

Scaling up advice weighting: Weighting scales reduce the prevalence of ignoring advice

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<https://coloradocollege.zoom.us/j/92697640380>

Abstract

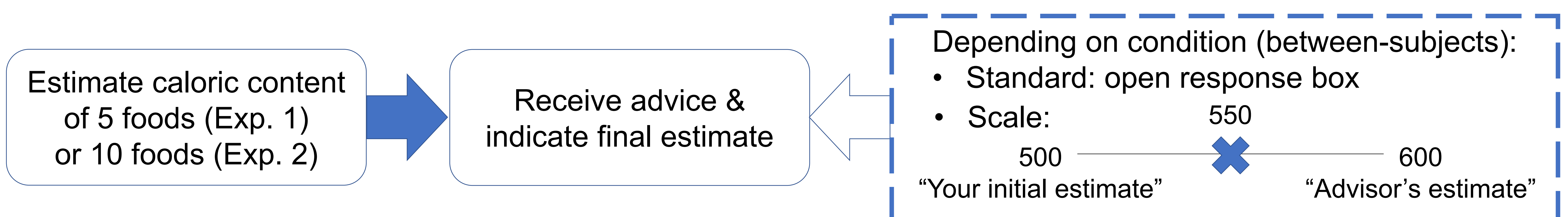
Advice is usually underweighted and often ignored completely. That is, individuals' estimates before and after receiving advice are often identical. This precludes accuracy gains and might hurt interpersonal relations. Do we in part ignore advice because restating our initial estimate is the easiest option? In support of this assumption, using a slider to indicate the final estimate rendered it more likely that individuals' final estimates differ from their initial estimates as compared to the standard, open response format.

Theory and Research Questions

- Advice is usually underweighted and often ignored (Soll & Larrick, 2009). Could this effect be inflated by effects of the elicitation mode of advice weighting?
- Stating either the initial estimate or the advice as a final estimate is easier than computing a new estimate.
- Is advice ignored at the same rate when all response options are equally easy (because they are all indicated by moving a slider on a scale)?

Methods (preregistered)

Exp. 1: $N = 86$ (25 male; $M_{age} = 24.66$, $SD_{age} = 5.33$); Exp. 2: $N = 160$ (45 male; $M_{age} = 23.54$, $SD_{age} = 3.55$)



Results (HLMs; Standard vs. Scale)

Revision rate

[binomial recoding of WOA to indicate whether advice was taken at all (i.e., $WOA > 0.05 \rightarrow 1$) or ignored completely (i.e., $WOA \leq 0.05 \rightarrow 0$)]

- Exp. 1: $b = .97$, $SE = .40$, $z = 2.42$, $p = .015$, $Odds\ Ratio = 2.65$
- Exp. 2: $b = .60$, $SE = .21$, $z = 2.82$, $p = .005$, $Odds\ Ratio = 1.83$

Weight of advice

[Final estimate – Initial estimate]/(Advice – Initial estimate)]

- Exp. 1: $b = .05$, $SE = .03$, $t(125.18) = 1.39$, $p = .167$
- Exp. 2: $b = .01$, $SE = .03$, $t(158.50) = 0.48$, $p = .636$

