

**What's Accessible is Expressible:
When Advice Seekers Are More Likely to Anchor Their Advisors**

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Abstract

Despite evidence that advice is most beneficial for increasing decision accuracy when advisors form independent judgments, people sometimes undermine this independence by sharing their preliminary conclusions when seeking advice. We propose that following the prescription to think independently before seeking advice paradoxically leads people to make this mistake. Specifically, deeper engagement with a decision makes one's own perspective more accessible and likely to be shared during an advice interaction. In two preregistered studies ($N = 2,109$), we demonstrate that higher levels of engagement with the decision prior to seeking advice increase the likelihood that the seeker will anchor their advisor. This suggests that advice seekers who follow prescriptions to form a judgment prior to seeking advice may inadvertently introduce bias into advice interactions, undermining the independence of the advice they seek. These findings contribute to the advice seeking literature by revealing a process by which anchors emerge in information exchanges.

Keywords: Advice, Anchoring, Judgment & Decision-Making, Information Processing

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When confronting a decision, people often turn to others for input. Seeking advice is useful because others sometimes have information that the decision maker does not (Van Swol & Ludutsky, 2007). If advisors make judgments based on unique cues, the decision maker can reach a better decision by combining their own judgment with those of their advisors (Surowiecki, 2005). This “wisdom of crowds” effect occurs because independent judgments contain different sources of error that can cancel out through aggregation (Larrick & Soll, 2006). However, aggregation is less useful for improving decision quality when judgments share common influences (Page, 2008). The benefit of advice thus depends crucially on its independence.

Although numerous scholars have highlighted that advice is most useful when advisors make independent judgments with uncorrelated errors (e.g., Soll, 1999; Johnson, Budesu, & Wallsten, 2001), surprisingly little attention has been paid to whether people seek advice in a way that preserves their advisors’ independence. The dominant paradigm in the advice-seeking literature – the Judge-Advisor System (JAS) (Sniezek & Buckley, 1995) – requires advice seekers to form an estimate prior to seeking advice. This sequence prevents the advice seeker from becoming anchored themselves, as it allows them to form their own judgment prior to the “mental contamination” that results from exposure to others’ opinions (Wilson & Brekke, 1994: 117). Within the JAS paradigm, however, advice tends to be supplied automatically rather than based on an advice request composed naturalistically by the advice seeker (Rader et al., 2017). In practice, advice-seeking is a social process and may introduce biases that undermine advisors’ independence. For example, people sometimes include their own thinking in their requests for input from others (Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020). Such disclosures can activate an anchoring

bias (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974) in advisors, reducing the independence that makes advice most useful. Including an anchor in an advice request reduces the effectiveness of opinion combination strategies such as averaging for improving accuracy, especially as the number of advisors increases (Reif et al., 2024). Why might people make this mistake?

The limited body of research that has examined why people sometimes include their tentative conclusions when seeking advice has focused on impression management motives. Advice seekers may sometimes include their own thinking in their requests for advice in order to demonstrate competence to their advisors (Reif et al., 2024; Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020). However, research on cognitive accessibility suggests that advice seekers may also ‘leak’ anchors into their advice requests simply as a byproduct of cognitive engagement with the decision task prior to the advice interaction (Strack & Mussweiler, 1997; Mussweiler & Strack, 1999; Higgins, 1996). Drawing on the selective accessibility framework (Mussweiler & Strack, 1999, 2001), we propose that decision makers who devote more attention to a judgment prior to seeking advice develop a richer, more concrete representation of the problem that becomes highly accessible when formulating advice requests. This heightened accessibility makes their conclusions and supporting arguments more likely to be shared in advice interactions, as the most accessible information is most readily retrieved. In summary, if what is “top of mind” is “tip of tongue” (Berger, 2016), then advice seekers who deliberate about a decision more prior to seeking advice should be more likely to share their own thinking in their requests for advice.

