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The Influence of Gratitude on Consumption Reduction: The Mediating Role of
Compassionate Goals

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Sara Fehberger BSc

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Univ.-Prof. Dipl.-Psych. Dr. Arnd Florack

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Abstract

To reduce environmental damage, it is crucial to understand the drivers and possible counterparts of overconsumption. Previous research has mainly focused on why people have high consumption patterns. The goal of this study is to contribute to this area of research by investigating how gratitude, as a positive emotion, affects people's willingness to limit their consumption and how the person's compassionate goals mediate this relationship. For this purpose, a study was conducted with 166 participants. The sample of German-speaking people was divided into a control group and an experimental group, in which gratitude was increased using a manipulation. All participants were then required to fill in the same questionnaires measuring their level of gratitude and compassionate goals. Finally, the individual's willingness to renounce streaming services was tested using a personally designed limited resource scenario. Although the experimental manipulation did not significantly increase gratitude levels, and no significant influence on consumption reduction was found, a significant positive correlation between gratitude and the participants' compassionate goals was observed. However, no mediating effect of the latter on reducing streaming consumption could be found. Although the hypotheses were not confirmed, an exploratory analysis found a significant difference between high and low consumers. Data suggest that people who frequently use streaming services are less likely to reduce their consumption than those who consume irregularly.

Keywords: overconsumption, gratitude, compassionate goals, ecosystem motivation, reduction of consumption

Deutschsprachiger Abstrakt

Um Umweltschäden zu reduzieren, ist es von Bedeutung, die treibenden Kräfte und möglichen Gegenspieler des Überkonsums zu verstehen. Bisherige Forschung hat sich hauptsächlich darauf konzentriert, warum Menschen viel konsumieren. Ziel dieser Studie ist es daher, die bisherige Literatur zu erweitern, indem untersucht wird, wie sich die Dankbarkeit als positive Emotion auf die Bereitschaft auswirkt, Konsum einzuschränken und wie diese Beziehung von den Gemeinschaftszielen der Person mediiert wird. Zu diesem Zweck wurde eine Studie mit 166 TeilnehmerInnen durchgeführt. Die Stichprobe mit deutschsprachigen Personen wurde in eine Kontroll- und eine Experimentalgruppe aufgeteilt. In der Experimentalgruppe wurde eine Manipulation durchgeführt, um die Dankbarkeit der TeilnehmerInnen zu erhöhen. Im Anschluss füllten alle Teilnehmenden Fragebögen aus, um ihr Dankbarkeitslevel und ihre Gemeinschaftsziele zu erfassen. Schließlich wurde die individuelle Bereitschaft zum Verzicht anhand eines persönlich gestalteten limitierten Ressourcen-Szenarios erhoben. Die experimentelle Manipulation führte nicht zu signifikanten Unterschieden hinsichtlich der Dankbarkeit und diese hatte keinen signifikanten Einfluss auf die Konsumreduktion. Jedoch konnte ein signifikanter positiver Effekt der Dankbarkeit auf die Gemeinschaftsziele der TeilnehmerInnen nachgewiesen werden.

Mediierender Effekt zweiterer auf die Konsumreduktion im Streaming konnte aber keiner festgestellt werden. Obwohl die Hypothesen nicht bestätigt werden konnten, ergab die Explorative Analyse einen signifikanten Unterschied zwischen Viel- und Wenig-KonsumentInnen. Die Daten deuten darauf hin, dass Personen, die Streaming-Dienste häufiger nutzen, weniger Bereitschaft zeigen, ihren Konsum zu reduzieren, als Personen, die diese wenig nutzen.

Schlagwörter: Überkonsum, Dankbarkeit, Gemeinschaftsziele, Ökosystemmotivation, Konsumreduktion

Introduction

Human-induced climate change, its devastating consequences for our planet and the urgency of immediate action are well known (Rosenzweig & Neofortis, 2013; IPCC, 2021). One factor contributing to this issue is the rising consumption and the associated resource use (Akhmat & Zahmat, 2014; Hatfield et al., 2017; Merz et al., 2023). An element that represents this issue impressively is the "Earth Overshoot Day". It is the day when humanity worldwide has consumed all the natural resources that the Earth can provide in a year— which was reached this year on August 1, 2024 (Global Footprint Network, 2024). Underscoring this, numerous studies indicate that we must intervene immediately to avoid reaching further tipping points and crossing thresholds in our climate system. Otherwise, this would have catastrophic effects on our entire ecosystem f.e extreme weather events like persisting heatwaves (Matthews et al., 2017), heavy floodings (Kundzewicz et al. 2013), or societal problems like food scarcity (Wheeler & Von Braun, 2013). To avoid these consequences, a massive reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will be needed (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2021).

As private household consumption is one of the main drivers (Steininger et al., 2018), it would be important to consider ways of reducing consumption to decrease emissions. There is already a substantial amount of research examining the reasons behind high consumption and how it can be switched to more sustainable alternatives (Collins et al., 2007; Stephen, 2016; Gonçalves et al., 2021). Additionally, there is already some research that addresses the concept of voluntary consumption reduction as a certain lifestyle such as minimalism (Kang et al., 2021) or the practice of voluntary simplicity (Alexander & Ussher, 2012). Although there is a literature base on sustainable consumption and psychological factors influencing such behavior, there is a gap in studies examining how consumption reduction can be encouraged

when there are not enough common resources and people get called to reduce their consumption.

One factor that could potentially facilitate the act of renunciation is gratitude. Bilsky and Schwartz (1994) suggested that gratitude as a positive emotion is strongly linked to the values of benevolence and universalism. Benevolence is about caring for and improving the welfare of people close to us. Universalism is about appreciating and protecting the welfare of humans and nature in general, which could be helpful in situations like reducing one own's consumption for the benefit of all. Some more recent papers suggest that increased gratitude may be associated with helping not only people who helped us before but also third parties or people we are not close to (DeSteno et al., 2010). According to DeSteno et al., (2010), gratitude inhibits temporary motives for selfish resource gain by adopting decisions and actions that focus more on the common good, which could help sustain shared limited resources by sacrificing short-term personal gain. In line with the idea that gratitude helps decrease selfish economic decisions, the latest results from Kates and DeSteno (2021) suggest that gratitude may potentially contribute to a reduction in the consumption of common resources. However, it is important to note that these findings are still preliminary, and further research into the possible connection between gratitude and prosocial behavior in terms of sacrificing one own's consumption is needed.

It may also be the case that gratitude acts as a trigger for a person's ecosystem and thus has an influence on their willingness to reduce their consumption, as both concepts go along with heightened cooperation and the value of caring for and protecting the welfare of others (Bartlett & DeSteno 2006; Smith et al., 2017). The ecosystem as a motivational system is linked to the preservation of

the species. It is important for cooperation and the prioritization of common goods and goals (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). Since global environmental problems such as overconsumption are problems for society as a whole, it requires positively perceived interdependencies and mutual trust that solving the problem will lead to a win-win situation for all. Nevertheless, also this topic must be explored more to understand a possible relationship between ecosystem motivation and consumption patterns better.

As the possible connection between gratitude, ecosystem, and consumption is rarely investigated yet, the present study wants to address this research gap in the following section. While gratitude has been shown to foster prosocial behavior and reduce selfish decision-making (DeSteno et al., 2010; Kates & DeSteno, 2021), its role in promoting personal reduction of consumption is unclear. Given the urgency of overconsumption as a global issue, understanding whether gratitude can shift individuals toward an ecosystem-oriented mindset is crucial. If gratitude strengthens cooperation and prioritization of collective well-being, it could serve as a key emotional driver of sustainable behavior. This study examines whether gratitude promotes such a shift, providing new insights into the emotional foundations of prosocial environmental action.

Theoretical Background

Overconsumption and Reduction of Consumption

Overconsumption is a major driver of climate change and therefore reducing individual consumption is necessary to mitigate environmental damage (Merz et al., 2023; IPCC, 2021). The increasing rate of resource extraction exceeds environmental limits and contributes significantly to human-induced climate change (Global Footprint Network, 2024). While sustainable alternatives have emerged,

overall consumption continues to rise, challenging efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Steininger et al., 2018). To effectively address climate change, we must consider not only sustainable alternatives but also strategies for overall consumption reduction (Wang et al., 2014).

