



Supplementary Information for

Perspective: Learning from Failures of Protocol in Cross-Cultural Research

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Recruitment

A total of 200 adult participants were chosen from 4 villages in rural Northwestern Bangladesh based on a prior census of the communities (1). Participants were recruited by approaching their home, identifying if they were at home, describing the study, and asking them if they would be interested in participating. The sample size was chosen to provide sufficient power (Power = 0.80, $\alpha = 0.05$) to detect a bivariate association between social distance and generosity with a coefficient of prediction greater than 0.15.

In the U.S., we recruited 40 participants via emails sent to a list of 6000 undergraduates, curated by the Center for Behavior, Institutions, and the Environment. In Indonesia, we recruited 44 participants using opportunity sampling from a single rural settlement (*nagari*) in West Sumatra, near the city of Payakumbuh in the Lima Puluh Kota regency, limiting recruitment to 2 individuals from the same household. For the U.S. and Indonesia, sample size was determined based on the sample size in a previous lab study of social discounting (2, 3).

Bangladesh protocols

The interviews were usually conducted within homes or on verandas in gated courtyards with two researchers—one providing instructions and asking questions and the other assisting with study materials and ensuring others in the house or compound remained away from the area. All researchers were female Bangladeshis (not from the specific villages), and had received prior training about establishing rapport with

participants, making the participant feel comfortable, and maintaining a humble demeanor to avoid reinforcing status distinctions.

Participants were given passport-sized photos of all consenting adults in their village (50-150 adults), and were asked to choose the 20 photos of people with whom they felt most “ghonishto”. For this task, respondents were asked to only include people who were not in their “khana”—a term for household based on those who eat together from the same fire or kitchen. Participants then sorted the listed individuals in order of how “ghonishto” they felt to each one. The experimenter selected individual photos at 5 social distances (#1, #2, #5, #10, #20) for the subsequent task. For each of these 5 individuals, participants made 6 dichotomous choices between keeping a certain amount of rice for themselves (i.e. selfish option) or giving a certain amount of the rice to that recipient (i.e. generous option). The generous option remained fixed for all choices (i.e., 5 kg rice). The selfish option varied between an amount equal to the generous option (i.e., 5 kg rice) to an amount 10% of the generous option (i.e., $\frac{1}{2}$ kg rice). The maximum generous option was scaled to the equivalent of a half day’s wage (150 Tk in Bangladesh).

Each decision was presented as a choice between two paper tickets, one with the selfish option and one with the generous option, with pictures of bags of rice for each kg of rice. For each choice, participants placed their preferred ticket in a small bucket on the table which they were told was a “lottery”, and their non-preferred ticket in a small bucket on the ground they were told was for unused tickets, called “wastebasket”. Participants were instructed that one of the tickets placed in the “lottery” would be paid out at the end of the experiment, whereas all tickets placed in the “wastebasket” would be

thrown away. All decisions were made behind a screen so that the experimenter was blind to participant decisions. Participants were instructed that their choices were anonymous and choice order was randomized between individuals.

Lotteries, where tickets are drawn from a receptacle to determine the winner of a prize, are common events at religious and secular festivals in the region.

Villagers were familiar with photographs, did not have any noticeable, strong reaction to photographs, and had no trouble identifying known others from their pictures. After piloting different approaches for identifying other villagers, we chose photographs for three reasons: (1) it permitted younger villagers to identify older villagers without having to utter their name (which was frowned upon), (2) it dealt with ambiguities when multiple villagers had the same name or when one villager had several nicknames, (3) it allowed identification of individuals without having to read a name.



Fig. S1. Photograph of interview setup. Green box to the left is the lottery bin. The blue screen is where the two choices are placed over the photographs of the respondent or recipient.

References

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