

Abstract

The present study examined the impact of words, empathy and future orientation on changes in environmental attitudes and behaviors based on the extended norm activation model. 90 undergraduate participants were recruited and being randomly assigned to read an article on polar bears suffering from climate changes, instructions were given for manipulation of the degrees they empathized with the polar bears. Then, participants completed questionnaires measuring future orientation, environmental attitudes and behaviors. Results showed that participants who empathized towards the polar bears exhibited stronger biospheric environmental concerns and larger behavioral changes than those remained objective. Besides, future orientation was positively associated with behavioral changes. The results of this study have implications on researches of causal factors determining environmental attitudes and behaviors.

Keywords: empathy, future orientation, environmental attitudes, environmental behaviors