

**How to Ask People for Change:
Examining Peoples' Willingness to Donate to Human Rights Campaigns**

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Which types of framing efforts are most effective at generating donations to support particular human rights campaigns? Using an experimental research design, we test the efficacy of framing strategies frequently employed by human rights organizations. Participants were randomly assigned to the control group (shown no campaign materials) or one of the treatment groups shown a campaign against sleep deprivation featuring one or a combination of framing strategies. We survey participants regarding their willingness to donate money to such a campaign. We find that informational frames, alone or in combination with personal frames, are most effective at generating donations. However, once people are mobilized to take direct action, they are more likely to also donate to those campaigns.

McEntire, Kyla Jo, Michele Leiby, and Matthew Krain. "How to Ask People for Change: Examining Peoples' Willingness to Donate to Human Rights Campaigns," in *The Social Practice of Human Rights*, Joel R. Pruce (ed.) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

How to Ask People for Change:

Examining Peoples' Willingness to Donate to Human Rights Campaigns

Imagine that Amnesty International, or any other large global Human Rights Organization [HRO] has decided to start a campaign. Perhaps the issue is marriage equality, or stopping sleep deprivation during interrogation. These types of issues may be less widely accepted by the general public as human rights issues, requiring that the HRO first change minds, and only then try to mobilize their effort or resources on that campaign's behalf. Raising money for such a campaign would be very challenging but doable, assuming that the organization knows how best to frame their appeals as they ask people to support the initiative.

Research by social psychologists demonstrates that the way people process information affects their willingness to help victims in need. HROs frame information about human rights abuses in order to shape individuals' values on contentious issues *and* mobilize them to act on their values. As Sikkink (1993, 416) notes, "since these organizations survive on donations, voluntary labor, and the dedication of underpaid staff, the NGOs that succeed and thrive are those that have a strong message capable of mobilizing their staff, membership, and public opinion." HROs rely heavily on fundraising and other forms of revenue generation to sustain their efforts (Smith, Pagnucco, and Lopez 1998), and often strategically employ frames to mobilize resources (Carpenter 2005).

Yet when we asked representatives of large global HROs about their understanding of whether and under what circumstances their messaging strategies are effective, they reported having a sense of what works based on past experience, but having little systematic evidence to support those intuitions (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014). Constrained by limited resources

and donors that want resources directed at action rather than research or administration (Baron and Szymanska 2011), HROs cannot afford to field-test their messaging strategies, or do systematic studies of their relative effectiveness. Given the centrality of messaging to HRO campaigns, this lack of clear evidence about framing's effectiveness may be problematic, especially in light of recent studies that have shown that untested messaging campaigns aimed at mobilizing for good causes may actually backfire (Nyhan et al. 2014).

Absent their own studies of messaging effectiveness, HROs could always turn to the academic literature to find out what works. But doing so would yield differing, and we argue incorrect, advice. For instance, suppose an HRO is trying to mobilize political action or to raise funds to advocate on behalf of a marriage equality initiative. The voter mobilization literature would suggest appeals that emphasize agency on the part of the individual would be most effective at mobilizing action and raising money (Duffy and Tavits 2008). Conversely, the research on the psychology of philanthropy would suggest that appeals that generate empathy work best to solicit political and monetary capital, and that information about the nature and scope of the issue only diminishes the effect (Slovic 2007).

Yet as we will show, emphasizing agency alone has little effect on generating donations to human rights campaigns. And while personal appeals are effective in generating empathy, in situations where it is not always clear that the issue is a human rights issue, some people who still need to be convinced must first be provided an informational overview on the issue. Only then are personal appeals effective at generating donations amongst that population of previously unmoved donors.

In this study, we examine which types of framing efforts are most effective at helping HROs mobilize resources by generating much-needed capital in the form of donations for

particular human rights campaigns. We first conducted archival research to identify the three most common messaging techniques employed by large, global, HROs. We then tested the efficacy of these framing strategies, separately and in combination, in getting respondents to contribute to a human rights campaign. We used an experimental research design in which participants were randomly assigned to the control group (shown no campaign materials) or one of the treatment groups shown a campaign against sleep deprivation featuring one of the three framing strategies, or some combination thereof. We then surveyed participants regarding their willingness to donate money to such a campaign.¹

While some of our previous research has shown the efficacy of personal frames for eliciting direct action and changing people's values on human rights (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014), we find that their use alone is not enough to motivate people to donate money to a human rights campaign. Rather, informational frames, either alone or in combination with personal frames, are key to generating donations. However, we also find that once people are mobilized to take direct action on behalf of a particular human rights campaign (often via appeals that rely on personal frames), they are more likely to donate to those campaigns as well.

What Are Frames and How Do HROs Use Them?

Framing is the process through which social and political actors present information in an effort to construct meaning or influence perceptions and opinions. Frames are rhetorical lenses used to shape how issues will be processed and understood (Goffman 1974). When exposed to a particular frame, people tend to assign greater weight to the value that frame invokes (Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley 1997). Therefore, which framing techniques are employed may have a significant effect on individuals' attitudes and behavior (Benford and Snow 2000; Chong and Druckman 2007). For example, experiments have demonstrated that people's expressed level of

tolerance for the Ku Klux Klan varies depending on whether the news item they are exposed to framed the story about a Klan march as a public security issue or a free speech issue (Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley 1997). The powerful effect of framing has been demonstrated on a wide range of political issues, from immigration reform (Knoll, Redlawsk, and Sandborn 2011), to public support for Supreme Court decisions and affirmative action (Clawson and Waltenburg 2003).

