**10th February 2020 Monday 9am Focus Group #FG201-206**

Moderator: Kay so um can everyone go around to introduce yourself? Your name and a time that you ate a memorable dessert, a sweet food that you remember until now?

FG201: Mm

Moderator: Perhaps you can start first?

FG201: Um I’m [participant name] um I’m doing marketing course. and yesterday was my birthday so I had a birthday cake so that’s what I remember now yeah.

FG202: Uh it’s [participant name]. Um, I am doing my PhD in law. Uh other than the fact that I just had a biscuit over there (laughs)

Moderator: (Laughs)

FG202: Um I think I had a cake (pause) Saturday. (laughs)

FG203: Um my name is [participant name], um I’m doing a marketing and communication course at this university. Um I just had a brownie bite? A small bite yesterday.

Moderator: Okay

FG204: Um my name is [participant name] and I’m studying marketing and communications? Uh for postgraduate. And (pause) yesterday I had a bread with strawberry jam.

Moderator: Mm

FG205: My name is [participant name] I’m studying marketing and communications and I thought I just had a croissant for breakfast on Friday?

Moderator: Mm

FG205: Last Friday.

FG206: My name is is [participant name] and I’m studying marketing communications and uh last dessert that I had was, the brownie bites at [participant name]’s house last Friday.

(General laughter)

Moderator: Okay (laughs) so can you tell me what type of drink is your favourite and why? For example fruit juice, or coke, (pause) diet Pepsi?

FG201: Does it need to be sweet or?

Moderator: No? Doesn’t have to be

FG201: Coffee? But I normally don’t put any sweeteners any sugar. I just drink it as it is.

Moderator: Mm. okay

FG205: Yeah me as well. Like I take with no sugar.

Moderator: No sugar. Coffee?

FG205: Yeah coffee

Moderator: Mm

FG204: Um my favourite drink is orange juice because it makes me feel fresh

Moderator: Mm okay. Is it fresh or?

FG204: Uh the fresh orange juice

Moderator: Oh okay

FG206: I like the uh peach tea? With the peach slice in [A Southeast Asian country] we th-the drink’s really famous and I like it for the freshness and sweetness.

Moderator: Mm

FG203: I like tea with milk. With two spoons of milk and a small one teaspoon of sugar. (laughs)

Moderator: Sugar okay.

FG202: Yeah black coffee (laughs)

(General laughter)

Moderator: Sugar?

FG202: No sugar.

Moderator: Okay so um when you consume food and drinks some of you, put sugar some of you don’t? So um what will drive you to want to add sugar inside a drink? For example, like why you –

FG203: It makes the flavour like more, strong and (pause) noticeable.

FG201: Mm

FG203: Or else it will be all bland. This is for me.

Moderator: And do you add sugar inside your peach tea for example?

FG206: Um, when I make the, peach tea I usually add the sugar in because, well the tea is really bland

Moderator: Mm

FG206: So it has to add the sugar.

Moderator: Mm. Um if you have to choose between sugar and sweetener, which would you pick like why do you add sugar?

FG201: (In overlap) Um

FG206: (In overlap) Between sugar and sweetener?

Moderator: Mm

FG206: Like sugar or honey?

Moderator: And or artificial sweeteners for example?

FG203: Mm, I don’t know my habit is sugar.

FG201: I’ve never tried a sweetener before but if I had the kind of opportunity I would pick either, like a honey like a natural sweetener or the sugar cube itself.

FG205?: Mmhmm, mmhmm

FG201: Rather than the sweetener. Yeah. Cause I’ve never tried. And I always see old people trying it so.

Moderator: Ohh okay.

FG201: Don’t know I always see old people trying it.

FG205: (In overlap) Ohh. For me honey if I –

FG203: I never thought of about it also.

FG204: I’ve never tried a artificial sweetener before so.

Moderator: Ohh

FG204: I always use sugar.

Moderator: Ohh okay. So it’s more of habit. Because you have never tried it before? And do you associate it because it’s, for old people so you don’t want to use it?

FG201: No I don’t think so, but because I’m I don’t know what’s in it and I’ve never kind of I always never curious cause I always knew what’s in the cube so I always use the cube. I guess it’s it’s kind of what you know about it and familiarity.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: Because it’s the other one I see it as artificial. So I wouldn’t use it. But for example if I have, diabetes or another condition, that might be an option because that’s something the doctor prescribes. Really.

Moderator: Do you agree?

FG206: Uh yeah I agree because the artificial sweetener is something that I don’t really want to try? If I have the chance between sugar and honey? Yeah I will choose honey because it’s natural.

FG205: Mm, mm. Me as well I think. More healthier. (laughs) (In overlap) For my, yeah. For me

FG204: (In overlap) Y-yeah for me, I would choose something that is more natural.

Moderator: Mm

FG204: Th-th-than something that is arti-artificial.

Moderator: Okay. Um but do you have any concerns about eating food or drinks with sugar?

FG205: Yeah.

Moderator: (For example)

FG205: That’s why I didn’t add like any sugar in my coffee. Yeah

Moderator: Okay. So what are the concerns you have?

FG205: My, like my weight. My fat? Yeah, something like that. When you get older yeah? (laughs) Yeah when at first I drink coffee, I love tea like Thai tea like more sweetness. But when you get older and like it’s hard to be like (pause) no time for, exercise. And you need to like take care of your, food yeah your diet. That’s why I try to like practice myself? To like, lose sugar and now I can like drink coffee with no sugar

FG203?: Yeah

FG205: Finally yeah. Even if it’s not like, tasty you know? But yeah.

Moderator: So it’s to, for like weight management.

FG205: Yeah.

FG201: Yeah.

Moderator: (In overlap) Any other –
FG201: (In overlap) Um I watched a documentary called um *That Sugar Film*? Which kinda changed my perspective of sugar. Um so the guy kinda talks about how um sugar impacted his life, um heart problems diabetes everything. And he, um, normally he’s a healthy guy?

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: And he starts eating sugar for twenty-one days?

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Like a lot of sugar. And you can see how um, his body changes

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: And all the condition he develops. So I did um, that’s probably because of him not because, also weight but mainly health in general?

Moderator: Mm

FG201: And I can see um, when I’ve done the twenty-one day no sugar, I’ve tried it myself. And I’ve seen the difference in my body,

Moderator: Mm

FG201: Like my skin and everything. And now when I put sugar even like um, one teaspoon whatever, I can see it’s very like, sweet? I can’t even try it.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: I’m more like a savoury person but now, I’m much more kinda conscious about

FG205: Yeah yeah (inaudible)

FG201: Not using sugar.

FG204: Yeah and, even though I love sugar sometimes, um I think and I’m worried about how it would affect my life? In the future?

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: Of my health? So, now I’m trying to have less sugar.

Moderator: Mm

FG203: I’m more concerned about my skin. (laughs) Yeah so I just tried to minimise the sugar as much as possible.
FG206: Mm

FG201: Mm

Moderator: And you, FG202?

FG202: I have no concerns

Moderator: (laughs)

FG202: Bout sugar whatsoever and this is not a joke (laughs) I love it so much! (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG202: I- I- I- I just don’t like sugar in my coffee but that’s about it. I do eat sugar all the time, so (laughs)

Moderator: Mm

FG201: She’s my housemate, she always does (inaudible) (In overlap) have that stuff

FG202: (In overlap) Yeah it’s it- to be fair, to be fair, it makes me happy and that’s all I care about so (laughs)

(General laughter)

Moderator: So um (pause) what comes to your mind immediately when I ask you about um sugar sweeteners and um, sweet foods? For example, [participant name] you said that it makes you happy.
FG202: Yeah I think sweeteners are not that good is it? I- I don’t- what I am mean is just some speculation I don’t know! (laughs)

FG201: Temporarily!

FG202: That’s what I heard? Uh so I think that kind of lies hence another (pause) um I don’t know, (in overlap) brain wave.

FG201: (In overlap) You- you need (inaudible – your drug?)

FG202: Yeah it’s kind of like, yeah you’re just basically fooling your brain

FG205?: (In overlap) Mmhmm

FG202: (In overlap) Into like, your body’s like having sugar but it’s not actually? So it’s actually making everything worse? (pause) So that’s what I heard. Uh not very scientific (laughs) but (laughs) uh so yeah so I- I prefer eating sugar itself rather than just like (laughs)

(General agreement saying yeah yeah, mm; nodding)

Moderator: Will you cut down your sugar level based on, concerns such as tooth decay and loss? Are you aware of…

FG201: Mm I normally brush before if I have a sweetener before I go to bed.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: But I don’t like say oh my god my teeth are, going to decay or anything.

