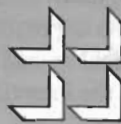


Replications and Refinements



Under this heading are brief reports of studies providing data that substantiate, disprove, or refine what we think we know. These Notes consist of a summary of the study's procedure and as many details about the results as space allows. Additional details concerning the results can be obtained by communicating directly with the author.

Sequential Request Strategy: Effect on Donor Generosity

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HARRIS (1972), following Freedman and Fraser's (1966) paradigm, has shown that doing one good act makes a person more likely to do another. When people were first asked for the time or for directions, they were subsequently more likely to give a dime when asked than were people who had not been exposed to the first request. Performing one altruistic act increased the salience of the norm of social responsibility; in turn, the norm would increase the probability of complying with a second request. Harris, however, measured only the rate of the participants' compliance with the request but not the level of their generosity. We hypothesized that the norm of social responsibility activation would also increase the donor's generosity.

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The participants were 1,643 men and 1,641 women, each of whom was walking alone in one of several shopping areas of a large French city (population greater than 300,000). Their approximate age range was 30 to 60 years, and all were French. Our interviewers were 164 1st-year psychology students, 37 men and 127 women ranging in age from 18 to 20 years. Each interviewer approached 20 participants, 10 of each sex, according to a condition, experimental or control, that was randomly assigned. Like most young people of their age, the interviewers were neatly dressed in jeans and sneakers.

The experiment was a partial replication of Harris's (1972) first study. In the experimental condition, the interviewer approached a person and said, "Please, could you tell me what time it is?" When the time was given, the interviewer repeated it in a neutral tone and made the second request: "Excuse me, would you have one or two coins to give me?"

In the control condition, the interviewer approached the participant and simply asked: "Excuse me, would you have one or two coins to give me?" We used this request because in France, economic conditions have led to a large number of young who beg in the streets, subways, train stations, car parks, and so forth. If the person agreed to give some money, the interviewer took it and counted it. Then, the person was debriefed, and the money was given back to him or her.

Differences between men and women were not significant; hence, the data were collapsed across sex. With three exceptions, all participants in the experimental condition gave the time. Among these, 43% agreed to give money as opposed to 28% in the control condition. The difference was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 3,280) = 72.38, p < .001$. Concerning the amount of donations, we found means of 2.45 French francs (US\$0.49) in the experimental condition and 1.85 French francs (US\$0.37) in the control condition. The difference was also significant in accordance with expectations, $t(163) = 16.07, p < .001$.

Concerning donation probability, our findings confirm Harris's (1972) donation rates. Unlike Pliner, Hart, Kohl, and Saari (1974), we observed that compliance with the first request induced people to give more money. Here, a succession of requests increased the donors' generosity. Perhaps in the second request, "one or two coins" could be viewed as an anchoring point for the individual. That would confirm Schwarzwald, Bizman, and Raz's (1983) results in the case of requests for aid to a charitable organization. The present study suggests that a multiple-requests strategy is also possible in France for requests by a private person.

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