To determine what kinds of framing strategies Western-based, international HROs most often use, we examined the historical archives of one of the largest of these HROs—Amnesty International USA (AI).² Based on a sample of their advocacy and promotional materials, we identified the three most commonly employed frames as: (1) personal frames, where a personal narrative is told with the aim of emotionally impacting the reader, and creating a sense of empathy for the aggrieved; (2) informational frames, where the focus is to educate the reader by presenting them with core facts and statistics; and (3) motivational frames, which emphasize the reader's agency and potential efficacy, and include a direct appeal to take action.

We then examined recent campaign materials from Physicians for Human Rights and Oxfam International, and had conversations with advocates at Human Rights Watch, Catholic Relief Services, American Jewish World Service, and Doctors without Borders, confirming that other large, global, Western HROs also most regularly employ these same three frames in their efforts to build consensus, and mobilize action and donations in grassroots human rights campaigns. Given their prevalence, we focus our efforts on understanding the effectiveness of personal, informational, and motivational frames, separately and in combination, on generating donations for human rights advocacy campaigns. Below, we discuss each frame, how they are

typically used and their likely impact on individuals' willingness to donate to human rights campaigns.

Personal Frames, Emotions, and Giving

Personal frames focus the audience's attention on a particular episode such as the plight of an individual, rather than on broader factual information about the rights issue. In human rights campaigns, they are used to "identify the 'victims' of a given injustice and amplify their victimization." (Benford and Snow 2000, 615; see also Gamson 1995). Personal frames work by evoking an emotional reaction through identification with and humanization of the victims of rights abuses. By establishing a personal connection with the individual in the story, the audience is more likely to feel anger, sadness, and empathy and to prioritize the issue and want to affect change (Scheufele 1999; Carpenter 2005). The way people process information affects their willingness to help victims in need. People are more generous toward a single identifiable victim than toward an unidentifiable victim or toward a set of statistical victims (Scheufele 1999; Small and Loewenstein 2003; Kogut and Ritov 2005a; 2005b; 2011; Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic 2007; Slovic, 2007). Identifying a single person humanizes the victim, creates a mental image of the victim, and reduces the social distance between the victim and the audience (Dickert and Slovic 2009; Small 2011). This feeling of closeness to the victim activates sympathy, empathy, and concern that the potential giver feels toward that victim (Small and Loewenstein 2003; Kogut and Ritov 2005a), which "triggers a motivation to act to relieve the suffering" (Small 2011, 150; see also Batson 1990; Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic 2007). Previous studies have shown that emotions play a key role in decision making more generally, and prosocial behavior specifically (Batson 1990; Dovidio et al. 1991). Some of our previous work has verified that, in the context of human rights campaigns, personal frames are highly effective at generating strong

emotional reactions, leading people to be more likely to both see the identified abuse as a rights violation and to mobilize to act to change the situation (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014).

Moreover, increased empathic concern is positively related to an individual's donations to charities broadly (Bekkers 2006), and human rights organizations more specifically (Bennett 2003). Studies of charity and philanthropy have found that the use of personal frames that identify a single victim leads to increased willingness to donate money to alleviate suffering (Kogut and Ritov 2005a; 2005b; Slovic 2007). While few studies specifically examine human rights campaigns, it is not a huge leap to assume that if HROs use personal frames that clearly identify a single victim of a human rights abuse, then they are likely to elicit a strong emotional reaction on the part of potential givers, which should in turn increase giving behavior by the target audience. Therefore, we hypothesize that HRO campaigns using a personal frame will heighten individuals' emotional reaction to the campaign issue, particularly regarding the consequences for the central person(s) in the campaign, and will consequently increase their willingness to donate money to the campaign.

Informational Frames, Calculation, and Giving

Informational frames set the issue being discussed in the context of objective information or statistics. These frames rely on the assumption that increasing an individual's knowledge about the nature and scope of an issue will make them more likely to see the issue as problematic and want to do something about it. Long-time human rights activists are clear that information is power, and that facts, deployed strategically, can help change minds, mobilize support, and run an effective campaign (Becker 2012; Bogert 2013; O'Keefe 2013). When HROs provide information about government abuses, they can directly affect interest in and public opinion about human rights and spur the desire to get involved and engage in human rights activism

(Stellmacher et al. 2005; Cohrs et al. 2007). Absent such information, people do not change their beliefs about their government's respect for human rights, even in the face of worsening governmental abuses of those rights (Davis, Murdie, and Steinmetz 2012).

