COVID-19_Trento_Klagenfurt_London (#37678)

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1) Have any data been collected for this study already?
No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?
The main goal of this study is to understand better how people perceive the risk and benefits of different diseases, the policies implemented by the government to limit the spread of these diseases, and the way the media talk about them. Specifically, we will test whether framing the information about two diseases, the coronavirus and the seasonal flu, in a positive way (i.e., the number of recovered) or in a negative way (i.e., the number of dead) will have an impact on people's perception of the risk and benefits of the virus, the policies and the media.

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
The key dependent variables will be the emotional reaction, the risk and benefits perception of the coronavirus, seasonal flu, the policies implemented to limit their spread, and the way the media talk about these topics. The perception of the benefits and how much the participants engage in some propagated behaviors to limit the spread of the two viruses will be measured. Specifically, participants will be asked to read a text with information regarding the coronavirus or the seasonal flu, framed in a positive (number of recovered) or a negative way (number of dead). The design of the study will be a 2 (disease: coronavirus vs. seasonal flu) x 2 (frame: positive vs. negative) between-subjects experiment with four conditions:
1. Condition 1: the information about the coronavirus will be framed positively (n° of affected people who recovered)
2. Condition 2: the information about the coronavirus will be framed negatively (n° of affected people who died)
3. Condition 3: the information about the seasonal flu will be framed positively (n° of affected people who recovered)
4. Condition 4: the information about the seasonal flu will be framed negatively (n° of affected people who died)
Then, the participants will be asked to answer a series of ad hoc questions about their emotional reactions, perception of risk, and benefits for the categories cited above using a 7-point Likert scale.

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
Participants will be randomly assigned to one of four between-subjects conditions:
1. Condition 1: the information about the coronavirus will be framed positively (n° of affected people who recovered)
2. Condition 2: the information about the coronavirus will be framed negatively (n° of affected people who died)
3. Condition 3: the information about the seasonal flu will be framed positively (n° of affected people who recovered)
4. Condition 4: the information about the seasonal flu will be framed negatively (n° of affected people who died)

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
To understand if the frame had an effect of the dependent variables, we will perform a 2(disease: coronavirus vs. seasonal flu) x 2(frame: positive vs. negative) Anova for each of the variables.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
We will exclude participants who will fail the manipulation check and those who took too long or too short to complete the survey. Specifically, participants will be asked to state if they read information about the coronavirus, the seasonal flu, or two filler answers. Those who will give the wrong answer according to their condition will be excluded. Moreover, the average time to complete the survey will be calculated, and those who will fall in three standard deviations above or under the average time will be excluded.

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 are aiming to reach around 200 participants in up to three European countries (Italy, Austria, and the UK) each.
Italian participants will be recruited using a subject pool at the University of Trento and will receive internship credit for their participation. The Austrian sample will be recruited as part of a large lecture at the University of Klagenfurt and will receive an extra point at the final exam. The British sample will be recruited using a subject pool at the Queen Mary University of London and will be paid for their participation.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
We will conduct exploratory analyses to examine the possible moderating role of demographics characteristics (e.g., age, gender, country, political orientation, etc.) and individual differences (e.g., trait emotional intelligence, trust in media and science, belief in conspiracy theories).