Abstract Comparison Task

**Version 1**

To meet net zero targets, it is important for people to adopt more sustainable behaviours, but it can be difficult to initiate change in people (Michie, 2013; Francis et al., 2015). Aldoh et al. (2021) argue that social norms are important when considering how to convince people to adopt more sustainable behaviours. Sparkman and Whalton (2017) found that participants who read a dynamic message emphasising how the wider population are adopting more sustainable behaviour reported greater interest in eating less meat than a static message only explaining how many people currently adopt the behaviour. We randomly allocated participants to receive a dynamic (n = 143) or static (n = 129) message about eating less meat, then they responded to a 1-7 Likert scale on their interest in eating less meat. The mean interest rating in the dynamic group was 3.45 and the mean rating in the static group was 3.31. A Welch t-test was not statistically significant, t(267.27) = 0.63, *p* = .528. The effect size was very small with a mean difference in interest rating of 0.14 and a Cohen’s d of 0.08. Our findings suggest that a simple message may not be enough to change people’s interest in adopting more sustainable behaviours.

**Version 2**

Our study directly replicated a previous study to investigate if participants who receive a dynamic message report greater interest in eating less meat than participants who receive a static message. Participants were in a dynamic (n = 143) or static (n = 129) group and responded to a 1-7 Likert scale. The difference between the two groups was not statistically significant. We did not replicate the target study and the implications will be discussed.

**Version 3**

To meet net zero targets, it is important for people to adopt more sustainable behaviours, but it can be difficult to initiate change in people. Sparkman and Whalton (2017) found that participants who read a dynamic message emphasising how the wider population are adopting more sustainable behaviour reported greater interest in eating less meat than a static message only explaining how many people currently adopt the behaviour. Our study directly replicated Sparkman and Whalton (2017) to investigate if participants who receive a dynamic message report greater interest in eating less meat than participants who receive a static message. We randomly allocated participants to receive a dynamic or static message about eating less meat, then they responded to a 1-7 Likert scale on their interest in eating less meat. A Welch t-test found that the difference in interest rating between the two groups was not statistically significant with a very small effect size (d = 0.08). Our findings suggest that a simple message may not be enough to change people’s interest in adopting more sustainable behaviours, but future research should investigate more direct measures, such as whether people actually eat less meat after the manipulation.