

# Supplement: Local news availability does not increase pro-social pandemic response

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## **Alternative treatment specifications**

### **Log transformation of newspaper count**

The first alternative treatment specification I consider is the log transform of a county's newspaper count, centered and standardized. Like the original specification, this is also a continuous measure. I find that re-estimating the same models from the main text with this specification does not lead to any substantively different results. Local news availability continues to appear to have no effect on the county-wide adoption of pro-social behavior.

### **Treatment as a binary indicator**

We can also conceptualize news availability as a binary variable, coding whether a county has any newspapers at all. By using this operationalization, I estimate the treatment effect of having any newspapers in a county on behavior change. Again, we see that in both contexts, local news availability has no effect on behavior change when taking into account propensity score weighting (Column 4 of Tables [S3](#) and [S4](#)).

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Table S1: Regression estimates for models estimating change in staying at home. All predictors centered and standardized unless otherwise noted. Standard errors clustered within states.

	Dependent variable: $\Delta$ Stay at Home			
	(1)	No Weighting		Weighting
		(2)	(3)	(4)
Total Papers (log)	0.674*** (0.148)	0.370*** (0.132)	0.015 (0.152)	-0.078 (0.249)
Cases		0.221*** (0.084)	0.139*** (0.050)	0.643*** (0.125)
Deaths		-0.015 (0.042)	-0.062* (0.032)	-0.195 (0.122)
Stay-at-Home Order (binary)		2.099** (0.890)	0.707 (0.748)	0.437 (0.784)
Days since Order		-0.138 (0.391)	-0.268 (0.385)	-0.369 (0.421)
Population Size			-0.195 (0.159)	-1.682*** (0.488)
Population Density			0.169*** (0.046)	0.219* (0.120)
Median Age			-0.690*** (0.228)	-0.580** (0.271)
Pct. Not White			-0.871*** (0.336)	-0.306 (0.533)
Pct. w/ College Degree			-0.688* (0.380)	-1.291** (0.511)
Pct. Below Poverty Level			-0.200 (0.523)	0.362 (0.565)
Pct. at least 2x Above Poverty Level			1.818*** (0.485)	2.353*** (0.497)
Pct. w/ Computer and Broadband			0.089 (0.442)	1.941 (1.183)
Pct. Speak only English at Home			-0.221 (0.286)	-0.721* (0.397)
Pct. w/ Low Access to Food			0.078 (0.276)	0.312 (0.315)
State Capital (binary)			-0.803 (0.601)	-0.725 (0.678)
2016 Clinton Vote Share			1.441*** (0.348)	1.625*** (0.353)
Constant	11.945*** (0.320)	11.024*** (0.490)	11.052*** (0.426)	10.665*** (0.637)
Observations	1,584	1,370	1,343	1,343
R <sup>2</sup>	0.018	0.065	0.165	0.265
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.017	0.061	0.154	0.255
Residual Std. Error	5.629 (df = 1582)	5.454 (df = 1364)	5.167 (df = 1325)	0.112 (df = 1325)

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table S2: Regression estimates for models estimating change in travel for retail or recreation purposes. All predictors centered and standardized unless otherwise noted. Standard errors clustered within states.

	<i>Dependent variable: Δ Travel for Retail or Recreation</i>			
	(1)	<i>No Weighting</i>		<i>Weighting</i>
		(2)	(3)	(4)
Total Papers (log)	-3.486*** (0.604)	-2.299*** (0.803)	0.128 (0.389)	0.169 (0.506)
Cases		-0.983* (0.584)	-0.277*** (0.104)	-1.263*** (0.273)
Deaths		-0.442 (0.494)	0.155 (0.192)	0.244 (0.412)
Stay-at-Home Order (binary)		-12.952** (6.191)	-10.208** (4.299)	-10.827** (4.322)
Days since Order		-1.871 (2.437)	-1.955 (1.607)	-2.031 (1.659)
Population Size			0.223 (0.273)	1.348 (0.851)
Population Density			-0.449*** (0.141)	-0.427 (0.383)
Median Age			-0.904 (0.596)	-0.529 (0.713)
Pct. Not White			2.074** (0.937)	1.897 (1.195)
Pct. w/ College Degree			-4.284*** (1.055)	-3.725*** (1.261)
Pct. Below Poverty Level			1.979 (1.233)	2.379* (1.239)
Pct. at least 2x Above Poverty Level			0.589 (1.078)	0.751 (1.109)
Pct. w/ Computer and Broadband			-0.532 (0.901)	-1.479 (1.412)
Pct. Speak only English at Home			2.332*** (0.535)	2.000*** (0.545)
Pct. w/ Low Access to Food			-0.927* (0.541)	-0.912* (0.531)
State Capital (binary)			2.076** (0.948)	4.326*** (1.561)
2016 Clinton Vote Share			-4.305*** (0.904)	-5.098*** (0.917)
Constant	-38.405*** (1.434)	-32.702*** (2.402)	-33.514*** (1.907)	-32.801*** (1.943)
Observations	<b>2,589</b>	<b>2,148</b>	<b>2,104</b>	<b>2,104</b>
R <sup>2</sup>	<b>0.043</b>	<b>0.142</b>	<b>0.377</b>	<b>0.385</b>
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	<b>0.043</b>	<b>0.140</b>	<b>0.372</b>	<b>0.380</b>
Residual Std. Error	<b>16.543 (df = 2587)</b>	<b>15.600 (df = 2142)</b>	<b>13.377 (df = 2086)</b>	<b>0.296 (df = 2086)</b>

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table S3: Regression estimates for models estimating change in staying at home. All predictors centered and standardized unless otherwise noted. Standard errors clustered within states.

