

Supporting Documentation: Type of Science

Description of task:

In this study we manipulated the type of science participants thought the research was advancing: participants were either told that the study was being run by the Social Science Research Group or by the Cognitive Neuroscience Research Group.

Consent Form:

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.

In this research we are interested in examining the process by which people make **word-group associations**. This is a topic of considerable interest to cognitive neuroscientists interested in neural networking in the brain.

Your task is to look at images describing groups of people and to select a **negative word** that you associate with each group. Your responses will help psychological scientists understand the process of word-group association which is important for understanding the cognitive and neural processes involved when people form impressions.

To begin the study, please press the "Click Here" button at the bottom of this page. After doing so, you will be asked a few questions regarding your feelings about our goals as scientists. You will then be directed towards an image followed by several adjectives. Your task is to choose **one** of these adjectives to describe the group featured in the image.

Thank you very much for your time. Without you, we could not complete our research.

Debrief Form:

Dear Participant,

Thank you again for taking part in this study.

You were told that the aim of this research was to understand human behaviour by examining the way in which people associate words with images. However, we were more interested in the circumstances under which people follow experimental instructions. In particular, we wanted to know whether ideas about science influenced compliance: Are people more likely to persevere in a difficult task when highly identified with the reasons for performing that task?

In order to test this theory we either told you that the research was being conducted by the Cognitive Neuroscience Research Group or the Social Behaviour Research Group. We did this because previous research suggests that 'hard sciences' (i.e. the cognitive neuroscience group) are generally more valued than 'soft sciences' (i.e. the social behaviour group). We then asked you to choose a negative word in order to describe the people portrayed within a set of photographs (or, you may have been presented with words). While photographs (words) in the first half of the questionnaire were of groups that it may have felt easy to justify describing negatively (i.e. The Klu Klux Klan), in the second half of the questionnaire this may have been more difficult. We were interested in whether your identification with the scientific objectives behind the research would make a difference in your decision to continue with the study. We predicted that those told that the research was done by the cognitive neuroscience group would go further in the study than those told the researchers were from the social behaviour group.

If you have any questions about this research or would like to be notified when the study is complete, please contact Megan Birney at meb205@exeter.ac.uk.

Thank you very much.

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