

Public Support for Development Aid during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Web Appendix

Not for Print Publication

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I Control variables

The wording for these questions were mostly taken from the Cooperative Congressional Election Survey 2018 (with minor editing), which we use to post-stratify estimates for the substantive effects.

- **Income:** Thinking back over the last calendar year, what was your family's annual income? [Less than \$30,000; \$30,000 - \$59,999; \$60,000 - \$89,999; \$90,000 - \$119,999; \$120,000 or more]
- **Education:** What is the highest level of education you have completed? [No high school; High school graduate; Some college; 2-year college; 4-year college; Post-graduate]
- **Gender:** Are you ...? [Male; Female]
- **Race:** What racial or ethnic group best describes you? [White; Black; Hispanic; Asian; Native American; Mixed; Other; Middle Eastern]
- **Ideology:** In general, how would you describe your own political viewpoint? [Very liberal; Liberal; Moderate; Conservative; Very conservative; Not sure]
- **Year of birth:** In what year were you born? [*integer entry*]

II Treatments in Experiment 2

Below are the three news articles for Experiment 2. Each article has the title on top and right below it the name of the author (“Nichole Kristopher) and the date (“Mon Apr 3 2020”). Below the author is the kicker, which previews the punchline of the article. At the bottom, below the text, is the identification of the author (“The writer is a global affairs columnist.” for Need and Targeted Development treatments; “The writer is an award-winning pastry chef in New Orleans.” for the Control condition).

Targeted Development

- **Title:** If Covid-19 is not defeated in Africa, it will return to haunt us all
- **Kicker:** Strategic US foreign aid can help Africa mitigate the pandemic
- **Text:** What happens in the following months in Africa will have serious ramifications for people in the United States and the rest of the world. If the Covid-19 pandemic continues to spread in Africa, it will come back even stronger in North America and Europe this fall. It is in our interest to channel substantially more aid to Africa to help combat the Covid-19 outbreak now.

It does not take much imagination to see the course of the coronavirus in Africa, where medical resources are scarce. Ten African countries have no ventilators at all. In the entire continent, there are only 20,000 care beds, or 1.7 for every 100,000 people. The worse the outbreak becomes in Africa, the more we will have to pay and suffer at home in the fall. By being cheap on foreign aid, we will squander a lot of the hard-won achievements battling the coronavirus over the last months.

If there is anything we have seen thus far, it is that a deadly virus threat anywhere is a deadly threat everywhere. If one country is a pandemic hotspot, we are all at risk of further exponential infections. Now more than ever we must act boldly and strategically abroad, in particular in Africa, to keep us safer at home in the fall. Our own health depends on the health of others.

Need

- **Title:** Africa will be the next epicenter of the Covid-19 outbreak
- **Kicker:** Without US foreign aid, half a billion more people will be pushed into poverty across Africa
- **Text:** The Covid-19 pandemic has overwhelmed healthcare systems and left many without proper medical treatment in Europe and North America. But it’s going to

be even worse for people in Africa, where medical resources are already scarce. Ten African countries have no ventilators at all. In the entire continent, there are only 20,000 intensive care beds, or 1.7 for every 100,000 people.

- As African governments lock down their economies, people in Africa are going to suffer their greatest ever economic decline. One immediate concern is hunger. Even before the pandemic began, about 45 million people in Africa were defined as food-insecure. As transport systems are severely disrupted by the virus, food supplies – already depleted after years of drought and extreme weather events – will become even more scarce.

If there's a significant outbreak of the virus in Africa, millions of people will be affected and very few will have access to the care they need. African countries are doing what they can with what they have, but it will not be enough. Defeating Covid-19 in Africa can only happen through international cooperation. If aid were ever necessary for people in Africa, it is now more than ever before.

Control

- **Title:** You might have heard of stress-eating, but what about stress-baking?
- **Kicker:** Baking relieves stress, provides comfort
- **Text:** By practicing mindfulness - being present, aware of where we are and what we are doing, and not overwhelmed by what is going on around us – we can reduce stress, enhance performance, gain insight and awareness, and increase our attention to others' well-being. Mindfulness can be cultivated through various techniques such as meditation, yoga, *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing), and even baking.