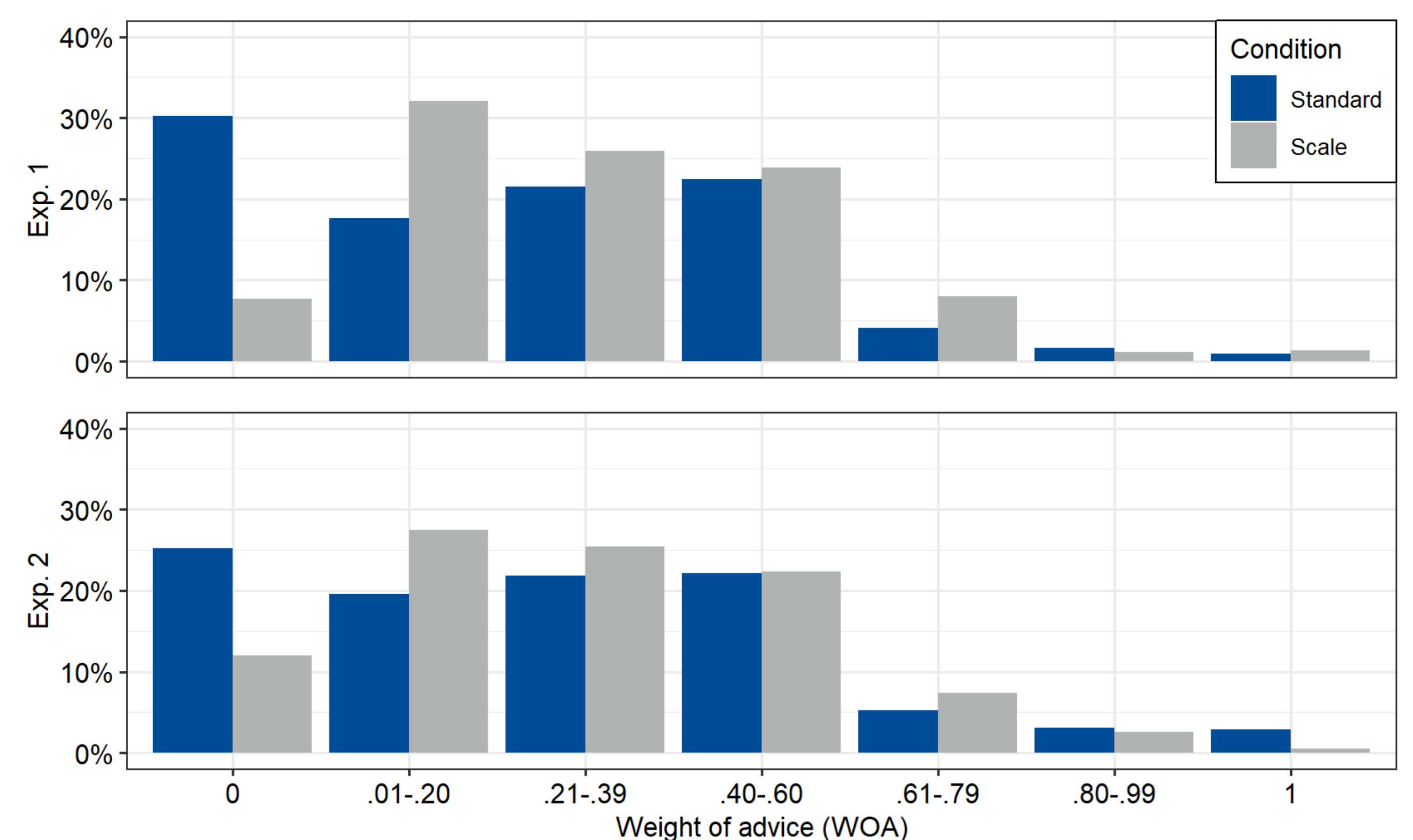


Figure 1. Distribution of the weight of advice (WOA) for the standard and scale conditions of Experiments 1 and 2.

Discussion

- eliciting advice weighting via a scale renders advice two times less likely to be ignored
- average weight of advice is not affected by elicitation mode
- underweighting is an inherent feature of advice weighting, but ignoring advice is not
- results remain the same when...
 - removing all numbers from the scale and replacing numeric anchors with verbal ones (i.e., “Keep initial estimate” and “Adopt advice”; 3rd condition in Exp. 1)
 - incentivizing accurate final estimates (Exp. 2)
 - manipulating elicitation mode within-subjects (2nd block in Exp. 2)
- effect of scale is not driven by eliciting a more abstract and less meaningful behavioral tendency (e.g., “In general, I would like to adopt advice.”)
- computational difficulty as a theoretical explanation?
- introducing scales to elicit advice weighting may not affect accuracy gains, but could improve interpersonal relations (e.g., Ache et al., 2020; Blunden et al., 2019)