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The ARC Mental Well-Being and Social Cognition Project

Please consider participating in our research study about people's personal characteristics, mental well-being, and social perception and judgements. This study is conducted at the Autism Research Centre at the University of Cambridge. Below you will find all the information about what this study entails and how you can participate. This project has received ethical approval from the Psychology Research Ethics Committee of the University of Cambridge.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to gain an understanding about people's personal characteristics, mental well-being and their relations to social cognition and judgements.

What will be asked of me if I decide to participate?

There are two parts of the study. In one part we will present words or pictures to you on a computer and ask you to classify them into categories as quickly as possible by pressing buttons on a keyboard, or to ask you to write down your judgements. In the other part, we will ask you to fill out a set of questionnaires which inquire comprehensively about your mental well-being (including your feelings, behaviours, thoughts, and living conditions), a variety of personal characteristics (including your personality characters, social relationship, and gender aspects of yourself in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation), and some social opinions. Due to the relatively large amount of questionnaires to be completed, we would like to suggest you to take your time and fill them out in 2 or 3 stages. You will fill out most of these questionnaires online before you come to Cambridge (except for the social opinion ones). We can assure you that all the information you provided will be absolutely confidential and the anonymity is ensured (Once you complete the questionnaires, all the information will be recognised only by an assigned arbitrary numeric code.) Finally, we will also administer a standard short version IQ test.

What will I have to do?

You will come to the Autism Research Centre or one of our behavioural testing labs in central Cambridge. Testing takes approximately 2 hours. Before the testing session, you will need to spend an additional 1 to 1.5 hour at home to complete most of the questionnaires online.

What happens at the end of the study?

Several months after the study has ended, once the study's results have been analysed and submitted for publication in a scientific journal, you can receive a summary of the study's findings.

Who will have access to the data?

All personally identifiable information will be kept strictly confidential. All of your data will be labelled with an arbitrary numeric code, to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Only properly authorised persons directly involved in this study will have access to this information for research purposes only. All files with data will either be locked in a file cabinet or stored electronically on a computer and password protected. Information generated by this study may be published, but no details will be divulged from which individual participants could be identified.

What will happen to the study results?

Aggregate results of the study will be presented in scientific academic conferences and submitted for publication in a scientific journal.

Are there compensation arrangements?

Yes. All participants can earn £20 for completing the whole study. If participants are travelling from outside of Cambridge, all travel expenses will also be compensated.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Yes, you may withdraw from the study at any point in time and without any explanations.

What should I do if I am interested in participating?

If you are interested in participating in this study, or have any further concerns or questions, please feel free to email Dr. Meng-Chuan Lai or Ms. Amber Ruigrok at mclai.cam@gmail.com for registration or inquiry. If possible, please include a contact number so we can discuss the project over the phone. Thank you for considering taking part in this study.