031720 Healthy Habits Lab Study 1 Revision: 3-condition study w/New Items (#37494)

Created: 03/17/2020 11:05 AM (PT)

Public: 06/17/2020 01:07 PM (PT)

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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?
We predict that after being incentivized to complete a positive behavior that should be intrinsically motivating, people will be more willing to forgo their financial incentives when asked to treat the positive, intrinsically rewarding experience as its own reward than when they are a) asked to treat a less rewarding/central aspect of the experience as its own reward or b) not reminded of any non-financial rewards from the experience.

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
The key DV is whether the financial incentive is forgone in part or in full. Participants will be asked how much of a $2 incentive they would like to forgo. They can enter any value between $0 and $2.

We are also collecting two further items after we collect the primary DV:

1) a behavioral measure to assess willingness to repeat the experience. Specifically, we will ask participants this yes/no question: "You wrote this letter as part of a larger campaign to support and care for children in need. We are always looking for people to write more letters in the future. Would you be willing to participate in more studies like this one for $1?
If you click "Yes" below, you will be added to a list of MTurkers eligible for studies like this one and may be asked to participate soon."

2) two items meant to measure whether participants see themselves as more authentically motivated to complete the letter writing task/more prosocial in the treatment condition. Participants are asked to indicate their agreement with these two items on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (extremely):
"I engaged in the letter writing task primarily to help a child in need"
"My decision to write a letter to a child in need was authentic"

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
Three conditions: self-signaling treatment, active control, and control. Participants will be asked to opt in to a task for $2. This task involves writing a letter to children in the hospital over the holidays. In the self-signaling treatment condition, participants are told to treat the joy and hope they've spread as their reward (an intrinsically rewarding aspect of the experience that feels like the "right reason" to have written the letter) and asked to forgo some or all of their incentive. In the active control, participants are told to treat the letter writing practice they've gained as their reward and forgo some or all of their incentive. In the control, participants are simply asked to forgo some or all of their incentive.

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
To test our primary hypothesis, we will run an OLS with the amount of incentive money forgone as the DV: Forgo ~ Treatment. Treatment will be a factor variable whose baseline is the inactive control. In other words, we will have dummy variables for the active control and the self-signaling treatment, while the baseline will be the inactive control.

As a secondary check of our results, we will run the same regressions (with robust standard errors) with binary forgo yes/no as the DV rather than the continuous variable.

To test whether participants are equally, more, or less likely to want to repeat the treatment experience, we will run an OLS regression with robust standard errors where willingness to take another, similar survey is the DV and the IV is the same categorical variable with control as the baseline and dummy variables for treatment and active control.

Finally, to test whether participants rate themselves as more authentically motivated in the treatment condition, we will run an OLS regression where the DV is the average of the two authentic motivation items and the IV is the same categorical variable with control as the baseline and dummy variables for treatment and active control.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
None, though by definition, only participants who opt in to the letter writing task can be included in our analyses.

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 will collect 775 participants aiming to get ~750 participants who complete the letter writing experience.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
We will explore each of the two authentic motivation items separately.

We will also see whether the results for the authentic motivation items and for willingness to repeat the experience again hold when the two control conditions are collapsed.

We will have three independent MTurkers rate the quality of each letter on a scale from 1 to 7. We will see if this rated quality interacts with treatment to predict the amount of money forgone by participants.