Yet, informational frames on their own do not usually lead individuals to mobilize, even in minimal ways such as signing a petition (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014). Research on the social psychology of philanthropy suggests that representations of larger numbers of victims or overall statistics “fail to spark emotion and feeling and thus fail to motivate actions” (Kogut and Ritov 2005a, 135). Instead of generating mental images of suffering and feelings of closeness, such information is processed in a more intangible manner, pushing people to calculate rather than feel—two distinct mental processes that yield very different outcomes in terms of charitable giving (Kahneman 2003; Dickert and Slovic 2009). Thus, we expect informational frames that emphasize the scope of the problem, rather than a single identifiable representation of that problem, to educate potential donors but to have no emotional effect on the target audience, and hence yield no discernible effect on giving patterns.

Research also suggests that when presented together, information meant to provide context for a vivid story of human suffering actually decreases the motivation to help others. Campaigns that discuss a single identifiable victim in the context of statistical information about the scope of the problem actually inhibit giving (Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic 2007). Social psychologists believe that information about the scope of the problem dulls the immediate emotional reaction that is critical to soliciting donations by making potential givers think more deliberately and analytically (Slovic 2007; Dickert, Sagara, and Slovic 2011). Thus, we expect that if HROs use personal frames in conjunction with informational frames, they will have no

effect on the emotional response to the campaign issue, and will not yield greater giving on the part of their target audience.

Motivational Frames, Feelings of Impact, and Giving

Motivational frames are calls to arms “intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support” (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). They motivate individuals to act by creating feelings of agency and efficacy (Gamson 1995). When individuals think that their political participation will be pivotal to achieving the outcome that they desire, they may be more likely to participate in political processes, particularly if they have an interest in helping others (Eldin, Gelman, and Kaplan 2007; Duffy and Tavits 2008).

Charitable giving is often driven both by appeals to emotion and enhancing a giver’s sense of agency. When donors feel that their contribution will have a real impact on the issue at hand, they are more likely to give money to a campaign to help others (Baron 1997; Featherstonhaugh et al. 1997). That increased sense of impact will also have a separate indirect effect on generosity, by stimulating emotions such as excitement and satisfaction in the donor, and enhancing their overall sense of agency (Cryder and Loewenstein 2011). If HROs use motivational frames that emphasize the importance of the donor’s contribution, then they may be likely to elicit both feelings of increased agency and satisfaction on the part of potential givers, which should in turn increase giving behavior by the target audience. We therefore hypothesize that HRO campaigns featuring a motivational frame will heighten individuals’ sense of agency, and in turn, will increase their willingness to donate money to the campaign.

However, some of our previous work has found that in human rights campaigns motivational frames *on their own* do not enhance individuals’ sense of agency and efficacy, and thus do not make people more likely to participate in a campaign to stop the abuse (McEntire,

Leiby, and Krain 2014). Moreover, motivational frames run the risk of overemphasizing the importance of a single contribution, which some respondents may view as manipulative and disingenuous, and may turn off potential donors (Seu 2010, 446). Therefore, we are cautious in our expectations regarding how strongly we expect these hypotheses about the effect of a motivational frame when used on its own to be supported. But appeals that stimulate *both* emotion and agency (using a combination of personal and motivational frames), and highlight the need for that particular donor's contribution in order to make a real difference, should encourage charitable giving. Thus, we hypothesize that a human rights campaign featuring both a personal and a motivational frame will increase donations to the campaign.

In contrast, since informational frames do not stimulate emotion, when combined with motivational frames, we do not expect an effect on charitable giving, even if they increase knowledge about the issues and yield a stronger sense of agency. Finally, given the literature's arguments about the possible dampening effect on emotional reactions that informational frames might have, we hypothesize that a combination of all three frames (a personal frame that clearly identifies a single victim, an informational frame, and a motivational frame) will still yield fewer donations to the campaign, even if individuals' knowledge about the issues and sense of agency are stronger.

[Insert Table 3.1 here]

Table 3.1 summarizes our hypotheses regarding the efficacy of different HRO framing strategies for encouraging grassroots giving. As indicated above, we expect the informational frame to depress giving, but the personal and motivational frames, alone or in combination, to increase donations to a human rights campaign.

Methods and Data

Experimental Design and Stimuli

To test these hypotheses, we created an experiment wherein a fictitious human rights organization launched various campaigns on the use of sleep deprivation during police interrogation. Participants were randomly assigned to either the control group (shown no campaign ad) or one of eleven treatment groups (shown a campaign ad featuring one or more of the frames). All participants were then asked a series of questions regarding their attitudes about the use of sleep deprivation during police interrogations and their willingness to make a financial contribution to a human rights campaign to end the practice.³

Using an experimental design allows us to examine the effects of different HRO framing strategies on individuals' donations to human rights campaigns, while controlling for potentially confounding variables. We created an HRO and accompanying campaigns, which reflect, as closely as possible, that which might be found in the real world. Our HRO's name—The Human Rights Initiative—sounds common enough as to be believable, but is distinct from the largest and most well known HROs. Similarly, the logo was designed to convey a sense of legitimacy, while avoiding any potential biasing elements. The name and artwork in the logo are easily recognizable as associated with the human rights community in general, but should not signal to any particular HRO. This anonymity is essential in order to avoid the effect an individual HRO's reputation may have on individuals' attitudes or willingness to donate to a campaign. While adding an official appearance to our campaign materials and survey, the Human Rights Initiative name and logo appeared on all pages of the survey for all participants, including the control group, and so cannot explain any observed difference in the beliefs or behavior of participants across the treatment groups.

