

Being moved by midterm political ads (#16528)

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1) Have any data been collected for this study already?

It's complicated. We have already collected some data but explain in Question 8 why readers may consider this a valid pre-registration nevertheless.

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?

The project is an extended replication of Schubert et al. (2017), "Touching the Base: Heart-Warming Ads from the 2016 U.S. Election Moved Viewers to Partisan Tears".

The main difference is that the current study adds one within-subject factor: Instead of only moving videos, participants see both moving and anger-evoking videos. A second difference is that after each political ad, participants had to guess the source of this video (R vs. D vs. independent candidate).

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.

We have the following dependent variables:

- Kama muta appraisal, 2 items
- Kama muta feelings, 3 items
- Kama muta sensation, 5 items
- Positive valence, 1 item

- Anger feelings, 3 items on anger directed at people in the ad, 3 items on anger directed at people who approved the ad
- Anger appraisal, 1 item
- Negative valence

- Motivation to support the candidate, 3 items

We measure also:

- Occurrence of playback problems
- Use of audio
- Whether participants saw the ad before

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?

We have the following independent variables:

- The emotion evoked by the video: ad_emotion, kama muta vs. anger
- The source of the video: ad_source, D vs. R
- The ID of the video. There are two videos for every cell of the 2 x 2 design of ad_emotion x ad_source. We code a method factor ad_id with numbers 1 – 8.
- The initial preference of the participant for either Democrats or Republicans: ppt_pref, D vs. R

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.

We exclude participants who indicate in the beginning that they neither prefer Democrats nor Republicans from the main analyses.

We will also check first whether the anger feeling items can be aggregated into one scale, because this scale has not been used before as such. We plan to average the three items for each judgment if their Cronbach's Alpha is above .60. We plan to average the two judgments if their negative correlations is below -.60. If the latter is not the case, we will treat the two kinds of anger (at the people depicted in the ad and at the people who approved the ad) as parallel independent variables.

The main hypotheses are replications of the earlier publication. We also add analyses involving anger. The analyses involving kama muta are the important hypotheses tests. The analyses involving anger are exploratory.

In particular, we predict:

In a first analysis with only the moving videos, we predict to find an interaction of initial preference X video source on kama muta appraisal, kama muta feelings, kama muta sensations, and positive valence. Ads from one's preferred party should evoke more kama muta on each of the measures. For this analysis, we use the model "SPSS mixed model syntax for the moderation hypotheses" from the earlier publication.

In a second analysis with both moving and anger-evoking videos, we expect an ordinal 3 way interaction for the same dependent variables. Scores on all dependent variables are expected to be low after seeing anger-evoking videos in all 4 conditions of the video source x participant preference design. Note

that because this three-way interaction is expected to be only ordinal, it will have less statistical power than the previously tested two-way interaction. As a manipulation check, this analysis should also show a main effect of ad_emotion.

Further, we predict that felt kama muta has effects on motivation to support the candidate after seeing the ad. We again first test this only for moving videos, and use the syntax “SPSS mixed model syntax for the regression hypotheses” from the earlier publication. We expect an unmoderated influence of experienced kama muta on post-ad motivation, as found in the earlier publication.

Next, we add the anger-evoking videos and experienced anger. We expect anger to predict post-ad motivation independently of kama muta.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.

We exclude video impressions where participants indicate playback problems or lack of sound.

We will first check how often participants correctly identify the source of the ad.

We will exclude participants who give wrong guesses of the one ad that promotes the Republican party in general. Wrong responses on this ad we interpret to indicate a lack of attention and/or knowledge about the parties.

How we treat wrong guesses on the other videos we will make dependent on the frequency:

If the source of a video is correctly identified in less than 66% of the cases, we will remove this video from the analysis.

If we find in total (across participants for all 4 moving videos) less than 25% of cases where participants guessed the wrong source of the ad, we will remove these cases of video impressions from the sample.

If we find more than 25% of cases with wrong guesses, we will conduct the analyses twice: once with the true source as IV and the wrongly guessed cases removed, and once with the guessed video source as IV. We then expect the hypothesis to hold in both analyses. For the guessed video source, we acknowledge that this outcome would be correlational in nature.

7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.

We collected 223 participants on Mturk. That was based on the reasoning to have at least 150 participants for enough precision of the main analysis, and some oversampling because we expect to exclude participants.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)

We already collected the sample, but did not yet download it from Qualtrics. We will download and analyse after submitting this preregistration.