

# **A Close Look at Health Advertising on Social media: a content analysis of sustainable core food messages on social media**

Yara Qutteina<sup>a\*</sup>, and Tim Smits<sup>a</sup>

*<sup>a</sup>Institute for Media Studies, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium*

\*Yara Qutteina,

Institute for Media Studies, KU Leuven

Parkstraat 45, P.O. Box 3603

3000 Leuven, Belgium

Tel. +32 16 32 43 19

Email: [yara.qutteina@kuleuven.be](mailto:yara.qutteina@kuleuven.be)

.

## **A Close Look at Health Advertising on Social media: a content analysis of sustainable core food messages on social media**

The aim of this study is to investigate how health advertisers communicate sustainable core food messages on social media. A content analysis of 585 sustainable core food videos, gathered from 20 social media (TikTok) health accounts (10 health organizations and initiatives and 10 registered dietitians), was performed. The analysis demonstrated that the social media content of registered dietitians was higher in volume and engagement, as compared to the content of health organizations and initiatives. Different communication strategies, such as social norms, rational and emotional appeals, were identified in the core food promoting videos of the health advertisers. Building on the findings of this investigation, practical implications for health advertising, particularly for health organizations and initiatives are discussed, and recommendations for future research are formulated.

Keywords: social media; health advertising; health organizations, dietitians, food communication