The term “overconsumption” refers to the extraction of resources at a rate that goes beyond environmental limits and contributes to human-induced climate change in a harmful way. Exceeding the available resources is determined by the rate at which these resources can regenerate and is made visible in the annual report of the Earth Overshoot Day (Global Footprint Network, 2024). A big part of CO₂ emissions caused by human activity is due to direct commissions of burning fossil fuels, industrial production, human and animal respiration, and deforestation (Wang et al., 2014; Zakarya et al., 2015). Indirectly, or at a more individual level, greenhouse gas (GHG) - intensive factors are emissions associated with consumption, particularly consuming food, goods, and services (Gough et al., 2011; Ripple et al., 2017) which thus, results in excessive demand in natural resources.

Possible actions for reducing those GHG emissions on an individual level may involve consuming less, consuming more sustainably, or any other form of renunciation (Trudel, 2019). There is a growing recognition that society needs to rethink its consumer behavior. Many people have already made the switch to sustainable alternatives like second-hand clothing (Halicki et al., 2024), vegetarian or vegan food (Alae-Caraw, 2022) but we must acknowledge that there is still a trend of increasing consumption of private households (Statistiken zum privaten Konsum in Deutschland, Statista 2023). It appears that sustainable behaviors have not yet contributed enough to a significant reduction in resource use and waste creation. This can be seen in a study by Lin and Chang (2012) where they found that people

use eco-friendly washing powder in a higher amount than non-sustainable alternatives because they believe it to be less effective.

Research suggests that another reason consumption still rises is that people think purchasing something makes them happy (Kasser, 2016). Moreover, consumption can give them autonomy on what to buy (Arnold & Reyes, 2003), can contribute to their identity (Belk, 1988b) and is in general seen as a part of human's current societal life value (Gálik & Lužák, 2015). A possible theoretical basis for this consumer happiness is the self-determination theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan 1985; Ryan and Deci 2000). The theory suggests that people have three basic motivational needs including autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the context of consumption, it might be that consumers who can choose what to buy feel autonomous. Additionally, they can feel effective and competent when using their goods or services and feel connected to others through shared experiences.

However, while consumption satisfies these psychological needs, research suggests increasing material wealth does not necessarily improve well-being (Christopher et al., 2004; Tsurumi et al., 2020). Studies further indicate that high-income countries could significantly reduce consumption without compromising objective well-being (O'Neill et al., 2018). Addressing that one potential strategy for attaining a reduction in consumption could be to cultivate greater consumer willingness to alter their consumption patterns. In concrete terms, this could be seen in a decreased utilization of goods (e.g. electronic devices), services (e.g. streaming platforms), or utilities (e.g. energy) and would lead to a decrease in natural resource usage (Vollebregt et al., 2024).

Another approach to reduce overconsumption would be direct appeals for consumption reduction. However, a call for change in consumption that is perceived

as involuntary can lead to reactance and social division (Contzen et al., 2021) as people may feel restricted in their autonomy. Especially in current times of uncertainty and increasingly limited resources (Conway et al., 2021), this presents an additional challenge to reducing consumption. Despite these challenges, research by Liu and Sibley (2011) showed that younger, educated people from more developed countries, do have the knowledge about how important making sacrifices is, to reduce environmental damage. However, despite this knowledge global ecological challenges are tragedies of the common dilemmas where private and collective interests are often in conflict (Van Vugt, 2009). Hedonic consumption, which provides immediate pleasure through buying (Alba & Williams, 2013), conflicts with the common resources that should be protected (White et al., 2019).

In addition to the conflict of individual and common interests, there may be interpersonal differences in the ability and the willingness to act in ways that contribute to the common good (Brick & Lewis, 2016). Research implies that various personality factors, attitudes, or motivational systems affect individuals' likelihood of changing their consumption patterns. One theoretical framework distinguishing these motivations is the ego- vs. ecosystem motivation model (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). This model suggests that consumption behaviors may be driven by self-oriented goals (egosystem) or compassionate goals (ecosystem). Understanding these underlying motivations could be key to promoting sustainable behavioral change.

Ego- and Ecosystem

Human decision-making is influenced by different motivational systems that affect how people perceive resource distribution, cooperation, and personal sacrifice (Brick & Lewis, 2016). Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that shifting from an egosystem to an ecosystem mindset could promote sustainable consumption.

Previous literature suggests that the egosystem focuses on self-interest and social status, while the ecosystem promotes collective well-being and cooperation (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). If overconsumption wants to be reduced, it is crucial to understand how these two systems shape individual attitudes toward shared resource use.

The egosystem represents a self-focused viewpoint. It emphasizes prioritizing one's own needs and emotions, aiming to boost self-image goals and social status. (Crocker & Canevello, 2008) This self-focus can lead people to adopt short-term and self-interested perspectives in their relationships. It is possible that when people are motivated by the egosystem, reducing consumption could be seen as a threat because people may feel as if they are losing resources and status when they compare themselves to others. Hence, the egosystem can sometimes lead to what is known as "zero-sum beliefs" (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). Such beliefs can lead to thoughts that if an outcome in interpersonal relationships is positive for one side, it automatically must have drawbacks for the other (Davidai & Tepper, 2023). Forms of sacrificing or renunciation in consumption could then be viewed as zero-sum-game, where a gain in the community automatically leads to a loss for oneself.

In contrast, when it comes to acting for the benefit of all, a person's ecosystem is important. It is a motivational system that drives us to do something for others. It involves considering one's relationships with others and the environment including a willingness to prioritize collective goals and collaboration (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). People motivated by the ecosystem perceive a positive interdependence with other people. This means they trust that their needs can be met in collaboration and that cooperation can result in a win-win situation for everyone involved. In the literature, this belief falls under the so-called non-zero-sum beliefs (Crocker &

Canevello, 2017). Ecosystem-driven people know that satisfying their wants and needs at the expense of others will inevitably cost them and the whole system. This awareness might facilitate the realization that individual overconsumption harms the entire population.

People who are motivated by the ecosystem also tend to consider the wishes and needs of other people. They pursue community goals, also known in the literature as compassionate goals (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). People who have compassionate goals try to be helpful and supportive out of genuine concern for others' well-being. Hence, compassionate goals could be helpful in a global environmental issue like overconsumption where people and systems must cooperate to create common solutions for this wicked problem (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

Moreover, the two systems are negatively correlated meaning that when people are motivated by one, they are less likely to be motivated by the other (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). Both systems are important in different situations, while the human egosystem serves the purpose of self-preservation, the ecosystem is necessary for the preservation of the species (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). Therefore, promoting this motivational system in humans could help preserve our species and maybe also our environment. Furthermore, it is not only positive for the community but could be seen as a boost for peoples' own well-being as supportive relationships enhance peoples' social, and psychological security (Clark et al., 1986).

To encourage the adoption of behaviors that reduce consumption, it may be necessary to shift peoples' motivation from ego-driven to eco-driven values. Gálik and Lužák (2015) suggested one possible way to shift from ego to ecosystem is to move away from our societal life value of "consumer happiness" towards new values

such as humility, deeper self-knowledge and growth, and thus a more conscious lifestyle. This aligns with Crocker and Canevello (2015) who postulated that ecosystem motivation supports personal growth and change, which could make individuals more open to adopting sustainable behaviors.

Another way to support a shift towards ecosystem motivation is gratitude. According to Kates and DeSteno (2021) actively cultivating feelings of gratitude could strengthen ecosystem motivation by increasing prosocial behavior and reducing resource consumption. This is in line with previous findings which suggest that gratitude is associated with more cooperation (Smith et al., 2017) and self-control (DeSteno et al., 2014) what found to be helpful in reducing selfish consumption patterns.

By encouraging emotions that align with ecosystem motivation, it may be possible to promote a greater willingness to reduce consumption and view it as a meaningful contribution to the common good rather than a personal loss.