We focused our human rights campaign on the issue of sleep deprivation during police interrogation. Recent surveys have shown a surprising degree of acceptance of the practice in the U.S. In one study, only 35 percent of those surveyed objected to the practice (Gronke et al. 2010), while in another 44 percent found it unacceptable (Richards, Morrill, and Anderson 2012). Given these earlier studies, we can expect considerable variation in our participants' a priori attitudes and willingness to donate to an anti-sleep deprivation campaign.

We carefully constructed the treatments to be comparable to those most often used by some of the largest international HROs. The language, style, and tone of the ads reflects that found in recent campaign materials used by Amnesty International, Physicians for Human Rights, and Oxfam International. We avoid any reference to social, national, ethnic or ideological groups, as previous studies have found that such shared identities between the audience and the victim may influence one's responses to the ad and subsequent behavior (Dovidio et al. 1991; Kogut and Ritov 2007). We also exclude images and colors, which have been shown to affect how individuals respond to materials, and in particular, may elicit different emotional reactions (Valdez and Mehrabian 1994; Small and Verrochi 2009).

We also made sure that the basic content was similar across all treatments; each frame identified sleep deprivation as an ineffective police interrogation technique, which often results in negative physical and psychological consequences for the detainee. This resulted in three distinct individual frames. Lastly, we removed any redundancy resulting from combining multiple frames in the same ad. For illustration purposes, an example of one of the campaign ads is shown below. All other frames are available in the online appendix, Figures OA1-OA6.

[Insert Figure 3.1 here]

Participants

We recruited participants through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online platform that allows researchers and other “requesters” to pay workers (or MTurkers) to complete small tasks.⁴ Our job ad simply asked participants to complete a “short opinion survey,” in exchange for which they would be paid \$0.50. While this is more than what is often offered for similar tasks (Paolacci, Chandler, and Ipeirotis 2010; Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012), MTurkers’ compensation level has been found to only affect the number of participants who complete the survey, not the quality of their responses (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011). Our job ad avoided any mention of the content or purpose of the study. We made no reference to human rights, sleep deprivation, or police interrogation procedures in order to avoid any selection effects.

To participate in the study, MTurkers had to be at least eighteen years or older, live in the United States, and have a satisfaction rate of at least 85 percent for previously completed tasks. Using these parameters, we recruited 1,834 participants. Twelve were subsequently excluded for submitting incorrect answers to the “captcha question” (What is 5-2?), leaving a total respondent pool of 1,822.⁵

A demographic profile of the participants in the control group and each of the treatment groups is presented in an online appendix, in Table OA1. There are no systematic differences in demographics (age, gender, level of education, or religiosity) across our groups, which we confirmed using difference of means t-tests. Our sample is consistent with other studies that use MTurk (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012; McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014). MTurkers are slightly younger, a bit more liberal, and slightly better educated than respondents in traditional samples (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012), which, as we discuss elsewhere is precisely the

audience often reached by large Western-based HRO campaigns (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014).

Survey Instrument and Data

Upon agreeing to participate in the study, all participants were taken to the first page of the survey, containing only the Human Rights Initiative's logo. Those assigned (at random by the survey software) to one of the treatment groups were taken to a second page and asked to read the corresponding campaign ad before moving on to the survey. Those assigned to the control group were shown no campaign ad and taken directly to the survey. All participants answered the same survey questions, in the same order.

The dependent variable—an individual's willingness to donate to a human rights campaign—is measured dichotomously in response to the following prompt:

The Human Rights Initiative is currently launching a campaign to ban sleep deprivation during police interrogations. Would you be willing to donate your compensation for completing this survey (\$0.50) to the campaign? One hundred percent of your donation will go directly towards efforts to ban sleep deprivation.

The “ask” was intentionally designed to be minimal. For most Americans, a \$0.50 donation presents very little financial burden. Instead of an out of pocket donation, participants were asked to simply donate the payment they otherwise would have earned for completing the survey. Previous studies have shown that it is not just the absolute cost of donating, but the *perceived* cost that affects the probability of making a contribution. Those willing to donate their \$0.50 of future earnings simply had to click “Yes” to complete the online transaction, making the barriers for donation as low as possible.

Each independent variable, representing one of the eleven possible treatments, is measured dichotomously, 1 if the participant was assigned to the relevant group, and 0 otherwise. Beyond the hypothesized effect of the different HRO framing strategies, previous studies have shown that charitable giving is heavily influenced by one's age, gender, education, and religiosity (Low et al. 2007; Bekkers and Wiepking 2010). The influence of such factors on the dependent variable is mitigated by including them as control variables and through the random assignment of participants to the control or treatment groups.

Beyond the measures taken in the design of treatments, we also added a number of control variables to account for factors known to shape individuals' attitudes towards and/or willingness to contribute to human rights issues. For example, studies have shown that the perceived efficacy and efficiency of charitable organizations weighs significantly on potential donors minds when asked to make a contribution (Parsons 2003; Low et al. 2007; Bekkers and Wiepking 2010). For instance, respondents to a national survey in the UK frequently cited having confidence that one's donations were being used effectively, and receiving information on how they were used as a key factor in their decisions about future giving (Low et al. 2007). Absent such assurances, potential donors may adopt a consumerist attitude (Seu 2010, 450). We address these concerns by assuring potential donors that 100 percent of their contribution will be used directly to ban sleep deprivation during police interrogations. We also control for respondents' perceptions regarding the efficacy of charitable giving, in general.