Baking has long been recognized for its therapeutic qualities. It gives us time to reflect and requires patience and precision, which helps us feel more centered and focused. Baking also gives us something concrete to create and control, which reduces anxiety and stress. Baking for others can even contribute to a sense of well-being and connection with others. Baking also serves as an outlet for creative expression, which reduces stress and increases feelings of happiness.

If you are feeling anxious or stressed, consider trying “baking therapy.” Start with a recipe you've always wanted to master, join a virtual baking club, or share your photos on social media with other baking fanatics. You will likely end up with less stress and a delicious treat!

III Details on coding worries

This section describes how the 447 written responses from the first experiment are coded. Each written answer comes from a prompt asking to write down worries about one’s household’s financial situation, worries about the country’s financial situation, and thoughts about the weather. We developed a simple coding scheme which coders use to evaluate the extent to which household or country finances worry them. After all, these are states of minds we care about.

Specifically, coders were asked to read the statement and pick one of several ordinal options for household and country financial worries. The answers went from “positive” (i.e people actually expressed joy), “neutral”, “minor”, “some”, “big”, to “extreme” worries. Each of these were accompanied by examples of what might constitute particular levels of worry. These were recorded separately for the worries about the household and country financial situation.³⁷ The full codebook is available from the authors.

We hired four reliable coders via Amazon’s MechanicalTurk who each coded almost all of the 447 responses. We deemed them reliable as they have performed crowd-coding for two of the authors in previous, unrelated research. Additionally two of the authors coded 150 random statements each. Nobody knew the treatment status and the answer to the aid question at the time of coding; further, the external workers were unaware of hypotheses and even the gist of the research project. All in all, the responses were evaluated 2,084 times for the two types of worries.

Each coder introduces inevitably measurement error into their evaluation of a given statement. Therefore, we use a Bayesian ordinal (confirmatory) factor model that extracts the latent dimension of each worry (Quinn 2004), removing (most) of the measurement error. We run two such models, one for each financial worry. Figure A.1 gives the distribution of posterior means for each observation (x-axis); the y-axis gives the number of observations in the bin of the histogram. In the upper panel gives the results for the expressed household worries for the people in control condition (left side) and the financial-worry treatment condition. We see that a tiny number of respondents in the control condition expressed some worries about the household’s financial situation and that several in the treatment condition actually did not state any worries. These are those that did not comply with their treatment status. However, for the vast bulk of people, no worries were expressed in control condition and a range of higher worries in the treatment condition. The bottom panel gives the analogous results comparing the control

