



When do defaults backfire?

The twofold effect of default options on green consumption when competing motivations are at stake

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INTRODUCTION

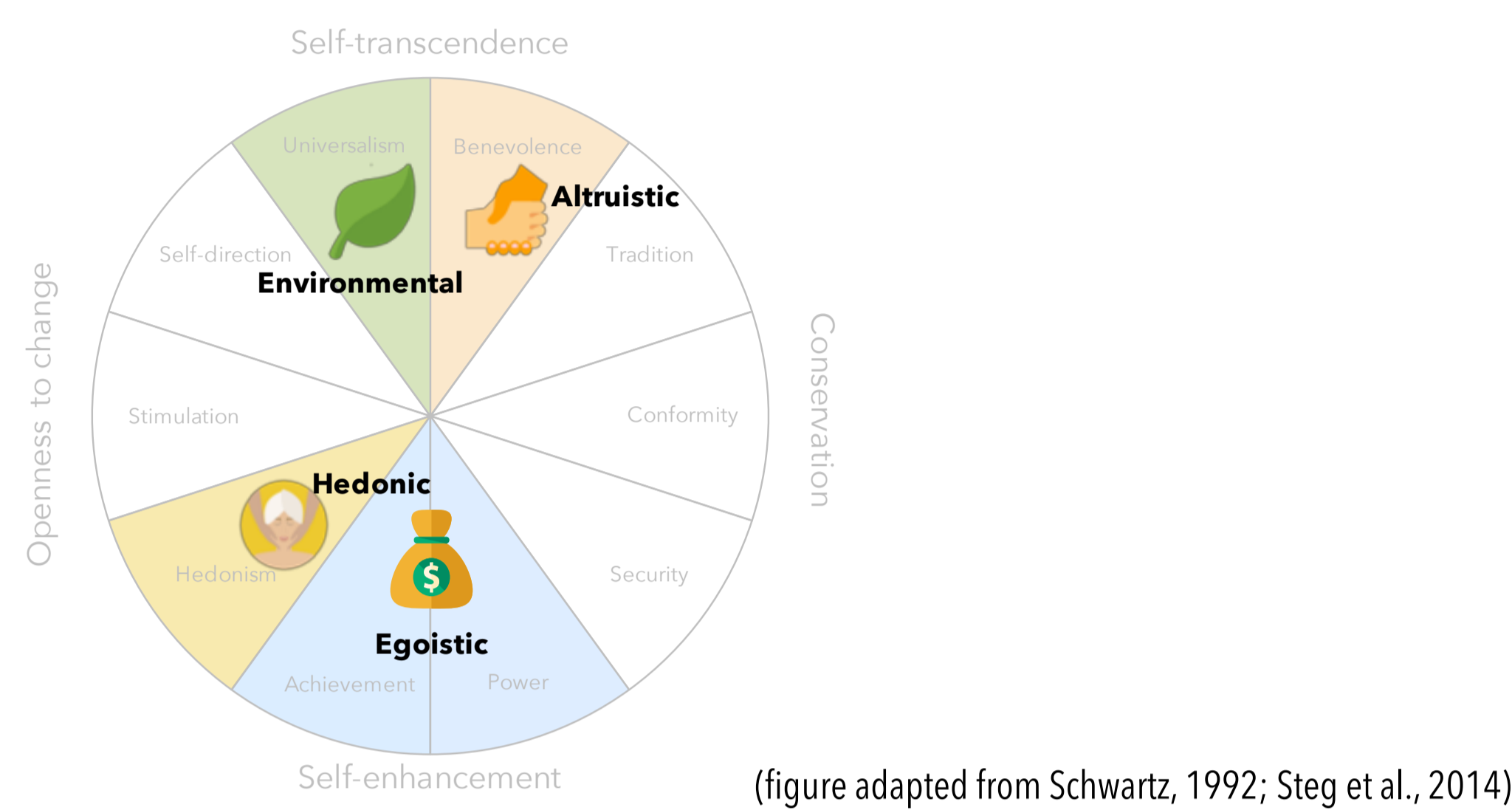
Green defaults guide consumers towards pro-environmental choices^[1]. Nevertheless, when multiple salient motivations are at stake (e.g. doing something good for the environment versus following one's self-interest), a recommendation can be perceived as a restriction of one's freedom^[2]. In this case, people may deliberately choose to act against it^[3]. Through a consumer dilemma task, we investigate the effect of pre-set options that (dis)favor eco-friendliness versus enjoyability of a product on consumer sustainable choices.