Because our dependent variable is measured dichotomously, we use logit regression to model the effects of HRO framing on giving. The online appendix provides a fuller description of each variable included in the models (Table OA2), and descriptive statistics for each variable

(Table OA3). Table 3.2 presents the results of the main models, reporting the coefficients and the robust standard errors for each variable.

Results

What, if any, framing effects are observed on individuals' willingness to make a donation to an HRO campaign to ban sleep deprivation during police interrogations? We find that, counter to our original expectations, reading a personal narrative featuring an emotional story of a victim is not sufficient to motivate giving to a human rights campaign. Rather, informational frames (whether viewed in isolation or in some combinations), with their emphasis on facts and statistics on the scope of the human rights crisis, are more successful.

[Insert Table 3.2 here]

The base model (Model 1) examines the effect that exposure to one or more of the HRO framing strategies has on an individual's willingness to make a financial contribution to a human rights campaign. Results show that compared to those participants who saw no campaign ad (control group), viewing the informational frame significantly increases one's willingness to donate. In fact, the informational frame is the *only* frame when used alone to significantly increase donations (compared to the control group). These findings counter expectations that evoking an emotional reaction from audience members would be more successful at generating donations than would informing them broadly on the scope of the human rights issue.

For ease of interpretation, we also calculated the predicted probabilities of making a donation for participants in the control group and each of the treatment groups (see Table OA4 in the online appendix). The control group, for example, has only a 0.0545 predicted probability of making a donation, compared to a higher probability of donation from those in the informational treatment group (0.1531). The informational frame in isolation or in combination with the

personal (male or female) and motivational frames consistently outperforms other framing strategies, and leads to highest probabilities of making a donation to the human rights campaign.⁶

Moreover, the expectation that combining the informational and personal frames would negate any positive effect of the latter is not supported by the findings. The efficacy of both personal frames increases when an informational lens is added.⁷ As expected, the personal frames (male and female) significantly increase respondents' negative feelings about sleep deprivation. And respondents' negative emotions were driven by their reactions to learning of the negative mental and physical consequences of sleep deprivation for the surviving victim. However, these effects are not lost when the same personal narratives are combined with an informational overview of the use of sleep deprivation as a police interrogation technique (see Table OA6). Almost all combination of frames that included both informational and personal narratives were statistically significant in the base model (Model 1) with one exception (informational + personal [male]).

As the models in Table OA6 show, knowledge seems to play a more important role than emotion or agency in affecting giving to human rights campaigns. Emotional appeals alone have limited ability to affect people's donations to rights campaigns. And none of the frames alone or in combination had a statistically significant effect on agency, suggesting that this mechanism is also insufficient to prompt giving to human rights campaigns. The mechanism that drives the effects of the informational frame, alone or in combination, is its ability to increase the knowledge of the respondent about the issue. In all experimental groups that were exposed to an informational narrative, the increase in respondents' knowledge about the issue was statistically significant, as expected. When used without an informational frame, neither the personal nor the motivational frame has a significant affect on knowledge about the issue, and perhaps as a result,

neither has a direct effect on giving to human rights campaigns. The implication here is that many people need first to be convinced about the nature or scope of the human rights issues involved before being willing to commit resources to a campaign to stop the abuses.

In addition, as with previous studies of philanthropy more generally (Lee, Piliavin, and Vaughn 1999; Bekkers and Wiepking 2010), we find that previous giving (the number of times one has given to a charitable organization in the past year) significantly increases one's willingness to contribute to a human rights campaign. However, contrary to previous findings in the charitable giving literature (Low et al. 2007), we find that religiosity (the number of times one reported going to church in the past month) is significantly, but negatively, associated with donations to a human rights campaign. This may be because religiosity affects giving to religious organizations or causes related to one's religious social network, but not to secular organizations or causes (Cnaan, Katernakis, and Wineburg 1993; Putnam 2000). There is clearly a qualitative difference between contributing to a campaign to ban sleep deprivation and, for example, donating to one's local food pantry or to a religiously affiliated charity. Nevertheless, given the skew in our sample, the vast majority of whom reported having not attended any religious services in the past month, further research is required to determine what, if any, relationship exists between religiosity and giving to a human rights campaign.

Lastly, in Model 2 we added variables to the base model to control for consensus mobilization (the process through which HROs attempt to bring individuals' views on the issue at hand in line with their own) and action mobilization (similar efforts to motivate the audience to take direct action, such as to participate in a protest or sign a petition). We measure consensus mobilization based on respondents' agreement/disagreement with the statement, "*Sleep deprivation is an appropriate police interrogation technique.*" Action mobilization is measured

dichotomously; a “1” is recorded if a respondent agreed to add his/her name to either a petition to ban sleep deprivation to be sent either to the Attorney General or one to be sent to the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights.