Gratitude

Gratitude may serve as a psychological mechanism that fosters making personal sacrifices in consumption by reducing self-serving decisions and promoting prosocial behavior (Smith et al., 2017). Since reducing overconsumption requires individuals to prioritize collective well-being over immediate personal gain, psychological factors that enhance cooperation and self-regulation could play a crucial role in sacrificing for the common good.

One such factor is gratitude an emotion linked to prosocial behavior, self-control, and increased willingness to sacrifice personal resources for the common good (DeSteno et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2017). If gratitude strengthens ecosystem motivation and reduces egosystem motivation in consuming, it may help people to

perceive consumption reduction not as a personal loss but as a meaningful prosocial act.

Gratitude is declared as a conscious positive emotional response to receiving something of value from other people or life itself (Emmons & McCullough 2003). Gratitude can be seen as a trait and/or state of thankfulness and appreciation that includes the reception of gifts from others as well as experiences. Examples of those experiences could be being thankful for having the possibility of getting a college degree or for the birth of one's child.

There are already numerous studies showing that gratitude as a positive social emotion (Stellar et al., 2017) increases pro-social behavior (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006; Ma et al., 2017) and is crucial for forming and improving interpersonal relationships (Algoe et al., 2010; Bartlett et al., 2012; Bono & Sender, 2018). In more detail, McCullough et al., (2001) have shown, that gratitude may motivate prosocial behavior by influencing psychological states that support generosity and cooperation. Supporting these findings, more recent literature showed that gratitude indeed enhances decisions that are currently costly but can be expected to turn into long-term cooperation later (DeSteno et al., 2014). Additionally, Bartlett and DeSteno (2006) demonstrated that gratitude enhances cooperative economic behavior. In their study participants experienced a gratitude induction by receiving help from a confederate who resolved a challenging task for them. They then played an economic game that measured their willingness to share tokens with either their benefactor or a stranger. Results demonstrated that participants who showed gratitude were more likely to share tokens, regardless of whether they interacted with their helper or a stranger. This indicates that gratitude promotes prosocial behavior

beyond simple reciprocity and the findings highlight gratitude's role in fostering cooperation and collective well-being.

Moreover, data suggest that gratitude acts as a driver for pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors such as green purchasing. (Liang & Guo, 2021; Syropoulos 2020). Regarding consumption reduction, there is also evidence that gratitude lessens materialism in children and adolescents (Froh et al., 2010) and may be a possible antagonist to the current societal life value of "consumer happiness". Battistella-Lima et al. (2024) demonstrated in their study that families where gratitude is both expressed and felt can serve as protective factors against elevated levels of materialism in children and young adults.

Nevertheless, there is little literature yet, that looks at how gratitude affects people's willingness to make personal sacrifices for the common good. As mentioned above, Kates and DeSteno (2021) researched the relationship between gratitude and decreased consumption by implementing a resource dilemma game (Kramer et al., 1986). In two studies, participants got into different groups where they were induced to recall a specific event they either felt grateful or happy. The control group in contrast had to write about a normal day routine. After that, they played a game where they decided how many points to extract from a shared resource pool. The resource pool was either sustainable or rapidly depleting, manipulated by virtual players' extraction rates. Results showed that participants in the gratitude condition extracted fewer points in the depleting condition compared to neutral or happy participants, who increased their extraction. This suggests that gratitude, distinct from general positive emotions, reduces self-serving behavior in resource dilemmas. It appears to promote sustainable decisions by prioritizing long-term collective benefit over immediate personal gain.

Especially through heightened cooperation and self-control gratitude is supposed to lead to more prosocial behavior like sacrifices for the common good (Ma et al., 2017). This rise in cooperation could go along with positive perceived interdependencies and non-zero-sum beliefs which is an important factor of the ecosystem (Crocker & Canevello, 2017). This could explain why, when pursuing a common goal like diminishing overconsumption together, people might not perceive it as a threat, if their ecosystem is activated. They would understand that the reduction in consumption does not have to end in a win-lose situation but is rather a gain for all leading to the preservation of common natural resources.

The Study

It has been shown that gratitude can be a factor that reduces people's consumption of common goods (Kates & DeSteno, 2021) and that people's ecosystem is crucial for the pursuit of common goals (Crocker & Canevello, 2015). Therefore, this study is based on the assumption that gratitude through its links to higher cooperation and self-control acts as a trigger for people's ecosystem motivation and hence increases participants' willingness to make personal sacrifices. This suggests that gratitude and the ecosystem are probably associated through the role of heightened cooperation, (Smith et al., 2017; Crocker & Canevello, 2018) and the readiness to do something for other people, even when it costs themselves (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006; Crocker & Canevello, 2015).

It is vital to understand the impact of both factors on the willingness to make sacrifices for a common goal to effectively address overconsumption and its impact on climate change. However, their exact association and influence on peoples' willingness to decrease consumption has yet to be investigated. This leads me to the following research hypotheses:

H1: People with higher gratitude scores show a greater willingness to reduce consumption than people with lower scores in gratitude.

H2: The main effect predicted in H1, is mediated by the ecosystem and thus compassionate goals of a person.

The study had an experimental between-subject design consisting of an experimental- and a control group. The independent variable was gratitude (manipulation), and the dependent variable was the reduction in consumption. To test the hypotheses, participants were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions. One condition included a question designed to heighten people's gratitude; the other condition did not have this question. Subsequently, everyone had to fill in the items that gathered information about their current level of gratitude and ecosystem motivation. In addition, they had to read a self-generated scenario about a shared scarce resource, state their normal resource usage, and then were required to state their willingness to make a sacrifice on it, without getting anything in return for that.

Methods

Participants and Design

Before starting with the collection of the data, a power analysis done with the statistic program G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) calculated a needed sample size of 126 participants (power 0.80 and a small effect of 0.05). A second power analysis done with the free online program Monte Carlo Power (Thoemmes et al., 2010) required 130 participants for medium correlations (power 0.84 and correlations XM : 0.30, MY 0.30, XY 0.30). The study sample consisted of 166 participants in total with a mean age of 35.5 ($SD = 13.2$), ranging from a minimum age of 16 to a maximum of 73. The survey was open to those aged 16 or over. Six people did not finish the study or did

not pass the attention check and therefore got excluded. Gender was not equally distributed with $n = 104$ female (65%) participants. The level of education was relatively high on average whereby $n = 71$ (44,4%) had a university degree and $n = 46$ (28,7%) finished their high school diploma. Further information regarding the sample can be seen in Table 1.

The study was conducted online as there was no need for interactions between the instructor and the participants. The questionnaires and scenario were designed to be easily readable on mobile or laptop screens, as the design was implemented as an empirical-quantitative between-subject design. The data were collected via the platform Unipark (Tivian XI GmbH, 2024) and the sample was collected through various online platforms, including WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Additionally, friends and family members forwarded the link to different work, sports, or university groups, which led to the recruitment of a snowball sample which is a convenient sample but should lead to more heterogeneous participants concerning sociodemographic variables like age and education (Handcock & Gile, 2011).

Table 1

Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample

Demographics	<i>N</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	160		35.5	13.2
Gender				
Female	104	65.0		
Male	52	32.5		
Diverse	4	2.5		
Highest Education				
No qualification	8	5.0		
Completed apprenticeship	30	18.8		

High school diploma	46	28.7
Bachelor's degree	42	26.3
Master's/Doctorate	29	18.1

Materials and Procedure

At the beginning of the study, participants were told the study goals and procedure. Participation was optional and withdrawal was allowed at any time. The data provided was anonymous and only used for the purposes of the study. All participants signed an informed consent before starting the questionnaire (see Appendix A). They were then asked to provide demographic information, including age, gender, first language, and highest level of education. Following this, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions, with one condition serving as the experimental group and the other as the control group. 76 (47,5%) people were assigned to the control and 84 (52,5%) people were assigned to the experimental group.