Moderator: So is, more of, uh like say skin and weight management things like that?

(General agreement saying mm; nodding)

Moderator: Okay if you have to provide a rough estimate for UK’s recommendation by *Public Health England* –

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: What-what’s the daily sugar allowance?
FG201: Uh, is it eight to ten tea-teaspoons? I’m not sure. Because e-even in the Coca-Cola can, there’s a lot of um sugar is it forty cubes? I’m not really sure. (pause) (In overlap) I don’t know the UK one.

FG205: (In overlap) Mm, I have no idea.

FG202: No I don’t I don’t actually

FG201: What is it?

(General murmurs of I don’t, I don’t know) (General half-hearted laugh)

Moderator: So it’s actually uh thirty grams?

(General murmurs of mm)

Moderator: Per day? And like what you mentioned, a can of coke

FG201: Oh yeah, loads.

Moderator: Does contain, um thirty-five grams, which is about nine sugar cubes?

FG202: Oh (profanity)! Oops.

Moderator: And a normal bottle like a small three hundred and sixty ml, uh smoothie? By uh Innocent, is forty-three point two grams, which is about eleven sugar cubes

FG205: (Gasp)

FG202: (Gasp) oh my god that is (inaudible)

Moderator: And uh the largest size of Starbucks hot chocolate is sixty grams which is twice the amount of the daily recommended allowance.

(General murmurs of mm mm)

Moderator: So how do you feel knowing these things do they shock you? Or, make you want to consume less of these sugar-sweetened drinks? What are your thoughts?

FG206: I just had the Innocent

(General laughter)

FG205?: Yeah! Innocent! This one! Yeah!

FG206: Mm, so um, I’m now reconsidering my (pause) daily dose. (laughs)

FG205: (laughs)

FG206: So now I think I will drink less.

Moderator: Okay

FG205: yeah!

FG206: About half a cup or something.

Moderator: (laughs)

FG205: I think it’s too much for like Innocent that we see that it’s like (pause) (inaudible – rich?) smoothie being like healthier but it’s all eleven sugar cubes it’s not (sigh) healthier as they appear you know like
FG201: Mmhmm

Moderator: Mm

FG205: Yeah

FG202: Yeah is that is that actually artificial sugar like I-I mean, not fruit sugar? It’s sugar sugar?

Moderator: It’s (pause) no it’s from the fruit juice itself. Because they add all the fruits inside.

(General realisation of ohhhhh, yeahhh!)

FG201: (In overlap) Yeah because in in

FG205: (In overlap) The fruits has sugar itself right?

FG201: In the documentary it also shows that cause the for example you mentioned fruit juice.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: Um because when you get the juice, you leave the fruit itself behind

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: And you can for example if I were to eat an orange, I can maybe eat two, maybe three maximum.

FG205: Mm

FG201: But if you have the juice, you can drink ten or fifteen

FG205: Ohhh! Yeah yeah

FG203: Mm

FG201: And then you get more sugar intake than you normally get from

FG204: The Fruit.

FG201: Yeah that’s why here even if it’s um fructose like natural sugar (laughs) you still get a lot of yeah. But then it says Innocent marked innocent but, a lot of fruits at once.

FG204: Yeah.

FG203: I see

FG201: And come with the calories as well.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: Horrible (laughs)

FG205: Next time when you (pause) have this one? You can choose this one. Better.

(General laughter)

FG206: I haven’t drink this in a long time

Moderator: So you will choose coke over Innocent smoothie now?

FG205: Not for me, I have to like, control my weight. Not like even –

FG204: (In overlap) Yeah, because all these time, I thought that anything that has to do with fruit is healthier.

FG205: Yeah! (In overlap) But it –

FG204: (In overlap) But

FG201: (In overlap) Cause they leave the important part behind

FG204: (inaudible) yeah! (laughs)

Moderator: Okay. So a recent report actually showed that in twenty seventeen, the bottled water sales exceeded Coca-Cola sales. Why do you think people are switching to a bottled water option? (pause) Over let’s say Coca-Cola?

FG201: You mean the bottle of Coca-Cola to can?

Moderator: Uh no, bottled water.

FG201: Water. Oh!

Moderator: Normal drinking water.

FG202: Think people are generally trying to be more hydrated anyway? But, also, Coca-Cola is not actually very you know, famous for its health benefits. (laughs)

(General laugher)

FG201: (In overlap)In my own (inaudible) because um if for example a meal deal, you prefer okay um I should spend, put my money for Coca-Cola because it’s normally more expensive.

FG205: Mmhmm
FG201: You get that one, and you can say I can drink the water at home anyway.

FG205: Mm

FG201: So it might be an kind of like a money kind of saving way.

FG202: But I th- I think she said bottle of will get, buying bottle of water has increased.
FG201: Oh! Has it?
Moderator: Mm

FG201: Oh (inaudible)

Moderator: People are switching to a water option rather than a coke option.

FG201: Ohh.

FG202: So I- I think people are just trying to be good (laughs)

(General agreement and murmurs of mmm yeahhh)

FG205: (In overlap) Aware of the –

FG201: (In overlap) Cause you need to drink at least eight glasses and that’s recommended.

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah

FG201: So maybe here people are becoming more conscious.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: Or trying to make up the sugar intake, to the water. Don’t know.

Moderator: Will you switch to a water option?
FG204: Yes I will.

FG203: Yes.

FG206: Yeah.

Moderator: So let’s say your peach tea you will change it to water option?

(General laughter)

FG206: I haven’t drink peach tea in a while? When I was back in [A Southeast Asian country] but coming here I drink more Innocent juice!

(General laughter)

FG206: I don’t know why

Moderator: So um, okay if you have to, go for let’s say water? Or a soft, or sorry. Or a diet soft drink, which one would you pick? Water or diet soft drink?

FG201: I normally take tap water when I go to a place. Because I notice that I can eat the whole portion if I order water.

FG205: Mm

FG201: Cause if I order a drink it will fill me up. So I go with water. I always ask for tap water.

FG205: For me is half half? When um this meal I drink water, next meal I will like, treat myself like have a cup of (pause) um soft drink? Yeah. (pause) That’s that the favourite one is soft drink for sure, but I think like about I’m worried my –

Moderator: How about diet soft drink? So let’s say they use sweeteners instead of sugar, so it has no calories.

FG205: Is like always half half like
Moderator: So you would alternate between water and

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah like. Yeah yeah.

Moderator: Okay

FG205: Like yeah

Moderator: So you think that um, soft drinks even diet soft drinks are a treat?
FG205: Yeah!

FG204: Um, I’ll choose, regular water instead of um diet.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: Diet soda? Uh because uh for me personally I don’t really enjoy the taste of the soda so I will choose water.

FG203: Yeah, me too.

FG206: I’m a savings person so I will go with water.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: But I really like water because yeah, eigh- eight cups a day. It makes us hydrated.

Moderator: Mm

FG206: More, I think that more than diet soft drink.
FG201: Mmhmm

Moderator: Do you do you drink diet soft drinks?
FG202: I don’t actually, I mean, don’t let this fool you but (laughs) I normally don’t do that. I go for water as well. Yeah.

Moderator: Mm when you mentioned that you don’t like the taste, is it you don’t like the taste of diet drinks because of the sweeteners? Or, overall you don’t like the taste of soda?
FG204: I don’t like the taste of soda.

Moderator: Okay

FG204: I mean, it’s not that I hate it but I don’t really enjoy it.

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: (In overlap) So it’s not about
FG203: (In overlap) And the taste of soda is better when is with sugar and if is (pause) if there’s no sugar, then is isn’t worth drinking it. (laughs) that’s for me, I think.

Moderator: Mm. Are you familiar with the variety of sweeteners currently available? Sweeteners. Talking about.

FG201: Um might be. I mean, the general idea of sugar like I know uh glucose, fructose, like um lactose, like all the, um types of

Moderator: Sugar?
FG201: Yeah where you get sugar from. And for example some of them your body doesn’t produce and, um so you need to get them for example glucose, and things. But I don’t know about the general sweeteners. Do you? (inaudible – maybe now, people are)

FG203: Back in my country, there is condensed fruit and uh condensed milk?