In two preregistered experimental studies, we find evidence that thinking more deeply about a task prior to seeking advice increases the inclusion of anchors in advice requests. This research contributes to the literatures on advice and anchoring. First, we contribute to the understanding of advice seeking as a critical stage in the advice process. In doing so, we uncover

an explanation for why people sometimes seek advice in a way that fails to preserve its independence. By demonstrating that putting thought into a task prior to seeking advice increases the tendency to include potentially biasing information in advice requests, we push the advice literature to consider how the content of advice requests influences the utility of the resulting advice. Additionally, we contribute to the anchoring literature by articulating a process by which anchors are introduced into social interactions. Although scholars have explored the strategic use of anchors in domains such as marketing (e.g., Jung et al., 2016) and negotiations (e.g., Ritov, 1996, Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001), extant work has not explored how anchors may inadvertently ‘slip’ into advice interactions. This gap is important given the prevalence of advice as a vehicle of information exchange (Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2018) and the robustness of anchoring biases (Schley & Weingarten, 2023).

Information Processing and Inclusion of Anchors

People vary in how much effort they put into a task prior to seeking assistance from others (Mueller & Kamdar, 2011). Consequently, there are likely to be differences in the extent to which people have generated task-relevant knowledge – such as assumptions or intermediate conclusions relevant to the task – prior to seeking advice. The process of generating task-relevant knowledge alters which information is more accessible to the decision-maker (Mussweiler & Strack, 1999). Those who think more deeply about a task and form a tentative conclusion are likely to have both their arguments and assumptions highly accessible in memory (Strack & Mussweiler, 1997). Conversely, those who process information more superficially are less likely to produce a highly accessible tentative conclusion.

As people devote more effort to forming an initial judgment, that judgment becomes more cognitively accessible (Mussweiler & Strack, 1999) and is more likely to be mentally

represented as true (Koehler, 1991; Gilbert, 1991). This increased accessibility of beliefs can influence how people search for and examine information. For example, people whose current perspectives are highly accessible become less capable of objectively considering new information (Schuette & Fazio, 1995). Increased accessibility leads people to engage in confirmatory information search – looking for ways in which new information aligns with their existing judgment (Chapman & Johnson, 1994). We propose that these cognitive processes spill over into how people seek advice.

When people engage deeply with a problem before seeking advice, the heightened accessibility of their judgments and supporting evidence makes this information more likely to be retrieved when formulating advice requests. Those who engage in superficial processing may lack both a concrete judgment and the accessible supporting evidence needed to articulate it. Accordingly, they are unlikely to anchor their advisors because they are less likely to have accessible assumptions or preliminary conclusions to share. In contrast, advice seekers who deliberate extensively prior to seeking advice create a pool of highly accessible, judgment-relevant information that can be shared in an advice interaction (Mussweiler & Strack, 1999). Although the process of deliberation may expose decision makers to information that weakens their conviction in their initial conclusions, such as conflicting evidence (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), it nonetheless alters what is accessible to the advice seeker as they formulate their requests for advice (Higgins, 1996). In summary, we hypothesize that advice seekers who have engaged with the decision task more prior to seeking advice – such as by considering relevant information and forming a tentative conclusion – are more likely to introduce anchors in their requests for advice.

Overview of the Present Research

In two experimental studies, we examine an information processing-based explanation for why people sometimes leak their own preliminary judgments into their requests for advice – a behavior we refer to as ‘anchoring’ the advisor. In Study 1, we manipulate whether, prior to seeking advice, participants were asked to form an initial estimate or form an initial estimate and provide a written explanation of their thought process. In Study 2, we manipulate both whether participants were asked to explain the thought process they would use to approach a decision and whether they were asked to supply an initial estimate prior to seeking advice in a 2×2 factorial design. Across both studies, we demonstrate that advice seekers who engage more with the decision task prior to seeking advice are more likely to include anchors in their requests for advice.¹

Open Practices Statement

All data, analysis code, study materials, and preregistrations are accessible on the Open Science Framework (OSF) at this link: <https://osf.io/8yjen/overview>. The studies were pre-registered and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the authors’ institution. All analyses were conducted in R (version 4.2.2).

Study 1

In Study 1, we test whether advice seekers who form an estimate and explained their thought process prior to seeking advice are more likely to include anchors in their advice requests than advice seekers who simply formed an estimate.

Method

¹ In an additional study reported in the Online Supplement, we compare the inclusion of anchors when seeking advice among participants who were randomly assigned to either think about a decision task or to think about the task and provide a written estimate. We find that participants who wrote down a tentative estimate prior to seeking advice were significantly more likely to share it with their advisors.

