December 2014

Why Do People Give? Similarity Based Persuasion on Charitable Appeals and Self-Presentation on Social Media

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WHY DO PEOPLE GIVE?

SIMILARITY BASED PERSUASION ON CHARITABLE APPEALS AND SELF-PRESENTATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

by

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A Dissertation Submitted in

Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Management Sciences

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

December, 2014

ABSTRACT

WHY DO PEOPLE GIVE?
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The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2014
Under the Supervision of Professor Laura A. Peracchio

Despite the sizable donations and the variety of views to research an individual's charitable motivations, the individual's charitable giving has remained somewhat stagnant. Ever since the economic crisis of 2008, contributions to charities have decreased. Therefore, garnering donations is a significant challenge for charitable organizations. Moreover, for individuals who have decided to make voluntary contributions, determining which of the over 800,000 nonprofit organizations to contribute to can be a challenging task, as well. The question of how nonprofit organizations should foster awareness and receive donations is of critical importance, yet the answer is not quite clear. In the current fierce competition with other charities, a charity must rely on an effective promotional strategy to present itself and its services to prospective donors. Unfortunately, marketing literature, which is rich in research and theories about promoting for-profit products and services, provides little guidance to nonprofit organizations on how to promote helping. Therefore, the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate when and how charitable appeals could be effective in the context of a nonprofit organization's website and social media based on similarity based persuasion (Essay 1) and self-presentation theory (Essay 2).

Essay 1: I Help People Similar to Me: The Role o Incidental Similarity on Heuristic Processing of Donations

According to recent charitable behavior research (Small and Simonshon, 2008), an individual feels sympathy when he shares a personal relationship with a victim and then, this greater sympathy is eventually transferred to a charitable behavior. Presumably, for this reason, we posit that a potential donor who perceives a similarity with an identifiable victim has a reduced feeling of distance and increased association with the victim. Across three studies, we investigated the importance of the role of incidental similarity as a moderator between emotional responses to charitable appeal and sympathy. Moreover, we also explored how people use incidental similarity (e.g., sharing first name initial, birth date and hometown, etc) as a cue of heuristic processing to make charitable decisions.

Essay 2: A Review of Social Media as a Marketing Tool for Charity: Self-Presentation and Charitable Behavior on Social Media

The second essay contains a literature review on human behavior on Social Networking Sites (SNS) and how the nonprofit organization utilizes social media for promotion. The GlobalGiving Foundation (2009) notes that utilizing online social networking sites can be a great way to reach out to new donors and evoke public interest. Not only does it help in seeking funds and resources, but it also provides a means through which individuals who share similar goals can connect with each other. Given that an individual is motivated by connection and belonging to others in public forums such as Twitter and Facebook, he values how other friends in the list positively view himself. In other words, SNS leads individuals to do good deeds in the context of charitable behavior. Using theories of self-presentation, we investigate the ways in which consumers construct identities by digitally associating themselves with posting information, pictures and interests in the SNS context. Given the importance of the tool for connecting individuals and allowing self-presentation, we explore how charities utilize SNS to help raise peoples' awareness of donations and further help them make charitable decisions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving"

Mother Teresa

When you have the opportunity to choose your friends, you tend to choose people who are similar to you. When you meet someone new, you tend to try to discover if you share a mutual friend, were born in the same city, went to the same school, or perhaps share the same hobby. If so, you may suddenly feel a connection and at once feel more comfortable with one another. Often, we spend the first few minutes finding common ground. There is a lot of evidence that we like others who are similar to ourselves. People tend to interact with others who are similar to themselves in terms of age, educational background, ethnic background, religion and even political orientation (McPherson et al., 2001). Social science researchers have defined this human interaction effect as similarity/attraction theory. Scholars from a variety of areas such as social psychology, sociology, political science, communication and marketing have contributed to and obtained evidence from empirical studies of this similarity/attraction theory.

An extensive literature across the social sciences supports that people are often drawn to others perceived as similar (Bauimeister, 1988) and the study of the role of similarity in persuasion has a long history. This dissertation builds on the role of perceived incidental similarity in persuasion to examine how it can impact helping behavior. Research on helping behavior has demonstrated that when a solicitor seems to be similar to the individual who was asked to help, he is more favorable to donating to the solicitor (Gueguen et al., 2005).

The persuasive role of similarity in helping behavior is very powerful and many scholars have investigated it by means of manipulations in various ways: congruence versus no congruence of race, status, apparel appearance, or attitudes between the solicitor and the person solicited (e.g., donor). For example, a donor helped more when he was the same race as the solicitor (Gaertner & Bickman, 1971; Wegner & Crano, 1975). The same effect was demonstrated in a phone fundraising context in which ethnicity was manipulated by the accent of the solicitor (Harris & Klingbeil, 1976). The perception that someone shares a similarity with another person is associated not only with a positive evaluation, but also with positive behavior toward that person. Research has shown that incidental similarity factors unrelated to individuals' attitudes also have a positive influence on compliance. Various studies have revealed that compliance with an unknown requester is affected by subjects' belief in the existence of an incidental similarity. For example, Burger et al. (2004) demonstrated that undergraduates who believed they shared a birthdate, a first name or a fingerprint with a confederate were more likely to comply with a request from the confederate. People who share incidental similarity are also more likely to trust and cooperate with one another (Burger et al., 2004; Hodges and Byrne, 1972). It is well established that individuals not only like people with whom they share incidental similarities but they are also more persuaded by them (Miller, Downs, & Prentice, 1998). However, a series of incidental similarity studies have indicated that sharing some trivial similarity such as birth date, initial or fingerprint with another individual provides no diagnostic information concerning forming a rapport in the form of a partnership. Jiang et al. (2010) assert that "incidental similarity lies at the lower end of the continuum of informative value, compared to shared attitude or opinions."

Although some researchers have declared that incidental similarity increases the level of effort or deliberation that individuals dedicate to some object or message (Howard and Kerin,

2010), the present study focuses on heuristic processing to understand the effect of incidental similarity on helping behavior. Existing research (Burger et al., 2004) has shown that people often rely on heuristic processing when responding to requests, supporting the hypothesis based on the work of Heider (1958), who proposed that incidental similarities often create a sense of association between two people. Heider referred to the connection that exists between people who are ‘perceived as belonging together in a specifically close way’ as a unit relation (p. 201). Given that people create a unit relationship with the requestor because of the similarity and treat him like a friend, we are more likely to agree with the view that heuristic decision making replaces rational consideration. Moreover, subsequent researchers who see incidental similarity as a heuristic cue (Jiang et al. 2010) showed that when individuals share an incidental similarity, they experience a sense of social connection. This social connection, then translates into cooperation, help, trust, and other positive consequences.

Contrary to social relationships, Brendl et al. (2005) uncovered the persuasive power of incidental similarity based on the individual perspective. They maintain that individuals tend to form positive associations with themselves, termed implicit egotism. This positive evaluation of themselves extends to personal details and characteristics as well. Thus, people tend to perceive personal cues such as their initial, favorably. Other people who share these cues are also considered favorably. Researchers of implicit egotism have found some evidence that implicit egotism is related to this effect of incidental similarity. Jiang et al. (2009) attempted to ascertain the context in which a sense of connection or implicit egotism constructs the effects of incidental similarity. They showed that a sense of connection is the primary mechanism in most interpersonal contexts. That is, in these contexts, the need to feel connected is especially strong. Conversely, implicit egotism is the primary mechanism in other contexts, where individuals evaluate objects instead of people.

We extend these initial findings to examine the effects of incidental similarity shared between a solicitor and potential donor in an actual charitable situation. Despite numerous studies to explore the incidental similarity effect on help in face-to-face or telephone interactions between the solicitor and the helper, there have been relatively few studies on the persuasive role of the heuristic cue in the computer mediated communication context (Gueguen, 2003). Given the popularity of the Internet and online donations, examining the role of incidental similarity in computer mediated communication (e.g., charitable appeal message by email) cannot be overemphasized.

We combine theories on incidental similarity and the heuristic decision making concept to determine whether a prospective donor perceiving incidental similarity or not with a solicitor in a charitable appeal email context feels sympathy toward the solicitor. Based on theory and research with the unit relationship (e.g., sense of connectedness) and implicit egotism, we anticipate that even an incidental association between a helper and requester would be sufficient to produce a fleeting sense of attraction. Given the vast amount of previous research (Burger et al., 2001; Dolinski et al., 2001), we conducted three studies to confirm that participants would process the request in a heuristic manner and thus would react to requesters with whom they share an incidental similarity as if responding to a friend or family member. Because we are more likely to comply with requests from friends than from strangers (Clark, Ouellette, Powell, & Milberg, 1987; Williamson & Clark, 1992), being aware of the incidental association should be sufficient to increase compliance with the request. Additionally, people like their own name because over a period time they have developed positive implicit associations with their name. The personal cues (e.g., name initial, hometown, birthdate) seem subtle and coincidental, however they are important to one’s sense of self (Pelham et al., 2002). As a result, we expected that participants in our three experiments would be more strongly attracted to the solicitor with a similar name and

would display more liking for the person with a similar name, birthdate and hometown. Because incidental similarity breeds liking, perceiving personal cues shared with a person enhances compliance with requests from that person (Burger et al., 2004; Garner, 2005). Given the importance of the charity appeal to foster public awareness and increase donations, this dissertation, which consists of two essays, investigates the effects of the charitable message on people's perception and charitable behaviors based on various theoretical foundations. Prior to Essay 1, Chapter 2 contains an extensive literature review on the domains of this dissertation. We provide summaries of literature on charitable behavior, motivations for charitable behavior and charitable organizations and marketing. The second essay mainly focuses on the two experiments, combining incidental similarity and heuristic decision making to determine their effects on the charitable decision. The third essay reviews research on social media, self-presentation on social media and how charitable organizations use social media to promote their business.

The remainder of the dissertation is organized as follow. In the following section, we review domains (Chapter 2) relevant to this dissertation. In particular, charitable behavior and how charitable behaviors are motivated by different mechanisms are explained in detail. This is followed by Essay 1 and 2 which provide motivation and research objectives, theoretical foundations, research models and hypotheses, methods and data analyses, summaries of results, and discussions, in greater detail.

CHAPTER 2

DOMAIN

"No one has ever become poor by giving."

Anne Frank, diary of Anne Frank

This chapter mainly discusses the individual's charitable behavior, and motivation, and charitable organizations to highlight the significance of examining their charitable decisions through the charity.

2.1. Charitable Behavior

The academic literature on charitable behavior is enormous. Moreover, the literature spans many different academic disciplines including economics, sociology, social psychology and marketing. As a result, it is somewhat challenging for practitioners and scholars to gain an overview of the literature on charitable giving.

A great deal of research has employed various terms to describe charitable behaviors such as prosocial behavior, altruistic, donation, helping behavior and volunteering (Bendapudi et al., 1996; Fisher and Ackerman, 1998; Guy and Patton, 1989; Penner et al., 2004; Sargeant, 1999; Schwartz and Fleishman, 1982). Prosocial behavior is defined as "voluntary actions that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals" (Eisenberg and Mussen 1989, p.3) and it includes a broad range of actions, including sharing, comforting, rescuing, volunteering and helping. For decades, the major topics in research on prosocial behavior have been the biological, cultural, and social

determinants of prosocial tendencies (see Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006, for review). Chou (1998, p. 195) considers altruistic behavior to be a subgroup of prosocial behavior, which can be defined as “voluntary, intentional behavior that benefits another and that is not motivated by the expectation of external rewards or avoidance of externally produced punishments”. Often, the motivations for prosocial behavior and altruism are associated with religious practices.

Although helping, donation and charitable behavior have been used interchangeably across the social sciences, this dissertation predominantly uses the term charitable behavior because it is focused on select aspects of the charitable organization’s promotion strategy.

Donations of both time and money have been examined extensively by marketing scholars (Bendapudi, Singh, and Bendapudi 1996; Reed, Aquino, and Levy 2007; Shang, and Reed, and Corson 2008). Winterich et al. (2009) categorize voluntary donations of time or money that are intended to help others under the broader domain of charitable behavior and they also report that marketing scholars more commonly use the term charitable behavior. Though donation of money and time are equally substantial, most literature on charitable behavior addresses aspects of monetary donations and donation of time is referred to as volunteering. In a huge literature review on charitable giving, Bekkers and Wiepking (2011) define “charitable giving as the donation of money to an organization that benefits other beyond one’s own family”.

Most importantly, the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate how charitable organizations foster awareness and receive donations by utilizing effective promotion tools and in view of this objective, this research mainly and extensively uses the term charitable behavior.