(General agreement of mmhmm yeah yeah! That yeah!)
FG203: And uh, honey. That’s all I know (laughs)

FG201: Yeah

FG205: Oh yes (inaudible)

Moderator: Okay? So, um (pause) once again, just to show you that there are actually different types of sources of sweetness? So for example honey and (pause) the normal table sugar? They are naturally occurring?
FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: But you can also artificially make sweet, sweetness as well? But they can come from both natural, and synthetic sources. So (pause) knowing that that there are different categories of sweeteners, will you treat (pause) um sweeteners differently now? So let’s say you would look at naturally sources of artificial sweeteners different from the synthetic sources?

(General murmurs of mm mm; looking at stimulus material of sweetener categories)

FG205: Yeah I don’t know

FG201: Think still I wouldn’t necessarily go and pick these because they are natural. I will still go with the, fruit or vegetable option.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: Still I don’t know. (pause) Cause I’ve never seen, any of these before. Have you?
(General murmurs of mm no no)

FG205: (In overlap) I have seen this in Thailand also have this one

FG202: (In overlap) Oh yeah, Splenda. (pause) and stevia

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah I see this one in Thailand (points to Splenda) yeah! Always like come together with the normal one. Yeah I think this the one.

FG202: (In overlap) I’ll stick with sugar (laughs) I don’t know! Because (inaudible) anymore.

FG201: (In overlap) There’s table sugar and honey.

FG202: (In overlap) Table sugar comes from sugarcane. Never seen sugarcane in my life.

FG205: (In overlap) Calories is like less than the normal one. I think

FG201: (In overlap) I know that there’s these ones anyway

FG203: (In overlap) Table sugar, what is table sugar?

Moderator: Table sugar is like the normal white sugar that that you add in?

(General murmurs of ohhh)

Moderator: So actually I- what I placed on the, the refreshment table? Has an option for sweetener that is

FG201: Yeah

Moderator: Artificially made? From synthetic source?

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: And one is artificially made from plant source

FG205: Mm

Moderator: So if you have to pick one, will you have more concerns over another one?

FG201: Yeah I would take the plant one but when I was seeing them I completely ignored them cause I didn’t think –

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah

FG201: Oh this is plant based. I didn’t even look.

FG203: Yeah

FG201: I just got went for the milk.

FG205: Yeah, that’s why I didn’t look. Didn’t realise.

FG201: But if I look from here, the green one looks like plant-based maybe cause it’s green.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: I don’t know. Is it?

FG204: Yeah

Moderator: Yes. (laugh) It-it is.

FG201: Oh yeah I would go with the plant one if I have to choose one.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Someone says you have to pick one. (inaudible)

FG202: To be fair, it’s not it’s not a very informed decision I know, but I sometimes put uh sugar or sweetener in my tea, just not very um, common. But that’s what I do, sometimes. And, just because it’s yellow. And I know Splenda? I’d probably go for the yellow one? I don’t know why I would do that so (laughs) I’m not good (in overlap) I’m not good at considering my options (laughs)

FG201: (In overlap) Yeah you (pause) cause you associate this brand with this colour yeah.

FG202: Yeah! Exactly! So th-the the Splenda is the only sweetener I know, so.

Moderator: Mm

FG202: That’s what I would do probably.

Moderator: Do you think (pause) you have any, what are the concerns that you have regarding sweeteners? So you mentioned about, health aspect.

FG201: Yeah. Mainly.
Moderator: And also, habits because you don’t know (pause) what is the taste of sweeteners.

FG201: Mm

Moderator: But do you have any other health concerns let’s say, in the long term you are worried that long term consumption might actually harm you? Or?
FG201: That’s what my main concern is. Like health but also I can see how it (pause) little time twenty one days impact. If you’re like this for your whole life, how it impacts, your physical –

Moderator: But that is sugar, right?

FG201: Yeah

Moderator: How ‘bout sweeteners?

FG201: Mm. (pause) I’ve never read any research on it and I’ve never tried it so I’ll have, I’ll say I’m neutral.
Moderator: Mm

FG201: Cause I’m much more, I can approach to that one more than these ones maybe. (points to Stevia as the good one)

Moderator: Any other, thoughts?

FG203: Not so far because I try to (pause) you know (laughs) minimise these sweet food?

FG201: Yeah

FG203: Sweet food per day.

FG201: Yeah

FG203: So I think as long as we don’t eat too much then it’s nothing to worry about (laughs)
FG201: Yeah. Cause even rice has sugar in it but I didn’t know this until that twenty-one-day thing. And everyone has sugar in it. Every packaged thing. It’s crazy.

(General murmurs of yeah; nodding)

Moderator: Okay? So um (pause) Okay (pause) So it seems like sugar has its own set of problems?
FG202: (laughs)

Moderator: and sweeteners, there are some concerns as well? Do you think that, um in general, people should reduce, sweetness in their diet as a whole? Or just sugar alone?

FG201: I think (pause) if you’ve been with this sugar for your whole life, you can’t just, because then you have the withdrawal effects, you can replace with sweeteners. And then gradually, kinda push it away.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: I would say. I would because then (pause) People will kind of, um, kind of impact their physical and mental wellbeing as well. Because, like it’s a drug. And it, will have the same effect as any other drugs like withdrawal because if you put in a lot of sugar, you can’t you need to, replace it with something else.

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

FG205: The-the whole like the whole sweetness should be like, reduced. When you like get older, because it’s good for your health? But I just realised that, the fruit? Has like, their own sweetness. You know, like old people like normally don’t realise this one. That’s why they, when I eat fruit, I think like it’s

FG203: Healthy (laughs)

FG205: Yeah healthy! And I keep, eating it more than like um normal food? Like yeah, protein, carbohydrate anything. Yeah and it’s own, it’s more sugar. (pause) Yeah. I think more people like (pause) um, will like have, no information about the su- what sweetness in like other food not only in sugar.

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

FG206: I don’t that we can push the sugar away from our life

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: completely? We just uh, I think that we should focus more on the natural one like the fruit? Uh have a- a- a- affordable and reasonable amount.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: In the su- sugar in real life can add some but not too much. Yeah we can, uh go towards the fruit. The natural one.
Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: Yeah I actually would agree with, most of everyone that we don’t have to completely remove sug- like sweet

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: from our life?
Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: But we just have to like have it in the normal amount.

Moderator: Mm. Any other?

FG202: I honestly don’t know because I do eat a lot of sugar (laughs)

FG201: Yeah

FG202: So, uh removing from my life I think that would be very very challenging for me.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: Um but I personally think that eating sugar is not the worst thing that you can do to your body so

Moderator: Mm

FG202: I’m trying to, yeah (pause) take it easy on myself

(General laughter)

Moderator: Um, someone brought up that uh you s- we could replace sugar with sweeteners? Do you agree that, that should be the way to go?

FG206: Well it’s just for me to try the sweetener and then I can make the decision?

Moderator: So taste will influence your decision.

FG206: Oh yeah.

FG205: For me as well I think. If it’s the same taste? But like um, low calorie. Yeah. I will, go for that.

FG203: Yeah, me too.

FG201: Some some people have diabetes, my friend, and she loves chocolates. So the doctor replaced it with a carrot. So rather than just saying you can’t consume anything, carrot still has sugar in it, in it. So she’s replacing chocolate cutting them is in chocolate pieces and having carrot as kuje chocolate.

FG205: Mm

FG201: So they replaced it. And it it it is kind of, is what doctor prescribes. And it’s working for her. So. He didn’t just say get rid of it completely, but replaced it with um, natural sugar. (pause) Even you think that carrot doesn’t have sugar, it does!

FG205: Mm

FG201: It has sugar in it.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: It’s crazy.

Moderator: Okay? So um going into reducing sugar in our diet, what do you think is the best, strategy or recommendation? Is it product labelling? Such as, having a low sugar label? Or traffic light system? Or education? What do you think is the best way to, recommend?

FG205: I think is mixed? Not only like with one, one strategy. I think it’s got to what you um, communicate with, I think.
FG201: Mmhmm

FG205: Yeah if like um (pause) For elder people I don’t know like maybe, only for label, it’s good for them because they know already, at their age. Because of low sugar is better for them. (pause) But for like um (pause) young age, have to like educate more. (pause) Yeah. Give information?

Moderator: Mm

FG205: Yeah about like, in the long run. It will probably impact for your health? Or anything. I think it’s not, not the best one. Only one strategy.

