

Pulling on the Heartstrings: Examining the Effects of Emotions and Gender in Persuasive Appeals

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Charities and nonprofits often solicit donations from private individuals. These organizations may use persuasive appeals that contain emotional content to encourage individuals to render their support. Research in consumer behavior has established a link between emotional persuasive appeals and prosocial behavior. In three experiments, this research examines the efficacy of two common emotions—pride and sympathy—in charitable appeals. Biological sex and gender roles are examined as potential moderators of emotion. In addition, a classification for donors based on the motives they may have for engaging in prosocial behaviors is suggested. Strategies for segmentation and targeting individuals with specific emotional appeals are illuminated.

Charities and nonprofits that are dedicated to mitigating or eliminating social problems often solicit donations from private individuals. In 2011, Americans donated more than \$346 billion to charitable organizations, both domestically and globally (Atlas of Giving 2012). Charitable organizations may use persuasive appeals that contain emotional content to encourage individuals to render their support. Research in the behavioral literatures has established a link between emotional persuasive appeals and prosocial behavior (Bagozzi and Moore 1994). Specifically, researchers have suggested that individuals primed with emotions may be more likely to donate their money and/or time (Batson et al. 1997).

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However, studies within the advertising and consumer behavior literature that have examined the effect of emotional appeals in charitable giving are limited in number (Bagozzi and Moore 1994; Brunel and Nelson 2000; Griffin et al. 1993). In a review of the literature, Bendapudi, Singh, and Bendapudi (1996) found only 27 studies on charitable giving and nonprofit marketing. A smaller portion examined the effects of emotional appeals in advertisements encouraging charitable giving behavior. More recent research on charitable appeals has studied the influence of culture, gender, and psychological processes on giving (Batson 2006; Batson et al. 2003; Brunel and Nelson 2000; Small and Simonsohn 2008; Small and Verrochi 2009; Wang 2008; Winterich, Mittal, and Ross 2009).

Some of the existing studies in the domain have found a positive relationship between negative emotions and prosocial behavior (Cialdini and Fultz 1990; Wang 2008). As a result, marketers have commonly used persuasive messages that induce sympathy in charitable appeals because sympathy is a negatively valenced emotion that elicits concern for others (Bagozzi and Moore 1994; Coke, Batson, and McDavis, 1978; Small and Simonsohn 2008). However, positively valenced emotions such as pride, an emotion which is related to goal attainment and progress, might also be effective in encouraging altruistic behavior. Giving to charitable causes might be a means through which individuals express their values and beliefs; contributing to such entities might therefore give an individual a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Further, the effect of such emotions might differ in accordance with an individual's gender, as research has demonstrated that many attitudinal differences and roles are manifestations of gender (Deaux et al. 1995). One way to conceptualize such differences is through socially constructed masculine and feminine dimensions. For example, women use language to make connections and reinforce intimacies, whereas men use language to protect their independence and assign status (Brunel and Nelson 2000). Advertisements aimed at women often reflect external or "other" claims; messages targeted at men tend to use simple, ego

gratification claims (Brunel and Nelson 2000; Eisenberg 1986). Therefore, to maximize impact, persuasive messages encouraging giving that use emotional appeals might consider how such emotional content differentially impacts individuals depending on gender.

The purpose of the present research is to examine the efficacy of two common emotions—pride and sympathy—and how along with gender (male/female), these emotions encourage individuals to engage in prosocial behavior. Emotion theorists have cited pride and sympathy as basic human emotions; consumer research has deemed them to be emotions experienced frequently during the consumption process (Richins 1997). In addition, this research suggests a classification for donors based on the motives they may have for engaging in prosocial behaviors. Strategies for segmentation and targeting individuals with specific emotional appeals are illuminated.

STUDY 1: EMOTIONS AND GENDER

Emotions play an important role in the formation of attitudes and judgments about advertisements and messages (Edell and Burke 1987; Royo-Vela 2005; Faseur et al. 2006). Researchers have found that different emotions such as sympathy, sadness, pride, and anger result in distinct meaning and appraisals of an individual's environment and thus may have unique motivational implications on choice and decision making (Lerner and Keltner 2000). Further, emotions have been found to have adaptive and functional significance in human survival (Izard 1977; Plutchik 1980). They can elicit action tendencies or states of readiness (Frijda 1986). However, not only may specific emotions result in distinct motivational influences but the impact and the experience of these emotions may differ depending on one's gender.

Much of the psychology literature has established that women experience emotions more strongly than men and are also more expressive of their emotions (Fujita, Diener, and Sandvik 1991; Krings and Gordon 1998). For example, Fujita, Diener, and Sandvik (1991) found that women display more affect intensity than men. Affect intensity refers to the strength or intensity with which one responds to a given level of emotion (Larsen and Diener 1987). Further, extant research has demonstrated that women score higher on negatively valenced emotional measures than men do (Grossman and Wood 1993). This may in part be due to the propensity of women to be more expressive of their emotions than men (Brody and Hall 1993).

Gender may impact the way in which individuals respond to emotional stimuli in persuasive appeals (Eisenberg 1986). Wang (2008) found that females showed more favorable attitudes toward helping when exposed to sad emotional appeals. Other studies suggest that women decode negative emotional messages more accurately than neutral or positive emotional messages (Callan and Gallois 1986). Further, women have been found to be more greatly affected by sympathetic emotional reactions than men when judging whether to help a needy stranger (Griffin et al. 1993; Hoffman 1977; Hope and Jackson 1988).

