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Group Vulnerability and Empathy in Response to COVID19 (WES2021) (#66959)

Created: 05/26/2021 06:33 PM (PT)

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

It's complicated. We have already collected some data but explain in Question 8 why readers may consider this a valid pre-registration nevertheless.

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

Does priming the vulnerability of particular groups to COVID19 increase empathy and prosocial behaviour?

We propose a comparative examination of attitudes towards two groups particularly vulnerable to serious illness and death as a result of COVID19: racial minorities, and disabled people. We hypothesise:

H1: The disability condition will elicit greater anger and empathic concern than the control, racial minority, or mixed conditions.
H2: The disability condition will elicit more prosocial action than the control, racial minority, or mixed conditions.
H3: The mixed condition will elicit greater anger and empathic concern than the racial minority or control conditions.
H4: The mixed condition will elicit more prosocial action than the control, racial minority, or mixed conditions.
H5: The racial minority condition will not elicit a significantly greater degree of anger, empathic concern, or prosocial action than the control condition.
H6: Disabled people and proximate relations of disabled people will exhibit greater empathic concern, anger, and prosocial action in response to the disability condition than non-disabled respondents, and respondents without disabled proximate relations

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

[grid_a] It should be compulsory for people to wear masks in places where lots of people are gathered (e.g. supermarkets, shopping malls, public transport)

[grid_b] It is worth temporarily sacrificing some of our personal freedoms if it means protecting those who are most vulnerable to COVID19

[grid_c] There should not be another lockdown if cases of COVID19 begin to increase again.

[grid_d] I am very concerned about those most vulnerable to COVID19

[grid_e] I feel anger towards people who refuse to take action to protect those most vulnerable to COVID19

[grid_f] I am quite moved by what can happen to those most vulnerable to COVID19

-Strongly agree
-Agree
-Neither agree nor disagree
-Disagree
-Strongly disagree
-Don't know

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

Respondents will be randomly assigned to one of four conditions. Each condition contains a statement describing COVID-19 casualty figures in the UK. In three of the four conditions, respondents are then given a second statement which varies across conditions. The treatments are listed below:

[split1] The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on UK society. Over the course of the pandemic, approximately 450,000 Britons have been hospitalised, and over 120,000 have died.

[split2] The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on UK society. Over the course of the pandemic, approximately 450,000 Britons have been hospitalised, and over 120,000 have died. Disabled people have been particularly seriously affected, with research showing that this group is significantly more likely to be seriously ill and die from COVID19.

[split3] The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on UK society. Over the course of the pandemic, approximately 450,000 Britons have been hospitalised, and over 120,000 have died.
Black and minority ethnic people have been particularly seriously affected, with research showing that this group is significantly more likely to be seriously ill and die from COVID19.

[split4] The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on UK society. Over the course of the pandemic, approximately 450,000 Britons have been hospitalised, and over 120,000 have died. Disabled people and black and minority ethnic people have been particularly seriously affected, with research showing that this group is significantly more likely to be seriously ill and die from COVID19.

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

Difference in means tests between treatment groups, linear regression models interacting treatment with disability status, relational proximity, and political ideology.

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

Respondent's who answer 'Don't know' will be excluded.

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.

Representative sample of approximately 4,000 eligible voters in Wales. The experiment is part of the 2021 Welsh Election Study post-election wave, with sample size pre-determined.

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

Data collection began on 12/05/2021, but will not be completed until approximately 31/05/2021. Data is being collected by YouGov. While data collection is underway, we have no access to the data.