CORONAVIRUS MESSAGES (#37726)

Author(s)

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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?

We examine how a message critical of the public's response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be perceived. We examine the roles of social identity and expertise.

We expect the message phrased as coming from an ingroup source ("we"), compared to outgroup source ("they"), leads to more positive responses to the message, more positive behavioral intentions, and more agreement that the public's response has been inadequate.
We expert an expert source (epidemiologist vs. radio personality) leads to more positive responses to the message, more positive behavioral intentions, and more agreement that the public's response has been inadequate.

Measures of message constructiveness and threat are expected to mediate effects on behavioral intentions and agreement about the public's response.

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

Primary measures:

Ratings of message constructiveness and positive intent of the source- 3 items

Ratings of message threat - 8 items

Behavioral intentions (e.g., hand-washing etc.) - 5 items

Public response (e.g., not taking virus seriously etc.)- 4 items

Additional measures:

Source knowledge - 3 items

Ideology - 1 item

Trust in science- 1 item

Trust in medicine - 1 item

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

Four between subject conditions in 2 (Source language: "we" vs. "they") x 2 (Source expertise: Epidemiologist vs. radio personality) design

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

We will conduct 2x2 ANOVAs on each of the combined measures.

We will conduct mediation analyses with message constructiveness and threat as mediators on behavioral intentions

Exploratory analyses will be conducted to determine if political ideology, trust in science, or trust in medicine will moderate the effects.

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

Failure to identify the occupation of the source leads to automatic exclusion from the study

We will also exclude anyone who responds to all ratings on a page with the same response as inattentive

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.

600

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

We collected data from ten participants to ensure there was sufficient variability on the measures and instructions were clear. We completed the preregistration before conducting any of the primary analyses.