Thus, extant research provides some evidence that emotion-congruency effects may occur with gender in some contexts, with a specific emotion eliciting greater response from one gender than the other. Such differences would be consistent with the many attitudinal and role distinctions that are manifestations of gender. Starting from early childhood, shared expectation and meaning regarding gender-appropriate behaviors influence learned experiences and gender identity (Bem 1974; Deaux et al. 1995). In Western culture, males may be socialized to be concerned with assertiveness, control, and a focus on the self (Bakan 1966; Winterich, Mittal, and Ross 2009). They may also learn to be more aggressive. In contrast, women may be socialized with more communal dimensions that promote concern for caring, nurturing, and expression (Eagly and Wood 1991).

Research has found that males and females do not differ in their propensity to engage in general helping behaviors (Eagly and Crowley 1986). However, studies have found the female role encourages helping that is more nurturing, caring, and responsive to the feelings of others, which may manifest in charitable giving behavior (Griffin et al. 1993; Markus and Oyserman 1989; Wang 2008). On the contrary, research suggests that male roles may engender helping behavior that is more heroic and chivalrous in nature—behavior indicative of engaging in risks to save others from harm (Thompson, Robinson, and Kenny 2003). Based on the proclivities of females and males with respect to their responses to specific emotions—as well as the characteristics they exhibit regarding prosocial behavior—sympathy, an emotion “concerned with others,” and pride, an emotion that exemplifies “achievement and attainment,” were chosen for investigation to ascertain how they might interact with gender in the context of charitable giving. A discussion of these two discrete emotions follows.

Target Emotions

Sympathy

Sympathy is an emotion that encompasses “concern for others” (Wispé 1986). It involves a heightened awareness for another person's state or circumstances (Batson et al. 1997). Sympathy is consistent with the need for unity, harmony, and the alignment of one's actions with those of another (Triandis 1994). It promotes attention to the needs of the weak and suffering. The link between sympathy and prosocial behavior is well established (Bagozzi and Moore 1994; Batson et al. 1997).

Empathy has also been examined with respect to helping behavior (Batson et al. 1997). Sympathy and empathy are often used interchangeably, but their meanings are distinct. Empathy involves experiencing the feelings felt by another person. It involves a process by which a person tries to accurately understand the plight of another person through perspective taking (Davis 1980; Wispé 1986). Sympathy, in contrast, refers to the process whereby the pain of the sufferer is made more apparent to the observer, leading to an unselfish concern for the other person.

People who have personal experiences with a particular misfortune may be more sympathetic toward other victims of the same misfortune, which in turn influences their donation and volunteering choices (Small and Simonsohn 2008). Sympathy tends to involve others' feelings or attributes as a primary referent, fostering feelings of affiliation and connectedness. Sympathy is closely linked to caretaking (Oveis, Horberg, and Keltner 2010).

Pride

Pride is an emotion that is experienced following a positive evaluation of one's competence or effort in achieving a goal (Weiner 1986). It is associated with self-achievement and autonomy and involves favorable personal attributes as a primary referent (Aaker and Williams 1998). Research suggests that pride may expand an individual's scope of attention and broaden his or her action tendencies by driving them toward greater achievements in the future (Fredrickson 2001; Louro, Pieters, and Zeelenberg 2005). In the context of prosocial behavior, pride for an organization, entity, or cause may motivate and drive individuals to such a degree that the individual is willing to help the organization, entity, or cause reach greater levels of attainment.

Sympathy and pride are two discrete emotions that generate differing appraisals as well as motivational forces in the individual. Such key distinctions may be directly related to gender. Specifically, because certain traits may manifest in males and females due to the expectations imposed by society, emotional appeals that align with an individual's gender might be more effectively used to target one gender over the other. Because some men may be socialized to develop traits that manifest agency (achievement and control) and are more likely to engage in helping behavior of a more heroic nature, emotional appeals that induce pride and achievement might be more effective in activating behavior. Moreover, because some females are encouraged to develop traits that manifest communal or caring behavior and may be more likely to engage in helping behavior involving nurturing, emotionally persuasive content which invokes sympathy might be more effective in stimulating behavior.

Subsequently, in the context of emotional appeals and their impact on charitable giving behavior, it is proposed that persuasive messages eliciting sympathy and pride will be moderated by gender. Specifically, gender is expected to interact with emotional appeal type in the following way:

H1a: When exposed to an emotional appeal eliciting sympathy, women will express greater behavioral intentions to give than men will.

H1b: When exposed to an emotional appeal eliciting pride, men will express greater behavioral intentions to give than women will.

Method

Procedure and Design

To examine the effects of pride, sympathy, and gender on prosocial behavior, a 2 (Emotion: Pride/Sympathy) $\times$ 2

(Gender: Male/Female) between-subjects experiment was conducted. Study participants were 84 nonstudent adults. Participants were garnered by having undergraduate college students in the Austin area recruit nonstudent adults to participate in the study. The students received extra credit in exchange for the participants they recruited. The mean age for participants was 32 (SD = 12.22; range = 20 to 59). The mean income of study participants was \$50,179, and 56% of the sample was male.

