Gesellschaft für experimentelle Wirtschaftsforschung e.V.
German Association for Experimental Economic Research e.V.

Institutional Review Board Certificate

No. 5PLNGby3

https://gfew.de/ethik/5PLNGby3

Date: 10/12/2021

Certificate Expires: 10/12/2023

Status: Approved

Review Level: Expedite

Details of Experiment:

Titel

Information avoidance under polarization

Authors

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Short description of the experimental study

The aim of this paper is to inquire under what conditions people would prefer to avoid knowledge of their partner's polarizing opinion or, by contrast, would actively seek this knowledge in order to make their decision in a give-or-take dictator game (DG). The dictators will be able to observe their partner's position with regard to a statement they themselves agree or disagree with. In some treatments dictators will be able to choose whether they want to inquire about a partner's opinion: we expect that such a control over information flow may decrease the degree of polarization.
The study consists of three treatments: forced_reveal where a polarizing position of the partner is provided to a participant before making a transfer in a DG and two treatments with unforced information exposure, where a participant can choose whether they want to observe their partner's position, either before the transfer (reveal_before), or after the decision is made (reveal_after).
The study consists of two parts: the first part is used as a filter for creating an artificially polarized balanced group and the second part uses this prefiltered group for the core experiment. In the first part we will collect the opinions on a set of potentially polarizing questions, including the main candidate for polarization that retrieves participants opinion about 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."). For the main part we will re-invite only those participants who either agree or disagree with the statement in Part 1. To make a balanced population we will randomly pick the equal number of those who agree and disagree with the statement to be invited for Part 2. After gathering dictators' decisions, we will invite the rest of eligible participants who take part in Part 1 to become recipients in DG. Recipients will be randomly matched with dictators and will receive corresponding payoffs, based on dictators' decisions.

We will exclude participants who fail to pass an attention check in Part 1. We will likewise exclude

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participants who fail to provide correct answers to the comprehension quiz for the Dictator Game more than 4 times.

The German Association for Experimental Economic Research (Gesellschaft für experimentelle Wirtschaftsforschung - GfeW) provides this certificate of approval in an expedited review process according the rules and procedures approved by the members of the association on September 19, 2017.

The approval is based on the agreement of the proposers to abide by the legal requirements of the European Union and by the policies and procedures of the GfeW. Furthermore, the approval is only valid, if (i) the proposers have provided all necessary information completely and truthfully, (ii) no part of the planned experimental project has been conducted before the approval was granted, and (iii) the experimental project is conducted as described.

This approval does not supercede or replace decisions by other statutory bodies. Furthermore, it is not a subsitute for certifications or approvals that are required by law, by the statutes of the involved research institutes, or by the codes of conduct that are applicable to the participating researchers, including those from other fields of research.

The expiration date of the approval is noted above. To continue the proposed experimental study beyond that date, a new approval must be requested, even if the experimental protocol remains unchanged.

Please also note that prior to implementing any changes or amendments in the protocol of the proposed experimental study, a new approval must be requested, even if the new experimental study including the changes or amendments to the protocol is expected to be governed by the GfeW´s rules for the expedited review process.

A copy of this letter should be kept in the records together with all documents associated with this experimental study.

Prof. Dr. Joachim Weimann
President of the GfeW

Prof. Dr. Abdolkarim Sadrieh
Vice-President of the GfeW