2.2. What Motivates Charitable Behavior?

The investigation of why and how people donate to charity in general has been extensive and has a revealed a plethora of variables affecting the decision to donate. Aside from the profusion of studies, attempts have previously been made to synthesize the literature on how and why individuals elect to give. Notable integration studies by Burnett and Wood (1988) and Guy and Patton (1989) reviewed the theoretical underpinnings of charitable behavior and proposed models of the charitable decision process. According to the helping decision process model (Guy and Patton, 1989), potential factors that may enhance an individual's motivation for charitable giving can be divided into two main groups: internal factors (characteristic of individual) and external factors (characteristics of situations). Internal factors include demographics, personality variables, social status, mood, knowledge, ability, resources and previous experiences. There is strong evidence that external factors have a considerably stronger effect on charitable behavior than internal factors. For example, the stimulus cue or appeal for help from charities or nonprofit organizations must be clear and unambiguous. In addition to clarity, when the appeal message indicates the intensity of the need and the situation for which help is being sought is interpreted as being both urgent and immediate, it becomes a more powerful persuasion. Moreover, the nature of other people is a strong external factor in charitable behavior. A series of studies have demonstrated that people are rather fastidious about who they are willing to donate to: they are most likely to help those in need who are like themselves and who are considered to be "we" or "ingroup" rather than "they" or "outgroup". A great deal of research has shown that the ingroup/outgroup relationship between the giver and the recipient of a benefit plays a substantial role in the charitable domain (e.g., Dovidio et al., 1997; Omoto & Synyder, 2002). In the same vein, the central theme of this study is that group membership, the perception of similarity, and familiarity can serve as crucial motivations in the decision to donate to others.

Using similar terms, other researchers have defined the same factors as different variables. Extrinsic factors include the socioeconomic profiles of the charity donors, and intrinsic factors address the underlying psychographic and behavioral variables involved in supporting a charity. More specifically, age, gender, education, income, marital status, and family loading were selected as extrinsic variables (e.g., Chrenka et al., 2004; Sargeant, 1999) while intrinsic variables were awareness of charitable issues, sense of social responsibility, and empathy (e.g., Bennett, 2003; Sargeant, 1999). The intrinsic determinants can assist donors in filtering out promotional charity messages that are likely to be most relevant to them and can help them structure the evaluation process. Variables shown to be significant indicators of giving include empathy (Saegean, 1999), sympathy (Small and Simonsohn, 2007) and other emotions such as pity, fear and guilt (Dawson, 1988). Sargeant (1999) notes that key intrinsic values determine the extent to which a donor feels empathy with a recipient and this feeling of empathy towards people who are in need is a central theme of this study. Empathy and sympathy have similar usage but differ in their emotional meaning. Empathy is the ability to mutually experience the thoughts, emotions, and direct experience of others. It goes beyond sympathy, which is a feeling of care and understanding for the suffering of others. The current dissertation, however, primarily uses sympathy rather than empathy because that is a more appropriate term in view of the purpose of this study and the term sympathy is more frequently used in the marketing context (Small and Simonsohn, 2007).

In addition to the two most frequently cited determinants of an individual's charitable motivations, Bekkers and Wiepking (2011), who, in their comprehensive summary of the philanthropic literature, categorize and describe the eight major mechanisms that drive charitable giving, address the question 'Why do people give?' To answer the central question of why people donate money to charitable organizations, Bekkers and Wiepking (2011)

structured and identified the eight mechanisms that were the most crucial factors driving charitable giving. The eight mechanisms are (1) awareness of need (2) solicitation, (3) costs and benefits, (4) altruism, (5) reputation, (6) psychological benefits, (7) values, (8) efficacy. The ultimate aim of this dissertation is to investigate whether there is any rationale behind or an exclusive psychological process which causes people to choose certain charitable organizations and people to receive assistance. In the line with this, the current study primarily focuses on psychological benefits among the eight mechanisms that lead people to make the decision to give to a charity. Bekkers and Wiepking (2011) examined the psychological benefit as one motivation to give to a charity with two main mechanisms: (1) joy of giving, (2) self-image. Some researchers have claimed that the two main motivations are distinct (Anik et al., 2009), and that joy of giving is a more self-centered emotional state than self-image. Showing the importance of joy of giving as a donor motivation, there is ample evidence from studies asserting that helping others produces a positive mood, satisfying a desire to show gratitude, and alleviating feelings of guilt, reducing aversive arousal and allowing one to feel they are a morally just person. Thus, this feeling good about giving is considered to be a self-centered or selfish motivation for charitable giving, whereas the majority of studies on self-image have focused on altruism or helpfulness, enhancing one's self-esteem (Ickes, Kidd, & Berkowitz, 1976); those studies view the motivation of self-image as altruistic. People may be motivated to give to enhance their self-esteem.

To understand charitable giving, it is important to understand donor motivation.

Mount (1996) discovered "motive variables" which could affect charitable behavior; these include "joy of giving, liking to be asked, altruism, sympathy, reciprocity and nostalgia" (p. 6).

2.3. Charitable Organizations and Marketing

A charitable organization is a type of nonprofit organization (NPO). It differs from other types of NPOs in that a charitable organization centers on philanthropic goals as well as social well-being (e.g., charitable, religious, educational, or other activities for the public interest or common good). According to Giving USA (2013), more than 70% of annual charitable donations come from individuals rather than corporations. The next largest sources of donations in terms of annual charitable donations are foundations (15%), bequests (7%), and corporations (6%).

Due to charitable organizations' heavy reliance on individual donors, it is important to investigate the individual's charitable behavior. The examination of why people give and how they are motivated to contribute to charity has been studied extensively and a plethora of variables affecting charitable behavior has been identified (Bendapudi et al. 1996; Bennette 2003; Sargeant 1999). In the current study, we reviewed the individual's charitable motivation in the previous section.

In terms of the type of recipient organization, the religion subsector received the biggest monetary contribution (32%), followed by education-related organizations (13%) and human service organizations (e.g., American Red Cross, Feeding America) (13%) , grantmaking independent, community, and operating foundations (10%), health organizations (e.g., American Cancer Society) (9%) and other NPOs such as international affairs (6%), art, culture, and humanity organizations (5%), and environmental and animal protection (3%). According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS, 2012), more than 1.5 million nonprofit organizations are registered in the U.S., and the charitable organization, the largest category of nonprofit organizations, included over 1 million charities. The number of charitable organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS, 2012) grew from 819,008 in 2000 to 1,081, 891 in 2012, an increase of 24 percent.

While the number of charitable organizations that compete for the individual's donation continues to increase, the economic crisis of 2008 has caused the monetary contributions to charity to decrease over the past few years. As a result, many nonprofit organizations have had to rely on federal stimulus money for child care, job training and other services to survive the recession (Abramson, 2013). Levels of individual donation have failed to keep pace with both the increase in the number of charitable organizations and the levels of need which these organizations exist to provide for. As the donor pool shrinks and the charities face increasing competition and less tax-exemption from the government, they will have to work ever harder to solicit the desired level of support. Thus, the issue of fundraising, especially individual fundraising, receives considerable attention in the literature and is likely one of the most researched streams of nonprofit marketing and management.

In the fundraising domain, marketing continues to grow and evolve because of the diversity of interdisciplinary theoretical bases on which it draws from the disciplines of economics, social psychology, anthropology, and sociology. A growing number of studies have attempted to synthesize the diverse literature in the various fields and to develop models of helping behavior (Bendapudi et al., 1996; Burnette and Wood, 1988; Guy and Patton, 1989; Sargeatn, 1999). More recent work has addressed the various communication techniques (Rooney, 2001), the use of direct marketing techniques in fundraising (Schmittlein and Peterson, 1996), and the development of behavioral measurement scales to assist in the prediction of giving behaviors (Webb et al., 2000). Cause-related marketing has also been explored in recent years, although it is a rather young concept. For example, the American Heart Association provides recognition for products that meet their standards for heart health. Given their heavy reliance on the individual contribution, charities must engage in a variety of fundraising tactics employing not only traditional media, but also new media such as websites, social media (Hart etl.al. 2007) and even mobile phones. Incorporating the new

media in individual fundraising activities helps charities reach far more potential donors and volunteers than was previously possible with traditional media such as telemarketing, direct mail, face-to-face fundraising and press and radio advertising (Massar 2007). Given the importance of effective fundraising techniques, essay 2 investigates the persuasive role of incidental similarity on charitable attitudes and donate decisions in a nonprofit marketing context.

The growing popularity of the Internet and the proliferation of social media websites provide opportunities to nonprofit marketers and academic scholars in the charity realm. Social media has revolutionized the way businesses and organizations promote themselves to their public, yet many nonprofits have fallen short. Numerous for-profit companies have utilized these "free" channels, however many nonprofits either underuse them or have not even begun tapping into these useful and free resources. In these circumstances, it is necessary to analyze how charitable organizations use new media, especially social media, to promote their business, increase public awareness and build a relationship with potential donors, as well as identify strategies for improvement. Although many studies attempt to understand the positive consequences of social media on business effectiveness, there has not yet been much academic research about the charitable organization's social media use and it is essential to gain more knowledge about it since charitable fundraising is nowadays moving there more and more. Thus, we review and discuss the role of social media for the charitable organization in Chapter 3.

In sum, Chapter 2 mainly discussed the key domains of this study: motivation to make a charitable donation decision and charitable organizations. In particular, we provided definitions of charitable behavior and a rationale for why we chose the term 'charitable' among other possible terms.

CHAPTER 3

Essay 1: I Help People Similar to Me: The Role of Incidental Similarity on Heuristic Processing of Donations

It's not just about being able to write a check. It's being able to touch somebody's life.

Oprah Winfrey

3.1. Motivation and Research Objectives

To help beneficiaries and to manage their programs, nonprofit organizations rely heavily on three major sources: individual donors, government aids and corporate giving. Although a widely-held perception is that corporations are the biggest sources of donations to nonprofit organizations, individual donors provide a large portion of a nonprofit's income. Whereas only 5 % of philanthropic donations are contributed by corporations, 73 % of individuals or households donate to charities (Giving USA, 2011). According to the National Philanthropic Trust (2007), between 60 % and 80 % of U.S households donate to more than one million charitable organizations in the United States and it is estimated that between 1998 and 2052, people will donate between $6.6 and $27.4 trillion to these organizations.

Given the significant portions of revenue for most nonprofits and charities, a great deal of research in psychology, marketing, economics and sociology has investigated what factors motivate an individual's donations (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007). For example, willingness and the amount of money that people donate can be dramatically influenced by how people in need are described (Small and Simon, 2007. e.g., sad vs. happy face of solicitors in charitable appeals), information on how much others donate (Fraser et. al., 1988), the anchor points, such as the suggested amount of donation (Shang and Croson, 2009. e.g., $10 vs. $20), the

order of the request (e.g., request first before further explanations vs. explanations first before request), additional request, such as the donation of time (Liu & Aaker, 2008), and even the attractiveness of the donation solicitor (Landry, Lange, List, Price & Rupp, 2006). Different emotionally framed message (positive vs. negative), perspective taking (donor self-focus vs. other focus) and degree of similarity between solicitors and donors (e.g., shared first name, last name initial, and even eye color) have been manipulated to measure people's charitable motivations (Faseur and Geuens, 2010; Small and Simonsohn, 2007).

Despite the sizable donations and the variety of views to research an individual's charitable motivations, the individual's charitable giving has remained somewhat stagnant. Ever since the economic crisis of 2008, contributions to charities have decreased. Therefore, garnering donations is a significant challenge for charitable organizations (West, 2004). Moreover, for individuals who have decided to make voluntary contributions, determining which of the over 800,000 nonprofit organizations to contribute to can be a challenging task, as well. The question of how nonprofit organizations should best request donor contributions is of critical importance (Smith & Schwarz, 2012), yet the answer is not quite clear. In the current fierce competition with other charities, a charity must rely on an effective promotional strategy to present itself and its services to prospective donors (Bendapudi et al., 1996). Message tactics chosen by the organizations influence the way the public responds to nonprofit message appeals (Keller & Lehmann, 2008) designed to increased donation intent. Unfortunately, marketing literature, which is rich in research and theories about promoting for-profit products and services, provides little guidance to nonprofit organizations on how to promote helping (Bendapudi et al., 1996).

Therefore, this dissertation seeks to develop how individuals form charitable behavior, which, in turn, is used to suggest promotional strategies for charities. We begin with an overview of charitable

behavior and review the research in the marketing and psychology areas to identify factors that affect helping behavior. Next, we examine research that explores mechanisms that drive charitable giving.

In the aftermath of the massive earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan, donations are pouring in to help Japan. Not only are companies and celebrities contributing, but also, many individuals have been sending checks through various charitable activities such as making online donations, purchasing foundation products and joining a charity dinner to help the Japanese earthquake relief effort. The American Red Cross has so far contributed $10 million to the Japanese relief effort (Red Cross, March 2011). According to Giving USA Foundations 2009, in 2008, for the second year in a row, charitable giving in the United States exceeded $300 billion, which was estimated to be 2.2 % of personal income. Because of the great number of charitable organizations and the huge amount of donations across the world, charitable giving by individuals and households has been so extensively studied that an overwhelming body of knowledge is available on charitable giving in literature reviews (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2010). Empirical studies in economics, social psychology and marketing have shown how situations can be created that encourage giving (Batson, 1997; List & Lucking-Reiley, 2002; Small & Simonson, 2007). Therefore, understanding the mechanisms that arouse charitable giving is of considerable importance.

