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as part of LSE GROUPS 2023.**

LSE GROUPS takes place during the final fortnight of the LSE summer term. Undergraduate students are placed in small groups; these are cross-year, interdisciplinary, and group members do not know one another in advance. Each group must then devise its own research question, and carry out every stage of a small-scale research project in less than two weeks.

LSE GROUPS is part of the LSE commitment to students learning through enquiry, and developing the skills for knowledge creation.

The overall theme of LSE GROUPS 2023 was *Connections*.

This paper was submitted on the final Thursday afternoon of the project.

Students then presented their work at a conference, on the closing Friday.

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What is the impact of social media on public perceptions of veganism? – A mixed method study

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Abstract

Key words: social media, veganism, diet, influence, public perceptions

This article investigates whether social media influences public perceptions of veganism. We have conducted an extensive literature review and for the methodology we have used mostly primary data with an explanatory sequential design (survey and focus group). The survey data demonstrate a weak or no correlation between social media usage and public perceptions of veganism. Pre-existing views of veganism were not altered or changed after being shown multiple videos about veganism. However, there was the suggestion of a connection between childhood, presence on social media and attitudes towards veganism.

I. Introduction

Aim

The aim of this paper is to investigate the connection between social media and the recent rise of veganism as a social movement. Through quantitative and qualitative analysis of various experiences and diverse perceptions people have of the vegan diet, we aim to identify whether there is a connection between using new media platforms and veganism.

Literature Review

The current literature indicates an underlying relationship between social media and the popularity of veganism. Laakso *et al.* (2022) states in relation to the Finnish Vegan Challenge, social media has acted as a key contributor to educating the public on veganism, also stimulating questions about the conventional meat-based diet. Furthermore, qualitative evidence in a study by Erben & Balaban-Sali (2016) shows how social media has provided a medium for vegan activists in Turkey; they expressed that they “felt heard”. A study by Phua *et al.* (2020) further suggests an accelerating impact social media; when an individual’s self-concept, such as health or environmental consciousness, “matches” with a social media or celebrity endorsers’ perceived characteristics, the individual’s intention to become vegan increases. Furthermore, Hwang & Kim (2015) states that social media does not only act as a simple reinforcer for individuals but can play a pivotal role in accelerating social movements. Jennings *et al.* (2019) also states that social media tends to generally portray the vegan diet in a positive manner, however, can be ignored or unreachable by non-vegans.

Nevertheless, it is undisputable that much of the current and past literature’s focus is limited to either ‘whether social media representation of vegans is fair’ or ‘how vegan activists use social media as a means of promoting their campaigns.’ Whether social media exposure has a correlated impact on the public audience’s perceptions of veganism is rather underexplored. Much of the completed studies target people who are already vegan or, on the contrary, those who are strongly ‘anti-vegan’.

Through this study, the authors seek to address the identified gap in literature by investigating whether social media and exposure to vegan content on various platforms can shape the public’s view of veganism, including those that range from minimal interest in veganism to

those who have voluntarily adopted a vegan diet. The authors have studied how social media may change or question the public's existing perceptions of veganism, and whether this may encourage them to participate in this recently rising social movement.

Research question

The research question investigated in this study is: "What is the impact of social media on public perceptions of veganism?" The independent variable of this study is the exposure to social media and the dependent variable is public perceptions of veganism. Whilst there may be multiple independent variables present, this study will be solely investigating social media's influence on perceptions of veganism, controlling for all other possible factors that may influence the stated dependent variable. This is of particular importance as there is increased discussion of social media influence on public perceptions of social movements and environmental change, and to what extent prolonged exposure to such targeted content may reinforce one's existing opinions.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this study are the following:

H₀: There is no association between social media and public perceptions of veganism

H₁: There is an association between social media and public perceptions of veganism.

To test these hypotheses, this study adopts a mixed method approach: a quantitative analysis on collected primary survey data and a qualitative analysis on the focus group discussion. The rationale for utilising this mixed method approach is because quantitative data alone cannot provide detailed explanations for suggested correlations between the independent and dependent variables, and qualitative data from alone is difficult to extrapolate and generalise to the wider population.

II. Methodology

Quantitative data

1. Participants

A convenience sampling method was conducted for 78 participants with approximately 70 being LSE Undergraduate students aged 18-21 years. It was conducted over the time interval of 08/06/2023 to 12/06/2023. Participants were asked to complete a survey created from Microsoft Forms through a type of social media (WhatsApp). Majority of the participants were known to varying degrees to the researcher.

