

AB018. The impact of emotional priming on delayed discounting

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Background: The aim of the current study is to investigate how consumer behaviour in a financial cost scenario, assessed by using a cost-discounting paradigm, can be influenced by an emotional state. To our knowledge, this is the first study to analyze the effect of emotional priming on cost discounting behavior. Cost discounting, is a phenomenon whereby a decline of subjective value is observed given a time delay before receiving, or losing, something of value. This raises the question: what traits and skills do these young individuals possess that allow them to inhibit acting to obtain an immediate reward? A common explanation by delayed discounting researchers is that individuals who have a higher subjective value as a function of time (i.e., discount less), are able to control their emotional response to the reward (Gómez-Miñambres *et al.*, 2017). By delving further into both emotion and discounting research, it becomes more apparent that the two factors interact, and deserve more attention in behavioural science and consumer behaviour research.

Methods: Participants (N=144) were recruited from the John Molson School of Business Participant Pool. To induce emotion, images from the international affective picture system were used. Participants were randomly

assigned to one of the five emotional priming conditions (neutral valence × neutral arousal, low valence × low arousal, low valence × high arousal, high valence × low arousal, high valence × high arousal). After viewing a series of 20 pictures that were presented sequentially for 5 seconds per image, participants were then tested in either cost scenario (\$1,000 or \$25,000), with a succession of choices between incurring a fixed cost now, or a increased cost over a given time delay (e.g., PAY \$1,000 today, or PAY \$1,250 in 1 month).

Results: In both the \$1,000 and \$25,000 cost conditions, it was shown that the null hypothesis was approximately 16 times more likely to explain the variance accounted for (BF01 =16.05, error =1.37%) in this experiment. However, it is noteworthy to address that between high arousal × positive valence and high arousal × negative valence conditions, the two conditions at opposing ends of the emotional priming spectrum, a significant difference was observed, $t(64)=-2.27$, $P=0.03$, $d=0.56$, $BF_{10}=2.00$, error =0.01%, in their respective discounting rates.

Conclusions: A significant result between the two previously mentioned subgroups is the comparison between the respective cost discounting behaviour of two most extreme ends of the pictorial emotional priming spectrum. These findings are to be taken anecdotally for a variety reason. The overall effect of difference between the five subgroups' discounting rates was observed to be vastly more probabilistic of the null hypothesis. The data collected for the current study demonstrates an association between visually induce emotional affect and cost-oriented decision making. However, there is in need of further investigation in order to establish any definitive linkages.

Keywords: Decision-making; discounting; emotion; affect; perception

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