

Final Individual Report
An Overview of the Public Relations Research Process

Makenna Buckskin

JMC 4453: Public Relations Research

Dr. Jeong-Nam Kim

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Module 1: Cyberscanning
Online Presence of Athleta Inc.

Makenna Buckskin
JMC 4453: Public Relations Research
Dr. Jeong-Nam Kim
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Executive Summary

Athleta Inc. is a female clothing brand focused on inspiring and empowering women to find confidence, strength and wellbeing. Online, they use the hashtag #PowerOfShe to share their product as well as their mission throughout the internet. Most issues discussed online could not escalate to issues that threaten brand reputation. The company works closely with female athletes, especially gymnasts. While the company's organic posts do not get high engagement, the company's retweets perform well on their accounts and speak to a good brand reputation. The inclusion of gymnasts as brand partners was well received and highly rewarded by customers and other members of the public. Most people would be a part of Athleta's nonpublic, neither aware of the brand nor their mission. There is a small active online community for Athleta where they should focus their energy and time to build their brand through word of mouth. Sentiment analysis shows little to be concerned about, but there are some things that product development and store management could consider in the future including carrying plus sizes in stores. I recommend using their current resources to increase their social presence and tap into current Internet trends and culture. Their social media presence is lacking, limited to direct promotion or highlighting their partnering athletes like Simone Biles, but I believe the brand could tap into short-form video and Internet culture to increase their brand awareness.

Cyberscanning Analysis

Based on the analysis of Athleta Inc., there are very few problems widely discussed on the Internet that would lead to an impact in brand reputation. Most discussions concerning Athleta are about their products. None of the problems discussed were caused by the organization. Most of the problems that were on the Internet were related to customer satisfaction within a brick-and-mortar store. There were some negative reviews stating employee misconduct caused dissatisfaction for the customer, but these did not affect the overall online reputation of the company.

The company works closely with female athletes, especially gymnasts. While the company's organic posts do not get high engagement, the company's retweets perform well on their accounts and speak to a good brand reputation. The inclusion of gymnasts as brand partners was well received and highly rewarded by customers and other members of the public. Simone Biles was a very strategic public relations move for this brand because of her previous media attention during the Olympics for her position on mental health. This continued partnership not only keeps a consistent audience for the brand, but also bolsters its reputation on certain specific values.

On the Internet, Athleta has a few distinct audiences. Athleta has a very small active public who are engaged and follow along with the brand. Most people in the U.S. would be considered a non-public, someone who does not know or care about the company whether good or bad. Then there is a small public who is aware, who knows about the brand but just may not be engaging with them on social media or purchasing products.

Each of these publics serves a different strategic purpose for the company. The most active public acts as a word-of-mouth marketing tool as well as the primary customers. This public is the most crucial to the growth of the business. This is the primary public that strategic communication initiatives will communicate with. The aware public, those who are listening but not engaging, are the most promising audience for the brand to work with. This audience is in the process of becoming an active public. The non-public, while important to consider, should not inform a majority of public relations decisions because they will not react to the good or bad media.

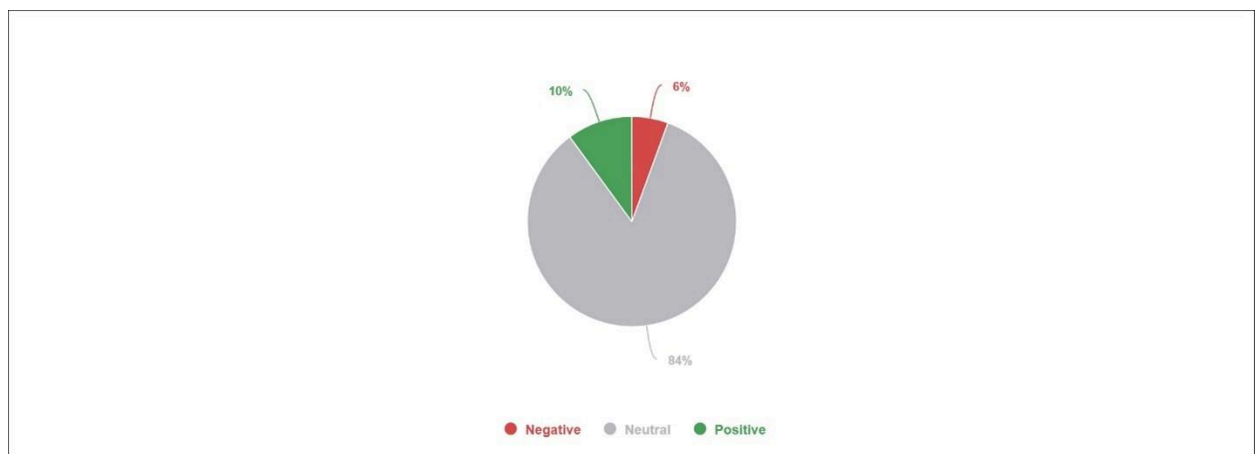
Currently, there are not any issues or topics that could become crises that would need to be addressed proactively. Based on the sentiment analysis included below, only 6% of brand mentions were negative. An analysis of these mentions shows that 2 out of the 5 are not actually negative towards the brand. The three that are negative have little potential to become crises for the brand. While they won't become major crises, these problems should be addressed by the brand in future decision-making. One of the negative comments was concerning the sizes held in stores. One commenter complained that plus sizes were not held in stores, saying she wanted to make a purchase, but couldn't in time for her vacation. Something like this can create a change in a company, yet the initial comment has little potential to become a major crisis.

Recommendations

The implications Athleta assessed during the cyber scanning process show that the brand does not have a large active audience. The brand is affected heavily by resale and is working in a competitive market. Despite this, the brand has an opportunity to shift their content from protecting their brand reputation to a heavier promotion campaign. Athleta's content does not

currently distinguish them from other brands in their market like Lululemon, Nike, or Adidas. Because of this, I recommend using their current resources to increase their social presence and tap into current Internet trends and culture. Their social media presence is lacking, limited to direct promotion or highlighting their partnering athletes like Simone Biles, but I believe the brand could tap into short-form video and Internet culture to increase their brand awareness.

Sentiment Analysis



Module 2: Focus Groups

Perceptions of Ocean Pollution in Landlocked States

Makenna Buckskin

JMC 4453: Public Relations Research

Dr. Jeong-Nam Kim

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Executive Summary

Ocean pollution is an ongoing problem in our current climate. From trash to oil spills, our goal is to assess the viability of ocean pollution mitigation efforts for non-coastal cities. For this report, we conducted two focus groups with participants aged 18-24 currently living in a non-coastal city. The first focus group included participants who were previously identified as latent or nonpublic regarding ocean pollution. In this group, we asked questions to gauge problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement recognition. Our second focus group included participants previously identified as active or aware publics. In this group, we asked questions to better understand problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement recognition. From the first focus group we concluded that due to location and lack of available information, participants lacked the urgency and knowledge to participate in pollution mitigation initiatives. In the second focus group, we concluded that prior knowledge regardless of location increased problem recognition, yet these participants still felt it difficult to participate in ocean pollution mitigation initiatives due to their location. Overall, any communication programs should focus heavily on coastal cities, while making information more readily available to those in non-coastal cities. These programs should focus on helping citizens recognize the ocean pollution problem and make it easy to participate in mitigation efforts without being in a coastal location.

Background

Our oceans are affected by millions of different pollutants every single day. From everyday trash to major oil spills, the condition of our oceans is an important piece of the overall environmental puzzle to create a better planet. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), most pollutants come from human activity not only along the coastlines but also far inland.

NOAA notes that a majority of this pollution caused by human activity can be defined as "non-point source pollution". This is pollution, transported through runoff where the water absorbs and assimilates all the pollutants it comes into contact with. As Oklahomans, it is important to understand this concept and how our everyday actions influence the oceans.

The ocean is polluted with marine debris in all shapes in sizes ranging from microplastics smaller than five millimeters to old fishing gear and abandoned vessels. All marine debris comes from human activity and hundreds of marine animals have been negatively affected by the amount of marine debris present in our oceans. Marine debris is a serious pollution problem because this debris can harm or kill wildlife, damage sensitive habitats, and damage active fishing gear.

There are also a number of garbage patches, as defined by NOAA, present in the ocean in places where the ocean currents pull debris into one location. The debris making up the garbage patches can be found from the surface of the ocean all the way to the ocean floor.

All of this pollution not only affects marine life and ecosystems but also human life from coastal communities to inland cities. Ocean pollution can affect many different industries and economies including food, healthcare, travel and tourism, transportation, and more. Most obviously, if marine life ingests trash and other pollutants, it cannot be served or approved to eat.

This means that there are less fish available to sell to consumers. This also affects the economies that rely on fishing, especially coastal communities. Trash and other ocean debris, or major oil spills, can also affect people's ability to travel to certain locations, or their experience while they are there. For many coastal communities, tourism is a major piece of their economy, and they are greatly affected by any interruption in this industry.

Through the use of the focus group, we were able to understand how the location of people affected their ability to understand and participate in the fight against ocean pollution. Understanding these perceptions is important to understanding how government and environmental organizations can increase awareness and minimization efforts in inland cities. It also helps to understand how people in inland cities perceive the effects their actions have on these marine ecosystems.

Methods

Through conducting two focus groups, we were able to understand perceptions towards ocean pollution and its effects on everyday life.

We conducted our first focus group with an audience previously identified as active in the fight against ocean pollution. This focus group consisted of five participants aged 18-24. Through a set of questions, we were able to build an understanding of how these participants became active in the fight against ocean pollution and their understanding of how their everyday actions affected the marine ecosystems.

Our second focus group included participants aged 18-24 who were identified as latent in their understanding of ocean pollution. Through the focus group, we were able to understand more of why they felt they did not need to be active. We also were able to ask questions that

gauge their understanding of the effects of their everyday actions on marine life and ocean ecosystems.

Overall, active participants paid more attention to news about ocean pollution and issues because of previous experiences that made them care about this issue. Latent participants agreed that it was hard to be active in the fight against ocean pollution because they did not see its adverse effects often.

Analysis

In both focus groups, participants emphasized that location played a major role in their ability to participate in the fight against ocean pollution. For some participants, this had a greater effect, but all of them agreed that there is little to no discussion about ocean pollution in Oklahoma, a landlocked state, so there was not much they felt that they could do to minimize the effects of ocean pollution.

In the latent focus group, participants were eager to discuss ocean issues and demonstrated at least a basic understanding of the issues but were not motivated to make a difference based on the knowledge and experiences they had. Participant Maggie said, “Maybe time commitment, people live a busy lifestyle. It's hard to find a lot of time for something like that.”

The latent audience participants all came to the conclusion that a lack of awareness was a major factor in their disinterest in participating in activities that would minimize ocean pollution. To combat this, government organizations and environmental activist organizations looking to make a difference in minimizing ocean pollution should ensure that any campaign looking for participation should be run after a broad awareness and education campaign. It is clear that members of the latent audience were interested in learning more about ocean pollution but did

not feel it affected them. While this is untrue, these organizations have an opportunity to educate a large audience who may then convert to supporting the fight against ocean pollution.

The active audience, while more knowledgeable about ocean pollution issues, was in agreement with the latent public that the location of Oklahoma makes it difficult to be an active participant in combating ocean pollution. Some of these participants noted that they grew up near a beach or coastline, which was the major reason that they were knowledgeable and passionate about issues related to ocean pollution.

The active audience focused heavily on the fact that awareness was necessary to make any difference for audiences who are not living in coastal communities. Alongside awareness, it is important that these audiences know what steps they can take to make an impact on ocean pollution from so far away. Participant Daniel said, “The obvious answer is probably just donating money to causes that do that type of work.”

Overall, the focus groups concluded that Oklahoma audiences require very specific and strategic communication when discussing ocean pollution issues. These audiences need to understand how their actions impact pollution and how this in turn affects them on a daily basis. These audiences also need to know what steps they can take to reduce their personal footprint as well as support the charge against ocean pollution.

Citations

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Key Quotes — Latent Public

Q1: How familiar are you with the focus group topic?

All participants are familiar with the concept of ocean pollution but only possess surface-level knowledge of the focus group topic. Participants do not actively partake in preventive actions against ocean pollution by seeing information regarding the topic through social media or college courses.

Direct Quotes:

Julia: “...I've seen some things about ocean pollution on the internet and social media and I'm excited to hear what everyone else has to say about it.”

Gracee: “....I was really hoping to learn more about ocean pollution science and maybe tie it to that bioremediation.”

Q2: When do you encounter any signs of ocean pollution?

Our participants unanimously agreed that they primarily encounter ocean pollution when they are near a coastline or beach. Participants also agreed that, due to Oklahoma's status as a landlocked state, they don't see ocean pollution in their daily lives.

Direct Quotes:

Yhanna: “I grew up in the Philippines and there's definitely trash coming up the beach shores...”

Lola: “I do not think they affect my everyday life currently, but I think if things continue the way they are regarding pollution my life may be affected.”

Q3: What actions have you taken to reduce your personal contribution to ocean pollution?

One participant was heavily involved in this question and provided a detailed response regarding their recycling habits. Overall, all participants appeared to agree with the notion that personal preventive measures were important in reducing ocean pollution.

Direct Quotes:

Gracee: “One thing that we really started doing in my household specifically was recycling...”

Maggie: “Whenever we went to the beach we would take a trash bag down or make sure I picked up our trash before we left...”

Q4: What is limiting people from making a greater effort to combat ocean pollution?

Participants all expressed confusion regarding the wording of the question. Once the question was further explained, participants reached the conclusion that lack of awareness and time were the primary factors preventing them from combating ocean pollution. Additional factors such as price and manpower were discussed but were not determined to be the primary obstacles.

Direct Quotes:

Gracee: “And nobody is really doing anything to help with the situation except for the few people that do go out and help with the situation.”

Maggie: “Maybe time commitment, people live a busy lifestyle. It's hard to find a lot time for something like that.”

Q5: How interested are you in other fights on environmental issues such as global warming or air pollution?

One participant expressed an interest in combating global warming, however, the majority of focus group participants appeared indifferent. Furthermore, all participants knew very little about the questioned environmental issues and only encountered the aforementioned on social media.

Direct Quotes:

Gracee: "I think it's a very important issue and topic that should be talked about more and, you know, I have plenty of people in my life who don't believe in global warming."

Lola: "I interact with social media posts when I see them. I will read them, but I do not actively research the ongoing environmental issues."

Q6: Is it easier for you to lead a charge against other environmental issues or ocean pollution?

All participants agreed that it was more difficult to make an impact in ocean pollution compared to other types of pollution because they weren't near an ocean and, therefore, didn't have the opportunity to help. Additionally, participants agreed that environmental issues they encountered throughout their everyday life, such as air pollution or littering, were easier to combat than those they didn't.

Direct Quotes:

Yhanna: "For me, growing up there compared to now is definitely different because I see more trash on the beach daily. I don't really see that here as much."

Q7: What could be a driving factor for you to be active in the charge against ocean pollution, if there are any?

Participants were more inclined to become active in preventing ocean pollution if the issue personally affected them or their community. Personal, community and environmental health risks brought forth by ocean pollution were identified as the primary driving factor. Additional driving factors against ocean pollution included the proximity of pollution and seeing well-known individuals participating in environmental efforts.

Direct Quotes:

Emily: "... if we lived in a geographic location where it was like an issue for us, we would probably feel more inclined to do something about it."

Gracee: "...causing health problems like respiratory issues and diseases and possible cancers because you know, who knows what's going into that water?"

Q8: How do you feel about the adverse effects on marine ecosystems caused by ocean pollution?

All participants agreed that the impact of ocean pollution on marine ecosystems was an important but overlooked issue. Participants expressed a desire to help impacted marine life but didn't know how to.

Emily: "....want people to care about the issues of cleaning up their environment and to care for the wildlife."

Julia: "I think it's like a huge issue and I feel like not many people know that marine life is affected by it that much."

Q9: Do you have any further concerns, ideas or takeaways regarding ocean pollution that you didn't have an opportunity to share earlier?

Participants identified the overall lack of aware publics as a primary obstacle in combating ocean population. Several participants shared the idea of educating unaware publics by increasing information about ocean population on social media platforms.

Direct Quotes:

Gracee: “...keep spreading that information on things like Instagram, TikTok, I mean, I'm always on things like that.”

Q10: What takeaways or valuable information did you gain from our focus group today?

Participants expressed a newfound appreciation for marine life and acknowledged the importance of preventing ocean pollution. Participants also recognized the impact ocean pollution has on society, even if it's not a recurring aspect of their daily lives.

Direct Quotes:

Maggie: “...even though we are in a landlocked state, like we don't see the ocean daily, it's still important to notice that our waste does matter.”

Gracee: “I think I would really pay more attention if I continued to see things like that on how it was affecting marine life.”

Key Quotes — Active Public

Q1: How often do you participate in environmental protection organizations?

Participants' answers were split, with some stating they are involved in the inner workings or solely participating within environmental protection organizations and some stating hardly ever.

Direct Quotes:

Brennen: "At least twice a year."

Daniel: "I'm head of one on campus... OU Ducks Unlimited Conservation for Wildlife and Wetlands across the United States"

Q2: What would you say is your level of awareness or concern about ocean pollution?

Participants showed a somewhat strong connection towards ocean pollution, as multiple individuals revealed they grew up somewhere along a beachline.

Direct Quotes:

Daniel: "I grew up at the beach a lot. Oil spills were always a big thing when I was a kid, so I feel like I knew a lot about it as a kid but ever since I moved to Oklahoma, not much."

Brennen: "Definitely moderate to high awareness, I've spent most of my life living in Huntington Beach, California."

Babs: "Personally, I definitely don't know nearly as much as I used to when I lived in California and Florida."

Q3: So what was it like growing up near the beach with issues about ocean pollution?

A couple of participants felt strongly on the subject of witnessing environmental issues within their oceanside communities, giving clear-cut examples of consequential actions leading to ocean pollution.

Direct Quotes:

Daniel: “We always saw the oil spills firsthand, which was very interesting. Because you would see it not only in the fish but in the birds that were around offshore oil rigs and stuff. But it ended up hurting commercial fishing a lot because they would bring in fish and they would have too much oil in them to be able to eat.”

Brennen: “Agreed, it was pretty difficult as a beachside city local to see the damage done and left behind by visitors and tourists. A lot of private businesses actually had some distaste for events held on the beach. Offshore drilling has also been a big problem, with it causing permanent damage to sea life and water conditions.”

Q4: What are some things that come to mind when you think about the effects of ocean pollution on our planet?

Some participants had first-hand experiences ingrained into their minds surrounding ocean pollution, while others were reminded of something they may have seen in television or advertising.

Direct Quotes:

Ryan: “Overfishing.”

Brennen: “Mainly like picnic trash eaten by wildlife, which in turn can disrupt local ecosystems and biological food chains.”

Mary: “I always think of the Dawn commercial from a few years ago.”

Q5: Can you talk about any observations that made you more aware of the impact of ocean pollution?

Some participants recounted more first-hand experiences when thinking of the impact of ocean pollution. However, one participant felt an important observation from a specific event unrelated to them during a stage in their life.

Direct Quotes:

Daniel: “I remember when I was in high school, the great coral reef was dying. That was a big thing because of farm pollution in Australia.”

Mary: “Last time I went to the beach I watched people just leave their trash around instead of throwing it in a bin.

Brennen: “Growing up, I spent many Saturday mornings doing beach clean-ups with local clubs and school groups. With all the work we did there was still always more to clean each Saturday. And private offshore oil rigs have had a few spills in my lifetime...”

Q6: How would each of you say that environmental issues like ocean pollution impact your daily life here in Oklahoma?

The overall consensus among participants regarding this question was there is a lack of availability and opportunity to contribute to the decline of environmental issues in Oklahoma, and certainly ocean pollution.

Direct Quotes:

Brennen: “Eh.”

Daniel: “Zero... I just think not being near an ocean, it just never comes up at all.”

Ryan: “Not at all.”

Mary: “Barely.”

Q7: What would you say prompted you to become involved in issues regarding ocean pollution?

Some participants responded to this question with uncertainty as to how to become even more involved in issues regarding ocean pollution, while one participant portrayed a clear reason for their involvement.

Direct Quotes:

Brennen: “Family and community as well as first-hand experience.”

Daniel: “I feel like if somebody gave me actionable steps, maybe there would be a chance to do stuff but I feel like that's not really said much here in Oklahoma.”

Mary: “I love visiting the ocean but it feels like there's nothing that I can do since we are all so far away from any coastline.”

Q8: What are some actionable steps that people could take to decrease ocean pollution?

Multiple participants offered some possible actions to help individuals kickstart steps in order to help decrease ocean pollution, delving in a little deeper past the typical environmentally friendly actions.

Direct Quotes:

Daniel: “The obvious answer is probably just donating money to causes that do that type of work.”

Mary: "I mean obviously like recycling and stuff, but then maybe just educating ourselves about what's going on even though we're not close to it."

Brennen: "Just pick up any trash you see and properly dispose of it. Don't spill or dump gasoline and chemicals into local waters."

Q9: What kind of actions do you take in your daily life to reduce your personal contribution to ocean pollution?

Most participants offered some sort of daily action to reduce the effects of environmental and ocean pollution.

Direct Quotes:

Ryan: "I guess I try to recycle when I can."

Babs: "Using way less plastic. I think it is a big one."

Mary: "I try to use reusable containers for leftovers and things like that when I cook."

Q10: What could an environmental organization do to encourage others to participate even in somewhere like Oklahoma?

Participants suggested advertising the fight against environmental issues in newspapers or media, or also providing some sort of financial based incentive for people who aid in the decline of environmental issues.

Direct Quotes:

Mary: "They could post advertisements or stuff in the newspaper or in something like The Oklahoman. Have to advertise to improve the environment."

Daniel: “Think that's a good idea, just to show some advertisements.”

Brennen: “Maybe free meals or coupons. Provide some financial incentive.”

Q11: In what specific ways do you feel you're making a difference in the decline of ocean pollution if you are at all?

Most participants felt when they resided near a beachside community that it was much easier to assist in the fight against ocean pollution, stating that the largest constraint came from location.

Direct Quotes:

Daniel: “I feel like back at home like I used to be but in Oklahoma I'm not at all... There's just no opportunities here. That's the biggest reason.”

Brennen: “I don't really think I'm making much of a difference here honestly but I try. I'd agree with [Daniel].”

Latent Focus Group Protocol

Opening Question:

1. Before we begin today, can everyone introduce themselves?
2. What motivated or inspired you to participate in today's focus group?

Introduction Questions:

3. How familiar are you with the topic of ocean pollution and what does it mean to you?
4. Have you ever personally encountered any signs of ocean pollution in your daily life?
5. Have you ever taken any action to reduce your own personal contribution to ocean pollution?

Transition Questions:

6. What steps do you take on a weekly basis to combat ocean pollution?
7. How much do you feel environmental issues affect your everyday life?

Key Questions:

8. What might be limiting you from being an active participant in the charge against ocean pollution?
9. How interested are you in other fights on environmental issues such as global warming, air pollution, etc.?
10. What could be a driving factor for you to be active in the charge against ocean pollution, if there are any?

11. How do you feel about the adverse effects on marine ecosystems caused by ocean pollution?

Ending Questions:

12. Do you have any further concerns, ideas or takeaways regarding ocean pollution that you didn't have an opportunity to share earlier?
13. What takeaways or valuable information did you gain from our focus group today?
14. Is there anything we can do to make today's discussion more productive?

Active Focus Group Protocol

Opening Question:

1. How often do you participate in environmental protection actions or organizations?

Introduction Question:

2. What is your level of awareness and concern about the issue of ocean pollution?
3. What comes to mind when you think about the effects of ocean pollution on our planet?
4. Can you share any personal experiences or observations that made you more aware of the impact of ocean pollution?

Transition Questions:

5. How do environmental issues impact your daily life?
6. In what ways do you think "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" programs have had an effect on plastic pollution?

Key Questions:

7. What prompted you to become involved in the charge against ocean pollution?
8. How do you feel global warming combined with oil spill and plastic pollution might affect the ocean overall?
9. In what ways do you feel you are making a difference in the decline of ocean pollution?
10. How might you recommend others to help you in your efforts to decrease ocean pollution?

Ending Questions:

11. How can we best address and discuss your opinions or insights in future focus groups?
12. What specific information or organizations regarding ocean pollution would you recommend we incorporate into our future questions?
13. How has our conversation today influenced your perspective or future actions towards ocean pollution?

Latent Focus Group Transcript

Moderator 0:09

Alright, so the first question is what made you guys choose to participate in a focus group surrounding ocean pollution? And how familiar you are, how familiar are you with the topic of it and kind of what does that mean to you?

Maggie 0:45

Okay, I can start. I'm participating because Catie asked me to and I'm passionate about ocean pollution. Yeah.

Lola 0:54

Hi, I'm Lola and I chose to participate because Nate asked me to and it sounded interesting.

Julia 1:07

I decided to just because Paris asked me to but also I've posted a lot about ocean pollution on the internet and social media and I just, I'm excited to hear what everyone else has to say about it.

Gracee 1:25

I can go, um, I came today because Rachel asked me to but also so I'm a nursing major and I'm in microbiology right now. And we're learning about bioremediation, which is where you take genetically modified microbes, and use them to get rid of plastics and things in the ocean so we can try and, you know, get rid of all that stuff. And that was really interesting. I often volunteer in beach cleanups but I don't know the science behind the actual pollution. So when she brought

this up, I was really hoping to learn more about ocean pollution science and maybe tie it to that bioremediation.

Moderator 1:59

So, to kick off things, have any of y'all ever encountered any signs of ocean pollution in your daily life, like, possibly going on a vacation to the beach or something like that or going even to like the lake around Oklahoma or anything like that?

Yhanna 2:22

Um, so I grew up in the Philippines, and I definitely, there's definitely like trash coming up in like the beach shores and when I go to like the bigger cities, like the slum areas are definitely like more. There's a lot of trash and it's really bad.

Moderator 2:40

Is that kind of centralized and like one area is spread out throughout the entire shoreline?

Yhanna 2:48

It's kind of spread out.

Moderator 2:50

Okay, so from your perspective in the Philippines, like, kind of wherever you go, you're gonna see trash along the shoreline?

Yhanna 3:00

Yeah, you definitely see remnants of it.

Moderator 3:02

Okay. Anybody else?

Emily 3:09

Um, I know it's not an ocean but at lake Chickasha. There's people that live on the lake side of the lake and whenever they're done with trash, they just kind of throw it out of their RVs and stuff. So there's a lot of just garbage and everything that gets in that lake.

Moderator 3:27

Does that affect you in any way like, enjoying your time or the lake?

Emily 3:31

Yeah, whenever there's beer cans. floating around you it's not a fun time.

Julia 3:40

I grew up, and I still live in Dallas by this lake right by my house and it's completely filled with garbage. And then it's like no one's allowed to swim in it anymore because of how much garbage there is and pollution.