Moderator: Mm

FG205: For me I think is. Have to look for, ways to attack it. And what they like, need, some kind of information, that to, that make um match for them.

FG201: Yeah. I agree that the education part. Cause, it’s kind of more of like, if you’re more ignorant you don’t know what it is? You continue consuming the way you do it. But also, it depends on your, previous experiences. For example

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Up your upbringings, what they drink what they eat. And then you see what they eat and you do the same so.
Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Just the culture itself? Education. And also social media has a big impact like if I were, if I didn’t watch this film

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: Yeah

FG201: I would still (pause) consume whenever whenever I see rice, now I’m checking, th- the packaging cause now I know what it is. And how horrible it impacts, a completely healthy person with a great BMI. And then to kinda go. So yeah. It depends on culture upbringings education everything.

FG205: But I think that, that documentary is good? Yeah

FG201: You should watch it! (laughs)

FG205: Yeah! It’s kind of like, a a strategy to like to do for, information like inform.

Moderator: Mm

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah. Is h-how long?

FG201: (In overlap) And my best friend did the

FG205: How long for that, documentary?

FG201: Um, I guess it’s like an hour or something. It’s on YouTube and my best friend did

FG205: Uhhuh

FG201: And also, because I respect h-her opinion, and she tried it and she benefitted and she had a really big ac-acne problem

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: And it disappeared like, it’s really good. So my

FG203: Yeah

FG201: It-it’s not just hormone it’s also sugar.

FG203: Yeah

FG201: You know when we talk about acne and stuff?

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: Um not just fat sugar has a big impact.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: And you see your face is much more hydrated

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: You can see it’s more, looks much more healthy when you stop

FG206: Yeah

FG201: Sugar

FG205: (In overlap) That’s the (inaudible)

FG201: (In overlap) No offence (laughs)

FG202: (In overlap) I-I think I think people need professional help! You know for sugar? Cause of the fact that I’ve I- I- y-yeah. I think she’s right. It is a drug (pause) and when I when I need, I need it.
FG201: Yeah

FG202: It’s not like (pause) uh, oh I should have a cake, oh I shouldn’t have.

FG205: Mm

FG202: It’s more like, I NEED A CAKE.

FG205: Yeah yeah yeah

(General laughter)

FG202: So yeah I feel I feel (inaudible) education, but I think people are not really aware of the fact that it is quite addictive? And it it is quite, um harmful to your body? It is important but also professional help, might, yeah. Help people.

FG201: But they also, um, some big companies are being um getting paid by some of the big companies to the doctors and they are giving kind of (pause) prejudice or kind of biased advice? So you shouldn’t always trust the professionals as well. I just like, do some research, ask people, what are their opinion, and stuff. So don’t just go to professionals yeah.

FG206: (In overlap) I think. I think it’s’ up to the scientists? And
FG201: (In overlap) Yeah

FG206: (In overlap) The manufacturer to um, develop the new kind of sugar or sweetener that is better for our health? And then (pause) they uh should not label it wrongly? Uh

FG201: Yeah

FG206: From the fact that uh it’s sugar free but it still has the kind of amount of sugar in it? Yeah.

FG201: Mmhmm. Yeah.

FG206: Uh but I think that (pause) uh, each one system health system is different from others? So, I know a friend, a friend of mine who, eats sugar every day.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: And (Pause) is a lot a lot of sugar. But he, he’s okay. He’s fine. But when I eat the (clicks tongue) uh same amount as him?

FG205: Uhhuh

FG206: I, grow. My acne on my skin.

FG205: Ohh ohh.
FG206: Yeah. So is depends on each health system and

FG205: Mm mm mm mm
FG206: Yeah

FG201: Yeah

FG206: So we (pause) I think that we cannot (pause) tell people to not to eat, not to drink. But we should educate them to uh

FG204: Mm

FG206: know about the sugar in it

FG201: Yeah you still give them an option to pick but you uh provide all the information.

FG204: Yeah because –

FG203: (In overlap\_ Yeah make sure they are aware of all the information needed

FG204: Yeah

FG203: To make the decision.

Moderator: But what kind of information are you referring to? So (pause) like

FG203: Sugar is bad for your health (laughs) Is not, I mean is, not very good for your health (laughs) And then we, uh inform them that there is, this amount of sugar in this product like in this uh tea, how much sugar is in this? And make sure they are aware of that?
FG204: Yeah

Moderator: And then they make their own decision

FG203: Yeah

FG205: Yeah

FG201: And maybe relating it to their experience for example if you’re talking with people who are, very much into putting sugar in their coffee.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: You (pause) kind of shape your, education, based on that. Because they are interested in that one. If you talk about something else and if they don’t already consume it they won’t listen but if you relate it to their, experience they will listen

FG204: Yeah yeah

FG201: cause th-they can relate

FG205: Yeah

FG201: and say okay last time I’ve done this this happened
FG205: Mm

FG206: Mm

FG202: But also, the fact that people just enjoy th- their drink, with sugar

FG205: Yeah

FG202: Is just that is something that you cannot change because some people most people, to be fair, don’t even care about the

FG201: Yeah!

FG202: Health impact. So so let’s say, you gonna have a coffee, you don’t you don’t like sugar, but (pause) um if I come to you and say you gonna have your coffee with sugar every single day. Can I ask you to do that? Is basically the same thing!

FG205: Yeah
FG203: Yeah

FG202: Um, a sugar-loving person, just gonna go up to them and just you can’t have sugar in your coffee. They’re like, no! I want to have sugar in my coffee because I enjoy it that way. So, it’s kind of, yeah. (In overlap) It’s not really easy to change that.

FG201: (In overlap) It depends on, it depends on your priorities.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: If you put your health or your enjoyment, whatever, happiness (pause) it depends on your priority. You have the option (pause) You can pick –

FG205: No but I think I think same as her. Because I-I always like control my weight to like weight management something like I will think about like it’s harm for my body or not? But the lover drink that I love a lot is like, milk tea bubble tea (laughs)
Moderator: (laughs)

FG205: You know, even having like, no sugar everything no sugar. But when I go to like, bubble tea shop, I will (pause) (laughs) add sugar
FG202: Yeah there you go! Yeah because yeah that’s (inaudible) condensed milk isn’t it? (inaudible) yeah (laughs)

FG205: Yeah I think! (inaudible- I love it) I have like done everything and I want it.

FG204: Mmhmm

FG202: (In overlap) Yeah it’s like. Because yeah. It-it-it, you can you enjoy it that way!

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah, that yeah. (pause) Yeah! Yeah yeah yeah.

FG202: Is like, su- without sugar, bubble tea is basically just (pause) Tea. (laughs)

FG205: Yeah. (laughs) nothing.

(General laughter; agreement of yeah yeah yeah)

FG205: I have I can have a cheat day every day for like, bubble tea.

(General murmurs, yeah ha-ha mm)

FG202: with sugar with sugar with sugar. (laughs)

FG205: (inaudible) I control everything like every food, every diet. But not bubble tea.

(General laughter)

FG205: (In overlap) (inaudible) Yeah!

FG206: (In overlap) I heard, I heard there are, a-applications about uh, (pause) um counting the calories in each food? And like sushi, or chicken or something? Uh (pause) What if the manufacturer uh, uh, tea or Coca-Cola or or anything, they put um, code on the label and then it will scan it with the app? We can know how many sugar amount are there in each product? And then we can make our own decisions!

Moderator: Mm

FG201: But they wouldn’t do that. (laughs) (In overlap) cause of the funding and stuff.

FG206: (In overlap) What if, what if

FG204: Yeah because I think that, most people don’t really care about what they eat or drink, until something happens to them

FG205: Yeah, yeah

FG202: (In overlap) That’s true, that’s true

FG201: (In overlap) Yeah (laughs) me too!

FG205: (In overlap) That’s true

FG204: (In overlap) So then after (pause) after something happens to them, then they will have less sugar or, like control their eating habit and stuff like that.

(General agreement, nodding)

FG206: We can use hospital as a channel of (laughs) advertising and education education (laughs)

FG203: (In overlap) Unless something happens, or like um –

FG201: Well then it’s again related what I said about uh, early experiences or your experiences.

FG205: Yeah. Yeah.

