



FACULTEIT ECONOMIE
EN BEDRIJFSKUNDE

TWEEKERKENSTRAAT 2
B-9000 GENT
Tel. : 32 - (0)9 - 264.34.61
Fax. : 32 - (0)9 - 264.35.92

WORKING PAPER

**Promoting help for victims of child abuse: which emotions are most
appropriate to motivate donation behavior.**

Faseur Tine¹

Geuens Maggie²

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¹ Department of Marketing, Ghent University

² Department of Marketing, Ghent University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tine Faseur, Ghent University, Department of Economics and Business Administration, Tweekerkenstraat 2, 9000 Gent, Belgium, Tineke.faseur@ugent.be, +32 9 2643527.

**PROMOTING HELP FOR VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE: WHICH
EMOTIONS ARE MOST APPROPRIATE TO MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO
DONATE MONEY?**

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of two cognitive appraisal dimensions of emotions, valence and certainty, in advertisements promoting a socially oriented organization. Furthermore, the moderating impact of showing multiple unidentified victims versus showing one identified victim and donation history of the respondents was investigated in 239 adult citizens. Certain emotions proved to be more effective (compatible) than uncertain ones for (with) advertisements with multiple unidentified victims and regular donors, whereas the opposite holds true for advertisements with one identified victim and non-regular donors. Surprisingly, positive emotions were found to be more or equally effective than negative ones under all conditions.

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of many socially oriented organizations is helping people in need. Therefore, they need to raise as many funds as possible. This task becomes increasingly difficult because of the growth of the charity industry, which has resulted in fierce competition. Marketers within this industry face the ongoing challenge of persuading as many people as possible to donate as much money as possible to their organization (e.g., Desmet and Feiberg 2003).

When making the decision to donate money to a certain organization, consumers often rely on their feelings. Not surprisingly, quite a number of studies have shown that ad-evoked emotions can serve as strong but subtle persuaders and are indeed very important to motivate people to help others in need (e.g., Bagozzi and Moore 1994; Dillard and Peck 2000). It is intuitively clear, however, that not all emotions will be equally effective in motivating all kinds of people to donate money for all kinds of good causes. Earlier research has shown that, to be effective, advertising cues (such as ad-evoked emotions) or extraneous emotions need to be compatible with the characteristics of the person perceiving the advertisement (Rusting, 1998; Bosmans & Baumgartner, 2005), and with other elements of the ad (MacInnis & Park, 1991). For example, a fear appeal in which a person in need is pictured in a perilous situation could be effective for some people because the fear that such an appeal evokes brings about a thorough shake-up, but it could be ineffective for others because such an appeal scares them off. Concerning the effectiveness of different emotions, many researchers have investigated the impact of positive versus negative emotions on persuasion in general (e.g., Hullett, 2005) or, more specifically, in the context of social marketing (e.g., Clark and Isen 1982; Shaffer and Graziano 1983). Although these studies show that the valence dimension of emotions explains a large part of the variance in the effectiveness of emotional ads, other dimensions of emotions, such as certainty, arousal, ego- versus other-focus (e.g., Fasseur and Geuens 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Smith and Ellsworth 1985) could also be of importance. However, limited research has been conducted on the effectiveness of these other dimensions. This study tries to partly fill this gap by looking at the influence of the valence and the certainty dimensions of emotions on the effectiveness of different emotional advertisements for a good cause. The certainty of ad-evoked emotions can be very relevant in a social context, because donating money is expected to be closely related to how certain and confident people are about what is going to happen in the (near) future. Furthermore, this study investigates the potential moderating impact on attitudes and helping intentions of (a)

featuring one identified victim in an ad, as opposed to featuring a group of unidentified victims and (b) the general donation behavior of consumers.

EMOTIONAL ADVERTISING FOR A GOOD CAUSE

It is generally recognized that the emotions people experience in a particular situation (e.g., when reading an advertisement) are based on a personal interpretation (cognitions, appraisals, thoughts, beliefs) of the situation (e.g., Pham 2004). This process is explained in several emotion theories like the attribution theory (Weiner 1985) and the cognitive appraisal theory (e.g., Smith and Ellsworth 1985). Adherents of the latter argue that the experience of a specific emotion is characterized by the person's evaluation of the event on a range of cognitive dimensions. Therefore, when investigating the effect of different ad-evoked feelings on ad effectiveness, it is advisable to also examine the contribution of the cognitive appraisal dimensions underlying these emotions. Different cognitive appraisal theorists have identified a diversity of cognitive dimensions by which events can be appraised and resulting emotions can be defined. Some of these dimensions recur systematically. For example, Smith and Ellsworth (1985) have distinguished six appraisal dimensions of emotions: certainty, pleasantness, attentional activity, control, anticipated effort and responsibility. Mauro, Sato and Tucker (1992) added four more dimensions being coping ability, goal/need conduciveness, legitimacy, and norm/self compatibility. Ruth et al. (2002) distinguished the dimensions pleasantness, other-agency, self-agency, perceived obstacle, anticipated effort, situational control, attentional activity, fairness and certainty. Obviously, in view of the number of dimensions, it is impossible to study all of them simultaneously. In this study, the focus is on two of the recurring dimensions that seem highly relevant in a social marketing context: the valence dimension (also referred to as the pleasure dimension) which divides emotions into positive and negative ones and the certainty dimension which divides emotions into certain and uncertain ones.

