Individual and Gender Differences in Responses to Tearful Crying (#8264)

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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?

Do visible tears promote helping behaviour and are perceived helplessness, friendliness, felt connectedness and empathy mediators of this relationship?

Do gender of the observer and the crying person influence this interpersonal function of crying?

- Participants will be more willing to help tearfully crying than non-tearfully crying individuals
- Perceived helplessness/connectedness/friendliness and empathy of the observer will mediate the relationship
- Men will be more willing to help crying women than crying men
- Perceived friendliness/helplessness and empathy, but not connectedness will mediate the relationship for male participants looking at crying people
- Women will make no difference between rating men/women
- All mediators will be significant for female participants

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

'Willingness to help' is the main dependent variable and will be measured with two self-rated statements that are rated on a scale from 1-7 (strongly agree to strongly disagree) as used in Vingerhoets, Ven & Velden (2016):

"I am inclined to ask this person whether I can be of any help"; "I am inclined to comfort this person"

Three mediators will be measured similarly:

Helplessness: "This person needs support"; "This person needs consolation"

Friendliness: "This person seems kind"; "This person seems likable"

Connectedness: "I feel connected to this person", "I feel emotionally involved with this person"; "I sympathize with this person"

+ 1 item of the Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale, rated on a 1-7 scale (IOS; Aron et al., 1992)

The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1980) is used for empathy measurement. It assumes empathy to be a multidimensional construct, reflected in four scales: Perspective taking, fantasy, empathic concern, personal distress. The Index consists of 28 items (7 per scale) that are assessed on a 5-point Likert scale.

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

The study will employ a within-subject design: participants will see images of both men and women and will also see both, pictures depicting individuals with and without tears.

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

First of all the original analysis from Vingerhoest, Ven and Velden (2016) will be replicated which contained a t-test between the tears/no tears condition independently of gender and a mediator analysis. To the latter one, the 4 IRI scales (empathy measure) will be added as additional possible mediators. Furthermore, the mediator analysis will be repeated separately for only male participants and only female participants to investigate the gender differences.

Lastly a repeated Measure ANOVA will be performed for the 2x2x2 design to investigate the role of gender and possible interactions in more depth. (Between-subject: gender; Within-subject: tears/no tears; gender of individual on pictures)

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

Outliers which are not due to deviations from the study procedure will not be removed. Only data of participants who did not complete the experimental task 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.

140 participants (power analysis for gender between subject effect in repeated measures ANOVA [medium effect size 0.3] resulted in sample size of 112, we are allowing for drop-out and technical problems of 28 cases). The sample should have equal numbers of men and women.

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