Participants. We recruited 904 participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk and paid them \$1.00 for their time (45.8% female, $M_{\text{age}} = 41.2$). This sample size was determined based on an a priori power analysis that indicated we would need a sample of at least 831 to detect a difference in proportions of 25% and 35% with 80% power (Faul et al., 2009)², which were the proportions we observed in a small pilot study. We recruited a larger sample so that we would have at least this number after applying our pre-registered exclusion criteria. Ultimately, one participant was excluded from the analysis for failing to provide an estimate prior to seeking advice and 24 participants were excluded from the analysis because two independent coders determined they had not supplied a written request for advice that was consistent with the prompt. Our final sample was thus 879.

Procedure. Participants were asked to imagine that they were organizing a one-mile parade in their hometown. They then read that their task was to determine the amount of time that the streets would need to be closed along the parade route. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: to provide an estimate (*Estimate*), to provide an estimate and a written explanation of the estimate (*Estimate and Explanation: Unincentivized*), or to provide an estimate and a written explanation of the estimate for which we indicated that they would be compensated up to an additional \$0.20 for a high-quality explanation (*Estimate and Explanation: Incentivized*). All participants in the *Estimate and Explanation: Incentivized* condition were awarded the quality bonus. Although we did not anticipate differences in the tendency to include an anchor in advice requests based on whether prior information processing was incentivized or unincentivized, we included both conditions to ensure that at least one group was monetarily motivated to deliberate prior to seeking advice. In each of the two *Estimate and Explanation*

² Our power analysis accounted for the expected difference in the number of participants assigned to the *Estimate* and *Estimate and Explanation* condition (allocation ratio = 1.5).

conditions, participants were asked to write the explanation as though it would be shared with their fellow parade organizers. The purpose of this instruction was to provide a realistic reason for which they might be asked to explicate their thought process in detail.

After making an estimate (*Estimate* condition) or making an estimate and providing an explanation (both *Estimate and Explanation* conditions), participants were asked to rate their confidence in their estimates on a scale of 1 (not confident at all) to 5 (very confident). Then, on the next screen, participants were asked to write a request for advice that could be sent to a friend or family member that would help them improve their estimate.

After all participants completed the study, two research assistants who were blind to participant condition and the study's hypothesis coded the open-ended responses to indicate if the advice seekers supplied an anchor in their requests for advice. Advice requests that contained a numerical estimate (e.g., "I guessed 8 hours") or a specific assumption that might constrain the range of estimates considered by the advisor (e.g., "I think they will need to be closed at least all morning") were coded as 1 (includes an anchor). Neutral requests that contained no preliminary judgment or related assumptions were coded as 0. Text entered by participants that did not include a request for advice consistent with the prompt was coded as an X. The two coders agreed whether the request contained an anchor in 92% of cases (Cohen's $\kappa = .84$), and differences were resolved by the first author who coded the responses blind to participant condition. The reported analyses were run using the final coding assigned after this resolution process, and for robustness we confirmed that we obtain similar results using the ratings of either of the two coders or excluding instances in which the raters disagreed.

Results

To examine whether providing an explanation for one's estimate contributed to differences in the rate at which participants anchored their advisors, we separately compared the *Estimate and Explanation: Incentivized* condition and *Estimate and Explanation: Unincentivized* condition to the *Estimate* condition. Consistent with our hypothesis, we found that participants in the *Estimate and Explanation: Unincentivized* condition included anchors in their advice requests at a higher rate (49.1%) than participants in the *Estimate* condition (34.8%, $Z = 3.54$, $CI_{\text{Difference}} = [6.37\%, 22.2\%]$, Odds Ratio = 1.81, $p < .001$). Similarly, we found that participants in the *Estimate and Explanation: Incentivized* condition included anchors in their advice requests at a higher rate (45.7%) than participants in the *Estimate* condition (34.8%, $Z = 2.71$, 95% $CI_{\text{Difference}} = [3.0\%, 18.8\%]$, Odds Ratio = 1.58, $p = .007$). There was no difference in the tendency to include an anchor between the *Estimate and Explanation: Unincentivized* condition (49.1%) and *Estimate and Explanation: Incentivized* (45.7%) groups ($Z = 0.81$, $p = .419$). Together, these results suggest that explaining one's own judgment prior to seeking advice increases the tendency to supply an initial judgment to the advisor when seeking advice.