Participants were presented with either a message that induced pride or sympathy. The appeal was for an organization known as the SIMS Foundation, which is a nonprofit in Austin, Texas, that provides access to and financial support for mental health and addiction recovery services for Austin-area musicians. Austin has a vibrant live music scene as a result of the large number of musicians that reside in the city. In 1991, it branded itself the "Live Music Capital of the World" (Austin Music Office 2012). All participants in the study resided in Austin.

The following message was used in the pride condition. It includes information about Austin's branding and burgeoning music scene.

Since 1991, Austin has been called "the live music capital of the world." It has over 200 live music venues and nearly 1900 professional musicians reside in the area. Music contributes millions of dollars to the Austin economy. Austin can boast about its fine musicians who enable it to have a world-renown music scene. However, when these musicians experience trying times in their life, they often have limited places to turn to for emotional and mental healthcare.

The sympathy condition made no mention of Austin being the "Live Music Capital of World" but emphasized the unique challenges of the musician.

Musicians contribute a great deal to the city of Austin. However, irregular hours, travel schedules, financial insecurity and proximity to alcohol and drugs can take their toll on musicians and their families, sometimes resulting in depression, anxiety, relationship problems, and alcohol and drug abuse. With the rising cost of living, many musicians find themselves struggling financially and emotionally. When these musicians experience trying times in their life, they often have limited places to turn to for emotional and mental healthcare.

After exposure to the appeal, study participants were asked to indicate the likelihood they would give money to the SIMS Foundation using two items: Not Probable/Probable, Not Likely/Likely ($r = .97$). Both items were measured on a 7-point scale, summed, and then averaged. After completing the dependent measure, participants provided demographic information and responded to manipulation check measures. Specifically, manipulation checks asked participants on a 7-point scale how they felt after reading the message: "The message made me feel proud" and "The message made me feel bad." These questions were anchored by *Very strongly disagree* and *Very strongly agree*.

Results

Results from the manipulation checks indicated there was a main effect for pride ($F(1, 81) = 4.85, p < .05$), with those in the pride condition expressing that they felt more pride ($M = 5.3$) than those in the sympathy condition ($M = 4.6$). Similarly there was a main effect for sympathy ($F(1, 81) = 2.5, p < .05$), with those in the sympathy condition indicating that they felt more sympathy ($M = 4.1$) than those in the pride condition ($M = 3.3$).

An analysis of the data indicated there was an *Emotion* $\times$ *Gender* interaction ($F(1, 79) = 4.46, p < .05$). In the sympathy condition, females expressed greater intentions to give money than males did ($M = 4.4$ and $M = 3.05, p < .05$). This supported the hypothesis 1a prediction. However, there were no significant differences between men ($M = 4.3$) and women ($M = 4.1$) in the pride condition (refer to Figure 1). Nonetheless, a significant main effect did emerge ($F(1, 44) = 6.8, p < .05$): men expressed higher intentions to give in the pride condition than in the sympathy condition ($M = 4.31$ and $M = 3.05$).

Study 1 provides preliminary evidence for how best to target consumer segments for charitable giving. Findings from Study 1 indicate an appeal that induced sympathy was more effective for women than for men. Although significant differences were not achieved between men and women with the appeal that fostered pride, means were in the appropriate direction, with men being more inclined than women to express intentions to give when exposed to the appeal. In addition, a main effect emerged for men in that they expressed greater behavioral intentions to give in the pride condition than the sympathy condition. To ascertain whether both hypothesis 1a and hypothesis 1b would be supported, another study was conducted. In addition, Study 2 provides further insight into how individuals might be targeted in charitable appeals by examining one personality trait, attachment avoidance, which has been shown to influence prosocial behavior.

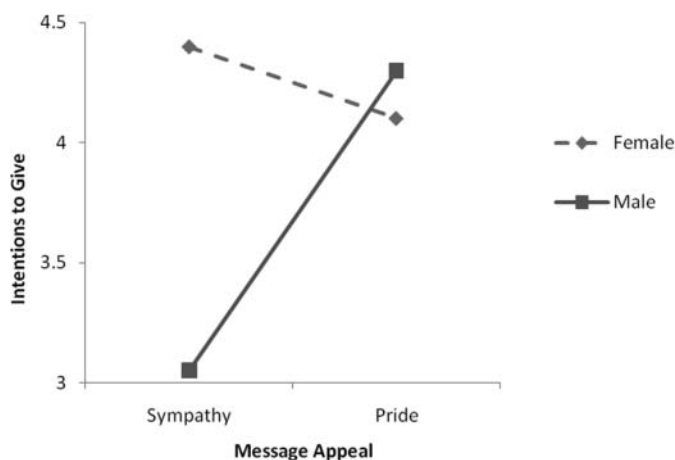


FIG. 1. Study 1: The impact of message appeal and gender on intentions to give.

STUDY 2: EGOISTIC GIVING MOTIVES AND ATTACHMENT THEORY

Evidence indicates that helping behavior is not always directed by other-oriented, altruistic motives but can also be governed by egoistic motives such as enhancing one's mood, relieving distress, and protecting close relationships (Mikulincer et al. 2005). Attachment theory (Bowlby 1969/1982) has been used as a framework for explaining cases in which people endorse egoistic motives for helping.