Moderator 4:07

That was like government regulated?

Julia 4:11

Yes, within the town where I live, yeah.

Moderator 4:19

So have any of you ever taken any actions to reduce your own personal contribution to ocean pollution or just waste while being around the water?

Maggie 4:38

I can go. This summer whenever we went to the beach we would take a trash bag down or make sure I picked up our trash before we left or like other people's trash that was around us. Just so that it didn't go into the water.

Lola 4:53

I usually always try to recycle, especially boxes and plastic bottles.

Gracee 5:01

To go off of that, like I know anytime that I take vacations I grew up in Arkansas and I grew up on a lake over there. And anytime we would go there or to any you know, oceans, the Gulf, the Pacific you know anywhere like that. We would always take trash bags with us so we could pick up trash whether it was our own, or others one thing that we really started doing in my household specifically was recycling and I mean plastics, aluminum, things like that and then taking you

know like those plastic things that hold together Gatorade bottles, snipping those because I've seen lots of videos and you know, articles that I've read where those affect sea turtles getting stuck around them and really caused damage to marine life in various areas of the ocean lakes, large bodies of water.

Moderator 5:49

During that time did you ever see anybody contribute to waste and ocean pollution?

Gracee 5:59

Not specifically, I mean, you'll see things like I mean mission groups, a lot of the times that are out there and picking up trash and other than that I don't really see anybody going out of their way to help with this problem that I think a lot of people have contributed to whether they know it or not, which is really unfortunate.

Moderator 6:30

So what steps do you guys take, if any, in terms of combating ocean pollution like I said, recycling or just any other ways in order to reduce your waste?

Emily 6:51

Me and my roommates make sure to recycle anything that we can and we try to use reusable containers and cups whenever possible to kind of limit the amount of plastic that we have.

Moderator 7:15

Anyone else?

Okay. How much do you guys feel that overall environmental issues, not just within ocean pollution, affects your everyday life?

Maggie 7:39

Wait, can you repeat that again? Sorry.

Moderator 7:42

I said, how much do you feel, if at all, environmental issues affect your everyday life?

If there's no response to that. What might be limiting you from making a greater impact? And like the charge against environmental issues, or more specifically ocean pollution?

Maggie 8:30

On the last question, I don't really know if this is exactly what you were saying. But like, I have a dog and so like, I take her outside and stuff like I don't want her like eating random stuff. That's like on the sidewalks or like in the grass or whatever. Because I don't know like what's in it. So yeah, that's kind of my concern about all of it, I guess.

Lola 8:49

I don't really think they affect my everyday life right now, but I think if things continue to head in the direction they are now then my life could be affected.

Moderator 8:58

Anybody else have any thoughts on that?

Gracee 9:04

We repeat the question you said after that.

Moderator 9:08

What might be limiting you from making a greater effort against ocean pollution?

Gracee 9:19

I think one big thing with that is I mean, you know, we're in a landlocked state. So when you're specifically talking about things like oceans, you know, it's expensive to go whether you drive whether you fly I mean, things aren't getting any cheaper and it's really hard to get even a group of people to go down to a place where there is quite a bit of pollution and help clean that up with things like you know, getting supplies for that getting people and then you've got to worry about travel costs staying and you know, things like that and I think it's expensive as well. I think that you know, there's a lot of trash and it's really hard to get down there. Get all of it picked up and all that and yeah, yeah. That's pretty much it.

Moderator 10:11

So do you think that it's quite a bit easier to be active in that fight? If you're living in somewhere like California, or Texas or Louisiana or something like that?

Gracee 10:24

I mean, I would assume so. I've never lived in any of those states. So I almost wonder if it's more like a bystander effect where, you know, you're walking by and you see trash along the beach, you see a garbage can that's overflowing and you're like, Okay, well that person is gonna get it. Well, that person will get it like it's fine. And then you know, it becomes this issue where it's always somebody else's problem. And nobody is really doing anything to help with the situation except for the few people that do go out and help with the situation.

Moderator 10:58

You mentioned it's kind of hard to be extremely active in things like the fight against ocean pollution in a landlocked state. Just kind of broaden that. What might be limiting you from participating more in environmental issues?

Maggie 11:30

Maybe like time commitment, people like to live a busy lifestyle. It's hard to like, allot time for something like that. Maybe, I don't know.

Or maybe like not being aware of how bad it actually is getting or how bad it could get.

Moderator 11:59

So kind of adding to that, how interested are you all in other fights on environmental issues, like global warming and air pollution?

Gracee 12:19

I think it's a very important issue and topic that should be talked about more and you know, I have plenty of people in my life who don't believe in global warming. I know we have that issue where some people believe in it. Some people don't believe in it. And you know, you don't want to offend anybody, but I mean, it's a serious problem. If you pay attention to, you know, like things that you've been talking about. These are all things that have occurred within our lifetime and we have seen become worse and worse and worse. And when you start talking about things like you know, the ice caps melting and animals in places like Antarctica are struggling to find food and homes for themselves and temperatures are rising. I mean, you know, it was 40 degrees this morning when I went to work and now it's like 80 or 75 degrees. That's just not normal. And you know, when are people actually going to start taking this problem seriously. So I think that that's definitely a really valid factor. And I mean, I'm always trying to learn more about the issue and what I can do to help. Sometimes I feel helpless living like you said in a landlocked state where I don't feel as you know, I don't live in a big city. I live in a small town and I live in an agricultural town that's where I'm from. And you know, we don't have the big things that you see in like, you know, New York or California or Houston or anything like that. So I think an eye opening experience if I could actually see the issues that are going on firsthand would really be helpful for a lot of people

Moderator 13:51

So you're saying that you feel like it's easier to be active in the issues that concern a landlocked state like, global warming and and you know... I guess, trash production and air pollution. Do you think it is easier for you to lead a charge against that more so than ocean pollution?

Gracee 14:47

I agree with that. I don't know if anybody else does but I do. Because at least here like I know like living here at least that like you know in Norman and going to like OU that I walk pretty much everywhere. I mean, like I find myself not driving as much and so whenever that happens, or I ride my bike, then I feel like I'm not contributing to things like air pollution as much. I'm kind of also going off of what somebody said earlier about using reusable containers and reusable cups and things like that. Like I really try hard not to you know, you go to Walmart and you get like 30 bags for like 10 items or something like that, and you know, reusable bags and things like that. So I feel like I mean, when I think of ocean pollution it's such a big, mass problem that I don't know almost if you were to simple it down a little bit and be like, Okay, well, what can you do about, like you said, air pollution or littering or anything like that. I'm like, oh, yeah, sure. Like I could work on that myself. No problem.

Yhanna 15:51

I say I would agree to especially on things that you see more on a daily basis, like trash on the sidewalks. And if you like live in the bigger city, you definitely see more of like air pollution so yeah

Moderator 16:11

So Yhanna even living in the Philippines and seeing kind of just what's happened to the ocean, even though you live near the ocean it's still kind of easier for you to to fight against, like air pollution, what we've been talking about rather than ocean pollution?

Yhanna 16:39

For me, growing up there compared to now is definitely different because I see more trash on the beach daily. I don't really see that here as much. But with the air pollution. Yes, I would definitely, to now yes, I would definitely agree more with the air pollution stuff than the beach. Since I don't see that on a daily basis.

Moderator 17:07

So what could be a driving factor for you all to also be active in the charge against social pollution? If there are any. Maybe hypothetically, if you lived oceanside or something like that, is there anything that could be a factor for you to lead that charge?

Emily 17:34

I think kind of like you said like if we lived in a geographic location like where it was like an issue for us, we would probably feel more inclined to do something about it.

Gracee 17:51

I would choose health as my main factor. My main factor of going into fighting this issue. I mean, going into nursing I mean that's gonna be my entire job. So when I think of living in a state which I could possibly move to one day, you know, and things like water and not having

adequate water for people, which I know like, you know, might not be as big of an issue here but can be an issue in other countries. And I mean, you never know or even like what somebody said earlier about letting their dog like go and you know, drink some water that you know, could not be good. It could have been standing there it could have had things littered into it and then you start having the issue of that goes into causing health problems like respiratory issues and diseases and possible cancers because you know, who knows what's going into that water? And if you're ingesting that, I mean, it's just it's so it's so unhealthy and it's so bad for you. So I mean, if I could pick a reason then it would definitely be to help with the health of people living in the community.

Yhanna 18:59

I'm kinda like, agreeing with Gracee with the water quality because I know like, at the lake house, we have to have like, three different water filters to just safely drink the water from the top. So yeah, I think health is definitely a big issue too. That comes with water pollution.

Lola 19: 15

I also think a driving factor for me could be if I just saw more people or well-known people engaging with organizations to help reduce the effects of the environmental issues. If I saw others involved, then that would kind of interest me to follow them too.

Moderator 19:25

So those responses kind of lead into the next topic. So how do you guys feel about the adverse effects left on marine ecosystems caused by ocean pollution? Whether it be oil spills or trash in the ocean? Should that be a primary concern or lower level on the totem pole?

Emily 20:09

What I think of whenever you say like oil spills is like that Dawn dish soap commercial where they have ducks covered in oil. And they like to invoke the emotional response because they want people to like, care about the issues of cleaning up their environment to care for the wildlife.

Julia 20:31

I think it's like a huge issue and I feel like not many people know that Marine Life is affected that much. And I feel like if people just realize that more, maybe it'll help. They're kind of just setting the issue aside but like, I feel like it's just one of the main issues.

Moderator 21:02

So we're nearing the end. Just a few more questions. Do any of you have any further concerns, ideas or takeaways regarding ocean pollution that you may have not been able to share? Based on the questions asked?

If not, are you guys able to discuss what takeaways or valuable information you might have gained from the focus group today?

Grace 21:52

I think spreading the information. I mean, because I think I heard just about everybody in this focus group say, Oh, well, I don't see it. So it's not an issue. Or you know, you see it in when something big happens like the Deepwater Horizon oil spill back in like 2012 I think is what that was and you know, like, you know, she said, the digital commercial and seeing that everyone's like, Oh, man, that's just so sad. And then you donate and kind of when things start to die down is when it becomes less of a major issue. And so I think that if we continue not not in a bad way, but just continue to, like, keep spreading that information on things like Instagram, TikTok, I mean, I'm always on things like that. And you know, I think I would really pay more attention if I continued to see things like that on how it was affecting marine life. Because you know, if marine life is affected, I mean, that's gonna affect us because you're talking about millions of creatures and animals and if they're affected, you know, we, we eat animals that are in the ocean, fish, things like that. So they ingest something that could be into us and I think a lot of people don't think about that. So, I mean, the main takeaway, I think, would be just spread the word. No matter if you are in a landlocked state like we are. I mean, like, I think everybody can do something to help and the more it's talked about, probably more will be done about it honestly.

Maggie 23:29

Kind of going off of what you're saying, it's important to note that even though we are in a landlocked state, like we don't see the ocean, like daily, it's still important to notice that like, our waste does matter. And like how we dispose of things or like properly picking up trash or taking care of our trash is important.

Moderator 23:56

You guys think that after today or after this focus group, you might have that more in the back of your mind whenever you're going to beaches or lakes?

Lola 24:10

Definitely.

Gracee 24:18

For sure. Without a doubt, for sure.

Yhanna 24:24

Yeah.

Moderator 24:32

Okay, well if nobody has anything else, that'll be all. Thank you so much.

Active Focus Group Transcript

Moderator 0:00

We've got everyone here, so I think we're ready to get started. Can everyone hear me okay? Yes. Okay. Awesome. So first I wanted to start off by thanking everyone for coming. Today we're hosting a focus group about ocean pollution and environmental issues for our PR research class. So nothing you say is gonna go anywhere public just going to be used for our class presentation. So I am going to record today just for our transcript because as we turned in, like I said, just being used for class recording All right. So first, we're gonna go and introduce the first one, have my group members introduce themselves. And then we can have each of the participants introduce themselves. So if my group members want to introduce themselves, that would be great.

Catie 1:08

Hi, I'm Catie, and I'm a group member.

Rachel 1:14

Hi, I'm Rachel and I'm a group member.

Paris 1:21

I'm Paris and I'm also a group member.

Moderator 1:27

Alright. And then if all participants want to go around, just give your name is all we need just introduce yourself, say hey.

Daniel 1:40

What's up, I'm Daniel.

Babs 1:45

I'm Babs.

Mary 1:47

I'm Mary.

Maggie 1:51

I'm Maggie.

Brennen 1:54

Hey everyone, I'm Brennen.

Ryan 1:57

I'm Ryan.

Moderator 2:03

Okay, awesome. Let's get started with the questions. So first off, I want to start by asking, How often do you participate in environmental protection organizations?

Brennen 2:12

At least twice a year

Ryan 2:17

Rarely

Babs 2:23

Not very often.

Daniel 2:27

I'm head of one on campus.

Moderator 2:30

Which one?

Daniel 2:31

OU Ducks Unlimited conservation for wildlife and wetlands across the United States.

Moderator 2:41

Okay. What would you say is your level of awareness or concern about ocean pollution? Would you say it's pretty high or would you say it's relatively low where you don't care very much?

Daniel 3:07

I grew up at the beach a lot. Oil spills were always a big thing when I was a kid, so I feel like I knew a lot about it as a kid but ever since I moved to Oklahoma, not much.

Brennen 3:16

Definitely moderate to high awareness, I've spent most of my life living in Huntington Beach, California.

Babs 3:24

Personally, I definitely don't know nearly as much as I used to when I lived in California and Florida.

Moderator 3:33

So what was it like growing up near the beach with issues about ocean pollution?

Daniel 3:43

We always saw the oil spills firsthand, which was very interesting. Because you would see it not only in like the fish but in the birds that were around offshore oil rigs and stuff. But it ended up hurting commercial fishing a lot because they would bring in fish and they would have too much oil in them to be able to eat. So that kind of hurt the industry a lot in the mid 2010s.

Brennen 4:04

Agreed, it was pretty difficult as a beachside city local to see the damage done and left behind by visitors and tourists. A lot of private businesses actually had some distaste for events held on the beach. Offshore drilling has also been a big problem, with it causing permanent damage to sea life and water conditions.

Moderator 4:27

What are some things that come to mind when you think about the effects of ocean pollution on our planet?

Brennen 4:34

Mainly like picnic trash eaten by wildlife, which in turn can disrupt local ecosystems and biological food chains, hurting native species while also benefiting the more invasive species. Like I mentioned too, local offshore oil drilling damages the quality of ocean water and literally visibly kills thousands of fish and sea mammals.

Ryan 4:47

Overfishing there's not enough fish using all up.

Mary 4:52

I always think of the Dawn commercial from a few years ago.

Moderator 4:59

I know you mentioned oil spills. It's a good one. Is there anything else?

Daniel 5:11

I know there's like that giant trash. I don't even know what it's called. Somewhere in the ocean.

It's like a five by five mile square of just trash that is collected.

Moderator 5:28

Yeah, no, those are definitely all effects of ocean pollution. So we talked a little bit about personal experience. But can you talk about any observations that made you more aware of the impact of ocean pollution?

Daniel 5:40

I remember when I was in high school, the great coral reef was dying. That was a big thing because of farm pollution in Australia.

Mary 5:50

Last time I went to the beach I watched people just leave their trash around instead of throwing it in a bin.

Brennen 5:59

Growing up, I spent many Saturday mornings doing beach clean ups with local clubs and school groups. With all the work we did there was still always more to clean each Saturday. And private

offshore oil rigs have had a few spills in my lifetime and time spent in Huntington Beach. These spills caused a lot of issues by making local waters unswimmable as well as portions of the dead sea life to wash ashore.

Moderator 6:19

How would each of you say that environmental issues like ocean pollution impact your daily life here in Oklahoma?

Brennen 6:26

Eh.

Daniel 6:30

Zero.

Ryan 6:32

Not at all.

Mary 6:37

Barely.

Moderator 6:41

Why would you guys say that it's zero?

Daniel 6:50

I just think not being near an ocean, it just never comes up at all.

Babs 6:55

I agree.

Brennen 6:59

I'd say that as a person who visits a lot of the lakes in Oklahoma, it's definitely discouraging to see what could be perfectly usable water not be very useful. The Colorado river is a really useful example of what happens when states set high standards for water pollution.

Moderator 7:13

What would you say prompted you to become involved in issues regarding ocean pollution?

Brennen 7:19

Family and community as well as first hand experience.

Daniel 7:25

I feel like if somebody gave me actionable steps, maybe there would be a chance to do stuff but I feel like that's not really said much here in Oklahoma.

Mary 7:32

I love visiting the ocean but it feels like there's nothing that I can do since we are all so far away from any coastline.

Moderator 7:57

How do you feel that global warming combined with oil spills and plastic pollution affect the ocean overall? This can be anything from things you've seen to things you've heard? Just talking about maybe the condition of the ocean or like you know if you want to go visit it, you have to take those things in consideration. Talking about how those things might affect your perception of the ocean and you're visiting it.

Ryan 8:30

I hate visiting the beach during busy seasons because there's just always so much trash and pollution. I bet a lot of that ends up going in the ocean or hurting animals.

Daniel 9:01

I mean, like usual ones, I guess it's just like seeing the ocean and seeing the trash like the perception can't be good.

Babs 9:20

I mean pollution is also just killing the wildlife in the ocean and it's just not fun to think about.

Brennen 9:26

Agreed.

Moderator 9:34

Are there any specific observations or experiences that contribute to those feelings?

Babs 9:55

You remember that Dawn commercial? I always think of that one.

Mary 10:04

That's like always the first thing I think about when people mention ocean pollution or anything like that.

Moderator 10:34

It definitely gets mentioned a lot. What are some actionable steps that people could take to decrease ocean pollution?

Daniel 10:45

The obvious answer is probably just donating money to causes that do that type of work.

Mary 10:53

I mean obviously like recycling and stuff, but then maybe just educating ourselves about what's going on even though we're not close to it.

Brennen 11:01

Just pick up any trash you see and properly dispose of it. Don't spill or dump gasoline and chemicals into local waters.

Moderator 11:15

What kind of actions do you take in your daily life to reduce your personal contribution to ocean pollution?

Ryan 11:32

I guess I try to recycle when I can.

Brennen 11:40

I just do the same as I just mentioned.

Babs 11:51

Using way less plastic. I think it is a big one.

Moderator 12:00

Yeah, even in Oklahoma, there's quite a bit you know we can do to reduce that. Are there any other steps we could take to reduce or anything anyone else does in their daily life to reduce their contribution to ocean pollution?

Mary 12:15

I try to use reusable containers for leftovers and things like that when I cook.

Moderator 12:27

What might be a driving factor for you to be active in the charge against ocean pollution if there are any driving factors?

Daniel 12:33

I think when I go home it's easier to see it and care, but there's just not much for us to do in Oklahoma.

Ryan 12:59

I don't feel like I ever hear anything about it unless there's a big issue like an oil spill or something.

Moderator 13:30

What could an environment organization do to encourage others to participate even in somewhere like Oklahoma?

Mary 13:53

They could post advertisements or stuff in the newspaper or in something like the Oklahoman. Have to advertise to improve the environment.

Daniel 14:16

Think that's a good idea, just to show some advertisements.

Brennen 14:24

Maybe free meals or coupons. Provide some financial incentive.

Moderator 14:33

In what specific ways do you feel you're making a difference in the decline of ocean pollution?

Daniel 14:40

I feel like back at home like I used to be but in Oklahoma I'm not at all.

Brennen 14:48

Agreed. I don't really think I'm making much of a difference here honestly but I try.

Moderator 14:59

Is there anything specific that like besides the location change that made you feel that way?

Daniel 15:06

There's just no opportunities here. That's the biggest reason.

Brennen 15:11

I'd agree with that.

Moderator 15:31

All right, well, does anyone have any further concerns, ideas or Takeaways regarding ocean pollution that we might not have asked about?

Okay, well, that's all for today. Thank you guys again for participating. And hope you guys have a great rest of your night

Module 3: Public Segmentation
Communication Plan for Recycling and Waste Issues

Makenna Buckskin

JMC 4453: Public Relations Research

Dr. Jeong-Nam Kim

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Executive Summary

Our environment is negatively impacted by climate change, pollution, and waste on a daily basis. As these issues continue to harm our ecosystem, our goal was to develop a communication plan that would effectively reduce one of these environmental issues among our chosen public. For this report, we surveyed and segmented the publics of three different environmental issues: climate change, pollution, and waste. An all-issues public was also segmented for the assessment. To gain background information from the publics, the audience of each environmental issue was crosstabs with gender and education. The results demonstrated that a majority of the public members in each issue were males with a four-year college degree. The non-public, latent, aware and active within each of the three environmental issues and the all-issues public were also crosstab with information behavior, perception of science, and perception of government. In climate change, the active and aware publics had high levels of information-seeking and pro-environmental behavior, but the aware public was distrustful of science. The pollution public was overall highly optimistic towards science, but there was a stark contrast between the active public's high and the latent public's low levels of information-seeking behavior. In waste, both the active and aware public had high levels of pro-environmental, information-seeking, and information-sharing behaviors. Finally, the all-issue public is highly trusting of the government, extremely knowledgeable and pro-environmental. Overall, our communication plan will focus on utilizing fact-based research on waste issues for males in their thirties who are well-educated. Our plan will utilize 30 to 39's males, who are the active public of waste issues, and their tendency for information sharing and seeking to create effective communication efforts.

Public Segmentation

Public segmentation is important to conduct to understand better how communication programs will impact the audience. Additionally, public segmentation helps during the creation of communication programs to create a more targeted communication plan. During this research, we assessed perceptions regarding three different environmental issues: climate change, pollution and waste. For each of these issues, audiences were surveyed and segmented into four different audiences: active, aware, latent and nonpublic. All-issue publics, those who are active about all three environmental issues were also segmented for assessment. This type of segmentation is vital to analyze the expected benefits and costs of any proposed communication plan.

Audience segmentation benefits a PR communication plan as it allows practitioners to better understand the audience they aim to communicate with. Relationships are integral to the success of an organization, therefore understanding the audience is important in building relationships. Audience segmentation also allows practitioners to assess where a communication program would be the most beneficial for their organization. For example, if the nonpublic audience is 18-25 years old, it may not be beneficial to target the communication program to this age group. If most of the active audience is liberal, it may be effective to target a communication program to this audience.

For this research, it is important to distinguish the individual types of publics because an effective communication program relies on understanding the audience we are hoping to communicate with. To do this, we need to understand how these audiences feel about our proposed issue. Our research helps to establish an understanding and showcase which publics have a larger consumption for information regarding specific issues. It is also likely that these

active publics will then share the information they learn with others, supporting the overall communication goals.

Methods

The active audiences were vetted through a survey to gauge their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior regarding specific environmental issues. A public survey collected 300 responses regarding knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors concerning common environmental issues. This survey helped segment the public to support the development of effective communication programs. This survey assessed the participants' interest and recognition of the issue, their involvement, and their willingness to receive and share information regarding the specific environmental issues. Comparing this against demographic information collected in the survey will help create an effective communication program.

To create a proposed communication plan, we conducted preliminary research to better understand the audience's perceptions towards environmental issues including climate change, pollution, and waste issues. We will also analyze all-issue publics who would be considered active in all three environmental issues. Based on the research, 32% of the observed audience would be considered an active public for climate change issues. 39% are aware publics, 9% are latent and 14% are nonpublics. For this issue, we will be focusing on communication programs that target both active and aware publics.

In the observed audience, 38% are members of the active public for pollution issues. 42% of people are aware publics and 14% are latent or nonpublics. These communication programs will focus on the active and aware public to be the most successful. For waste issues, 33% of the participants are active, 37% are aware, 18% are latent and 7% are nonpublic. Overall, 24% of the audience would be considered an all-issue public. Those participants who fall into the active

category for each issue are included in the research. Using this information we can develop effective communication plans that target the audience more effectively to make a difference regarding environmental issues studied.

Findings

After segmenting the public into three environmental issues, climate change, pollution, and waste, we conducted a descriptive analysis to gain further insight on our publics and create a more effective strategic communications plan. We began by calculating the percentage of publics for each specific environmental issue. For climate change issues, 32% of the observed audience is considered active, 39% is aware, 9% is latent and 14% is nonpublic. For waste issues, 37% of the audience is an aware public, 33% is active, 18% is latent and 7% is non-public. For pollution, 3.9% is nonpublic, 10.5% is latent public, 42.3% is aware public and 38.4% is active public. The environmental all-issue public is 24%. For this public, we will try to encourage communicative actions in order to create pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors.

Any communication programs proposed should focus on active or aware audiences because of their knowledge and interest regarding the issue of climate change. We analyzed information behaviors within the climate change audience. The active and aware members are highly information-seeking and information-attending, therefore communication programs should target these audiences for effectiveness. The latent audience is highly information-permitting so there is not much that any communication program could do to move these audiences. The active members of the climate change public are also strongly information sharing so this would benefit a communication program targeted at these members. The cost of the communication program would multiply due to the sharing behaviors of those in the active audience.

The data shows that the climate public is highly knowledgeable and commonly has pro-environmental behaviors. Members of the active and aware audiences are optimistic and trustful of science, much more than the nonpublic and latent public climate change audiences. The aware public shows a disproportionately high level of distrust in science, which could affect how any communication programs are received. It is important to take this into account during the creation of any future communication programs. The active public also has a high level of trust in the government and their actions regarding climate change issues.

In the pollution public, we looked at the information behaviors regarding pollution-related issues. The active audience is highly information-seeking, and there is a high contrast between this and the latent public, which has almost no markers for information-seeking behavior. This same proportion is present in the sharing behavior as well, with the active public displaying high information-sharing behavior and the latent public showing almost none. In the pollution audience, the active members are highly forefending, with the aware public being the highest. The non-public also shows high markers for this behavior. Communication programs should take into account the behavior gap between the latent and active public regarding pollution issues.

Active members of the pollution public show high levels of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. Along with the active and aware public, the latent public shows high levels of science optimism, which could be beneficial for future communications programs and their effectiveness. The latent and aware public show disproportional levels of distrust in science, which is important to consider in the creation of communication programs. Any communication programs should be sure to avoid heavily focusing on science if they are targeting either of these

audiences. The active public does show high levels of trust in the government and low levels of environmental conspiracy. All are important to consider when creating communication programs.

In the waste public, around 70% of the public is considered active or aware. Taking into account sampling error, this shows that a large majority of the U.S. public would also fall into these audiences. To further understand the waste public, we analyzed the information behaviors of this audience to improve future communications programs. The active and aware public demonstrate high levels of information-seeking and information-sharing behavior, making these publics the optimal target for communication efforts. Meanwhile, the latent public has both low information-seeking and information-sharing behaviors. These low levels would make communication efforts more difficult with the latent audience. When creating a communication plan, it is important to account for the differing behaviors between audiences.