Furthermore, we hypothesize that the effect of positive versus negative and of certain versus uncertain ad-evoked emotions will depend on their compatibility with (a) advertisements showing one identified victim versus a group of unidentified victims and (b) the characteristics of regular versus non-regular donors.

THE VALENCE DIMENSION

The valence dimension has received a lot of attention in advertising literature. More specifically, social marketing studies that investigate the impact of different ad-evoked emotions on ad effectiveness and helping behavior, have largely focused on the valence dimension (investigating the differential impact of positive and negative emotional ad appeals) (e.g., Clark and Isen 1982; Shaffer and Graziano 1983). This distinction has also been referred to as the “the sick baby” versus “the well baby” approach (e.g., Obermiller 1995). Both positive and negative emotions can be effective to motivate people to help others (see Carlson and Miller 1987; Carlson, Charlin and Miller 1988 for an overview). According to Obermiller (1995), positive ad-evoked emotions stress the significance that an individual action of a donor can have. A positive emotion convinces people that, with their help, a positive outcome will be obtained (i.e., a positive emotion increases the perceived consumer effectiveness). Negative ad-evoked emotions, on the other hand, concentrate on the severity of the problem. Negative appeals try to increase concern for the problem, make it more salient, and try to convince people that the problem is acute and that their help is needed. The idea that negative emotions increase concern for the problem is also in line with the negative state relief model (e.g., Bauman, Cialdini, & Kenrick, 1981), which states that negative emotions indicate that things are not under control, driving people to reduce their negative feeling, for example by helping the people in need.

It is clear that the valence dimension of the emotions evoked in an ad promoting a good cause will not influence ad attitudes and helping behavior in a clear and unidirectional way. One element that is expected to influence the impact of negative and positive ad-evoked emotions (as well as the impact of certain and uncertain emotions) is the compatibility of these emotions with the ad appeal. According to MacInnis and Park (1991), advertisements will be most effective when the different executional elements of the advertisement show a “fit”. In their study, they found that music in advertisements result in positive ad and brand attitudes when they fit the other ad elements, that is, when the music is perceived congruent with and appropriate to the message of the ad. When different ad cues are complementary, they reinforce the basic message. In line with these findings, we expect that also different ad-evoked emotions will lead to more positive attitudes, to the extent that they are more compatible to the ad appeal. Furthermore, we expect that these more positive attitudes toward the ad and the organization will increase people’s helping intentions. In this study, we

investigate the compatibility of the different ad-evoked emotions with ad appeals that portray one identified victim or multiple unidentified victims.

Next to the ad appeal, emotions also need to be compatible with the characteristics of the perceiver of the ad. Several researchers have shown that personal characteristics and people's personality can moderate the effectiveness of advertisements evoking different emotions. (e.g., Chang, 2006a, b; Rusting, 1998). Chang (2006a), for example, found that extravert people generated more positive ad and brand attitudes when the ad-evoked emotions were positive and that introvert people generated more positive ad and brand attitudes when the ad-evoked emotions were negative. Furthermore, Bosmans and Baumgartner (2005) showed that the correspondence between consumers' goals and (extraneously evoked) emotions moderates the influence of the emotions on product evaluations. More specifically, they found that people will use (extraneously evoked) emotions as relevant information for the evaluation of a product, only when these emotions are consistent with their achievement (promotion) or protection (prevention) related goals. In this study, we investigate whether the compatibility between ad-evoked emotions and characteristics of regular versus non-regular donors moderates the effectiveness of the different ad-evoked emotions.

Advertisements featuring one identified victim versus a group of unidentified victims

Advertisements for socially oriented organizations can show one identified person in need, and they can show a whole group of unidentified people in need. Earlier research has shown that people react differently when the victim of a problem is identified versus not identified (Jenni & Loewenstein, 1997; Kogut & Ritov, 2005a, b; Small & Loewenstein, 2003). According to Schelling (1968), for example, a problem is perceived as more vivid and familiar when the victim of the problem is identified. Furthermore, providing concrete details about the identified victim can increase the concern of the problem. More recently, Small and Loewenstein (2005) referred to the dual-process models which suggest that specific instances are more involving and are more likely to receive greater attention. Hence, an advertising appeal with one identified victim will make people care more about the problem than an advertising appeal with a group of unidentified people.

Because, advertisements evoking negative emotions and advertisements with one identified victim both increase the salience of and concern for the problem, negative rather than positive emotions are expected to be more congruent with ads showing an identified victim.

Advertisements featuring multiple unidentified victims create a larger distance between the people in need and the consumer, making the danger less severe and less acute decreasing the concern for the problem. A positive emotion is expected to be more compatible with such an appeal than a negative one, because positive emotions indicate that everything is under control, increasing people's trust that the problem can be solved. So, both positive emotions and appeals featuring multiple unidentified victims change the focus from the severity of the problem to higher confidence that the problem can be solved.

Based on the prediction that ad-evoked emotions will lead to more positive attitudes and higher helping intentions when they are more compatible with the ad appeal, and assuming that negative emotions are more compatible with ads featuring one identified victim and that positive emotions are more compatible with ads featuring multiple unidentified victims, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1A: When a single identified victim is shown in an ad, negative emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than positive emotions.

H1B: When a group of unidentified victims is shown in an ad, positive emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than negative emotions.

