

Personality Types and Self-Reported Eating Habits

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Background

- An unhealthy diet has become common in the United States
- Many individuals consume too much sugar, sodium, and saturated fat
- Repeated unhealthy eating behaviors can lead to chronic health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease
- This project sought to uncover what makes an individual more susceptible to unhealthy eating habits by examining personality types.

Survey Design

- This survey investigated the relationships between...
- Different personality traits:
 - Extraversion
 - Conscientiousness
 - Agreeableness
 - Emotional Stability
 - Intellect/Imagination
- Self-reported Eating Habits
- Perceived Eating Habits



Methods & Results

- Participants were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk service
 - 287 total responses were recorded
- A questionnaire was created online using Survey Monkey
- Questionnaire was constructed of four separate sections:
 - Demographic survey
 - IPIP-NEO (Personality Item Pool Test)
 - Self-Reported Habit Index Survey (SRHI)
 - Perceived Eating Habits Survey (PEH)
- Results demonstrated strong correlations amongst several of the variables:

	Self-Reported Habit Index	Perceived Eating Habits		Perceived Eating Habits
BMI	0.166 correlation 0.006 significance	No significant correlation	Self Reported Eating Habits	0.609 correlation 0.000 significance

Table 1

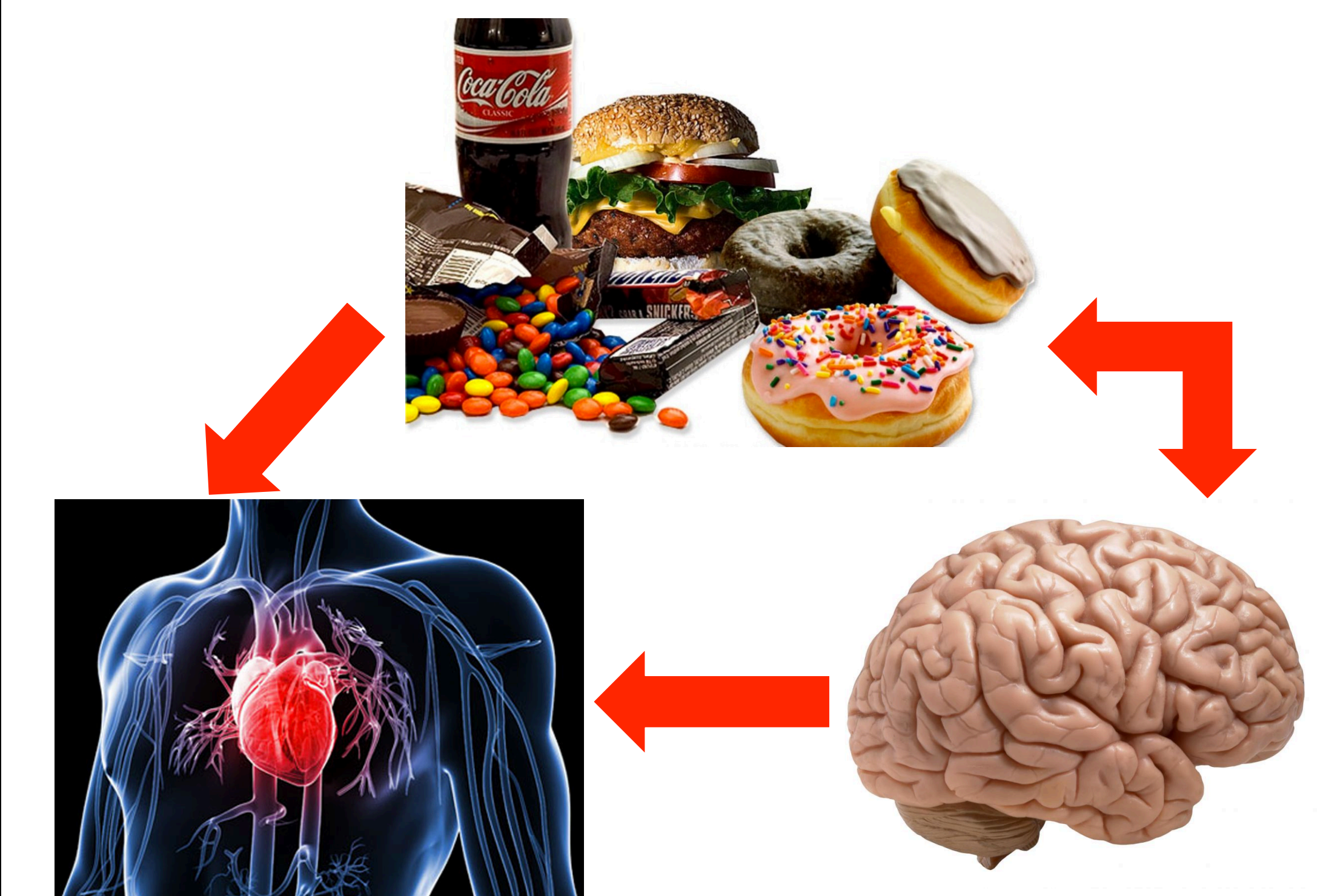
Table 2

	Self-Reported Habit Index	Perceived Eating Habits
Extraversion	-0.119 correlation 0.049 significance	No significant correlation
Agreeableness	-0.258 correlation 0.000 significance	-0.187 correlation 0.002 significance
Conscientiousness	-0.336 correlation 0.000 significance	-0.225 correlation 0.000 significance
Emotional Stability	-0.295 correlation 0.000 significance	No significant correlation
Intellect/Imagination	-0.257 correlation 0.000 significance	-0.201 correlation 0.001 significance

Table 3

Discussion

- Strong negative correlations between SRHI and all five personality factors
- Strong negative correlations between PEH and personality factors of conscientiousness, emotional stability, and agreeableness.
- Overall, lower scores on personality traits led to higher incidences of unhealthy eating
- Study was limited by the inability to observe and record an individual's actual eating habits
- Further research could include a longitudinal study to re-evaluate eating habits every few months



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