FG206: Yeah

FG201: If you see, someone that you can relate. (inaudible) rather than seeing something on TV, someone you don’t know

FG205: Yeah

FG204: Yeah

FG201: If it’s some, it if it is yourself or someone you know, you’re more likely to, listen and relate

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: Yes. (pause) That’s true

FG201: Because you say okay if he, it happened to someone really close to me, with uh similar habits

Moderator: Mmhmm
FG201: This can happen to me too

FG204: Yeah

FG205: Yeah

FG201: But then it might be too late or not too late.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Just depend on again, you can’t completely get rid of it. But you can gradually. I mean I used to put um two tablespoons of sugar, when I was a kid.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: But the more you become much more conscious, you get

FG205: Yeah

FG201: watch and read and stuff

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: You can cut out

FG205: Yeah

FG201: It’s about, your will? Cause I, I lost twenty kilos in like two years’ time. And it was also like cutting the sugar and fat and everything.

FG205: Mm

FG201: And it it’s not easy it’s very hard.

FG203: Yeah

FG204: Yeah

FG201: But then, you see the benefits in the long run
Moderator: Mmhmm
FG204: Yes.

Moderator: So you mentioned about, sushi and chicken did I hear it correctly?

FG206: Yes?

Moderator: So you’re talking about um (pause) labelling not on just, normally sweet food but hidden sugar as well.

FG206: Uh yes. Um (pause) um but then what I talk about in the calories?
Moderator: Oh okay

FG206: Yeah I heard about the apps? And they count the calories in the food?
Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: And what what if they make, make uh the counting the sugar amount in, the sweet, the sweet food?
Moderator: Oh okay

FG202: I-I think I- I- I- used to use one for, for a couple of times (laughs) days s-so It didn’t last very long but uh, so basically when you scan the barcode and everything, um I think it gives you different nutritional um, aspects of that? So, there is an app, that actually shows you, how much fat, how much sugar
Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: And how much calories they have in them? So it’s kind of, yeah. That’s beneficial. But it’s hard work isn’t it?

(General agreement, murmurs of mm; nodding)

FG206: Yeah it’s not keeping track?
Moderator: (laughs)

FG202: (In overlap) Yeah I know, cause y- you you

FG204: (In overlap) but you have to add everything you will eat

FG202: (In overlap) Yeah sometimes you just cannot find the uh food you’re having

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: I-in the database

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: So you have to like enter it manually (inaudible) but it’s hard work cause it’s for every single in-ingredient. So.

FG201: But then for example for this one it says zero sugar. But if you read, it says sweeteners –

FG202: (In overlap) That’s that’s even I mean that’s even worse! I think

FG201: No because there is sucra, like the one you showed, it’s here but it doesn’t show that one

(General murmurs, mm)

FG202: Yeah

FG201: When you look it says zero sugar you’re like oh! Zero sugar!

FG205: Yeah! Yeah! Yeah

FG201: It says with sweeteners. (inaudible) placement but you don’t see this sweetener because they’re focused a lot on um sugar

Everyone: Sugar!

FG205: Yeah

FG201: And not on sweeteners.

(General agreement, murmurs yeah yeah; nodding)

FG202: (In overlap) Yeah I don’t know I-I didn’t really notice this before buying it I was just thirsty so (laughs) I literally just bought it and then it says sugar-free and it says like (pause) actually this is like quite small font isn’t it you can barely see it?

(General murmurs, yeah mm; nodding)

FG202: Well. I don’t know.

FG203: But it’s still noticeable.

FG202: Yeah but it’s it’s I think I-I-I don’t know if I should ask her but is that is it is it is it is it even worse! Than normal one?

(General laughter)

FG202: You can’t can you! But the thing is I- I, to be fair –

FG201: (In overlap) That’s the main purpose of the study yeah to (inaudible)

FG202: (In overlap) When I see sugar (inaudible) but yeah because to be fair, as a consumer

(General laughter)

FG202: When I see this, I-I it rings some bells. Because i-if it’s sugar-free, how is that that sweet? That’s that’s I think that sounds even worse? And so, I don’t know. I mean that wasn’t the question but. Just just like an additional comment.

FG205: Yeah

FG202: (laughs)

Moderator: So does it mean you are against replacing sugar with sweeteners?

FG202: I-I-I personally am. (inaudible) (laughs)

FG201: Mm. Yeah. I think any is bad but if I have to go with one, I guess, I don’t know. I don’t know. Sweetener maybe.

FG205: Yeah s-s-sweeteners.

FG201: But but still you know it’s it’s artificial but (inaudible) my main concern is.

(General agreement and murmurs of yeah yeah)

FG201: Cause this one says um sucralose. With again, (pause) I guess it was the artificial one was it? Wasn’t it? So (pause) It’s not the or- the fructose. It’s not the oranges.

FG205: Mmhmm, I think need more information about sweeteners. Sw-sweetener.

FG201: Then the education part yeah.

FG205: Yeah like. (In overlap) What’s the good things, if you have that, better than sugar. I have no idea but I thought (inaudible)

FG202: (In overlap) I don’t know what to choose (inaudible)

FG201: Yeah because no one does that no one educates you about um that. really.

FG205: Yeah! Yeah yeah

FG201: They just say oh, either no sugar or (pause) you know, um, a lot of sugar. Because of what you have Coca-Cola and everything. And big companies normally try to say oh it’s diet.

FG203: Mmhmm

FG201: But they still put sweeteners.

FG206: Yeah

FG201: So what’s the difference? Cause they still have the same effect even though it says zero calories there’s a sweetener in it.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: So it doesn’t, you don’t gain weight but you still. Impacts you.

(General murmurs mm; nodding)

FG206: I have a thought that if for the same flavour? The same weet-sweet flavour, if we just need a pinch of sugar

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: And twice, to have the sweetener? I- I think I will people will choose sugar because

FG205: Mm

FG206: Is a less is a less uh (pause) amount than sweetener. If they put a lot of sweetener to make the same sweetness then I think is, very controversial. Horrible to choose between the two.

FG201: So it’s about the intake.

FG206: Yeah

FG204: Yeah

FG205: But how many like low calorie between the same amount? For sugar and sweetener?
Moderator: So all sweeteners they have lower calories than the sugar?
FG205: Yeah

Moderator: But it varies between the amount of sweeteners that you have to

FG205: Put in the (inaudible)

(General murmurs mm yeah)

Moderator: The amount of sweetness. So you think there should be more education

FG205: Yeah
Moderator: On the types of sweeteners and how you can replace them with sugar?

(General agreement yeah yeah yeah)

FG203: And it’s about changing habit too. Because, my friend once told me that uh she used to put a lot of sugar in her drink? And it taste tasty. But then he tried she tried to drink low sugar. So the next day she feel she felt terrible.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG203: But then, about a year after that, she felt tasty! With that drink. (In overlap) So it’s about –

FG201: (In overlap) Then you can taste the coffee itself. Rather than sweet.

FG203: Yeah it’s about changing habit too.

FG205: Yeah training habit. Yeah

FG204: (In overlap) Yeah not –

FG203: (In overlap) Not immediately but yeah that like –

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah like when I take a long time to like, no sugar. At first I like, two spoon of sugar. And at like, (pause) um couple years ago I cannot add any sugar only milk I still have milk.

FG203: I (inaudible – cannot?) milk. (laughs)

FG205: Yeah I still have that milk, but I cannot, I tried to change for like black coffee but I didn’t start yet. (laughs)

FG203: (Laughs)

FG205: Yup

Moderator: So how about um scare tactics or regulations similar to cigarettes and alcohol? For example plain packaging? So um. (pause) If we have, food packaging such as this? Do you think it will be –

FG205: Oh I won’t buy that.

(General murmurs ooh mm)

FG203: (laughs) It looks terrible!

Moderator: Do you think it will work? Will help you reduce your sugar consumption? For the public? Why not?

FG201: Because um, I- there’s a lot of research showing that if you put a lot of extreme images on cigarette and everything, it does the contrast effect it doesn’t it’s not helpful.
FG205?: yeah

FG201: And this is again

FG205?: Yeah

FG201: People focus on pleasure and short term thou- stuff.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: They will just ignore it and eat it

FG205: Yeah

FG201: Because they know the brand? KitKat, even though they changed they will still take it.

Moderator: Mm
FG201: So like in the cigarettes one or anything, they don’t focus on oh this will affect your sexual health or your social life or this will cause cancer, they still smoke it

FG203: Mm.