Regular versus non-regular donors

Some people are used to donate to socially oriented organizations on a regular basis, while others are not. The effectiveness of positive versus negative ad-evoked emotions is also expected to depend on their compatibility with this characteristic of the potential donors. Regular donors are expected to be more interested in and concerned with the problems of other people in general than non-regular donors. Furthermore, they are expected to trust the organizations and have confidence that the organizations will help the people in need (Sargeant, Ford & West, 2006). Non-regular donors might be less interested in or involved with the problems of others. Hence, people who are not used to make donations to socially oriented organizations will need to be convinced more of the severity of specific problems and the necessity of the help than regular donors. Because negative emotions can increase the perceived severity and the salience of the problem, they are expected to be more appropriate than positive emotions to persuade non-regular donors. To persuade regular donors to donate money for a specific problem, positive rather than negative emotions will be more appropriate. Positive emotions confirm their trust that their help will lead to positive outcomes

for the people in need, and that their donations really make a difference. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H2A: The less respondents are used to donate, the more negative emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than positive emotions.

H2B: The more respondents are used to donate, the more positive emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than negative emotions.

THE CERTAINTY DIMENSION

According to Smith and Ellsworth (1985), the certainty dimension can include multiple components. The certainty dimension of emotions can refer to a) the violation or confirmation of people's past expectations (for example when something unexpected happens) and the resulting ambiguity of the present, b) the (un)certainty about and predictability of the future (for example, when you are unsure what is going to happen), and c) the degree to which people understand what is happening now (Smith & Ellsworth 1985; Mauro, Sato, & Tucker 1992). However, the results of Smith and Ellsworth's (1985) study revealed that these items do not show a nice fit and that respondents found it hard to rate this dimension consistently. In order to reduce the ambiguity related to this dimension and to simplify the task for respondents to rate their emotions on this dimension we concentrate on only one component in this study. The (un)certainty that socially oriented organizations may evoke in their advertisements is likely to be related to the predictability of the attainment or maintenance of the goals and objectives of the organization, referring to the predictability component of the certainty dimension. The uncertainty that people can experience when confronted with people in need refers to the feeling that they do not know what the outcome will be for these victims, or what the future will bring.

Limited research has been conducted on the impact of the certainty appraisal dimension of emotions on subsequent judgments. Some researchers did investigate the effect of certainty on information processing. Tiedens and Linton (2001), for example, have examined the effect of the certainty appraisal of emotions on information processing in subsequent judgment and found that uncertain emotions (like fear and hope) lead to more systematic information processing than certain emotions (like anger and happiness). People who feel uncertain about a situation are highly unconfident. They experience an implicit goal of uncertainty reduction (Raghunathan and Pham 1999) and will therefore exert more effort to gain confidence about the situation. On the one hand, the feeling of certainty, along with strong confidence, can

serve as an internal cue that the situation is under control, that everything is all right, and that no further processing is needed. Feeling uncertain, on the other hand, indicates that some things are not under control and that further processing might be needed to make things all right.

Feeling certain or uncertain does not only affect message processing. It can also influence attitudes and guide behavior. For example, Lerner and Keltner (2001) found that the level of certainty of an experienced emotion exerts an influence on risk perception and preference, in the sense that people experiencing a certain emotion tend to express optimistic risk perceptions and are more risk-seeking in their actions, and that people experiencing an uncertain emotion tend to express pessimistic risk perceptions and are more risk-averse in their actions. Raghunathan and Pham (1999) also found that the experience of an uncertain emotion biases one's preferences toward options involving a low risk.

Based on earlier research it is clear that the certainty dimension of emotions is closely related to how confident people are in a specific situation, and to the perception of risk (Lerner & Keltner 2001; Raghunathan & Pham 1999; Tiedens & Linton, 2001). Similar as for the valence dimension, the certainty dimension of emotions evoked in advertisements for socially oriented organizations is expected to have a differential impact depending on whether one identified or multiple unidentified victims are shown, and on the donation history of the respondents. More specifically, we expect the effectiveness of certain and uncertain emotions to depend on how compatible they are to the characteristics of the ad appeal or the reader of the ad.

Advertisements featuring one identified victim versus a group of unidentified victims

For the moderating effect of the ad appeal on the influence of the certainty dimension, we refer to the study of Chandran and Menon (2004), who investigated, among other things, the impact of temporal framing on risk estimates and concern about health hazards. They found that every day framing, as opposed to every year framing (i.e., framing the health hazards (e.g., people that die from a disease) as occurring every day versus every year), reduces the psychological distance between the people and the health hazard, making risks appear more proximal and concrete. Variation in temporal distance is one way to manipulate the psychological distance people perceive from the problem, and the resulting risk perceptions.

But other elements have also been suggested to influence this psychological association, like social distance (Chandran & Menon, 2004).

Based on the literature concerning the identifiable victim effect (Jenni & Loewenstein, 1997; Kogut & Ritov, 2005a, b; Small & Loewenstein, 2003), we suggest that this effect could also influence the psychological distance. As mentioned before, people perceive a problem as more vivid and familiar when an identified victim rather than a group of unidentified victims is portrayed in the ad (Schelling, 1968). More concrete information about the victim can give people the impression that they know the victim, making the problem more self-relevant (Small & Loewenstein, 2003). Hence, we expect that portraying an identified victim, rather than a group of unidentified victims, can also decrease the psychological distance people perceive with the problem, resulting in an increase of the perceived risk and concern. In the assumption that uncertain emotions lead to higher risk perceptions than certain emotions, and that an identified victim, as opposed to many unidentified victims, increase risk perceptions, we predict that an advertisement portraying one identified victim will be more compatible with an uncertain than with a certain emotion evoked in the ad. An uncertain emotion will be more appropriate for advertisements that emphasize the risks the problem involves. Certain emotions on the other hand, will be more appropriate for advertisements portraying many unidentified victims, not focusing on the risks of the situation. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H3A: When a single identified victim is shown in an ad, uncertain emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than certain emotions.