In this current study, I examine what drives people to donate their money to charity, and how donors choose among competing causes. More specifically, I investigate whether there is any rationale behind or an exclusive psychological process which causes people to select certain charitable organizations and people to receive benefits. In line with these inquiries, I aim to demonstrate a structure of charitable giving by answering the question “why do people give?” In a recent study seeking the mechanism, Aaker and Akutsu (2009) addressed that people give their money to others based on factors such as 1) guilt 2) sympathy and empathy or 3)

happiness. However, in spite of the progress that has been made in understanding “why do people give”, less work has focused on “how people have chosen beneficiaries based on these mechanisms”.

Prior research indicated that individuals offer greater support when there are specific, identifiable victims rather than a large, vaguely defined group with the same need because of the “identifiable victim effect” (Loewenstein & Small, 2007). Another previous study on charitable giving demonstrated that the closer the relationship with a victim, the greater the degree of sympathy because of social distance (Small and Simonsohn, 2008). Loewenstein gand Small (2007) defined *sympathy* as “emotional concern for other” and *social distance* as “feeling of closeness between individuals”. In a recent study on consumers’ prosocial behavior, Small and Simonshon (2008) theorized that an individual feels sympathy when s/he shares a personal relationship with a victim and that this greater sympathy is eventually transferred to a prosocial behavior. The existing literature on sympathy consistently shows that feelings of distance between victims and potential donors tend to be reduced by various factors such as 1) showing a victim’s face or being in the presence of a victim (Bohnet and Frey, 1999; Charness and Gneezy, 2006) and 2) asking or priming people to take the victim’s perspective (Batson, Early, and Salvarani ,1997). Moreover, individuals are more sympathetic toward victims who belong to their in-group rather than their out-group (Dovidio et al., 1997; Flippen et al., 1996), who are similar to them (Krebs, 1975), or who have special interest in a cause (Ratner and Miller, 2001), therefore, given these definitions of “sympathy” and “social distance” and the variety of factors which influence reducing the distance between victims and potential benefactors, understanding when people feel a close relationship with a victim and hence promoting sympathy and donation is of considerable importance to this current study.

One way to find out when people feel closeness to others is to focus on similarity. In a series of similarity studies, similarities in dress style, birth date, name and hometown have all been shown to increase liking (Burger et al., 2004). Psychological literature has examined that sharing similarity between two strangers arouses positive relationships during their first encounter (Gueguen & Martin, 2009). The perceived similarity with someone is not only associated with a positive perception, but also with positive behavior toward the person (Garner, 2005; Gueguen & Martin, 2009). Therefore, Garner (2005) concluded, "Perceived similarity influences both liking and compliance, and people seem to be more willing to the requests of similar others" (p. 108). A variety of studies has shown that compliance with an unknown solicitor is also influenced by incidental similarities. For example, Burger et al. (2004) demonstrated that undergraduate students who believed they shared birthdays, first names, or fingerprint similarities with a confederate were more likely to consent to a request from the confederate. Burger et al. (2004) explained the compliance consequences in their experiments with heuristic processing. Chaiken (1980) distinguished between a systematic and a heuristic view of persuasion. She defined a systematic view as exerting cognitive effort in performing a task. In contrast, in a heuristic view of persuasion, recipients employ comparatively little effort in judging the validity of a message. For example, we often encounter someone who asks for a small favor, sells us a product, or seeks our compliance with a request, however we seldom think critically before complying. Cialdini (2001) suggested that recipients or targets in compliance situations are often "burdened with the task of correctly comprehending, evaluating, and responding to requests in a relatively short time, and therefore lack the luxury of entirely deliberated and rational decision-making" (p. 594). A growing body of research has found that people generally take a cognitively efficient approach and heuristics to direct their response rather than considering costs and benefits or analyzing the requester's arguments (Burger et al., 2001; Cialdini, 2001). In addition, this

heuristic processing can lead to an increase in compliance when the receiver perceives salient cues such as sharing similarity with the requestor (Burger et al., 2004), finding solicitors physically attractive (Reingen & Kernan, 1983) or sharing facial similarity with candidates in an election (Bailenson et al., 2009). In most of these cases, people were asked to make snap judgments of competence based on a one-second exposure to stimuli of the requests (Bailenson et al., 2009), such as photographs of the competing candidates. Thus, to the extent that people rarely respond to these requests with thoughtful, reasoned and systematic decisions, research about charitable behavior as a heuristic process is considerable. For example, when we are asked to donate money to a nonprofit organization which helps children in Africa, our decision on whether to donate or not depends on appeal messages in solicitor mail or phone fundraising. Because of the limited information about the requestors and a cognitively efficient approach or speed, we often take mental shortcuts, namely, heuristics, which reduce the cognitive burden associated with decision making (Shah & Oppenheimer, 2008).

For this reason, I posit that the potential donor who shares similarity with an identifiable victim has a reduced feeling of distance and an increased association with the victim. Moreover, this feeling of a close relationship tends to promote sympathy and helping behavior because of similarity, as a heuristic view. Based on this preliminary evidence that similarity creates attraction because people feel a relationship with others who share certain things with them, I aim to better understand the psychological processes supporting this pattern of charitable decision making. Moreover, I provide an explanation for how and why the similarity can have a persuasive influence in a charity appeal context. To do this, I draw from the theoretical framework of incidental similarity and sympathy. Despite the vast amount of research on the incidental similarity effect, particularly name letter similarity, on compliance and preference for requestors or solicitors, surprisingly little study has delivered a

link between emotional responses to charitable appeals and sympathy. Previous researchers have found a positive relationship between sympathy and charitable behavior. Small and Simonsohn (2008) suggested that the greater the degree of sympathy, the greater the degree of giving to a solicitor. A charitable advertisement study demonstrated that sympathy ad responses will positively influence ad attitudes (Escalas and Stern, 2003). However, less study has been focused on how sympathy is created and what psychological factors influence sympathy.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to present the “Similarity as a Donation Heuristic Model”, suggesting the emotional response to a charitable appeal (i.e., negative, positive and neutral) influences sympathy, which, in turn, leads the attitude to the appeal and the amount donated to a solicitor. Meanwhile, this current study examines the importance of the role of incidental similarity as a moderator between the emotional response to an appeal and sympathy. To find out the persuasive role of incidental similarity in the relationship between emotions aroused by charitable appeal and sympathy, this study builds a theoretical model based on sense of connection, implicit egotism and the heuristic process, and empirically tests different hypotheses to support the research model. This study has two contributions in the non-profit organization marketing research. First, based on an incidental similarity and sympathy theoretical framework, this study builds a new model, which explains charitable behavior is motivated by sympathy, an emotion bred by personal relationships with victims. Second, nonprofit organizations can boost their fundraising efforts by nurturing and building on this unique dynamic.

This study is organized as follows. First, theoretical backgrounds and hypotheses are presented along with a “Similarity as a Donation Heuristic Model” in a charitable appeal context. Next, detailed research methods are discussed to support the hypotheses. Finally, future research and implications are presented in the last section.

3.2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

Previous studies have demonstrated that similarity effects on helping behavior involved situations in which the benefactor and beneficiary had an opportunity for direct, face-to-face interaction, either during or after the experiment, such as a relationship between a salesperson and a potential consumer in actual face-to-face sales situations (Burger et al., 2004; Garner, 2005; Jiang et al., 2010). However, in most cases, the charitable appeal from and advertisement by nonprofit organizations do not involve face-to-face contact. There is more of the non-face-to-face interaction situation in telephone conversations, solicitation mail and website donation by such charitable organizations as World Vision, Compassion and United Way. The similarity effect on the face-to-face contact is not remarkable because similarity increases the likelihood of helping another person that one physically meets (Bekkers, 2010), therefore, finding out the similarity effect on indirect communication by a non-face-to-face medium would be more remarkable because of the lack of interaction with the solicitors.

Only a small number of recent studies (Bekkers, 2010; Gueguen et al., 2010) have examined the similarity effect in the non-face-to-face interaction situation in which participants received a fundraising letter from University Fund. Therefore, to investigate whether the incidental similarity effect occurs when there is no face-to-fact contact between solicitors and donors and there is no possibility for future interaction sheds light on how the charitable appeal in the non-face-to-face context leads to actual donations. Moreover, this study examines overt behavior such as attitude towards the appeal and amount of money donated, not just preference for compliance with requests for small favors (Burger et al., 2004; Garner, 2005).

The main theme of “Similarity as a Donation Heuristic Model” is the mediating role of sympathy, suggesting that emotions in response to the appeal message are indirectly associated with the attitude towards the appeal and the amount of the donation. Incidental

similarities are examined as a moderator between emotions to appeal and sympathy. The model is presented in Figure 1.

3.2.1. Donation Appeal Message and Emotional Response to Elicit Sympathy

Charities have a long history of using emotive appeals to trigger giving, arousing negative emotions such as guilt, fear and shame or, on the positive side, love and care, uplifting feelings. As uncovered by a mega-analysis (Cialdini & Fultz, 199), a significant number of studies appearing in the psychology literature have found a positive association between negative feelings (i.e., guilt, fear and shame) and various types of helping behavior. Because of its positive contribution to giving, negative emotional appeals have been frequently used by nonprofit organizations to encourage sympathetic responses. According to Moore and Hoenig (1989), "Public Service Announcements (PSAs) sponsored by nonprofit organizations (e.g., American Diabetes Associations, Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse, etc.) have been designed to evoke emotions such as fear, guilt, sympathy, pity, or compassion" (p. 581). However, in some domains, potential donors who receive this negative appeal message object to the appeals because it promotes their stigmatization and disadvantage as well (Harris and Harris, 1977). Furthermore, some potential donors also disapprove of the use of negative appeals when they feel that they are being manipulated in their donation decisions by charities (Hibbert et al., 2007).

Studies on positive (warmth) appeals in charity advertisements are fewer than those in negative feelings research, yet the relationship between positive mood and helping behaviors has been widely studied. For example, Isen and Levin (1972) demonstrated that people who felt good (i.e., receiving cookies or finding a dime left in a payphone) were more likely to provide help. Replicating this effect in a different domain, Aderman (1972) stimulated either an elated or depressed state by having participants read statements designed to evoke these

moods. Participants in a positive mood were more likely to help with a favor to the researcher during the study, and even promised to help by participating in a second experiment. Other positive mood states have also been shown to promote altruism; feelings of competence, particularly, have been investigated in relation to helping and volunteering behavior (Harris & Huang, 1973; Kazdin & Bryan 1971), as has succeeding in tasks (Isen & Levin, 1972). Despite a great deal of study on positive mood as an antecedent of helping behavior, there is a lack of research about a link between positive emotional appeals in charity and positive mood. Thus, given that the previous studies found that positive moods induce prosocial behavior, exploring how different appeals in the charitable context elicit a positive mood is still essential for future study.

Even though the effect and nature of negative and positive appeals across different contexts remains a subject of debate (Carlson & Miller, 1987), a substantial number of these studies focus on two main emotional states as consequences. According to Batson et al., two emotions, sympathy and personal distress, have been shown to be common “emotional responses to seeing another person suffer” (Batson et al., 1983, p. 706). In other words, the altruism model of Batson et al., (1981) suggests that people can experience two types of emotion when they see someone suffer: personal distress (alarm, anxiety, fear) that leads to egoistic helping, or sympathy (empathic concern, compassion, tenderness) that leads to charitable behavior. Thus, in line with the altruism model of Batson and his colleagues, negative emotions operate on the basis of personal distress; however, positive emotions carry out sympathy.

Appeals that try to engender a negative emotion (i.e., sadness, guilt or shame) usually concentrate on the problematic situation and the negative consequences such as disaster places or victims, both for the people in need and for the potential donors. However, the positive appeal (i.e., happiness, pride or care) usually focuses on the positive outcomes that

can occur, both for the people in need and for the potential donors, when help is provided. Interestingly, regarding the impact of negative feelings, focusing on the problematic situation that others (people in need) have to go through induces sympathetic responses, which in turn increase helping behavior (Thompson et al., 1980). However, when a person focuses attention on himself during the experience of a negative emotion (e.g., perspective taking or by imagining oneself in the situation), the person wants to avoid the problematic situation because personal distress has been aroused. Therefore, this tendency leads the person who focuses on the self to help needy people to a lesser degree than a person who focuses on the other. Furthermore, such a positive emotion, focused on oneself, could stimulate positive thoughts, leading to higher helping behavior. Interestingly, when the appeal is focused on the other (victims or solicitors) this positive feeling could evoke more negative thoughts such as jealousy.

