Paternalism and mental capacity (#1405)

Author(s)

Juliana Schroeder (UC Berkeley) - jschroeder@berkeley.edu

Adam Waytz (Northwestern University) - a-waytz@kellogg.northwestern.edu

Nicholas Epley (University of Chicago) - epley@chicagobooth.edu

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

Do people believe more paternalistic policies will be more effective for others than for themselves? We predict that people believe others have less mental capacity than the self, and therefore paternalistic policies seem more appropriate for others.

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

Participants will select which of two policies (one more paternalistic, the other less paternalistic) will be more effective for themselves vs. others to: 1) reduce obesity, 2) reduce credit card debt, 3) reduce gun misuse, 4) increase savings, 5) reduce debt. We will count the total number of paternalistic policies selected as our DV.

We will also measure perceived mental capacity of the self and other.

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

Two conditions: self vs. other (within-subjects).

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

We will conduct a chi-square analysis on the number paternalistic policies selected for self vs. other. We will also run a paired t-test on mental capacity index for self vs. other. Finally, we will see if the effect of self vs. other condition on policies selected is mediated by perceptions of mental capacity.

5) Any secondary analyses?

We may run the same analyses specified in #5 controlling for political affiliation and orientation, gender, and age.

6) 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 run 100 participants.

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

As an exploratory analysis, we may exclude participants who report that a particular policy is irrelevant to them (for example, participants who don't own guns can report that the gun control policy is not relevant to them).

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

No, no data have been collected for this study yet