According to attachment theory, human beings are inherently equipped with attachment and caregiving behavioral systems. The attachment system protects a person from danger by assuring that he or she maintains proximity to caring and supportive others (attachment figures) who offer protection and support during times of adversity (Bowlby 1982; Mikulincer et al. 2005). Individuals may vary in their attachment orientation. Research has suggested that two attachment orientations commonly manifest: attachment-related avoidance and attachment-related anxiety (Brennan, Clark, and Shaver 1998).

The avoidance (or attachment-avoidance) dimension of attachment orientation relates to the extent to which a person distrusts relationships and strives to maintain independence and emotional distance from relationship partners. The anxiety (or attachment anxiety) dimension indicates the degree to which a person worries that a partner will not be available and responsive in times of need. A low score on the avoidance or anxiety dimensions indicates that an individual has a secure attachment style. Attachment security is related to positive self-concept, curiosity and interest in exploration, cognitive openness, as well as relationship commitment and satisfaction (Feeney 2002).

Specifically related to prosocial behavior, attachment insecurities along the attachment-avoidance dimension may cause an individual to endorse egoistic motives for helping (Mikulincer and Shaver 2003). Research has found that avoidant persons who are not able to deal directly with pain and distress tend to engage in defensive maneuvers to generate and maintain positive mood while protecting or enhancing self-esteem (Mikulincer and Shaver 2003). Helping others is viewed as one possible route for such individual to feel better about themselves. When such an outcome is salient, they are eager to help (Mikulincer et al. 2005).

As indicated previously, many emotional appeals attempt to invoke sympathy to encourage helping behavior. Individuals expressing sympathy for a person in need are especially motivated to gain the rewards of vicarious joy (Batson et al. 1991). In the context of the present research, it is proposed that the attachment-avoidance orientation will interact with emotional appeal type. Individuals who are high in attachment-avoidance insecurities will be more inclined to express intentions to donate money to charitable causes when subjected to an emotional appeal that induces sympathy. As the literature suggests, these individuals may have egoistic motives for giving. It is expected that in the sympathy appeal intentions will be more pronounced than for the pride appeal because sympathy is a negatively

valenced emotion and affect regulation motives might therefore be more salient. Previous research has found no relationship between gender and attachment avoidance (Izhaki and Schul 2011), so no interactions between gender and attachment avoidance are expected. However, the following is hypothesized:

H2: High-avoidant-attachment individuals will express greater behavioral intentions to give money when exposed to an emotional appeal that induces sympathy than will low-avoidant-attachment individuals. The differences for high- and low-avoidant individuals will be less pronounced for the emotional appeal that elicits pride.

Method

Procedure and Design

Study 2 was a 2 (Emotion: Pride/Sympathy) $\times$ 2 (Gender: Male/Female) $\times$ 2 (Attachment Avoidance: Low/High) between-subjects experiment. Similar to Study 1, participants were recruited by having undergraduate college students in the New Orleans area have nonstudent adults complete the study. The students received extra credit in exchange for their recruitment efforts. Study participants were 63 nonstudent adults. The mean age for participants was 36 ($SD = 10.1$; range = 23 to 69). Mean income was \$75,000, and 41% of the sample was male.

Similar to Study 1, participants were presented with a message that induced either pride or sympathy. The appeal was for the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic, which is a nonprofit organization located in New Orleans that provides comprehensive health care and mental health/social services to New Orleans musicians. New Orleans has an international reputation for its musical heritage and is lauded as the birthplace of jazz. All participants in the study resided in the Greater New Orleans area.

The following message was used in the pride condition. It highlights the city's international music reputation.

New Orleans is the birthplace of jazz and the melting pot of musical inspirations and innovations. From street performers to intimate clubs, jazz funerals to festivals, those who live in New Orleans can boast about its fine musicians who enable it to have an internationally renowned music scene. However, when these musicians are sick and ill, they often have limited places to turn to for healthcare.

The message in the sympathy condition omits information about the city's musical heritage. It follows:

A number of New Orleans musicians suffer from chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension and occupational maladies like a bad back or arthritis. These illnesses can limit a musician's ability to perform and earn a living. Many of these musicians are entrepreneurs and do not have health insurance. Unfortunately, when they are sick and ill they often have limited places to turn to for healthcare.

After exposure to the appeal, study participants were asked to indicate the likelihood they would give money to the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic using two items—"Donating money to the Musicians' Clinic is something I would like to do" and "I want to become a financial donor to the Musicians' Clinic" ($r = .86$). Both items were measured on a 7-point scale, summed, and then averaged. After completing the dependent measures,

participants filled out the attachment-avoidance dimension ($\alpha = .91$) of the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (Brennan, Clark, and Shaver 1998; Mikulincer and Shaver 2003), a scale which has exhibited high internal consistency and good construct validity and test-retest reliability (Izhaki and Schul 2011; Mikulincer and Shaver 2003). It includes 18 items (e.g., "I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down inside," and "I am nervous when partners get too close to me"). Questions were anchored by *Very strongly disagree* and *Very strongly agree*. Following these items, participants provided demographic information.

