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As Predicted: "Predicted vs. actual consent with a phone search request" (#3173)

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1) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?

We predict that a larger proportion of study participants will agree to hand over their personal cell phones to be searched than a separate group of study participants predict when imagining a hypothetical request to turn over a phone.

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

Yes/No compliance with a search request. In one condition (the "actual request condition"), the DV corresponds to whether the participant ACTUALLY complied with a search request. In a second condition (the "hypothetical search condition") the DVs are whether participants believe a "reasonable person" would comply (yes or no), and whether they believe they themselves would comply (yes or no).

We will also ask how uncomfortable Ps feel/would feel saying "no" on a series of five 7-point scales (i.e., How easy, comfortable, awkward, pressured, and free to say no or yes did you/would you feel in this scenario?). We predict that participants in the actual request condition will recognize the discomfort of saying "no" more than those in the hypothetical request condition.

In addition, we will ask one open-ended question in both conditions asking about why Ps would comply with or decline the request, and our experimenters will record the verbal responses of participants in the actual request condition. Both of these latter measures will be used in supplementary analyses; we do not have specific predictions related to them.

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

Two conditions: actual request, hypothetical request

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

We hypothesize that people have a hard time imagining what it's like to be in the actual situation of being asked by someone to hand over a personal, potentially sensitive, object, regardless of how they try to imagine it. So, we plan to include two different phrasings, one that's used in many legal contexts ("reasonable person") and one that's been used in the perspective-taking literature ("hypothetical you"), and tested both against what people actually do. We predict that regardless of phrasing, participants will underestimate the number of people who agree to this request.

To test this, we'll compare both phrasings against actual behavior in two separate one-tailed chi-squared tests looking at frequencies of (1) actual compliance vs anticipated compliance for a "reasonable person" in a hypothetical scenario and (2) actual compliance vs anticipated compliance for oneself in a hypothetical scenario. In addition, we will conduct a within-subjects test between the two wordings ("reasonable person" vs. "hypothetical you") to see whether the phrasing made a difference or not. We do not expect it to, so we predict a null result in this last test.

5) Any secondary analyses?

We have a directional prediction that Ps in the hypothetical request condition will indicate less awkwardness and discomfort at the prospect of saying "no," more ease, more freedom, and less pressure to say "yes" than those in the actual request condition. Therefore, we will perform one-tailed t-tests between the actual and hypothetical request conditions on the awkwardness, discomfort, ease, freedom, and pressure variables for both the "reasonable person" and the "hypothetical you" phrasings. We will calculate Cronbach's alpha for the 5 scale items and combine them if $\alpha > .7$, in which case we will conduct a single t-test. If Cronbach's alpha for the 5 items is lower than .7, we will conduct separate t-tests on each of the items. We again do not expect phrasing to make a difference on these items. We will conduct a repeated-measures ANOVA to see whether it does.

6) 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 offer the study until 200 Ps have participated, or until May 1, 2017, whichever comes first.

7) Anything else you would like to pre-register?

(e.g., data exclusions, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)

8) Have any data been collected for this study already?

No, no data have been collected for this study yet

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