The experimental group started with the initial question: *"Please list three things for which you are grateful. There is no true or false, you can write down anything you can think of."* It was hypothesized that this question would result in a higher state of gratitude in comparison to those who did not have to answer this question. Subsequently, all participants were required to complete the GQ-5-G Questionnaire by Hudecek et al. (2021) (Cronbach's Alpha = .82), as a manipulation check, measuring their current level of gratitude. The questionnaire included five items designed to assess levels of gratitude, for example, *"There is so much in my life that I am grateful for"* and *"I am grateful to many people"* (for a complete list of items, see Appendix B). Participants were asked to answer these questions on a 7-point Likert scale, (1 = *strongly agree* to 7 = *strongly disagree*). Participants in the

control condition did not receive the gratitude induction; instead, they were immediately presented with the GQ-5-G questionnaire.

Afterward, all participants were presented with the same content, comprising two measurements: one focused on the individual's ecosystem and the other on their willingness to renounce (see Figure 1). To ensure attention and engagement, an attention check was integrated into the items. Participants who did not pass the attention check were excluded from the evaluation.

To determine the ecosystem the “Self-Image and Compassionate Goals Scale” of Crocker and Canevello (2008) (Cronbach’s Alpha = .80) was used whereas only the 7 questions concerning the compassionate goals were embedded in the survey. The items included, for example, the following statements: *“I want to/try to avoid being selfish or self-centered”* and *“I want to/try to have compassion for others’ mistakes and weaknesses”* (for a complete list of items see Appendix C) Participants were then required to indicate their level of agreement with each item on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very strong*). Next, they got to read the following self-generated scenario:

“Imagine you live in a multi-apartment block in your local community or district. There are a total of 7 parties in your building. You feel comfortable in your flat, the building is well maintained, the rent is not overpriced and if there are any problems, the property management is quickly available to solve them. However, there is one major disadvantage: the internet connection in this apartment block is very poor and there are always conflicts about internet usage. This means that streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, YouTube, Sky, etc.... do not work in the evening if all 7 households use the services at the same time. Now imagine you really want to watch

your favorite TV show and there is no alternative (mobile phone hotspot or similar), but you are dependent on Wi-Fi and the use of the other people in the house.

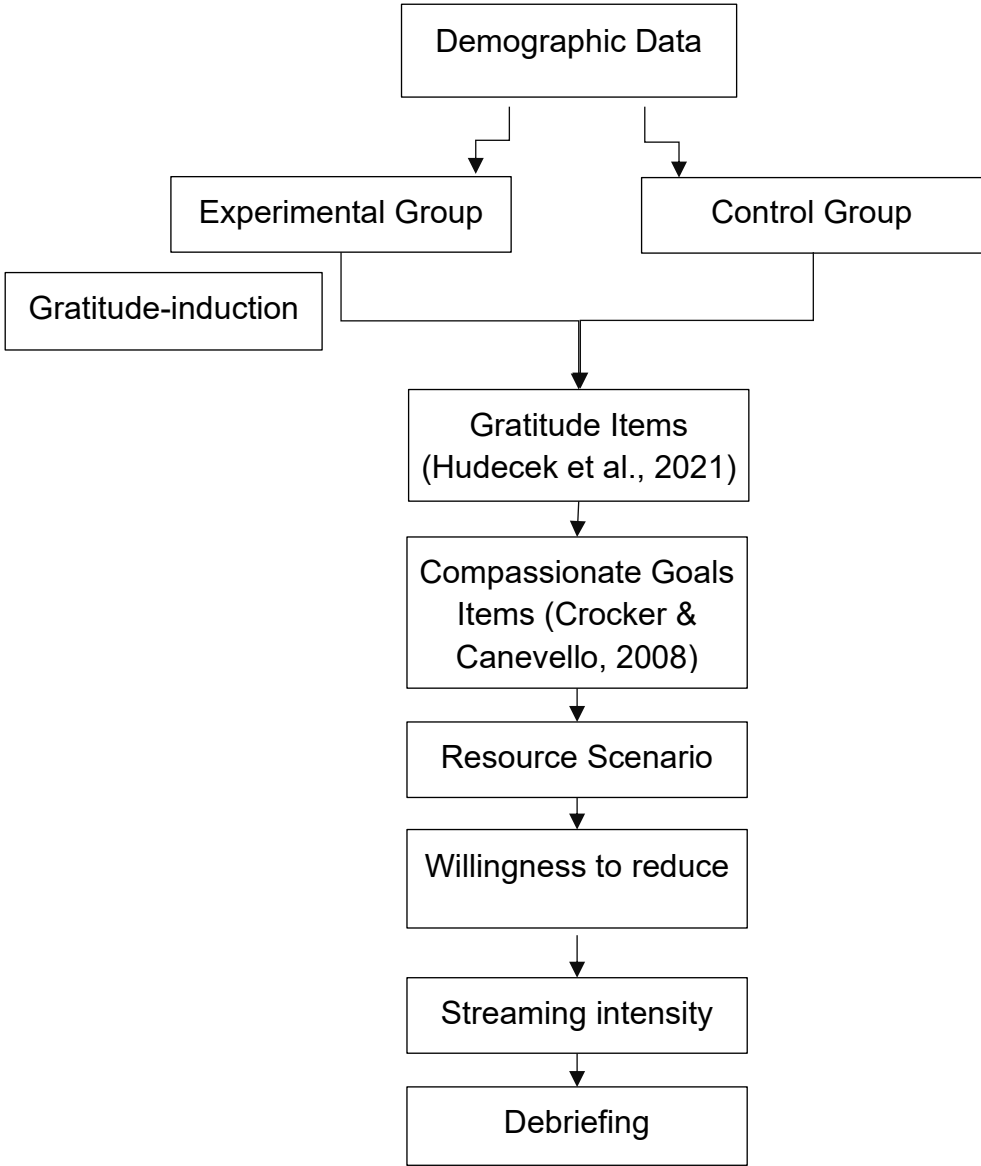
A possible solution to this problem would be for one party not to stream every night. This means that the Wi-Fi would be stable enough for 6 parties to watch series/films at the same time. So, if each party in the house was willing to give up one night, then everyone else could watch what they wanted for the remaining 6 nights without any restrictions.

How many evenings would you be willing to give up streaming, knowing that there is one party in the house who watches every evening and is not ready to make any sacrifices?”

After reading the scenario, participants were asked how many evenings they would be willing to sacrifice streaming in order to ensure a stable internet connection for the other parties. They could choose from zero to seven evenings and had the option to specify why they decided as they did and write it into an open input field. Lastly, also the amount of time people use streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Sky, etc. was asked and could be answered on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*). On average, it took participants about 7 minutes to complete the study.

Figure 1

Flowchart of the study procedure



Data Analysis

In early June 2024, the study began, and it ended midway through the month, having exceeded the necessary participant threshold. After that, the data was downloaded and imported into the program SPSS version 28.0 (IBM, 2021) which was the only program used for the data analysis.

First, correlations between all measured variables were conducted and descriptive values were calculated. Second, a t-test for independent samples was computed to test whether the gratitude manipulation was successful and to make a possible group difference visible. Next, a linear regression was computed to test if higher gratitude increases the willingness to renounce streaming and if any other of the collected variables had effects on the willingness to sacrifice. After that, a mediation analysis using PROCESS Version 4.2 (Hayes, 2022) was performed to test if the postulated main effect was mediated by compassionate goals. Subsequently, an explorative analysis was conducted to differentiate between the participants based on their streaming behavior. Therefore, a cut-off value was used to divide participants into low and high streamers.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

The first step was to conduct a correlation analysis (see Table 2) in order to examine the relationship between the variables of gratitude, compassionate goals, willingness to reduce streaming consumption, and streaming intensity. Additionally, an overview of the data was gained by computing descriptive data including mean and standard deviation of all scales.

Secondly, the reliability of all scales was examined to ensure the consistency of the measurement. The findings demonstrated high Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the gratitude scale in the experimental group (.84) and in the control group (.87), as well as for the compassionate goals scale (.77).