Pilot Test

Before administering the main study to participants, a pilot test was performed with 25 nonstudent adults from the Greater New Orleans area to ensure that the messages would elicit the desired emotions. Study participants were presented with either the message that was intended to induce pride or the message that would invoke sympathy. Following the messages, the participants were asked to rate how they felt after reading the message, on a 7-point scale (e.g., "The message at the beginning of the survey made me proud"; "The message at the beginning of the survey made me feel bad"). Questions were anchored by *Very strongly disagree* and *Very strongly agree*. There was a main effect for pride ($F(1, 25) = 14.02, p < .05$), with those in the pride condition ($M = 5.8$) expressing that they felt more pride than those in the sympathy condition ($M = 3.7$). Similarly, there was a main effect for sympathy ($F(1, 24) = 5.2, p < .05$) with those in the sympathy condition ($M = 5.81$) indicating that they felt more sympathy than those in the pride condition ($M = 4.7$).

Results

An analysis of the data indicated there was an *Emotion* $\times$ *Gender* interaction ($F(1, 62) = 4.9, p < .05$). Though the means were in the appropriate direction, there were no significant differences between men ($M = 2.9$) and women ($M = 3.44$) in the sympathy condition. As a result, hypothesis 1a was not fully supported. However, a significant main effect did surface ($F(1, 34) = 4.3, p < .05$). Women expressed higher intentions to give in the sympathy condition ($M = 3.7$) than the pride condition ($M = 2.6$). Hypothesis 1b, which predicted that in the pride condition men ($M = 3.57$) would express higher intentions to give money than women would ($M = 2.44, p < .05$), was supported as a result of the interaction (see Figure 2).

To assess the effects of attachment-avoidance style, the attachment-avoidance scale was dichotomized using a median split to represent low ($M = 2.17$) and high ($M = 4.0$) attachment-avoidance individuals. Analysis indicated there was an *Emotion* $\times$ *Attachment avoidance* interaction ($F(1, 55) = 7.05, p < .05$). As predicted in hypothesis 2, attachment-avoidant behavior was most salient in the sympathy condition. High-attachment-avoidance individuals expressed greater intentions to donate money than their low-attachment-avoidance counterparts when exposed to the sympathy appeal ($M = 4.04$ and $M =$

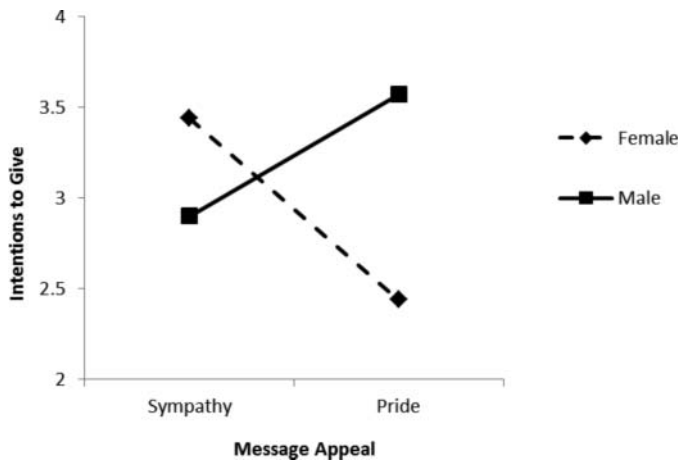


FIG. 2. Study 2: The impact of message appeals, gender, and attachment avoidance on intentions to give.

2.60, $p < .05$). Differences between high- and low-attachment-avoidance participants in the pride condition did not reach statistical significance ($M = 3.12$ and $M = 3.81$; see Figure 3).

Results from Study 2 demonstrate, once again, differential effects for emotions and gender. Unlike in Study 1, there were significant differences between males and females in the pride condition. However, the differences between males and females in the sympathy condition did not reach statistical significance. Instead, what occurred was a main effect similar to the pride condition in Study 1. Women expressed greater behavioral intentions to give money in the sympathy condition over the pride condition.

STUDY 3: GENDER-ROLE IDENTITY AND EMOTIONS

As discussed previously, research has examined the concept of gender-role identity and orientation (Bem 1974; Spence and Helmreich 1978; Winterich, Mittal, and Ross 2009). Shared ex-

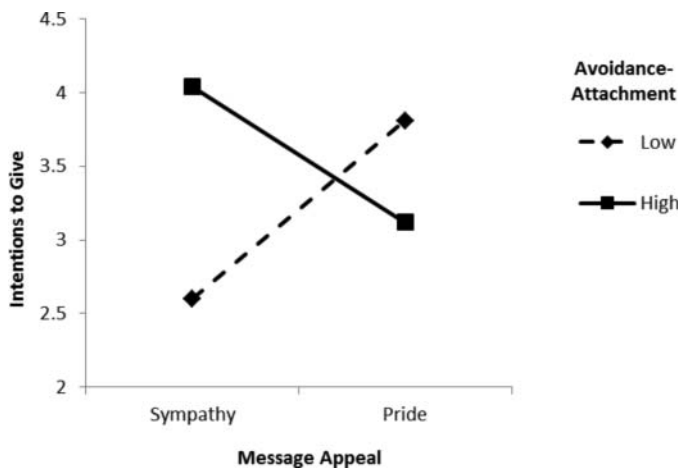


FIG. 3. Study 2: The impact of message appeal and attachment avoidance on intentions to give.

pectations and meanings regarding gender-appropriate qualities and behaviors help shape gender identity (Bem 1974; Deaux et al. 1995). Both Study 1 and Study 2 assessed how emotions interacted with biological sex to impact charitable giving intentions. However, biological sex and gender identity may not always be commensurate. Gender identity is contingent on the degree with which an individual has internalized society's socially constructed standards for gender roles. Study 3 examines the impact of gender-role identity and the emotions—sympathy and pride—on charitable giving.

