

Addendum to Pre-analysis Plan for ‘Encouraging Cooperation with the State – A Field Experiment on Household Connections to the Police’

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The previous pre-analysis plan dealt with the data collection and analysis strategy for endline data collected during November 2018. This addendum describes an additional data collection exercise that takes place in the same sample of households which were exposed to the intervention described in the previous pre-analysis plan. This data collection exercise will begin on May 18, 2019. This addendum has been pre-registered prior to the realization of these new outcomes. Any details on study design that are not described in this addendum can be found in the original pre-analysis plan (PAP). Any contingency not accounted for in the previous PAP or this addendum will be dealt with according to the Standard Operating Procedures for Don Green’s lab at Columbia as of June 7, 2016. This study has received approval from the Columbia University Institutional Review Board (IRB), protocol AAAR6346.

New Outcome Measure

As part of this new round of data collection, each of the 250 households in the sample will receive three items which are presented as thank you gifts for having participated in the survey. One goal of this exercise is to increase respondents’ inclination to participate in a follow-up survey that will be implemented later and described in a separate pre-analysis plan. A second goal is to obtain a less obtrusive measure of the support for police and community involvement in the fight against crime.

The first item that households receive is a two-page report with some demographic information about the endline sample. The report serves to give respondents an example of how the survey data will be used. The second item is a mug and the third item is a t-shirt. Household members will be asked to choose between two t-shirts. One t-shirt displays the slogan “As a community, we fight crime” (*community t-shirt*). The other t-shirt displays the slogan “Together with our police, we fight crime” (*police t-shirt*). Otherwise, both t-shirts are identical. Enumerators will record which t-shirt was chosen in each household.

Enumerators will also mention to the respondent who makes the t-shirt choice that we are considering giving out t-shirts to other community members and inquire which t-shirt respondents would prefer us to give to other community members.

Mechanisms

Consider the following two mechanisms through which the alarm treatment may affect the support for police and community involvement in the fight against crime:

Mechanism 1: The alarm system improves perceptions of police effectiveness and, hence, reduces the perceived need for community involvement in the fight against crime. As described in the previous PAP, the alarm system is designed to enable a swifter and more effective police response to crimes that happen in the home of an alarm owner. Beyond these immediate technology-related improvements, there is also the possibility that members of households that are protected by an alarm will update their beliefs about the quality of the police service more broadly, either because they come more frequently in contact with the police or because they interpret the fact that the police has bought into the alarm project as a signal of the police's intentions or competence. In other words, those who own an alarm may develop a more positive opinion about the police and may generally perceive less of a need for community involvement in the fight against crime.

Everything else equal and under the assumption that individuals prefer t-shirts that express their views both for themselves and for others, this mechanism has the following observable implication:

Empirical prediction 1: Members of households that are protected by an alarm are more likely to choose the police t-shirt and to recommend the police t-shirt for other community members.

Mechanism 2: The alarm system increases perceptions of police oversight and, hence, increases the perceived costs of participating in illegal efforts by the community to fight crime. Those who are protected by an alarm may feel that they have become less "anonymous" in the eyes of the police. After all, the name, address and phone number of at least one household member are on file at the police station. Presumably, the police could easily identify and find an alarm owner who is suspected of taking part in illegal activities. As described in the previous PAP, community involvement in the fight against crime in the context of this study often takes the form of extra-judicial punishment of alleged criminals, also referred to as mob justice. As a consequence of their decreased anonymity, alarm owners may think it particularly likely that they would be sanctioned by the police if they took the law into their own hands. Even if they do not feel more protected by the police, members of households that are protected by an alarm may thus be less willing to participate in crime-related community efforts that are illegal.

Suppose only mechanism 2 is at play, i.e. the alarm system increases the perceived cost of participation in community efforts but does not increase trust in the police. In this case, we would not expect those who are protected by an alarm to become more likely to recommend the police t-shirt for other community members. Even though they themselves are afraid to participate, alarm owners would presumably still like other community members to make an effort to fight crime.

Empirical prediction 2a: Members of households that are protected by an alarm are as likely as those in the control group to recommend the police t-shirt for other community members.

The effect on their own t-shirt choice seems ambiguous. If individuals believe that wearing the community t-shirt may signal to the police that they are potential mob justice participants, alarm owners, who may think that they are already under greater supervision by the police, may become less likely to choose the community t-shirt.

Empirical prediction 2b: Members of households that are protected by an alarm are less likely to choose the community t-shirt.

That said, for ethical reasons, the message on the community t-shirt is sufficiently broad that, even though it signals support for community crime prevention efforts, it is not generally understood as a call for mob

justice.¹ A second possibility is that alarm owners become more likely to choose the community t-shirt. Community protection against crime likely relies on reciprocity – if you help me when I am being attacked, I help you if you are being attacked. Alarm owners may be perceived as being connected to the police and hence outside this reciprocity scheme. As a consequence, other community members may become less likely to help an alarm owner in an emergency. Alarm owners who still want to rely on the community may thus feel an even greater need to wear a t-shirt that signals their willingness to help out the community.

Empirical prediction 2c: Members of households that are protected by an alarm are more likely to choose the community t-shirt.

Hypotheses

To shed light on the above mechanisms, I will test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The alarm treatment increases or decreases the proportion of households that choose the police t-shirt (two-tailed).

Hypothesis 2: The alarm treatment increases or decreases the proportion of households that recommend the police t-shirt for other community members (two-tailed).

Moreover, if the effect of the alarm is mediated by mechanism 2, we would expect treatment effects to be particularly strong among those who, at baseline, thought that one could participate in mob justice with impunity. I will therefore also test the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The effect of the alarm treatment on the t-shirt choice is larger (in absolute value) among households that believed it ‘Not likely at all’ or ‘Not very likely’ that the police would arrest those involved in mob justice than among households that believe it ‘Somewhat likely’ or ‘Very likely’ that the police would arrest those involved in mob justice (two-tailed).

See the variable `mob_violence_police_reaction_bl` in the baseline questionnaire attached to the main PAP.

Estimation and Analysis

The unit of analysis will be the household. The analysis strategy (specification, covariate selection, uncertainty estimates) is identical to the one that has been described in the previous PAP.

¹This has been pre-tested extensively.