Convincing people to care about the issue, and in the case of human rights, identify it as a rights issue, is clearly important to any fundraising campaign. In a recent survey, of those who reported giving to charitable organizations, a majority reported that their belief in the organizations’ issue or work was most significant to their decision to make a donation (Low et al. 2007). In our study, however, agreeing with the Human Rights Initiative’s stance on sleep deprivation was not sufficient to motivate charitable giving to the human rights campaign. However, once individuals were mobilized to take action, even a small political act, such as signing a petition, they were more likely to *also* donate money to the human rights campaign (see Model 2).

These results suggest that the personal frames still matter, albeit indirectly. Our previous research demonstrated that the personal frame was the *only* one effective at spurring respondents to take direct action against sleep deprivation (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014). Table OA5 in the online appendix shows that the predicted probability of someone in the control group donating \$0.50 to the campaign if they refused to sign a petition was only 0.0216. However, if a respondent in the same group agreed to add their name to either of the petitions to ban sleep deprivation, their predicted probability of also donating \$0.50 to the campaign increased to 0.1097. This result mirrors previous findings that voluntarism, activism, or other forms of social or political participation are complimentary activities to charitable giving (Lee, Piliavin, and Vaughn 1999; Putnam 2000), and significantly increase one’s willingness to contribute to political campaigns (Brown, Powell, and Wilcox 1995). The takeaway message here for HROs is

that it is easier to solicit monetary support from those whom you have already mobilized to act on behalf of your campaign. This suggests even greater urgency for HROs to get their messaging campaigns right, as efforts at mobilizing political action can also reap a pool of possible donors in the future.

Discussion

Why might our findings about the effects of informational frames, alone or in combination with other frames, differ so much from the standard literature on charity and philanthropy? The logic behind the social psychology arguments about why informational frames are ineffective is that emotional connection, rather than knowledge and calculation, is the mechanism that drives prosocial giving. But that understanding has been built on experiments that clearly identify a victim of an obvious humanitarian crisis, such as someone facing a life-threatening health crisis, or a victim of a natural disaster (Kogut and Ritov 2005a; Slovic 2007). Factors that lead people to contribute to human rights organizations may differ substantially from those that lead people to contribute to other types of charities, even those with humanitarian missions (Bennett 2003). Our experiment depicted an issue that is not as clearly a human rights violation, at least among the general public in the United States. Studies show that the perceived degree of need for help is positively related to the likelihood of an individual's willingness to donate (Cheung and Chan 2000). Readers must first be convinced of the nature and scope of the human rights problem—particularly a contentious one—before being moved by an emotional appeal to donate to a campaign to address it. This may explain why an information frame works to generate donations in the case of sleep deprivation as an interrogation technique, while a personal frame on its own does not.

Our previous work has shown that personal frames are very effective at mobilizing consensus and action on contentious human rights issues such as sleep deprivation (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain 2014). In this study, we find that once convinced to mobilize to act, people are more willing to donate to the campaign to stop the abuse. Indeed, some HROs create campaigns intentionally to simultaneously mobilize consensus and action, and raise funds for their campaign (Talbot 2014).

This may also explain the power of combining informational and personal frames evident in our results. The logic of social psychology arguments about why informational frames dull the effects of personal frames is that such information pushes people to calculate rather than feel. However, one is unlikely to feel empathy for a “victim” of a “violation” if one does not believe that the person is a real victim of a real violation. When the nature of a humanitarian issue is contested, the informational context appears to be a necessary condition that allows personal frames to be effective at generating the emotions that lead to prosocial donation. The emotional appeal is only effective in the context of compelling information that the appeal is legitimate and that the issue at hand really is a human rights abuse.

Also contrary to the findings of the social psychology research that has focused on charity and philanthropy in general, we have found that exposure to the combination of all three frames—a personal frame that clearly identifies a single victim, an informational frame, and a motivational frame—increases a person’s willingness to donate money to a human rights campaign. This is further evidence of the difference between raising funds for humanitarian concerns where the issue is clearly understood and it is obvious that the fundraising is to help victims in need versus a human rights campaign about an issue where it is not inherently obvious that the issue at hand is a violation of human rights, or it is not widely recognized as a problem.

This also mirrors anecdotal reports by human rights advocates that combining all *three* frames (informational, personal, and motivational) is a successful strategy to solicit support (Talbot 2013).

Motivational frames on their own do little to affect a sense of agency and therefore to generate donations to human rights campaigns, they can be effective if used in conjunction with frames that generate *both* an understanding about the nature and scope of the issue and an emotional connection to the victim. In this context, once the reader has identified the problem and connected to the victim, they have an outlet to do something to affect change—in this case, they can, and do, choose to donate money to the HRO campaign to stop the abuse.

Conclusion

This study provides the first systematic test of the effect of the three most common framing techniques employed by many large, Western, global HROs on donations to human rights campaigns. Our results demonstrate that informational frames, alone or in combination with personal and motivational frames, are important in generating donations. However, we also find that once people are mobilized to take direct action on behalf of a particular human rights campaign (via appeals that rely on personal frames), they are more likely to donate to those campaigns as well. This suggests that HROs may need to consider a two-pronged strategy for generating donations. HROs should use personal frames to mobilize action, which makes those mobilized more likely to continue to contribute to the campaign, both in deeds and in monetary support. Next, provide information about the nature and scope of the rights issue to motivate those who have not yet been mobilized to contribute to the campaign. Our study suggests, contrary to much of the more general philanthropy and charitable giving research, that combining these two strategies does not blunt the effects of the personal frame. Rather, it helps

HROs reach out to both those who are willing to act and those who still need to be convinced about the worthiness of the appeal.

