

Author(s)

Etan Green (Wharton) - etangr@wharton.upenn.edu
Joshua Lewis (Wharton) - lejoshua@wharton.upenn.edu

Created: 05/24/2017 09:34 AM (PT)

Public: 05/27/2017 06:14 PM (PT)

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

We hypothesize that after people turn down the option to spend a fixed amount on unlimited consumption of a good, they become less likely to consume an additional unit of that good if it brings their total expenditure to beyond that fixed amount.

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

Participants read a vignette about a protagonist weighing consumption against expenditure. At the end of the vignette, the protagonist decides whether to consume an additional unit that would push total expenditures beyond a fixed-cost counterfactual. We ask participants how likely the protagonist is to consume this additional unit. The dependent variable is the participant's likelihood rating on a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely).

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

The survey will randomly assign participants to one of 4 conditions in a 2 (option: forgone option versus no option) by 2 (vignette: dessert versus movie) design.

Each vignette describes a protagonist weighing consumption against expenditure. In both vignettes, the protagonist knows about an unlimited option with a fixed cost but expects to spend less paying piecemeal, and hence ignores the option. However, in the forgone-option condition, the protagonist finds out that the option would have been available if they had wanted it, and in the no-option condition, the protagonist finds out that the option would not have been available even if they had wanted it.

Thereafter, in all conditions, the protagonist spends more than expected and decides whether to consume an additional unit that would push total expenditures beyond the fixed-cost counterfactual.

In addition, for each participant, we randomly select a name for the protagonist from a set of 6 female names (Amy, Claire, Meredith, Mei, Gabriella and Keisha) and 6 male names (Bob, Steven, Brad, Chang, Carlos and Lamar).

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

For the first analysis, we will separate the data by vignette condition, and for each vignette, run a two sample t-test on the dependent variable using the option factor as the group variable. For each vignette, we expect the forgone option condition to decrease the perceived likelihood of the protagonist consuming the additional unit that moves expenditure beyond the counterfactual fixed cost.

For the second analysis, we will pool data from both vignettes, and regress the dependent variable on (1) a dummy variable for the foregone option condition, 2) vignette fixed effects. We expect the same results to hold for our pooled analysis.

5) Any secondary analyses?

None

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 aim to collect responses from 2000 MTurkers.

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

If any MTurk ID or IP Address responds to the survey more than once, we will include the response with the earliest start date only. Otherwise, we will include all participants in our main analyses.

Finally, we will ask participants to justify their decision, and code their answers for exploratory analysis.

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

No, no data have been collected for this study yet