

Negative Evaluation of individuals with a history of child maltreatment (#83676)

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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?

This study will explore if individuals with a history of child maltreatment (CM) (targets) are rated as less likeable, trustworthy, and cooperative than individuals without a history of CM (controls) by people naïve to their trauma history (raters) and if those ratings are mediated by the targets showing less positive and more negative facial affect in comparison to controls.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Targets performing the thin slices paradigm (TSP; i.e., targets talk about their interests and preferences in front of a camera during study 1a) are rated as less likeable, trustworthy, and cooperative than controls by independent raters (zero acquaintance; i.e., independent raters who are blind to the study purpose rate these 30s long video recordings during study 1b).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Targets are rated as less likeable, trustworthy, and cooperative than controls during a 3-min interaction on Skype (first acquaintance paradigm, FAP). (Raters are members of the study team who interact with the targets on Skype during study 1a).

Hypothesis 3 (H3): When talking about their interests (TSP) and during the FAP, targets express less positive and more negative emotions in the face than controls.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Lower ratings on likeability, trustworthiness, and cooperativeness for targets (vs. controls) will be mediated by the degree of positive and negative facial emotion display during the TSP and the FAP.

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

H1, H2 and H4: Ratings on likeability, trustworthiness, and cooperativeness: Likert scale between 1-7.

H3 and H4: facial emotion display will be tested through analysis of videos from the TSP and the FAP using the software FaceReader™:

- Positive affect display in face: average percentage of positive emotion detection [happy%]
- Negative affect display in face: average percentage of negative emotion detection [sad% + angry% + disgusted% + fearful%]

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

Non-experimental design. Study 1a: Targets will be assigned to one of two groups, based on the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ; Bernstein et al., 2003). If the cut-off value is reached in one of the subscales of the CTQ, targets will be allocated to the group with a history of CM. Otherwise, they will be assigned to the group without a history of CM. Study 1b: Independent participants will rate the videos recorded in study 1a.

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

Initial descriptive statistics will be provided. A table of means and standard deviations for basic demographic variables (e.g., age, sex) will be created to explore group differences and psychometric parameters (e.g., BDI scores) in order to identify relevant covariates.

H1 and H2: Regression analyses for likeability, trustworthiness, and cooperativeness ratings by independent raters (H1) and interaction partners (H2) will be conducted.

H3: Regression analyses for positive and negative affect display and group allocation will be conducted.

H4: We will use the PROCESS macro from Hayes (2022) to assess whether positive and negative affect display mediate the relationship between group (with vs. without CM) and likeability, trustworthiness, and cooperativeness ratings.

If the data do not meet requirements to perform the statistical method chosen (e.g., heteroscedasticity or normal distribution), alternative nonparametric methods will be applied.

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

To minimize the possible influence of outliers, we will use the Winsorize technique (Dixon, 1960). Cut-off points will be set once the data is available.

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.

Our sample size was determined based on the study by Hepp et al. (2019). We used their correlation coefficients for likeability ($r = -0.54$), trustworthiness ($r = -0.44$), and cooperativeness ($r = -0.22$), resulting in an average of $r = -0.40$. A power analysis in G*Power 3.1 yielded a total required sample size of 71 for a power of 0.95 to detect a medium effect size of $f^2=0.19$ with a linear multiple regression, using an alpha of 0.05. To account for possible outliers, we will aim for a minimum total sample size of 80 (40 in each group).

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

Data for study 1a have already been collected (video recordings of targets who participated in the TSP and ratings of study members who performed a 3-min interaction with targets via Skype). However, with exception of the ratings from study members, data that have already been collected (i.e., all video recordings) will merely serve as stimulus material for the present study 1b.

- In exploratory analyses, we will furthermore assess whether ratings of likeability, trustworthiness, and cooperativeness are related to levels of depression, severity of child maltreatment, social anxiety, social support, and rejection sensitivity.
- As a control variable, similarity between targets and raters will be added to the models of H1 and H2. Similarity will be derived by subjective estimates (Likert scale 1-7) from raters (independent participants for H1, interaction partners for H2). Additionally, for H2, average scores on the social attraction scale (McCroskey & McCain, 1974) will be added as a control variable. Scores on the social attraction scale will be derived by subjective estimates (Likert scale 1-7) from interaction partners (study members).
- As an exploratory analysis, it will be tested whether targets display overall reduced levels of emotion expression (average percentage of emotion detection [100% - neutral%]) in comparison to controls and whether the overall emotion expression mediates the relationship between group (targets vs. controls) and likeability, trustworthiness, and cooperativeness ratings.
- As a secondary analysis, t-tests with independent samples will be conducted to test whether targets differ in their objective cooperativeness (as assessed with the dictator game; Bolton, Katok, & Zwick, 1998). It is expected that targets do not differ from controls in their objective cooperativeness (Hepp, Gebhardt, Kieslich, Storkel, & Niedtfeld, 2019).