

## Ending on a familiar note: Basic effect + "safe bet" mediation (#76681)

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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?

(1) Endings will increase choices of repeat options; (2) Endings will increase desires for a 'safe-bet' experience; (3) Increased choice of repeat options is explained by increased desires for 'safe-bet' experiences.

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

The key DV is choice of activity (from 2 options - a repeat option vs. a novel option, all else equal between them - displayed in randomized order). Participants will make 10 such choices, one at a time in randomized order, reflecting 10 domains of activities: Restaurants, Desserts, Cities, Movies, Books, Beaches, Sports, Bands, Museums and Socializing. We are including 10 domains simply for generalizability (we assume a similar pattern for each).

To assess our proposed mediators, for each of these 10 domains, participants will also rate one item on a bipolar scale, about the importance of choosing a 'safe bet' experience ("...Wanting a 'safe bet' for your experience (where you can guarantee you'll have a good enough time, even if it means missing out on other desirable options)") versus taking a risk on an option that could 'max out' the experience ("...taking a risk to 'max out' your experience (where you shoot for the best possible time, even if there's a bigger chance you'll only have a so-so time)"). This item is a bipolar scale of 1 to 10 with the poles randomly counterbalanced for each scenario ("For THIS particular occasion, it's better to choose the 'safe bet'"; "For THIS particular occasion, it's better to try to 'max out'").

For each domain, the DV-block and the mediators-block will be presented in randomized order.

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

Participants will be randomly assigned to condition via a 2 (Condition, between-subjects: Control vs. Last Chance) x 10 (Domain, within-subjects: the 10 domains described above) design. For the Control condition, for each Domain, participants will read that they have more chances to experience that domain for quite some time; for the Last Chance condition, for each domain, participants will read that it is their last chance to experience that domain for quite some time (all else is identical across conditions).

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

We will restructure the data file to produce a column for participant ID (each participant gets 10 rows), a column for Condition (control vs. last), a column for Domain (1-10), a column for choice (repeat option vs. new option), a column for risky-versus-safe-bet ratings (1-10).

First: For our primary DV (choice), we will conduct a repeated-measures binary logistic regression analysis (via SPSS GEE) using participant ID as a subject variable, Domain as a within-subjects predictor, Condition as a between-subjects predictor, and Choice as the DV. We hypothesize a main effect of Condition, such that more Last Chance participants than Control participants choose repetition.

Second: For our proposed mediator (risky-versus-safe-bet), we will conduct a repeated-measures linear regression analysis (via SPSS GEE) using participant ID as a subject variable, Domain as a within-subjects predictor, Condition as a between-subjects predictor, and risky-versus-safe-bet as the DV (we will standardize this measure to have lower values represent risky bets and higher values represent safer bets: 1 = risky bets and 10 = safe-bets). Of most critical interest, we hypothesize a main effect of Condition for risky-versus-safe-bet, such that more Last Chance participants than Control participants will report wanting safer bets as being more important to their choice.

Third: Collapsing across domains, we will assess mediation via SPSS PROCESS Model 4 (5,000 iterations) with  $x = \text{Condition}$ ,  $y = \text{Choice}$ ,  $m = \text{risky-versus-safe-bet}$ , with the hypothesis that risky-versus-safe-bet mediates the effect of Condition on Choice (as revealed a significant indirect effect).

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

No plans at this time.

### 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 will request 500 "Cloud Approved" participants from Cloud Research, to allow for ~250 per between-subjects cell.

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

At the end of the study, all participants will complete a single item whereby they report their generalized preference across their 10 scenarios from 1 of 2 forced-choice options (displayed in randomized order): "An experience that's HIGH on Sentimental Connection...but happens to be LOW on Pure Pleasure..."; "An experience that's HIGH on Pure Pleasure...but happens to be LOW on Sentimental Connection...." We are including this measure in order to get a better sense of why participants chose their choice in the main measure. Based on our current theorizing, we hypothesize that more Last Chance participants than Control participants will choose the "high on sentimental connection" option, as revealed via binary logistic regression (IV = condition; DV = choice).

At the end of the study, all participants will complete a manipulation check regarding the extent to which endings were on their minds when making their choices overall (single item, rated from 1 = definitely wasn't imagining this, to 10 = definitely was imagining this); will complete an attention check regarding what the study was about (forced-choice: Enjoyable experiences like eating/traveling/socializing vs. Painful experiences like being sick/doing chores/commuting vs. Neutral experiences like sleeping/sitting/cleaning); will report demographics (gender, race/ethnicity, age); will rate how confusing they found the study (1 = not confusing, 10 = very confusing); will rate their study engagement regarding whether mental images actually came to mind from the study prompts (1 = no, not really, 10 = yes, very much); and will complete an honesty check regarding whether we should trust their responses as genuine, with no penalty for honesty (forced-choice: yes vs. no). We are collecting these items simply for descriptive purposes and do not intend to exclude participants based on them; however, if the study works as hypothesized and ends up in a paper, we plan to reanalyze our results entering these items as covariates and will report the results in a Supplemental Materials document, simply for thoroughness (we assume to find generally similar patterns regardless).