H3B: When a group of unidentified victims is shown in an ad, certain emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than uncertain emotions.

Regular versus non-regular donors

The effectiveness of certain or uncertain ad-evoked emotions is also expected to depend on their compatibility with the potential donor. Many researchers tried to discover the reasons and motivations for people to donate money to good cause organizations (Hibbert & Horne, 1996; Radley & Kennedy, 1995; Schlegelmilch, Diamantopoulos & Love, 1997). Sargeant, Ford and West (2006) found that the final decision to donate will only occur when they trust and are committed to the organization. So, people that are used to donate money to socially oriented organizations should feel some confidence and trust that their money will be spent effectively. Evoking an uncertain emotion in an advertisement for a socially oriented

organization could counter (part of) this trust and confidence. Therefore, an ad evoking a certain emotion is expected to be more appropriate to persuade regular donors to donate to a specific organization. A feeling of certainty will confirm their trust and confidence. People who are used to donate to socially oriented organizations are, therefore, expected to react more positively to certain emotional advertisements than to uncertain ones.

In contrast with the motivations to donate, the reasons and motivations for people not to donate to socially oriented organizations are far more difficult to predict. Considering the growing presence in the media of socially oriented organizations that are asking for help, it is unlikely that people do not donate because they are unaware of the demand for help. The idea that they do not care about anybody or anything else but themselves is also rather far-fetched. Following the finding of Sargeant, Ford, and West (2006), that people first need to trust and feel committed to an organization in order to donate money, it can be expected that people who are not used to donate money to any organization are rather unconfident, have less trust in those organizations, or are uncertain that their money will be spent effectively. Hence, we expect that people who are not used to donate will react less positively to advertisements evoking a certain emotion than regular donors, because such a certain emotion is not congruent with how they feel about donating. For them, an advertisement that indicates that the problem involves high risks for the people in need and that the future of these people is uncertain is expected to be more appropriate and persuasive. People who are not used to donate to socially oriented organizations are, therefore, expected to react more positively to uncertain emotional advertisements than to certain ones.

H4A: The less respondents are used to donate, the more uncertain emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than certain emotions.

H4B: The more respondents are used to donate, the more certain emotions will lead to higher ad attitudes and higher helping intentions than uncertain emotions.

RESEARCH METHOD

The objective of this study was to test the impact of different ad-evoked emotions on the effectiveness of advertisements for a good cause by varying valence and certainty. More specifically, this study investigated how the effectiveness of positive or negative and certain or uncertain emotions was moderated by the use of one identified victim versus multiple unidentified victims and by the common donation behavior of consumers.

To test the hypotheses, advertisements were created to promote a fictitious confidence centre that helps victims of child abuse. The confidence centre served as a facility for child abuse prevention, education, supporting high-risk families and providing physical and psychological assistance to the victims. The advertisements with one identified victim or a group of unidentified victims were manipulated by using different pictures in the ads. In the ad with an identified victim, one child was featured in the middle of the ad, as if the assistance needed was for this particular child. The child was given a name, and some personal information about the child (e.g., hobbies) was given. The text in these ads referred to this child. In the advertisements with many unidentified victims, several children (and families) were shown, without any information. The text in these ads referred to all children that are victim of child abuse. For each of the two appeals, four advertisements were created that were intended to evoke four kinds of emotions: a positive certain emotion, a positive uncertain emotion, a negative certain emotion and a negative uncertain emotion. The advertisements evoking a positive feeling showed happy children and the text emphasized the positive outcome when help is given. The text includes words like “loving”, “affectionate”, “untroubled”, and “laughing”. The advertisements evoking a negative feeling showed angry or fearful looking children. The text in these ads describes the terrible things that these children have to go through. Words like “violence”, “frustration”, “trauma”, “injustice” and “atrocities” are mentioned. The certainty dimension of the emotions was manipulated by trying to influence the degree to which respondents will feel that the children will be helped. In the uncertain appeals, the focus is on the idea that the future of these children is uncertain. It is uncertain whether they will ever have a normal life again. Therefore, in the uncertain appeals, a lot of question marks are used. The advertisements intended to evoke a certain feeling emphasize that, with the necessary help, the organization will be able to help the children out of their misery or help them to work on a new and loving future. In the certain appeals, a lot of exclamation marks are used. At the bottom of each ad, information is provided about the organization, together with the logo of the organization and the account number to which donations can be made.