Table 2*Descriptives and Correlation Analysis*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Gratitude	5.89	0.91	-	.347**	.120	-.024
2. Compassionate Goals	3.92	0.52	.347**	-	.089	.000
3. Reduction of Consumption	2.41	1.68	.120	.089	-	-.226**
4. Streaming intensity	3.41	1.24	-.024	.000	-.226**	-

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

Participants reported a mean score of 5.89 ($SD = 0.91$) for gratitude, indicating relatively high levels in the sample. Compassionate goals were assessed with a mean score of 3.92 ($SD = 0.52$), also suggesting moderate-to-high levels of compassionate goals among participants. For reduction of streaming consumption data showed a mean value of 2.41 days ($SD = 1.68$), reflecting variability in participants' willingness to reduce streaming. Streaming intensity showed a mean score of 3.41 ($SD = 1.24$), suggesting that participants rank their streaming behavior between "sometimes" and "often" on average.

Consistent with expectations, data showed a significant positive correlation between gratitude and compassionate goals ($r = .35, p < .001$). This value indicates a medium, positive correlation between the two variables, meaning higher values in gratitude are associated with higher values in compassionate goals. Additionally, the analysis revealed a significant negative correlation between the willingness to reduce one own's streaming consumption and the streaming intensity ($r = -.23, p < .001$). Given that, it can be suggested that individuals who show a stronger willingness to reduce their streaming behavior may also tend to stream less. To further investigate this assumption, it will be discussed in more detail in the exploratory analysis.

Contrary to what was assumed, the connection between gratitude and reduction of streaming intensity is not statistically significant ($r = .120$, $p = .078$). This suggests that gratitude had no clear influence on participants' willingness to reduce their streaming behavior. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between gratitude and streaming intensity ($r = -.024$, $p = .764$), as well no connection between compassionate goals and streaming intensity was found ($r = .000$).

Hypothesis Testing

To test the first hypothesis a manipulation check was done to investigate if the gratitude induction was successful and to find possible differences in average gratitude scores between the experimental and the control group. The difference in gratitude between the group with the gratitude induction and the control group was not statistically significant $t(158) = -0.74$, $p = .456$, 95% CI [-0.39;0.17]. Given the lack of a statistically significant difference between the two groups, subsequent analyses (Regression, Mediation) were conducted with the full sample treated as one group ($N = 160$, $M = 5.89$, $SD = 0.91$). This approach is justified by the non-significant value of the t-test.

In a next step, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of gratitude, compassionate goals, streaming intensity, age, and gender on participants' willingness to reduce their streaming consumption. The regression model was found to be statistically significant $F(5,150) = 2,786$, $p = .019$, $R^2 = .05$. Among the included predictors, streaming intensity was the only variable that significantly contributed to the model ($\beta = -0.240$, $p = .005$). This negative relationship suggests that participants who used streaming services more frequently were less willing to reduce their consumption. The remaining predictors gratitude ($p = .365$), compassionate goals ($p = .462$), age ($p = .737$), and gender ($p = .121$) did not show

significant effects on the consumption reduction (see Table 3). These findings indicate that while individual differences in streaming behavior are related to the willingness to decrease streaming intensity, other examined variables did not play a substantial role in this context. These results do not support Hypothesis 1, as no association was found between gratitude and reduction in consumption.

Table 3

Regression Analysis with reduction of consumption as dependent variable

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
						<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Constant	2.67	1.41		1.89	.06	-0.11	5.45
Gratitude	0.14	0.15	0.08	0.92	.36	-0.16	0.45
Streaming	-0.32	0.11	-0.24	-2.90	.00	-0.54	-0.10
Compassionate Goals	0.19	0.27	0.06	0.70	.46	-0.35	0.73
Age	-0.00	0.01	-0.03	-0.36	.74	-0.03	0.02
Gender	-0.44	0.24	-0.14	-1.80	.01	-0.92	0.04

Note. $N = 160$; $R^2 = 0,085$; $F(5,150) = 2,786$, $p = .019$

After that, a mediation analysis was carried out to investigate whether the variable compassionate goals (mediator = M) acts as the mediator in the relationship between gratitude (independent variable = IV) and reduction in consumption (dependent variable = DV). The analysis showed that gratitude exerts a significant influence on the mediator compassionate goals ($b = 0.21$, $SE = 0.04$, $p < .001$, $\beta = 0.37$) indicating a medium to strong positive relationship between gratitude and compassionate goals (see Figure 2). Furthermore, compassionate goals did not significantly affect the dependent variable reduction of consumption ($b = 0.17$, $SE = 0.28$, $t(157) = 0.61$, $p = .545$). This suggests that the mediator alone does not

sufficiently explain variations in the willingness to reduce one own's streaming intensity. These results do not support Hypothesis 2.

In contrast to expectations, both the direct effect of gratitude on the willingness to reduce streaming ($b = 0.19$, $SE = 0.16$, $t(157) = 1.18$, $p = .240$) was not significant, as well as the total effect of gratitude on the dependent variable ($b = 0.22$, $SE = 0.15$, $t(158) = 1.52$, $p = .131$). The indirect effect of gratitude on the reduction of streaming via the mediator compassionate goals was also not significant ($b = 0.04$, $SE = .06$ *CI* [-0.10 - 0.16]). The mediation analysis indicates that while gratitude significantly predicts compassionate goals, neither the direct effect of gratitude on streaming reduction nor the mediated effect through compassionate goals reached statistical significance. The connections investigated can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4

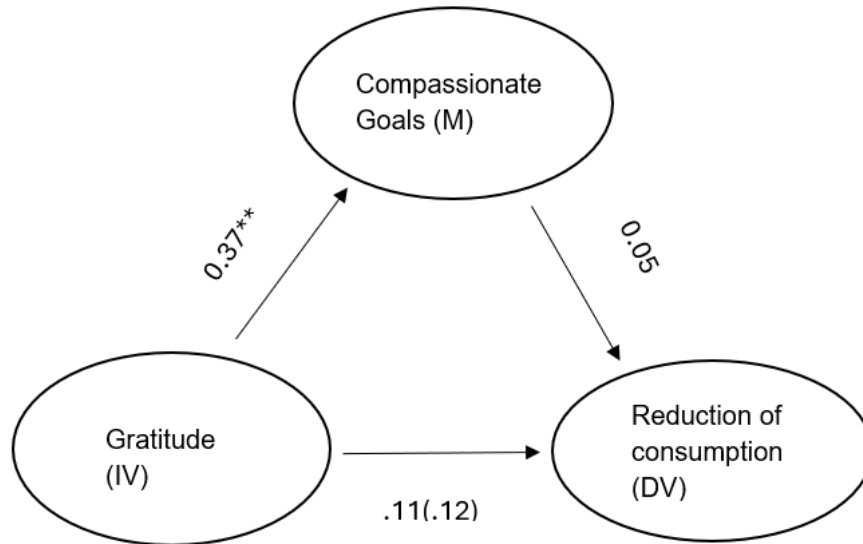
Mediation of the link between gratitude and consumption reduction by compassionate goals

Variable / Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Gratitude → Compassionate goals	0.21	.04	5.06	< .001	0.13	0.30
Compassionate Goals → Reduced consumption	0.17	.28	0.61	.545	-0.38	0.71
Gratitude → Reduced consumption	0.22	.15	1.52	.131	-0.07	0.51
Effects						
Direct	0.19	.16	1.18	.238	-0.13	0.10
Indirect	0.04	.06			-0.10	0.16
Total	0.22	.15	1.52	.131	-0.07	0.51

Note. $N = 160$. Analysis is based on 5000 bootstrap samples.