The mean age of the participants were 20.76 years, where 53.85% identified as female, 42.31% identified as male, and 3.87% identified as other. Majority of the participants had lived or were living in the United Kingdom at the time of the survey, where a considerable amount of exposure to social media is used as a means of communication (S, et al., 2020). 70 of the participants identified their diets as non-vegan/vegetarian, 5 identified as vegetarian and 3 identified as vegan.

2. Materials

a. Microsoft Forms

Microsoft Forms allows for the easy design of surveys to be conducted and was selected by the researchers for the data security of the participants.

b. RStudio

RStudio and R allows for the quantitative analysis of the data collection performed through Microsoft Forms.

3. Design

An explanatory sequential design was used for the entire research project to allow for the interpretation of the numeric findings found in the quantitative data collection.

4. Procedure

Researchers had a small sample complete the initial survey to detect possible flaws with the data collection. After confirming no errors detected, the survey was advertised across Whatsapp group chats that the researchers were a part of with the last question allowing an opt-in for a focus group participation. This was to gather a wide range of data and not limit the data collection to particular groups. Surveys were anonymised with the option to write their email address in order to be contacted for the focus group discussion.

The survey asked for the gender identity and diet of the participants, and then measured their perception of veganism. A mixture of question formats were used in the survey to collect a richness of data, ranging from interval questions about social media usage e.g, 'how many number of hours do you spend of social media' to ordinal questions about the perceptions of veganism on social media, e.g. 'I believe everyone should follow a vegan diet'. A final multiple-choice question was asked to assess the participants' perception of veganism on social media ranging from strongly negative = 1, to neutral = 3 to strongly positive = 5.

The researchers then collectively performed a quantitative analysis through Rstudio.

5. Ethical considerations

Before being allowed to participate in the survey, participants were fully informed of the intentions of the study and of their right to withdraw their data at any point of the research. Each answer was completely anonymised to ensure confidentiality.

Qualitative data

1. Participants

4 out of 78 of the participants from the quantitative data collection opted in for the focus groups. 3 out of 4 identified as female, with one participant identifying as 'other'. All participants were Undergraduate students at LSE and were living in the UK at the time of this study. None of the participants identified as vegan, though one participant had tried a vegan diet during childhood.

2. Materials

a. Pre-written questions

A pre-set list of 6 questions were used by the one moderating researcher to conduct the focus group. The questions were split into two sections of three questions. Before the videos were shown, one researcher asked about the participants' opinions of veganism, personal experiences, and what they believe social media's portrayal of veganism is. After each of the videos were shown, the researcher asked about the participants' immediate responses to the video, whether the video had changed their perceptions of veganism, and whether they believed that if they were exposed to similar content for a prolonged period whether their perception of veganism would change. Researchers asked further questions based on emerging themes of the group discussion.

b. Otter.ai

Otter.ai, a website used to transcribe auditory conversations was used in real-time of each of the discussions automatically for the thematic analysis.

c. Video clips.

Four video clips were used to present to the participants to assess whether social media would influence pre-existing views of veganism. Two of the videos presented strongly subjective views about veganism (one negative, and one positive), with the other two videos presenting objective views about veganism (one negative and one positive). Each video was collected from YouTube.

3. Design

A within-groups design was used given that the same participants in the focus group performed the survey. A thematic analysis was conducted on the transcriptions of the qualitative data to identify themes within the group discussion.

4. Procedure

Participants were asked to arrive in a classroom located on the LSE campus. Only one researcher facilitated the group discussion. The focus group took 49 minutes to complete. The entire focus group was auditorily recorded but not visually.

In the thematic analysis an inductive approach and semantic approach was applied to identify the themes of experiences, accessibility, corporate vs individual responsibility and speculation, which we will discuss in section III.

5. Ethical considerations

Before any questions were asked for the focus group, the participants read out a disclaimer as to the sensitive nature of the videos, that includes mentions of animal cruelty. Their right to withdraw at any point during the discussion was announced.

III. Results

Quantitative data

Figure 1 shows the participant's public perception of social media against their mean number of hours spent on social media. Whilst the chart shows a high value of '4.25' for 'Strongly Negative', implying that those who have strongly negative views are, on average, on social media dramatically more (on average 1.94 hours more), there were only two people of the seventy-eight respondents who answered: 'Strongly Negative.' Thus, the strongly negative bar is unrepresentative of all those who hold this view. Nonetheless, the rest of seventy-six participants all tend to use social media the same amount of time.