Both active and aware members of the waste public demonstrate high levels of pro-environmental behaviors and attitudes. The active public also showed high levels of trust and optimism in science, implying that including research in our communication plan would appeal to this public. The aware public and nonpublic were extremely distrusting of science while the latent and active displayed barely any distrust. The stark contrast between the public's trust in science is important to remember when designing a communication plan. Members of the active public displayed high levels of both their knowledge of the topic of waste and their trust in the government.

The environmental all-issues public demonstrated high levels of information-seeking and information-attending behaviors. These high levels indicate that information from our communication plan will be sought out and retained by the targeted public. The public also showed extremely high levels of information-sharing, confirming that information from our

communication plan could be distributed throughout and beyond the target public. Additionally, the public was highly forefended. This is important to developing a communication plan because it helps public relations professionals determine how much communication we should have with our public.

Within the environmental all-issues public, there were high levels of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, the public displayed high levels of trust and optimism towards science. These high levels imply that our communication plan should include scientific information and research in order to better communicate with our public. The public also highly trusts the government and does not believe in conspiracies, which would be useful to remember when developing our communication plan. Finally, the public was highly knowledgeable in environmental issues. Communication efforts should acknowledge and utilize the target public's understanding of the subject at hand.

Proposed Communication Plan

Based on the data analysis, the most effective communication program would focus on the recycling and waste issues. Based on our findings, we recommend that waste-related or recycling communication programs focus on males in their thirties who are well-educated. These men will also be politically liberal and have a four-year college education or higher. In a study from Bowling Green University, it says that anywhere between 50-60% of men ages 30-39 are married so the target audience will likely be married men who are homeowners, most for the first time. According to the CDC, about 35% of these men will also be fathers. During this stage of life, communications programs should focus on logical reasons why recycling is important, as well as appealing to the family dynamic.

Because these audiences show high levels of trust and optimism in science, the communication plan should include statistics that emphasize the magnitude of the waste problem and show the benefit of in-home recycling on the overall problem. The communication plan should focus on easy-to-remember statistics and facts because active and aware members of the waste public also showed high information forwarding and information-sharing behaviors. These statistics should appeal to this man's sense of independence and protection of his family. Statistics could range from the effects of waste on households or the benefits of in-home recycling on the immediate community.

Overall, this communication plan should use logic and statistics to appeal to the 30 to 39-year-old males who make up the majority of the active audience regarding waste issues. These men will be white married fathers who are generally left-leaning politically and have a four-year degree or higher. The men will be in the lower middle class economically. The statistics presented will help these men seek and share the information that is presented, increasing the effectiveness of communication programs. The secondary audience is the aware audience. These people will be white females ages 30-39 who have attended at least some college or earned an associate's degree. These women are very liberal and are lower middle class, likely married with at least one child.

The key messages will focus around the effect of recycling and waste on the household. Because both of these audiences are married parents, appealing to the protection of the family and of the household will ensure that the message is retained. Providing easy-to-remember statistics throughout key messages will encourage these active and aware audiences to share the information with those around them. The first key message will stress the presence of the waste issue. By showcasing the average amount of waste a family creates, where this waste goes, and

its effects on the environment, we can encourage these audience members to want to take action. After a short awareness campaign preparing these audience members to take action, the communication plan should then provide actionable steps that these families can affordably take to reduce the waste produced in their home. From using reusable plates and cups to tupperware, these measures can go a long way to reducing the amount of trash created in the home. This phase of the communication plan must also work on educating publics on what can and cannot be recycled. Messages like how to identify recyclable materials, how to recycle certain materials, and how the recycling process works will support the process of education

These messages will be distributed through social media, streaming commercials, and direct mail promotion. Most audiences aged are considered millennials. Millennials are familiar with social media but may not use it as much as their younger counterparts. Therefore these social media messages will be focused on paid advertisements through Facebook using geotargeting and interest targeting. These messages will be aimed at establishing a contact list to increase the ability to promote key messages through direct and electronic mail. The streaming commercials will focus on catching the attention of those watching. With the rise of DVR and streaming, many people are not watching commercials anymore, but some platforms are still releasing commercials for the base subscription. These platforms also have the ability to present an ad when a user pauses the streaming service, which should also be considered. These ads should focus on attention and brevity. Because of the nature of the streaming service, these messages do not have long to catch the viewer's attention and chances are that the viewer will not look very long to read a text-heavy ad. Direct mail promotions will contain many of the education messages previously discussed. It will act as a resource document that a household can display to remind them and their family members which materials can be recycled and how.

These can also be personalized to location to provide local resources like waste and recycling centers for people to take their recycling and other materials to dispose of.

Monitoring for this type of campaign may be different than purely digital campaigns, but this campaign will need many different types of monitoring due to its nature. The Facebook campaign will be monitored using the Meta business platform. Key performance indicators for these messages include impressions, comments, and link clicks. Impressions are important to gauge the number of people who are seeing the post in their feed, this can help gauge reach and awareness of the campaign. Likes and comments show who is willing to stop and engage with the ad. Some ads throughout the campaign should be created with the intention of garnering comments and engagements. Link clicks, especially on the intended link are helpful in two realms. Firstly, social media platforms allow you to retarget those who previously engaged, so those who have made an effort to click on a link can be retargeted with ads curated as a follow up. Link clicks are also helpful if the user completes the data collection form allowing for an electronic mail and direct mail list. These types of lists are important to converting audiences from shared platforms to owned spaces as well as providing an accessible way to reach different types of people.

Through extensive tracking, this campaign will aim to increase awareness of the waste issue as well as ways to mitigate it in the home. Key messages focusing on emphasizing the issue and providing actionable steps for people to take at home will support the goal to diminish waste and promote recycling. This campaign will appeal to the target audience of 30-39 year old white married fathers with college degrees in the lower middle class using statistics based messaging because of the trust in science and the liberal-leaning political views, as well as a high trust in government.

Appendix

Data Graphs

ClimatePublic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nonpublic	43	14.1	14.9	14.9
	Latent public	29	9.5	10.0	24.9
	Aware public	119	39.0	41.2	66.1
	Active Public (climate change)	98	32.1	33.9	100.0
	Total	289	94.8	100.0	
Missing	System	16	5.2		
Total		305	100.0		

PollutionPublic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nonpublic	12	3.9	4.1	4.1
	Latent public	32	10.5	11.0	15.2
	Aware public	129	42.3	44.5	59.7
	Active Public (pollution)	117	38.4	40.3	100.0
	Total	290	95.1	100.0	
Missing	System	15	4.9		
Total		305	100.0		

WastePublic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nonpublic	21	6.9	7.2	7.2
	Latent public	55	18.0	19.0	26.2
	Aware public	114	37.4	39.3	65.5
	Active Public (waste)	100	32.8	34.5	100.0
	Total	290	95.1	100.0	
Missing	System	15	4.9		
Total		305	100.0		

Allissuepublic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	.00	10	3.3	3.5	3.5
	1.00	1	.3	.3	3.8
	2.00	16	5.2	5.6	9.4
	3.00	18	5.9	6.3	15.7
	4.00	19	6.2	6.6	22.3
	5.00	24	7.9	8.4	30.7
	6.00	86	28.2	30.0	60.6
	7.00	14	4.6	4.9	65.5
	8.00	24	7.9	8.4	73.9
	9.00	75	24.6	26.1	100.0
	Total	287	94.1	100.0	
Missing	System	18	5.9		
Total		305	100.0		

WastePublic * What is your gender? Crosstabulation

			What is your gender?				
			Female	Male	Prefer not to say	Non-binary / third gender	Total
WastePublic	Nonpublic	Count	3	16	1	1	21
		% within WastePublic	14.3%	76.2%	4.8%	4.8%	100.0%
	Latent public	Count	24	30	1	0	55
		% within WastePublic	43.6%	54.5%	1.8%	0.0%	100.0%
	Aware public	Count	53	54	0	5	112
		% within WastePublic	47.3%	48.2%	0.0%	4.5%	100.0%
	Active Public (waste)	Count	44	52	0	4	100
		% within WastePublic	44.0%	52.0%	0.0%	4.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	124	152	2	10	288	
	% within WastePublic	43.1%	52.8%	0.7%	3.5%	100.0%	

EnvAllIssuePublic * What is your gender? Crosstabulation

			What is your gender?				
			Female	Male	Prefer not to say	Non-binary / third gender	Total
EnvAllIssuePublic	Passive Env Public	Count	86	115	2	7	210
		% within EnvAllIssuePublic	41.0%	54.8%	1.0%	3.3%	100.0%
	Environmental Public (all-issue0	Count	37	35	0	3	75
		% within EnvAllIssuePublic	49.3%	46.7%	0.0%	4.0%	100.0%
Total	Count		123	150	2	10	285
	% within EnvAllIssuePublic		43.2%	52.6%	0.7%	3.5%	100.0%

WastePublic * What is your highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received? Crosstabulation

			What is your highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?						
			High school incomplete	High school graduate or GED (includes technical/vocational training that doesn't count towards college credit)	Some degree (some community college, associate's degree)	Four year college degree/bachelor's degree	Some postgraduate or professional schooling, no postgraduate degree	Postgraduate or professional degree, including master's, doctorate, medical or law degree	Total
WastePublic	Nonpublic	Count	0	7	4	9	0	1	21
		% within WastePublic	0.0%	33.3%	19.0%	42.9%	0.0%	4.8%	100.0%
	Latent public	Count	2	14	11	21	0	7	55
		% within WastePublic	3.6%	25.5%	20.0%	38.2%	0.0%	12.7%	100.0%
	Aware public	Count	3	29	34	27	4	15	112
		% within WastePublic	2.7%	25.9%	30.4%	24.1%	3.6%	13.4%	100.0%
	Active Public (waste)	Count	0	20	23	42	5	10	100
		% within WastePublic	0.0%	20.0%	23.0%	42.0%	5.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	5	70	72	99	9	33	288
		% within WastePublic	1.7%	24.3%	25.0%	34.4%	3.1%	11.5%	100.0%

EnvAllIssuePublic * What is your highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received? Crosstabulation

			What is your highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?						
			High school incomplete	High school graduate or GED (includes technical/vocational training that doesn't count towards college credit)	Some degree (some community college, associate's degree)	Four year college degree/bachelor's degree	Some postgraduate or professional schooling, no postgraduate degree	Postgraduate or professional degree, including master's, doctorate, medical or law degree	Total
EnvAllIssuePublic	Passive Env Public	Count	5	54	56	65	6	24	210
		% within EnvAllIssuePublic	2.4%	25.7%	26.7%	31.0%	2.9%	11.4%	100.0%
	Environmental Public (all-issue0	Count	0	15	16	33	3	8	75
		% within EnvAllIssuePublic	0.0%	20.0%	21.3%	44.0%	4.0%	10.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	5	69	72	98	9	32	285
		% within EnvAllIssuePublic	1.8%	24.2%	25.3%	34.4%	3.2%	11.2%	100.0%

WastePublic * AGEgroup Crosstabulation

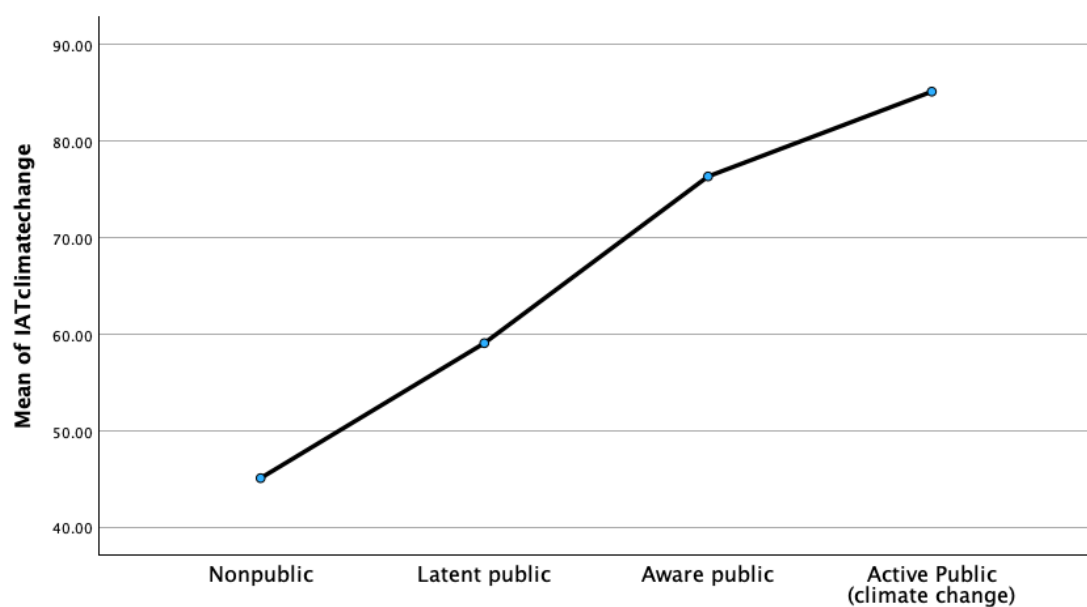
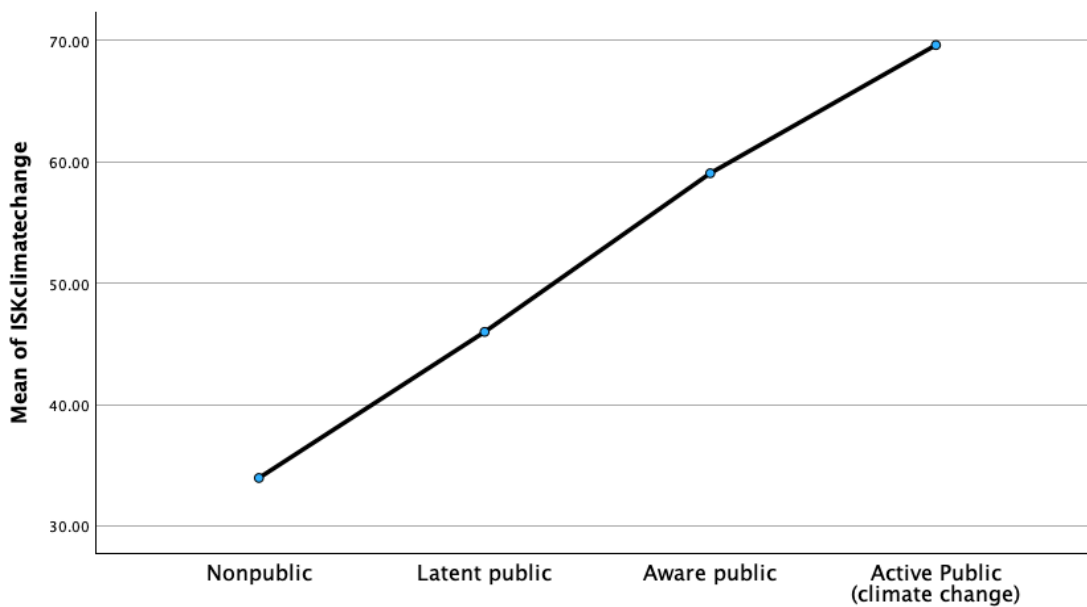
			AGEgroup						
			18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 above	Total
WastePublic	Nonpublic	Count	11	7	0	3	0	0	21
		% within WastePublic	52.4%	33.3%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Latent public	Count	15	18	13	6	2	1	55
		% within WastePublic	27.3%	32.7%	23.6%	10.9%	3.6%	1.8%	100.0%
	Aware public	Count	38	41	16	13	4	0	112
		% within WastePublic	33.9%	36.6%	14.3%	11.6%	3.6%	0.0%	100.0%
	Active Public (waste)	Count	24	31	12	22	8	3	100
		% within WastePublic	24.0%	31.0%	12.0%	22.0%	8.0%	3.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	88	97	41	44	14	4	288
		% within WastePublic	30.6%	33.7%	14.2%	15.3%	4.9%	1.4%	100.0%

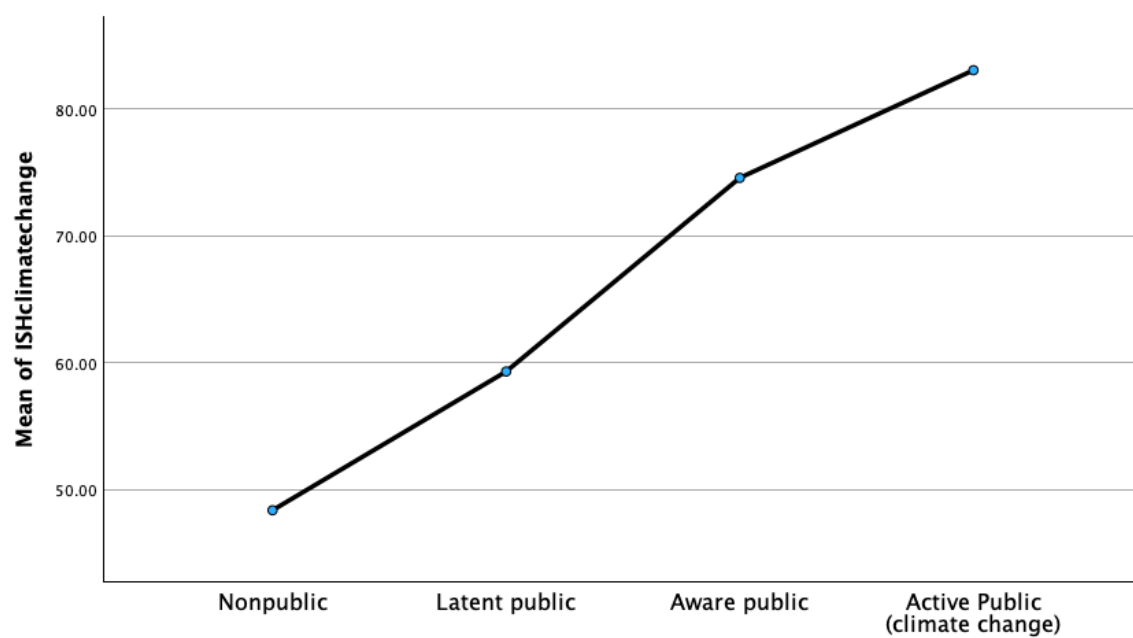
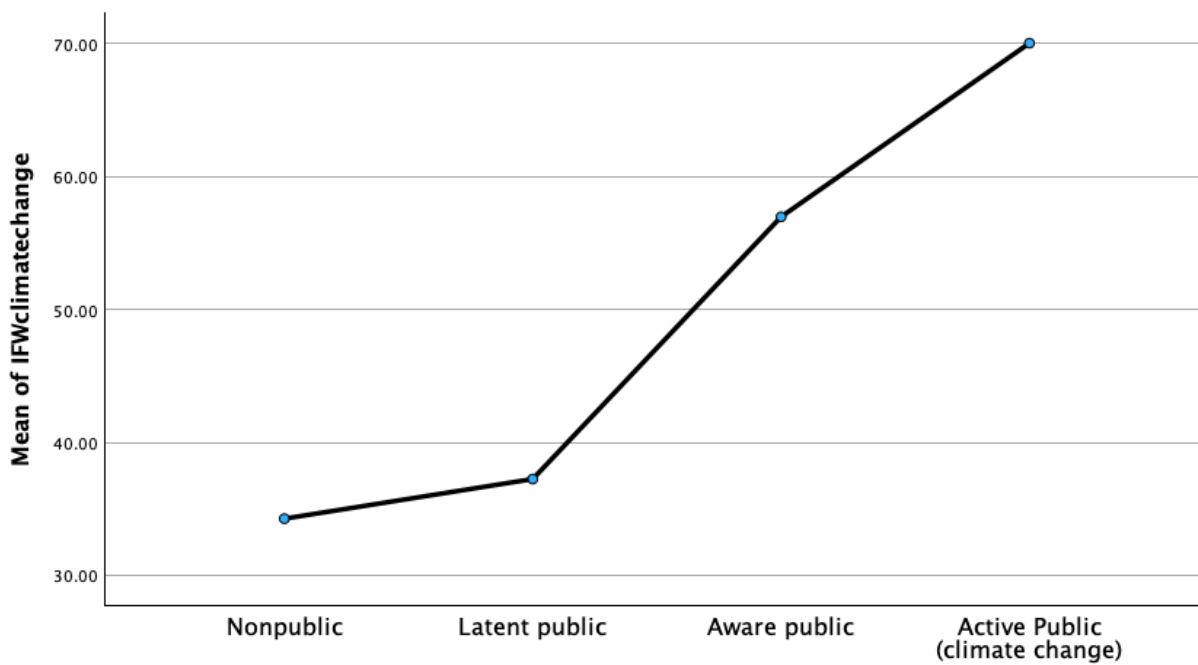
WastePublic * Please indicate your political orientation on the following scale: Crosstabulation

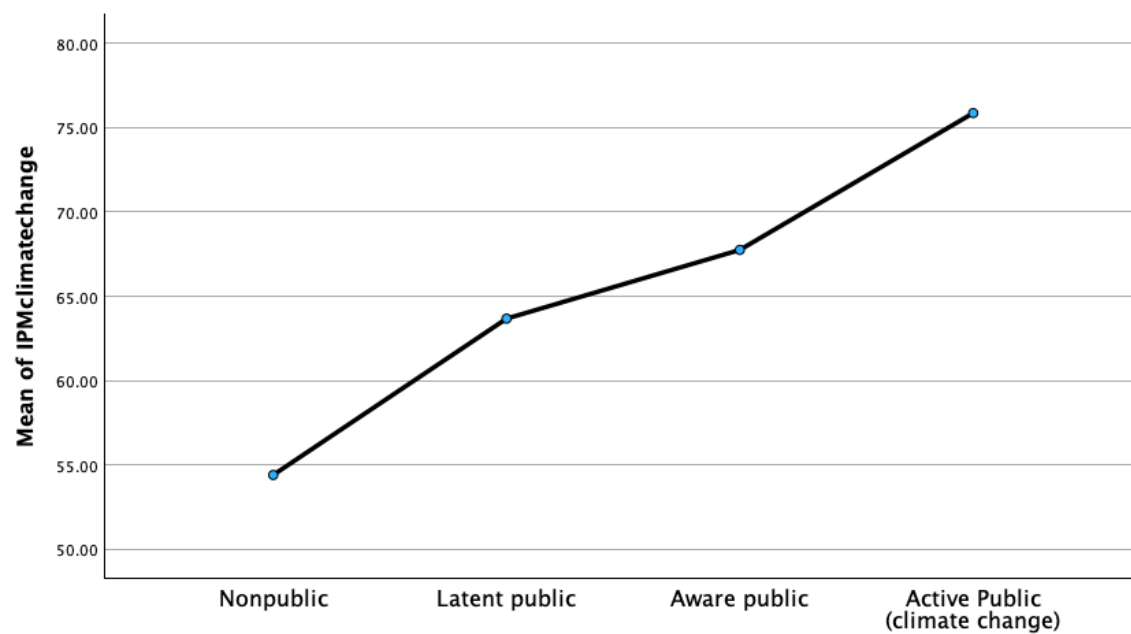
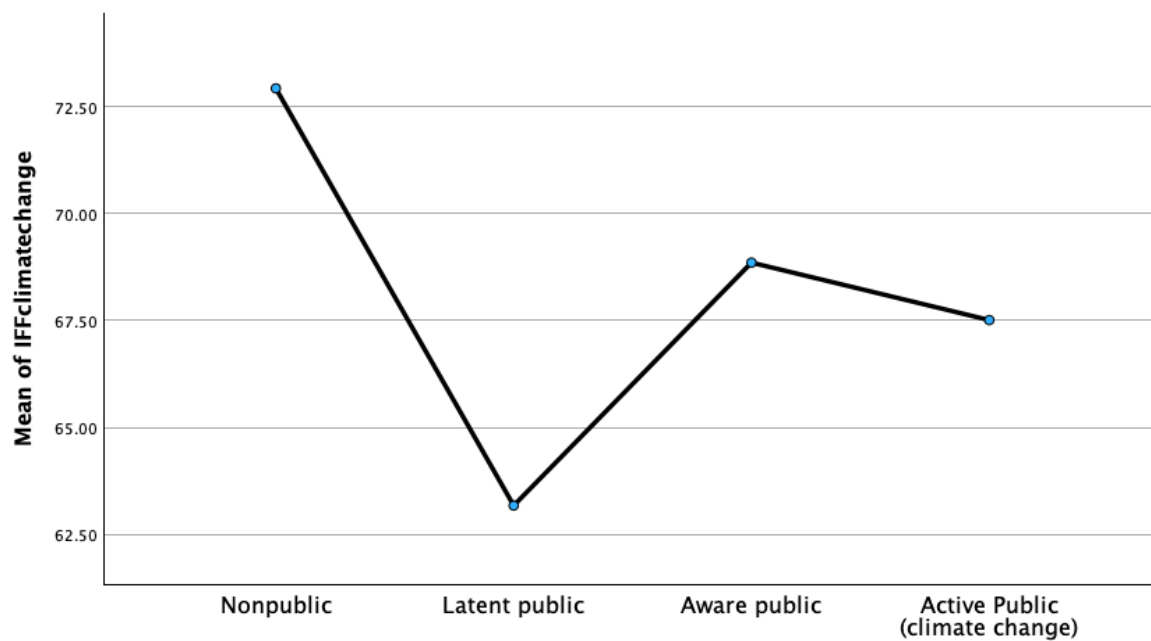
			Please indicate your political orientation on the following scale:					Total
			Very conservative	Conservative	Neither	Liberal	Very liberal	
WastePublic	Nonpublic	Count	4	8	3	5	1	21
		% within WastePublic	19.0%	38.1%	14.3%	23.8%	4.8%	100.0%
	Latent public	Count	2	9	21	16	7	55
		% within WastePublic	3.6%	16.4%	38.2%	29.1%	12.7%	100.0%
	Aware public	Count	2	20	25	32	33	112
		% within WastePublic	1.8%	17.9%	22.3%	28.6%	29.5%	100.0%
	Active Public (waste)	Count	3	12	21	41	23	100
		% within WastePublic	3.0%	12.0%	21.0%	41.0%	23.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	11	49	70	94	64	288
		% within WastePublic	3.8%	17.0%	24.3%	32.6%	22.2%	100.0%

