

# Regulatory Focus and Willingness to Sign Advance Directives

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## INTRODUCTION

- The issue of how to treat a patient arises with end-of-life decision making.
- ADs allow individuals to communicate wishes for care if unable to make these decisions, **but not many have one.**<sup>1,2</sup>
- If a message “feels right,” **individuals may be persuaded.**<sup>3</sup>

## PURPOSE

To assess if matching regulatory focus (promotion/prevention focus) with frame can improve willingness to sign an AD

## METHODS

- Online surveys were administered to 1239 participants from a convenience Internet sample (Amazon Mechanical Turk) across three studies.
- The manipulation consisted of emphasizing either the benefits received (promotion frame) or risks avoided (prevention frame) within the description of ADs from the Five Wishes AD.
- Assessed promotion focus and prevention focus with the Regulatory Fit Questionnaire<sup>4</sup> and willingness to sign an AD via a sliding scale and how many clicked a link to learn more about ADs.

## EXAMPLE OF FRAME MANIPULATION

### Promotion Frame

You gain the benefit of having your family members know your wishes when making hard choices, if you become seriously ill.

If you sign an advance directive, you will receive the benefits listed.

### Prevention Frame

You avoid having your family members guess what you want. If you become seriously ill, you avoid having them make hard choices without knowing your wishes.

If you sign an advance directive, you will avoid the risks listed.

## RESULTS

- Across all studies, participants with a greater promotion focus showed greater willingness to sign an AD.
- The effect of promotion vs. prevention framing on willingness to sign an AD was inconsistent across studies, but a stronger manipulation of promotion/prevention framing was used (Study 3), prevention framing led to a greater willingness to sign an AD.
- There was no evidence that framing that matches participants’ regulatory focus affects willingness to sign an AD.
- The stronger manipulation (Study 3) led to prevention focus no longer being a significant predictor.

## FIGURES

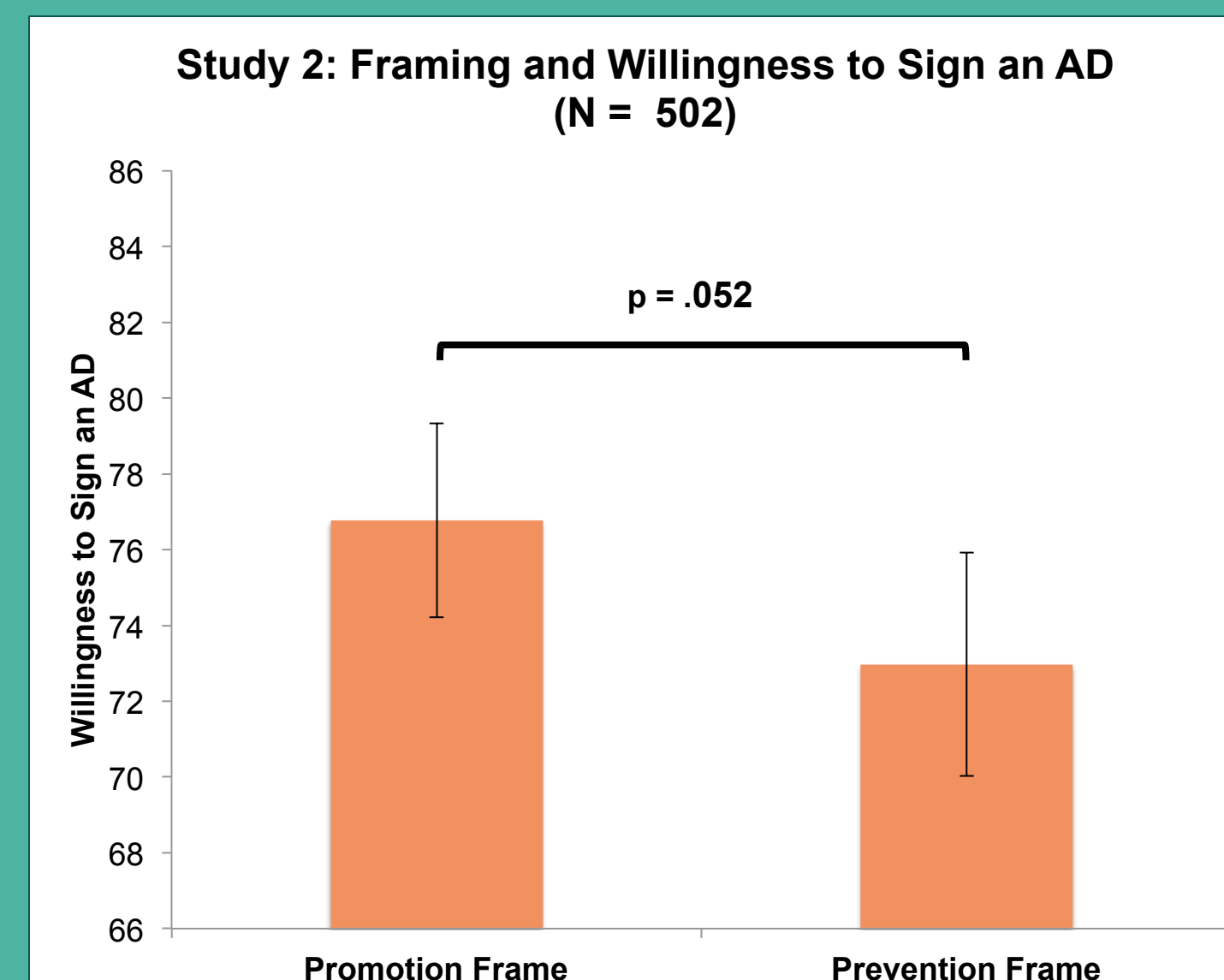


Figure 1. Comparison of Willingness to Sign an AD between Frames (Study 2)