FG205: Yeah yeah

FG201: And it’s not. You. I don’t know. Maybe they should change the strategy. (laughs)

FG202: T-to be fair, personally, if I see this sort of packaging, then I’ll go for a banana instead because uh

(General laughter)

FG202: No the thing is, what I what I believe, no it’s not it’s not what I believe, it is what is it. But, so basically all those packaging, like they mostly use like bright colours like red and stuff

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: I think that’s kind of like sending that sort of, um, yeah. Idea to your brain that that you should be that that is kind of, you know attractive

FG205: Mmhmm

FG202: For the consumer, that’s how it’s designed.

FG204: Yes

FG202: So um, if you see something like this, you wouldn’t even notice that, in the shop anyway.

FG205?: Yeah

FG202: So can you imagine like seeing everything, in this packaging. (In overlap) You wouldn’t even notice, you would go for a banana

FG201: If you, if you saw once, you will have to read it. Because everything is like that. Oh what is this one?

(General murmurs of yeah yeah mm mm yeah yeah, except FG202)

FG202: Yeah no no no no one will be bothered by this. People would be –

FG205?: Yeah

FG201: When I when I first looked at it, I looked at the names just I didn’t read the the long text. Cause you’re hungry you want sugar, you then look at the brand.

(General murmurs of yeah yeah yeah, except FG202)

FG201: Don’t know

FG202: No mean if I see cover like this I would I wouldn’t be buying yeah (pause) No.

FG206: I know that (pause) Mm I think that in the psychology aspect? Uh some people looking for sweetness when they are sad or depressed

FG205: Mmhmm

FG206: If they see this package (laughs) I don’t know, I i-t this cannot cheer them up.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG206: I-it-it can make

FG201: make it worse

FG206: them even sadder

FG201: Yeah

FG206: Psychology image or something I don’t know (laughs)

FG204: Yeah

FG205: Uh it’s taking like when I think about like um cigarette? It’s the same like when like scare tactic and when people want to smoke, they will buy it. (pause) Yeah and it’s like, doesn’t work I think.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: Because it’s it’s a it’s long term as well

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: In the future and this as well.
FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: And because of doctors, studies proving that it’s not effective and people are still smoking.

FG202: (In overlap) But if –

FG201: (In overlap) Even if it’s thirteen pounds, they still pay thirteen pounds! For a little box.

FG202: (In overlap) Th- But but the fact that people are (pause) oh okay. That is the different of addiction. Sugar is kind of addictive. Uh but I (inaudible) But the thing is, um with smoking is like people have their regular smokes and they go for it

FG205: Mmhmm

FG202: They don’t even care what the packaging is because they have a, usual go to

FG205: Mmhmm

FG202: But, with the um, sugar

FG205: Sugar. Mmhmm

FG202: And like chocolate and stuff like that, you just go enter a shop and you just see, what’s in there and you just
FG205: Mmhmm

FG202: make up a, an immediate decision there. (pause) And then, that’s that’s it.

FG201: (In overlap) and also for some people it’s a habit though, you just have to have your chocolate

FG202: (In overlap, raised voice) you know it’s it’s like it’s like it’s like. Maybe some people but mostly, when you have loads of options

FG205: Mmhmm

FG202: you just enter a shop and see what you fancy at the moment, so it’s not like kind of like

FG205: Habit

FG202: Yeah so with smoking, that’s the reason why it’s not actually working or what because of the fact that people know what they want
FG203: Mm

FG202: And then go for it

FG205: Mmhmm

FG202: And they don’t actually consider other options.

FG201: It’s also because how it portrays, like for cigarettes if they say it’s an addiction, no one says sugar is an addiction? No one really talks about it because

FG205: No they don’t

FG201: Of the big companies, kind of (pause) discouraging that kind of not to do it. If If they talk much more about sugar being, like a problem

FG206: Mmhmm

FG201: Cause some people are really addicted to it they should have their sugar like (pause) If I’m not eating will have the withdrawal effect

FG206: Mmhmm

FG201: Then, I don’t know. No one tried it but yeah.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: If if for me, it wouldn’t work. Cause I-I don’t e-eat a lot of sugar

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: And if I need to have one KitKat, I will have that KitKat because

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: It won’t affect me that much. Cause it’s just once a month or something.

FG203: Mmhmm. (In overlap) Is it high sugar consumption?

FG202: (In overlap) But to be –

FG204: Mmhmm

FG201: Yeah

FG203: If you can, have them small? Consumption, then you can (sigh)

FG202: But is this being considered? Because what now what I’m thinking is, um obviously uh there’re other stuff that are quite (pause) you know, not so beneficial even harmful, uh in the shops. So it’s not just bout sugar, but if we actually, go for this, these regulations in terms of what every single thing we eat (pause) then it would be the end of an era. Of marketing and (In overlap) brands and everything.

FG201: (In overlap) Even for the brands!

(General agreement saying yeah yeah! Mm mm; nodding)

FG202: (In overlap) Because I’ve I’ve felt –

FG206: (In overlap) Yeah, the economy. (laughs)

FG202: Yeah exactly.

(General agreement saying mm mm; nodding)

FG202: I don’t I don’t think that would be (pause) actually very manageable

FG201: Cause you can’t see the brand itself?

FG202: Yeah so –

Tayla: (In overlap) And even the brand names are smaller than the writing I don’t think (pause) This would ever happen

FG202: (In overlap) Yeah so –

FG204: (In overlap) Yeah, I agree.

FG202: (In overlap) I don’t. Yeah. Th-the

FG204: (In overlap) Yeah

FG202: This is kind of like (pause) a bit of uh, utopic idea no offence

FG201: No if we look from the, marketing prospect of that

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: Um, they mentioned in the class for example, the logo is the kind of, image of, brand image of the company

FG206: Mm

FG203: Mm

FG201: And you can’t see KitKat’s logo you can’t see Cadbury you can’t see the, purple colour. And they even um, get the pa-patent for that colour. So if if it’s not here, I don’t think even the company would go for it because

FG204: Yes

FG201: This a risk for them is a threat and it’s

(General agreement saying yeah yeah mm; nodding)

FG201: not them. It’s (pause) it’s like, Sainsbury’s basics kind of like white

(General laughter)

FG201: I don’t think

FG204: Yeah I –

FG206: (In overlap) In the economy there’s no competition and then no economy anymore. (laughs)

FG201: (laughs)

FG204: Yeah

FG201: Yeah, it’s like everything is

FG202: Yeah

FG206: Blank.

FG204: Yeah I think that, uh if these packaging, actually exist in real life, it, they wouldn’t se-sell well

FG205: Yeah

FG204: Nobody would, really buy it

FG201: Not because of, this sugar it’s because of the

FG204: Yeah

FG201: Packaging (laughs)

(General agreement saying yeah yeah!; nodding)

FG204: Cause of the pack-packaging

(General agreement saying yeah yeah mm; nodding)

FG203: There is a rule of branding, marketing? (laughs)

FG204: Yeah

FG206: Yeah is like a home-made brand like

FG205: Yeah

FG204: I mean it’s not even attractive.

FG201: (Laughs)
FG205: Yeah

FG204: Doesn’t have colour, and stuff like that

FG203: But if it’s still attractive and is has some colour uh notice? Information (pause) then uh (laughs)

FG201?: (laughs)

FG206: Educated, educated information

FG203: Yeah

FG206: Rather than these scare?

FG203: Yeah yeah

FG206: scare information?

Moderator: Okay

FG203: It wil still goi- be more attractive.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Cause people have been trying this for years and it’s not working. (pause) They still, using alcohol, drugs

FG204: Yeah. (In overlap) Cigarettes.

FG201: (In overlap) Cigarettes. (pause) And why would they do this for something, less addictive, in their mind. I don’t know.

(General agreement saying mm mm mm; nodding)

Moderator: Mm, how bout sugar tax? What are your, thoughts on sugar tax? So there’s actually a – (In overlap) yeah

FG201: (In overlap) Oh! Th- yeah. (pause) So th-they they have twenty p sugar tax for example, I was at Nando’s yesterday. And they have um, twenty p sugar tax if you buy, if you say I want, a bottomless drink?
FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: And if you say (pause) If you don’t specify no sugar, they add twenty p, as the sugar tax.

FG205: Ohh

FG201: Yeah I think it’s not doing any difference because the people think it’s twenty p, they pay the twenty p. (pause) I don’t think it makes a difference.

FG204: Yeah

Moderator: So actually the government has implemented a su-, a sugar tax on soft drinks?

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: Meaning that (pause) between uh between five grams to eight grams

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: Of per hundred ml of sugar, they have to pay more?