	Dependent variable: $\Delta$ Stay at Home			
	(1)	No Weighting		Weighting
		(2)	(3)	(4)
At least 1 Newspaper (binary)	0.037 (0.966)	-0.095 (0.752)	0.603 (1.007)	0.726 (0.949)
Cases		0.285** (0.120)	0.137*** (0.049)	0.130*** (0.048)
Deaths		0.047 (0.074)	-0.063* (0.034)	-0.082** (0.033)
Stay-at-Home Order (binary)		2.121** (0.968)	0.683 (0.746)	0.478 (0.783)
Days since Order		-0.216 (0.413)	-0.277 (0.387)	-0.335 (0.391)
Population Size			-0.193 (0.147)	-0.174 (0.135)
Population Density			0.168*** (0.047)	0.169*** (0.047)
Median Age			-0.695*** (0.227)	-0.649*** (0.227)
Pct. Not White			-0.870** (0.340)	-0.829** (0.330)
Pct. w/ College Degree			-0.697* (0.378)	-0.574 (0.373)
Pct. Below Poverty Level			-0.205 (0.532)	-0.315 (0.517)
Pct. at least 2x Above Poverty Level			1.839*** (0.485)	1.815*** (0.472)
Pct. w/ Computer and Broadband			0.080 (0.439)	-0.028 (0.441)
Pct. Speak only English at Home			-0.224 (0.284)	-0.199 (0.307)
Pct. w/ Low Access to Food			0.082 (0.274)	0.002 (0.270)
State Capital (binary)			-0.827 (0.595)	-0.817 (0.599)
2016 Clinton Vote Share			1.458*** (0.343)	1.429*** (0.366)
Constant	12.096*** (0.906)	11.178*** (0.789)	10.489*** (1.023)	10.456*** (0.903)
Observations	1,584	1,370	1,343	1,343
R <sup>2</sup>	0.00000	0.060	0.166	0.170
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	-0.001	0.057	0.155	0.159
Residual Std. Error	5.679 (df = 1582)	5.468 (df = 1364)	5.166 (df = 1325)	0.108 (df = 1325)

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table S4: Regression estimates for models estimating change in travel for retail or recreation purposes. All predictors centered and standardized unless otherwise noted. Standard errors clustered within states.

	<i>Dependent variable: <math>\Delta</math> Travel for Retail or Recreation</i>			
	(1)	<i>No Weighting</i>		<i>Weighting</i>
		(2)	(3)	(4)
At least 1 Newspaper (binary)	3.054** (1.323)	4.622*** (1.783)	2.287* (1.226)	1.161 (1.161)
Cases		-1.430* (0.796)	-0.276*** (0.101)	-0.276*** (0.104)
Deaths		-0.872 (0.726)	0.157 (0.190)	0.167 (0.198)
Stay-at-Home Order (binary)		-13.424** (6.633)	-10.287** (4.292)	-10.311** (4.322)
Days since Order		-1.484 (2.719)	-1.988 (1.616)	-1.962 (1.630)
Population Size			0.257 (0.245)	0.210 (0.250)
Population Density			-0.446*** (0.144)	-0.453*** (0.147)
Median Age			-0.896 (0.601)	-0.836 (0.611)
Pct. Not White			2.070** (0.932)	2.047** (0.945)
Pct. w/ College Degree			-4.295*** (1.070)	-4.375*** (1.104)
Pct. Below Poverty Level			1.922 (1.255)	1.748 (1.252)
Pct. at least 2x Above Poverty Level			0.616 (1.094)	0.459 (1.130)
Pct. w/ Computer and Broadband			-0.589 (0.895)	-0.623 (0.890)
Pct. Speak only English at Home			2.325*** (0.536)	2.397*** (0.545)
Pct. w/ Low Access to Food			-0.915* (0.546)	-0.856 (0.556)
State Capital (binary)			2.024** (0.938)	2.073** (0.935)
2016 Clinton Vote Share			-4.232*** (0.910)	-4.045*** (0.928)
Constant	-41.406*** (1.191)	-36.796*** (2.972)	-35.625*** (2.484)	-34.467*** (2.466)
Observations	<b>2,589</b>	<b>2,148</b>	<b>2,104</b>	<b>2,104</b>
R <sup>2</sup>	<b>0.002</b>	<b>0.130</b>	<b>0.378</b>	<b>0.378</b>
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	<b>0.002</b>	<b>0.128</b>	<b>0.373</b>	<b>0.373</b>
Residual Std. Error	<b>16.894 (df = 2587)</b>	<b>15.703 (df = 2142)</b>	<b>13.367 (df = 2086)</b>	<b>0.281 (df = 2086)</b>

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01