For exploratory purposes, we also examined whether confidence mediates the relationship between providing a written explanation and anchoring the advisor. We found that confidence partially accounted for this relationship, but that a substantial direct effect of providing an explanation remained even after accounting for confidence. We report this mediation analysis in greater detail in the Online Supplement.

Discussion

Study 1 provides support for our hypothesis by demonstrating that thinking more about one's own judgment prior to seeking advice increases the tendency to supply an anchor to the advisor when seeking advice. Participants who were prompted to explain their estimates were

significantly more likely to include their judgments in advice requests compared to those who only generated estimates. This is consistent with the notion that participants who engaged in more deliberation prior to seeking advice are more likely to have accessible task-relevant information accessible that can be shared with an advisor.

Although informative, this study has several limitations. First, the sequence of writing one's estimate prior to explaining that estimate may have led participants to justify their estimates post hoc, which could more directly invoke confirmation bias in the process of seeking advice relative to a process that asked them to produce their estimate after describing the process they would use to form it. Second, the explanation step asked participants to explain their reasoning to an external audience (fellow parade organizers), which could have introduced a sense of social accountability in the advice-seeking process. Finally, the design does not separate the independent effects of forming a concrete judgment (*Estimate*) and deeply considering the steps necessary to form an estimate (*Explanation*), because both steps were required in the *Estimate and Explanation* conditions. We aim to address each of these limitations in Study 2.

Study 2

In Study 2, we examine the extent to which detailing the thought process one would use to form a judgment and actually forming that judgment separately influences the tendency to include anchors in requests for advice, and whether the factors interact. We also reverse the sequence in which participants completed these steps from the order employed in Study 1. This allows us to examine whether we observe the same pattern of results when participants engage in deliberation prior to supplying an estimate.

Method

Participants. We recruited 1,205 participants from the CloudResearch Connect platform and paid them \$1.15 for their time (52.1% female, $M_{age} = 43.3$). We chose this sample size based on an a priori power analysis that indicated we would need a sample of at least 942 to detect a difference in proportions of 22% and 30% with 80% power (Faul et al., 2009), which was the smallest main effect we observed in a small pilot study. To ensure we would have at least that many observations after applying our pre-registered exclusion criteria, we recruited a larger sample. Following our pre-registered exclusion criteria, we removed 3 participants who wrote explanations that were fewer than 30 characters and an additional 8 participants because two independent coders determined they had not written a request for advice that was consistent with our prompt. Our final sample was thus 1,197.

Procedure. Participants were asked to imagine that they were managers at a mid-sized company, and that they were in the process of planning a team-building event for their department of 20 people with their colleague, Jake (adapted from Reif et al., 2024). They then read that the event would not occur until later in the year, and that all that was needed at this time was an estimate of the costs so that funds could be set aside. Further, they read that the team-building event should include a group activity and a meal.

Next, participants were randomly assigned to either the *Explanation* condition or the *No Explanation* condition. Participants in the *Explanation* condition were asked to consider all of the factors that would inform their estimates. Then, they were asked to write out, step-by-step, how they would form an estimate, explicitly articulating the factors they would consider and the assumptions they would make. To keep the total time to complete the study similar across conditions, participants in the *No Explanation* condition were asked to write several sentences unrelated to the process of forming an estimate. Specifically, they were asked to describe why

they think companies host team-building activities for their employees. After this step, participants were randomly assigned to the *Estimate* condition or *No Estimate* condition. Participants in the *Estimate* condition were asked to supply a numeric estimate of the total cost of the team-building event. Participants in the *No Estimate* condition proceeded directly to the next step.