In a pretest we tested whether the different emotional ads evoked emotions with the intended level of valence and certainty. This pretest was conducted to make sure that the emotions evoked by the uncertain and the certain emotional appeals varied sufficiently on the certainty dimension and that the emotions evoked by the positive and the negative emotional appeals varied sufficiently on the valence dimension. Fifty-eight respondents participated in the pretest. Each respondent was asked to read two of the eight advertisements. After reading the

first ad, they were asked to fill in a questionnaire. Respondents were asked to think about the emotion that they experienced when watching the ad. Next, they were given a definition of the two dimensions of emotions and asked to rate their emotion on each of the two dimensions. For the valence dimension the scale ranged from 1 (negative emotion) to 11 (positive emotion), and the certainty scale ranged from 1 (highly uncertain) to 11 (highly certain). Afterwards, the same procedure was followed for the second ad. Results showed that the ad-evoked emotions that were intended to be negative had a lower score on the valence scale than the ad-evoked emotions that were intended to be positive ($M = 2.65$ and 8.52 respectively, $t = 15.83$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, the ad-evoked emotions that were intended to be negative versus positive did not differ on the certainty scale ($t = .58$, $p = .56$). The ad-evoked emotions that were intended to be uncertain had a lower score on the certainty scale than the ad-evoked emotions that were intended to be certain ($M = 5.28$ and 8.00 respectively, $t = 5.10$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, the ad-evoked emotions that were intended to be uncertain versus certain did not differ on the valence scale ($t = .52$, $p = .60$).

MEASURES

Independent variables.

According to the cognitive appraisal theory, the experience of emotions depends on how people appraise their environment. The extent to which an advertisement evokes a negative or positive emotion or a certain or uncertain emotion will thus depend on the person who reads the ad. Therefore, respondents were asked to think about the emotion that they experienced when watching the ad and to rate this emotion on two appraisal dimensions: the valence and the certainty dimension. These scores were used as the independent variables in the analyses.

Valence: Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they experienced a positive or negative emotion after reading the ad, or how pleasant or unpleasant was it to experience this emotion. The valence dimension was measured by using a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (negative) to 9 (positive).

Certainty: Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they experienced a certain or uncertain emotion after reading the ad and, while experiencing this emotion, how well they could predict what would happen in the relatively near future. This dimension was measured by using a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (uncertain) to 9 (certain).

Moderating variables.

Donation behavior: Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they were used to donating money to or buy things from socially oriented organizations. Donation behavior was measured on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (“I almost never make donations”) to 9 (“I make donations very regularly”).

Advertisements portraying one identified versus a group of unidentified victim: This variable was included as a dummy variable with 1 referring to the ads with one identified child and 2 referring to the advertisements with many unidentified children.

Dependent variables.

Several scales were used to measure the effectiveness of the ads.

Attitude toward the ad: Aad was measured using three 9-point semantic differential scales, anchored by the adjectives “bad–good”, “negative–positive” and “dislike–like” (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .85$).

Attitude toward the organization: Aorg was also assessed by three 9-point semantic differential scales, anchored by the statements “The confidence center looks like a bad–good organization to me”, “I don’t like–like the confidence center”, and “I feel negatively–positively about the confidence center” (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .91$).

Helping intentions (HI): The respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they believed the ads were effective in persuading them to support the confidence center, to what extent the ads were effective in persuading most people to support the confidence center, and how likely they were to ever make a donation to the confidence centre. All items were measured on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (very ineffective/very unlikely) to 9 (very effective/very likely) (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .76$).

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

Data were collected from 239 adult respondents, divided equally into women and men, from 30 to 60 years. All respondents received a lottery ticket providing them with 10 chances to win a book token for 10 euro. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight advertisements. A web-based questionnaire was set up, using the program “The Websurveyor”. The questionnaire was sent out to 2000 people from the respondent pool of the department of Marketing. A mail was sent in which respondents were asked to take time to fill out the questionnaire in a quiet room, without any interruption. After a short introduction to

the researchers and the object of the research, participants were asked to carefully read the test ad and to answer some questions about the ad. Participants were assured of anonymity. The questions following the ad contained measures for the (in)dependent and moderating variables.

RESULTS

The hypotheses, H1-H4, were tested using multiple regression analyses. Based on the arguments of Irwin (2001) and Irwin and McClelland (2001), and based on the idea that the experience of emotions depends on individuals' ratings of the stimulus on different appraisal dimensions, respondents' ratings on the valence and the certainty dimensions were used as independent variables rather than categorical variables.

Concerning the valence dimension of emotions, it was hypothesized that negative emotions would be more effective than positive ones when one identified victim was shown (H1A) and for non-regular donors (H2A). On the contrary, when multiple unidentified victims were shown, and for highly regular donors, positive (relative to negative) emotions were hypothesized to be most effective (H1B and 2B respectively). To test these hypotheses, multiple regression analyses were conducted. The first analysis modeled Aad, Aorg and HI as functions of the valence of the ad-evoked emotion (valence), whether one or a group of victims is shown (victim), and the interaction between valence and victim (valence x victim). The second analysis modeled the three dependent variables as functions of the valence of the ad-evoked emotion (valence), the donation behavior of the respondents (donation), and the interaction between valence and donation (valence x donation). The estimates and the corresponding t-statistics for the different predictors are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Regression analysis modeling Aad, Aorg and HI in function of valence and victim and of valence and donation history

		Aad		Aorg		HI	
VALENCE X VICTIM							
		Adjusted R ² of the model		Adjusted R ²		Adjusted R ²	
		0.26 (p < 0.001)		-0.002 (p = 0.49)		0.06 (p < 0.01)	
PREDICTORS		ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT
Constant		3.22	3.91***	7.07	10.07***	4.64	5.38***
Valence		0.38	2.55*	0.07	0.53	-0.07	-0.42
Victim		0.23	0.44	0.01	0.02	-0.84	-1.51
valence x victim		0.05	0.51	-0.00	-0.02	0.19	1.78
VALENCE X DONATION							
		Adjusted R ² of the model		Adjusted R ²		Adjusted R ²	
		0.27 (p < 0.001)		0.02 (p = 0.08)		0.14 (p < 0.001)	
PREDICTORS		ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT
Constant		4.97	8.15***	7.69	14.88	4.57	7.46***
Valence		0.20	1.76	-0.10	-0.97	-0.21	-1.77
Donation		-0.24	-2.47*	-0.11	-1.35	-0.18	-1.86
valence	x	0.04	2.36*	0.03	1.84	0.07	3.69***
donation							

The results indicate that the interaction effect between valence and victim was significant for none of the dependent variables. (Aad: p = .61; Aorg: p = .98; HI: p = .08) (Figure 1).

