

CONFIDENTIAL - FOR PEER-REVIEW ONLY

Honesty Pledges Study 1 (#46568)

Created: 08/22/2020 10:27 PM (PT)

This is an anonymized copy (without author names) of the pre-registration. It was created by the author(s) to use during peer-review. A non-anonymized version (containing author names) should be made available by the authors when the work it supports is made public.

1) Have any data been collected for this study already?

No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

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

We are examining if an honesty pledge that varies in different levels of engagement affects (i.e. reduces) people's likelihood to over-report (cheat) their performance on a task for higher financial gain.

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

The key dependent variable is the percent of problems (matrices) that participants report as solved (in the "cheating" conditions; in the "no cheating" control condition it is the percent of problems actually solved). Additionally, we measure responses to three unsolvable matrices.

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

All participants will complete an online version of the matrix task (Mazar, Amir & Ariely, 2008) which includes 20 problems displayed sequentially on survey pages, each with a time limit of 20 seconds to solve. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of six between-subject conditions:

- (1) Control: No possibility to cheat - participants have to type in the solution to each of the 20 problems (on a separate page following each problem) and are rewarded based on the actual number of correct solutions entered.
- (2) Self-report: With possibility to cheat – participants are asked to only mark, for each problem, whether they found the solution or not, and are rewarded according to the number of problems they reported as solved.
- (3) Read: With possibility to cheat – before starting the task, participants are asked to read an honesty pledge and mark a check-box stating "I agree" to the pledge.
- (4) Sign: With possibility to cheat – before starting the task, participants are asked to read an honesty pledge and sign it by typing their Participant ID,
- (5) Copy: With possibility to cheat – before starting the task, participants are asked to read an honesty pledge and copy it by re-typing it manually into a text box (pledge is given in a picture format so copy-and-paste is not possible).
- (6) Copy + Sign: With possibility to cheat. Combination of conditions 4 and 5.

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

We will first conduct an ANOVA to examine the differences in the percent of problems reported as solved between all conditions. Then, we will compute a "cheating gap" score, which is the difference between the percent of problems reported as solved in the Self-report (2) condition and the Control (1) condition. Then, we compute the same score for all "cheating" conditions and evaluate the effect of each condition at reducing the cheating gap using planned contrasts.

We will replicate the ANOVAs with linear regressions with the Control condition or Self-Report conditions as baseline.

For the unsolvable problems, we will compare the percent reported as solved between the conditions using ANOVA and/or regression analysis.

We will also examine differences in the distribution of the percent of problems reported as solved between conditions using Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests. If we find significant differences, we will also examine how the distributions differ, specifically focusing on the differences in the percent of "brazen" lies, which are defined as the percent of participants who cheated to a maximal, or close to a maximal, degree (i.e., reported more than 80% of problems solved). The differences on this measure will be tested using chi-square tests.

Lastly, we will explore interactions effects between the condition and demographic variables such as age and gender using ANOVA and/or regressions.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.

We will exclude instances of multiple attempts by the same participant ID. We will exclude participants in conditions 5 and 6 who did not re-type the pledge or enter a wrong participant ID in their signature.

7) 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 post 900 requests on Prolific Academic and therefore expect 900 responses (i.e. ~150 participants per condition). We will include, however, all participants who complete the survey in response to this request.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)

We will collect demographic variables at the end of the experiment (gender, age, education, income). We will flag duplicate IP addresses and categorize participants based on how comprehensively and accurately they summarized the instructions for the task. We will use these procedures to contextualize

the data.

If the data exhibits characteristics that violate common assumptions of statistical analyses (i.e., the data are non-normally distributed or contain extreme outliers), we may utilize data transformation techniques in our analyses.

