

Social Influences on Americans' Mask-Wearing Behavior during COVID-19

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Abstract : Based on a convenience sample of 2,092 participants from across all 50 states of the United States, a survey was conducted to explore Americans' mask-wearing behaviors during COVID-19 according to their political convictions, religious beliefs, and ethnic cultures from late July to early September, 2020. The purpose of the study is to provide evidential support for government policymaking so as to drive up more effective public policies by taking into consideration the variance in these social factors. It was found that the respondents' party affiliation or preference, religious belief, and ethnicity, in addition to their health condition, gender, level of concern of contracting COVID-19, all affected their mask-wearing habits both in March, the initial coronavirus outbreak stage, and in August, when mask-wearing had been made mandatory by state governments. The study concludes that pandemic awareness campaigns must be run among all citizens, especially among African Americans, Muslims, and Republicans, who have the lowest rates of wearing masks, in order to protect themselves and others. It is recommended that complementary cognitive bias awareness programs should be implemented in non-Black and non-Muslim communities to eliminate social concerns that deter them from wearing masks.

Keywords : COVID-19 pandemic, ethnicity, mask-wearing, policymaking implications, political affiliations, religious beliefs, United States

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