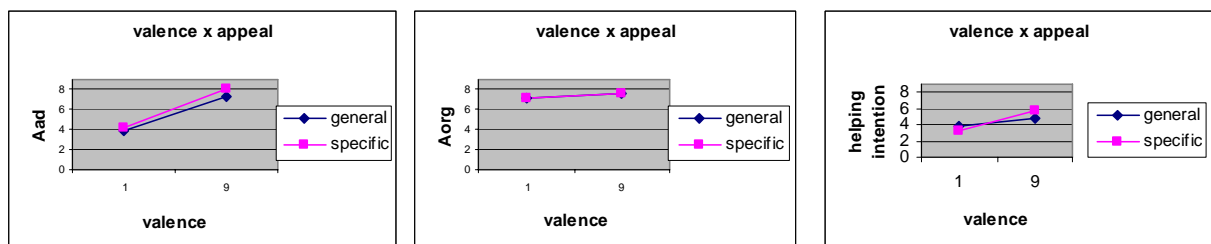


Figure 1: Interaction effect between valence and victim

To test hypotheses 1A and 1B, separate regression analyses were conducted for the advertisements with one identified victim and those with many unidentified victims. These results revealed that for both appeals the valence dimension had a (marginally) significant positive effect on Aad (identified victim: b = .484, p < .001; unidentified victims: b = .433, p

< .001) and on HI (identified victim: $b = .304$, $p < .001$; unidentified victims: $b = .119$, $p = .09$) and no effect on Aorg (identified victim: $b = .064$, $p = .299$; unidentified victims: $b = .066$, $p = .253$). These results partly support hypothesis 1B in the sense that ad-evoked positive emotions led to higher Aad and HI when a group of unidentified victims was shown. Hypothesis 1A was not supported. When a single identified victim was shown, not negative but positive ad-evoked emotions led to higher Aad and HI.

The interaction effect between valence and donation was (marginally) significant for Aad, HI and Aorg (Aad: $p < .05$; Aorg: $p = .07$; HI: $p < .001$) (see table 5.1). For the interpretation of this interaction effect, the instructions of Aiken and West (1996) were followed. Figure 2 shows the interaction effect for Aad, Aorg and HI.

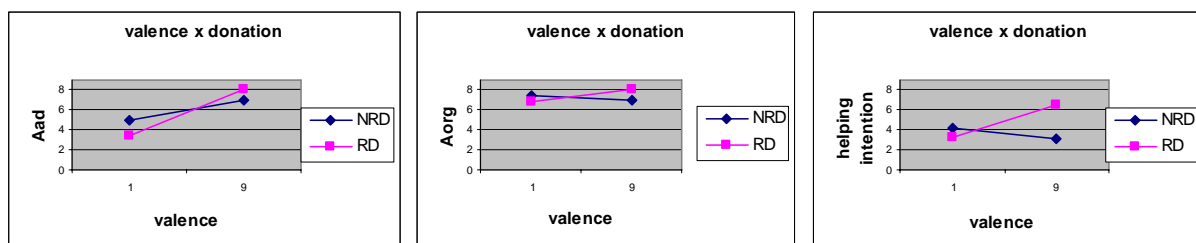


Figure 2: Interaction effect between valence and donation behavior

To create these graphs, the highest and lowest levels of each of the independent variables were substituted into the regression equation. The slopes of the different regression lines are shown in Table 2, together with the standard error and the significance of the slopes.

Table 2: Measures for simple slopes of valence for different values of donation^a

DONATION	Aad			Aorg			HI		
	SLOPE	STAND ERROR	T-STAT	SLOPE	STAND ERROR	T-STAT	SLOPE	STAND ERROR	T-STAT
1 (non-reg donator)	0.25	0.10	2.47	-0.07	0.08	-0.79	-0.14	0.10	-1.38
9 (regular donator)	0.59	0.08	7.68	0.16	0.07	2.41	0.40	0.09	4.26

^a: The measures for the simple slopes were calculated as proposed by Aiken and West (1996).

Figure 2 shows that highly regular donors (RD) evaluated the ads that evoked a positive emotion more positively than the ads evoking a negative emotion. This result confirmed hypothesis 2B. However, contrary to expectations, non-regular donors (NRD) did not prefer

ads evoking negative emotions over positive ones. For this group of people, Aad was even higher for ads evoking positive emotions than for ads evoking negative ones. No support was thus provided for hypothesis 2A. Previous analyses show that, contrary to expectations, ads evoking positive emotions were evaluated to be more or equally positive than those evoking negative emotions under all conditions. Furthermore, the analyses reveal that the valence dimension had no or only very little effect on the attitude toward the organization.

