

Nudging Sustainable Meal Choices



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BACKGROUND:

- ▶ A **nudge** influences behaviour by strategically manipulating the way options are presented.
- ▶ A **personalised nudge** strategically targets each decision-maker with a carefully selected nudge based on their unique characteristics.
- ▶ The goal of this project is to determine which nudges are most effective at increasing the purchase of sustainable options (in the context of a meal delivery service) and to what extent the effectiveness of those can be increased by using personalised nudges.

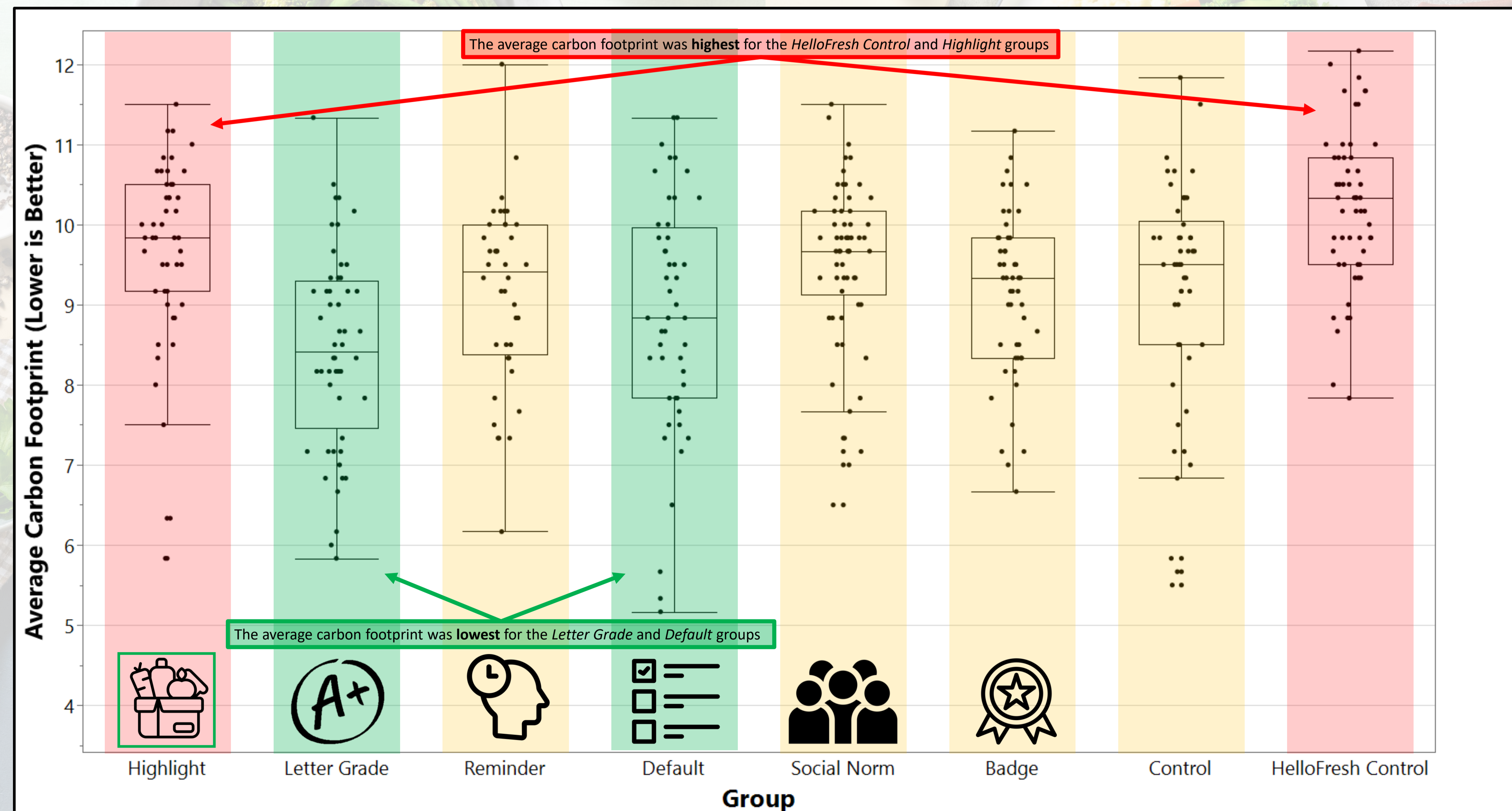
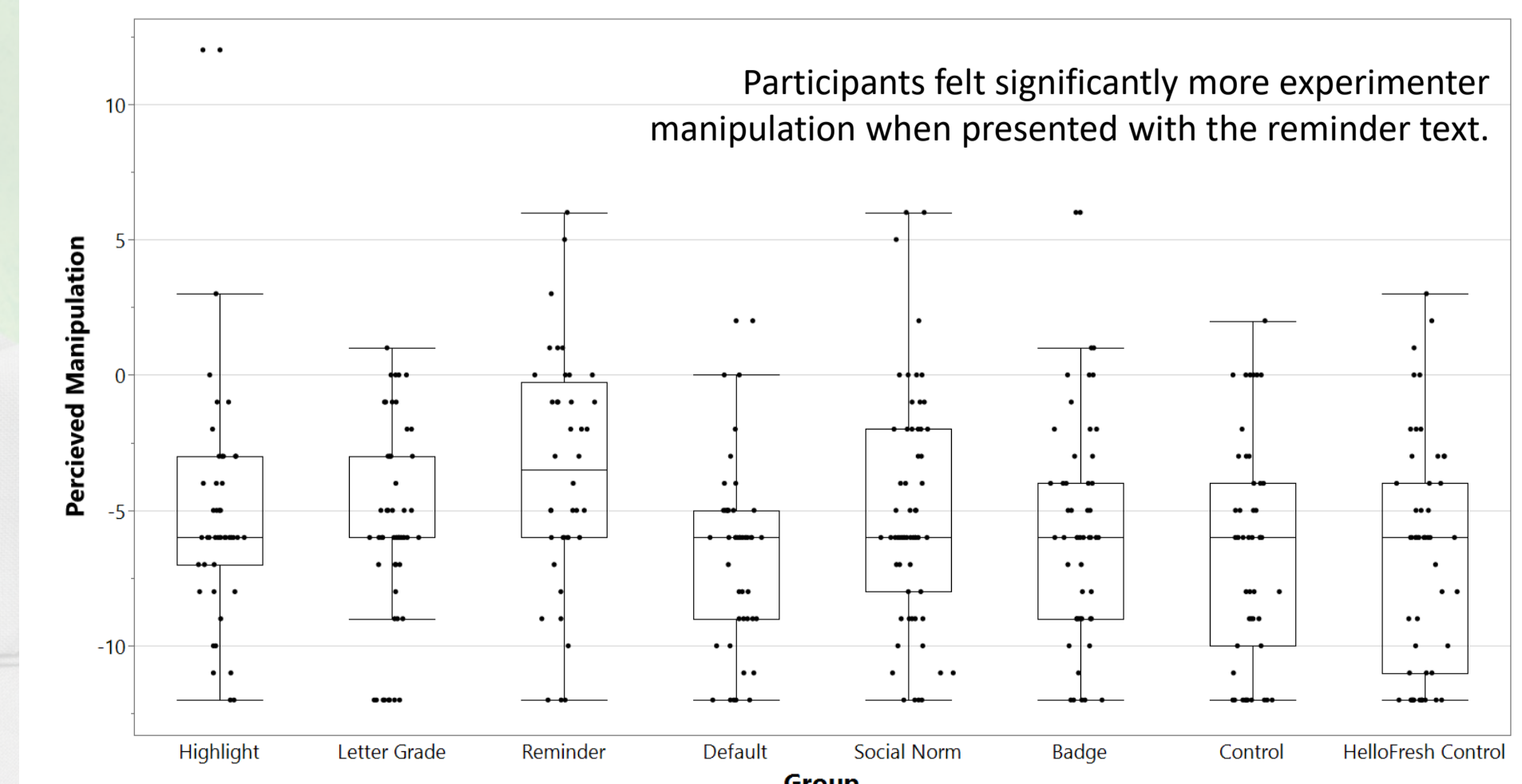
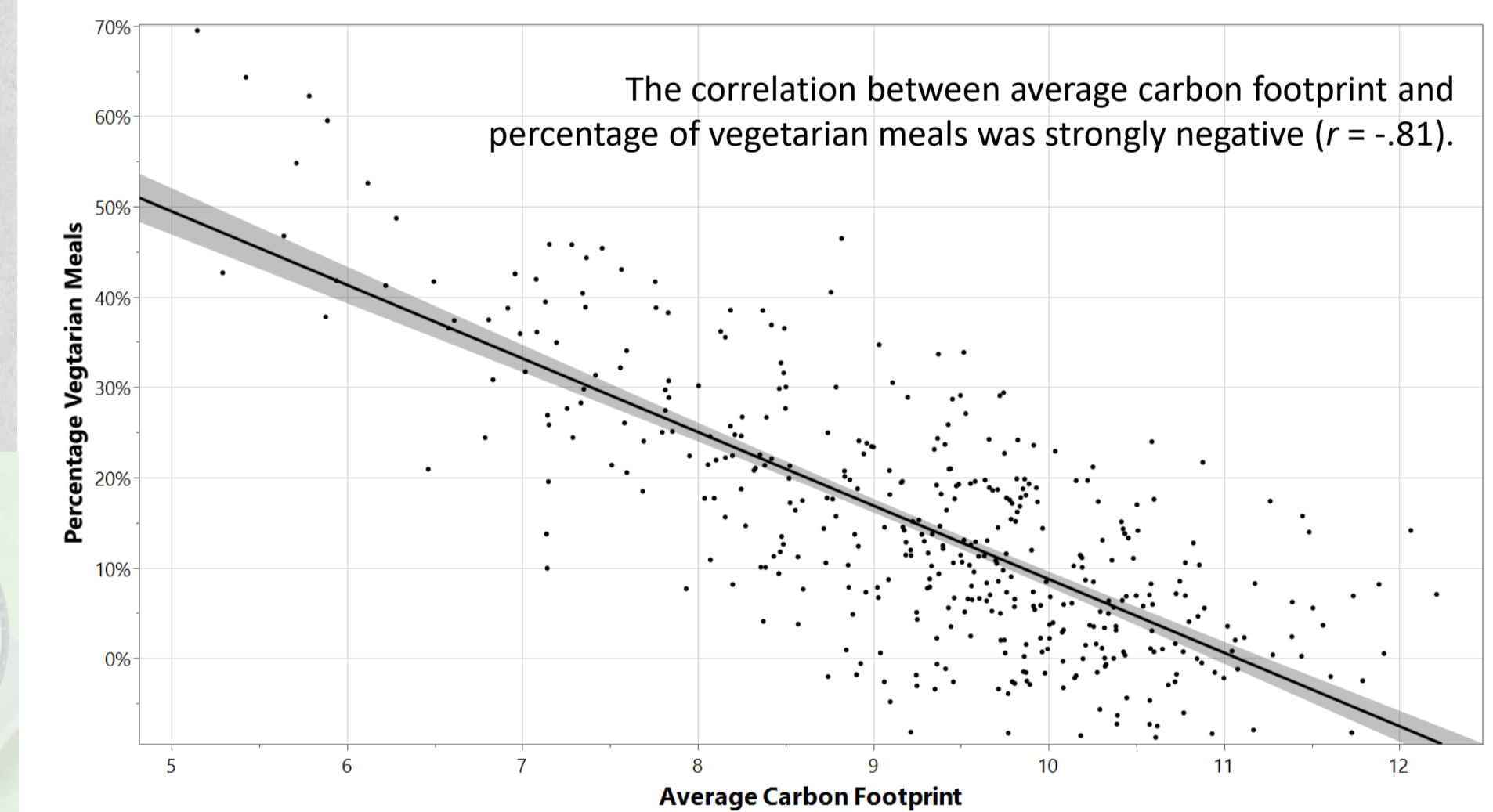
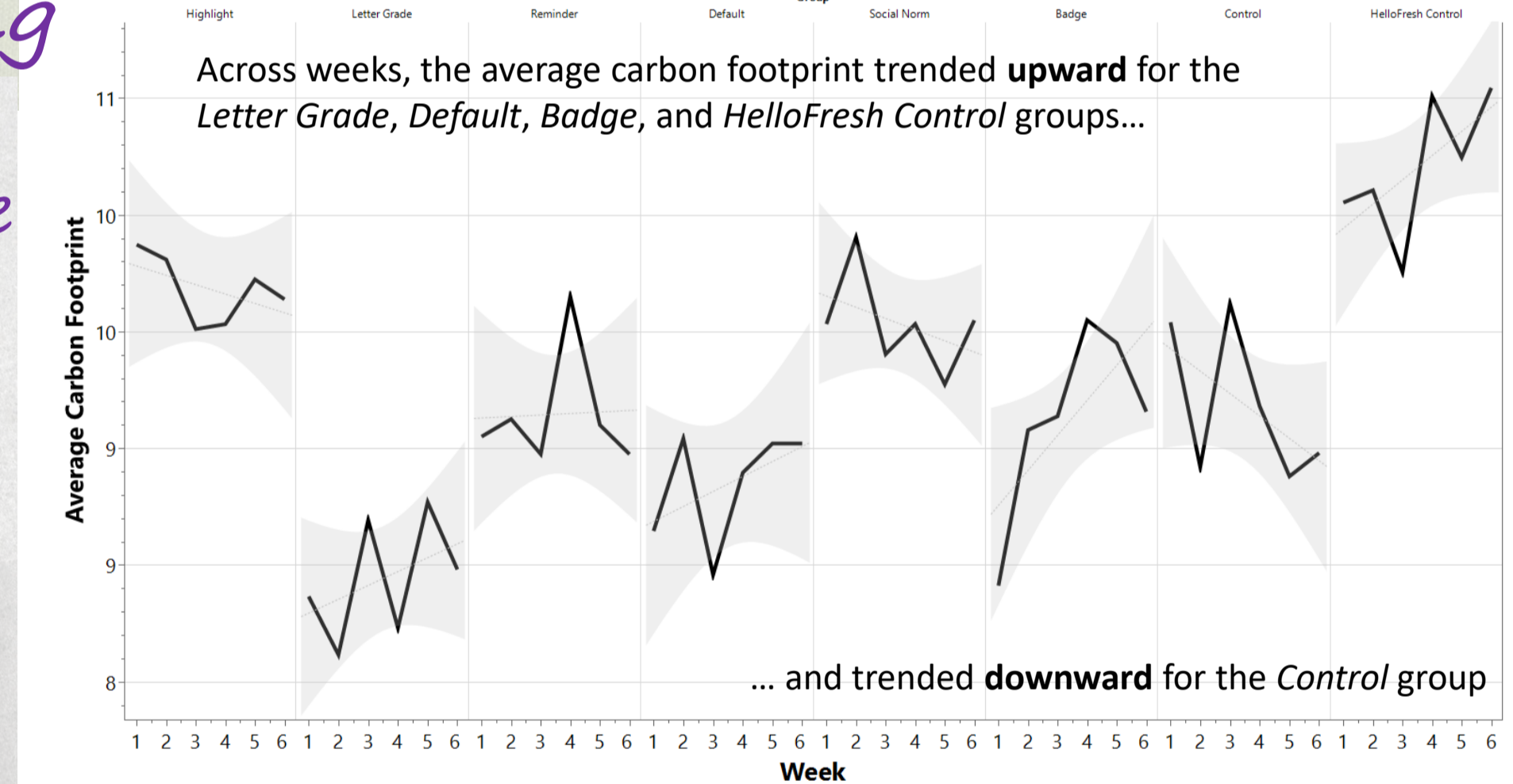
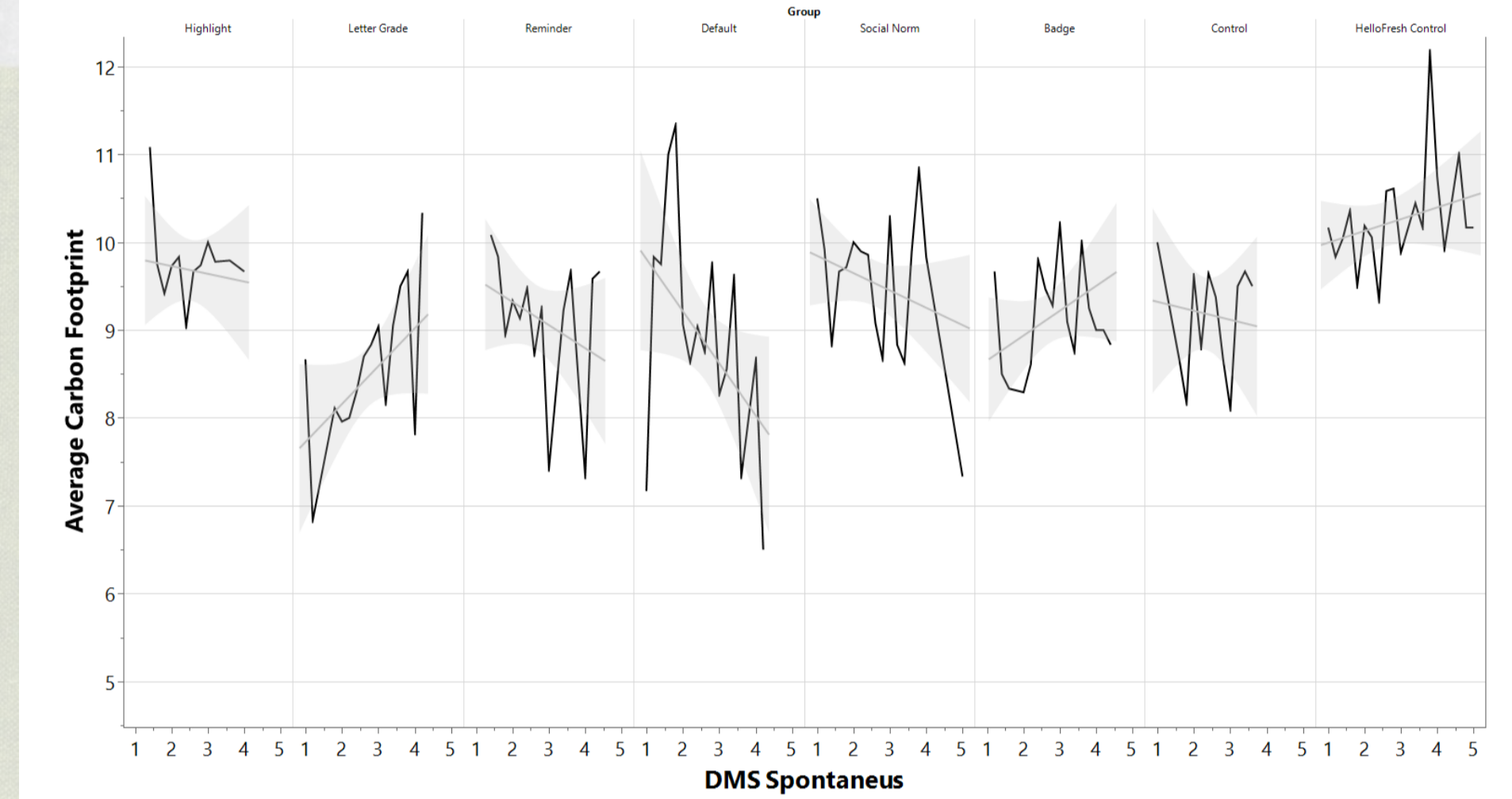
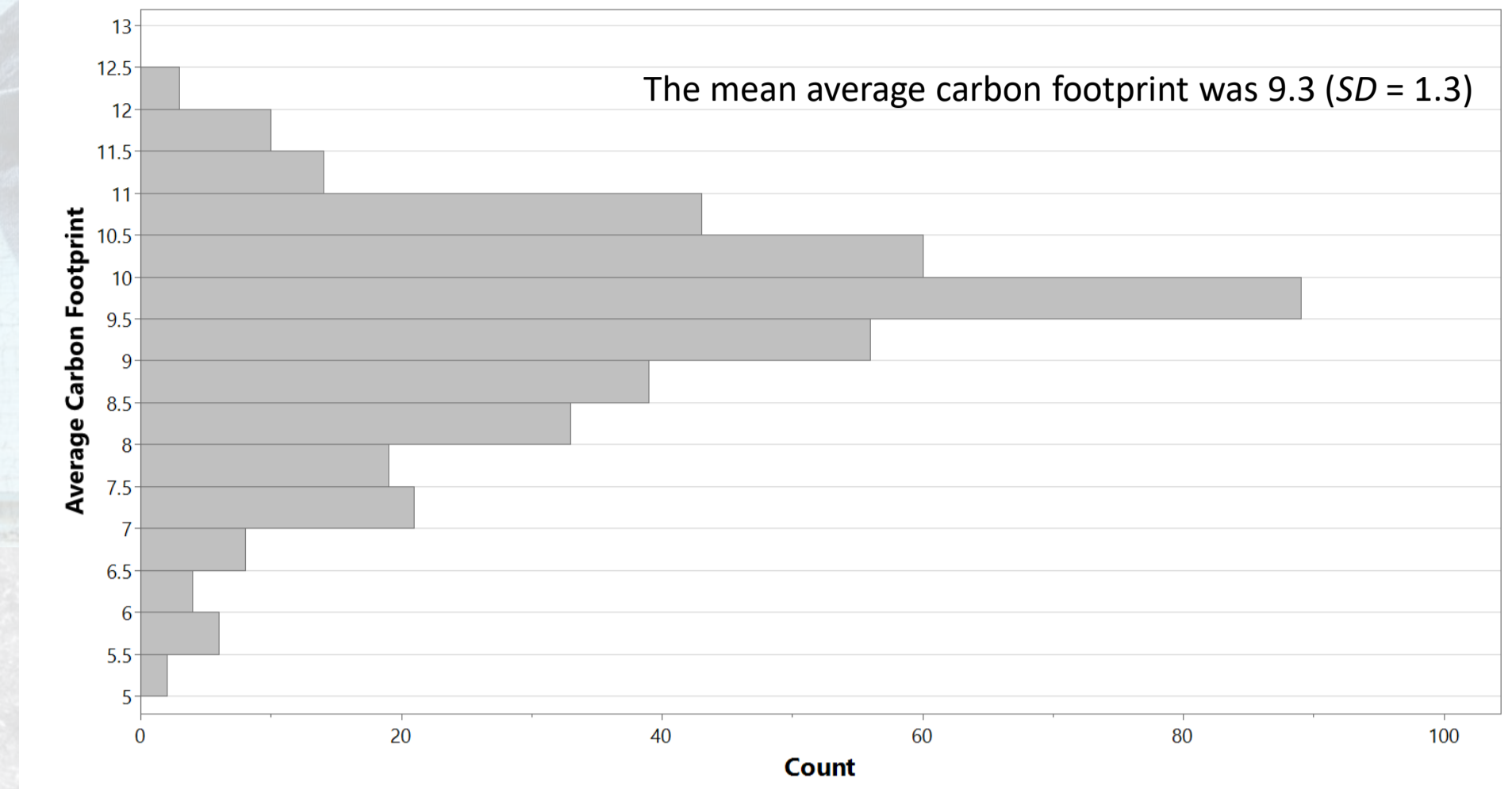
METHODS

- ▶ 407 non-vegetarian Americans recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk were asked to imagine having just signed up to a meal delivery kit service.
