Supplementary Materials: Study Details

All studies followed the same structure: 1) participants are introduced to the setting; 2) they are provided details on the two suppliers; 3) they are asked attention-check questions; 4) we introduce the PD manipulation; 5) they make their decision; and 6) they complete basic demographics.

S.1. Study 1

S.1.1 Vignette Introduction

Your Role

Imagine that you are the purchasing manager for a chain of environmentally friendly coffee shops. As part of your role, you oversee the supply of coffee beans required to prepare the beverages.

Your Company

The firm has gone to great lengths to become environmentally friendly. The brewing processes are carbon neutral, the packaging is highly recyclable and all waste his recycled. The owners and executives pride themselves to be at the forefront of sustainability.

The Complication

The current economic crisis has forced the firm to reduce costs to try and guarantee the viability of the business. The accountant has exhausted all avenues and insisted that sharp savings and cut-backs are needed for the firm to avoid failure, therefore increasing costs is not viable. This trade-off is impacting your choice for suppliers.

S.1.2 Supplier Descriptions

New Suppliers

The Director of the company has tasked you with identifying two high quality suppliers:

- One supplier that can help meet the sustainability objectives of the firm
- One supplier that can help alleviate the firm's current financial hardships

After doing a thorough investigation, you have found two suppliers that meet the criteria given to you by your Director. The following are the two suppliers you will present to the Director.

Supplier Low-Cost Café

Supplier Low-Cost Cafe is a traditional supplier and can help address the upcoming financial hardships.

- Supplier Low-Cost Cafe is offering a lower price compared to all other comparable suppliers
- This supplier is known for being reliable in all their deliveries

However:

- Supplier Low-Cost Cafe has recently come under scrutiny for causing environmental problems related to land transformation and water pollution
- This occurrence is clearly opposed to the vision of the firm and could harm the company's reputation

Supplier EcoBeans

Supplier EcoBeans is a new supplier and can help address the firm's sustainability objectives.

- Supplier EcoBeans has been praised for being environmentally friendly and is certified by a third party
- This supplier uses natural modes of production with organic fertilisers and wild harvesting, which is clearly aligned with the firms' vision

However:

- Supplier EcoBeans is 35% more expensive than Supplier Low-Cost Cafe
- Due to their sustainable farming, their yields can be unpredictable and you could receive anywhere between 65% and 100% of your original order. Meaning that:

    - You will need to make ad hoc adjustments on a regular basis to maintain sales levels
    - The incomplete deliveries would cause your firm to sell less coffee

Note that the quality of both suppliers is identical. Meaning either would deliver coffee beans of identical specifications and quality.

S.1.3 Attention Check Questions

What does your company sell? _Chocolate _Coffee _Peanuts _Chicken

The Director has tasked you with identifying:

- a) A new brewing process for making ethical coffee to meet the sustainability objectives of the firm
- b) A new supplier that can help alleviate the firm's current financial hardships
- c) A new brewing process for lowering the cost to help alleviate the firm's current financial hardships
- d) A new supplier that can help meet the sustainability objectives of the firm
- e) Both b) and d)
- f) Both a) and c)

How are both suppliers different from one another?

- Supplier EcoBeans is 35% cheaper than Supplier Low-Cost Cafe, but Supplier Low-Cost Cafe is more enviornmentally friendly
- There are no cost or environmental differences between the suppliers

- Supplier Low-Cost Cafe is 35% cheaper than Supplier EcoBeans, but Supplier EcoBeans is more environmentally friendly

Which statement is true regarding the quality of the suppliers?

- Supplier Low-Cost Cafe has poor quality
- Suppliers Low-Cost Cafe and EcoBeans have the same quality
- Supplier EcoBeans has high quality

S.1.4 Spatial Distance Manipulations

The Stores

Your company uses a variety of suppliers to stock its 5 stores around the country, depending on their location as follows:

- Store L is located **around the corner** from the company's office, which is **less than 1 mile away** from where you live
- Store M is located **200 miles away** from the company office and where you live
- Store N is located **600 miles away** from the company office and where you live
- Store O is located **800 miles away** from the company office and where you live
- Store P is located **in another state more than 1,200 miles away** from the company office and where you live

The Director wants a new supplier to stock Store L which **is around the corner** from the company office and **less than 1 mile away** [Store P which is **in another state more than 1,200 miles away**] from the company office and where you live.

How close or far would you say is the store **less than 1 mile away** [**in another state more than 1,200 miles away**] from where you are situated?

_Very close *…to…* _Very far [7 point Likert Scale]

S.1.5 Decision Page

The Director's Reaction

- The Director is impressed by the two suppliers you presented
- The Director wants you to choose one of the suppliers for one of your stores.
- The Director decides that the new supplier will be used to stock the **store around the corner [in another state]** which is **less than 1** [**more than 1,200**] **mile away** from the company office and where you live

Take into account

- The company needs to uphold its vision of being at the forefront of sustainability
- The accounting team has insisted on cutting supply costs due to short term financial stress in order to avoid failure of the company
- You have the final word, and you can only select one supplier

Your Decision

You now have to make the decision of which supplier will stock the **store around the corner** [**in another state**] which is located **less than 1** [**more than 1,200**] **mile away** from you.