Similar regression analyses were conducted to investigate the interaction effects of the certainty dimension with portrayed victim in the ads and respondents' donation behavior. It was hypothesized that uncertain emotions would be more effective than certain ones for advertisements showing one identified victim (H3A) and for non-regular donors (H4A). On the contrary, certain emotions, as opposed to uncertain ones, were hypothesized to be most effective for advertisements showing a group of unidentified victims and for more regular donors (H3B and 4B respectively). The estimates and the corresponding t-statistics for the different predictors are given in Table 3.

The results indicate that the interaction effect between certainty and victim was significant for all three dependent variables (Aad: $p < .01$; Aorg: $p < .001$; HI: $p < .001$) (Figure 3). Separate regression analyses were conducted for the two ad appeals.

The results revealed that for the advertisements showing one identified victim certainty had a negative effect on Aad ($b = -.204$, $p < .05$), HI ($b = -.265$, $p < .01$), and Aorg ($b = -.089$, $p = .185$), although the latter was not significant. For the advertisements showing many unidentified victims the certainty dimension had a positive effect on Aad ($b = .248$, $p < .01$), Aorg ($b = .172$, $p < .01$) and HI ($b = .136$, $p = .09$), although, the latter was not significant. These results largely support hypotheses 3A and B.

Table 3: Regression analysis modeling Aad, Aorg and HI in function of certainty and victim and of certainty and donation behavior

		Aad		Aorg		HI	
CERTAINTY X VICTIM							
		Adjusted R ² of the model		Adjusted R ²		Adjusted R ²	
		0.05 (p < 0.01)		0.03 (p < 0.05)		0.04 (p < 0.01)	
PREDICTORS		ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT
Constant		2.00	2.01	5.40	7.32***	1.88	2.03*
Certainty		0.70	3.64***	0.43	3.04*	0.54	3.00**
Victim		2.47	3.77***	1.21	2.49*	1.90	3.10**
Certainty	x	-0.45	-3.60***	-0.26	-2.81**	-0.40	-3.43**
victim							
CERTAINTY X DONATION BEHAVIOR							
		Adjusted R ² of the model		Adjusted R ²		Adjusted R ²	
		0.27 (p < 0.001)		0.02 (p = 0.08)		0.14 (p < 0.001)	
PREDICTORS		ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT	ESTIMATE	T-STAT
constant		7.44	9.73***	8.74	15.82***	6.37	9.48***
certainty		-0.35	-2.32*	-0.33	-2.97**	-0.62	-4.61***
donation		-0.33	-2.70**	-0.28	-3.20**	-0.29	-2.75**
certainty	x	0.07	2.89**	0.07	3.85***	0.10	4.65***
donation							

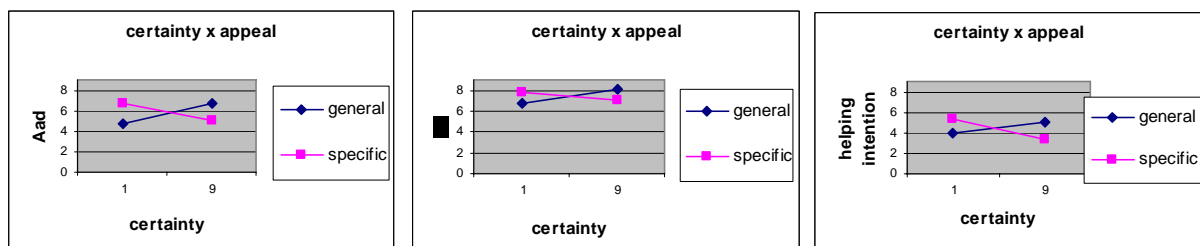


Figure 3: Interaction effect between certainty and victim

The interaction effect between certainty and donation was also significant for the three dependent variables (Aad: $p < .01$; Aorg: $p < .001$; HI: $p < .001$). Figure 4 shows the interaction effects.

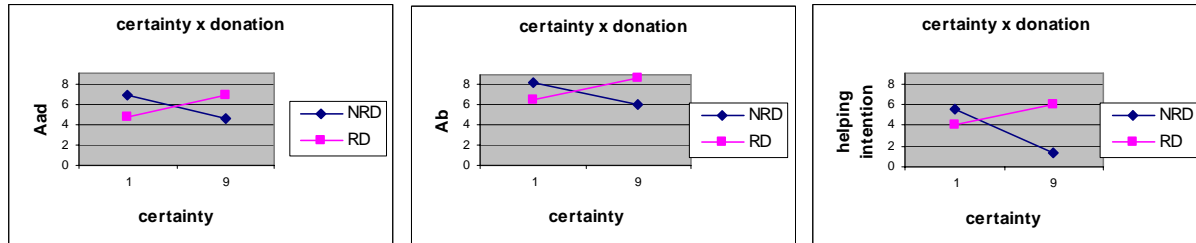


Figure 4: Interaction effect between certainty and donation behavior

The slopes of the different regression lines are shown in Table 4, together with the standard error and the significance of the slopes.

Table 4: Measures for simple slopes of certainty for different values of donation^a

DONATION	Aad			Aorg			HI		
	SLOPE	STAND ERROR	T-STAT	SLOPE	STAND ERROR	T-STAT	SLOPE	STAND ERROR	T-STAT
1 (non-reg donator)	-0.28	0.13	-2.17	-0.26	0.09	-2.76	-0.52	0.12	-4.51
9 (regular donator)	0.26	0.10	2.63	0.27	0.07	3.76	0.26	0.09	2.95

^a: the measures for the simple slopes were calculated as proposed by Aiken and West (1996).