- ▶ For 6 hypothetical weeks, participants were asked to select 3 meals from a selection of 9 meals, which were randomly presented in a 3x3 grid.
- ▶ The primary dependent variable was the average carbon footprint of the selected meals.
- ▶ According to Luo, Li, Soman, and Zhao (2021), nudges can be classified as followings:
 - ▶ **Attention** nudges use stimulus features to increase or decrease the salience of an option.
 - ▶ **Perception** nudges frame the content of information to influence the conscious interpretation of the information.
 - ▶ **Memory** nudges use encoding cues or retrieval cues to alter subsequent decisions.
 - ▶ **Effort** nudges change the cognitive or physical ease associated with selecting an option.
 - ▶ **Intrinsic motivation** nudges influence inherent interest toward an option in the absence of external factors.
 - ▶ **Extrinsic motivation** nudges impose external rewards or punishments to alter decisions.
- ▶ Participants were randomly allocated to one of 8 groups: 6 different nudges (corresponding to each nudge type) and 2 control groups.
- ▶ Individual difference measures included:
 - ▶ Food choice motivations.
 - ▶ Decision-making style.
 - ▶ Personality.
 - ▶ Perceived manipulation.
 - ▶ Demographics.

People are more likely to choose sustainable meal options when the most sustainable meals are pre-selected and when all meals are labelled with a carbon score.

For those who are more spontaneous when making decisions, a default nudge is more effective (probably because these people are less likely to spend time thinking about a decision and so more likely to go with the often vegetarian pre-selected meals).

For those who are less spontaneous when making decisions, a letter grade nudge is more effective (probably because these people are more likely to spend time processing the additional letter grade information and be influenced by it).



"In general, plant-based meals are the most environmentally sustainable, while beef-based meals are the least environmentally sustainable. Selecting plant-based options can reduce your carbon footprint."

"Did you know that the rate of people selecting vegetarian meals in the last few years has gone up by 63%? This trend is expected to continue."