Thus, when taking a different perspective or focus of attention adds to an emotional state, the charitable appeal becomes more complex. When a negative appeal involves selffocus (potential donors), the personal distress of the person will be increased. However, when the negative emotion appeal engages with the other-focus (solicitors or victims who appeared in the appeal), sympathy will be enhanced. The effect of the association between positive appeal and perspective taking is less clear. Some researchers have argued that a positive appeal, which engages with self-focus, will promote helping behavior. Others have claimed that a positive appeal with self-focus has no significant effect. Therefore, compared to finding out about the association between perspective and negative appeal, the effect of the relationship between positive appeal and focus of attention (perspective taking) is less clear. A substantial number of studies have been widely researched to find out the clear relationship in different domains such as advertising, communication and marketing. Moore and Hoenig

(1989) found that the effect of negative emotions on attitude toward helping is dependent on 1) perception of attention is focused on the needs and feelings of the victim and 2) the degree of sympathy that is generated toward the victim. Fisher et al. (2008), asserted that the most effective fund-raising appeals communicate the benefits to others (solicitors or victims) and evoke negative rather than positive emotions. Griffin et al. (1993), provided that consumers will react differently based on the relative levels of sympathy and distress evoked by a charitable appeal. They suggested that appeals should be designed to evoke maximum levels of sympathy and minimum levels of distress to maximize consumer intentions to give. Tine and Maggie (2010) showed that when help was asked for people to whom respondents felt connected through positive (vs. negative) and mixed-focused (vs. other-focused) feelings there were more positive ad evaluations and increased respondents' helping intentions. However, when help was asked for unconnected people, the negative ads were most effective. Furthermore, they investigated the effect of ego (self) versus other focused feeling on ad evaluations and how helping intentions were mediated by people's motivation to help.

The theoretical relationship underlying the persuasive role of the donation appeal message and emotional responses to the message which were suggested above supports that nonprofit organizations have chosen to use emotional appeals to enhance the persuasive impact of their appeals. Furthermore, different emotional responses to appeal messages are positively associated with sympathy and personal distress. Following Griffin (1993)'s recommendation that charitable appeals should be created to promote maximum levels of sympathy and minimum levels of distress to aggrandize intention to give, Tine and Maggie demonstrated the feeling of connections affects the intention to help. Thus, I have the hypotheses as follows:

H1: A donation appeal message will evoke an emotional response.

H2: A donation appeal message will be positively associated with generating sympathy by mediation of the emotional response.

H3a: A negative emotionally framed appeal message will evoke sympathy if the message is focused on the other. If the negative appeal is presented with a self-focused message, it will fail to evoke sympathy.

H3b: A positive emotionally framed appeal message will evoke sympathy if the message is only focused on the self. However, the effect is less than in the negative appeal.

In applying this argument, I posit there is a moderator which explains the relationship between emotional response and sympathy because it is obvious that the negative emotional response from the negative emotionally framed appeal transfers to a favorable attitude by the change in the focus of attention. Although different focus of attention (donor - self vs. solicitor – other) in the charity message helps to promote sympathy, the question about how potential donors choose one specific recipient out of a number of candidates who are waiting for benefits still needs to be answered. Not only the message framing of the emotional valence and the focus of attention, but also the perception of distance between solicitors and donors is considerably important in finding out how emotional responses transfer to sympathy in the end. Thus, in the next section, as the moderator, how the feeling of similarity helps to decrease negative states of mind and leads to increased sympathy for others is presented.

3.2.2. The Moderating Role of Incidental Similarity as a Heuristic View

The study on similarity has a long and well established history, suggesting that people are not only more attracted to others who share similar attitudes but are also more influenced by them. However, this study is focused more on incidental similarity, that is, chance similarities between individuals that provide little relevant information (Burger et al., 2004). For example, such similarity as sharing a birthday or being born in the same state as a requestor provides no diagnostic information about the requestor and logically should not play a role in

careful consideration of the request. However, existing research has shown that incidental similarity can play a role in social context and can enhance liking, persuasion, and cooperative behavior between individuals (Burger et al., 2004).

When people encounter a situation with limited time and information, they are more likely to rely on heuristic, rather than thoughtful and systematic, processing to make a decision. Since this current study is based on non face-to-face communication and no future interaction between solicitors and donors, I posit that making a donation decision is more likely to be heuristic processing because it has been offered little information and it is relatively low cost. Several researchers have asserted charitable behavior as a heuristic view (Burger et al., 2004; Garner 2004 & 2005; Jiang et al., 2010). Small and Simonshon (2008) suggested that "most people do not calculate the expected benefit of their donation and choices are rather made intuitively, based on spontaneous affective reaction." In a circumstance which allows for a cognitively efficient decision, perceiving a similarity and sharing a commonality plays a very important role because of increasing attention. For example, research has shown that sharing a conversation or even sitting silently in the same room with the requestor was sufficient to evoke increased compliance (Burger et al., 2001). Manipulations aroused fleeting feelings of attraction, which caused participants to mindlessly react to the requesters as if they were dealing with friends. Consequently, these participants were more likely to comply with requests than were participants in appropriate control conditions.

According to Heider (1958), two main mechanisms support this effect of incidental similarity. The first mechanism is implicit egotism and the second is a sense of connection. In the next section, these two underlying mechanisms are presented.

3.2.2.1) Implicit Egotism

People tend to form a positive association with themselves, called implicit egotism.
This positive evaluation of themselves extends to personal details and characteristic as well. People perceive personal cues such as birthday and name initial, favorably. Therefore, other people who correspond to these cues are also perceived favorably.
Brendl et al. (2005) explained this tendency as the self-concept theory, particularly self-enhancement, because self-enhancement increases the positive valance of name letters themselves (i.e., Tony prefers Twix over Snickers and Mary prefers Mars over Snickers). Individuals gravitate toward people, places, and things that resemble the self (Pelham et al., 2002). Researchers have consistently found that people like their given name because an individual's name is one of the most important components of self-identity (Allport, 1937). That is, people prefer the letters in their own name, not merely because they have been constantly exposed to these letters, but because of the importance the name has for them (Allport 1937; Pelham et al., 2002). This tendency is more of an unconscious process which is grounded in people's favorable self-associations (Pelham et al., 2002).
However, Jiang et al. (2009) argued that this implicit egotism is the primary mechanism in other contexts, when individuals evaluate objects instead of people.
Specifically, the effect of incidental similarity on the evaluation of a dentist was mediated by the sense of connection, however, the effect of incidental similarity on the evaluations of a clinic was probably mediated by implicit egotism. Therefore, in the next section, the sense of connection as the underlying mechanism of the incidental similarity effect is presented.

3.2.2. 2) Sense of connection

When individuals share an incidental or trivial similarity, they experience a sense of social connection and then this sense of connection translates into trust, cooperation, and other positive consequences (Jiang et al., 2009). Sense of connection has been defined as "emotional connectedness between the self and other people" (Lee and Robbins, 1995, p 239). Moreover, this connectedness can be acquired through more subtle means, such as the association created by simple interaction and participation with others (Lee and Robbins, 1995). Therefore, incidental similarity as a subtle cue can establish a sense of connectedness in the stage of social relationship.

However, there is a factor that moderates the impact of incidental similarity. For example, if individuals do not like someone else, incidental similarities with this person do not translate into trust and cooperation. Indeed, in this context, similarities can decrease, rather than increase, the likelihood of these consequences (e.g., Miller et al., 1998). Additionally, in a sales context (Jiang et al., 2009), the valence of a salesperson's behavior and the possibility of an extended service relationship moderate the persuasion effects. For example, when an incidental similarity is shared with a salesperson who exhibits negative behaviors, the consumer's favorable attitude toward the service or product decreases and even the purchasing intention (Jiang et al., 2009) diminishes.

Given the different domain from the personal sales setting in that previous study and the fact that guilt appeals are commonly used by charities to motivate prosocial behavior, we posit this negative emotional stimulus in the donation context still translates into a positive. Due to the persuasion of the heuristic view, potential donors have negative emotional arousal upon seeing the sad faces or the miserable situations of victims who share incidental similarity; their feeling of self-association with the victims alleviates the negative emotion and even leads it to translate into a positive consequence such as sympathy. For example, Katrina Petrillo raised $1000 for Hurricane Katrina victims by selling lemonade (Salkin, 2005). If she

wants to avoid the negative emotion of Hurricane Katrina, which shares the same name, she may not invest her time and money in disaster relief. Therefore, I believe that people may not always minimize their associations with negative stimuli. When it comes to the donation context, not just the interpersonal and sales context, there is a process which transfers negative emotion to concern for others, namely sympathy through a feeling of similarity. Thus, taken together, following the previous literature on the emotional response to donation appeal and incidental similarity, I hypothesize that negative emotions would be mitigated by the feeling of similarity as follows,

H4: Incidental similarity will moderate the relationship between the emotional response to the donation appeal message and sympathy such that 1) an individual with higher selfesteem will display higher levels of sympathy and 2) an individual with a higher sense of connection will display higher levels of sympathy.

H5: When potential donors perceive incidental similarity with solicitors in a donation appeal, negative emotions to the appeal message will diminish and, in turn, translate to sympathy.

3.2.3 Direct and Mediating Role of Sympathy

Reducing the distance between victims and potential benefactors can promote sympathy and giving (Small and Simonsohn, 2008). As a predictor, the role of sympathy has been studied exhaustively. The link between sympathy and charitable behavior is well established (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Baston et al., 1997; Coke et al., 1978). Research has documented several factors that promote charitable giving by facilitating sympathy. As described earlier, sharing incidental similarity with a solicitor such as perceiving a sense of closeness and association with self-esteem has shown to increase sympathy towards the person, which in turn influences their donation and volunteering choices (Small and Simonshon, 2007). There is a great deal of evidence that fostering sympathy increases people’s tendency to give to charity (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Fisher et al., 2008; Small and Simonsohn 2007; Small and Simonsohn, 2008). Thus, I have the follow the hypotheses:

H6: Sympathy will be positive associated with a charitable behavior.

H6a: Individual with sympathy toward the person in a message will show more favorable attitude toward the donation appeal message.

H6b: Individual with sympathy toward the person in a message will donate more.

3.3. Research Method and Data Analysis

Three experiments were conducted to examine the hypotheses and research questions proposed in Chapter 3.2. The experimental design was suitable for the purpose of this dissertation because it allowed us to ascertain the relationships between three factors: incidental similarity, sympathy, and charitable behavior. The rest of this section presents the designs and analytical procedures of the two studies.

STUDY 1

To rule out face-to-face communication which might increase compliance, we conducted an online survey asking participants about their emotional response toward and sympathy for hypothetical appeal messages in different scenarios. Study 1 examined how emotional responses to a donation appeal message mediate between the message and sympathy.

Method

Participants: A total of 230 undergraduate business majors at the large Midwestern university participated by completing an online survey questionnaire. Each participant received a course credit for participating. Study 1 only dealt with questionnaires which asked the emotional response to a charitable message. Since the participants were business majors, they were familiar with emotional responses to product advertisements or appeals from organizations. The sample was 52% female and 48% male; 94 % were Caucasian, 2 % were African-American, 1% were Asian, and the rest indicated “other”.

Stimuli: To test the hypotheses, particularly emotional response to a donation appeal message, participants were presented with a charitable appeal imbedded within other stories in an email newsletter type of format. Stimuli for the current study had modified a version that Griffin et al. (1993) used because the study demonstrated two specific and distinct emotions (e.g., sympathy and personal distress) likely to be evoked by charitable appeals.

Procedure: To investigate hypotheses 1 through 3, participants were randomly assigned to different controls and read one of four fictional scenarios about individuals experiencing misfortune. 1) positive emotion framed message with self (e.g., donor) focus 2) positive emotion framed message with others (e.g., victims or solicitors) focus 3) negative emotion framed message with self-focus 4) negative emotion framed message with othersfocus. For the negative emotion framed message, the appeal described a man who had lost his vision while using a "weed-eater". An example of the scenario is presented in Appendix A. In this negatively framed letter, the words poor and desperate support the negative emotions, sadness and hopelessness. Following exposure to the stimuli, respondents were presented a survey instrument which included measures assessing their responses to the appeal for assistance.

Dependent Variable:

- Emotional response to be assigned the emotionally framed appeal message - Sympathy for the person who appeared in the donation appeal message

Measures: Coke et al.'s Emotional Response Scale (Coke et al., 1978) was used to measure participants' feelings toward the person in the appeal message because this scale has high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$) and convergent validity. Furthermore, this scale is

highly correlated with sympathy. This Emotional Response Scale is used to indicate the extent to which respondents feel upset, distressed, sympathetic, alarmed, grieved, troubled, compassionate, perturbed, softhearted, worried, tender and disturbed, on a 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely) scale. The scale consists of two factors, sympathy and personal distress. The sympathy factor consists of sympathetic, passionate, tender, and softhearted and predicts altruistic motives, whereas the personal distress factor consists of the remaining items and typically predicts egoistic motives (Small and Simonshon, 2008). To measure sympathy towards the message's appeal, the Ad Response Sympathy (ARS) scale was used (Escalas and Stern, 2003) because it was uniquely constructed for the specific domain, sympathy and advertisement (See Appendix B). However, as this current study dealt with the donation appeal message, rather than charity advertisement, we modified some words (i.e., commercial and ad). We chose this scale instead of others because it has high internal consistency (Cronbach $\alpha = .89$) and is highly targeted with the current study.