Finally, all participants were instructed to write an email message to their colleague seeking advice about estimating the total cost of the team-building event. They read that they could then use that advice to make their budget more accurate. As a manipulation check of whether participants in the *Explanation* condition and *No Explanation* condition deliberated more extensively prior to seeking advice, participants responded to the following two items on the next screen: “I thought about my estimate a lot before asking Jake for advice” and “Before asking for advice, I considered many factors that could affect the cost of the event.” The results of this manipulation check are reported in the Online Supplement and show significant differences between conditions. Finally, participants were asked to disclose if they used artificial intelligence and to provide demographic information.³

We followed the same process for coding the advice requests as we did in Study 1. The two coders agreed whether the request contained an anchor in 97.9% of cases (Cohen’s $\kappa = .92$), and differences were resolved by the first author. The analyses reported here were run using the final coding assigned following this resolution process, but for robustness we confirmed we reach identical conclusions using the ratings of either of the two coders or excluding all instances in which the raters disagreed.

³ We asked participants to disclose whether they used a generative AI tool such as ChatGPT to assist them with the task. We assured them that their response would not affect their payment for the study. In total, 35 participants indicated that they used AI. We confirmed that we reach identical conclusions to those reported here if these 35 participants are excluded from our analysis.

Results

To test the effects of providing an explanation and an estimate on the inclusion of anchors in requests for advice, we ran a logistic regression model in which the presence of an anchor (1 = anchor, 0 = no anchor) in the advice request was the dependent variable. Both independent variables were effects coded (Explanation: *Explanation* condition = 1, *No Explanation* condition = -1; Estimate: *Estimate* condition = 1, *No Estimate* condition = -1) such that the main effects represent the average effect of each variable across levels of the other variable, and the intercept represents the overall tendency to include an anchor averaged across all conditions.

As shown in Table 1 (Model 1), the logistic regression revealed significant main effects of both *Explanation* and *Estimate*. Participants who provided an explanation were significantly more likely to include an anchor in their requests for advice (23.0%, $b = 0.42$, $SE = 0.08$, $z = 5.11$, $p < .001$) compared to participants who did not provide an explanation (11.8%). Similarly, participants who supplied an estimate prior to seeking advice were also more likely to anchor their advisors (28.2%, $b = 0.89$, $SE = 0.10$, $z = 9.28$, $p < .001$) than participants who were not asked to produce an estimate prior to seeking advice (6.4%). Collectively, these results suggest that both engaging in deeper thinking about the process of forming an estimate as well as forming a concrete judgment prior to seeking advice contribute to the inclusion of anchors in advice requests. Figure 1 depicts the rate at which participants included anchors in their request by condition.

In a preregistered exploratory analysis, we also examined whether the effects of *Explanation* and *Estimate* interact (Table 1, Model 2). The interaction term was significant and negative ($b = -0.40$, $SE = 0.13$, $z = -3.07$, $p = .002$), indicating that the combined effect of both

manipulations on the log-odds of anchoring the advisor is less than would be expected from their additive effects alone. Notably, the interaction term is significant in the logistic model due to the nonlinearity of the log-odds scale, but the same effect does not reach significance in a linear probability model (OLS regression). As a result, we believe that the significant interaction in this case is an artifact of the log-odds scale and may not be psychologically meaningful.

Additional Analysis

Although we made no predictions about the relative effects of writing an explanation and supplying an estimate on the tendency to include anchors in advice requests, we compared these conditions directly for exploratory purposes. This analysis was not preregistered.

Using a z -test of proportions, we found that participants who provided a written explanation of the process they would use to form an estimate but who were not asked to supply an estimate (*Explanation* and *No Estimate* condition) anchored at a lower rate (11.9%) than participants who formed an estimate but did not provide an explanation (*No Explanation* and *Estimate* condition) (22.8%, $z = -3.46$, $p < .001$, 95% CI $[-0.17, -0.05]$). Though participants in the *Explanation* and *No Estimate* condition still anchored at a higher rate than those in the *No Explanation* and *No Estimate* condition (1.5%, $z = 8.23$, $p < .001$, 95% CI $[0.16, 0.26]$), these results suggest that the effect of forming an estimate prior to seeking advice more strongly predicted the inclusion of anchors in advice requests than simply thinking more extensively about the task.