Figure 2

Overall mediation model of gratitude (IV), compassionate goals (M), reduction of consumption (DV) for $N = 160$



Exploratory Analysis

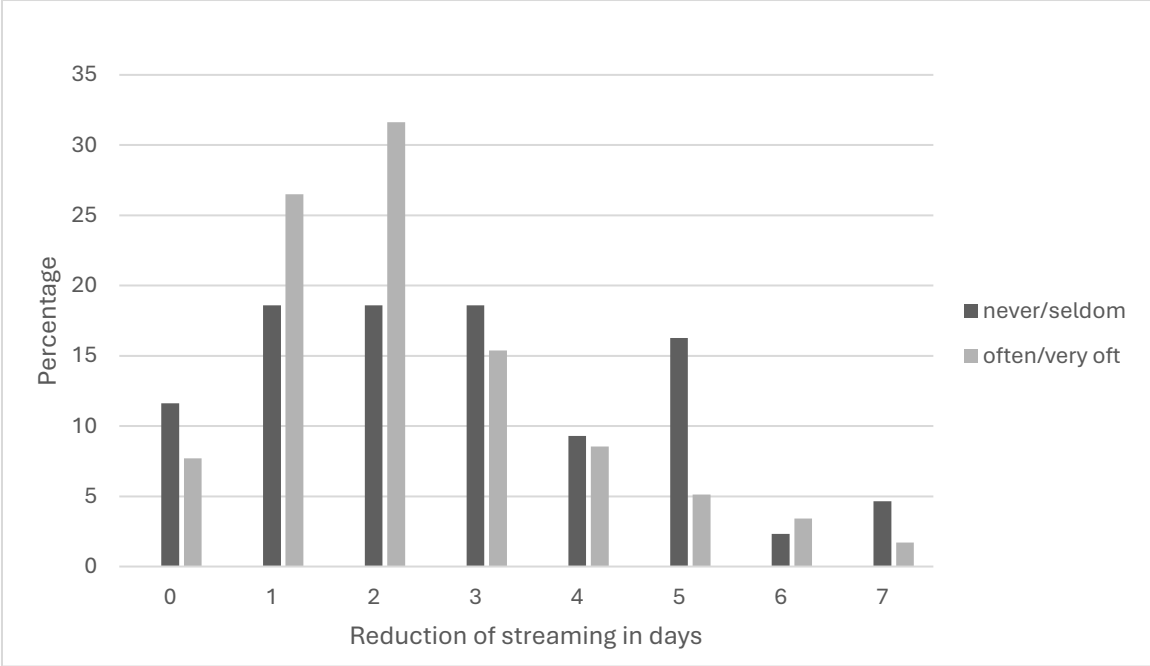
Among the included predictors in the regression, streaming intensity was the only variable that showed a significant influence on the dependent variable. To further investigate this, an exploratory analysis was conducted to compare the willingness to reduce the streaming intensity among low ($M = 1.79$, $SD = .41$) and high streaming ($M = 4.0$, $SD = .85$) users. The variable of streaming intensity was used to categorize participants into two groups based on a cut-off value of two. This means that individuals who stated that they use streaming services "sometimes", "often" or "very often" were grouped as "high streamers" ($n = 117$). In contrast, participants who stated they use streaming services "never" or "seldom" were grouped into "low streamers" ($n = 43$).

Two separate mediation analyses were done with the two groups formed. The analyses revealed that both groups showed a significant positive relationship

between gratitude and compassionate goals. The effect was stronger in low-streamers ($b = 0.35$, $SE = 0.08$, $t(41) = 4.63$, $p < .001$ $\beta = 0.59$) compared to high-streamers ($b = 0.15$, $SE = 0.05$, $t(115) = 3.05$, $p = .003$, $\beta = 0.27$). In both groups, compassionate goals did not have a significant effect on willingness to reduce streaming (see Table 4, 5). Additionally, neither the total nor the direct effects of gratitude on reduction were significant in either group. Moreover, no significant indirect effects were observed in either group.

Figure 3

Reduction in streaming consumption between high and low streamers



Note. never/seldom $n=43$; often/very often $n=117$

Table 5

Mediation of the link between gratitude and consumption reduction by compassionate goals for low streamers

Variable / Effect	b	SE	t	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Gratitude → Compassionate Goals	0.35	.07	4.63	< .000	0.20	0.50
Compassionate Goals → Reduced Consumption	-0.58	.62	-0.94	.354	-1.83	0.67
Gratitude → Reduced Consumption	0.47	.30	1.60	.118	-0.12	1.07
Effects						
Direct	0.67	.37	1.84	.073	-0.07	1.41
Indirect	-0.20	0.27			-0.77	0.30
Total	0.47	0.30	1.60	0.118	-0.12	1.07

Note. $n = 43$. Analysis is based on 5000 bootstrap samples.

This table presents the mediation analysis results for the low-streamer group. Gratitude significantly influenced compassionate goals ($b = 0.35, p < .001$). Still, compassionate goals did not significantly predict consumption reduction ($b = -0.58, p = .354$). The direct effect of gratitude on consumption reduction was not significant ($b = 0.67, p = .073$). The indirect effect via compassionate goals was also insignificant ($b = -0.20, 95\% CI: [-0.77, 0.30]$).

Figure 4

Mediation model of gratitude (IV), compassionate goals (M), reduction of consumption (DV) in low streamers for n = 43

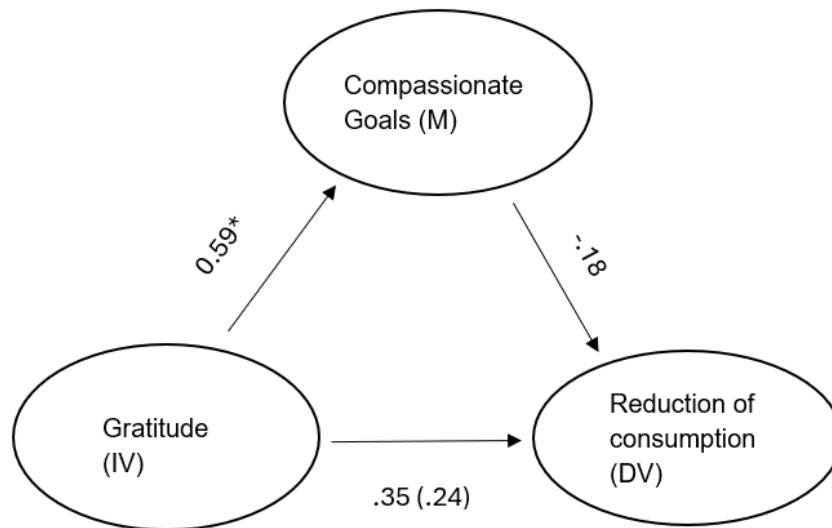


Table 6

Mediation of the link between gratitude and consumption reduction by compassionate goals for high streamers

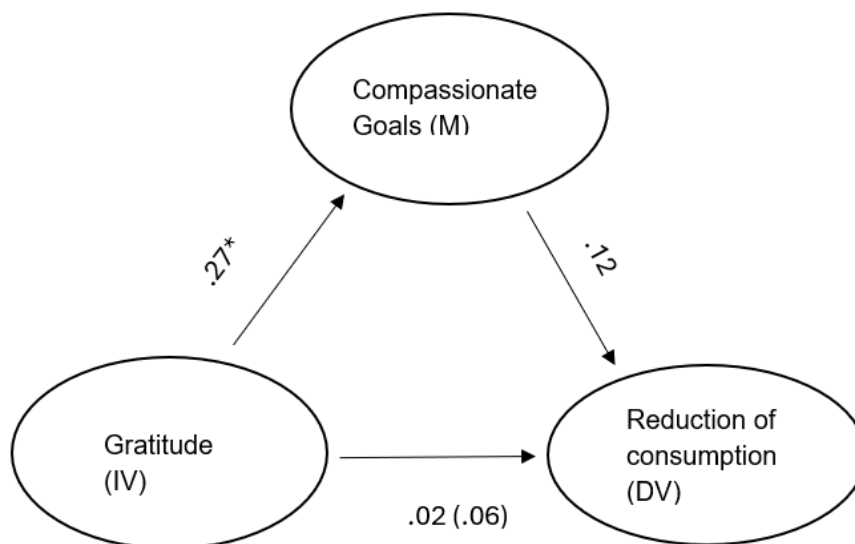
Variable / Effect	b	SE	t	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Gratitude → Compassionate Goals	0.15	.05	3.05	.003	0.05	0.25
Compassionate Goals → Reduced Consumption	0.39	.30	1.28	.203	-0.21	0.99
Gratitude → Reduced Consumption	0.10	.17	0.62	.537	-0.23	0.43
Effects						
Direct	0.04	0.17	0.25	.805	-0.30	0.38
Indirect	0.06	0.06			-0.03	0.20
Total	0.10	.17	0.62	.537	-0.23	0.43

Note. n = 117. Analysis is based on 5000 bootstrap samples.

