Reputational Incentives in Advice-Giving (Selfies) (#130343)

Author(s)
This pre-registration is currently anonymous to enable blind peer-review.
It has 2 authors.

Pre-registered on: 04/26/2023 08:37 PM (PT)

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 hypothesize that (1) advice-givers who are incentivized to be likeable will give advice that is biased to make the recipient feel more flattered than those who are incentivized by accuracy, and (2) that advice-receivers view those who give them more flattering advice as more likeable and warmer.

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
Our first DV is the advice from advice-givers. They communicate an attractiveness rank from 1 to 10, where 1 is "most attractive" and 10 is "least attractive."

We collect two key DVs from the advice-takers: (1) how likeable they think the advice-giver is (single item) and (2) a measure of warmth determined by an average of 4 items from an existing scale (warmth, friendliness, well-intentioned, good-natured). All these items are collected on 5-point Likert scales.

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
Advice-givers will be randomly assigned to one of two conditions: Warmth or Accuracy. In both conditions, participants will give advice to the participant they had ranked as the 7th most attractive participant in the group. We vary between conditions whether they receive a bonus payment if the advice-taker rates them as likeable (Warmth condition), based on their advice, or whether they receive a bonus payment if the advice-taker guesses their rank accurately (Accuracy condition).

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
To test hypothesis (1), we will conduct a t-test on the rank the advice-giver communicates in their advice. We expect this rank to be lower (i.e., the participant is advised to guess that they are more attractive) in the Warmth condition than in the Accuracy condition.

To test hypothesis (2), we will conduct two OLS regressions with likeability and warmth as the DVs, respectively, and with the advised rank as the predictor. We hypothesize that those who are advised that they rank higher (i.e., are more attractive) perceive the advice-giver as more likeable and warmer. We collapse this across treatments, because advice-takers only receive advice from one advice-giver and are blind to that person's incentives.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
Among advice-takers, we exclude participants who (1) do not upload a picture, (2) upload a selfie that is of an inappropriate nature or very unlikely to be the participant (e.g., a well-known celebrity), or (3) upload a group photo. We do not count these participants toward our preregistered sample size.

We include all advice-givers who complete the survey.

We only invite advice-takers back for a second survey if at least one participant had ranked them in the 7th spot and gave advice to them. Participants who were never ranked 7th did not get any advice and hence do not have an advice-giver to evaluate.

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 open recruitment on Prolific for 100 men and 100 women in the role of advice-taker. We will increase the sample as much as necessary to have exactly 100 selfies from men and 100 selfies from women. If more than 100 selfies for a gender are collected, we will only include the first 100 valid submissions.

For advice-givers, we will target 300 male and 300 female participants via Prolific. All participants who complete the survey will be part of our sample.

We will then invite the advice-takers who have received advice back to a follow-up survey. We will keep this survey open and available for 7 days and we will send one reminder notification after 4 days. At the end of the 7th day, we will close the survey.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
The experiment will be conducted in three stages. Advice-takers first upload photos of themselves ("selfies"). They also guess their relative attractiveness in a group of 10 (most to least attractive, 10-point rank) after uploading the selfie, which we collect for exploratory purposes.

Advice-givers will always evaluate selfies of participants of the opposite gender. We limit participation in the survey to those who self-identify as male or female. We will collapse all our analyses across gender and do not make any predictions about gender differences.

The existing warmth scale completed by advice-takers includes two additional items (sincerity and trustworthiness). We create an average of these two items separately for exploratory purposes.

Advice-takers also guess their own rank after receiving advice. This measure is collected on a scale from 1-10, with "1" being most attractive and 10 being "least attractive."