

Dr. Stavroula Kousta
Chief Editor
Nature Human Behaviour

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Location: TU Dresden, Germany
Date: 24.03.2022

Cover Letter for a Stage 1 Registered Report

Dear Dr. Kousta,

we would like to submit the Stage 1 Registered Report titled "Estimating individual subjective values of emotion regulation strategies" for consideration in *Nature Human Behaviour*.

We present the evaluation of a new paradigm for determining individual subjective values of demand levels of effortful tasks in the context of emotion regulation. The choice of an effective emotion regulation strategy is an important aspect of goal achievement and adaptive behavior. Yet, initial evidence from our lab suggests that individuals choose emotion regulation strategies not primarily because of their subjective effectiveness, but on the subjective effort of a strategy. To determine what subjective value different emotion regulation strategies have for a person, we advanced an existing paradigm by Westbrook and colleagues (2013) that has been found suitable to determine subjective values for cognitively demanding tasks. We adapted this paradigm so that it allows to determine subjective values without assuming that the objectively easiest level is preferred and for effortful tasks whose levels have no objective order of difficulty as is the case in emotion regulation research. Apart from testing whether this paradigm adequately describes individual differences in the preference for cognitive effort, covered in a separate Report, we here aim to determine subjective values in the context of emotion regulation. We do so by predicting subjective values by measures of efficiency and effort and using them to predict choice behavior in the context of emotion regulation.

To investigate both properties rigorously, these questions are covered in separate Registered Reports that we submit in parallel (see submission by Josephine Zerna). Here we present the Report for the *second* question which is of broader interest for fields such as psychology, mental health research and cognitive science, offering an effective and adaptable way to assess the preference for effortful tasks without objective order of task load.

Following Stage 1 in principle acceptance of both Reports, we will collect the data over a span of six months, and analyse the data and write the Stage 2 Report within four to six weeks, resulting in a total project duration of about seven to eight months. Depending on the progress of the pandemic, this estimation may vary. We hereby confirm that all necessary support and approvals are in place for the study to commence immediately. We agree to share the raw data, study materials, and analysis code openly on the Open Science Framework. We agree to register the approved protocol as a publicly available preprint on the Open Science Framework following Stage 1 in principle acceptance. We agree to *Nature Human Behaviour* publishing a short summary under a section Withdrawn Registrations, should we choose to withdraw our paper.

Thank you very much for considering our manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

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