The mediation analysis for the high-streamer group reveals that gratitude significantly predicts compassionate goals ($b = 0.15, p = .003$). However, compassionate goals do not significantly predict consumption reduction ($b = 0.39, p = .203$). Neither the direct effect of gratitude on consumption reduction ($b = 0.04, p = .805$) nor the indirect effect via compassionate goals ($b = 0.06, 95\% CI [-0.03, 0.20]$) was significant.

Figure 5

Mediation model of gratitude (IV), compassionate goals (mediator), reduction of consumption (DV) in high streamers for $n = 117$



Discussion

Overconsumption is a well-studied phenomenon of pressing concern in the current age. Despite the rise of sustainable alternatives, statistics show that household consumption continues to increase (Statistiken zum privaten Konsum in Deutschland, Statista 2023). Since individual consumption is one of the most significant contributors to greenhouse gas emissions (Steininger, 2018), people need to change their consumption patterns drastically and be more willing to personal sacrifices. Studies indicate that emotions influence decision-making processes

related to consumption (Syropoulos, 2020; Battistella-Lima et al., 2024) and suggest that they also affect the willingness to make sacrifices (Kates & DeSteno, 2021). However, as there is limited research on how positive emotions, particularly gratitude, influence people's willingness to give up on something, the present study aimed to investigate this potential connection. Therefore, the primary goal was to examine whether induced gratitude could reduce consumption and whether a person's compassionate goals mediated this relationship.

Contrary to expectations, the results showed neither a significant direct effect of gratitude on consumption reduction nor an indirect effect through compassionate goals. However, gratitude was positively correlated with compassionate goals, suggesting that gratitude may enhance prosocial attitude but does not necessarily lead to reduced consumption.

To explore the hypotheses, an online survey was conducted to assess participants' levels of gratitude, compassionate goals, willingness to reduce their streaming consumption, and streaming habits. A gratitude induction was implemented to increase participants' gratitude levels. However, this manipulation proved ineffective, as participants in the experimental group did not exhibit significantly higher gratitude levels compared to the control group. One possible explanation is that the one-dimensional scale used to measure gratitude (Hudecek et al., 2021) may have had a priming effect (Molden, 2014), meaning that reading the five questions already stimulated and heightened feelings of gratitude in both groups.

Although previous research has shown that induced gratitude can increase prosocial behavior, including reducing one's consumption (DeSteno et al., 2010; Kates & DeSteno, 2021), this study found no significant link between these concepts. One possible explanation is that reducing consumption requires repeated gratitude

inductions rather than a single emotional trigger. Additionally, the way gratitude was induced may have played a crucial role. Ma et al. (2017) postulated that benefit-triggered gratitude—arising from specific acts of kindness—is more effective in fostering prosocial behavior than generalized gratitude. In the present study, participants were asked to describe what is meaningful or important to them, leading many to write down general aspects such as health, relationships, or their country of birth. This broader focus may explain why gratitude did not influence participants' willingness to make sacrifices for the community. Furthermore, previous research demonstrated that gratitude induced in vivo, such as through monetary games, tends to have a stronger effect than recalling things one is grateful for (Ma et al., 2017).

The present findings do not align with those of Kates and DeSteno (2021), who also examined the relationship between gratitude and consumption reduction. However, some methodological differences may explain these differing outcomes. First, participants in their study were asked to recall a specific event they felt grateful, making the induction more benefit-triggered. Second, the researchers examined the relationship between gratitude and willingness to reduce consumption in vivo through a resource dilemma game (Kramer et al., 1986).

As expected, a notable relationship between gratitude and compassionate goals was identified. It is therefore possible to hypothesize that gratitude contributes to ecosystem motivation and thus prosocial attitudes. Although limited studies explain the direct connection between gratitude and compassionate goals, some findings support the current results. Kim et al. (2018) found a positive correlation between gratitude and compassionate love, with empathy potentially playing a mediating role. Other studies have shown that gratitude fosters reciprocal relationships, reduces selfishness, and increases economic cooperation (McCullough et al., 2001; DeSteno,

2010). Furthermore, Grant and Gino (2010) suggest a link between gratitude and prosocial behavior, proposing that gratitude makes people more likely to empathize with others and act altruistically. The data that show that gratitude and compassionate goals are related also supports the theory of Bilsky and Schwartz (1994), who postulated a connection between gratitude and the values of benevolence and universalism. Applied to this study, the emotion may have contributed to prioritizing compassionate goals over self-image goals but did not translate into actual behavior change.

Despite this connection, neither gratitude nor compassionate goals significantly predicted the willingness to reduce streaming consumption. The mediation model was not significant, meaning that compassionate goals did not explain the link between gratitude and consumption reduction, as originally hypothesized. Additionally, the regression model only explained 8.5% of the variance ($R^2 = .085$), suggesting that other factors played a bigger role in the decision to sacrifice streaming.

Interestingly, the descriptive data shows that many participants were open to reducing their streaming consumption. 29.5% were willing to cut back on two evenings and 27.1% on even three or four evenings. Only 10.3% of participants showed reactance (Contzen et al., 2021) and refused to reduce it at all. While this suggests that moderate consumption reduction is generally accepted, it's important to note that these findings are descriptive and not statistically linked to gratitude or compassionate goals in this study. Future research could explore what other factors drive people to make such reductions, beyond personal attitudes or emotions.

Another factor that may have influenced participants' willingness to reduce consumption is social norms. Norms are implicit rules or standards that guide

behavior in specific social contexts and are believed to play a crucial role in maintaining cooperative relationships and group performance (Gross & Vostroknutov, 2022). In the study scenario, a neighbor refused to make sacrifices, which could have influenced participants' responses. Some participants stated that they would be willing to participate in the solution only if all neighbors contributed, suggesting concerns about fairness. This could be perceived as an interesting illustration of a broader societal tendency towards sacrificing. Many societal and environmental problems fall into the category of tragedy of the commons (Van Vugt, 2009) where all individuals need to contribute to their resolution, by cutting down personal gain. However, people may hesitate to cut consumption due to worries about being taken advantage of by those with stronger self-image goals. This can lead to problems such as overconsumption as a collective action problem arising from responsibility diffusion and free riding.

The exploratory analysis further showed that "high streamers" ($M = 4.00$) were significantly less willing to reduce consumption than "low streamers" ($M = 1.79$). A possible explanation for this result could be the self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan and Deci 2000). Applied to streaming, users can choose from various services deciding which best suits their preferences. They can choose categories and decide when and where to watch, which gives them a sense of empowerment. Additionally, streaming series with friends, or discussing episodes on social media, creates feelings of belonging to a like-minded community. It is conceivable that according to the SDT reducing consumption may feel like a loss of autonomy, competence, or social belonging—especially for frequent users. However, since this concept was not directly tested in this study, this assumption remains speculative and should be investigated in future research.

Interestingly, some participants noted that the study scenario prompted them to reflect on their streaming habits allowing them to spend more time on other things, which they think is not a loss but rather a gain. This highlights the potential to frame consumption reduction as a gain rather than a sacrifice, reinforcing autonomy and social connection, by doing something for the community.

Limitations and Further Research Implications

When discussing the results of the current study, it is important to acknowledge several limitations. One key limitation of the study design is that the data were collected through self-reports rather than observed behavior. This can lead to biases such as social desirability effects. In such cases, participants may respond in ways they believe are socially acceptable rather than reflecting their true thoughts or feelings (Chung & Monroe, 2003).

Regarding sample representativeness, gender distribution was unequal, with women comprising two-thirds of the participants. Research suggests that women on average show higher altruistic and cooperative behavior (Willer et al., 2015; Dovidio et al., 2017), which could be a confounding variable in the analysis. Additionally, voluntary participation may have resulted in a sample with stronger pre-existing compassionate goals thus leading to a ceiling effect (Status et al., 2021). The ceiling effect is a phenomenon in psychological research where most participants score at the upper end of the scale, reducing the variability needed to detect significant differences. Future studies could address this by recruiting a more diverse sample.