We speculated that one reason for this difference might be that the process of expanding on the steps that one would use to complete the task may not always produce anchors that are accessible to the advice seeker in a subsequent advice interaction. In contrast to the process of forming a concrete estimate, which always yields a number that could be shared with the advisor,

explaining one's thought process may not always yield numerical assumptions. We examined the *Explanation* and *No Estimate* condition (N=285) to explore whether the tendency to include an anchor in advice requests was highest when the participant had formed a concrete numeric judgment in the *Explanation* step. Specifically, we read the explanations participants wrote prior to seeking advice and coded each response as either containing a numerical conclusion (e.g., "It might cost around \$20 per person for bowling") or not containing a numerical conclusion (e.g., "I will first do an audit of how much each meal will cost"). A majority of the explanations *did not* include a numerical conclusion (86.0%), and, among these participants, just 7.4% (N=18 out of 245) included an anchor in their advice requests. However, among the participants who did include a numeric judgment in their explanation, 40% (N=16 out of 40) included an anchor in their advice requests. This suggests that the explanation step was more likely to produce an increase in the tendency to anchor one's advisors when it yielded an accessible numerical conclusion that could be shared with the advisor.

Discussion

In Study 2, we found that two information processing steps prior to seeking advice – explaining the thought process one would use to approach the task and forming a concrete estimate – contribute to the inclusion of anchors in requests for advice. This is consistent with our theorizing that individuals who engage in deeper information processing prior to seeking advice are more likely to include their intermediate conclusions in their advice requests.

General Discussion

Our research examines why people sometimes include their own thinking when seeking advice from others. In two studies, we demonstrate that engaging more with a decision task prior to seeking advice increases the tendency to include one's own judgment in advice requests. This

pattern aligns with the notion that decision makers who have thought more deeply about a problem are more likely to have tentative conclusions and supporting arguments highly accessible in memory. Consequently, this information is more likely to be retrieved and shared when formulating advice requests. In summary, the deliberation process involved in forming an initial judgment creates a pool of readily accessible task-relevant assumptions that naturally “leak” into advice-seeking interactions. Our findings suggest that the process of thinking deeply about a problem may inadvertently lead decision makers to seek advice in a way that jeopardizes its independence and undermined its value for increasing accuracy.

Implications

This work contributes to both the advice and anchoring literatures. The advice literature has largely focused on why people seek advice (e.g., Alexiev et al., 2020), from whom they seek advice (e.g., Schultze et al., 2015), and how they utilize the advice they receive (see Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006 for a review). In this work, we address a critical but often overlooked stage in the advice process: *how* people seek advice. The JAS paradigm is the most commonly used methodological approach to examining advice interactions in the judgment and decision-making literature (Snizek & Buckley, 1995; Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; Rader et al., 2017). This paradigm typically involves a three-step process in which participants form an initial judgment, receive advice, and then revise their judgment (Rader et al., 2017). Although this structured sequence affords tight experimental control, our findings reveal that the advice-seeking stage itself deserves closer examination. Including anchors in advice requests reduces the likelihood that advice seekers will be able to improve their judgments by combining them with others (Reif et al., 2024), and deeper engagement with the decision task prior to seeking advice increases their tendency to do so.

Importantly, while there may be situations in which sharing one's initial judgment is not harmful for the resulting advice (e.g., when the advice seeker happens to have an accurate estimate that provides a helpful starting point), advice seekers typically cannot assess the quality of their own judgments *ex ante*. Indeed, uncertainty about the quality of a judgment is often precisely why they seek advice in the first place (Kämmer et al., 2023). Thus, advice seekers who desire a second opinion should preserve its independence by avoiding anchoring their advisors.

From a methodological perspective, our findings suggest there is value in broadening the experimental paradigms used to study advice to examine factors that contribute to variation in *how* people seek advice from others. Because the content of advice requests shapes the advice that is provided, differences in how people formulate requests for advice is worthy of research attention. Methods that allow for this variation would better reflect the reality that advice-seeking is not a neutral conduit for information exchange, but rather a social process that can introduce unwanted influence.

This work also contributes to the anchoring literature by examining how anchors emerge in social interactions. Although studies of anchoring typically examine how decision-makers are influenced by others (see Schley & Weingarten, 2023 for a meta-analysis), this research suggests some of the same psychological mechanisms that contribute to anchoring effects (such as cognitive accessibility, Mussweiler & Strack, 1999) may also lead anchors to be supplied to others in social interactions. Complementing recent work that highlights how the social source of an anchor shapes how people interpret and adjust to it (Reis et al., 2023), our findings demonstrate a process by which anchors emerge organically in the process of social information exchange. Indeed, our results suggest that a robust cognitive bias (Wegener et al., 2001) typically

studied in controlled experimental settings may arise “in the wild” when advice seekers have put a lot of thought into a decision prior to seeking advice.

