What are you afraid of? Examining belief in government agencies to protect against terrorism and trust in the honesty of the information they provide

**<Questions for response>**

1. Both evaluators commented on need to describe how variables were constructed to yield the outcome and the predictor

* Each level of government federal, state, and local had different levels of leadership. For example the federal level of government would have leadership roles classified under different titles compared to state and local government. These unique titles could include different tasks. If each level of government had the exact same role or position then the “protection” factor would be consistent across all levels of government.
* The trust the government can protect from terrorism (outcome) and belief the government is honest with the public (predictor) variables were measured by the NSDEP survey on scales from 1 to 5 where: for the outcome variable, 1 was “not at all sure” and 5 was “extremely sure” and for the predictor variable, 1 was “never honest” and 5 was “always honest”. Both the outcome and predictor variables were collapsed to binary variables where the categories 1, 2 and 3 were coded as 0 and interpreted as “does not trust the government can protect from terrorism” and “does not believe the government is honest with the public about terrorism”, respectively. Values of 4 or 5 on the original factor variables for the outcome and predictor variables were coded to 1 and interpreted “does trust the government can protect from terrorism” and “does believe the government is honest with the public about terrorism”, respectively.
* The outcome variable was measured as at the local, state and federal government levels and these three scores were aggregated into an average overall score.
* The predictor variable was measured for many government organizations (ex. Mayor, State Office of Emergency Services, President of the United States). All of the organizations identified as local (Mayor, Local Fire Department, Local Police Department, County/City Health Department), state (Governor, State Office of Emergency Services, State Health Department) and federal (President of the United States, Department of Homeland Security, Centers for Disease Control, Federal Emergency Management Agency) were combined into average scores for local, state and federal government. The local, state and federal aggregate scores were further combined into one overall average score.

1. How good was your model at classification? i.e. What was the sensitivity and specificity of your model for correctly predicting the outcomes?

* In terms of sensitivity there was a higher proportion of people *with (true positive)* trust in their local government protection against future terrorist attacks compared to state and federal. The sensitivity of the model was low, 13.2%, and thus poorly predicted true positives.
* In terms of specificity there was a proportion of people *without (true negative)* trust in their government protection at the federal level against future terrorist attacks. The specificity of the model was high, 98.7%, and thus predicted true negatives very well.

1. It would be good to describe the demographic distribution (i.e. race, age, sex, income) in table 1 and include columns by level of government

Characteristics of participants who do or do not trust that the federal government can protect them from terrorism

|  | **Not trust federal government protection (n=1488)** | **Trust federal government protection**  **(n=541)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Education - n (%)** |  |  |
| High school diploma/GED | **462 (31.0%)** | **187 (34.6%)** |
| Junior college degree | 140 (9.4%) | 50 (9.2%) |
| Bachelor’s degree | 339 (22.8%) | 117 (21.6%) |
| Post-graduate degree | 278 (18.6%) | 79 (14.6%) |
| None/Other | 269 (18.1%) | 108 (20.0%) |
|  |  |  |
| **Age – median [min, max]** | 50.0 [18.0, 98.0] | 47.0 [18.0, 94.0] |
|  |  |  |
| **Belief of information received - n (%)** |  |  |
| 1 - Did not believe any of it | 95 (6.4%) | 13 (2.4%) |
| 2 | 266 (17.9%) | 44 (8.1%) |
| 3 | **625 (42.0%)** | **187 (34.6%)** |
| 4 | 326 (21.9%) | 171 (31.6%) |
| 5 - Believed all of it | 176 (11.8%) | 126 (23.3%) |
|  |  |  |
| **Perceived risk of terrorism - n (%)** |  |  |
| 1 - Not at all likely | **446 (30.0%)** | **172 (31.8%)** |
| 2 | 345 (23.2%) | 123 (22.7%) |
| 3 | 320 (21.5%) | 121 (22.4%) |
| 4 | 153 (10.3%) | 59 (10.9%) |
| 5 - Definitely will occur | 224 (15.1%) | 66 (12.2%) |

Characteristics of participants who do or do not trust that the state government can protect them from terrorism

|  | **Not trust state government protection (n=1723)** | **Trust state government protection**  **(n=306)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Education - n (%)** |  |  |
| High school diploma/GED | **540 (31.3%)** | **109 (35.6%)** |
| Junior college degree | 160 (9.3%) | 30 (9.8%) |
| Bachelor’s degree | 396 (23.0%) | 60 (19.6%) |
| Post-graduate degree | 329 (19.1%) | 28 (9.2%) |
| None/Other | 298 (17.3%) | 79 (25.8%) |
|  |  |  |
| **Age – median [min, max]** | 50.0 [18.0, 98.0] | 46.0 [18.0, 94.0] |
|  |  |  |
| **Belief of information received - n (%)** |  |  |
| 1 - Did not believe any of it | 100 (5.8%) | 8 (2.6%) |
| 2 | 289 (16.8%) | 21 (6.9%) |
| 3 | **729 (42.3%)** | 83 (27.1%) |
| 4 | 396 (23.0%) | **101 (33.0%)** |
| 5 - Believed all of it | 209 (12.1%) | 93 (30.4%) |
|  |  |  |
| **Perceived risk of terrorism - n (%)** |  |  |
| 1 - Not at all likely | **521 (30.2%)** | **97 (31.7%)** |
| 2 | 414 (24.0%) | 54 (17.6%) |
| 3 | 367 (21.3%) | 74 (24.2%) |
| 4 | 174 (10.1%) | 38 (12.4%) |
| 5 - Definitely will occur | 247 (14.3%) | 43 (14.1%) |

Characteristics of participants who do or do not trust that the local government can protect them from terrorism

|  | **Not trust local government protection (n=1728)** | **Trust local government protection**  **(n=301)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Education - n (%)** |  |  |
| High school diploma/GED | **547 (31.7%)** | **102 (33.9%)** |
| Junior college degree | 162 (9.4%) | 28 (9.3%) |
| Bachelor’s degree | 393 (22.7%) | 63 (20.9%) |
| Post-graduate degree | 326 (18.8%) | 31 (10.4%) |
| None/Other | 300 (17.4%) | 77 (25.6%) |
|  |  |  |
| **Age – median [min, max]** | 50.0 [18.0, 98.0] | 48.0 [18.0, 88.0] |
|  |  |  |
| **Belief of information received - n (%)** |  |  |
| 1 - Did not believe any of it | 99 (5.7%) | 9 (3.0%) |
| 2 | 286 (16.6%) | 24 (8.0%) |
| 3 | **726 (42.0%)** | 86 (28.6%) |
| 4 | 396 (22.9%) | **101 (33.6%)** |
| 5 - Believed all of it | 221 (12.8%) | 81 (26.9%) |
|  |  |  |
| **Perceived risk of terrorism - n (%)** |  |  |
| 1 - Not at all likely | **520 (30.1%)** | **98 (32.6%)** |
| 2 | 418 (24.2%) | 50 (16.6%) |
| 3 | 369 (21.4%) | 72 (23.9%) |
| 4 | 176 (10.2%) | 36 (12.0%) |
| 5 - Definitely will occur | 245 (14.2%) | 45 (15.0%) |