After completing the scale for both parts (sympathy toward the person in the charity appeal message and emotional response to the message), participants indicated how similar they were to the person who had suffered from the misfortune described in the scenario, on a scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Person similar to me in the world). We refer to this 1-7 variables as similarity. Although the purpose of Study 1 was to measure participants' emotional response to the charitable appeal and sympathy toward the person in the appeal, we also measured willingness to donate (e.g., imagine that you will receive $5.00 for completing this survey. You can donate any part of this $5 to the charity.). Individual differences in emotional intensity and perspective taking were measured, as well. Lastly, as a pre-study of Experiment 2, we also asked each participant if they remembered the name of the person in the message that they saw in the beginning of Study 1 and then let them know that the first name initial of the solicitor in the charitable appeal was identical to that of the participant

(e.g., Jim - participant finds the statement “original”, the first name of the person in the story is Jacob). To manipulate the first name initial, each subject had to enter their first name initial for the purpose of extra credit before they started Study 1. Finally, the participants reported their demographic information.

Results and Discussion

The positively framed message received more positive emotional response than the negatively framed message (Mpos = 4.7> Mneg = 3.3). A lower number indicates negative emotions and a higher number indicates positive emotions (e.g., 1= negative emotion; 5= positive emotion, Figure 1). People who were assigned to the negative emotion framed message with self condition showed the most negative emotions (M=2.5 out of 5) and people assigned the positive emotion framed message with other condition showed the most positive emotions (M=4.6 out of 5).

There was a significant difference across the four groups (F (3,229) = 64.859, p = .000). The negative*self group showed the most negative emotional response, while the positive*others group showed the most positive emotions. Also, the mean difference between self and others across the emotional response was significant. For example, the negative emotional response difference (self vs. others) was 0.85, while the mean difference of the positively framed message between self and others was 0.58. This indicates that people respond emotionally more negatively in the negative situations associated with the respondents, themselves. However, when people are in a positively framed condition, neither self-focus nor others-focus has a big impact on the emotional response.

The relationship between feeling sympathy and different emotional response was investigated using Pearson’s correlation coefficient. There was a negative correlation between the two

variables [r=-.138, n=233, p<0.035], with positive emotional response with low level of sympathy. In other words, when people respond with a positive emotion, they feel less sympathy, but when people show a negative emotional response, they show higher sympathy. However, the degree was slightly different. Also, there was a significant difference between emotional response and sympathy. (p<0.029). Therefore, hypothesis 2 was supported.

Table 1: Correlations

		Emotional Response	Sympathy
Emotional Response	Pearson Correlation	1	-.138*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.035
	N	233	233
Sympathy	Pearson Correlation	-.138*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	
	N	233	233

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.490	3	4.163	3.061	.029
Within Groups	311.465	229	1.360		
Total	323.955	232			

The degree of feeling of sympathy depends on whether people perceive a similarity or not. When a participant perceived a similarity to the solicitor and showed a higher level of closeness to the solicitor, they showed a higher degree of sympathy, and vice versa. This also was supported by the first name initial manipulation. Figure 2 helps to support our assumption that the willingness to donate would be different depending on the similar/dissimilar condition. After participants know that they share a first name initial with the person seeking help in the charitable appeal message, they tend to donate more compared to before knowing it (Mbefore=$3.502 vs. Mafter=$3.825 out of $5).

STUDY 2

In Study 2, we determined whether perceived incidental similarity can influence liking and the willingness to do a favor. Participants read a scenario in which the first name initial of the solicitor was either similar or dissimilar to their own. We expected that those persons who read the scenario containing the first name initial-similar character would report that the character was similar to them, would evaluate the character more favorably, and would report greater willingness to perform a favor for that person. Preliminarily, we tested this as premeasure in Study 1.

Method

Participants: Of the 120 completed surveys, 7 respondents failed to answer the instructional manipulation checks or respond to the purpose of the study and were removed from the analysis. 113 respondents were recruited from the large Midwestern University and extra

credit provided participants with an incentive to participate. The average age of the respondents was between 18 and 25 years old. 39 out of 113 participants who indicated their gender were female (36% female, 64% male). To manipulate incidental similarity, we asked participants to write down their first name initial, birthdate and home state, respectively, before starting the survey. The instructions stated this initial task was for extra credit purposes, but the collected information was used later to manipulate each respondent to a different condition (e.g., similar vs. dissimilar)

Stimuli: Each participant was randomly assigned to one of four conditions: 2

(incidental similarity between solicitor and prospect donor: similar vs. dissimilar) * 2 (emotions: positive vs. negative). Study 2 was conducted in a controlled computer lab. When the participants arrived at the assigned study time, they were informed by the experimenter this is an advertising message evaluation study. Participants were asked to read the fictional appeal from Feeding Hungry Children Organization with a child's picture. A computer screen showed a real child's picture on the bottom of the charitable appeal message. Before reading the message with the picture of the child in the different conditions, participants were asked to spend as little or as much time picturing the situation as they needed (See Figure 3&4). The reason why this children helping organization stimulus was used for the study is because child development, hunger, and third world charities are popular with young people (18-24 years old) (Reed, 1998).

Procedure: In the similar condition, participants read a scenario in which the child who is soliciting in the charitable appeal shares the same first name initial, birthdate and hometown with them (e.g., while collecting personal information, David wrote his first name initial, 'D',

birthdate '6/5' and home state as "Illinois" and we morphed the personal cue of the soliciting child to be identical to Sam. For example, 7-year old Danny is living in Illinois and he feels hopeless prior to his birthdate, June 5^{th}). In the dissimilar condition, there was no similarity in personal cues between the solicitor and the prospective donor, that is, the respondent. Coke et al.s' Emotional Response Scale (Coke et al., 1978) was used to measure participants' feelings toward the person in the appeal message after reading the scenario, to capture whether the participants felt either a positive emotion or a negative emotion. All the names used for Study 1 and Study 2 were English names which sounded familiar to the participants.

In the next page, based on the sympathy measurement scale in Study 1 (Ad Response Sympathy (ARS) scale used, Escalas and Stern, 2003), they were asked whether they felt sympathy or not. After completing the 5 questions, participants were asked to answer questions on similarity and closeness to the solicitor in the message and sympathy toward the person. To test the hypotheses based on the theoretical framework, we used the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (1965, See Appendix C) to measure if incidental similarity, particularly implicit egotism, was presented. After completing the 10 items of the self-esteem questionnaire, participants were asked to complete the Social Connectedness Scale (Lee and Robin, 1995, See Appendix D) to measure whether they felt connectedness to the person in the message in the donation context. This scale was constructed based on the theoretical framework of belongingness, a fundamental human motivation involving the need to form and maintain strong, stable interpersonal relationships. Because of the underlying mechanism that humans have an innate need to belong and connectedness can be achieved through subtle means such as simple and brief interaction, the assertion that incidental similarity is a subtle cue that can establish social connectedness in the initial stage of a relationship (Jiang et al., 2010) was concluded for sure.

However, there is a moderator that impacts on incidental similarity. For instance, if someone does not like a certain person, incidental similarities with the person may not translate into positive emotions, such as trust and cooperation. Miller et al. (1998) noted that similarities can even decrease in this context. In addition to this, Jiang et al. (2009) extend this to a sales context which the valence of a salesperson's behavior and the possibility of an

extended service relationship moderate the persuasion effects.

Given the donation domain is different from the sales setting in that previous study and more importantly the fact that enormous research has examined the relationship between guilt appeals and charitable donations (e.g., Bozinoff & Ghingold, 1983; Regan, 1971), we posit this negative emotional stimuli in the charitable appeal still translate into a positive emotion. Unlike the interpersonal and sales context, in the donation context, there is a process which transfers negative emotion to concern for others, that is, sympathy through a feeling of similarity. Therefore, we posited in our hypothesis 4 incidental similarity will moderate the relationship between the emotional response to the donation appeal message and sympathy such that an individual with a higher sense of connection will display higher level of sympathy. Consequently, respondents with high social connectedness showed more sympathy towards the person in the message than respondents with low social connectedness in the similar condition. However, as we expected, there was no significant effect in the dissimilar condition.

After completing the set of incidental similarity measures, participants were asked their intention to donate and their attitude towards the message. And, finally they completed emotional intensity daily scales to measure an individual difference of emotional response.

Dependent Variable:

- Sympathy toward the person in the donation appeal message
- Attitude towards the message - Amount of money to donate

Independent Variable:

- Sense of Connectedness
- Self-Esteem

Measures

1) Implicit Egotism: The Rosenberg self-esteem scale (1965) is a self-esteem measure widely used in social-science research. It is a ten-item Likert scale with items answered on a four-point scale – from strongly agree to strongly disagree (See Appendix C).

2) Sense of Connection: The Lee and Robin Social Connectedness Scale (1995) is used to measure individual differences in social connectedness. Lee and Robin developed this scale based on the following criteria: a) each item maintained a significant correlation with only one factor b) if items were judged to overlap in wording, the item with the higher correlation was chosen, and c) the number of items per measure was dependent on obtaining adequate internal item consistency, as calculated by coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951). Furthermore, these items were first correlated with the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Index (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) to exclude those times that elicit socially desirable responses. As it meets these requirements, this scale was robust to measure the sense of connection for this study.

Finally, they answered whether they were aware of the purpose of the current study. If anyone answered they were familiar with the solicitor in the donation appeal message, s/he was excluded from the data. The completion time to answer had been recorded to the data.

Expected time to complete the total survey questionnaire was 30 minutes and the average time was 15-20 minutes.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation check: Similar condition respondent regardless of emotion condition (positive vs. negative) evaluated the message more positively than dissimilar condition respondents (Msimilar = 3.1> Mdissimilar = 2.8).

Before testing the fourth hypothesis, that incidental similarity will moderate the relationship between the emotional response toward the charitable appeal and sympathy, we examined the emotional response toward the message. Across four different conditions, respondents who are in similar * positive showed the most positive emotional response (M=3.5 out of 5), whereas participants in the dissimilar * positive condition showed the most negative emotional response (M =2.24). The mean difference between the positive and negative emotional response in the similar condition (M=1.12) was greater than the mean difference between the positive and negative emotional response in the dissimilar condition (M = -.1). This result indicates that people do not respond emotionally if they perceive the situation as being not relevant to them. Regardless of the negative emotion framed and positive emotion framed message, the emotional response to the appeal message is relatively slight.

According to our hypotheses, based on our theoretical framework, people tend to perceive a greater similarity when they are in a similar* positive condition compared to a similar * negative condition. To examine this, we first tested an interaction effect. There was a significant interaction between the feeling of sympathy in the similar condition (similar or dissimilar), in the emotion framed message (F (1,110) =10.713, p=0.001). Given the assumption that incidental similarity enhances sympathy, we tested how the perceived

incidental similarity differed depending on the emotional response: negative vs. positive. Participants who were in the similar * negative condition showed the greatest sympathy (M=3.75 out of 5), but other conditions are not much different from each other (M=2.7 and M=2.75, respectively). This indicates that people tend to have sympathy for others who are similar to them and the degree of sympathy becomes greater when they are in the negative circumstance.

Table 3

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Closeness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	21.776[a]	3	7.259	17.247	.000
Intercept	972.032	1	972.032	2309.595	.000
Neg_Pos	1.891	1	1.891	4.493	.036
NonSim_Sim	19.677	1	19.677	46.754	.000

A review of Table 3: respondents who showed different emotional responses were significantly different in their perception of closeness to the solicitor in the charitable appeal message depending on the different type of frame ($F(1,110) = 4.493$, $p = 0.036$). Moreover, respondents differently perceived closeness depending on incidental similarity. People in the similar condition felt much closer to the solicitor in the appeal compared to people in the dissimilar condition ($p=.000$). There was significant interaction between closeness in the framed message and incidental similarity.

Table 4 indicates a significant three-way interaction between emotional response, incidental similarity and sense of connectedness (closeness: low vs. high) ($F(7, 104) = 5.566$, $p=0.020$). Figure 6 helps to explain these results further; those in the similar* negative condition

showed the greatest sympathy, while those who were in the negative condition* dissimilar, regardless of the sense of connection (high vs. low), showed the least sympathy. Those who reported having a high sense of connectedness showed an interaction effect between the similar and dissimilar condition. When those who evaluated themselves as having a high sense of connectedness were in a similar and negative condition, they experienced greater sympathy, whereas when they were in a similar and positive emotion framed condition, they experienced the least sympathy. As a result, as people seek more of a sense of connectedness, they perceive more of a feeling of sympathy toward others who share incidental similarity.

