No short-term benefit of a dynamic norm intervention on reducing indicators of meat consumption

*A recommendation by **Chris Chambers** ⓘ based on peer reviews by **Gabriela Jiga-Boy** of the STAGE 2 REPORT:*

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Human meat consumption is associated with a variety of risks to health, animal welfare, sustainability, and the environment (including greenhouse gas emissions and loss of biodiversity), prompting a growing research effort to develop psychological interventions to reduce it and encourage alternative diets. At the same time, although meat consumption remains the majority choice in the UK, its prevalence is declining, with the proportion of vegetarians and vegans increasing substantially over the last two decades. One potential tool to accelerate behaviour change is to expose people to "dynamic norm" messaging, which, rather than providing static descriptive information about the prevalence of a desired behaviour, emphasises how the desired behaviour is changing over time so that people can begin to conform to the emerging trend. Although promising in theory, previous research offers mixed evidence on the effectiveness of dynamic norms in encouraging a reduction in meat consumption, with some studies suggesting benefits and others showing no effect or even counterproductive effects. The methodological rigour of some studies is also in question. In the present study, Aldoh et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of dynamic norm information (compared to static norms) on several indicators of meat consumption, including interest, attitudes, and intentions toward reducing meat consumption, as well as self-reported meat consumption itself. Using an online sample of ~1500 participants, the authors also tested the role of visual cues (including data trend graphics) in causing any effects and explored the potential longevity of the intervention over a period of 7 days. Results revealed moderate evidence for *no* net effect of dynamic (compared to static) norm information on meat consumption outcomes, nor any positive change over the 7-day period. However, the addition of visual cues enhanced the effect of dynamic norm messages, suggesting potential avenues for increasing the potency of future messaging interventions. The Stage 2 manuscript was evaluated over one round of in-depth review, following which the

recommender judged that the manuscript met the Stage 2 criteria and awarded a positive recommendation. **URL to the preregistered Stage 1 protocol:** `https://osf.io/txzvm` **Level of bias control achieved:** Level 6. *No part of the data or evidence that was used to answer the research question was generated until after IPA.* **List of eligible PCI RR-friendly journals:**

- Advances in Cognitive Psychology

- Collabra: Psychology

- Experimental Psychology

- Journal of Cognition

- Peer Community Journal

- PeerJ

- Royal Society Open Science

- Swiss Psychology Open

References:

1. Aldoh, A., Sparks, P. & Harris, P. R. (2023). Communicating dynamic norm information [Stage 2]. Acceptance of Version 1 by Peer Community in Registered Reports. `https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/tac3j`

Reviews

Evaluation round #1

Reviewed by Gabriela Jiga-Boy, 07 June 2023

I have read the Stage 2 manuscript submitted and I am happy to recommend the article for publication because, in my opinion, the research findings reported at this stage look accurate compared to the research planned and submitted at Stage 1.