Managing costs and rewards when choosing to disclose information

*A recommendation by **Zoltan Dienes** ⓘ based on peer reviews by **Tyler Jacobs** and **Yikang Zhang** ⓘ of the STAGE 2 REPORT:*

An interviewee in an intelligence interview can face competing interests in disclosing information: The value in cooperating because, for example, information given leads to the arrest of a narcotics gang, making the neighbourhood safer; and the risk that disclosing the information leads to reprisals from the gang. Different pieces of information will compete with each other for disclosure, depending on this balance of risks to self-interest. According to the disclosure-outcomes management model of Neequaye et al., information will be disclosed more with a high than low probability of reward, as might be straightforwardly expected, but this difference will be larger when there is a low probability of cost rather than a high probability. The high probability of cost will induce more a variable response to the possible benefits.

Neequaye et al. (2024) invited participants to assume the role of an informant, with the goal of maximizing their points according to stated probabilities of costs and benefits of disclosing pieces of information relating to given scenarios. The degree to which each type of information was disclosed in a subsequent interview wase assessed. Perceived benefits positively influenced the likelihood of disclosing information. The crucial interaction, obtained in a Pilot study, was not significant in the pre-registered replication. The study had decent power to pick up an interaction the same size as found in the pilot, but not half the size, which would still have been interesting. The Stage 2 manuscript was evaluated over one round of in-depth review. Based on detailed responses to the reviewers' comments, the recommender judged that the manuscript met the Stage 2 criteria. **URL to the preregistered Stage 1 protocol:** https://osf.io/ru8j5

Level of bias control achieved: Level 6. *No part of the data or evidence that was used to answer the research question was generated until after IPA.* **List of eligible PCI RR-friendly journals:**

- Collabra: Psychology

References:

Neequaye, D. A., Luke, T. J., & Kollback, K. (2024). Managing Disclosure Outcomes in Intelligence Interviews [Stage 2]. Acceptance of Version 11 by Peer Community in Registered Reports. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/tfp2c

Reviews

Evaluation round #1

Authors' reply, 08 April 2024

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Decision by Zoltan Dienes ⓘ, posted 01 April 2024, validated 02 April 2024

Minor Revision

Two reviewers have evaluated your Stage 2 and are largely happy. They have some minor concerns to address. I just have one further point to make. In the manuscript you point out you have low power to pick up an effect for the crucial interaction of half the size found in the Pilot. As half the size may still be interesting, you point out that a non-significant result means one should suspend judgment. In the Discussion you point this out again. That is good. You also claim in the Abstract and Discussion that the interaction failed to replicate. On the one hand, if replication means "getting a significant result", that is true. But many people implicitly take the claim that an effect failed to replicate to mean there was evidence against the effect. Be clear in the Abstract that by failing to replciate you mean there was a significant interaction in the pilot but but not a signfiicant interaction in the main study, though the power means interesting effect sizes may have been missed.

Reviewed by Yikang Zhang ⓘ, 26 March 2024

Dear Dr. Zoltan Dienes,

Thanks for your patience. Enclosed please find my review of the stage 2 report. I hope that you and the authors find it helpful.
Best,
Yikang
Download the review

Reviewed by Tyler Jacobs, 19 March 2024

Overall, I am satisfied with the authors' reporting of their Stage 2 results. PCI-RR highlights the following questions as important for reviewers to consider at Stage 2: Have the authors provided a direct URL to the approved protocol in the Stage 2 manuscript? Did they stay true to their protocol? Are any deviations from protocol clearly justified and fully documented?Is the Introduction in the Stage 1 manuscript (including hypotheses) the same as in the Stage 2 manuscript? Are any changes transparently flagged? Did any prespecified data quality checks, positive controls, or tests of intervention fidelity succeed? Are any additional post hoc analyses justified, performed appropriately, and clearly distinguished from the preregistered analyses? Are the conclusions appropriately centered on the outcomes of the preregistered analyses? Are the overall conclusions based on the evidence?

Overall, in my view, these questions are answered affirmatively. I just have a few small questions, largely revolving around a couple of questions from my Stage 1 review that I feel still could be addressed better.

-One other question first though. It seems like the authors did a great job sticking to their preregistered protocol and analysis plan. Just to make it clear for readers, though, could the authors clarify if there were any deviations from their Stage 1 proposed protocol or analyses? Again, it seems that the answer is "no", which is great, but stating that explicitly could further reassure readers about the transparency of the methods and results.

-For the preliminary study, the authors said in their Stage 1 response that they reported the Nakagawa R^2, but I do not see it present. Could authors make sure it is present, and if it is not, report it? I do see it reported for the replication.

-I feel there is still more that could be said regarding external validity, particularly in the light of the replication results. Here and in the Stage 1 response, the authors did a great job of justifying the decision to use the economic self-interest decision-making task compared to a verbal interview and included a nuanced discussion of the trade-offs between the two methods. My point is different than that, though. Instead, my point (also raised in Stage 1), is that any sort of artificial lab task will have difficulty capturing the threats (costs) caused by a real-life disclosure decision in which one's life or freedom (or the life or freedom of loved ones) is at risk. The difference in severity of the costs of disclosure in real criminal scenarios compared to the economic costs used in the task could also partially explain why attention to benefits seemed to be the bigger driver of decisions here compared to the proposed model. As the authors mention, this sort of artificiality is common and necessary to examine the issue psychologically, so it is not a huge deal, but I still would appreciate a sentence or two to this point in the "external vs. internal validity" discussion subsection.

I thank the authors for their time and efforts.