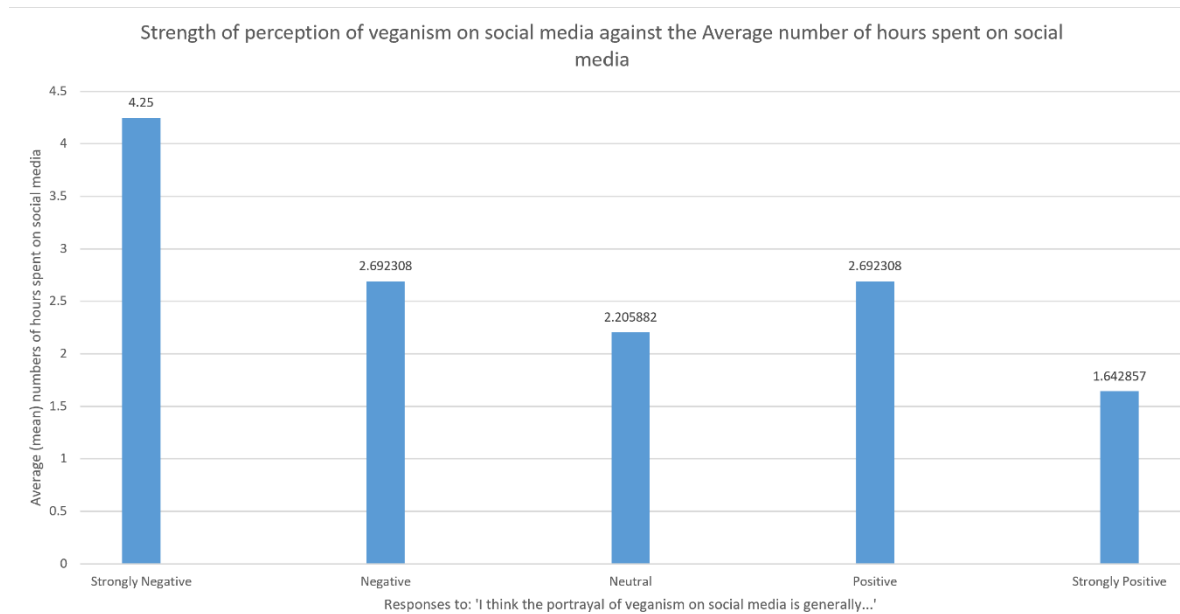


Figure 1, bar chart showing strength of perception of veganism on social media against the average number of hours spent on social media

We tested people's perceived portrayal of veganism on social media ($M = 3.461538$ $SD = 0.9628463$) against their average daily hours spent on social media ($M = 2.532857$ $SD = 1.613621$) in a spearman's rho hypothesis test. We received a p-value of 0.5073, meaning we do not have sufficient evidence to

reject the null hypothesis, concluding that there is no association between being on social media and having a perception or stance on veganism.

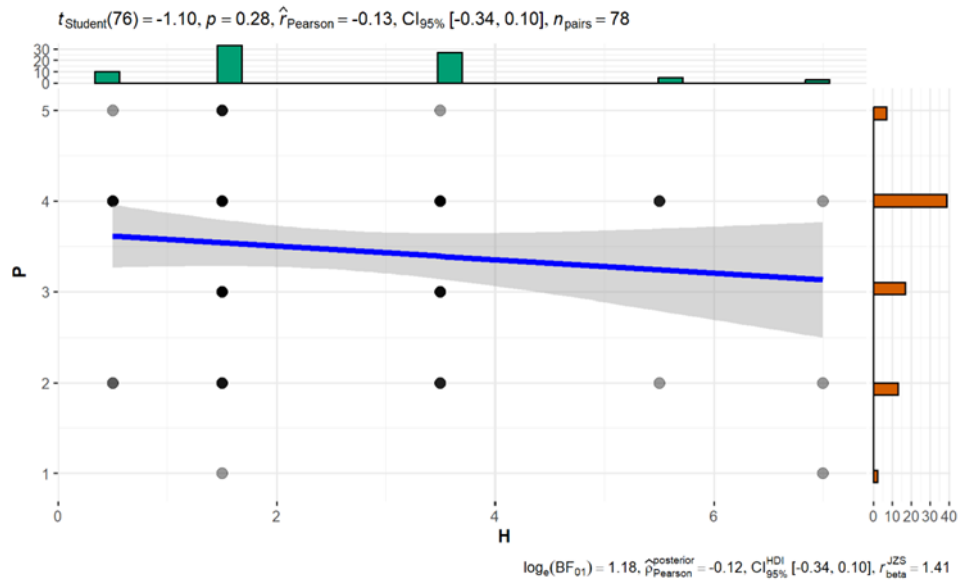


Figure 2 – Visual representation of the correlation between the number of hours spent on social media (H) and the public perceptions of veganism on social media (P)

