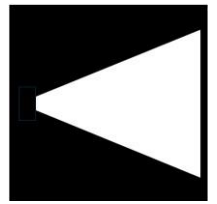


Stack it high



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Research Paper

Plate Size or Plating? Effects of Visual Food Presentation on Liking, Appetite, and Food-Evoked Emotions in Online and Real-Life Contexts. Salazar Cobo, M. I., Jager, G., Ioannou, O., de Graaf, C., & Zandstra, E. H. (2025). Food Quality and Preference, 122, 105306.

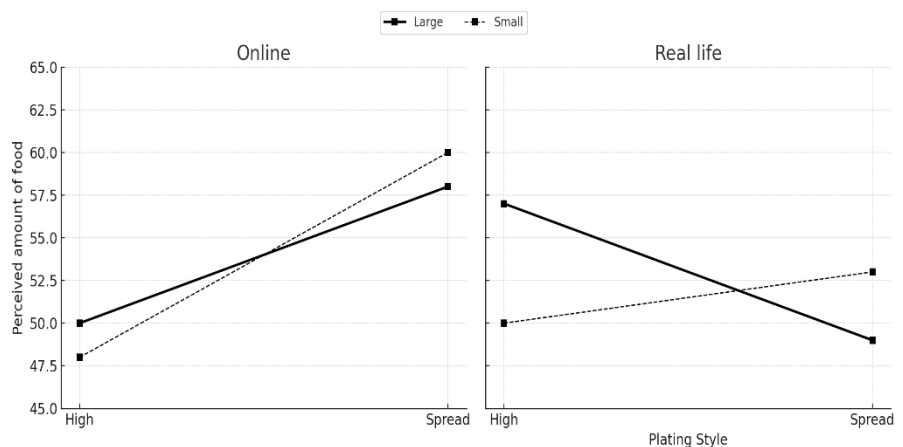
Overview

This research investigates how plate size and plating style (high-stacked vs. spread) influence liking, appetite, and food-evoked emotions in both online and real-life contexts. The experiment used either interactive 360-degree videos or the a real-life cafeteria setting with actual food consumption.

Key Findings

Context Matters: Different amounts of food were perceived online vs real life. The real-life setting produced stronger emotional and sensory responses, expressing greater liking, fullness, and willingness to pay compared to the online experiment.

Plating Style Drives Enjoyment: High-stacked plating on large plates significantly increased liking and evoked more positive emotions such as happiness and satisfaction. This effect was more pronounced in the real-life setting.

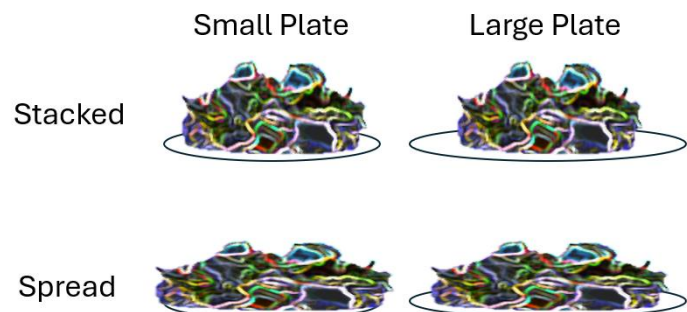


No Significant Impact of Plate Size on Consumption: Unlike some previous studies, plate size had minimal impact on the amount of food consumed. Participants ate similar amounts regardless of whether the food was served on a small or large plate. The discrepancy may stem from contextual differences; real-life environments, like this one, introduce variables like social interactions and more natural eating that may mitigate the influence of plate size on consumption.

Methods

Food was either stacked high or spread out on small or large plates. In the online experiment, participants evaluated chicken salads using 360-degree interactive videos under different plate and plating conditions.

The real-life experiment took place in a cafeteria where participants consumed the salads, with measurements of hunger, fullness, and emotional responses taken before and after eating.



Insight

This research highlights that while plating style significantly enhances emotional responses and perceived satisfaction, plate size has a limited effect on actual food intake in a real-life context. This finding challenges previous assumptions about the influence of plate size on consumption, suggesting that real-world eating behaviours may be less susceptible to visual illusions than controlled experimental settings. High stacked plating on large plates did boost liking, happiness and satisfaction though.