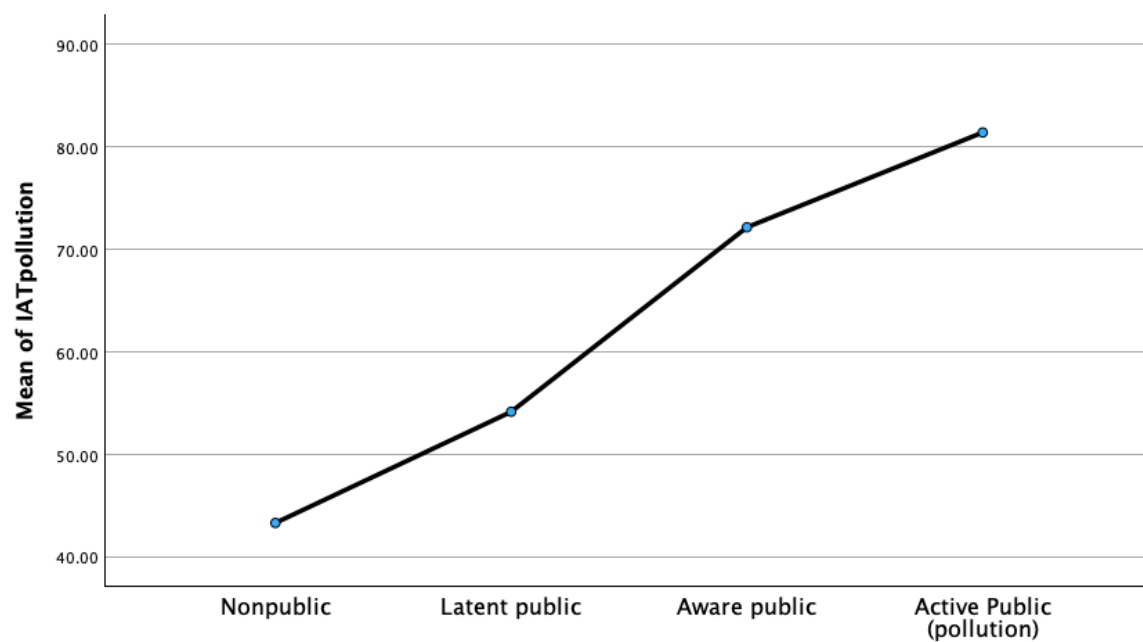
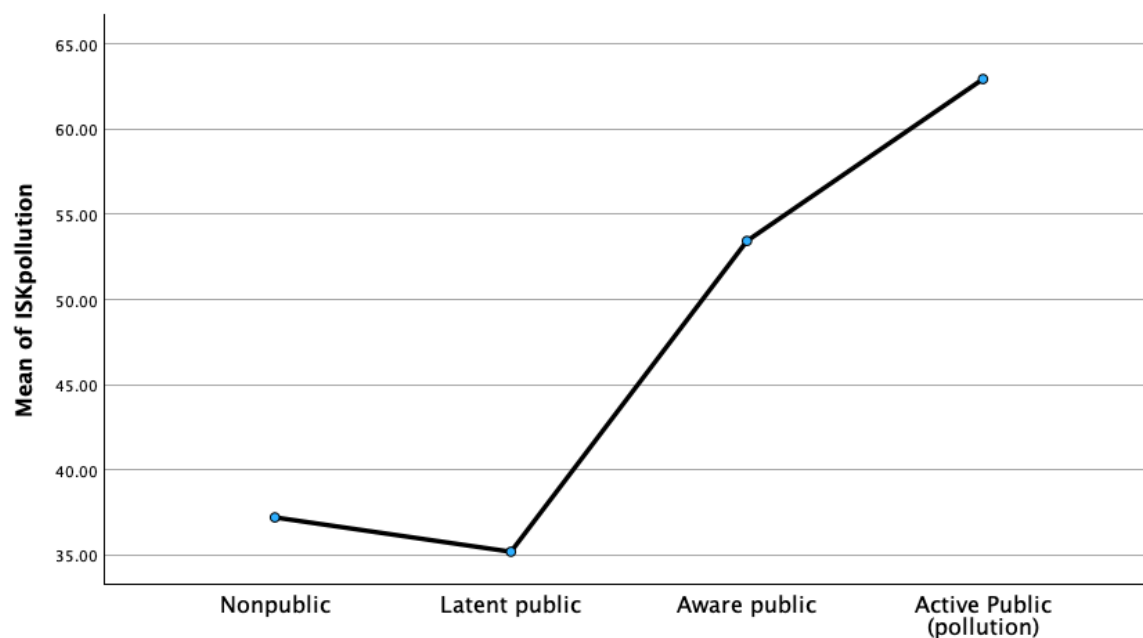
WastePublic * Which of following describes your race? - Selected Choice Crosstabulation

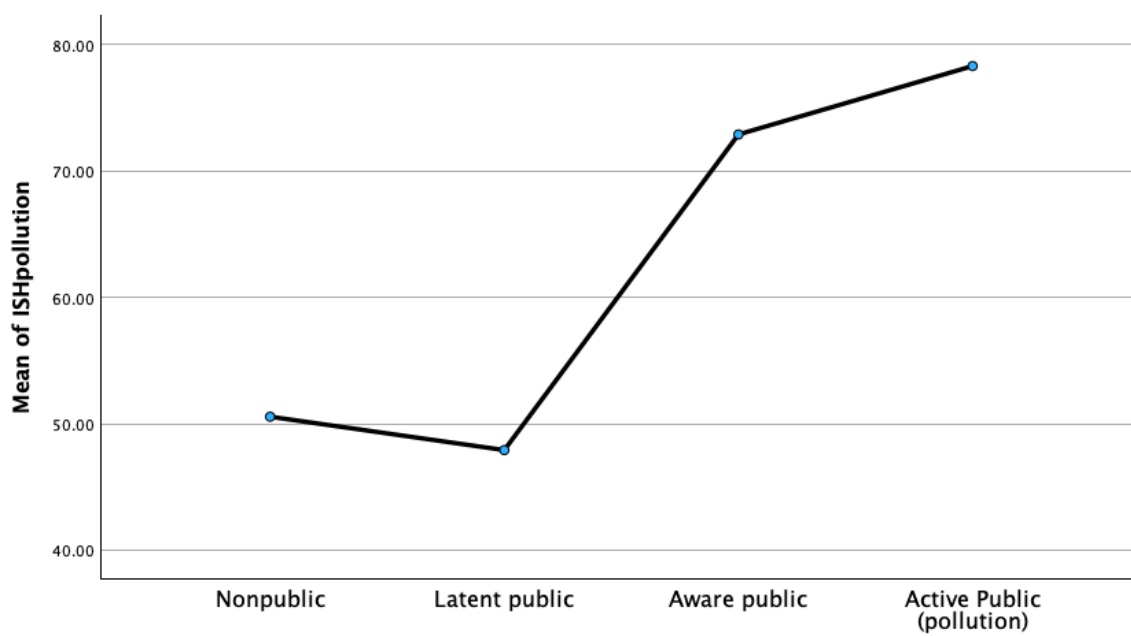
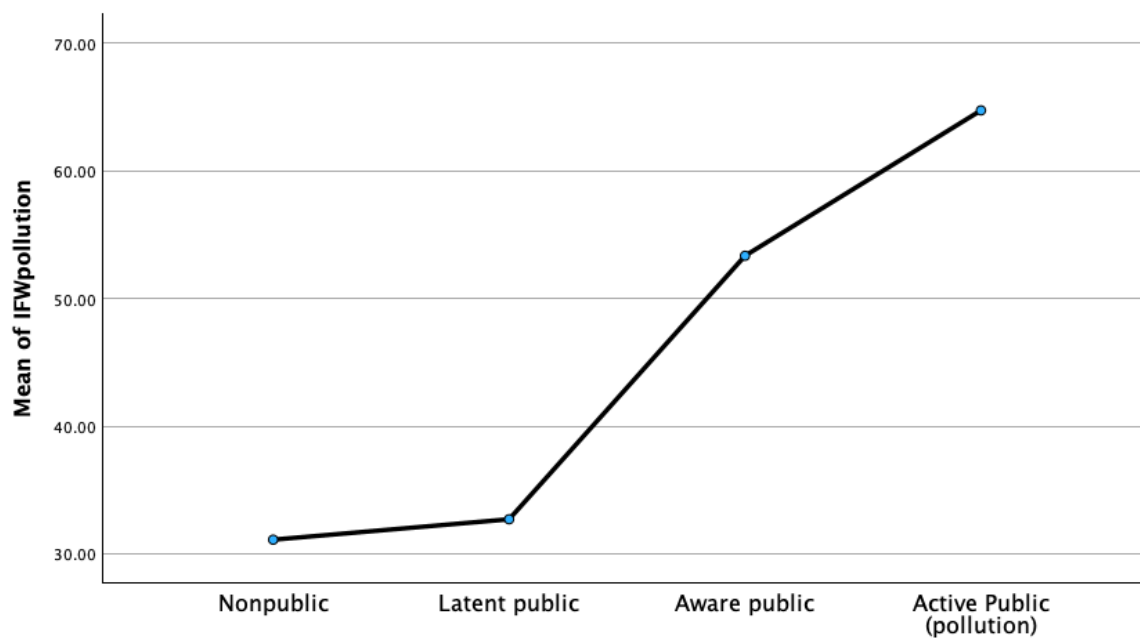
			Which of following describes your race? - Selected Choice					Total
			White	Black of African-American	Asian or Asian-American	Native American/American Indian/Alaska native	Some other race, specify: _____	
WastePublic	Nonpublic	Count	18	0	1	0	2	21
		% within WastePublic	85.7%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%	9.5%	100.0%
	Latent public	Count	38	7	5	1	4	55
		% within WastePublic	69.1%	12.7%	9.1%	1.8%	7.3%	100.0%
	Aware public	Count	88	11	6	0	7	112
		% within WastePublic	78.6%	9.8%	5.4%	0.0%	6.3%	100.0%
	Active Public (waste)	Count	80	6	8	2	4	100
		% within WastePublic	80.0%	6.0%	8.0%	2.0%	4.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	224	24	20	3	17	288
		% within WastePublic	77.8%	8.3%	6.9%	1.0%	5.9%	100.0%

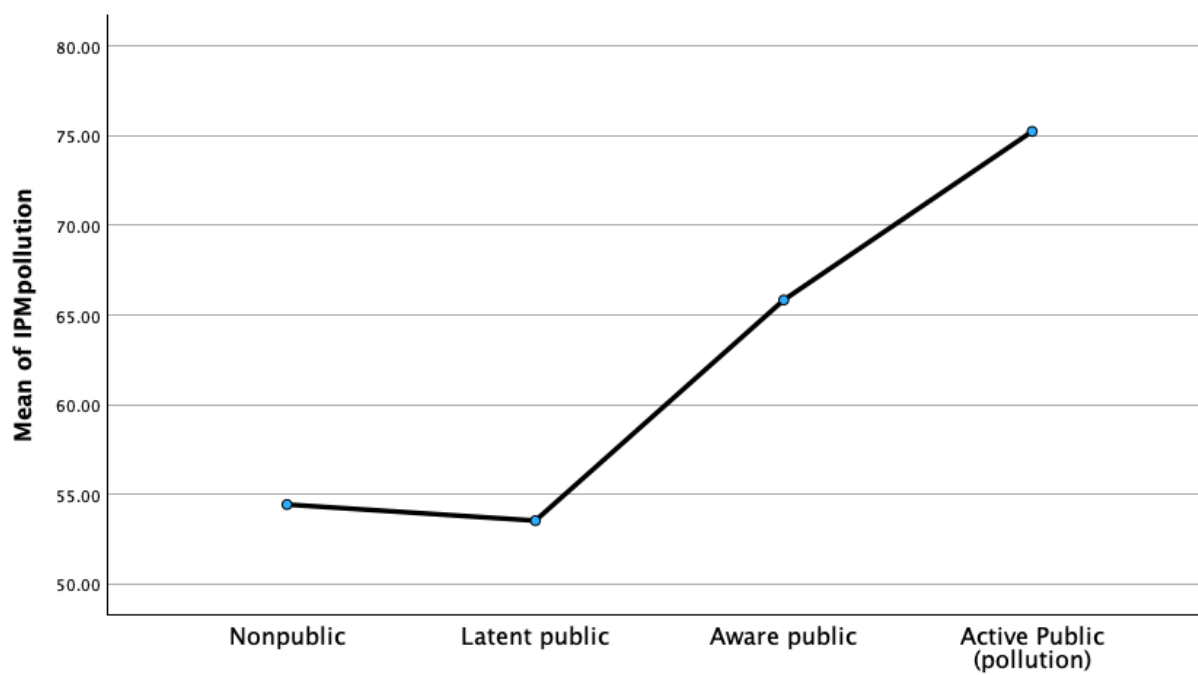
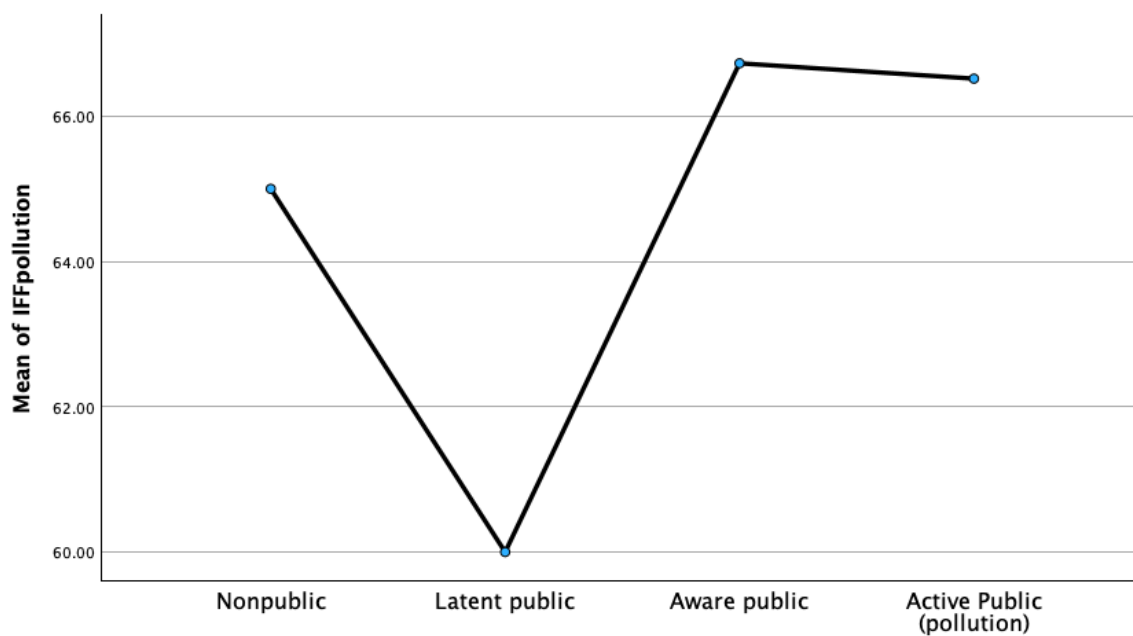


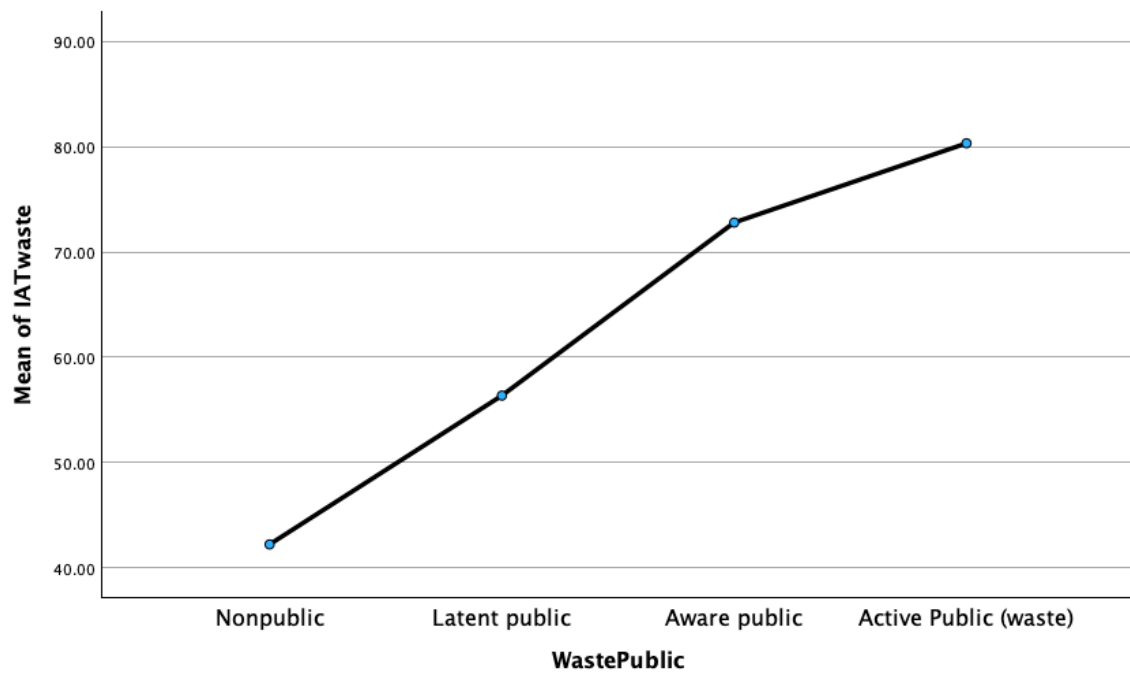
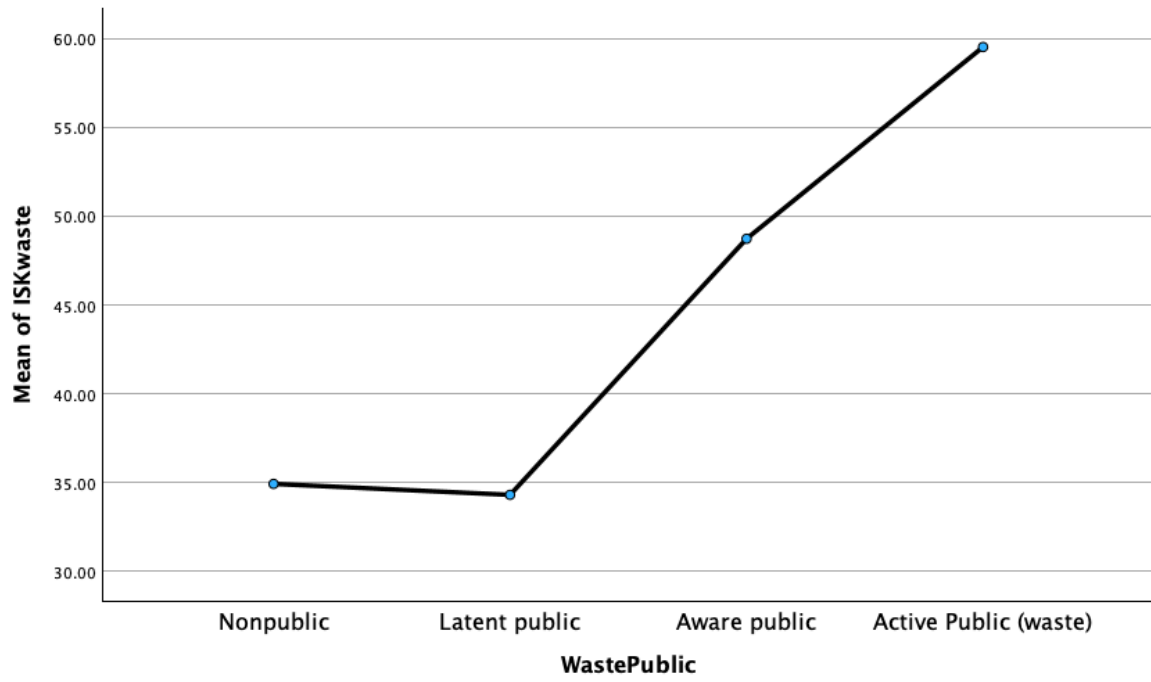


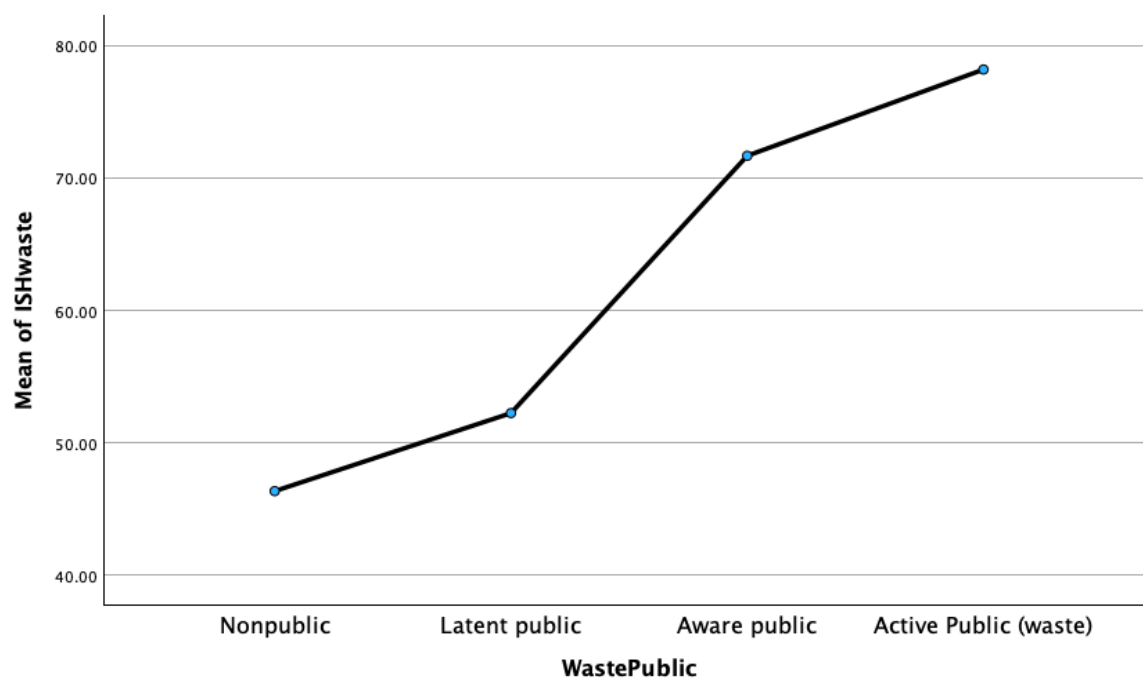
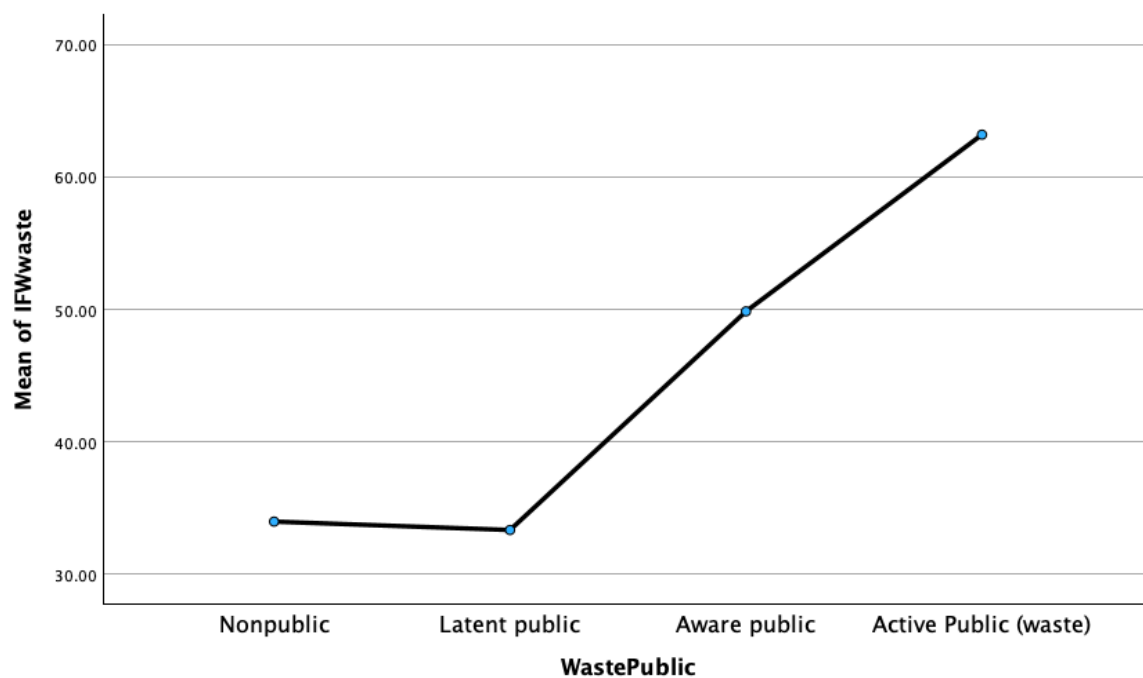


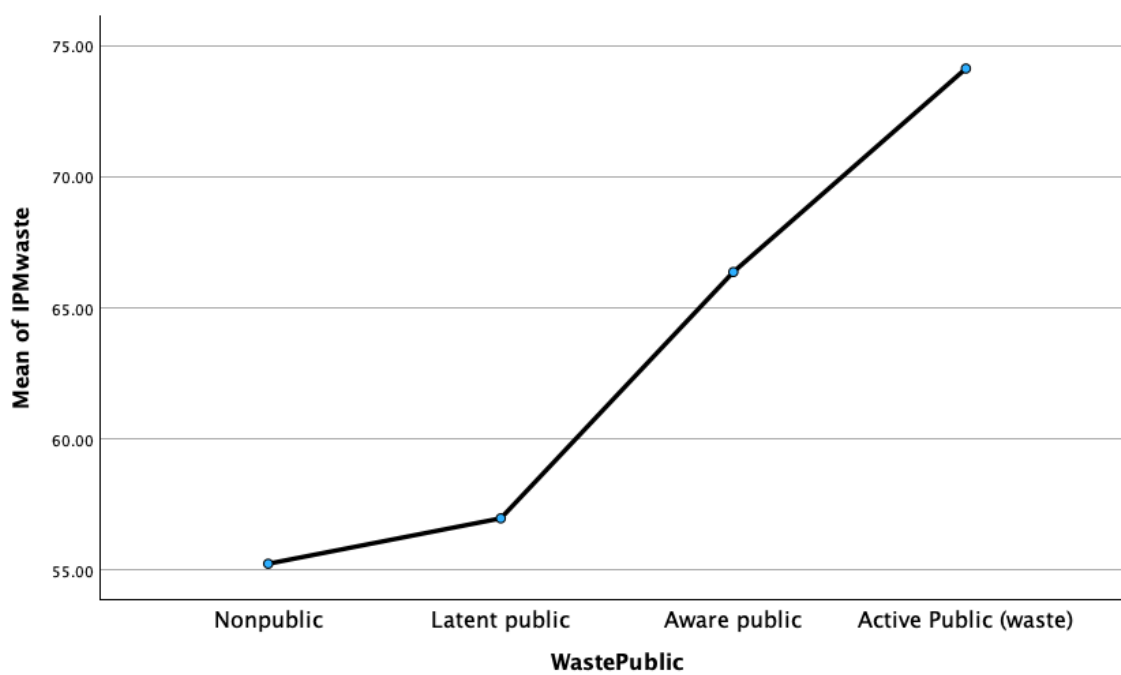
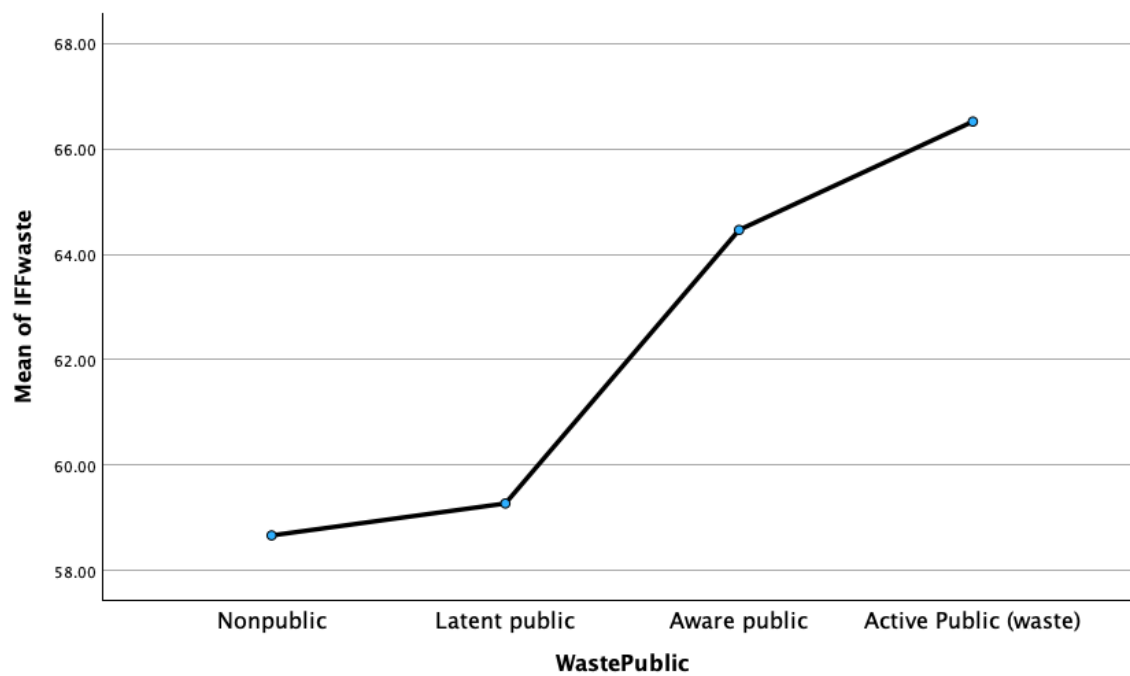