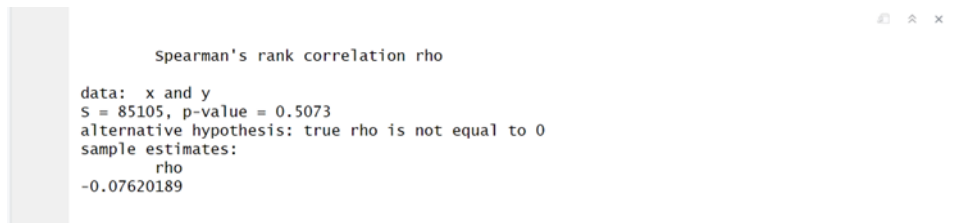


Figure 3 - Correlation between “how many hours do you spend on social media per day” and “I think the portrayal of veganism is generally...”

After cleaning the data, we calculated the accumulated sum of each participants response to the ten questions ($M = 29.07692$ $SD = 4.66757$). We then tested this variable against the participant’s perceived portrayal of veganism on social media ($M = 3.461538$ $SD = 0.9628463$). We then conducted a spearman’s rho test where a p-value of 0.001779 was found. The p-value is less than the 1% significance level ($0.001779 < 0.01$). Therefore, we have enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis,

concluding that there is an association as to people’s perceptions of veganism and the portrayal of veganism on social media.

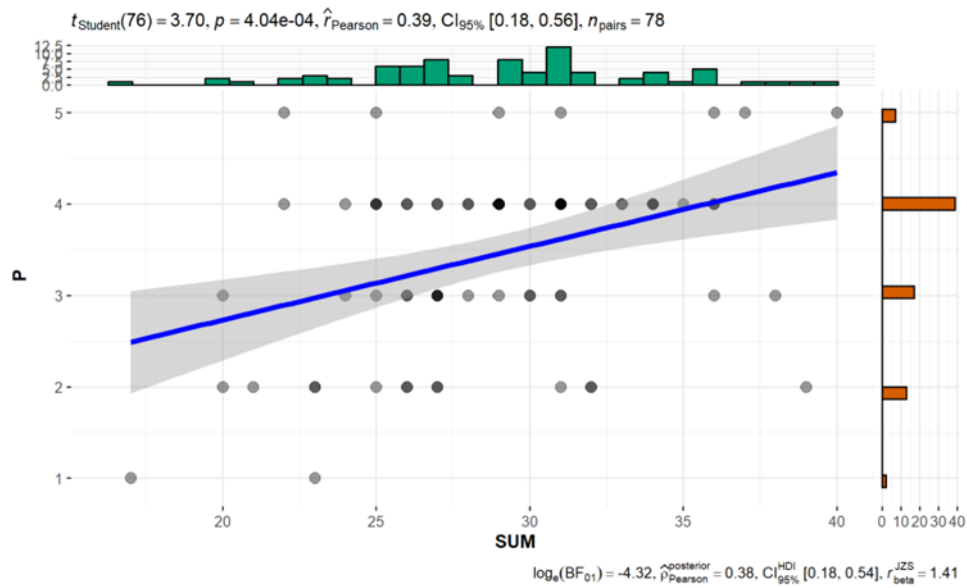


Figure 4 – Visual representation of the correlation between the public perceptions of veganism on social media (P) and accumulated sum of people’s portrayals on veganism



Figure 5 – Correlation between “I think the portrayal of veganism is generally” and the accumulated sum of the answers of “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”

Qualitative data

Note: The thematic analysis conducted was based on transcriptions. The quotes taken from these extracts may have been rephrased for analysis purposes, however cross-checks have been completed to minimise error.

From the inductive and semantic thematic analysis conducted, there were 4 key themes identified.