Method

Procedure and Design

Study 3 was a 2 (Emotion: Pride/Sympathy) $\times$ 2 (Gender Identity: Masculine/Feminine) $\times$ 2 (Attachment Avoidance: Low/High) between-subjects experiment. Similar to Studies 1 and 2, participants were garnered by having undergraduate college students at a university in the southwestern part of the United States recruit nonstudent adults to participate in the study. Again, students received extra credit in exchange for the participant recruited. Study participants totaled 142, and the mean age was 42 ($SD = 12.3$; range = 20 to 69). The mean income for participants was \$58,000, and 45% of the sample was male.

Once again, participants were presented with either a message intended to induce sympathy or pride. The target organization in the appeal was a fictitious organization called Road of Hope, which provides shelter and developmental training to homeless teenagers. The following message was used in the pride condition. It emphasized the strides the organization has made in assisting homeless teens become productive members of society.¹

The number of homeless teens is a serious problem in the United States. Road of Hope is a local organization with an 80-bed emergency shelter available to youth in need. Having received national attention for serving countless homeless and at-risk teens, it has many success stories of how it has helped teens become successful adults that now give back to the local community. You can take pride in knowing that your donation to Road of Hope will help it continue the work of providing our youth with shelter and the life skills needed to become productive citizens.

The message used in the sympathy condition underscored the harsh realities of living on the streets and the challenges homeless teens face.

The number of homeless teens is a serious problem in the United States. Alicia was a homeless teen living on the streets. Alone, tired, hungry and scared, with no one to turn to, homeless teens like Alicia urgently need food, shelter, counseling, and someone to care about them. Road of Hope serves hundreds of homeless and at-risk teens each year. As a compassionate supporter of Road of Hope, your donation will prevent homeless teens from falling prey to the many abuses and harsh realities that come with living alone on the streets.

Similar to Studies 1 and 2, after exposure to the appeal, study participants were asked to indicate the likelihood they would give money to Road of Hope using the same scale

from the previous two studies (e.g., Not Probable/Probable, Not Likely/Likely). After completing the dependent measure, participants provided demographic information and responded to manipulation check measures. In Study 3, manipulation check measures were altered for sympathy to ensure that sympathy was the intended emotion induced. Participants were asked if the message made them feel “sympathetic” and “grieved.” The same manipulation check for pride was retained, and individuals were asked if the message made them feel “proud.” These questions were anchored by *Very strongly disagree* and *Very strongly agree* and measured on a 7-point scale. Attachment avoidance was measured using the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (Brennan, Clark, and Shaver 1998), just as in Study 2.

To measure gender identity, the short form of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1974; Choi, Fuqua, and Newman 2009) was used. The scale consists of both masculine and feminine dimensions. The feminine dimension consists of traits traditionally viewed as desirable for a woman. Sample items from the femininity scale include being compassionate, sympathetic, and sensitive to the needs of others. The masculine dimension contains characteristics conventionally viewed as more desirable for a man than for a woman. In the short form, the masculinity scale encompasses two factors: personal masculinity and social masculinity. Items for the personal masculinity factor included being willing to take a stand, defending beliefs, a strong personality, having leadership abilities, and being independent. The social masculinity factor included traits related to being forceful, dominant, aggressive, and assertive. The scale consisted of 20 items and was measured on a 7-point scale. Questions were anchored by *Not at all like me*, and *Very much like me*.

Results

Results from the manipulation checks indicated there was a main effect for pride ($F(1, 140) = 4.2, p < .05$), with those in the pride condition expressing that they felt more pride ($M = 5.0$) than those in the sympathy condition ($M = 4.5$). Similarly, there was a main effect for sympathy ($F(1, 140) = 12.6, p < .01$), with those in the sympathy condition indicating that they felt more sympathy ($M = 4.5$) than those in the pride condition ($M = 3.8$).

As indicated, the short form of the BSRI, used to measure gender identity, has three factors: femininity, personal masculinity, and social masculinity. Gender differences were examined for each factor. Consistent with previous literature, there were significant differences ($t = 5.35, p < .01$) between males and females on the femininity factor, with females displaying higher feminine traits ($M = 5.82$ and $M = 5.04$), as well as the social masculinity factor ($t = 2.5, p < .05$), with males exhibiting higher social masculine traits ($M = 4.83$ and $M = 4.24$). There were no significant differences between genders ($t = .93, p > .05$) on the personal masculinity trait ($M = 5.74$ and $M = 5.89$), which is also consistent with previous findings in the literature (Choi et al. 2009).

The femininity factor and social masculinity factors were then examined to see if they would interact with emotions on intentions to give. A median split was performed on the femininity measure to represent high ($M = 6.1$) and low ($M = 4.6$) femininity. Likewise, a median split was performed to form high ($M = 5.78$) and low ($M = 3.0$) social masculinity groups. Next, a variable was created for those individuals that scored high on either femininity or social masculinity. This was used to represent a polarized measure of gender identity. Individuals that scored high on both measures were excluded from the analysis. An ANOVA was conducted using gender identity and emotions with intentions to give as the dependent measure. A significant interaction emerged between emotions and gender identity ($F(1, 54) = 4.5, p < .05$). Individuals scoring high on femininity expressed greater behavioral intentions to give in the sympathy condition than individuals scoring high in social masculinity ($M = 4.42$ and $M = 3.67$). There were no significant differences between high femininity and high social masculinity in the pride condition ($M = 4.20$ and $M = 4.87$). However, a main effect did emerge ($F(1, 52) = 3.91, p < .05$) for pride, with those scoring high in social masculinity expressing higher intentions to give in the pride condition than the sympathy condition ($M = 4.7$ and $M = 3.9$; see Figure 4).

