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Moral Domains and Correspondent Judgments Under Cognitive Load (#127309)

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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?

We aim to replicate past findings that individuals are more likely to make extreme correspondent judgments/dispositional attributions of a target following moral transgressions within property and fairness domains. Additionally, we anticipate that these findings will be somewhat automatic. That is, these findings will be robust even when an increased cognitive load is present, regardless of individual differences in participants' working memory.

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

Dependent variables include the correspondent moral judgment of a target (i.e., how morally upstanding, ethical, principled, and likable they are on a 6-point bipolar scale), and whether participants attribute moral behaviors to a target (dispositional judgment) or to a situation (situational judgment).

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

Participants will be assigned to two between-subjects conditions: one condition where cognitive load is increased by presenting moral stimuli alongside a span task, or one with just the moral stimuli presented alone. Within these conditions, participants will be shown 14 total moral stimuli. Each of these capture one of 14 targets (presented just as a four-letter male name) acting in a way that either conforms to or violates one of our seven moral domains. These moral domains include: helping (failing to help) a member of one's family, doing (failing to do) for someone else as they had done for you, acting (failing to act) in a way that is courageous, tough, or resilient, honoring (failing to honor) the rules of one's superiors, showing (failing to show) equal kindness and compassion to all others, respecting (failing to respect) one's property, and uniting (failing to unite) with one's community to share burden and responsibility.

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

We plan to do mixed ANOVAs to see if there are differences in correspondent judgments across domains and whether these further differ based on the valence of the behavior (e.g., behaviors in line with a domain or violating it) and the amount of cognitive load the participant is under while passing judgment.

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

We do not anticipate outliers occurring in our continuous scales, but in the case of any outliers we will winsorize at 2.5 SD above/below mean.

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 collect approximately 200 participants from Prolific Academic.

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

We have previously collected data exploring an effect of moral domain on correspondent judgments. Through this study, we aim to replicate those data and also extend our findings by testing the robustness of those effects under cognitive load.