KEY CONCEPTS

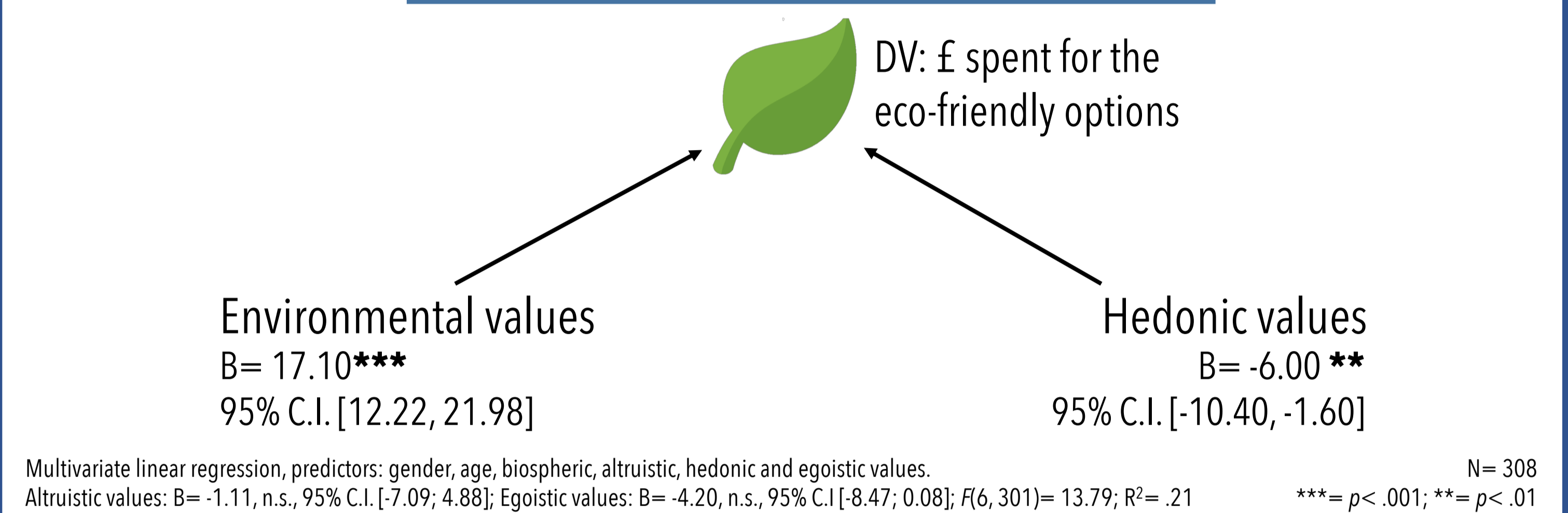
Nudge: steer people in desired directions^[4]

Default: use of pre-set options^[4]