Our study demonstrated these outcomes when examining a particularly contentious issue—sleep deprivation as a police interrogation technique—one that many do not believe is inappropriate, let alone a human rights issue. Future studies should consider whether informational frames work better to solicit donations for some human rights issues that may be less well understood, or on which there is less consensus (such as sleep deprivation) but not for others where the information provides little new knowledge or understanding.

Moreover, it would be interesting to know whether it is easier to solicit donations for campaigns that work on behalf of victims perceived as vulnerable, innocent, or apolitical than on behalf of victims of rights abuses who are less vulnerable, may be guilty of a crime, or are political dissidents. These types of studies would help us better understand how framing works to generate resources for HROs, but also under what conditions HROs should or should not employ particular frames to maximize the resources available to them.

Our study also focuses on the types of campaigns commonly used by large, Western, global HROs that target a more educated, Western audience. Future research should examine the ways in which local HROs, cultural contexts, and audiences change the choice of framing strategies or the efficacy of these frames in helping them to fund locally-focused human rights campaigns.

Finally, our study suggests that not all charitable giving is alike. Some factors that typically lead to charitable giving in some contexts may have very different effects on donations to human rights campaigns. Contrary to some popular exhortations (Kristof and WuDunn 2010), human rights advocates need to view the policy recommendations of the philanthropy and

charitable giving literature skeptically, and consider the unique demands of their own human rights campaigns. Future research would benefit from analyzing framing effects across a range of issues to better understand how human rights donations differs, so as to give HROs and their publicity and development personnel a better understanding of how best to mobilize resources for change.

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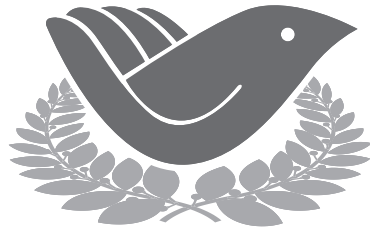
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Table 3.1: Hypothesized Framing Effects on Donating to an HRO Campaign

Hypotheses	Frame(s)	Expected Relationship to Giving	Mechanism(s)
H1-2	Personal	Positive	Increased emotion
H3-5	Informational	None	Increased knowledge, but lessened emotion
H6-7	Personal + Informational	None	Increased knowledge, but lessened emotion
H8-9	Motivational	Positive	Increased agency
H10-11	Personal + Motivational	Positive	Increased emotion and agency
H12	Informational + Motivational	None	Increased knowledge and agency, but no effect on emotion
H13	Personal + Informational + Motivational	None	Increased knowledge and agency, but lessened emotion

Figure 3.1: Informational + Personal (male) + Motivational Combination Frame



the human rights initiative

*Please read the following message from the Human Rights Initiative about sleep deprivation.
After that we'll ask you a few questions.*

Informational
frame

Sleep deprivation is used increasingly as a regular interrogation technique. Detainees are often forcibly kept awake for extended periods, which can have a variety of physiological or mental effects, ranging from severe headaches to social anxiety disorder and impaired cognitive functioning. Despite its increased use, sleep deprivation is an ineffective means of obtaining reliable information, in part because it makes detainees more suggestible to leading questions and more likely to change their answers later. The Human Rights Initiative recently investigated 27 cases of sleep deprivation during interrogation; police officials reported acquiring reliable information that led to an arrest and conviction in less than 5% of these cases.

Personal (male)
frame

For instance, Andrew is a 37-year old husband and father of two. Until recently, Andrew worked as a math teacher at his local high school. On his way home from work on February 11, Andrew was stopped by two police officers and taken to the local police station. There, he was interrogated about his suspected involvement in an armed robbery. Andrew was detained at the police station for three days, during which time he was kept awake by dumping cold water on his body, restraining him in a forced standing position, and playing loud music in his cell. Despite knowing nothing about the robbery, Andrew was pressured into falsely accusing his brother of involvement in the crime, an accusation that he later withdrew. Since being released, Andrew has suffered from high blood pressure, debilitating headaches, depression and hallucinations. He has reported having difficulty relating to his wife and children, and focusing on work.

Motivational
frame

Sleep deprivation is an inhumane and ineffective interrogation technique that must be stopped. The Human Rights Initiative is working to ban this practice that is increasingly used by police officers to gather information. However, we can't do it without YOU! Our members and supporters have had great success in previous human rights campaigns, and all because they dared to stand up and be heard. Help us now as we work together to ban sleep deprivation during police interrogation. Lend your voice to the millions of others who are outraged by the use of sleep deprivation during interrogations. YOU can make a difference.