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: And then for more than eight grams, they have to pay more

FG206: Yeah

Moderator: So manufacturers actually are (pause) absorbing the cost right now

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: Do you think that consumers should help to pay for (pause) the tax? Do you think that will help to reduce sugar consumption?

FG205: Hmm, consumption.

Moderator: Why not?
FG205: Because when they need like (pause) bubble tea, like

(General laughter)

FG205: For example, if they’re like (pause) Not not that expensive, then I- I still need that. (pause) Yeah (pause) For me

FG203: If that was, apart from bubble tea and

(General laughter)

FG203: That wouldn’t be effective for you.

Moderator: So you feel like even if they increase the price you will still pay it because you want it, you want it

FG205: Yeah! Yeah.

FG206: Yeah maybe reduce it to, once a month?

FG205: Yeah

FG206: Or something? (Pause) (inaudible) laughs)

FG205: Reduce (pause) reduce everything but bubble tea. For me.

(Generally)

FG203: That’s why! That’s why! That’s why normally it will work?

FG201: (In overlap) Cause I feel like they’re like this to reduce the – sorry.

FG203: (In overlap) Apart from bubble

FG203: I-I mean, normally it will work for [participant name]?

FG205: Mm

FG203: But just except bubble tea cause

FG205: Yeah

FG206: (laughs) When you love something, you can-not let go, right? (laughs)

FG205: (laughs)

FG203: (laughs) You will make excep-exceptions for the thing that you really love.

FG205: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah

Moderator: You will try and

FG201: Um I feel like they’re trying to um, do this, even if the um, cost of the, drink, because they want to kind of make people, consume less. But then they giving, um much more money for the companies

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: To kind of

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: Produce that product more. So it’s kind of like a double-edged sword like I would say.

FG205: Mm. But I think is a good way to like um (pause) realise for, the manufacturer to, have, create, or find innovation to like (pause) uh use, uh sweetener, instead of the real sugar. (pause) instead, that’s the good way to the long run.

FG206: Mm

FG205: Yeah, I think it’s a, a good way to do.
FG201: (In overlap) If they –

FG205: (In overlap) If they tell them nothing like –

FG201: (In overlap) Yeah (pause) well if you say –

FG205: (In overlap) No text no nothing

FG201: If you say I’m gonna uh, a diet coke?
FG205: Mmhmm
FG201: Which has no sugar?

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: They give you the, that drink for twenty p less.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: But you might just because you have all the options, you can pick any one you like. I don’t think it’s preventing

FG205: Mmhmm
FG201: It’s just. People can always find a way.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: Cause so- some people might just say okay I’m going uh no sugar nothing

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: But then they can change their mind and say okay I’m going to try this one. Cause it-it’s the bottomless option. You can try any of them. Anything you like.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: I don’t think it’s preventing. It’s just. I-I-I also just think this in (pause) the UK for example especially Nando’s it tells you twenty p more? I haven’t seen it anywhere else saying

FG205: Mm

FG201: You paying the sugar tax. Cause of this.

FG203: Mm

FG201: They don’t explain.

FG203: Mm

FG201: It’s just there. And no one knows.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: So it doesn’t prevent anything. Again it, they need to be more aware, and the education part comes again.

FG205: Mm

Moderator: Okay w—

FG204: I don’t know if it’s possible or not? But, maybe if the government make tax really, really high

FG205: Mmhmm

FG204: Really expensive? Maybe people will be more aware of it. I- I don’t know if that’s possible. So.

Moderator: Mm

FG205: Mmhmm

Moderator: Okay. [participant name], what do you think of sugar tax?
FG202: Sugar tax. Um, no. I’m not entirely sure about this.

FG201: They add a few p more like

FG202: No no!

FG201: For drinks

FG202: Yeah yeah I understand that! But I’m not sure if it would work.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: Because it’s it’s really difficult to justify that as well? (pause) You know what I mean

FG201: Yeah for example in some countries they, again make the cigarettes very expensive

FG205: Mmhmm
FG201: People still buy it. (pause) (In overlap) If it were to –

FG205: (In overlap) But but, it reduced, in my country yeah is like alcohol and smoke, is like the tax is higher.

FG201: Yeah

FG205: Is helped for like, people like not often to buy it like reduced.

FG201: Yeah I think instead of preventing it, they should encourage them and then help them see other options other than saying oh this is too expensive you can’t buy it now. People will still buy it because they don’t know what it is. They still like that sugar. They don’t know why they shouldn’t consume less. (pause) Then the education part comes again because they don’t know, and oh! is because um of Brexit whatever.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: This should be higher now, and they will continue paying it because they don’t know the reason by it. (pause) I’m not sure.

(General murmurs of mm mm yeah yeah, except FG202)

FG202: Yeah exactly so. Yeah if if you actually emphasize the, um justification, I think yeah might work. But (pause) to be fair, there’re, so many (pause) I don’t know, different aspects in life that we can put a tax on?

(General laughter)
FG202: That sugar tax, I mean again, it sounds a bit utopic to me.

(General laughter)
FG201: Cause I’ve seen it, after Brexit, in some shops (pause) For example there’s a certain thing, sausage or whatever I buy, and there’s five or ten p difference. People don’t realise is just because I always buy that one, I will realise. But I won’t know the reason behind it. I will just assume it’s Brexit. But it might be, the sugar tax in that sausage. (pause) You don’t know.
FG204: Yeah

FG201: But no one knows it in the packaging as well. No one explains it.

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: Because you always buy it, you always buy it.

(General murmurs of mm mm yeah yeah, except FG202)

FG201: I don’t think it will make any difference.

Moderator: Have you noticed that chocolate bars are shrinking in size?

FG201: Yeah

Moderator: Does it influence your shopping habits? (pause) You will buy two you will eat two instead of one? Or?

FG201: Mm (pause) Don’t know. do you, eat chocolate, anyone?

FG204: No I don’t really. I don’t really buy chocolates
FG205: No

(General murmurs of yeah no no, mm no)

FG201: I noticed they say two eggs bigger, and you can see is actually the same one (laughs) but they because it’s getting smaller and smaller, next time they put in two eggs, you buy it more. I can say, in many is the opposite way. Is bigger, you buy it because of the money reasons. But when it’s smaller, I think, you don’t think oh, this is smaller. Cause you think okay this is smaller, the money should be smaller. If you don’t, consciously know the price.

FG205: Mm

FG201: So I will say (pause) I wouldn’t realise. Maybe. I know, but I wouldn’t check okay what’s the gram whatever

FG205: Mmhmm

FG201: Cause they do it very, slowly. You can’t

FG205: Mmhmm, mmhmm

Moderator: How do you – sorry. Any other thoughts on this?

FG206: Hmm, not so far.

Moderator: No? How about words such as diet or lite or zero calories? Do they influence your shopping or eating habits? Choices?

FG203: (inaudible) (In overlap)

FG206: (In overlap) I want sugar, yogurt? That says fat-free?

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: And then when I came home I eat it? Uh is really (pause) sweet. But, I feel enjoying because the taste is flavourful and is suit my my taste.

FG205: For me like milk? We have like um, cereal like low, low fat? For milk. I will choose that one, instead of the normal one.

FG203: Yeah

FG204: Yeah. Uh I used to (pause) get like zero coke because I thought it would be better

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG204: Than the normal coke.

FG205: (laughs) Yeah

FG204: But then I realised that, they taste exactly the same so

Moderator: Mm

FG204: I don’t really care now it’s a zero or not.

Moderator: Mm

FG204: I just buy coke.

FG206: Buy the one cheaper? Buy the cheaper one.

FG204: Mm, I don’t really (pause) see the price?

FG201: It’s the same price!

FG203: For milk and yogurt, I will choose the less sugar

FG205: Yeah

FG203: Yeah (inaudible) (In overlap)

FG205: (In overlap) I will choose fat-free, yeah something like that.

FG204: I don’t know, for me? It tastes exactly the same.

FG201: Yeah it’s the same!

FG206: (In overlap) But it says fat-free!

FG205: (In overlap) (Inaudible) For like

FG206: (In overlap)Fat-free

FG203: For me is different!

FG205: Yeah! For me is actually (inaudible) but I still like choose the lower fat (laughs)

FG203: yeah (laughs)
FG202: I mostly go for zero ones. I-I don’t I don’t actually do that very often but

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG202: I d- I don’t drink soft drinks much but, if I see (pause) a zero calorie one I’d go for that one. I even though I know it’s not zero calories

(General agreement and murmurs mm yeah ha-ha yeah)

FG202: I will just. Yeah. (In Overlap) Go for it.