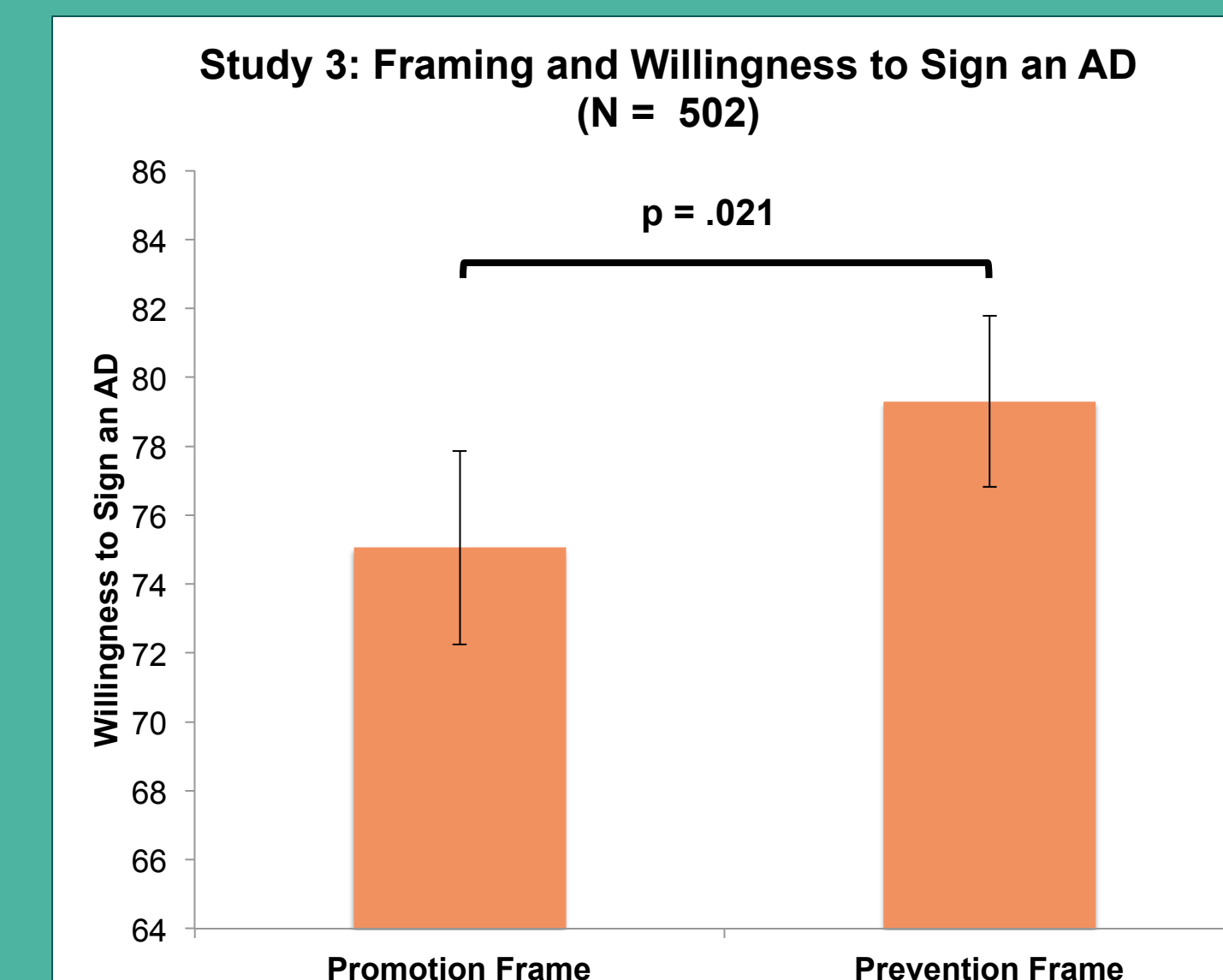


Figure 2. Comparison of Willingness to Sign an AD between Frames (Study 3)

Table 1. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Willingness to Sign an AD (N = 1004)

Variable	Study 2			Study 3		
	B	SE B	95% CI	B	SE B	95% CI
Regulatory Focus (R)	3.58***	0.95	[1.72, 5.44]	2.83***	0.95	[0.95, 4.70]
Frame (F)	3.32*	1.93	[-0.48, 7.11]	-4.42*	1.86	[-8.08, -0.77]
R x F	-0.62	1.90	[-4.33, 3.10]	-2.36	1.91	[-1.24, 0.22]
R <sup>2</sup>			.035			.029
F			6.08***			4.99***

Note: Frame was coded as -0.5 for Prevention Frame and 0.5 for Promotion Frame

\*p < .1. \*\*p < .05. \*\*\*p < .01.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Individual difference on regulatory focus serves as a consistent predictor for intentions towards signing an AD.
- Framing ADs in promotion vs. prevention terms seems to have variable effects on AD intentions.

## REFERENCES

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