

Information Avoidance II - Cornell, Summer 2020, Online Survey' (#43189)

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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?

Hypothesis 1: Intentional information avoidance increases with chronological age.

Question 1: To what extent do expected affective responses (positive/negative), information usefulness, and expected implications for decision preferences (current/future) explain age differences in information avoidance?

Question 2: To what extent do demographic, cognitive, personality, and socioemotional covariates explain age differences in information avoidance?

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

Participants will respond to six information avoidance scenarios, the order of which will be randomized and counter-balanced across participants. Three of the scenarios focus on health (the beach, café, and TV streaming scenario), and three of the scenarios focus on environmental concerns (the water bottle, desk, and grocery shopping scenario). Each scenario presents a choice between two options: one option that entails receiving aversive information and one option that does not entail receiving information.

Information avoidance: For each scenario, participants make a binary decision between the option with (0) and the option without information (1). The latter indicates information avoidance.

Affective responses: For each scenario, participants rate how much the aversive information would make them feel bad or limit their enjoyment. Both items are assessed on 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 7 = "Strongly agree", and scores are averaged across the two items.

Implications for decision preferences: For each scenario, participants rate how much the aversive information would influence the current decision or future habits. Both items are assessed on 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 7 = "Strongly agree", and scores are averaged across the two items.

Usefulness: For each scenario, participants rate how useful the aversive information would be to them. This item is assessed on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 7 = "Strongly agree".

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

Age, while naturally varying between participants, will be treated as a continuous variable.

The order of scenarios which will be randomized and counter-balanced across participants, as will be which of the two options is paired with which name and in which order the options are being displayed on the screen.

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

Intercorrelations among information avoidance items will be examined for the three items within each domain (health, environment) and for the full set of 6 items. Summary scales will be computed if internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) exceed .6.

The two items assessing affective responses and the two items assessing implications for decision preferences will be averaged if intercorrelations exceed .6. Usefulness will be treated as a separate item.

Hypothesis 1: We will regress information avoidance on participants' age.

Question 1: We will jointly regress information avoidance on participants' affective responses, information usefulness, decision preferences, and age. In addition, we will independently regress affective responses, information usefulness, and decision preferences on age.

Question 2: We will regress information avoidance on:

Block 1: Demographic variables

Block 2: Personality

Block 3: Socioemotional and health variables

Block 4: Cognitive measures

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

We winsorize all univariate outliers to values equaling z-scores of +/- 3.30, 3.31, etc. Multivariate outliers are cases where Mahalanobis Distance = $X^2 p < .001$.

Participants are excluded if age is missing, below 18, over 120, or does not match birth year (1 year error margin). Participants must pass attention checks to be included: "Please select "Fair" to show you are paying attention" and "At the FUN IN THE SUN music festival, everybody gets a door prize. Out of 1,000 visitors, how many are expected to get a door prize?"

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.

We aim to collect data from 500 participants. 450 participants will be recruited through the Qualtrics.com Recruitment Services (150n 18-35 years, 150n 36-65 years, 150n 66+ years). 33 participants will be recruited through the Cornell University LEEDR Lab SONA panel. 17 participants will be recruited through the Cornell University Healthy Aging Lab contact list. Recruitment will be selective to yield comparable gender and race/ethnicity composition across age groups.

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

We will also collect data on demographic, personality, socioemotional/ health, and cognitive covariates (listed below). We will run exploratory analyses involving these variables as specified in Questions 1 & 2.

In addition, we will report means and standard deviations for the following collected measures, as well as their correlation with age.

Demographics

- Gender (1 dummy-coded variable: 0 = Male, 1 = Female)
- Race/Ethnicity (1 dummy-coded : 0 = Non-Hispanic White, 1 = Other)
- Income (1 variable indexed on a 1-7 scale)
- Education (1 variable indexed on a 1-5 scale)
- Political orientation (0 democrat, 1 republican, 2 independent, 3 other)

Personality

- Neuroticism (2 items, measured on 5-point Likert scales, averaged)
- Agreeableness (2 items, measured on 5-point Likert scales, averaged)
- Openness (2 items, measured on 5-point Likert scales, averaged)
- Extraversion (2 items, measured on 5-point Likert scales, averaged)
- Conscientiousness (2 items, measured on 5-point Likert scales, averaged)

Socioemotional and health variables

- Subjective physical health (4 variables rated on a 5-point Likert scale)
- Subjective emotional health (4 variables rated on a 5-point Likert scale)
- Incidental Affect (1 item to measure valence of affect, 1 item to measure activation level, both variables are measured on 7-point Likert scales)
- Self-continuity (6 items measuring perceived continuity with past and future self at 1, 5, and 10 years)
- Life position (1 continuous variable, 0-100)
- Focus on affect versus information in decision making (1 continuous variable, 0-100)
- Focus on growth versus maintenance goals (1 continuous variable, 0-100)

Cognition

- Subjective memory (1 item measured on a 5-point Likert scale)
- Subjective learning ability (1 item measured on a 5-point Likert scale) Cognitive reflection ability (3 items summed up into 1 variable, with 0-3 correct responses)
- Vocabulary (12 items; 0-12 correct answers)
- Numeracy (3 items summed up into 1 variable, with 0-3 correct responses)