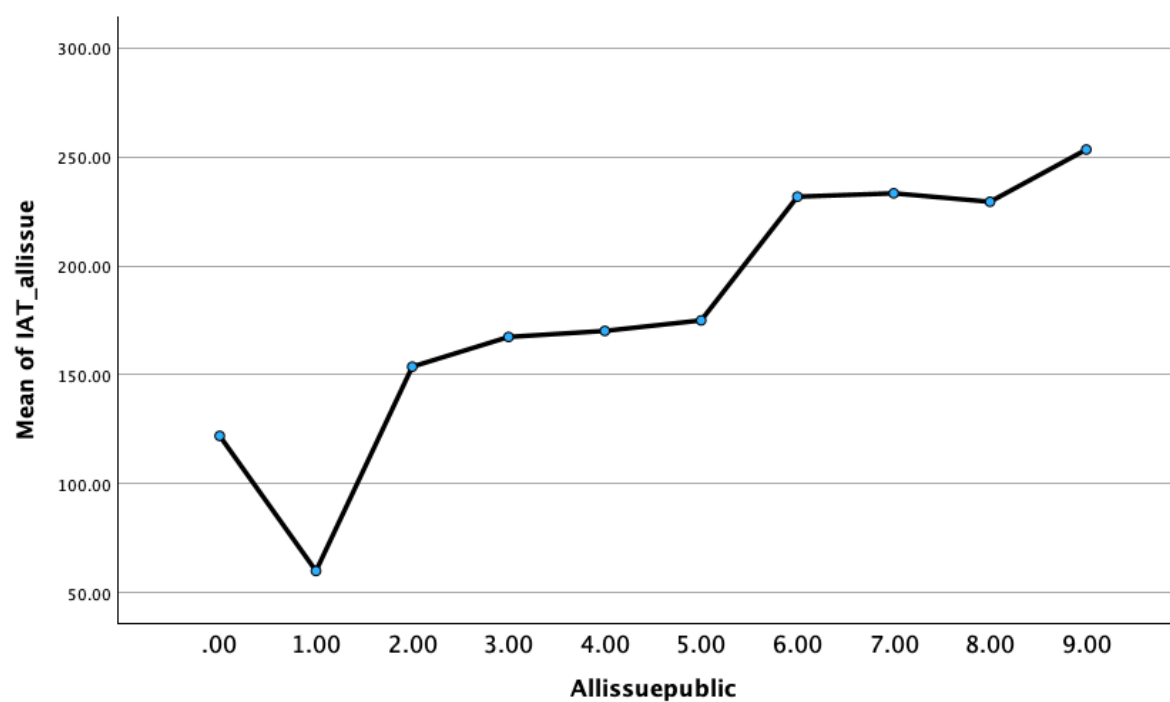
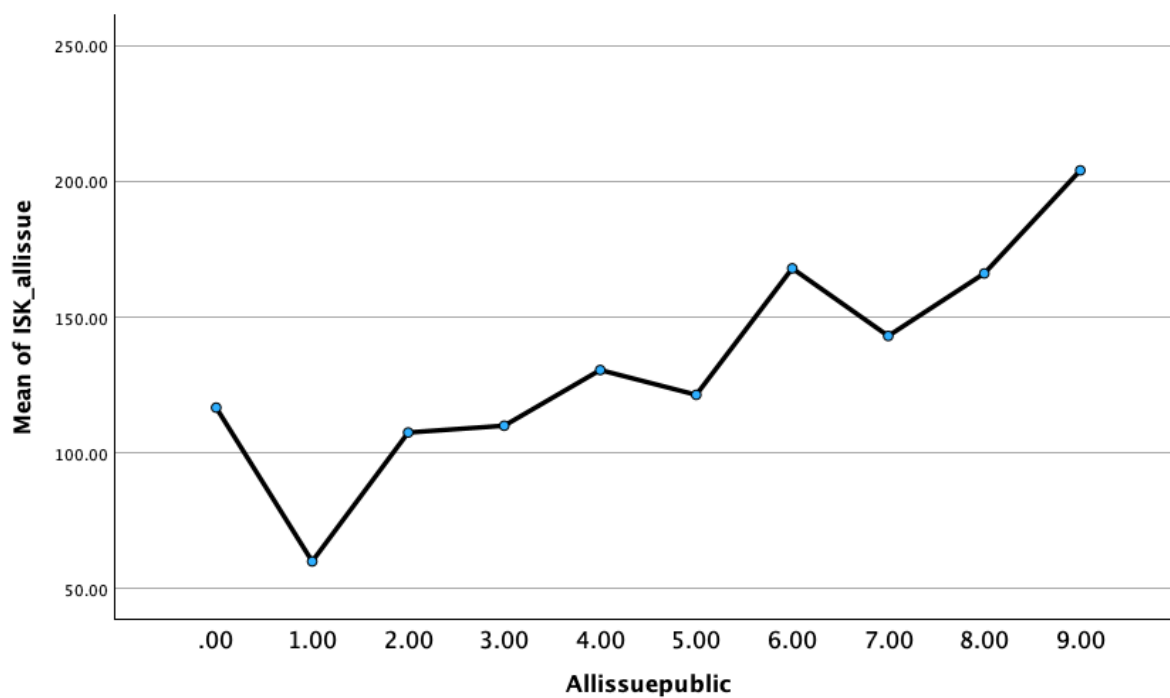


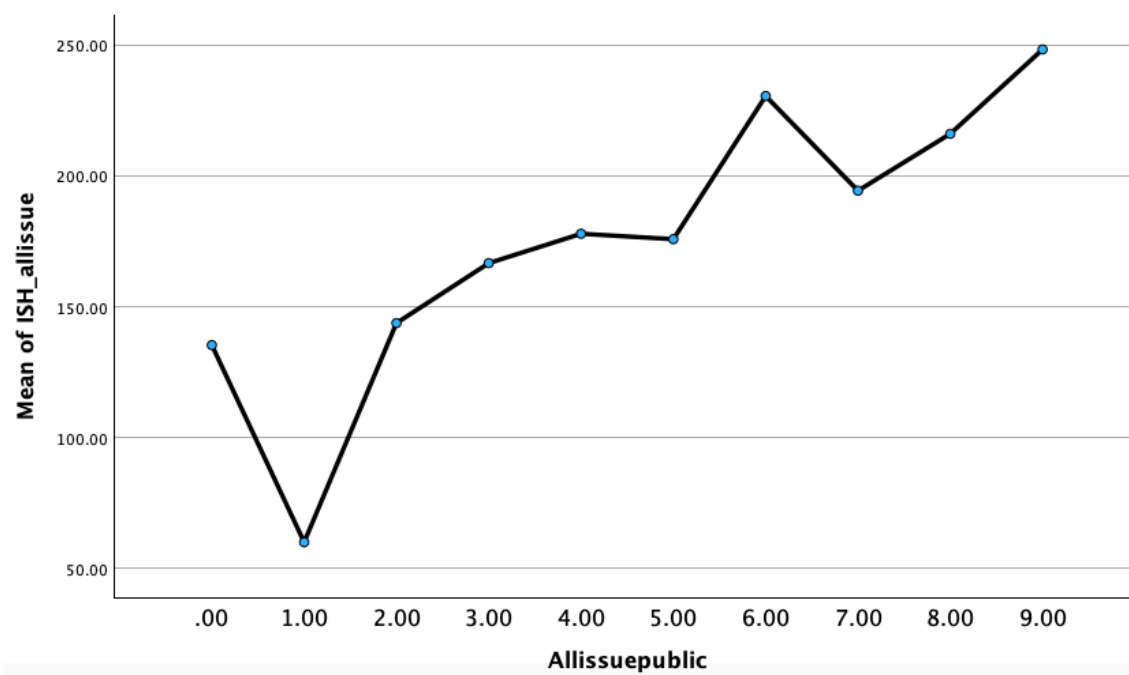
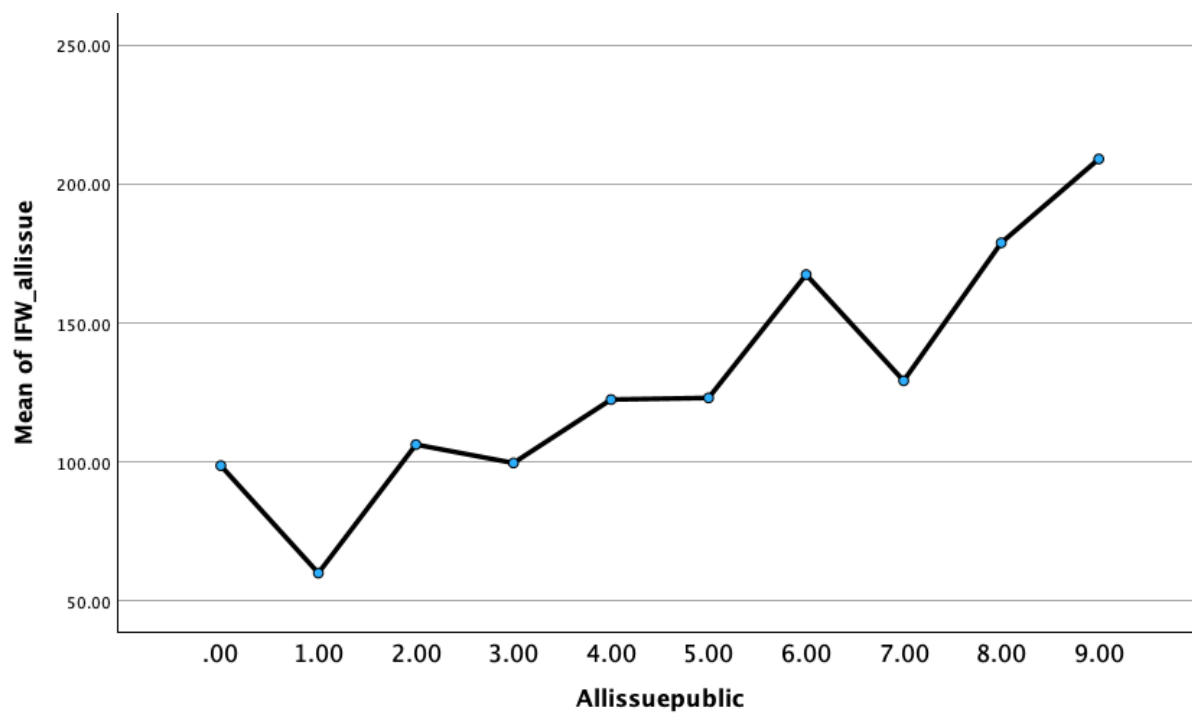


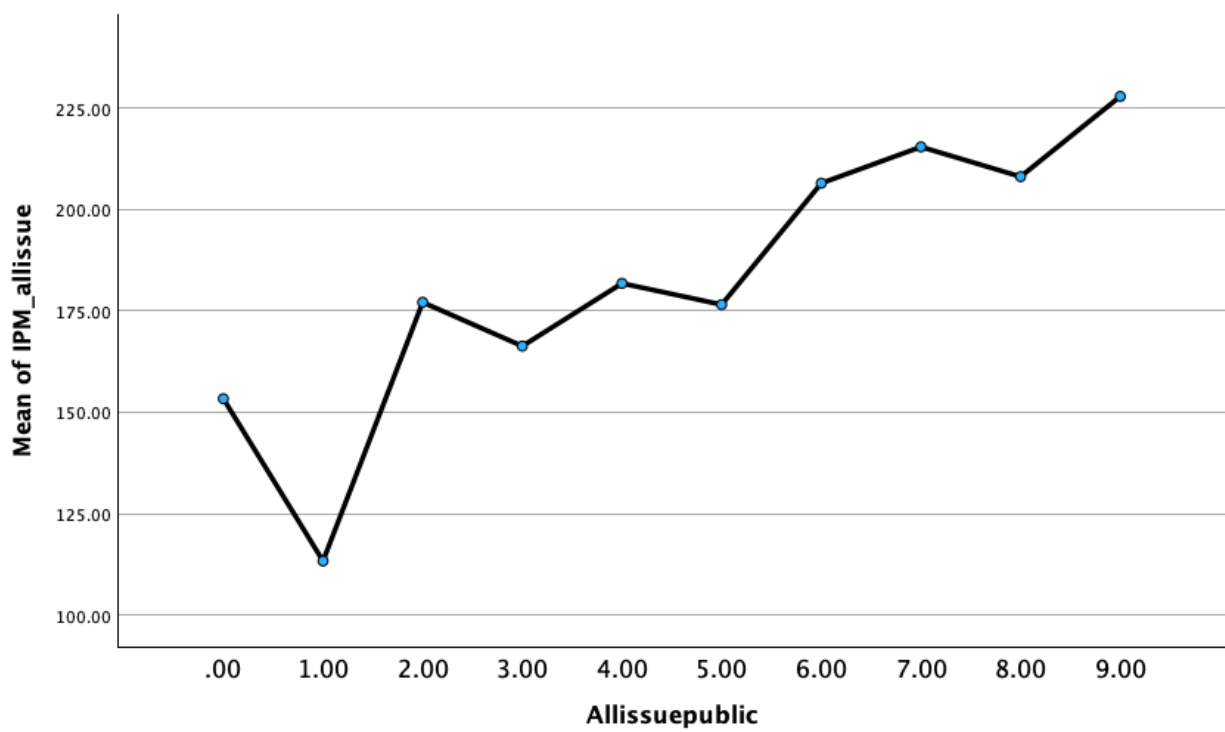
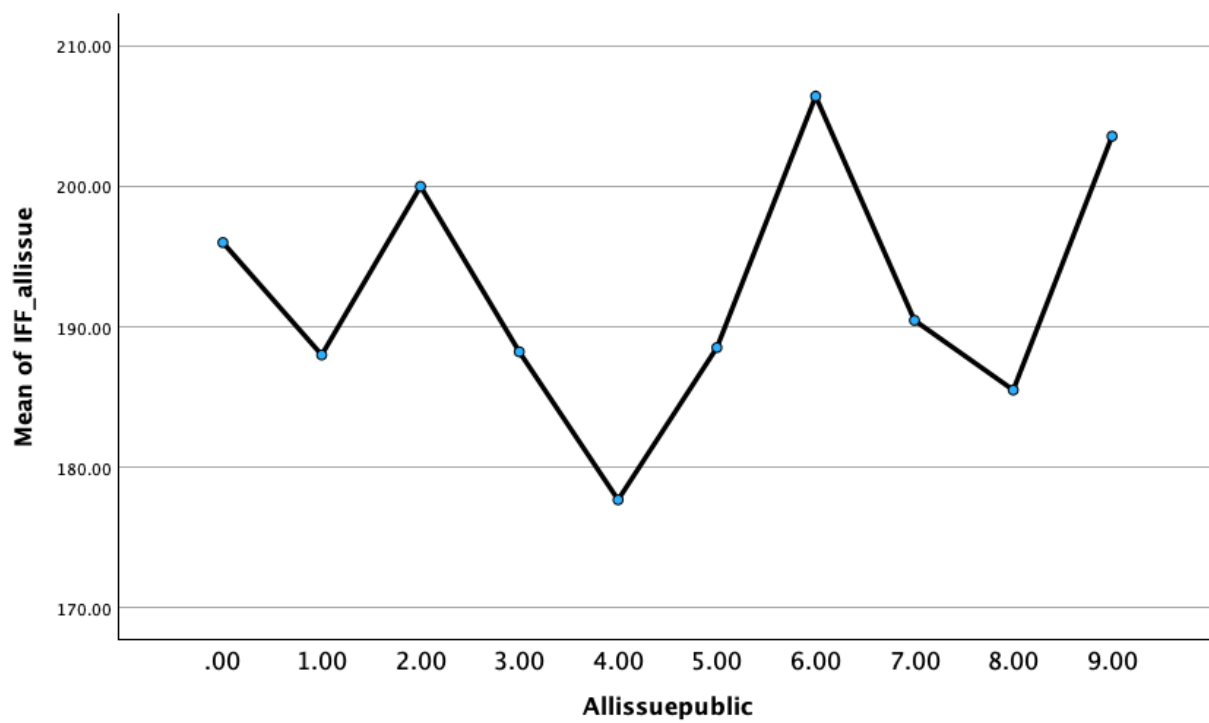


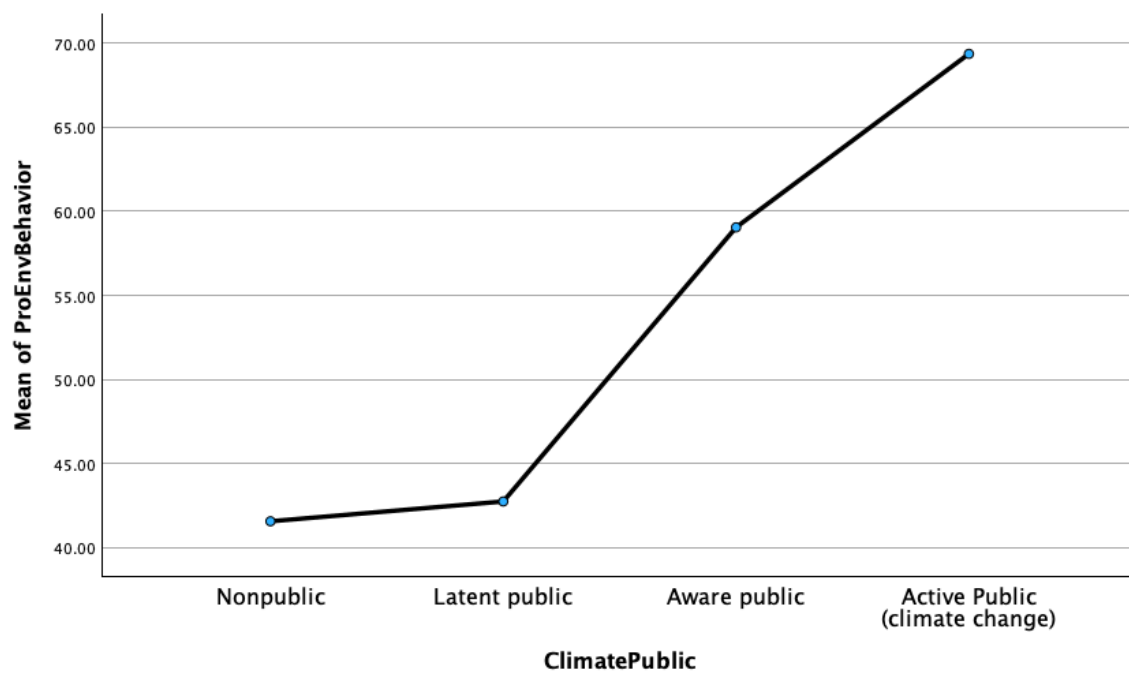
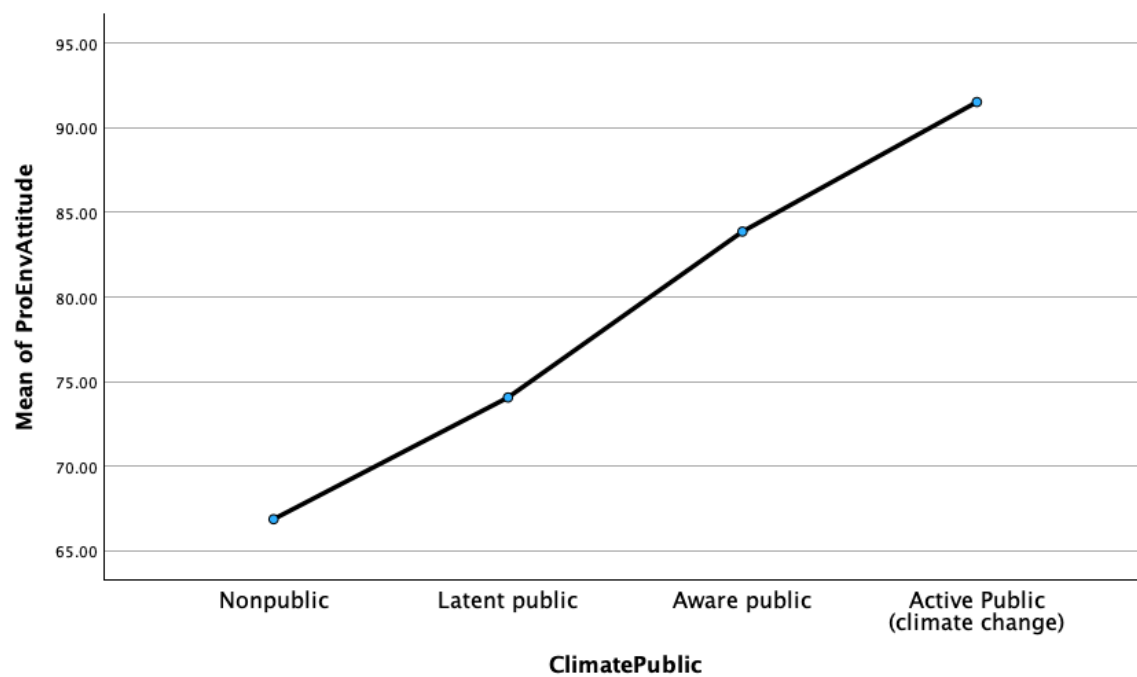


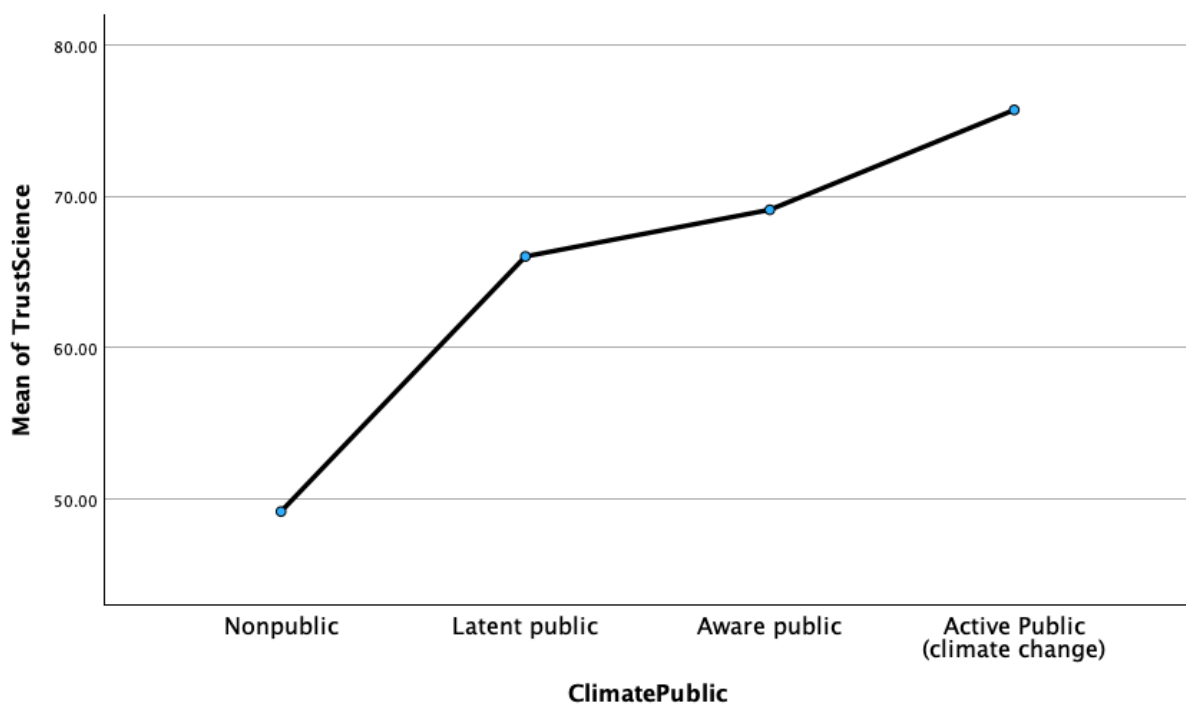
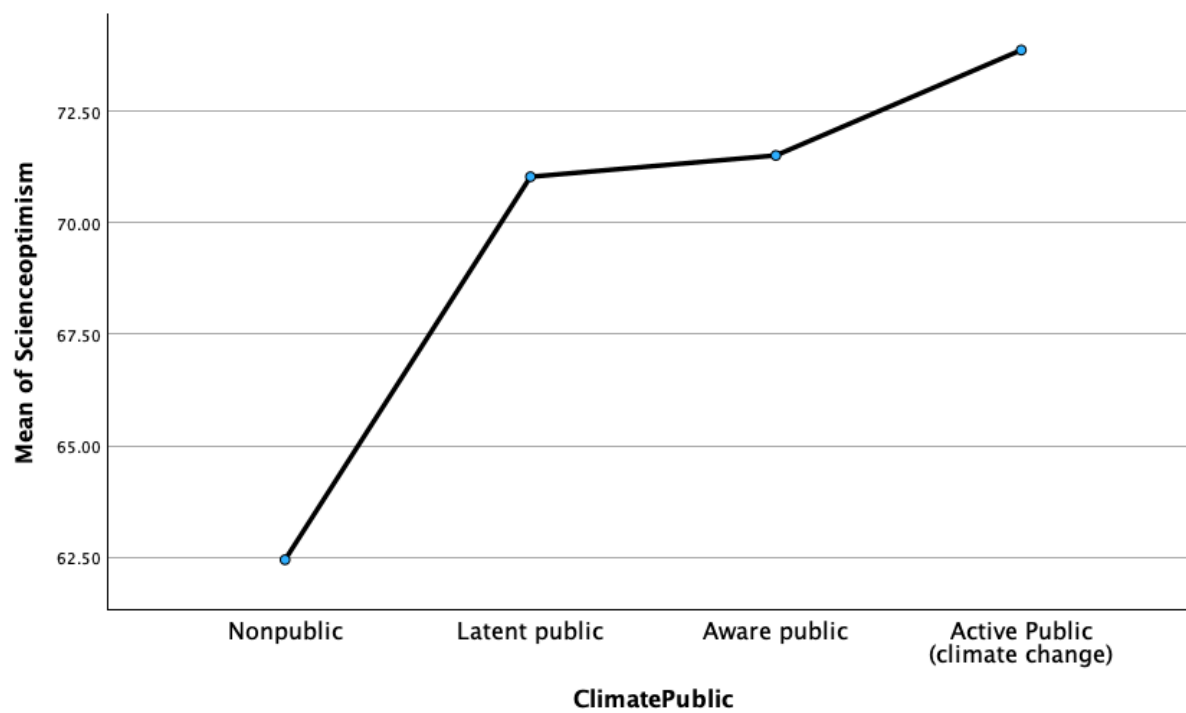