Table 3.2: Logit Results, Effects on Giving to a Human Rights Campaign

		Model 1⁸	Model 2
Treatments	Informational	1.144* (0.454)	1.145* (0.488)
	Personal M	0.768 (0.474)	0.649 (0.504)
	Personal F	0.727 (0.482)	0.626 (0.512)
	Motivational	0.865 (0.468)	0.914 (0.506)
	Info + Pers M	0.852 (0.468)	0.717 (0.495)
	Info + Pers F	0.942* (0.447)	0.872 (0.482)
	Info + Motiv	0.217 (0.526)	0.089 (0.546)
	Pers M + Motiv	0.417 (0.507)	0.283 (0.535)
	Pers F + Motiv	0.406 (0.519)	0.178 (0.537)
	Pers M + Info + Motiv	1.111* (0.450)	1.016* (0.484)
	Pers F + Info + Motiv	1.069* (0.460)	1.008* (0.496)
Controls	Age	0.026*** (0.007)	0.031*** (0.008)
	Gender	-0.016 (0.172)	0.025 (0.181)
	Education	-0.074 (0.064)	-0.016 (0.068)
	News	0.087 (0.084)	0.050 (0.091)
	Agency	0.293* (0.116)	0.187 (0.128)
	Religiosity	-0.409** (0.139)	-0.321* (0.135)
	Perception of Giving Efficacy	0.181 (0.120)	0.067 (0.128)
	Annual Giving	0.465*** (0.126)	0.444** (0.129)
	Consensus Mobilization		-0.178 (0.113)
	Action Mobilization ⁹		1.720*** (0.205)
Model Stats	N	1781	1775
	χ^2	$\chi^2(19) = 72.08^{***}$	$\chi^2(21) = 177.93^{***}$
	Log Likelihood	-525.37317	-467.354
<i>Notes: robust standard errors in parentheses; * = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$</i>			

¹ This research was performed under College of Wooster Human Subjects Research Committee Approvals HSRC 2012.037.1213 and HSRC 2013.09.001.

² AI-USA's archive is housed at Columbia University. The collection, spanning 1966 to 2003, contains 107.52 linear feet of information, including administrative and financial records, fundraising materials, internal memoranda, work product, and published reports from the organization.

³ For the full text of the survey, as well as all other materials referenced as being included in the online appendix may be found at www.MicheleLeiby.com.

⁴ Studies have repeatedly shown MTurk's reliability as a high-quality data collection tool for experimental social science research (Paolacci, Chandler, and Ipeirotis 2010; Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011; Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012).

⁵ Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart (CAPTCHA) questions are commonly used in online platforms to authenticate the user as human, and not an automated bot.

⁶ We also graphed the confidence intervals of the predicted probabilities for each group and performed Wald tests to determine whether there were significant differences in the substantive effects of each treatment on the dependent variable (Long and Freese 2006, 77-78; Williams 2014). The relevant Wald test statistics for Model 1 are:

Informational=Informational+Motivational ($\chi^2=4.40$, $p<0.05$);

Informational=PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=2.96$; $p<0.10$);

Informational=PersonalFemale+Motivational ($\chi^2=2.85$, $p<0.10$);

Informational+PersonalFemale=Informational+Motivational ($\chi^2=2.84$, $p<0.10$);

Informational+Motivational=Informational+PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=4.16$, $p<0.05$);

Informational+Motivational=Informational+PersonalFemale+Motivational ($\chi^2=3.71$, $p<0.10$);

PersonalMale+Motivational=Informational+PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=2.74$, $p<0.10$). The relevant Wald test statistics for Model 2 are: Informational=Informational+Motivational

($\chi^2=5.42$, $p<0.05$); Informational=PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=p<0.10$);

Informational=PersonalFemale+Motivational ($\chi^2=p<0.05$);

Motivational=Informational+Motivational ($\chi^2=3.01$, $p<0.10$);

Informational+PersonalFemale=Informational+Motivational ($\chi^2=3.16$, $p<0.10$);

Informational+Motivational=Informational+PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=4.24$, $p<0.05$);

Informational+Motivational=Informational+PersonalFemale+Motivational ($\chi^2=4.08$, $p<0.05$);

PersonalMale+Motivational=Informational+PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=2.82$, $p<0.10$);

PersonalFemale+Motivational=Informational+PersonalMale+Motivational ($\chi^2=3.67$, $p<0.10$);

PersonalFemale+Motivational=Informational+PersonalFemale+Motivational ($\chi^2=3.53$, $p<0.10$).

⁷ Given the overlap in the confidence intervals between the PersonalMale and the Informational+PersonalMale frames, as well as between the PersonalFemale and the Informational+PersonalFemale frames, we cannot say for sure that the greater probability of making a donation observed from the addition of the informational frame is statistically significant (see Table OA4).

⁸ We also examined the separate impact of each treatment on the dependent variable in multivariate models (including all control variables). The results are essentially the same as those

presented here, with the exception that in Model 1 the motivational frame by itself is now statistically significant at $p < 0.01$, and in Model 2 it is significant at $p < 0.05$.

⁹ We also disaggregated action mobilization, according to those who signed the petition to be sent to the Attorney General and those who signed the petition to be sent to the UN Special Rapporteur, and ran separate regressions. The results of these two models, as well as those reported in Model 2 where action mobilization is collapsed, are substantively the same.