As a basis of comparison, analysis was also performed with biological sex. Findings indicated there was an *Emotion $\times$ Gender* interaction ($F(1, 135) = 7.0, p < .05$). Results were similar to findings with gender identity. In the sympathy condition, females expressed greater intentions to give money than males did ($M = 4.41$ and $M = 3.74, p < .05$). However, there were no significant differences between men ($M = 4.72$) and women ($M = 4.48$) in the pride condition. Nonetheless, a significant main effect did emerge ($F(1, 59) = 9.4, p < .05$). Men expressed higher intentions to give in the pride condition than the sympathy condition ($M = 4.72$ and $M = 3.74$).

Finally, to assess the effects of attachment-avoidance style, the attachment-avoidance scale was dichotomized using a median split to represent low- ($M = 2.53$) and high- ($M = 4.20$) attachment-avoidant individuals. Analysis indicated

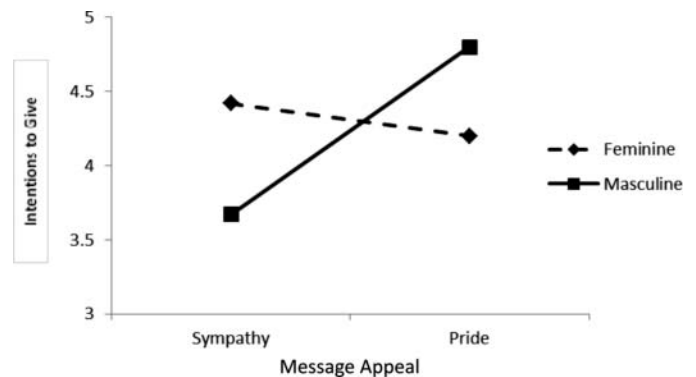


FIG. 4. Study 3: The impact of message appeal and gender identity on intentions to give.

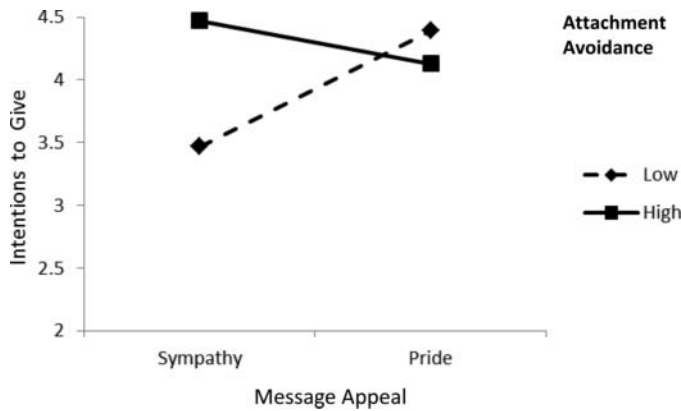


FIG. 5. Study 3: The impact of message appeal and attachment avoidance on intentions to give.

there was an *Emotion* $\times$ *Attachment* avoidance interaction ($F(1, 136) = 2.5, p < .05$). As predicted in hypothesis 2, attachment-avoidant behavior was most salient in the sympathy condition. High-attachment-avoidant individuals expressed greater intentions to donate money than their low-attachment-avoidant counterparts when exposed to the sympathy appeal ($M = 4.47$ and $M = 3.47, p < .05$). Differences between the high- and low-attachment-avoidance participants in the pride condition did not reach statistical significance ($M = 4.13$ and $M = 4.39$; see Figure 5).

DISCUSSION OF OVERALL FINDINGS

This research examined the effect that pride and sympathy have on prosocial behavior. Sympathy promotes attention to the needs of others and caretaking, while pride entails success-related appraisals. Findings suggest persuasive appeals that elicit these emotions might interact with an individual's gender and gender identity as well as internal traits related to attachment style. Specifically, results from Study 1 indicated appeals that induced sympathy were more effective for women than men in encouraging prosocial behavior. Although significant differences were not found between men and women in the appeal that fostered pride, men expressed greater intentions to give money to the target charitable organization when exposed to a pride appeal rather than a sympathy appeal.

Findings from Study 2 also demonstrated differential effects for emotions and gender on intentions to give. However, the significant differences occurred between males and females in the pride condition. The differences between males and females in the sympathy condition did not reach statistical significance. Nevertheless, women expressed greater behavioral intentions to give money in the sympathy condition than the pride condition.

Study 3 assessed the influence of gender identity and emotional appeals on intentions to give. Results demonstrated that individuals scoring high on femininity expressed greater intentions to give than those who scored high on masculinity. No significant differences were achieved between the two gender

identities for pride. The same findings resulted when biological sex was examined in place of gender identity.