Table 4

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Sympathy

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	21.458[a]	7	3.065	6.817	.000
Intercept	759.295	1	759.295	1688.521	.000
Neg_Pos	1.633	1	1.633	3.632	.059
NonSim_Sim	2.919	1	2.919	6.491	.012
Closeness_Low_High	.302	1	.302	.672	.414
Neg_Pos * NonSim_Sim	5.512	1	5.512	12.257	.001
Neg_Pos * Closeness_Low_High	.596	1	.596	1.324	.252
NonSim_Sim * Closeness_Low_High	.006	1	.006	.012	.912
Neg_Pos * NonSim_Sim * Closeness_Low_High	2.503	1	2.503	5.566	.020
Error	46.767	104	.450		
Total	1050.544	112			
Corrected Total	68.225	111			

To test implicit egotism, we analyzed interaction and main effect. However, there was no main effect on self-esteem and a significant two-way interaction between self-esteem and sympathy. There was no correlation between self-esteem and other variables. Therefore, we need to consider another scale or reconsider the hypothesis regarding whether implicit egotism plays a role as a moderator.

STUDY 3

Study 3 sought to test the charitable decision from the view of heuristic processing. Previous studies have referred to heuristic processing as cognitively efficient, less deliberate and snap judgment (Chiken, 1980; Gladwell, 2000). Furthermore, people often use this decision making process for economic reasons such as time and effort. Heuristic processing deals with a) the low involvement decision which asks for a small amount of money, and b) limited resources with which to decide something with insufficient time and lack of information about the object. Therefore, this less deliberate thinking process is affected by salient cues such as a feeling of closeness and perceiving similarity with the object. Due to the positive contribution of the salient cue to increasing attraction and getting attention, perceiving similarity is often achieved by incidental similarity such as seeing the same initial as mine. Thus, we posit if a cognitive load is involved in this heuristic process, the feeling of liking towards the person who shares incidental similarity, which, in turn leads to sympathy, may decrease. In the same vein, when time and resources such as more information about solicitors (more than birthdate, name and hometown) are offered, heuristic persuasion may diminish. To support this argument, we designed a study as follows.

Method

Participants: In this study, 110 students attending a variety of undergraduate business courses at a large, public Midwestern university volunteered to participate in a 30 minute experimental task. Each participant received extra credit for course work.

Stimuli: 2 (incidental similarity: similar vs. dissimilar) *2 conditions (efforts: high vs. low) were randomly assigned to participants. As a stimulus, an appeal letter from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) was used to manipulate the participants. In

the similar condition, by employing perspective taking, participants were instructed to assume that parents in the message who lost their child because of a defective children's product had surprisingly much in common with them. As personal cues, the same first name initial, the same hometown and even the same eye color were presented in the instruction.
The difference between the high effort and low effort condition was the high effort condition contained only a long passage without a picture of the child (named Danny in the appeal) and the low effort condition contained only a short summary sentence with a picture of Danny. The purpose of the use of different manipulations here was to explore how much effort people invest in understanding a lengthy passage without a visual image. Moreover, we wanted to explore how the picture and summary of the passage decreased the time and effort needed to process the given information.

Procedure: For the manipulation check, participants first defined high effort versus low effort. After completing the self-report mental questionnaire, their cognitive ability was measured based on the Need for Cognition Scale (NFC; Cacioppo and Petty, 1982) short form. After completing the NFC measure, subjects were asked to read the assigned message from the Consumer Product Safety Commission and then they were measured for similarity, sympathy, self –report of effort and time decision, charitable attitude and amount of donation, respectively.

Dependent Variable:

- Sympathy toward the person in the donation appeal message
- Attitude towards the message - Amount of money to donate

Independent Variable:

- Time of decision
- Self report of mental effort and time decision

Measures: 1) Sympathy: Three subscales of a multidimensional measure of sympathy (Davis, 1983) were used to examine perspective taking (e.g., “I try to look at everybody’s side of a disagreement before I make a decision”; 7 items, Cronbach’s α = 0.82), empathic concern, hereafter referred to as sympathy (e.g., “I am often quite touched by things that I see happen”; 7 items, Cronbach’s α = 0.75) and personal distress (e.g., “In emergency situations, I feel anxious and ill-at-ease”; 7 items, Cronbach’s α = 0.78). Participants were asked to rate how well each item described them on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (does not describe me well) to 5 (describes me very well). This measurement is most used to evaluate a person’s sympathy and empathy. Because of robust reliability (from the Cronbahc’s alpha presented above) and internal consistency between items, this scale is most appropriate for this current study.

2) Need for Cognition: The concept of need for cognition can explain why some individuals like to engage in complex, inquisitive, and analytical thoughts. They feel intrinsically motivated to devote effort to cognitive endeavors, striving to understand objects, events, and individuals. These individuals are less inclined to be biased by superficial factors such as the appearance of speakers or social comparison. Given the definition of need for cognition, the current dissertation used this scale to measure if people who appeared to have a high need for cognition tended to be different from people who scored low in need for cognition. In addition to NFC, we also measured self-report time decision to complete the task (e.g., self-report of speed of thoughts while they were reading the passage and self-report of fast reader or not) and effort (e.g., While reading the message, I had to put in more thought

to understand the situation.). Lastly, individual difference of knowledge and experience about a charity behavior was measured.

Results and Discussion

A review of Figure 7: As predicted, participants who were primed with incidental similarity and the low effort condition had a higher degree of sympathy and also greater willingness to donate (M = $4 out of $5) than people who were primed with incidental similarity and the high effort condition

(M = $3.5 out of $5). It indicates that when people think more and invest more effort in making a charitable decision, they feel less sympathy compared to people who rely on heuristic decision making. Since those people do not use heuristic processing in charitable decision making, they are involved in effortful responding.

3.4. Discussion and Conclusion

General Discussion

Summary of Research

We began this study with a plan to contribute to the existing literature in the area of incidental similarity and charitable behavior. Past research on this topic found that consumers who perceive incidental similarity to solicitors who ask for monetary donations would be more likely to have a favorable attitude toward the solicitor, and to donate actual money (Chandler et al., 2008; Gueguen et al. 2005; Harris & Huang, 1973, Harris & Klingbeil, 1976). We also used heuristic processing as a persuasive to determine the effect that the charitable decision making process – whether a person is experiencing shared similarity to a

solicitor as an incidental and subtle cue – plays a role in how an incidental similarity between solicitor and prospect donor affects charitable behavior.

Over two studies, we confirmed that participants primed with the similar condition (shared first name initial, shared birthdate, shared home state with the person who is in need), who are then presented with a negative scenario (financial damage and physical injuries experienced after misfortune or accident), are more likely to express negative emotions and this emotional response transfers by moderating of the sense of connection, but not selfesteem, compared to those who are similar and positive emotion framed and the dissimilar condition. This was supported when participants perceived incidental similarities with solicitors when they were asked to donate; their sympathy increased, and in turn, they tended to have more willingness to donate to the solicitors.

We demonstrated this phenomenon based on the heuristic decision making theory because people usually do not invest too much time and thought to make a small donation when they are asked to help by a charity. They rely heavily on heuristic processing to make a charitable decision based on information given by the solicitor (e.g., name of the charity and donation amount requested by the charity). In Study 3, we explored that people who perceive incidental similarity with low effort have a higher degree of sympathy and greater willingness to donate. As a result, we can suggest that when people think more and put more effort (e.g., time and knowledge) into processing the donation request, they feel a lower level of sympathy than people who accelerate their charitable decision making based on heuristic cues like perceived similarity to the solicitor and closeness to the requester. Since those people who invest more effort or appear high in need for cognition do not use heuristic processing in the charitable giving decision, they are involved in effortful responding. A recent study demonstrated that it is surprisingly effective when fundraisers ask which football team you support or what kind of food you had for lunch before broaching the subject of donation

(Fennis, Janssen, & Vohs, 2009). Fennis et al. (2009) found that questions that seem like polite chitchat actually soften you up for the pitch and the friendly initial questions deplete the self-control resources that are needed to resist an unwanted influence attempt. And this strategy succeeds at increasing donations. When the requests entail attraction/similarity, listeners get softened up and essentially yield to the request of the people requesting a donation.

Limitation and Directions for Future Research

Three studies were conducted with student samples. Some people argue that these student participants might generate biased sampling and fail to support this current study. According to a new report by the Charities Aid Foundation (2010), more than half of all donations to charity are from the over 60s and the findings show over 60s are also twice as likely to give to charity as those aged under 30. In 2010, 32 % of over 60s had donated, compared to 16% of the under 30s. Given the difference by age, generalization of sampling will be considered in the future. Researchers should consider a group more interested in the charity context and showing active charitable behavior. However, although the older generation donates more than the young generation, they might not be experienced in the use of computer mediated communication, which was used as the medium of the current study.

Aside from donation by age, the current study has the limitation of congruency of identity. Throughout the three studies, we used pictures of children and the messages asked participants to imagine situations of children and the parents of the children. Some participants stated that they were experiencing difficulty imagining the unfortunate situation of the child, although they followed the perspective taking instructions. Since the participants of the current study were college students and they did not have children, the stimuli, which

targeted families, might fail to generate the participants' attention and help them to understand the stimuli. Researchers should consider the identity congruence of the recipient and the charitable appeal and promotions.

Furthermore, some questionnaires were evaluated by self-report. In particular, in the study 3, the participants were asked to self-report their cognitive ability and mental effort. Those answers regarding to intelligence or cognition, participants may overstate or exaggerate; various biases may affect the result, like social desirability bias. With the social desirability issue, this self-report measurement might need to be reconstructed with wellestablished measurement scales.

For study 2, I used limited stimuli such as the initials of the first and last name. However, a great number of nonprofit organizations assist people who are living in the developing countries such as Southeast Asia, South America and Africa. These solicitors have different donor names. For example, India has different phonetics and syntaxes in their several languages compared to America. Therefore, some names might not even be pronounced and read as well. Thus, in this different cultural context, sharing the same initial for first name may not offer any perceived similarity. Research about similarity in different cultures and languages is greatly important for the future.

Future studies using this framework might extend to field study. By collecting field data outside of lab controlled experiment and examining the validity in the field (e.g., collaboration with local nonprofit organization to create charitable email letter to prospective donors). Despite the small pool of donors in Asia, public awareness of donation and the amount of donation have been increasing among the rich in the emerging Asian market. Therefore, this study might extend to cultural research to determine the difference between individualist and collectivist cultures in regards to charitable behavior.

Implications

Donation appeal for charities often display emotions of the people they help to evoke the kind of sympathy that engenders giving. This article examines how the expression of emotion in a victim's story affects both sympathy and giving by moderating incidental similarity. Therefore, the marketer and the advertisement of a charity should consider how they evoke emotions to lead sympathy and giving by finding salient cues. Furthermore, people who consider donation as heuristic process, providing convenience such as speed and easy process of donation may be a priority. However, for people who consider donation as a systematic process, offering detailed information and statistics which engender their mental effort to help them decide on giving may be a good strategy.

CHAPTER 4

Essay 2: A Review of Social Media as a Marketing Tool for Charity: Self-Presentation and Charitable Behavior in Social Media

Facebook is really about communicating and telling stories.
We think that people can really help spread awareness of organ donation and that they want to participate in this to their friends.
And that can be a big part of helping solve the crisis that's out there.

Mark Zuckerberg

This chapter continues with the conceptual framework, reviewing and drawing upon the literature on social media, self-presentation and impression management and how charities use social media as a marketing tool.

4.1. Social Media

Social networking sites in particular refer to "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bonded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (Boyd and Ellison, 2008, p. 211). Common features of social media are that it allows individuals to present themselves, establish connections with others and articulate their social networks. People use social media for different purposes: work-related contexts (e.g., LinkedIn.com), social networking (e.g., Facebook), sharing pictures (e.g., Instagram), content community (e.g., Youtube), collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia), and microblog (e.g., Tweeter). Pew research (2010)

explores that people join in social media for a variety of reasons: 1) to stay in touch with friends, 2) to make plans with friends, 3) to make new friends, or to flirt with someone (Lenhart and Madden, 2007). Ridings and Gefen (2004) discovered psychological motivations for social media use and the reasons include feelings of affiliation and belonging, need for information, goal achievement, self-identity, values, and notions of accepted behavior.

For Essay 2, we provide a review of relevant literature on self-presentation in social media and the aim of the study is to understand how it can lead individuals to do good deeds in the context of charitable behavior. We build on the individual’s motivation for social media use for connection and belonging to others. Therefore, we are particularly interested in reviewing the need to belong among a variety of reasons for social media use.

Baumeister and Leary (1995) note that people need to be loved and socially accepted. They refer to the phenomenon as the need to belong. This need to belong among humans is a “fundamental human motivation that is something all human beings possess… to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships” (Baumeister and Leary 1995, p. 497). Social media offer a platform in which people can address this need to belong by using services provided by the sites that enable gathering information, conversations, expressing opinions, influencing others and the possibility of gaining social approval (Gangadharbatla, 2008). Thus, it is important to understand that the need to belong is the fundamental drive to form and maintain relationships and a major motivator for social media use. Social media can be an effective platform for coping with feelings of social disconnection (Sheldon, Abad, & Hirsch, 2011), as it enables relationship development and peer acceptance (Yn, Tjan, Vogel, & Kwok, 2010) and boosts self-esteem (Gonzales and Hancock, 2011).