1. **Experiences:** Participants shared their engagement with veganism during their upbringing, for example through short-term commitment, direct exposure to social media content on veganism, and what they have heard from friends and family.

2. **Accessibility:** Participants discussed the issue of accessibility to vegan diet in the societies they live in, and its implications to public perception and/or participation with veganism.
3. **Corporate versus individual responsibility:** Participants discussed the underlying tones of videos shown, and to what extent individual engagement with veganism is more powerful than corporate engagement/action taken.
4. **Speculation:** Participants formed speculative answers based on leading questions that asked them to consider ‘what if...’; this reflected on their childhood experiences with social media.

Part 1

During the discussion prior to showing the videos, participants briefly shared their **experiences** and perceptions of veganism. All 4 participants claimed not to be vegan, however 2 expressed their interest in partially committing to the vegan diet. This can be shown by “...maybe want to be partially vegan” and “definitely try it out, I don’t buy meat for myself but my family shops for it.” All 4 alluded to second-hand experiences as well; family and friends who were pursuing a vegan diet and that they have “sparked interest in” or “influenced” the participants. All participants suggested some association with social media and their perceptions of veganism. For instance, for one participant who had previously tried a vegan diet, “social media was [their] biggest exposure” and “YouTube [was] why [they] tried a vegan diet”. Participants alluded to seeing vegan content on social media platforms which were persuasive, e.g., “TikTok has people with convincing anecdotes.”

Regarding the pre-existing perceptions of veganism, **accessibility** was the main themes discussed. Participants mentioned that the lack of **accessibility** to vegan options had a greater influence of their perceptions of veganism as opposed to social media clips that were presented. Evidencing quotes are: “it doesn’t fit the lifestyle I live in...restrictions on restaurants in a meat-heavy world”, “restrictive...my vegan friends are often stressed out, making it bad for their psychological health” and “people don’t know how to get a balanced diet with being vegan.” Regarding the environmental aspects, participants mentioned how the veganism culture has a more positive impact on the environment rather than individual commitments to

the vegan diet: “you can be vegan and still be wasteful”. Participants also mentioned the exploitative nature of factory farming (of animals).

Part 2

In analysis, the videos shown are the following, in respective order:

#1 Subjective video with a negative portrayal of veganism

#2 Objective video with a positive portrayal of veganism

#3 Subjective video with a positive portrayal of veganism

#4 Objective video with a negative portrayal of veganism

Table 1, observed changes in perceptions of veganism amongst focus group participants

Participant	Perception of veganism				
	Initial	After #1	After #2	After #3	After #4
1	Slightly negative	Neutral	Neutral	Slightly negative	Slightly negative
2	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	N/A
3	Strongly negative	Strongly negative	Strongly negative	Negative	Strongly negative
4	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative

Note: Table 1 is based on researchers’ judgement after reading and analysing the transcribed version of focus group

In general, as shown in Table 1, the videos shown, regardless of subjectivity/objectivity had little to no influence on the participants’ existing perceptions of veganism. Although some changes in perceptions have been induced, for example participant 1: Neutral -> Slightly negative and participant 3: Strongly negative -> Negative -> Strongly negative, this is not a considerable change in perception as their overall stance remained unchanged.

Key themes that have arisen in the discussion after exposing the participants to videos align with the initial themes discussed in part 1: **experiences**, **accessibility**, **corporate versus individual responsibility**, and **speculation**, there are findings from the part 2 discussion that

must be highlighted. After watching video #1 a participant said, “groups susceptible to influence, such as younger girls, may have been impacted; they would not seek more education but have more fear” and participant 1 agreed. After video #3, a participant said, “this could be educational to some people who have not been exposed to such messages” and participant 1 said: “I agree, there is a reason she has a big following. People are definitely convinced by her.” A participant then further reinforced this by saying: “educational level is interesting- it affects the perception of people and how they respond to these videos.”

IV. Discussion

The quantitative findings of this research demonstrate the impact of social media on public perceptions of veganism are low to non-existent. This is evident by the computer analysis earlier where we found no correlation between the number of hours spent on social media and the portrayal of veganism on social media. However, we found a strong positive correlation between the portrayal of veganism on social media and participants’ views of veganism. From this, we can infer that depending on the vegan content that the participants consume, they are aligned with their views. However, this is to be expected given that users will be provided content that will reflect their views as the algorithm recommends content that aligns with their views. Although this finding aligns with previous research, this is not a new discovery.

