Introduction

- Does quality affect consumption amount as much as consumers think it will?
- We find that people tend to overestimate the impact of product quality on their consumption amount. This happens because they overestimate the mindfulness of their consumption decisions, resulting in an overestimation of the influence of consumption norms, and an underestimation of the influence of (non-discerning) visceral factors such as hunger and boredom.

Methodology

**Study 1A-1B & 3-4 (Jellybeans, subjective quality):** Subjects tasted a sample of two flavors of jellybeans, indicated the flavor they preferred (higher subjective quality), and predicted how many of their preferred or and less-preferred jellybeans they thought they would consume. They then received a cup of both flavors (Study 1A) or randomly received a cup of either preferred or less-preferred jellybeans (Study 1B and 2). Their actual consumption amount was measured after each session.

**Study 2 & 5 (Cartoons, objective quality):** Cartoons were pretested to create a set of high-quality (funny) cartoons and low-quality (less funny) cartoons. Subjects were randomly assigned to either the high-quality (funny) cartoons and low-quality (less funny) cartoons they had to enter a verification code for each cartoon. 

**Study 3: to test underestimation of satiation**

**Study 3 to 5: Underlying mechanism**

**Study 4: to test underestimation of the impact of visceral motives**

**Study 5: to test underestimation of the impact of visceral motives**

Conclusions

- People overestimate the impact of quality differences on how much they consume.
- Inconsistent with inadequate accounting for satiation, the overestimation pattern already occurred at the initial stage of consumption (Study 3).
- The actual consumption became more discerning to the quality difference when the hunger was sated (Study 4), and the overestimation of the importance of quality disappeared when subjects were reminded of boredom before the prediction measures (Study 5).
- The effect was not driven by underestimation of variety-seeking (Study 1B) nor difference in joint vs. separate evaluation mode (Study 1A & 2).

**References**