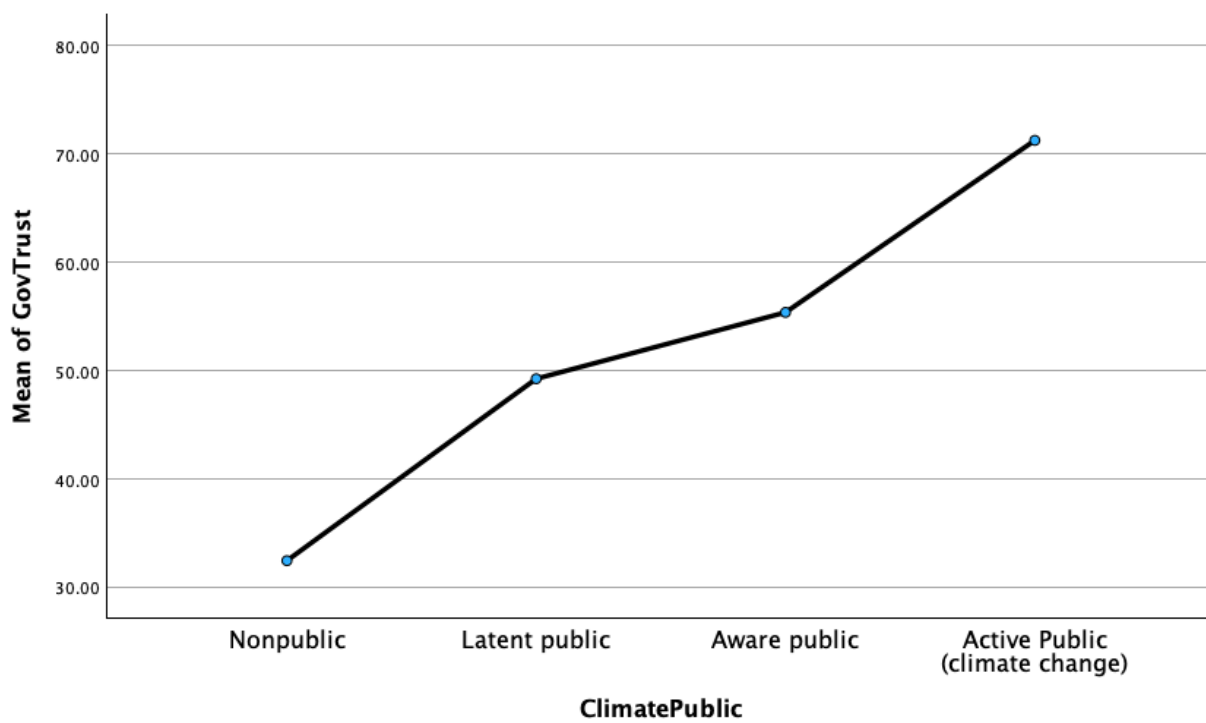
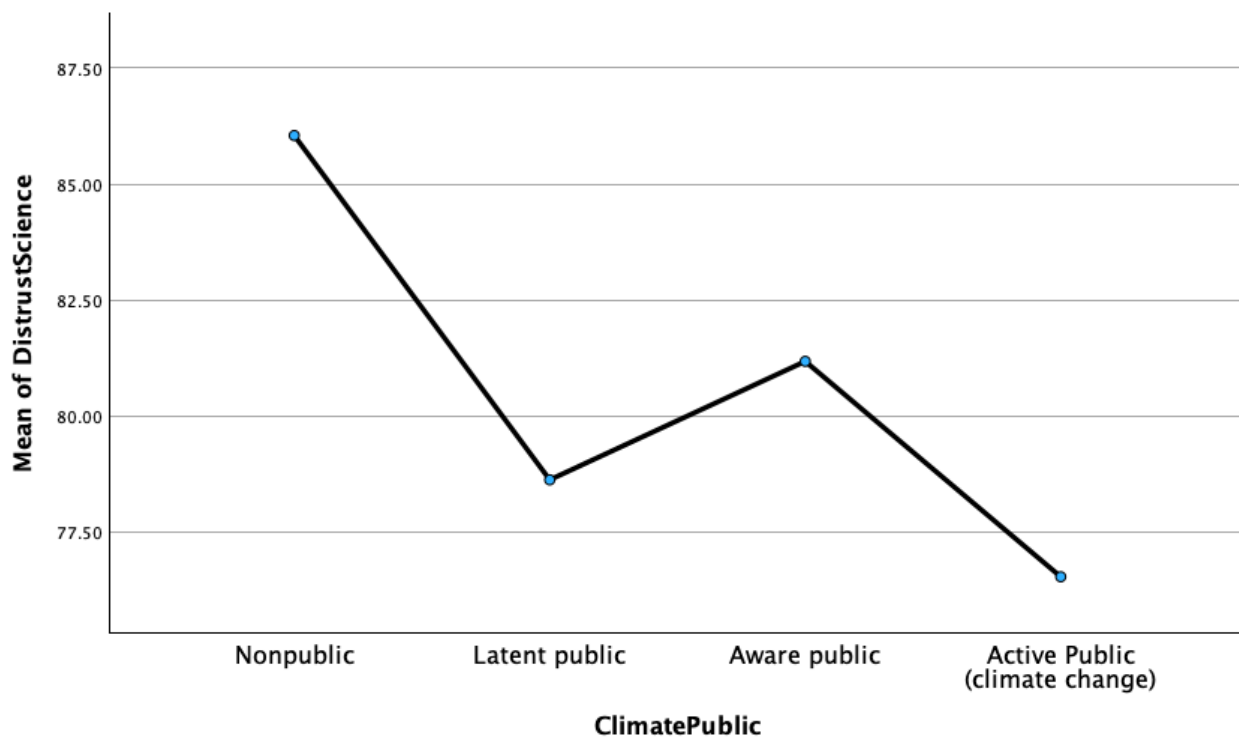


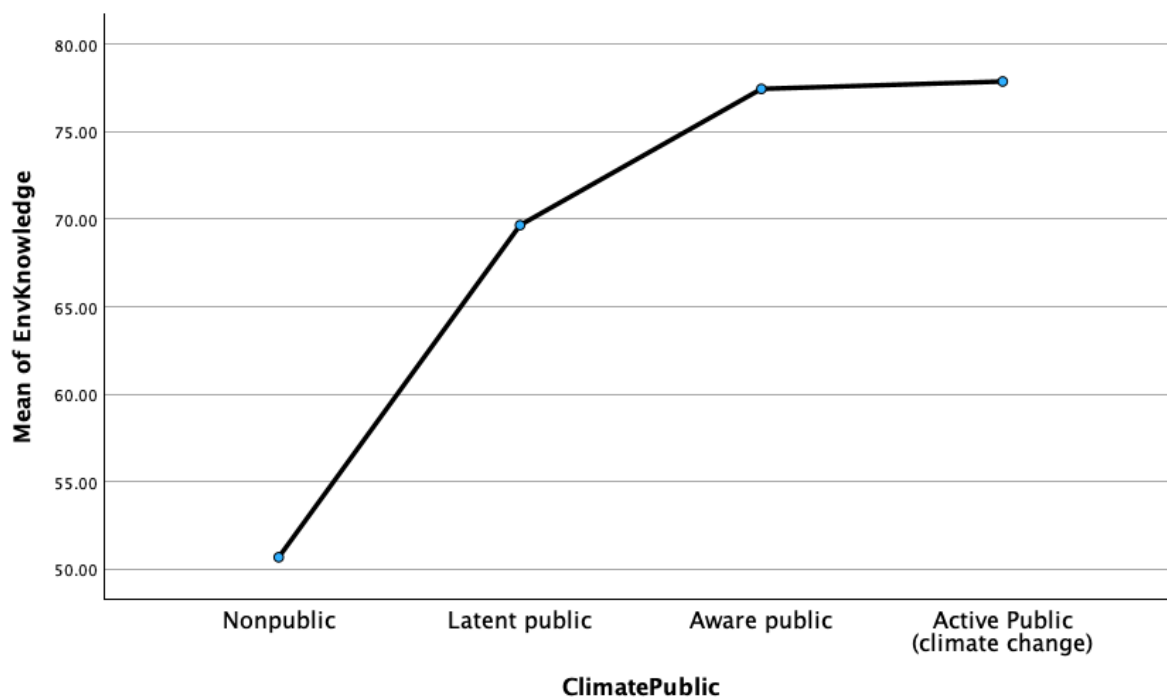
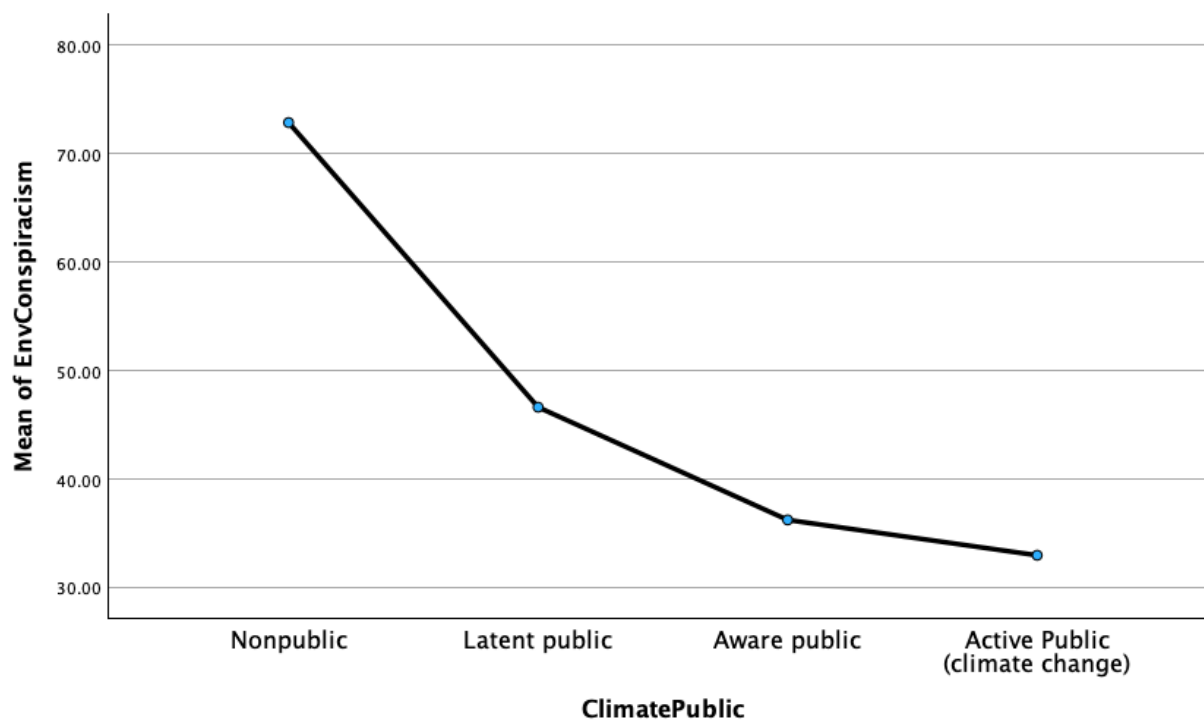


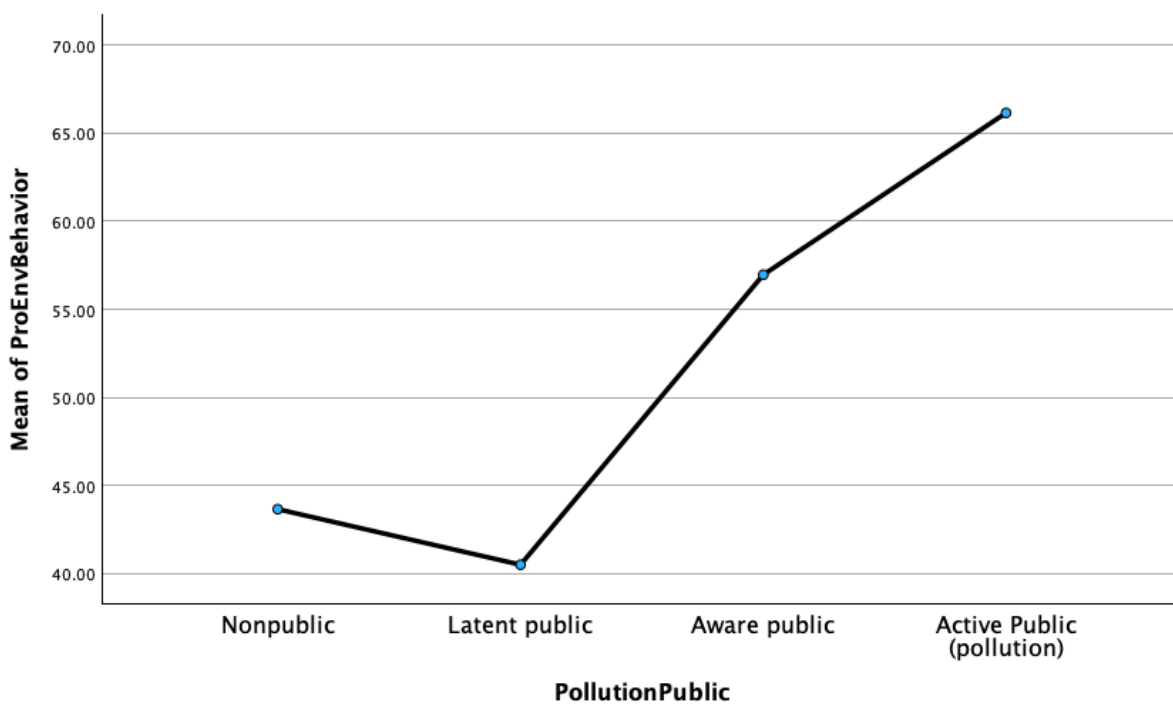
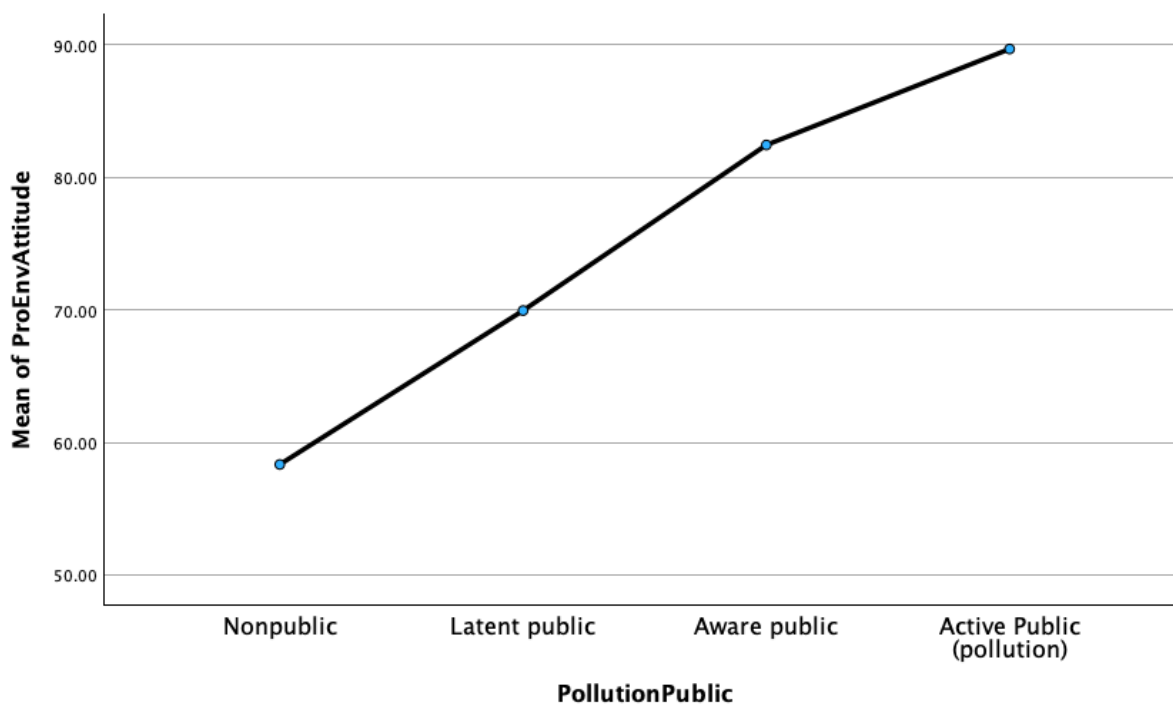


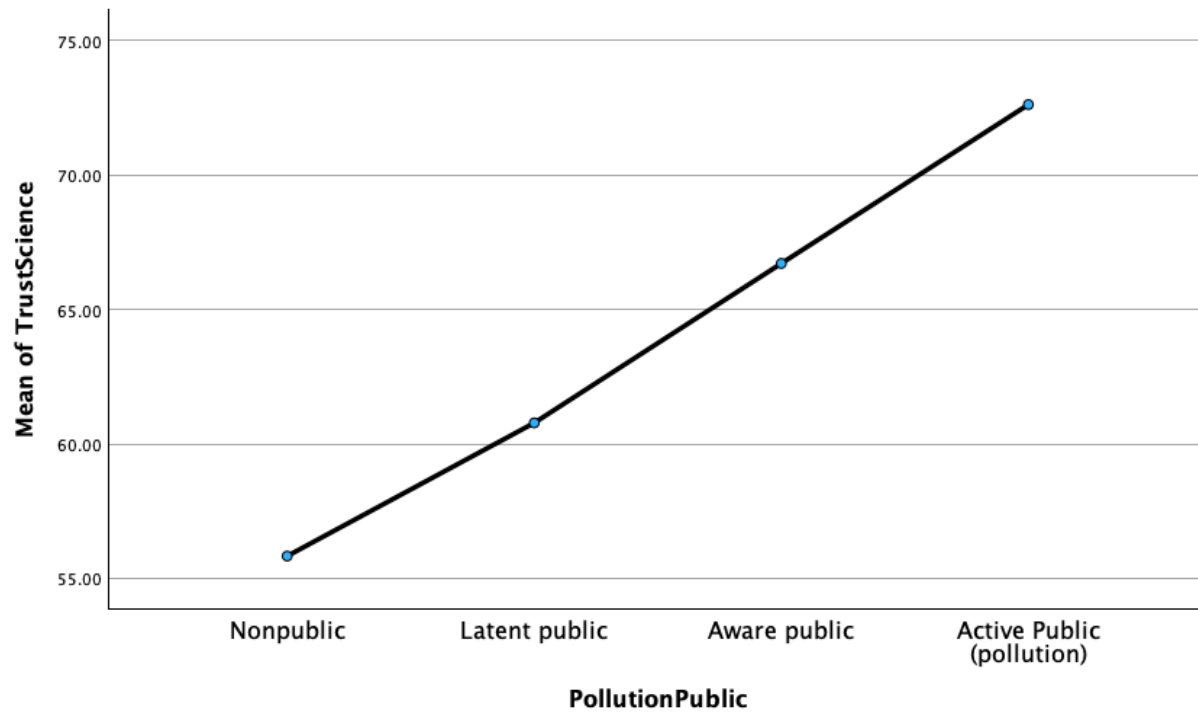
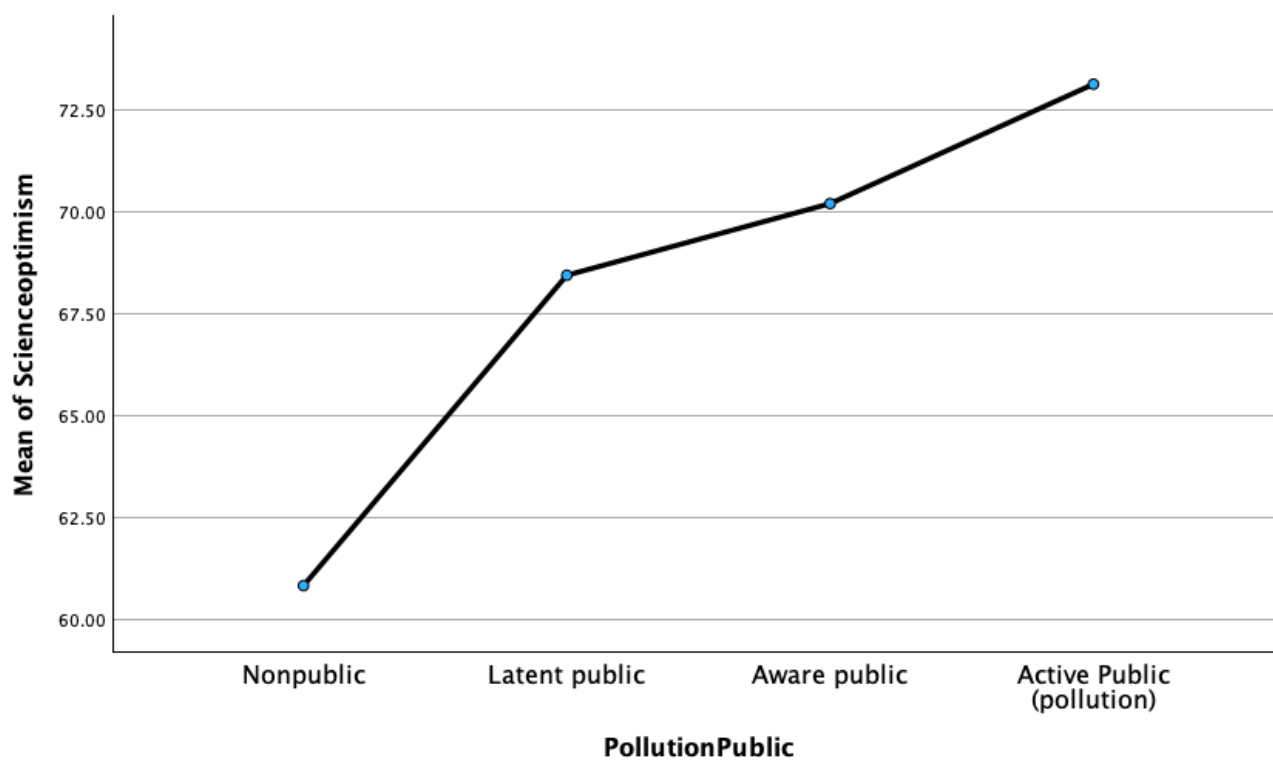


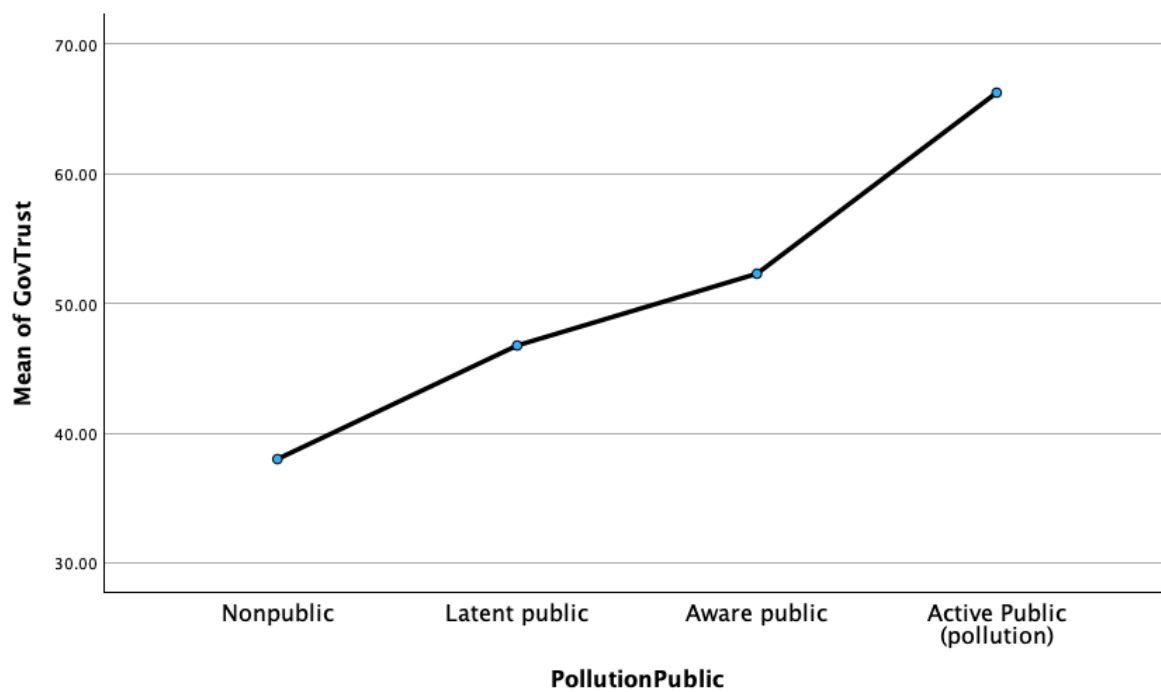
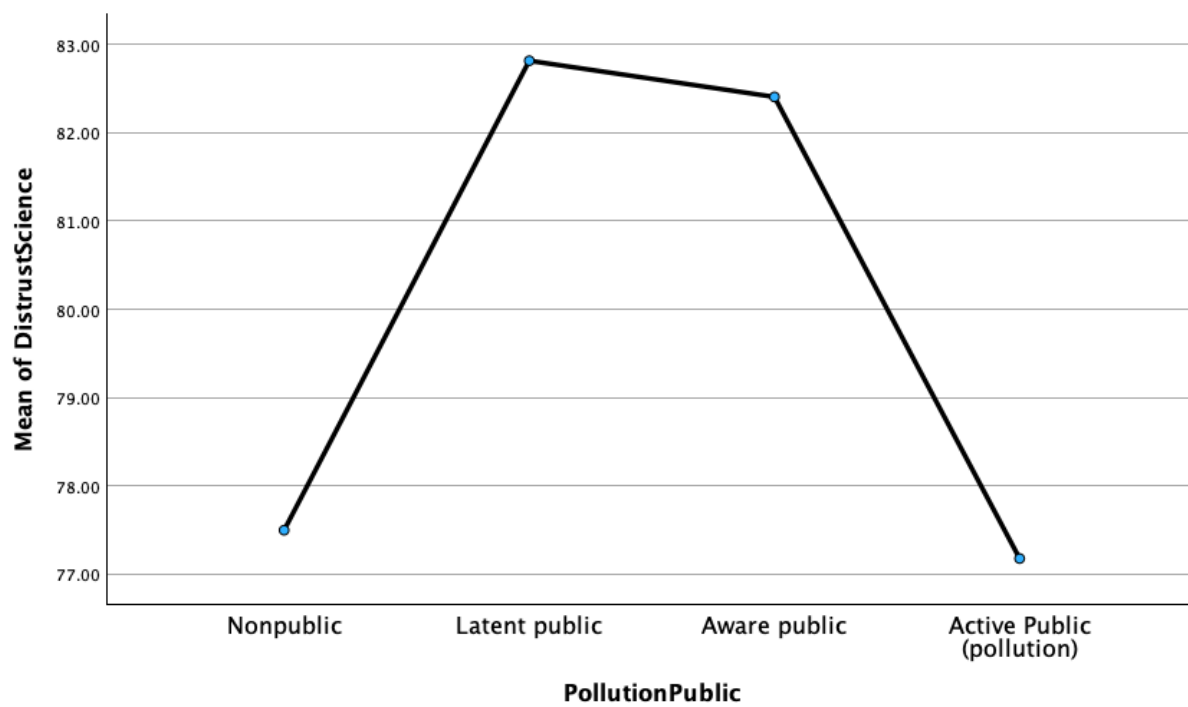