Figure 4 shows that highly regular donors (RD) evaluated the ads that evoked a certain emotion more positively than the ads evoking an uncertain emotion. This result confirmed hypothesis 4B. Furthermore, as hypothesized in H4A, non-regular donors evaluated the ads evoking an uncertain emotion more positively than the ads evoking a certain emotion.

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of this study show that not all emotions are equally effective in creating advertisements for a good cause and that the effectiveness of different emotions depends on

the common donation behavior of consumers and whether the ad features a single identified victim or a group of unidentified victims.

The impact of the certainty dimension of emotions was moderated by these two factors. As expected, ads evoking uncertain emotions were evaluated more positively and increased helping intentions when people were not used to donate regularly (H4A) and/or when a single identified victim was shown in the advertisement (H3A). For non-regular donors, a certain emotion was probably incompatible with their lack of trust in socially oriented organizations. Non-regular donors were more persuaded by uncertain ad-evoked emotions which focused on the risks that the people in need are facing and their uncertain future. Furthermore, an uncertain emotion appeared to be more compatible with an ad appeal with one identified victim. Both ad elements focus on the perceived risks that the problem involves and are therefore compatible with each other.

When a group of unidentified victims was shown in the advertisement and/or when respondents were regular donors, ads evoking certain emotions were evaluated more positively and increased helping intentions (H3B and 4B). Certain emotions are more compatible with ad appeals that portray a group of unidentified people, because both ad elements draw attention away from the potential risks which the problem may involve. Furthermore, certain emotions were found to be more appropriate to persuade regular donors, probably because this certainty confirmed their trust and confidence in the organization.

Concerning the interaction effects between the valence dimension of the emotions and the moderators, the expectations of this study were only partially confirmed. It was hypothesized that ads evoking negative emotions would be evaluated more positively than those evoking positive emotions, leading to higher helping intentions, when a single identified victim was shown (H1A) and for non-regular donors (H2A). When a group of unidentified victims was shown in the ad and for regular donors, ads evoking positive emotions were hypothesized to be evaluated more positively and lead to higher helping intentions than those evoking negative emotions (H1B and 2B). While hypotheses 1B and 2B were largely supported (except for Aorg), no support was found for hypotheses 1A and 2A. No negative effect of the valence dimension was found for the ads showing a single identified victim and for non-regular donors. A possible explanation could be that under all conditions, a negative emotion overemphasized the severity of the problem. It is considered likely that the negative appeals came across as too harsh or cruel. Probably, the severity of the problem of child abuse was perceived to be very high in all conditions. Thus, it was not advantageous to increase the

severity further by inducing a negative emotion; not when an identified victim was shown, and even not for non-regular donators. For Aad, negative (relative to positive) emotions even had a detrimental effect. These results are in line with the findings of Obermiller (1995) that positive emotions are more effective than negative ones when the problem is already perceived as a very severe one.

Finally, the results of this study show that, under all conditions, the effect of the valence dimension on Aorg was not significant or very small. Apparently, whether a positive or a negative emotion was evoked did not really influence respondents' attitude toward the confidence centre. The certainty dimension, on the other hand, did have a high impact on Aorg. Especially for regular donors, the certainty dimension of the ad-evoked emotion influenced Aorg considerably. It is not inconceivable that the certainty of the ad-evoked emotion tells more about the organization than the valence dimension. For example, a certain emotion can indicate that the organization is convinced of its own capability to solve the problem.

The results of this study could guide marketers in creating emotional advertisements to promote a good cause. Before deciding what emotions to evoke (positive or negative and certain or uncertain), they should first ascertain whether or not the target population consists of regular donors who have more trust and confidence in socially oriented organizations than non-regular donors. Furthermore, marketers can also manipulate the psychological distance people experience with the problem and the perceived risks involved in the problem by featuring one identified victim or a group of unidentified victims. Marketers should beware that when a problem is already very salient in the minds of the people or when it is perceived as very severe, a negative emotional appeal could overemphasize the severity and lead to detrimental effects. In this case, it is more effective to evoke positive emotions in an advertisement, emphasizing the positive outcomes that can be obtained with the help of the people. Concerning the certainty dimension of ad-evoked emotions, marketers should ascertain that the ad-evoked emotion is compatible with other ad elements (like portraying a single identified victim or a group of unidentified victims) and with the characteristics of the target group (like donation history).

In this research respondents' previous donation behavior was measured by means of one item, indicating the extent to which respondents were used to donating money to or buy things from

socially oriented organizations. This item does not take into account the amount of money donated, the number of recipient organizations, and the domain specificity of the donations. Although this item might not include more detailed information about people's donation behavior, it is perceived to be a clear indication of how socially committed people are. Still, future research could take into account more detailed information about respondents' donation behavior. Furthermore, in future research, the effectiveness of certain versus uncertain and positive versus negative emotions could be compared for different types of good causes. Child abuse is already perceived as a very severe problem. Other good causes may address problems that are perceived as less severe and people could be more or less involved with other kinds of good causes. Furthermore, other dimensions of emotions could be taken into account when investigating the effectiveness of feelings to promote good causes. Factors related to the people in need could also influence the effectiveness of different emotional appeals, such as the age of the people in need (e.g., children, adults or seniors) or the extent to which the people in need are assumed to be responsible for their own problems (e.g., cancer for heavy smoker versus non-smokers).

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