The qualitative findings of this research reinforce its quantitative findings; there is no shown association between social media and perceptions of veganism. Participants in general evaluated the shown videos, based on credibility, whether it is anecdotal or not, the tone of the video (whether it stimulates fear), and how this would influence perceptions of various groups. Whilst answering speculative questions, participants highlighted the level of education they have, and how they can critically reflect on the implication of the shown videos. They also alluded to their childhood experiences mentioning whether they have been continuously exposed to such content, believing they would have been influenced by them (regarding their perceptions of veganism). This indicates the lack of investigative focus in this study on varying levels of influence social media has on different age groups, educational levels, etc.

There are several limitations for this research project. When assessing public perceptions, it is important to grasp the full scope of perceptions of the general population, however due to the nature of the research, findings were only collected from participants aged 18-21 who attended

a prestigious university. The conclusions of the findings therefore cannot be applied to the general populace, as varying degrees of education and exposure to social media will impact members of society differently. Additionally, the sample size of four participants in the focus group, who were majority female, does not provide a representative sample of opinions for this research. Furthermore, a Likert scale of 10 questions cannot accurately portray the participants' perceptions of a complex topic like veganism and social media. Another fundamental limitation of the survey data was that the research questions may have been formatted in a way to promote acquiescence bias, meaning that the participants felt that they must respond as either 'agree' or 'disagree'. Whilst this is easy to analyse, this does not then accurately reflect the participants' perceptions of veganism.

Despite the range of limitations associated with this research, this study has provided a theoretical bias as to the role of adolescence as playing a crucial factor for the impact of social media on the perceptions of Veganism. Prior experiences as identified in the thematic analysis indicate that the role of social media on public perceptions of Veganism may be more influential on children as opposed to adults. This has been supported in research as social media plays a crucial role in the education for children across Europe (O'Neill, 2023).

For future research, improving the sample and methodology is crucial to determining whether social media plays a role in influencing perceptions of veganism. Whilst our research concludes that social media is not the sole determinant of opinions of veganism, this does not rule out the possibility of social media as a contributing factor. Therefore, including a larger sample size across all age groups, and varying levels of education would be best to establish whether a correlation exists. Furthermore, addressing social media usage in more detail during the focus group in the asked questions may have improved our results further.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has discovered that social media has no impact on public perceptions of veganism. This finding is limited to the scope of our study, our sample size, and methodology, and thus cannot be generalised. Nonetheless, we believe that our finding provides a fundamental basis for further research on the connection between social media and veganism.

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VII. Appendices

Appendix 1- Figures and Tables

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Appendix 2- Survey

Exploring the Influence of Social Media on Public Perceptions of Veganism

We are conducting a research project on the impact of social media on public perceptions of veganism. Your participation is voluntary and anonymous. It will help us to better understand how social media is shaping public perceptions of veganism. You may withdraw from the survey at any time without penalty. Your responses will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at: M.Mughal@lse.ac.uk / k.lee44@lse.ac.uk/ x.w.chaudhary@lse.ac.uk/ m.townley@lse.ac.uk.

* 필수

1. I have read the project description above and consent to my answers in this survey being collected and used for research purposes. *

Yes

2. What is your age? *

3. What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to say

4. What is your ethnicity?

Disclaimer: The usage of the UK government's recognized ethnicities in our survey is solely intended to promote inclusivity and gather diverse perspectives. We acknowledge that ethnic identities are personal and multifaceted, and individuals may identify with ethnicities beyond the categories provided. We respect the self-identification of participants and aim to create an inclusive environment that values and represents the diversity of experiences and backgrounds. *

- White British
- White Irish
- White Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White Other (including White European)
- Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity: White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity: White and Black African
- Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity: White and Asian
- Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity: Other Mixed
- Asian/Asian British: Indian
- Asian/Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian/Asian British: Chinese
- Asian/Asian British: Other Asian
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black

- Other Ethnic Group: Arab
- Other Ethnic Group: Any Other Ethnic Group
- 기타

5. What is your diet? *

- Vegan
- Vegetarian
- Non-vegan/Non-vegetarian

6. Please provide reasons for your diet. Select all that apply. *

- Health
- Allergies and food intolerances
- Religion/culture
- Environment
- Ethical
- Convenience
- No particular reason