Crossover interactions did not surface as hypothesized for the studies. The lack of significance between men and women as well as gender identity in the pride condition in Studies 1 and 3 may be attributed to the overall feelings of sympathy that females inherently possessed for the target individuals in both studies. However, in both studies men did express greater intentions to give in the pride condition than in the sympathy condition. Subsequently, results from all three studies demonstrated that emotional appeals differentially impacted individuals based on gender.

Further, this research also suggests a link between attachment style and giving behavior. According to attachment theory, human beings possess attachment and caregiving behavioral systems. However, an individual may vary in his or her attachment-style orientation. Those individuals who exhibit attachment-avoidant proclivities may endorse egoistic motives for helping (Mikulincer and Shaver 2003). Results from Studies 2 and 3 confirmed that individuals scoring high in avoidance were more likely to give when exposed to a charitable appeal inducing sympathy. For attachment-avoidant individuals, helping others is viewed as one possible route to feeling better about themselves.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

In 2010 Americans contributed about 2% of disposable personal income earnings to philanthropic causes (Giving USA 2011). However, with ever-increasing competition among charitable organizations and during turbulent economic times, people may give to fewer charities or temporarily decrease their overall giving. For example, charitable giving decreased more during the Great Recession than in previous recessions, falling a combined 13% in 2008 and 2009 (Giving USA 2011).

Findings from this research may be able to offer direction to charities and social entrepreneurs in their efforts to engage their publics in prosocial behavior. As charitable organizations consider campaign structural elements, which represent messages that describe the campaign (Grau and Folse 2007), using messaging that is mission based, persuasive, and effectively targets desired demographics is vital. For example, studies indicate that women, regardless of income level, are more likely to give to charity and to also give more money than men (Women Give 2010). This may be due to the fact that women engage in helping that is more charitable in nature. Charitable organizations might purposely target women as donors given this information, or they might employ tactics that would be more effective at reaching men. This research suggests emotional appeals might be specifically designed to target a certain group. Understanding how to successfully target individuals—whether it be based on gender or personality characteristics—with the appropriate message content is paramount. Such persuasive appeals can not only encourage individuals to contribute monetarily to an organization

but also be used to garner volunteers for the organization and to amass committed proponents for the organization's purpose who encourage others to render their support.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While two of the studies in this research focused on real charities and the nonstudent samples were chosen to maximize the relevance to the advertised issue, the experimental context and setting may affect the generalizability of the results. For example, participants viewed the ad stimuli immediately prior to responding to the dependent variables. While the approach used in this research is common in advertising experiments, future research might present the ad stimuli in a more natural setting among competing (filler) ads to limit the effects due to forced exposure to the ad stimuli. While behavioral intentions are a popular dependent variable in the advertising literature, it may not be a true indicator of how likely consumers are willing to actually give. Future research that examines actual giving behavior is needed, and thus replication in a field setting is strongly encouraged.

The emotions of pride and sympathy were the focus of the studies due to their direct relevance and popular use in charitable giving appeals. However, empathy has also been used in charitable giving appeals (Batson et al. 1997). As indicated previously, sympathy and empathy are two very similar emotions. Yet empathy differs from sympathy in that it involves perspective taking and sharing the same feelings as the person in need; sympathy involves general concern for those in need. Although inducing empathy, which would entail participants enlisting some level of perspective taking, was outside of the scope of the studies presented here, future research might *compare* the effects of empathy and other emotional appeals (including sympathy) on prosocial behaviors. For example, guilt is a negative emotion that elicits an awareness of differences in well-being among people and provides a sense that one should help those less fortunate (Basil, Ridgway, and Basil 2006). Charitable appeals that induce guilt might impose an obligation to give. In addition, hope is a positive emotion that promotes the belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one's life (Snyder 1994). Hope might incite optimism with respect to improving an unfavorable situation. Subsequently, these emotions might be efficacious in stimulating giving behavior.

With respect to differences in giving behavior involving gender and motives, women have been found to give money for social change, whereas men have been found to be concerned with gaining prestige from their giving behavior (Bennett, Stadt, and Karmos 1997; Beutel and Marini 1995). Future research might examine such motives with respect to attachment insecurities. Individuals high in attachment avoidance might be more inclined to give for egoistic motives.

Finally, while the specific issues examined in our three studies were carefully chosen to maximize the realism of the re-

search, more research is needed to understand boundary conditions of the effects demonstrated here.

As nonprofits and charitable organizations compete for consumers' money and time, focused messaging is crucial. Examining how affective message components can effectively target desired consumer segments can assist marketing managers in maximizing the impact of their donor/support campaigns. Accordingly, more research in this area is warranted.

NOTE

1. A small study was conducted to ensure that the study manipulations did not differ in regards to participants' perceptions of what the donation would be used for (helping to develop life skills versus preventing abuse). Results indicated no significant differences between the two treatment conditions on this measure ($F_s = 0.02$ to 0.72 , $p_s > 0.10$).

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APPENDIX

Experiences in Close Relationships (Brennan, Clark, and Shaver 1998): Attachment Avoidance Dimension

1. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.
2. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.
3. Just when my partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling away.
4. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
5. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.
6. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
7. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
8. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.
9. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
10. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.
11. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.
12. I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.
13. I tell my partner just about everything.
14. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.
15. I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.
16. I don't mind asking romantic partners for comfort, advice, or help.
17. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.
18. I turn to my partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance.

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