4.2. Self-Presentation and Impression Management on Social Media

We often hear and use the phrase “We are what we eat” and “We are what we wear” The series of “we are (e.g., we are what we eat, we are what we quote and we are what we wear”) phrases tells “who you are”. As Tuan notes, “Our fragile sense of self needs support, and this we get by having and possessing things because, to a large degree, we are what we have and possess” (1980, p. 472). Scholars of human social behavior across disciplines have theoretically asserted that we are what we have (e.g., Feirstein 1986; Rosenbaum 1972; Van Esterick 1986) and people regard their possessions as part of themselves (Belk, 1988). Through consumption, people tend to define and express themselves. Consumption has enough of an influence our lives that it becomes part of our identities. Consumers make their identity self-present by associating themselves with products and brands. With the rise of social media, consumers can present themselves using digital rather than physical possessions.

If “we are what we have”, does it apply that “we are what we post” (Schau and Gilly, 2003)? Consumers construct identities by digitally associating themselves with posting information, pictures and interests in the social networking sites (SNS). This dissertation builds on the individual’s self-presentation to determine how it can impact charitable behavior in the social media context.

One of the most notable theories of researchers on social networking sites is the selfpresentation and impression management theory. To conceptualize self-presentation in social media, this dissertation builds on Goffman’s (1959) theories of identity and social performance. The self-presentation theory is used to understand how people present themselves to other people. The literature on consumption and identity has demonstrated that products represent our identities by the meaning attached to them. That is, we use products symbolizing certain qualities to send the message to others. In the same vein, when we are

making judgments about another person's identity, those judgments can be influenced by what that person Tweets, what pictures the person uploads to Facebook and what message the person posts on someone's Facebook wall. For example, a woman uploads a picture of her driving a luxury car to her social media account and she is intentionally trying to communicate success with the possession. Goffman (1959) defines self-presentation as an intentional and tangible component of identity. When people encounter others face-to-face, communicate on the phone or through the Internet, they are utilizing some form of selfpresentation. People want others to see them a certain way and use any attempts to persuade their audience that this is who they really are. Goffman (1959) notes that every person is like an actor on stage that is acting the part they want the audience to believe is the real them but off stage this is not their exact person. He terms it "social actor" and the social actors engage in complicated intraself negotiations to present a desired impression. Therefore, it is important to understand that each individual has a presenting self, which is the public image that they allow others to see. Alder and Town (1996) describe the presenting self that individuals attempt to show as a socially approved image such as a hard worker, a community volunteer, a successful businessman.

Goffman (1959) terms an individual's tendency to maintain a desired impression to others as impression management. People want to be liked and accepted and to be perceived as skilled, qualified and competent (Trammel & Keshelashvilk, 2005). Using the Internet, people are able to gain followers, which helps them to feel competent and liked. When people share their informative posting or pictures of their accomplishments on their social media, followers (e.g., Tweeter) or friends (e.g., Facebook and Instagram: picture sharing social networking site) compliment the postings or pictures and they begin to feel competent and qualified.

Social networking sites are becoming the dominant form of communication among

Internet users. Despite the relatively short history of SNS, a great deal of research has examined social media. The emerging research topic in the area is understanding motivations for social media use how people use social networks to fulfil a variety of social needs, including self-expression, affiliation, and self-presentation (Back et al., 2010; Gosling et al., 2007). Valkenburg et al. (2006) explored how, when people receive positive feedback on their social media postings (including pictures), it enhances their self-esteem and well-being. Based on self-presentation and impression management, this study will extend to investigate how people use social media to do good deeds in the context of charitable behavior through a series of experiments. Given that an individual is motivated by connection and belonging to others in the public forum, social media, he values how positively friends in the list view him. To maintain the desired self-impression and receive positive feedback in their social ties, people tend to show their charitable activity. Next, we review how charities utilize SNS to help raise peoples' awareness of donations and further help them make charitable donations.

4.3. How Charities Use Social Media to Promote Their Business

4.3.1 Donor Behavior on Social Media

People's charitable behavior has been studied extensively over the last decades. Charitable behaviors, along with charitable motivations, were discussed in Chapter 1 in this dissertation. Despite a great deal of research on charitable behavior, the answer to the question of how charitable behavior affects other people is not quite clear. Recent study on the effect of other donor presence investigates how visible donations for the public good in transparent boxes have affected the people walking by the boxes (Martin and Randall, 2007). The finding of the study was non-empty boxes generate higher average donations by people walking by the boxes. Martin and Randall explore that the social norms drive more people's charitable behavior than altruism or motive to reciprocate. A series of studies on donation has investigated that people tend to contribute more or less the amount of money that other people had donated before and nothing if it seemed that others had not done that, either. Keeping this in mind, charitable organizations may try to activate new and old donors to tell about their donations to their networks and possibly also the amount they donated. Given the importance of knowing the donation amount of others, it compels individuals' friends to do the same.

4.3.2 Charitable Organization's Use of Social Media

Many NPOs have already realized social media's possibilities for fundraising. The American Red Cross was able to collect more than 35 million U.S. dollars for Haiti's earthquake victims in less than 48 hours, including 8 million dollars from text messages (Lassila, 2010). According to spokeswoman Huang (2010), Twitter played an extremely important role in this donation campaign that surpassed even the donation given to hurricane Katrina or the Japanese tsunami. Twitter also activated their pool of 30 celebrities, which in

turn had a huge fan base in Twitter. Those celebrities started tweeting and their followers retweeting the message on. People were not only re-tweeting, but actually donating also. By tweeting “I just donated $10 for Haiti’ or tagging it, it becomes an effective and suitable way to help, which leads other people to pay attention to the message and tend to donate.

In addition to sending messages for donations in Twitter and Facebook, Facebook offers a variety of applications that can utilize charitable behavior. The most well-known application for fundraising purposes is called Causes. Causes enables organizations to directly raise funds with the help of the application.

Threatt (2009) explores that creating events, posting videos and starting groups in social media are highly effective features or application for organizations to use in order to reach their goals set for marketing.

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Figure 1:

Similarity as a Donation Heuristic Model

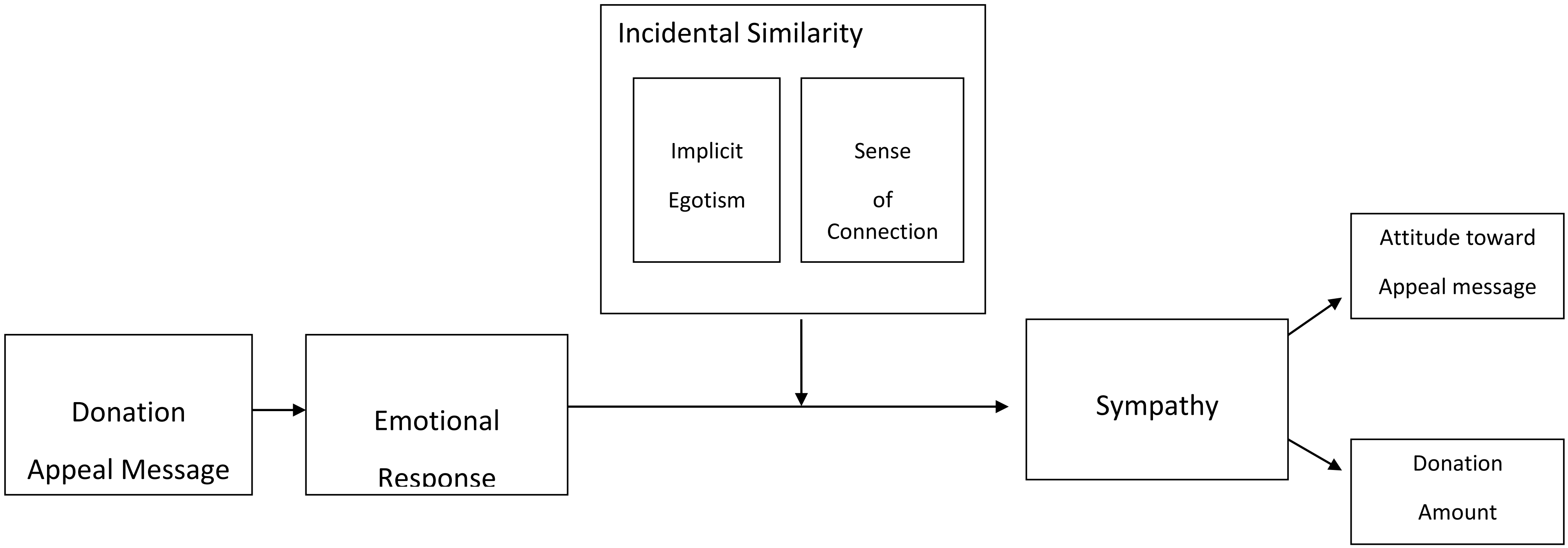


Figure 2

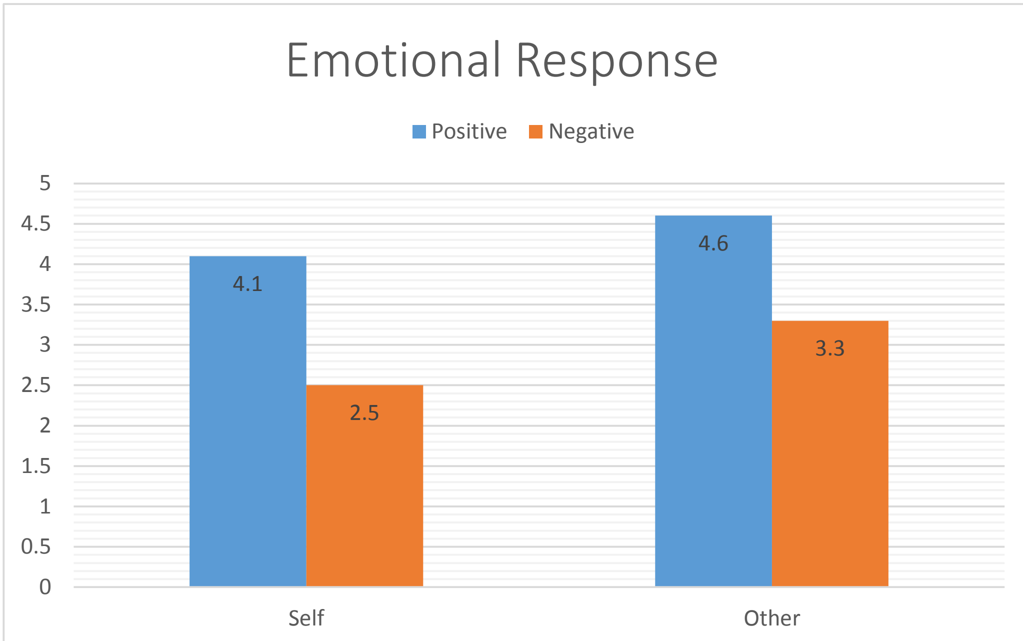


Figure 3

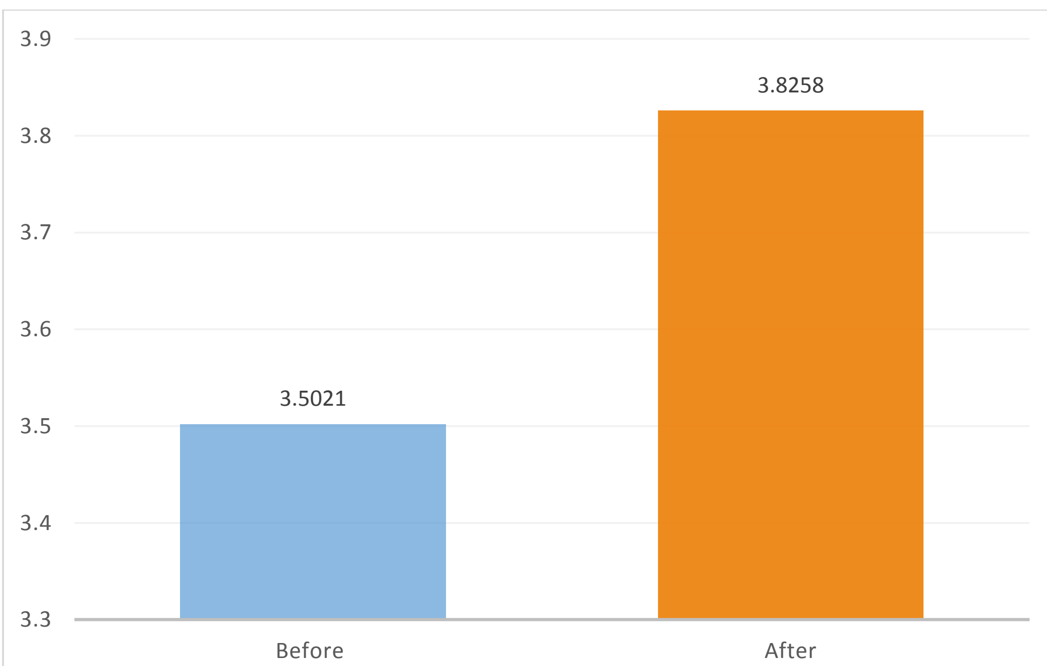


Figure 4: Similar * Positive Condition

When the economy goes bad, it is poor children who suffer the most. "Seven-year-old (Born on May 5th, 2005) **L**" (First Name Initial: privacy protection) ran away from a bad home situation and is living in rural Wisconsin. He gets food by eating from dumpsters. But now "**L**" has found a happy life again after receiving financial aid and food from the *Feeding Hungry Children Organization in* Wisconsin. Imagine the happiness and security that "**L**" regained. There are many children who are struggling with misfortune. With someone's help, unfortunate children can have an opportunity for a bright future.

