Dismantling the Theory of Planned Behavior: Evaluating the relative effectiveness of attitudes, norms, and perceived behavioral control

Erika Montanaro

Theory-based interventions are the best way to change health behavior; however, it is still unclear which theoretical constructs may be the “active ingredients” of change and how constructs in a particular theory may work separately versus in combination to produce the greatest amount of behavior change. Interventions can be highly resource intensive, so determining the optimal set of constructs to target for maximal change has the potential not only to more effectively change behavior but also to increase the cost-effectiveness and improve dissemination of our efforts. This study utilizes a dismantling design to determine how the constructs in the TPB (i.e., attitudes, norms, self-efficacy) influence each other to increase condom use among college students. Seven computer-based interventions focus on different combinations of the constructs, in order to determine the optimal combination to produce behavior change.