

UCSB Asymmetry without cause (#4983)

Created: 07/26/2017 02:00 PM (PT)

Shared: 07/26/2017 02:14 PM (PT)

This pre-registration is not yet public. This anonymized copy (without author names) was created by the author(s) to use during peer-review. A non-anonymized version (containing author names) will become publicly available either when an author makes it public, or three years from the "Shared" date at the top of this document (whichever comes first). Until that time the contents of this pre-registration are confidential.

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

The purpose of this study is to test whether judgments of responsibility for good compared to bad outcomes would be differentially sensitive to bypassing, the tendency for an uncontrollable factor (e.g. action caused by a brain tumor) to contribute to a behavior. Our prediction is that people will be sensitive to bypassing for bad behaviors but not good ones. Accordingly, we predict that when a tumor is implicated in causing a person's behavior, that that person will not be held responsible for the behavior when it is bad, but they will be held responsible when it is good.

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

Participants will indicate on a 5-point scale how responsible the actor in each scenario is for his behavior and will also indicate whether they believe the actor's behavior before or after the tumor is removed is reflective of who the actor truly is. They will also indicate their agreement with the statement, "The tumor brought out the good in Alex/Mark." on a 7-point scale.

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

Participants will read two separate scenarios about someone who has a brain tumor which makes them behave in a certain way. The two versions are: extreme good and mild bad.

All participants will read both scenarios, and will be randomly assigned to either read the bad version first or the good version first. Additionally, the names of the subjects in the scenarios will be counterbalanced with the versions of the scenarios that the participants will read. Participants will learn about someone named Alex or someone named Mark. All participants will get one Alex scenario and one Mark scenario.

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

We will test the basic responsibility difference by comparing good vs. bad in only the scenarios that participants rated first. For responsibility, this will be done with a 1-way ANOVA on "responsible" with group as the IV. We will test whether including the "Extraversion:meek" subscale of HEXACO as a covariate changes the results.

We predict that people will hold the actor they read about more responsible for good, rather than bad behaviors.

5) Any secondary analyses?

As an exploratory investigation, we will test whether these results are moderated by scores on a cynicism subscale (factor-analysis extracted scores using Maximum Likelihood estimation on a single factor).

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 collect data until 1500 participants complete an attention check. Specifically, in the HEXACO and cynicism scales, participants are told to select a specific scale point for one item in each scale. Participants must select both scale points correctly to be considered passing the attention check.

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