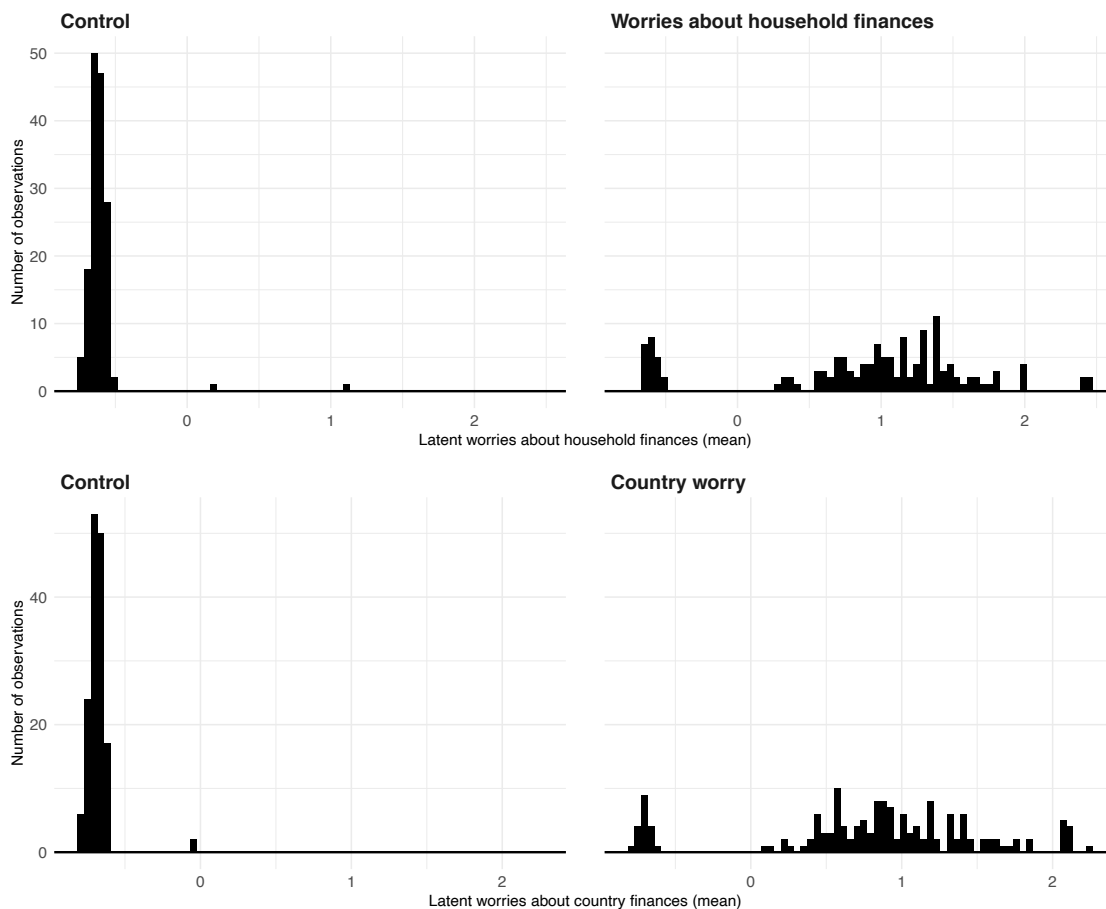


Figure A.1: Distribution of posterior means of the expressed worries. The upper panels show latent scores of the expressed worries about the household finances (x-axes) and their frequency in the histogram (y-axis). Left-hand panel gives these estimates for those in control condition, the right-hand panel for those under household-worry treatment condition. The bottom panel shows analogously the results for the expressed country-worries under the control and country-worry treatment conditions.

and country-finance worries conditions on their effects on the expressed worries about financial situation of the country. The results are very comparable.

To underscore the validity of the estimates, we show the five responses with the highest scores for worries about the financial situation of the household:

- “I will not have enlightened money to pay the bills and rent to be able to stay in a house. And I won’t be able to afford food to eat”
- “Less opportunity to make money and may lose house”
- “I am worried due to the primary breadwinner having recently lost their position. We now have no income, and yet with the pandemic it is not safe to be going outside the house. We have 2 household members who are at increased risk for a more severe infection if we catch COVID-19. It puts us in a place of losing our home and getting sick and possibly losing a life.”

- “Having no savings, having no food available to eat”
- “Can’t feed my family and loose my house”

Analogously, we show below the five highest scores for worries about financial situation of country:

- “the economy crashing”
- “Due to the stupid actions of the federal government and some states that are trying to return to “normal” while their COVID infection rates are still out of control, we may well be simply prolonging the pain and increasing deaths compared to what my native country of Canada is doing. And, unlike that country, support for people and small businesses in the US is severely lacking. We may find ourselves in a Depression.”
- “This may turn into another depression. Most Americans don’t even have 1000 dollars saved in their bank account. Americans are not prepared for a depression because Americans are not well-prepared for hardship in general.”
- “There ain’t no such thing as a free lunch”

What makes me concerned is the fact that some people seem to think that the government can continue to supply for their needs endlessly. Coupled with politicians who are willing to buy public support buy promising handouts. It’s not a viable long-term strategy. The US is almost 25 trillion dollars in debt and is building a house of cards. If we continue to borrow money and promise handouts to get, elected the United States will eventually fail, or be forced to change course dramatically lowering our standard of living.”

- “For me, it’s three main things. (1) Exploding national debt, for which a reckoning will eventually have to come. (2) Lack of (personal) confidence in Wall Street/Big Banks. I think they’re engaging in the same kind of risky policies and practices that they have always done, that have caused global depressions and recessions in the past. (3) Migration of so many U.S. jobs offshore. Not only are we losing the jobs, but we are losing expertise in certain areas, which reduces our ability to rapidly respond in times of crisis. Okay, (4). I have no confidence in the current administration’s policies/ability to improve our position in regard to foreign trade/balance of payments. I think seem to be making things worse.”