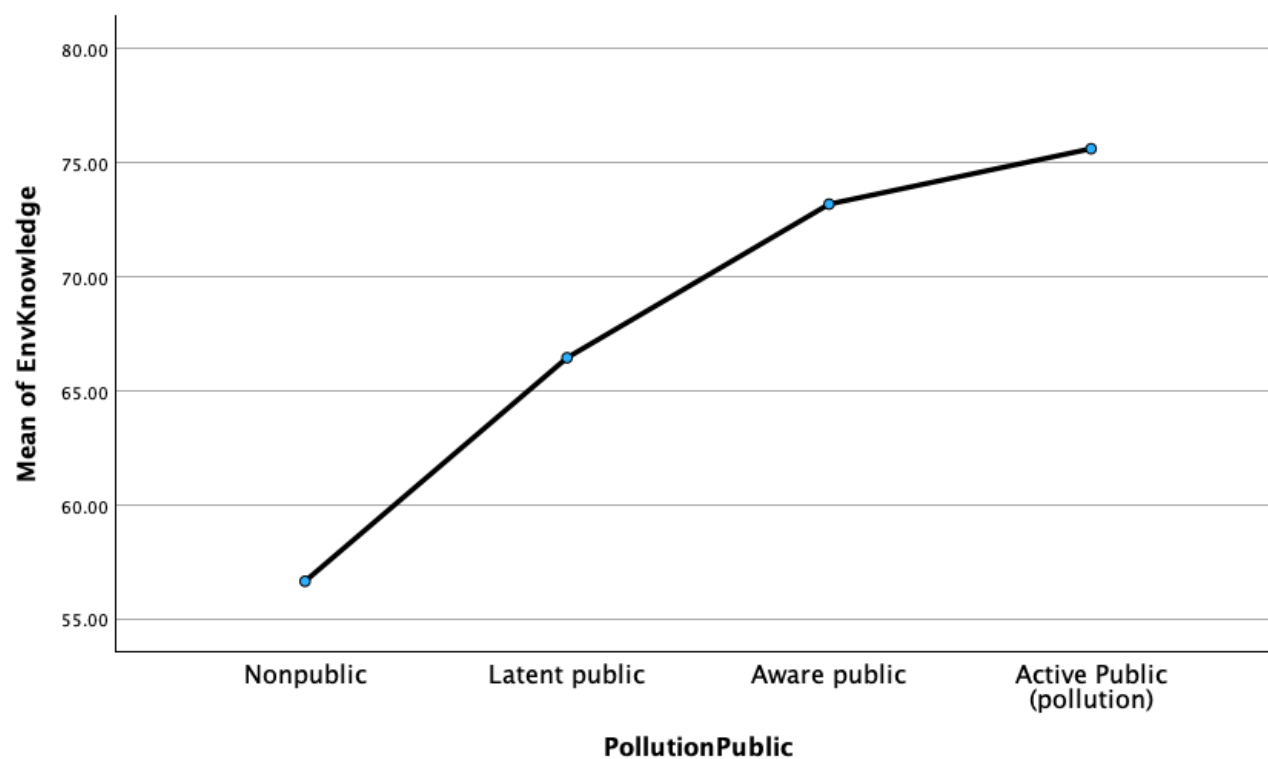
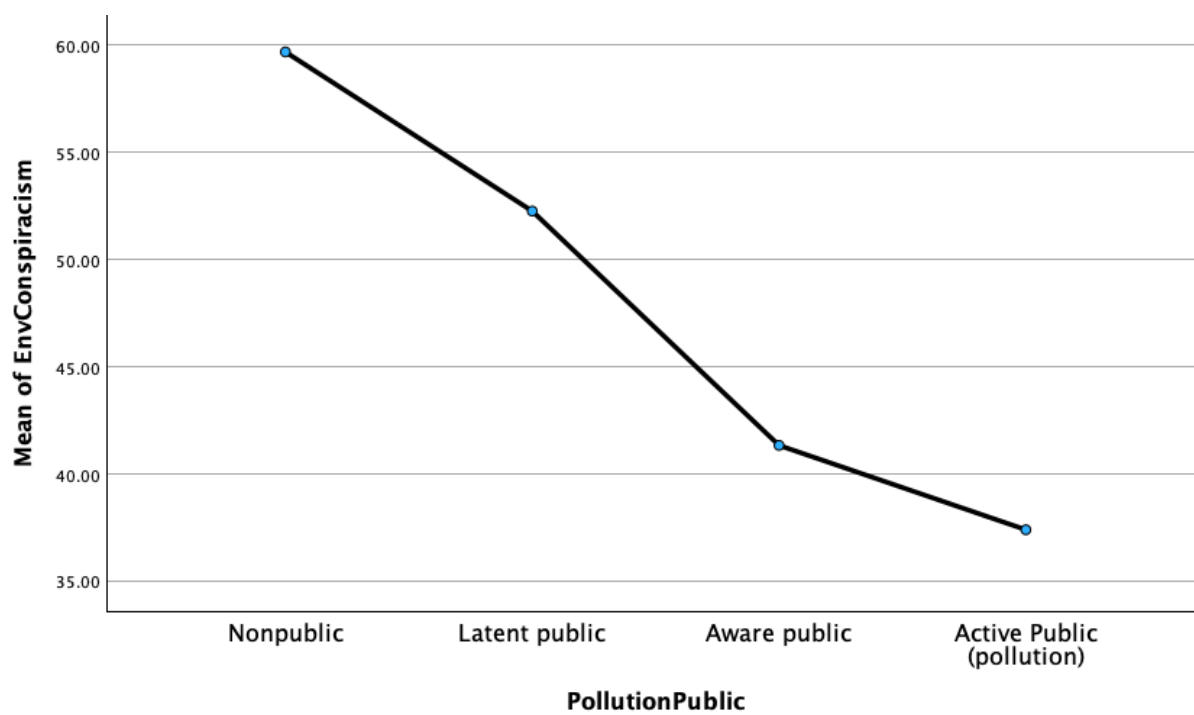


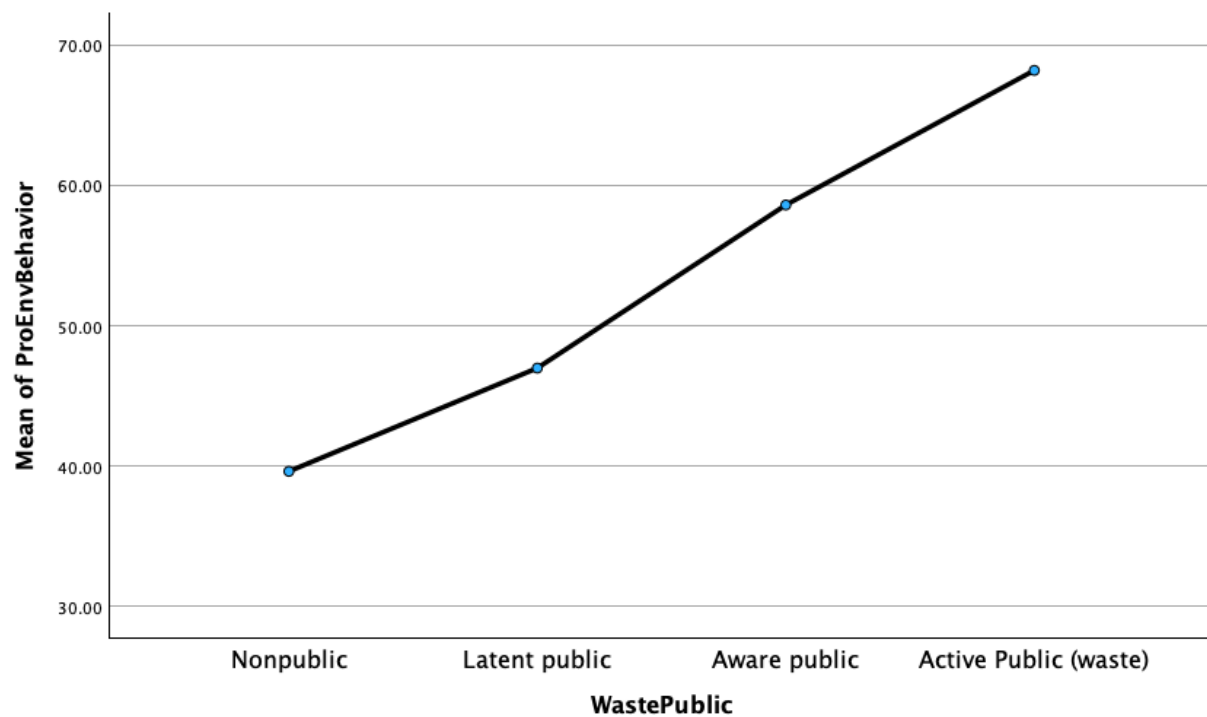
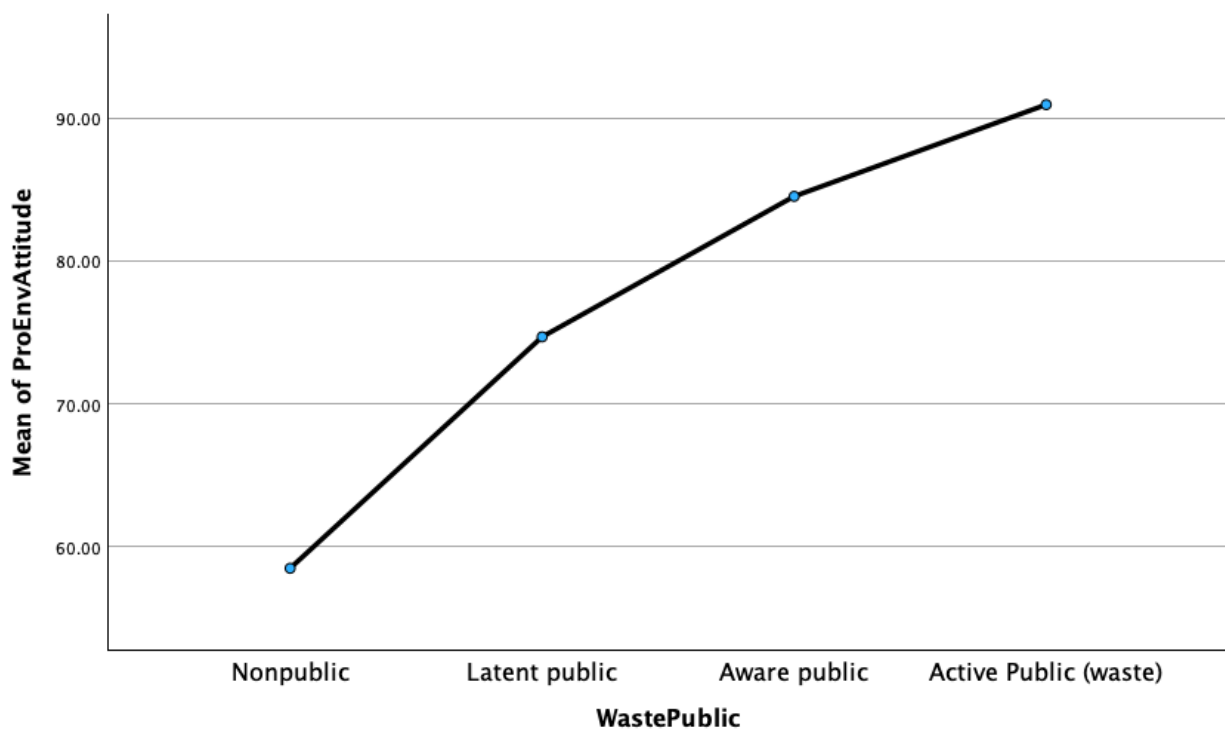


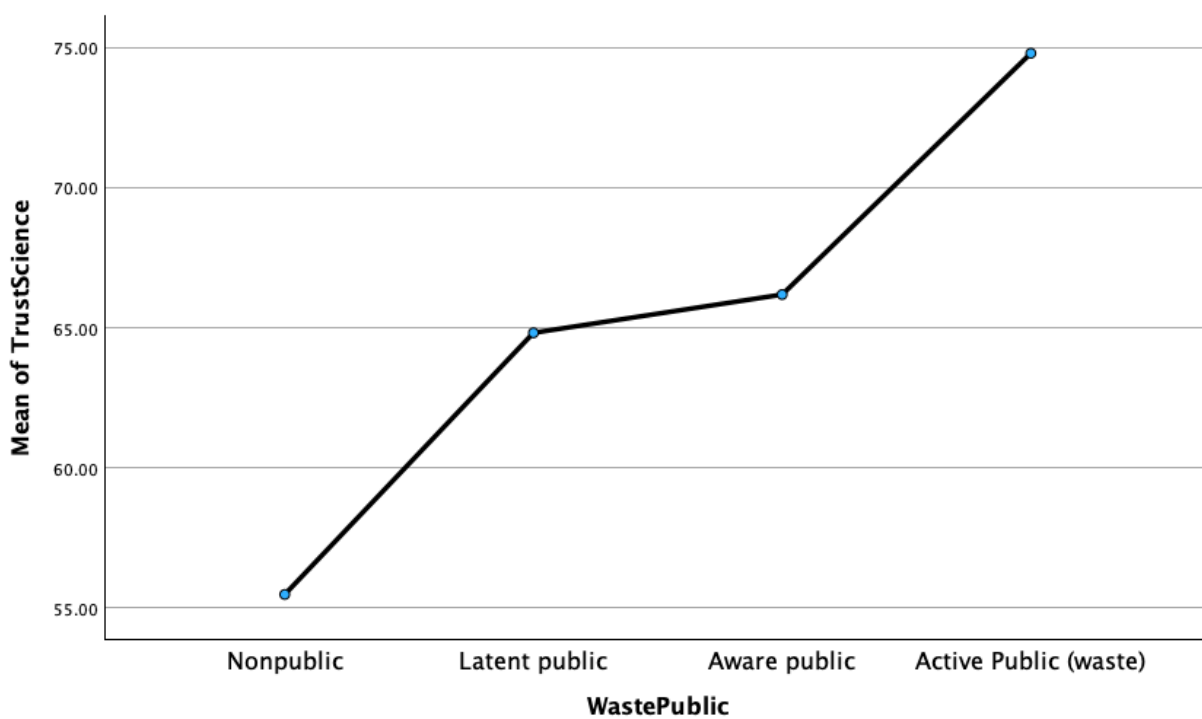
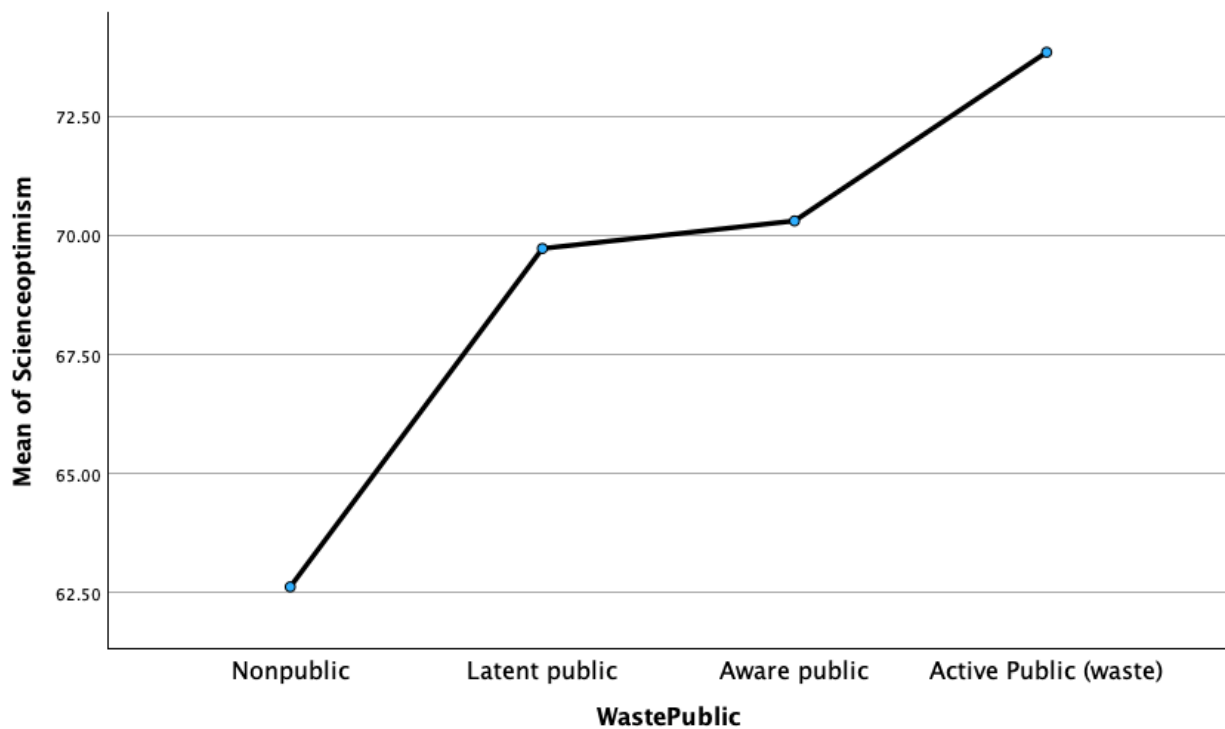


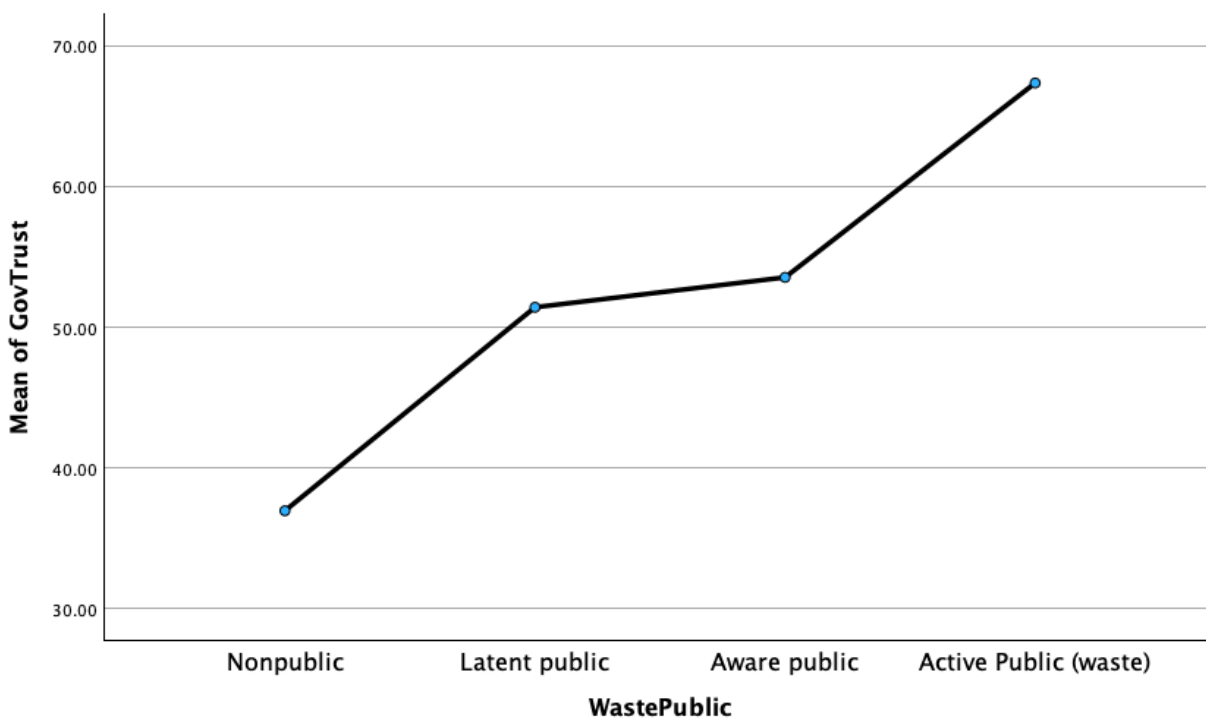
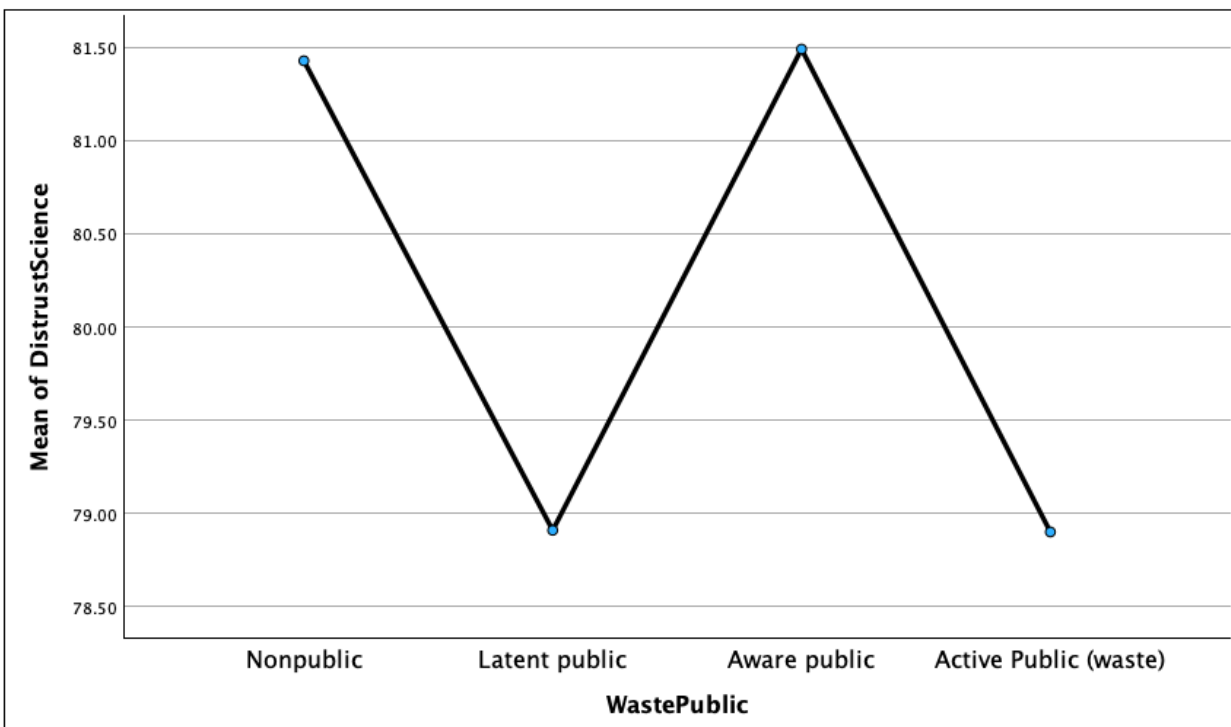