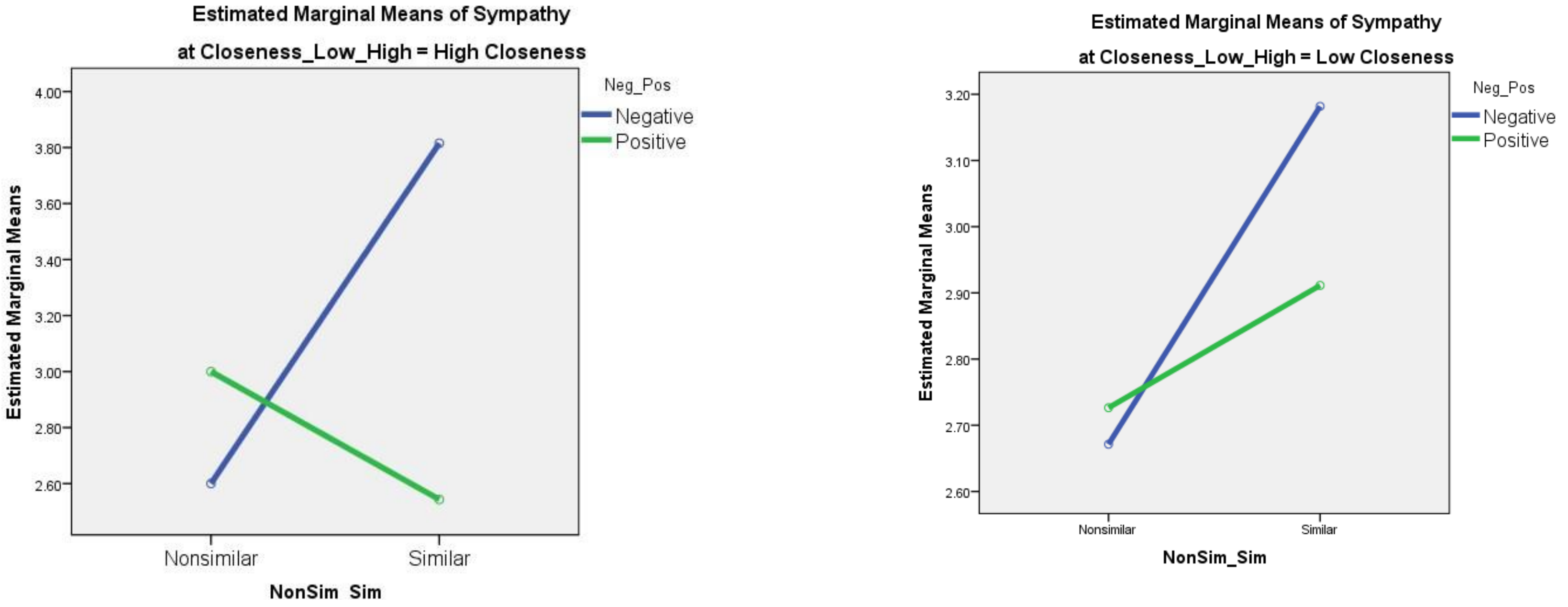
A picture of "**L**" taken by a staff member of *Feeding Hungry Children Organization.*

Figure 5: Similar * Negative Condition

When the economy goes bad, it is poor children who suffer the most. "Seven-year-old (Born on 07/08, 2005) **S**" (First Name Initial: privacy protection) ran away from a bad home situation and is living in rural Wisconsin. He gets food by eating from dumpsters. Hunger and sever malnutrition is now a fact of life for him. Last year, *Feeding Hungry Children Organization* made sure "**S**" received nutritious meals at least three times a week, but cutbacks in charitable giving have meant that *Feeding Hungry Children Organization* can no longer afford to reach "**S**" and other children like him in rural areas of Wisconsin. "**S**" feels sad and depressed because he has no longer received any aid from *Feeding Hungry Children Organization*. He desperately needs help. Without someone's help to *Feeding Hungry Children Organization*, an unfortunate child will remain living in the dark.

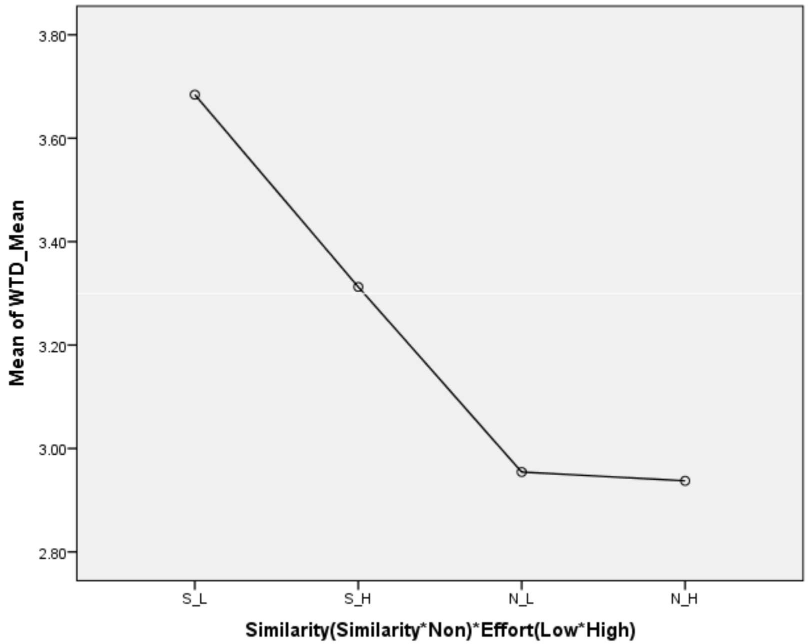
A picture of **"S"** taken by a staff member of *Feeding Hungry Children Organization*.

Figure 6



Estimated Marginal Means of Sympathy
at Closeness_Low_High = High Closeness
Estimated Marginal Means
4.00
3.80
3.60
3.40
3.20
3.00
2.80
2.60
Nonsimilar
Similar
NonSim_Sim
Neg_Pos
Negative
Positive
Estimated Marginal Means of Sympathy
at Closeness_Low_High = Low Closeness
Estimated Marginal Means
3.20
3.10
3.00
2.90
2.80
2.70
2.60
Nonsimilar
Similar
NonSim_Sim
Neg_Pos
Negative
Positive

Figure 7


3.80
3.60
3.40
3.20
3.00
2.80
Mean of WTD_Mean
S_L
S_H
N_L
N_H
Similarity(Similarity*Non)*Effort(Low*High)

APPENDIX A

Stimuli for Study 1

Version A (negatively-framed appeal with other focus condition)

Joe had lost his vision while using a “weed-eater” to trim grass in his yard without the aid of protective goggles. He is described as being unable to work, without insurance, and unable to pay the accumulated $250,000 in medical bills. He feels sad because he can’t see his family anymore. His wife and two daughters desperately need help. Joe’s wife starts to work at local restaurant as waitress, but her salary is still short of living expenses for Joe’s family.

Version B (positively-framed appeal with other focus condition)

After unexpected accident, Joe lost his vision. As a result, he lost his job and couldn’t make money. But now he and his family finds happy life again after receiving financial aid from name of organization. Imagine the pride and confidence that Joe retook. There are many of Joe who struggling with misfortune. You can be their friends by participation of our community.

Messages used for self-condition were very similar except instruction to take a perspective victim (solicitor)’s situation as participant him/herself. Instruction took a lead to imagine participant him/herself in to the same misfortune circumstance.

APPENDIX B Message Response Sympathy Scale (Escalas and Stern, 2003)

1. Based on what was happening the message, I understood what the person was feeling
2. Based on what was happening in the message, I understood what was bothering the person
3. While reading the message, I tried to understand the events as the person occurred
4. While reading the message, I tried to understand the persons' motivation
5. 5. I was able to recognize the problems that the person in the message

APPENDIX C

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

The scale is a ten item Likert scale with items answered on a four point scale - from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The original sample for which the scale was developed consisted of 5,024 High School Juniors and Seniors from 10 randomly selected schools in New York State.

Instructions: Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you strongly agree, circle **SA**. If you agree with the statement, circle **A**. If you disagree, circle **D**. If you strongly disagree, circle **SD**.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	SA A DSD
2.* At times, I think I am no good at all.	SA A D SD
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	SA A D SD
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	SA A D SD
5.* I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	SA A D SD
6.* I certainly feel useless at times.	SA A D SD
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	SA A D SD
8.* I wish I could have more respect for myself.	SA A D SD
9.* All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	SA A D SD
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	SA A D SD

Scoring: SA=3, A=2, D=1, SD=0. Items with an asterisk are reverse scored, that is, SA=0, A=1, D=2, SD=3. Sum the scores for the 10 items. The higher the score, the higher the self-esteem.

APPENDIX D

Lee and Robin Social Connectedness Scale (SCS, 1995)

1. I feel disconnected from the world around me.
2. Even around people I know, I don’t feel that I really belong.
3. I feel so distant from people.
4. I have no sense of togetherness with my peers.
5. I don’t feel related to anyone.
6. I catch myself to losing all sense of connectedness with society.
7. Even among my friend, there is no sense of brother/sisterhood
8. I don’t feel I participate with anyone or any group

APPENDIX E

Short Form of the Need for Cognition Scale

Instructions: For each of the statements below, please indicate to what extent the statement is characteristic of you. If the statement is extremely uncharacteristic of you (not at all like you) please write a "1" to the left of the question; if the statement is extremely characteristic of you (very much like you) please write a "5" next to the question. Of course, a statement may be neither extremely uncharacteristic nor extremely characteristic of you; if so, please use the number in the middle of the scale that describes the best fit. Please keep the following scale in mind as you rate each of the statements below: 1 = extremely uncharacteristic; 2 = somewhat uncharacteristic; 3 = uncertain; 4 = somewhat characteristic; 5 = extremely characteristic.

1. I would prefer complex to simple problems.
2. I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.
3. Thinking is not my idea of fun. a
4. I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities?
5. I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance I will have to think indepth about something."
6. I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.
7. I only think as hard as 1 have to. a
8. I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long-term ones?
9. I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them?
10. The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me.

1 I. I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.

12. Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much?
13. I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.
14. The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.
15. I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.
16. 1 feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort?
17. It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works?

18. I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.

Note. From "'The Efficient Assessment of Need for Cognition," by J. T. Cacioppo, R. E. Petty, and C. F. Kao, 1984, *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *48*, pp. 306-307. Copyright 1984 by Lawrence Erlbaum. The number of response options on the scales used across studies has typically ranged from five to nine, and the labels for these response options have varied from agreement—disagreement to extremely uncharacteristic-extremely characteristic. Although these variations across studies may influence the total scores obtained, they have not had dramatic effects on the relationships between interindividual variations in need for cognition and other variables in a given study.

a Reverse scored.

Jihye Lee

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Jihye Lee, Laura Peracchio and Xiaojing Yang, "I Help People Similar to Me: The Role of Incidental Similarity on Heuristic Processing of Donations," Revising for resubmission at *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*

Jihye Lee, Laura Peracchio and Xiaojing Yang (October, 2013), "I Donate to Where My Friend's Helping: The Role of Incidental Similarity on Heuristic Processing of Donation in Nonprofit Social Media," *The Proceedings of AMA Educators' Conference*

Jihye Lee, Laura Peracchio and Xiaojing Yang (June, 2013), "The Role of Incidental Similarity on Heuristic Processing of Donations in Nonprofit Social Media," *The Proceedings of Association of Public & Non Profit Marketing Conference Proceedings.*

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPERATION (See appendix for selected abstract)

Tingting He and Jihye Lee, "Assimilation and Contrast Effect on Understanding Expiration Dates of Perishable Food," Manuscripts in Preparation and Submit by May, 2014 for Target: *Psychology and Marketing*

Jihye Lee and Massimiliano (Max) Ostinelli, "Does Mental Simulation Always Help?: Imagine Yourself in the Situation of Victim vs. Helper," Manuscripts in Preparation and Submit by August, 2014 for Target: *Journal of Consumer Psychology*

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Marketing Management, Summer 12	Enrollment: 30	Mean teaching evaluation: 4.5/5
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