FG201: (In overlap) So then again even though you know it’s still, your (pause) Conscious choice. So even though you educate, they will still

FG205: Yeah

FG203: Yeah
FG201: I still want to be this one.

FG203: (Laughs)
FG201: Again depending on the habits

FG204: Yeah

Moderator: So can I just check again? Whether you agree that we should (pause) replace, we should encourage people to replace (pause) sugar with sweeteners? Or not?

FG202: (In overlap) So I I don’t know.

Moderator: (In overlap) What are your individual thoughts on this?

FG202: (In overlap)I. No. I personally think that we shouldn’t.

Moderator: (In overlap) Shouldn’t replace

FG202: (In overlap) So I- I- I don’t. I’ve. Yeah I- I- think that is as bad.

FG201: I think we can, but only temporarily. To just find a way for them to quit sugar.

Moderator: Mm

FG201: As an alternative.

Moderator: And, and you?

FG206: Find the one that suit your taste. (pause) I- I-. Which will make you uh (pause) feel happier? Or. make you want to drink something. Yeah choose between the two.

Moderator: Okay. So

FG203: Like it depends (laughs) really. Like if the taste the same then I will choose the one with less calories.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG206: Sweetener.

Moderator: Yeah

FG205: Right now I have not much information about like sweetener

Moderator: Sweeteners?
FG205: Yeah.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG205: That’s why I cannot like exactly, answer th-the right one. But if it like (pause) um better like

Moderator: Mm

FG205: In the many ways

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG205: Like benefit or advantage

Moderator: Mm

FG205: Then uh, sugar. Like.

Moderator: Mm. (In overlap) So what –

FG205: (In overlap )It should it should –

Moderator: (In overlap) is the most important factor for you to decide whether you want to consume sugar or sweetener?

FG205: Uhh

Moderator: For you it seems to be taste?
FG206: (In overlap) Taste and health.

FG205: (In overlap)Calorie and about diet. Everything about diet like

Moderator: Diet

FG205: Yeah like um (pause) It’s um (pause) less calorie? In the same amount? And (pause) more advantage I don’t know like, benefit for like for health.

FG203: Mm

FG206: Mm

FG205: Yeah I concerned about health.

FG203: Like in food, there’s, is so, it also sweet but it also contain vitamin something then I would still

FG205: Yeah

FG203: Go for fruit? (pause) Over sugar.

Moderator: So health
FG203: Yeah health. Yeah.

FG204: For me, it’s the health too.

Moderator: Mm

FG204: Health aspect.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: I would say health too.

Moderator: Okay. Is there anything about, sweet food or sugar or sweeteners that you feel strongly about but we haven’t discussed today? (pause) Anything you want to, you thought about, for sugar or sweet food or sweetness? (pause) That has not been mentioned yet?

FG201: Mm

Moderator: When you s-, when you knew that you were coming to this focus group and you thought that you will talk about it? But it didn’t come up? Anything?

FG206: Um (pause) the sweet in the cake? Cake or something?
Moderator: Mmhmm (pause) (In overlap) What do you –

FG206: (In overlap) We mainly talked about

Moderator: Drinks.

FG206: Yeah

FG201: Mmhmm

FG206: Drinks and sugars and sweetness. But (pause) (laughs) I don’t know. Something bout like cake or something?

FG201: Yeah I think we mainly covered the (pause) um, so for example, both the sugar, table sugar and artificial sweetener, they’re both artificial.

FG203: Mmhmm

FG206: Mm

FG201: But we haven’t focus on the other

FG206: Natural

FG201: For example um, sugar in milk, sugar in fruits and stuff

FG205: Mmhmm

FG203: Mm

FG201: But in the natu-natural ones. Cause then, people might say (pause) Then you see the difference between natural and artificial. And I would probably, if you were to ask that question I would always go for the natural again.

FG203: Yeah

FG201: Be-because um (pause) I know that I will just take one rather than, a few of them. But still gives me like a healthier option.

FG203: Mm

FG201: Yeah. But I guess the main purpose of this is, picking between both two artificial ones.

FG206: Um. I’m. Mm I’m thinking that the sugar is, do they have the, natural component? Or they only have the artificial component, the sugar?
Moderator: Actually sugar is considered natural.

(General disbelief, surprise, realisation murmurs mm? hmm?)

Moderator: Sugar is considered naturally occurring.

FG205: Is from sugarcane or something?
Moderator: Mm

FG205: I see that picture. Mm.

FG206: Yeah if I know that sugar is n-a little more natural? I (pause) (laughs) I know I thinking about it.

FG205: Yeah. Yeah. (pause) Yeah (laughs) I change my mind.

FG202: It’s natural! (laughs) ha- ha!

FG201: And also because you know (pause) you know that all the research about it and th-the- the-the, but you don’t know anything about sweeteners that’s (inaudible – weird?). (pause) Because they they tell us artificial, but we don’t know. For example, I’m (inaudible) about um sweeteners as well but because I’ve never used it and I don’t know anything about it. (pause) That’s the main reason not because (pause) oh be- in between these two. Because I know both about (pause) I don’t know anything about sweeteners.

FG205: Yeah

FG201: So there might be much more awareness of that one.

FG203: Yeah

FG206: Um, I don’t know, are sweeteners are really famous in which country or which continent? Because in uh Asia, we usually use sugar or honey or fruit or something? But we don’t actually see, a lot of sweetener.

FG205: Yeah

FG206: Where is it popular? (In overlap) Where where do we see people using it?
FG205: (In overlap) Only for coffee in Thailand.

FG201: (In overlap) Yeah same

FG205: (In overlap) Only for coffee and tea. For the sa-sa-sa sachet. Like yeah.

FG201: I think in most, for example in my perspective, in most Mediterranean countries (pause) um because they have all the natural products

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: And they have all the fruits and vegetables they can produce

Moderator: Mmhmm
FG201: They don’t need sweeteners. Or they, for example, my grandma puts honey.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Rather than sugar

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: Because she’s much more used to that. And it’s also depends on the culture, what they’re used to and what they produce

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG201: As the, as a country.

FG203: Yeah

FG204: Yeah

FG205: Yeah

FG201: In the US and the UK, I see more (pause) sugar consumption.

FG205: Mm

FG201: And if you move there, you kind of, you kind of (pause) gain those habits like you mentioned, cause when I came here, I was drinking much more coffee than tea for example. And I’m, more like a different person now. Is because what they do and they be kind of (pause) habituate. Don’t know.

FG205: Yeah

FG206: When I moved here, I drink more (laughs) juice in (pause) in tea or coffee. I- I don’t norm- normally like coffee? So I, drink a lot of juice in supermarket like Innocent. (In overlap) because i-i-it makes me feel healthy or something.

FG201: (In overlap) Because and also because (inaudible) yeah

FG205: Yeah and just realise that in your smoothie is like

FG206: Yeah yeah yeah

FG205: Sugar is. Has more sugar.
FG201: Innocent

?: Yeah. I just think.

FG201: Nothing. (inaudible) dangerous in it.

(General agreement, murmurs of yeah yeah mm yeah)

FG204: Yeah may-. Also I think maybe it’s because of the placebo effect. So, when I drink juice? I always feel much more healthier.

(General Laughter)

FG201: Now we know!

FG204: Yeah I know I know!

FG205: Yeah so much fruit!

FG204: Yeah

FG205: Fruits are like.

FG204: Yeah! Fruit

FG205: I used to like have mango. But I heard somewhere like mango is more sugar.

FG201: Yeah

FG205: And I, like reduced.

FG201: For example Kellogg’s bars the K bars they have a lot of sugar in it as well

FG203?: Yeah

FG201: When I was watching the document- you have to watch the documentary! (laughs) It’s horrible. But also in my class, they were watching it too. They all, they were having Starbucks coffee they just put it in the bin as soon as they w-watched it.
FG205: (laughs)
FG201: It’s that effective.

Someone: Mm

FG201: It’s crazy.

FG206: Mango sticky rice is – the It’s the signature of your country!

FG205: (In overlap) Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Oohh I always like

(General laughter yeah! Yeah!)

FG205: Yeah and I always like. Yeah! I really cry and like pass through, cause I really like that. So you feel. (laughs)

Moderator: Kay? Thank you very much for all your input. We’ve come to the end of the focus group.

Everyone: Oh thank you.