Another limitation is the single gratitude induction, which may not have been strong enough to produce lasting effects. Future research should consider longitudinal designs with repeated gratitude interventions to examine long-term impacts. Since the gratitude manipulation check showed no significant difference

between the experimental and control groups, it is possible that the gratitude items themselves heightened participants' gratitude levels, leading to a priming effect (Molden, 2014).

It is also important to note that external validity is lower in online and laboratory studies compared to field experiments. This means that the findings may not be applicable to real-life situations. Future studies should refine gratitude interventions by incorporating real-world scenarios, such as actual reductions in streaming or resource consumption. Given that participants who used streaming services more frequently were less willing to reduce their consumption, future sustainability interventions could be more effectively targeted at high consumers. One potential strategy is to develop visual feedback mechanisms that engage frequent streamers, prompting them to reflect on and reconsider their consumption habits. Another approach could be exploring how digital tools can enhance the impact of regular gratitude exercises or interventions.

Moreover, further research should include additional variables, such as participants' general self-control, individual consumption behavior, and empathy. Including these factors in the analysis could provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumption patterns and help differentiate the effects of gratitude and ecosystem motivation from other psychological influences.

Conclusion

This study found no significant effect of gratitude on consumption reduction, nor a mediation effect through compassionate goals. However, gratitude was correlated with compassionate goals, suggesting that it may enhance prosocial attitudes even if it does not directly drive behavioral change. The results suggest that there may be a certain degree of willingness among participants to consider

restrictions on their streaming behavior, provided that certain conditions are met. However, it should be noted that this willingness may vary according to the personal frequency of use, with high-streaming users tending to be less open to restrictions on consumption. These results indicate that individual habits and personal usage patterns may play an important role in determining willingness to reduce consumption. Nevertheless, methodological limitations, such as the reliance on hypothetical scenarios and the type of gratitude induction, likely constrained the study's findings. Future research should explore real-life interventions, repeated gratitude inductions, and broader participant samples to better understand the complex relationship between emotions, common goals, and reduced consumption.

Notes

In order to write this master's thesis, Artificial Intelligence programs such as DeepL and Grammarly were used for proofreading or rephrasing sentences.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Welcome Text & Informed Consent

Herzlich Willkommen und vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme an der Studie zu meiner Masterarbeit!

Die Studie wird voraussichtlich 5 Minuten dauern und dient ausschließlich wissenschaftlichen Zwecken. Die Befragung wird vom Institut für Arbeits-, Wirtschafts-, und Sozialpsychologie der Universität Wien durchgeführt.

Ihre Teilnahme an der Studie besteht aus der Beantwortung einer Reihe von Fragen und ist zu jedem Zeitpunkt vollständig anonymisiert. Die Daten werden nur zu wissenschaftlichen Zwecken ausgewertet. Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten, es geht nur um Ihre persönliche Einschätzung. Die Teilnahme an der Studie ist freiwillig und mit keinen bekannten Risiken verbunden. Sie können jedoch jederzeit und ohne Angabe von Gründen abbrechen.

Bei Fragen oder Anmerkungen zur Studie, wenden Sie sich bitte an: Sara Fehberger, BSc unter: a01511652@unet.univie.ac.at

Wenn Sie auf "weiter" klicken, stimmen Sie zu, die Einleitung gelesen zu haben und können mit der Studie starten.

Appendix B

Fragebogen (übersetzt) zu Compassionate Goals

Crocker & Canevello, (2008)

1. Wie sehr möchten Sie/versuchen Sie, Dinge zu vermeiden, die nicht hilfreich sind für Sie oder Ihre Mitmenschen?
2. Wie sehr möchten Sie/versuchen Sie zu vermeiden egoistisch oder selbstbezogen zu sein?
3. Wie sehr möchten Sie/versuchen Sie Mitgefühl für die Fehler und Schwächen anderer zu haben?
4. Wie sehr möchten Sie/versuchen Sie, in Kommentaren oder Kritik gegenüber anderen konstruktiv zu sein?
5. Wie sehr möchten Sie/versuchen Sie, andere zu unterstützen?
6. Wie sehr möchten Sie/versuchen Sie, einen positiven Unterschied im Leben anderer zu machen?

1 = überhaupt nicht

5 = extrem stark

Appendix C

Fragebogen Dankbarkeit (GQ-5-G)

Hudecek et al., (2021)

1. Es gibt so viel in meinem Leben, für das ich dankbar bin.
2. Wenn ich alles auflisten müsste, für das ich dankbar bin, wäre dies eine sehr lange Liste.
3. Wenn ich die Welt betrachte, dann sehe ich nicht viel, für das ich dankbar bin.
4. Ich bin einer Vielzahl an Menschen dankbar.
5. Je älter ich werde, desto mehr bin ich in der Lage, für die Menschen, die Ereignisse und die Situationen, die ein Teil meiner Lebensgeschichte gewesen sind, dankbar zu sein.

1 = stimme überhaupt nicht zu

7 = stimme voll und ganz zu

Appendix D

Szenario Streaming Verzicht

Stellen Sie sich nun bitte folgendes Szenario vor: Sie leben in einem Mehrparteien-Wohnhaus in Ihrer Gemeinde/in Ihrem Bezirk. In Ihrem Wohnhaus gibt es insgesamt 7 Parteien. Sie fühlen sich in Ihrer Wohnung wohl, das Haus ist gepflegt, die Miete ist nicht zu hoch und wenn es Probleme gibt, ist die Hausverwaltung schnell erreichbar und kümmert sich darum.

Allerdings gibt es einen großen Nachteil: In diesem Wohnhaus ist die Internetverbindung sehr schlecht und es gibt immer wieder Konflikte um die Internetnutzung. Das bedeutet, dass Streaming-Dienste wie z.B.: Netflix, AmazonPrime, Youtube, Sky etc. abends nicht funktionieren, wenn alle 7 Haushalte gleichzeitig die Dienste verwenden. Stellen Sie sich vor, Sie möchten abends sehr gerne Ihre Lieblingsserie/-Film schauen und es gibt keine Alternative (mobiler Handyhotspot oder dergleichen) sondern Sie sind vom W-lan und der Nutzung der anderen Personen im Haus abhängig. Eine mögliche Lösung des Problems wäre, dass jeden Abend eine Partei nicht streamt. Das heißt, dass das W-lan stabil genug wäre, um in 6 Wohnungen zeitgleich Serien/Filme zu schauen. Würde also jeden Abend eine Partei im Haus auf das Streamen verzichten, könnten Sie die restlichen 6 Abende uneingeschränkt schauen, was Sie möchten.

An wie vielen Abenden wären Sie bereit, auf das Streaming zu verzichten, wenn Sie wissen, dass es eine Partei im Haus gibt, die jeden Abend schaut und nie bereit ist, darauf zu verzichten?

0 = ich verzichte keinen Abend

7 = ich verzichte an allen Abenden

+ Begründung (optional in ein offenes Input Feld)

Streaming Intensität Abfrage

Wie oft nutzen Sie Streamingdienste um Serien/Filme zu schauen? (z.B.: Netflix, AmazonPrime, Sky, Disney+, Joyn..etc.)?

nie – selten – manchmal – oft – sehr oft

Appendix E

Debriefing, Closing Text

Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich die Zeit genommen haben, um an meiner Studie teilzunehmen!

Mit Ihrer Teilnahme haben Sie mir sehr geholfen, neue Erkenntnisse zum Thema Dankbarkeit und der Bereitschaft zum Verzicht auf Ressourcen zu gewinnen.

Wenn Sie Fragen oder Anmerkungen zur Studie haben oder an den Ergebnissen interessiert sind, stehe ich Ihnen unter folgender E-Mail-Adresse zur Verfügung:

a1511652@unet.univie.ac.at

Die Studie ist nun zu Ende und Sie können die Seite schließen.