Limitations and Future Directions

This research is subject to several limitations. First, these studies leveraged online samples that afforded us tight control over the advice-seeking task. Although we attempted to mimic real advice interactions by asking participants to write their own requests for advice, future research could examine whether our results replicate in naturalistic settings. A second limitation of this work is that we examined a narrow range of information processing prior to advice seeking. Future research is necessary to determine whether higher levels of cognitive engagement further increase the tendency to share initial judgments when seeking advice, or whether the effects diminish after a certain point. Finally, this work did not consider the temporal aspect of thinking about the decision prior to seeking advice. It may be the case, for example, that temporal distance between the advice seeker’s original deliberation and the advice interaction would decrease the accessibility of the advice seeker’s thinking, and therefore decrease the tendency to include one’s own judgment in requests for advice.

Conclusion

In this research, we find that people often include their preliminary judgments in their requests for advice and that deeper information processing prior to seeking advice increases the tendency to do so. This work contributes to the advice literature by highlighting why people often seek advice in a way that does not preserve its independence, and to the anchoring literature by articulating the process by which anchors are introduced into social interactions.

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Tables and Figures

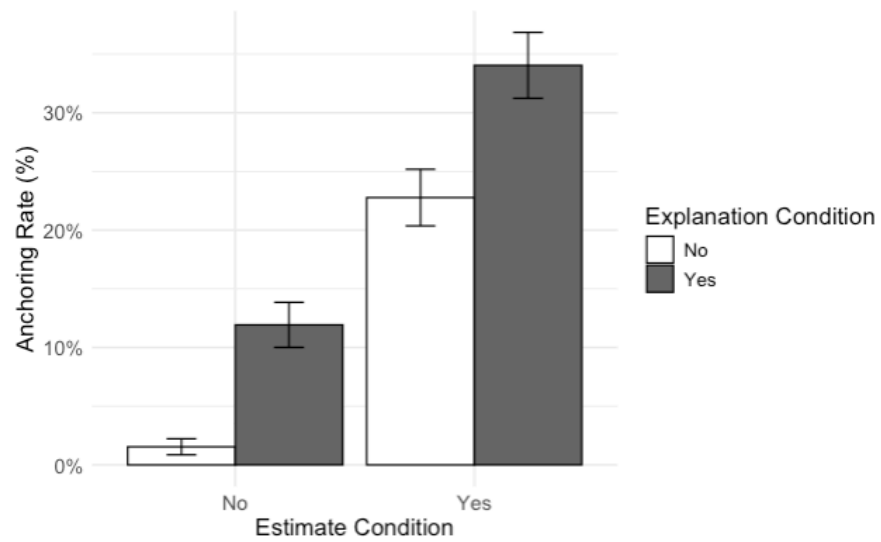
Table 1: Logistic Regression Models Predicting the Inclusion of an Anchor in the Advice Request (Study 2)

Predictor	Model 1			Model 2		
	b	SE	z	b	SE	z
Intercept	-1.85***	0.1	-18.99	-2.01***	0.13	-15.45
Estimate	0.89***	0.1	9.28	1.07***	0.13	8.21
Explanation	0.42***	0.08	5.11	0.68***	0.13	5.22
Estimate × Explanation				-0.40**	0.13	-3.07
Null deviance	1096.17			1096.17		
Residual deviance	962.62			950.63		
AIC	968.62			958.63		
<i>df</i>	1194			1193		

Note. N = 1197. Model 1 tests main effects only; Model 2 includes the interaction term. The *Inclusion of an Anchor* variable is dummy coded (1 = anchor present, 0 = anchor absent) and *Estimate* and *Explanation* are effects coded (-1 = absent, +1 = present). b = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error; df = degrees of freedom (residual). ** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Figure 1. Percentage of participants who included an anchor in their requests for advice by condition (Study 2).



Note: Bars represent standard errors.