

Drink Coca-Cola, Eat Popcorn and CHOOSE POWERADE

Testing the limits of subliminal persuasion

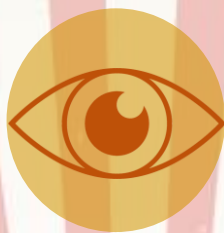
A 3-part study by I. Smarandescu and T.A. Shimp (2015)

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Aim:

To examine whether subliminally priming brand names is successful under “realistic” marketplace conditions.



Participants in all 3 parts subliminally primed with

“POWERADE”

or

“DRAWEDOE”

(control word)

Objective:

To measure buying intentions of 3 drink brands (Coca-Cola, Gatorade, Powerade) after being subliminally primed with the brand with the lowest market share (Powerade).



Part 1



Participants answered questions on buying habits, current thirst levels and intent to buy.

Part 2



Participants asked to choose a drink from a simulated convenience store shelf.

Part 3



Same as part 2, but with a 15 minute interlude between subliminal priming and choosing the drink.

RESULTS

Intent to buy Powerade was significantly higher in participants who reported that they were thirsty when subliminally primed with the brand name.

Thirsty participants were more likely to choose Powerade when subliminally exposed to the brand name over the control word. There was no effect in non-thirsty participants.

There was no effect from either subliminal prime when participants were not choosing immediately after priming.



Conclusion

The efficacy of subliminal priming significantly depends on time between priming and choosing, as well as the participant's prior intentions and motivations.

References

Smarandescu, L. and Shimp, T. A. (2015) 'Drink Coca-Cola, Eat Popcorn and Choose Powerade: Testing the Limits of Subliminal Persuasion' in *Marketing Letters* 26(4), pp. 715-726. New York: Springer.

Background picture:

Vecteezy.com. *Distressed Sunburst Vector Background*. Available at: <https://www.vecteezy.com/vector-art/105180-distressed-sunburst-vector-background> (Accessed 19th April 2020).

All other imagery available at <http://clipart-library.com/> (Accessed 18th-19th April 2020).