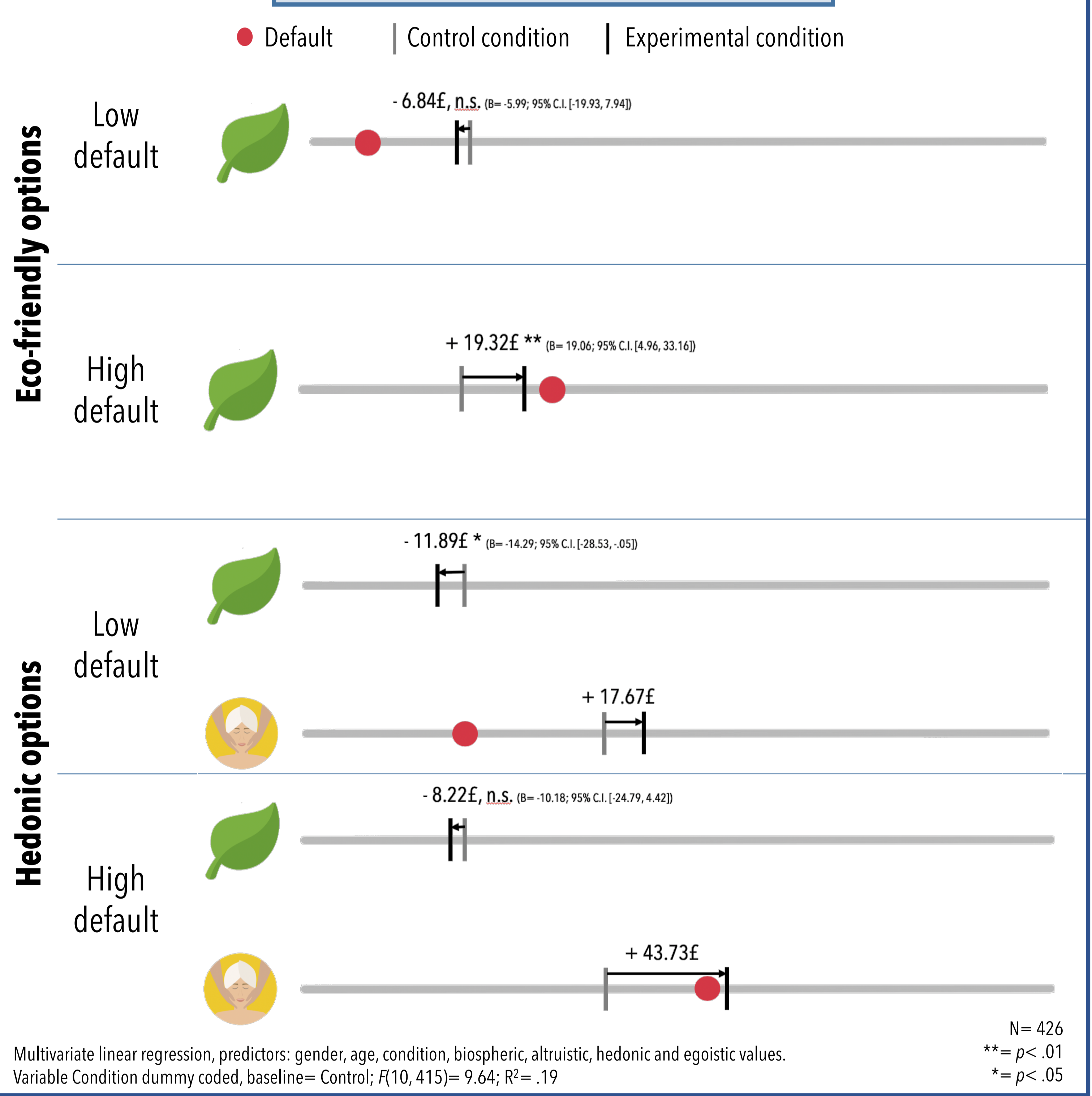
Values: stable, trans/situational and abstract motivations and goals in life that influence goal directed behavior^[5,6]



RESULTS STUDY 1



RESULTS STUDY 2



METHODS

The Consumer Dilemma Task (CDT)

Study 1: Values measures (T1) → CDT (T2)

