December 27, 2023

Professor Susan J. Elliott

Editor-in-Chief

*Social Science & Medicine*

Dear Professor Elliott:

I wish to submit a research article, titled “Adding Nudge-based Reminders to Financial Incentives for Promoting Antibody Testing and Vaccination to Mitigate the Spread of Rubella,” for publication in *Social Science and Medicine*. The paper was coauthored by Shusaku Sasaki and Fumio Ohtake.

This study examines the effects of combining financial incentives with nudges to encourage antibody testing and vaccination to mitigate the spread of rubella. We explore the efficiency of sending text message reminders to promote antibody testing and vaccination using randomized controlled trials, focusing on men aged 40–57 in Japan. These men can be grouped into those 40–46 years who automatically received a free voucher for antibody testing and vaccination in FY2019 and those aged 47–57 years who automatically received the free voucher after FY2020 but had to apply to obtain it in FY2019. Our findings reveal that an altruistic text message reminder, which highlights the negative externality of infection, increases the actual uptake rate of antibody testing for the first group. However, this message is less effective for the second group. No message has a statistically significant impact.

This study contributes to the body of research investigating the conditions under which nudges are effective. In recent years, evidence for the effectiveness of nudges has been contradictory and may depend on various conditions, including topics and channels. Therefore, this study examines a novel combination of financial incentives and nudges, which have often been viewed as substitutable measures, and demonstrates that nudges can be effective when used in combination with financial incentives.

Further, we believe that this paper will be of interest to the readership of your journal because it will also contribute to the development of herd immunity for rubella globally. The findings obtained will be significant to this research field and provide researchers and decision-makers with additional valuable information.

This manuscript has not been published or presented elsewhere in part or in entirety and is not under consideration by another journal. All study participants provided informed consent, and the study design was approved by the appropriate ethics review board. We have read and understood your journal’s policies, and we believe that neither the manuscript nor the study violates any of these. There are no conflicts of interest to declare.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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