7. If you are willing to share more about your diet, please do so below.

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I think I have a good understanding of what a vegan diet is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe everyone should follow a vegan diet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not understand why people choose to be vegan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe veganism is a healthier diet than a general/regular diet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am open to trying a vegan diet short term.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have seen negative portrayals of my own diet on social media.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Veganism is popular because of social media.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How social media portrays veganism is persuasive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

On social media, I think many people agree with veganism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to follow a vegan diet forever.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. If you were to try a vegan diet, for what reason would it be? Please rank in order of likelihood. *

To improve my health
For environmental causes
For ethical causes
For religious causes

10. What type of media do you consume the most? Please rank in order of most to least consumed. *

Newspapers/Articles
TV broadcasts (e.g. BBC, CNN)
Social Media (e.g. Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Podcast
Radio

11. How many hours do you spend on social media per day? *

- I don't use social media
- 0-1
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7+

12. When using social media, what platforms do you use? Select all that apply. *

- Youtube
- TikTok
- Instagram
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Reddit
- Snapchat
- Whatsapp
- WeChat
- I don't use social media

13. I think the portrayal of veganism on social media is generally... *

- Strongly positive
- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
- Strongly negative

14. If possible, I am willing to take part in an anonymous in-person focus group about veganism on the LSE campus, on Tuesday the 13th of June. *

- Yes
- No

15. If yes, I can be contacted by the following contact. (Please provide either e-mail address/phone number.)

If no, please enter "No". *

16. If you have any comments, please share below.

Appendix 3- Focus group consent form

LSE GROUPS Consent and information sheet

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your interest in this project. In this form, we give you information about the project and ask for your consent to participate. If you agree, please state your name and that you agree to the statements in the table below to give your consent.

What is the study about?

With the rising interest in veganism, and the widespread use of social media, there is increasing debate as to whether social media can influence public perceptions of veganism. We will be investigating the connection between social media and the rise of veganism as a social movement through quantitative and qualitative analysis. This focus group will form the qualitative analysis of our study, and we thus hope to hear from various participants with different diets and perceptions of veganism.

What will my involvement be?

Your involvement as a participant will be the following. You will be invited to take part in a short introductory discussion where you will have the chance to discuss your existing perceptions of and/or experience with veganism. Then, we will ask you to watch 4 short videos that have different perspectives on veganism. After this, you will be invited once again to a group discussion where you may discuss your impressions of the videos shown and/or elaborate on your opinions stated previously.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary. There are no negative consequences for you if you decide not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part but then later on you change your mind, you can let us know by [14/06/2023] - you will not have to give any explanation why. It is also absolutely fine if you feel that you don't want to answer any specific questions.

What will my information be used for?

The data gathered from this focus group will be used to form our research paper. This paper may be published on the LSE website and may be shared further for research and academic purposes after the LSE-GROUPS conference.

Will my information be anonymous?

Your participation will be anonymous - your name will not be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study.

If you agree to take part in the research, please complete the section below

Your name:

Please read these three statements. If you agree with the statement, put X in the box next to it.

I have read this message and had the opportunity to ask questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to participate in the focus group.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my responses will be kept confidential and anonymous and that my personal information will be kept securely and destroyed at the end of the study	<input type="checkbox"/>

Researcher names: Maya Townley, Ahmad Mughal, Kyumin Lee, Xavier Chaudhary

Email address: m.townley@lse.ac.uk, m.mughal@lse.ac.uk, k.lee44@lse.ac.uk, x.w.chaudhary@lse.ac.uk

If you have any questions about the study, please email m.mughal@lse.ac.uk.

If you wish to make a complaint about this study, please email sdn_groups@lse.ac.uk.

[The LSE Research Privacy Policy](#).

Appendix 4- Focus group disclaimer and questions asked

Disclaimer:

The videos we present there may be certain opinions that are sensitive and/or biased. Although there will be no visually graphic details, these videos may also contain mentions of sensitive content such as animal cruelty. We would like to inform all participants that this is not representative of the purpose and/or scope of the entire study. We would also like to make sure that participants may withdraw from this focus group at any point they wish without penalty. The discussions will be recorded for analysis purposes, but all contributions will be kept anonymous and confidential.

Questions:

Before video:

1. What are your opinions on veganism?
2. What are your personal experiences with veganism?
3. What do you think about social media's portrayal of veganism?

After video:

1. What are your immediate/first responses to the video?
2. Do you think this has changed your perceptions of veganism?
3. Do you think, if you were to be exposed to similar content on social media for a longer term/time period, your perceptions of veganism will change?