

Additional Motivation for Between-Subjects Conditions

More vs. Less Effective Version of Ritual

- Rituals present a “cognitive paradox”: They are widely used to create change but there is often no apparent causal connection between the ritualistic actions and the intended change or outcome.²
- Legare & Souza (2012) proposed that specific features may be linked to increased perceptions of efficacy. Participants evaluated either **more** or **less effective** versions of rituals meant to capture each feature.

Framing

- Construal Level Theory states people’s thoughts and behaviors are influenced by psychological distance.⁵
- Higher levels of construal allow us to look beyond our mental representations and consider objects or people through psychological distance.^{5, 6}
- When actions are framed as coming from a social group unfamiliar to participants, they will use higher-level construals, thus potentially increasing judgements of efficacy.⁴

Full List of References

- ¹Mort, J. & Slone, D. J. (2006). Considering the rationality of ritual behavior. *Journal of the North American Association for the Study of Religion: Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, 18(4), 424-439.
- ²Legare, C. H., & Souza, A. L. (2012). Evaluating ritual efficacy: Evidence from the supernatural. *Cognition*, 124(2012), 1-15.
- ³Boyer, P., & Liénard, P. (2006). Why ritualized behavior? Precaution Systems and action parsing developmental, pathological and cultural rituals. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 29(2006), 1-56.
- ⁴Kapitány, R., & Nielsen, M. (2016). The ritual stance and the precaution system: The role of goal-demotion and opacity in ritual and everyday actions. *Religion, Brain & Behavior*, 7(1), 27-42.
- ⁵Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. (2010). Construal-Level Theory of psychological distance. *Psychological Review*, 117(2), 440-463.
- ⁶Trope, Y., Liberman, N., & Wakslak, C. (2007). Construal levels and psychological distance: Effects on representation, prediction, evaluation, and behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 17(2), 83-95.

Procedure

Near: “You will be reading a series of descriptions of rituals used by Americans to solve different problems.”

vs.

Far: “You will be reading a series of descriptions of *simpatias* or rituals used by Brazilians to solve different problems.”

More Effective

vs.

Less Effective

Time specified

Time not specified

Repetition

No repetition

More steps

Fewer steps

Religious object

No religious object

Object

No object

More Effective

vs.

Less Effective

Same rituals as listed under *Near*

Note: Three rituals were presented for each *feature* category (specificity of time, repetition, complexity, presence of religious object, presence of object). All features were presented within-subjects. Order of all rituals was randomized for each participant.