Please select the option that reflects better your preferred choice of supplier

_Definitely Supplier Low-Cost Café …*to*… _Definitely Supplier EcoBeans [7-point Likert Scale]

S.1.6 Demographics

What is your age?

Do you have any experience in the coffee industry? _Yes _No

What is your gender? _Female _Male _Non-binary/Other

S.2. Study 2

The vignette was the same as Study 1, except the manipulation was based on social distance.

S.2.1 Social Distance Manipulations

Some History [Close Condition]

- The Company is small and was started by the Director 3 years ago
- Over the years you have gotten to know the Director and have developed a **close friendship**. For example, **you** always **call them by their first name**, you usually **spend 10 minutes of your meetings gossiping, joking around, and talking about your families**, and you both **use colloquial, casual language in your conversations**.
- The Director communicated the new directive **while on an outing together with your families**

You meet personally with the Director and present the information gathered on both suppliers.

Some History [Far Condition]

- The Company is small and was started by the Director 3 years ago
- Over the years you have maintained a **formal relationship** with the Director. For example, **you** always **address the Director by their surname, all conversations are strictly professional**, and you both **use formal, polite language in your conversations**.
- The Director **communicated your new directive via email**

You send via email the information gathered on both suppliers.

How socially close or distant would you say **you are to the Director of the company?**

_Very close …*to*… _Very far [7-point Likert Scale]

S.2.2 Decision Page Questions

Your Decision [Close Condition]

Imagine you are about **to meet the Director for lunch** where you will communicate the supplier you have chosen.

Your Decision [Far Condition]

Imagine you are about to **write an email to the Director** to communicate the supplier you have chosen.

Please select the option that reflects better your preferred choice of supplier

_Definitely Supplier Low-Cost Café *…to…* _Definitely Supplier EcoBeans [7-point Likert Scale]

S.3. Study 3

Study 3 is the same as Study 1, except following the participant selecting their preferred supplier, we also asked them the following: "Which objective between ensuring low costs and ensuring sustainability do you think is more central for the firm?"

_Definitely ensuring low cost *…to…* _Definitely ensuring sustainability [7-point Likert Scale]

S.4. Study 4

Study 4 follows the same structure as Studies 1-3 and is almost verbatim for the supplier description, attention-check questions, and demographics. The key differences between Study 4 and Studies 1-3 are the start of the vignette, the manipulation, and the questions on the decision page.

S.4.1 Vignette Introduction

Your Role

In this questionnaire we will ask you to imagine that you are an Operations Manager who works for an environmentally friendly coffee company that roasts, packs and distributes coffee. As part of your role, you oversee the supply of coffee beans required to roast and sell your product.

Your Company

The firm has gone to great lengths to become environmentally friendly. The roasting processes are carbon neutral, the packaging is highly recyclable and waste has been dramatically reduced. The board of directors and shareholders pride themselves to be at the forefront of sustainability.

The Complication

The current economic crisis caused by COVID-19 has forced the firm to reduce costs to try and guarantee the viability of the business. The accounting team has exhausted all avenues and has

insisted that sharp savings and cut-backs are needed for the firm to avoid failure, therefore increasing costs is not viable. This trade-off is impacting your choice for suppliers.

S.4.2 Temporal Distance Manipulation

The Contract

Your CEO decides that he wants you to replace a supplier whose contract expires **1 month** [**12 months**] from today and is giving you full autonomy to choose one of the two new suppliers you found.

How soon or far away would you say the **start date** of **the new supplier's contract** is from today?

_Very soon …*to*… _Very far away [7-point Likert Scale]

S.4.3 Decision Page Questions

Given that the contract for the new supplier starts **1 month [12 months]** from now, which would be your preferred supplier?

_Definitely Supplier Low-Cost Café …*to*… _Definitely Supplier EcoBeans [7-point Likert Scale]

In **1 month [12 months]** from now, which objective - ensuring low costs or ensuring sustainability - do you think will be more central for the firm?

_Definitely ensuring low cost …*to*… _Definitely ensuring sustainability [7-point Likert Scale]

I am optimistic that the economy will recover **1 month [12 months]** from now?

_Strongly disagree …*to*… _Strongly agree [7-point Likert Scale]

I am confident that the economy will recover **1 month [12 months]** from now?

_Strongly disagree …*to*… _Strongly agree [7-point Likert Scale]

I trust that the economy will recover **1 month [12 months]** from now?
_Strongly disagree …*to*… _Strongly agree [7-point Likert Scale]