Information avoidance under polarization (#76723)

Created: 10/12/2021 04:40 AM (PT)
Public: 02/21/2022 05:16 AM (PT)

Author(s)
Philipp Chapkovski (Higher School of Economics, Russia) - fchapkovskiy@hse.ru

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?
There are two research questions:
(1) Do people avoid or seek information about the political (or otherwise polarizing) position of their partner in a give-or-take dictator game (DG)?
(2) Does the information avoidance interact with a transfer decision differently depending on the stage during which the revelation takes place (that is, before or after the DG decision)?

There are four hypotheses:
H1. The difference in transfers towards those with aligned opinions and conflicting opinions will be lower in a treatment where participants can avoid knowing their partner's position.
H2. Dictators who make a decision to not observe their partners' position before the transfer will transfer more than conflicting revealers and less than aligned revealers in the same treatment.
H3. Those who make a decision to observe their partners' position after the transfer will transfer more than those who decide to not observe.
H4. Those who make a decision to not observe their partners' position before the transfer will transfer more than those who decide not to observe after the transfer.

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
There are two key dependent variables: (1) the size of the transfer, either positive or negative, made by a dictator in DG. (2) in some treatments a decision to observe or not the information about the partner's position regarding a polarizing statement.

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
The data is collected in two parts: first, a filtering part and then the main study.
In the filtering part participants will have to state whether they agree or disagree with the statement regarding same-sex marriage ("How much do you agree with the following statement: LGBT people should have the same legal rights to marry as people of heterosexual orientation.") with a 5-point likert scale. Then in the main study participants are matched with partners with aligned or conflicting positions.
There are three treatments: forced_reveal where a polarizing position of the partner is provided to a participant before making a transfer in a dictator game, and two treatments with unforced information exposure, where a participant chooses whether they want to observe their partner's position, either before the transfer (reveal_before), or after the decision is made (reveal_after).

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
I will explore the research questions using standard linear and Tobit (censored) regression techniques to compare mean DG decisions across treatment conditions. I will study mean DG decisions within 'reveal' treatments, comparing and contrasting the decisions of those who elect (and elect not) to reveal their partners' positions.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
I will run a filtering part where all participants will answer questions using a five point Likert scale. For the main part I will re-invite an equal number of those participants who either agree or disagree with the statement in Part 1, dropping those who choose an option 'Neither agree, nor disagree'. The filtering stage will include an attention check, and I will exclude participants who fail to pass it. I will likewise exclude from the main study those participants who fail more than four times to provide correct answers to the comprehension quiz for the Dictator Game.

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.
I will collect 800 complete Dictator's observations using the crowdsourcing platform Toloka.ai.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
For exploratory purposes I will check how decisions to reveal are correlated with Social Distance Index, Social Curiosity Scale, Information Avoidance Scale. After the decision is made, I will also elicit dictators' beliefs about the modal dictator's transfer, and their beliefs about the share of revealers (in relevant treatments).