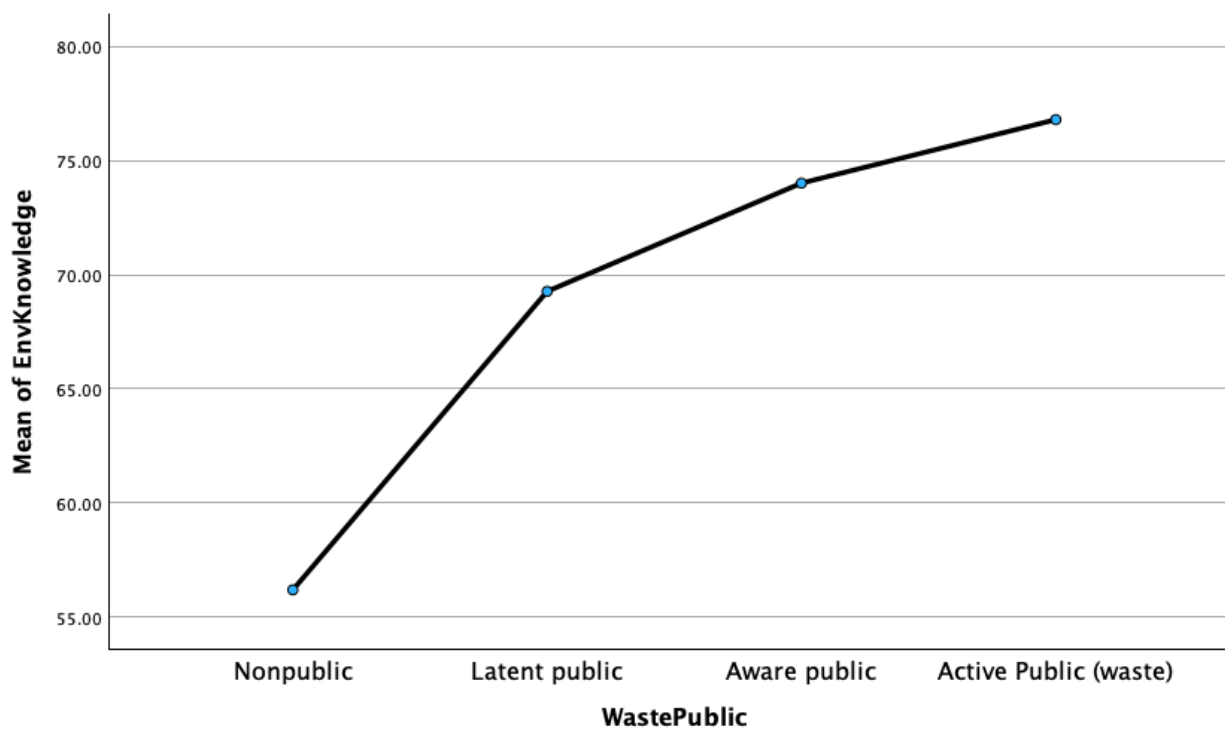
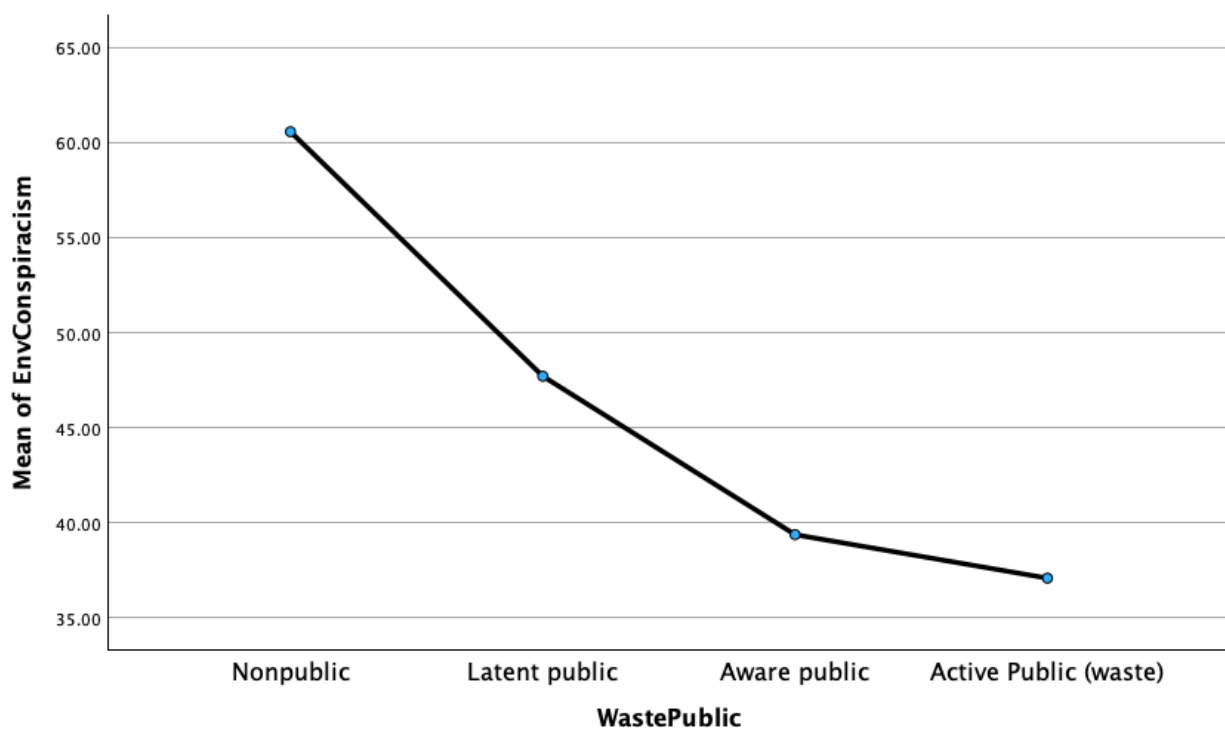


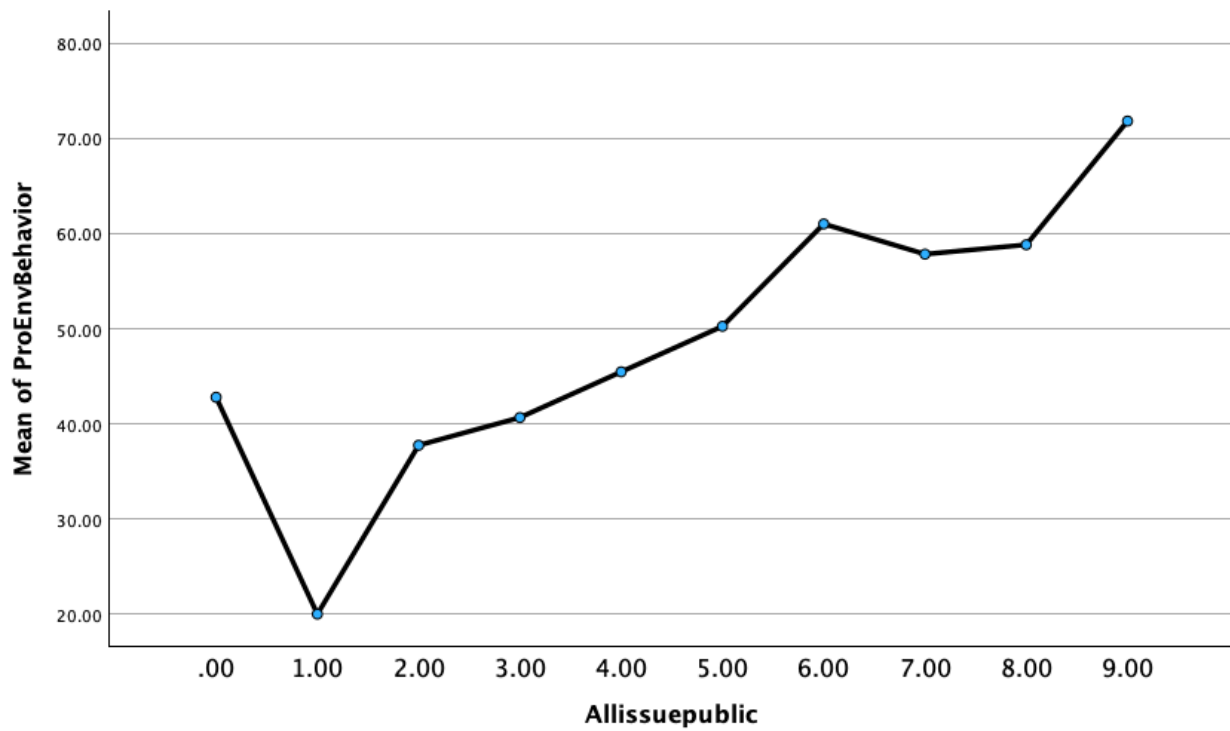
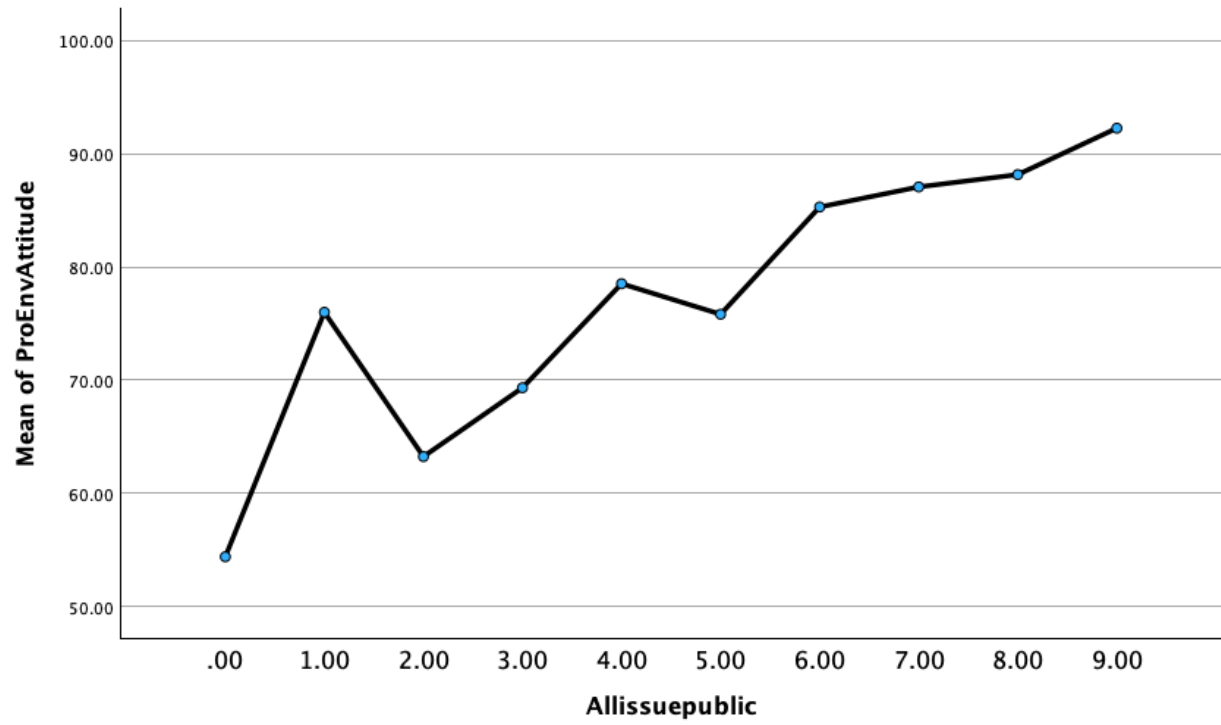


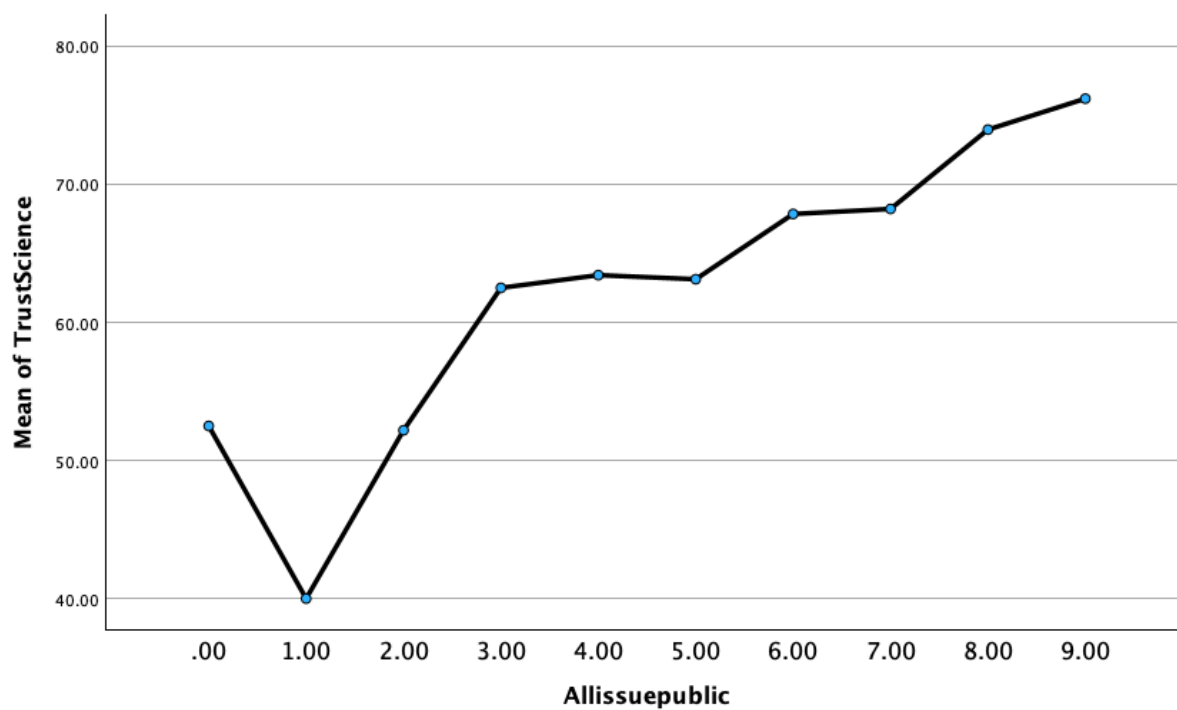
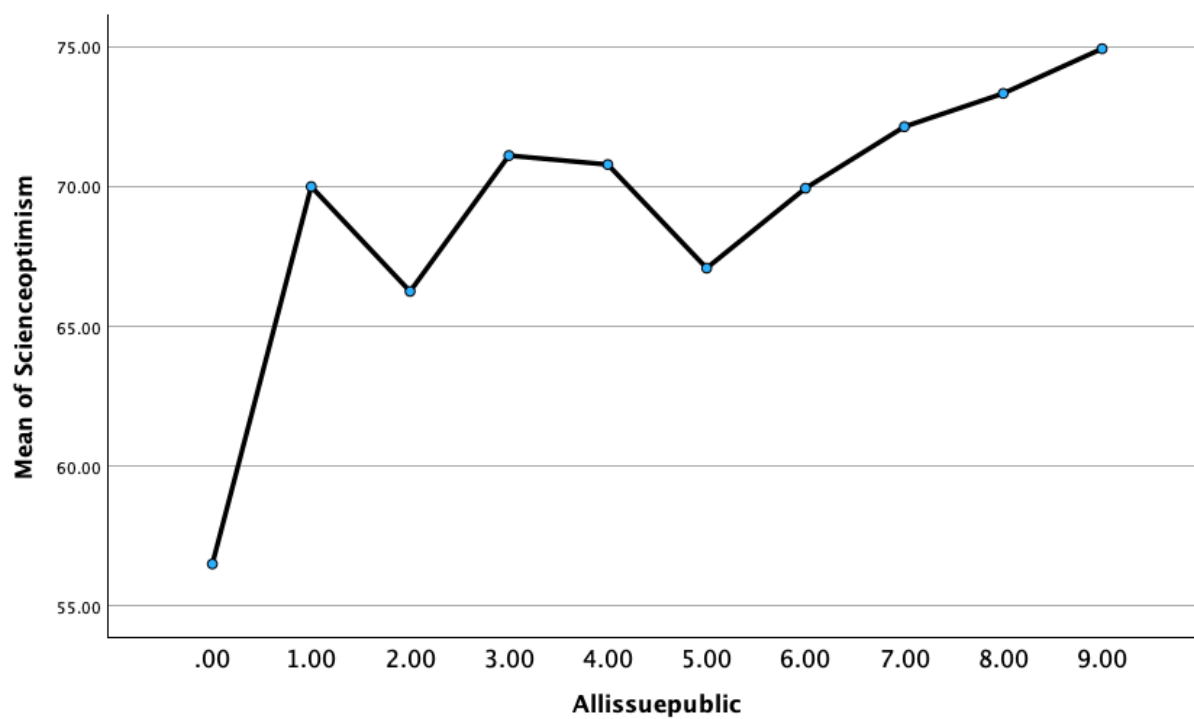


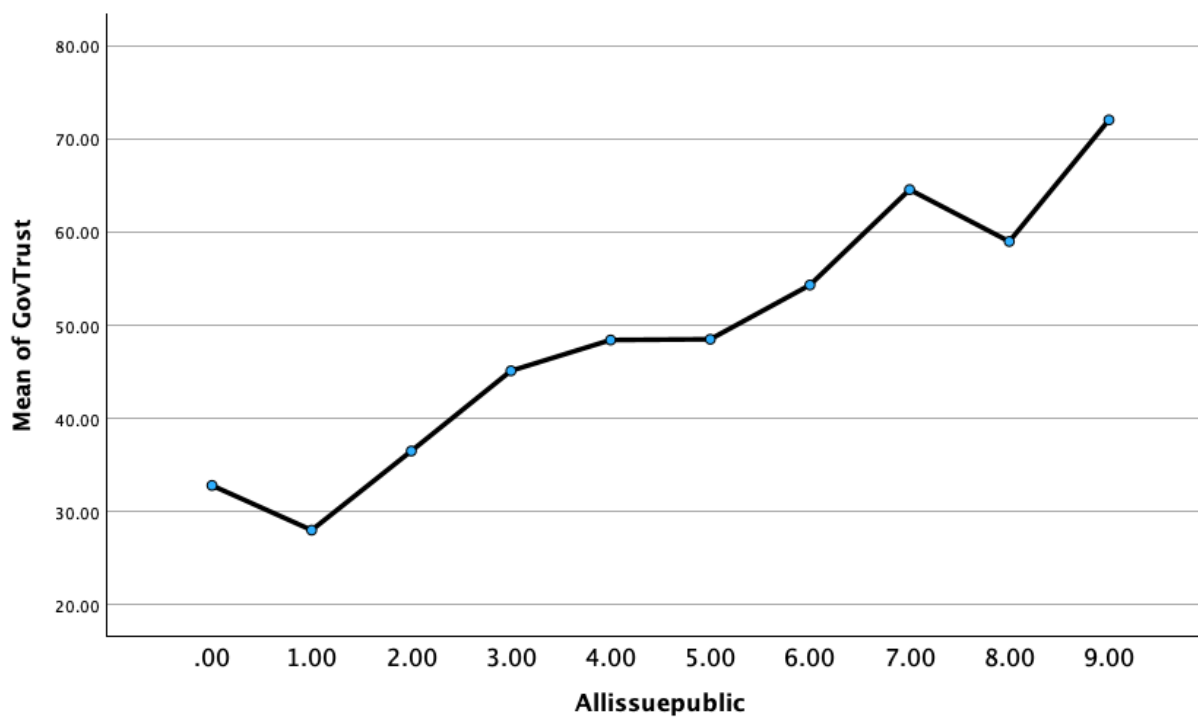
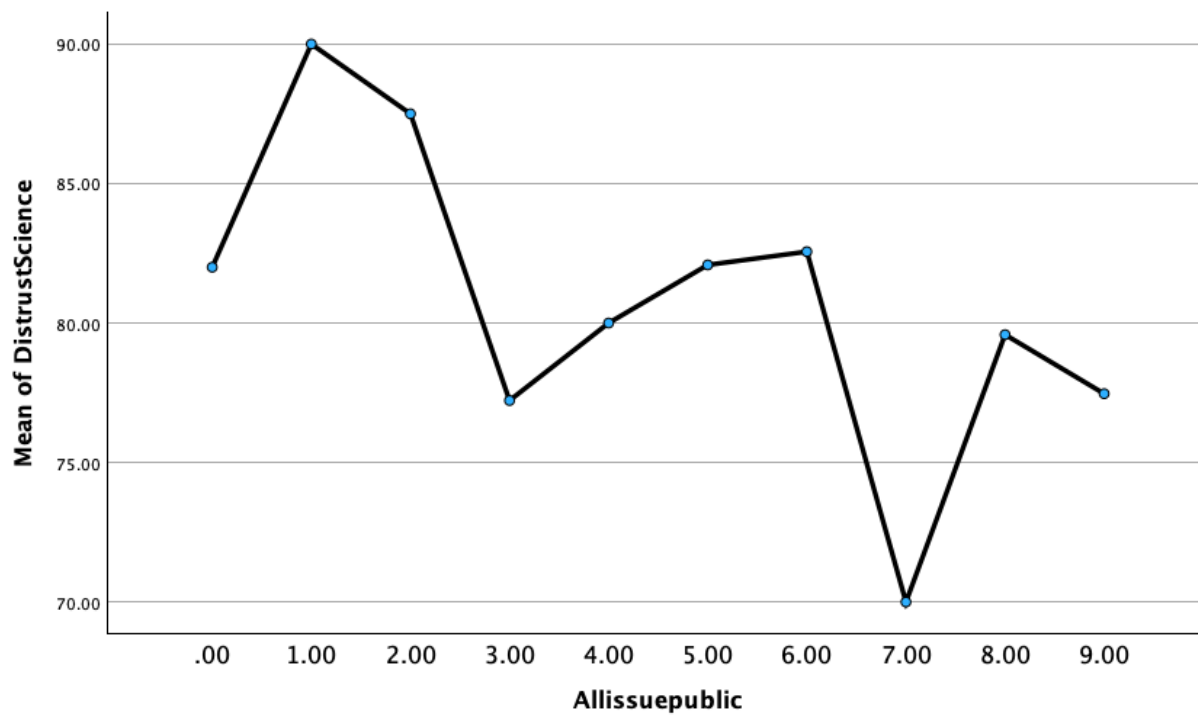


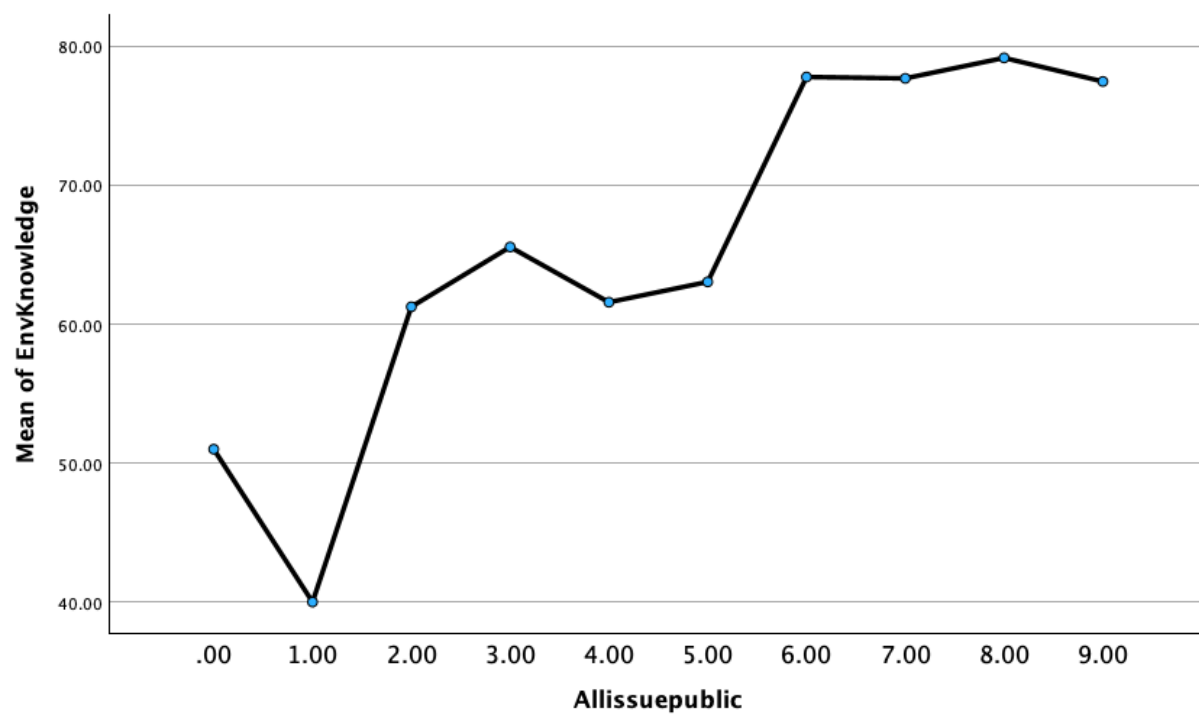
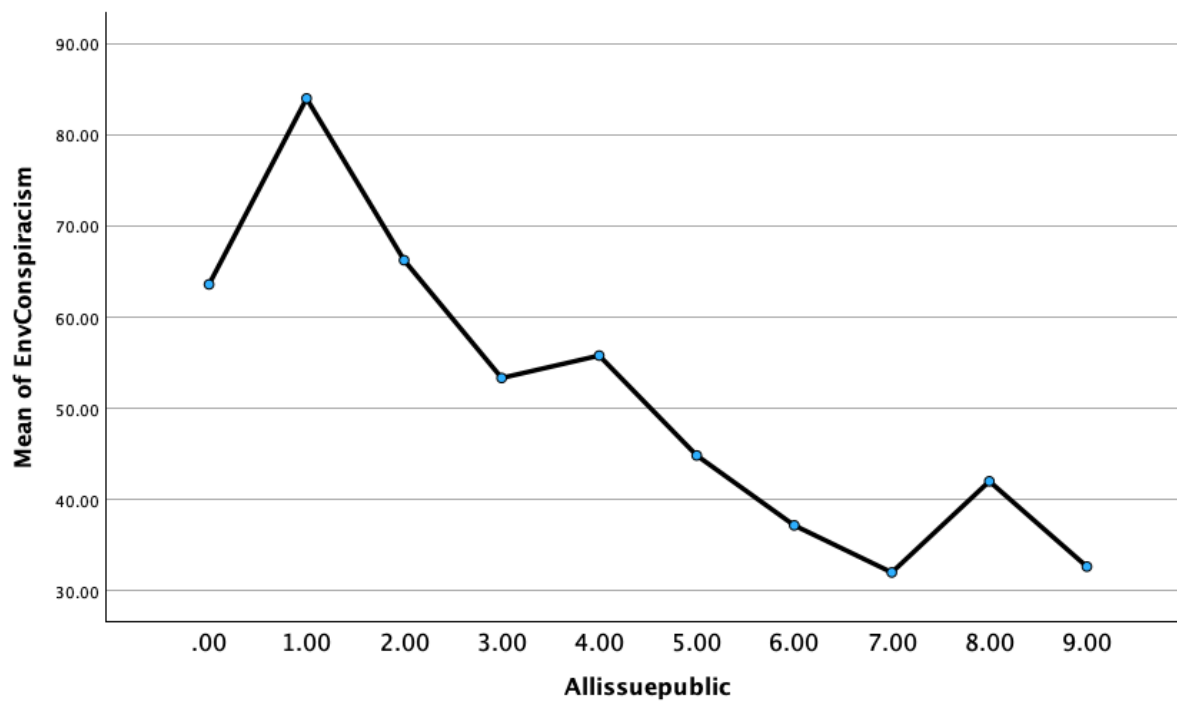












Background Information

Martinez, Gladys M., and Kimberly Daniels. “Fertility of Men and Women Aged 15–49 in the United States.” *National Health Statistics Report*, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 10 Jan. 2023, www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr179.pdf.

Brown, Adrienne R., and Wendy D. Manning. “Relationship Status Trends According to Age and Gender, 2019-2021.” *National Center for Family & Marriage Research*, Bowling Green State University, 2021, www.bgsu.edu/ncfmr/resources/data/family-profiles/brown-manning-relationship-status-trends-age-gender-fp-21-25.html#:~:text=Among%20adults%20aged%2030%2D34,from%2012%25%20to%2013%25.

Peer Evaluation

Team 1		A, B, C, D, F
Catie	Adams	B
Nathan	Aker	B
Paris	Bailey	B
Rachel	Bregnard	A
Makenna	Buckskin	A