

Expectation Violations in the Communication About Death and Dying: Predictors of Coping Among University Students

Public registration

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Study Information

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: A higher (vs. lower and neutral) credibility of the disconfirming information will lead to more accommodation.

Hypothesis 2: A lower (vs. higher and neutral) credibility of the disconfirming information will lead to more immunization.

Hypothesis 3: A better-than-expected (vs. worse-than-expected) event will lead to more accommodation.

Hypothesis 4: A worse-than-expected (vs. better-than-expected) event will lead to more immunization.

Hypothesis 5: Persons with higher death avoidance will show more immunization than persons with lower death avoidance if the event is better than expected.

Hypothesis 6: Persons with higher death avoidance will show more accommodation than persons with lower death avoidance if the event is worse than expected.

Design Plan

Study type

Experiment - A researcher randomly assigns treatments to study subjects, this includes field or lab experiments. This is also known as an intervention experiment and includes randomized controlled trials.

Blinding

For studies that involve human subjects, they will not know the treatment group to which they have been assigned.

Is there any additional blinding in this study?

No response

Study design

In the first experiment, a between-subjects design will be implemented including one factor with three different conditions (credibility: low vs. neutral vs. high) and two outcome variables (accommodation and immunization).

In the second experiment, a 2 (valence: better-than expected vs. worse-than expected) x 2 (death avoidance: low vs. high) between-subjects design with two outcome variables (accommodation and immunization) will be implemented.

No files selected

Randomization

No response

Sampling Plan

Existing Data

Registration prior to creation of data

Explanation of existing data

No response

Data collection procedures

Participants are eligible for participation if they are 18 years or older and are university students. They will be recruited primarily via e-mail distribution lists of the university. Furthermore, flyers and notice boards will be used.

At baseline, participants will receive general information about end-of-life communication to ensure a similar level of knowledge. In the next step, vignettes including an expectation-violating information or event will be presented and participants will be asked to rate the likelihood of two possible reactions to the expectation violation for themselves (accommodation and immunization).

In experiment 1, participants will be randomly assigned to one of three conditions (credibility low vs. neutral vs. high), while in experiment 2, they will be randomly assigned to one of two conditions (better than expected vs. worse than expected). Participants will receive a payment of 6 € or 0.5 credits if they complete the entire survey.

No files selected

Sample size

We attempt to recruit at least 207 participants.

Sample size rationale

No response

Stopping rule

No response

Variables

Manipulated variables

No response

No files selected

Measured variables

Outcome measures will be eight situation-specific, self-developed items on accommodation and immunization. Items are rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 („very unlikely“) to 5 („very likely“). The outcome measures will be assessed directly after presenting the vignettes.

No files selected

Indices

No response

No files selected

Analysis Plan

Statistical models

To test hypothesis 1 and 2, we will use one-way ANOVA (between-subjects factor: credibility). In order to test hypothesis 3, 4, 5 and 6, 2 x 2 two-way ANOVA will be used (between-subjects factor 1: valence, between-subjects factor 2: death avoidance).

No files selected

Transformations

No response

Inference criteria

No response

Data exclusion

No response

Missing data

No response

Exploratory analysis

No response

Other

Other

No response

Contributors

Yannik Bendel and Chrys Gesualdo

Description

A large number of studies have shown the relevance of open communication about death and dying. However, end-of-life conversations are often avoided or postponed. One reason could be negative expectations regarding these conversations. Interventions have been developed to violate these expectations and general predictors of coping with expectation violating events have already been identified in different research fields. However, predictors of coping with expectation violations regarding end-of-life communication have not yet been investigated. For this purpose, in the planned online study, vignettes describing an expectation-violating information or event will be presented to university students in two experiments to assess whether they react with accommodation (expectation update) or immunization (expectation maintenance). In experiment 1 the credibility of an expectation-violating information will be manipulated, whereas in experiment 2 the valence of an expectation-violating event will be manipulated. Since a person's attitudes and personality characteristics can also influence how an expectation violation is dealt with, we will also examine the influence of death avoidance in experiment 2.

Show less

Registration type

OSF Preregistration

Date registered

July 13, 2022

Date created

July 13, 2022

Associated project

osf.io/ev6p3

Internet Archive link

https://archive.org/details/osf-registrations-gbd4c-v1

Category

Project

Registration DOI

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Subjects

Psychology

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Medicine and Health Sciences

Psychiatry and Psychology

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Tags

communication death dying

end-of-life expectations

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predictors of coping

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