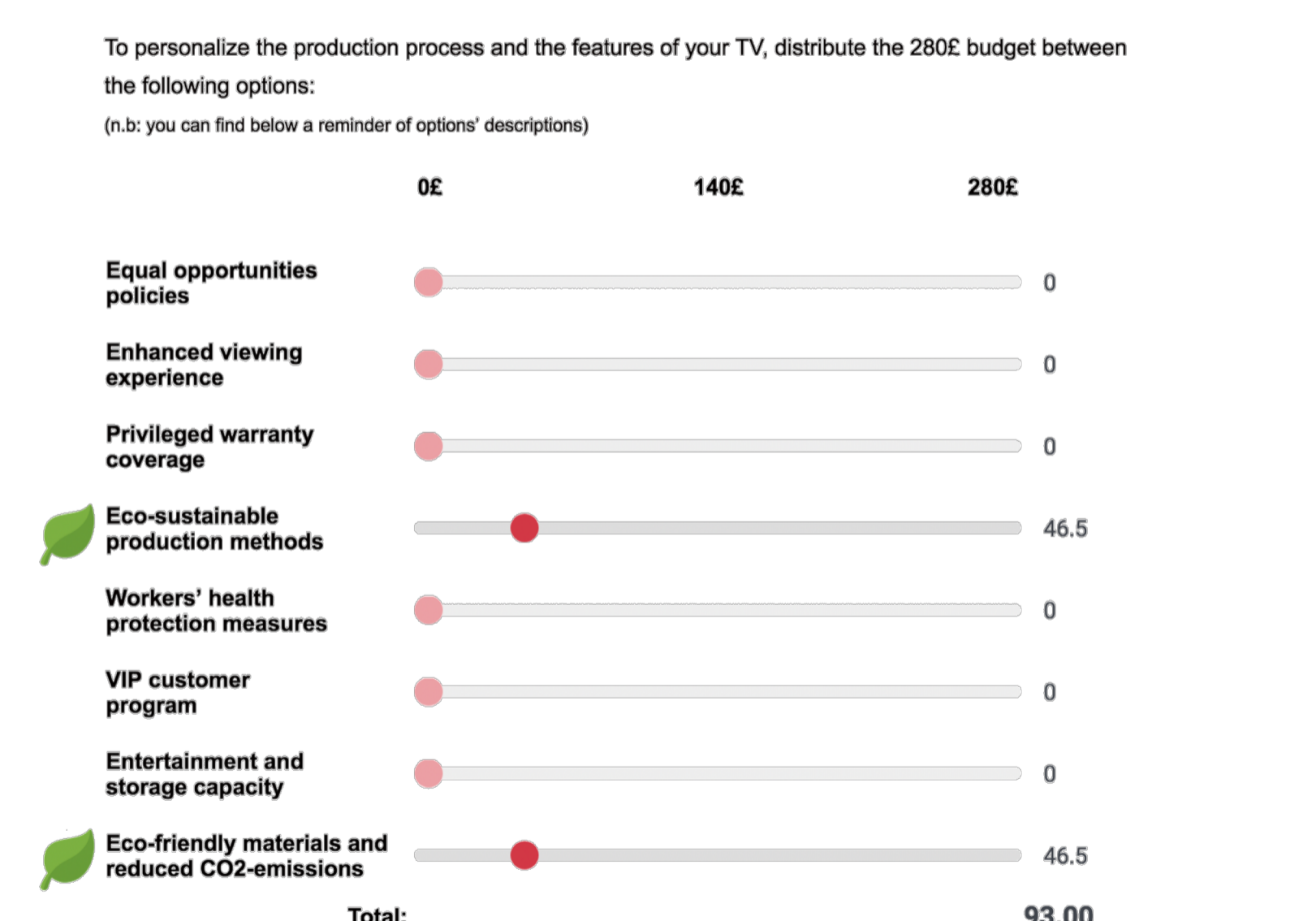
Study 2: CDT (T1) → Values measures (T2)

2X2 Between-subjects design

Example: Eco-friendly options, high default

Options	Default	
	High	Low
	High	Low
	High	Low

+ control condition
(replication of study 1)



CONCLUSIONS

- » **Environmental and hedonic values** had **specific impact** in participants' environmental-friendly choices (compared to other environmentally relevant values);
- » The **opposite effect** of environmental and hedonic values **might describe the dilemma of foregoing personal gain in favor of a more abstract gain** to the environment.
- » The presence of a default **promoted**, but also **backfired**, on participants' eco-friendly behavior;
- » **Different defaults** had **different effects**;
- **FUTURE DIRECTIONS:** How and why?

REFERENCES

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 [3] Jachimowicz, J. M., Duncan, S., & Weber, E. U. (2016). Default-Switching: The Hidden Cost of Defaults. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 646-647. Available at <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2727301>
 [4] Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2008). *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
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 [6] Steg, L., Perlaviciute, G., Van der Werff, E., & Lurvink, J. (2014). The significance of hedonic values for environmentally relevant attitudes, preferences, and actions. *Environment and behavior*, 46, 163-192.