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ABSTRACT

Charities typically ask potential donors repeatedly for a donation. These repeated requests might trigger avoidance behavior. Considering that, this paper analyzes the impact of offering an ask avoidance option on charitable giving. In a proposed utility framework, the avoidance option decreases the social pressure to donate. At the same time, it induces feelings of gratitude toward the fundraiser, which may lead to a reciprocal increase in donations. The results of a lab experiment designed to disentangle the two channels show no negative impact of the option to avoid repeated asking on donations. Instead, the full model indicates a positive impact of the reciprocity channel. This finding suggests that it might be beneficial for charities to introduce an ask avoidance option during high-frequency fundraising campaigns.

Keywords: Charitable giving, Repeated request, Ask avoidance, Experiment**JEL Codes:** C91, D64, C73**Corresponding author:**

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1 Introduction

Many charitable organizations ask individuals repeatedly for a donation or to perform another prosocial act. During online fundraising campaigns (e.g., the Wikimedia Foundation "Big English" campaign), pop-ups with donation requests appear every time an individual visits the website of the organization. Online-shoppers are asked to donate to a charity each time they pay via PayPal. Charities regularly send out printed donation appeals to warm-listed individuals. Fundraisers await individuals when they enter grocery stores and then again leave (e.g., fundraisers for the Salvation Army, as described by Andreoni et al. 2017). The aim of such repeated appeals is to maximize the so-called 'power of the ask' (Andreoni 2006).

The downside of this strategy is that repeated asking might annoy potential donors. Diamond and Noble (2001) find that individuals use defensive strategies against repeated appeals. In the same vein, van Diepen et al. (2009) observe irritation when charities send out too many donation appeal mails. Importantly, individuals might employ strategies to avoid being asked. In the lab experiments by Dana et al. (2006) and Broberg et al. (2007), individuals are willing to give up money to avoid being in an environment where donating is possible. In the field, agents are unsubscribing from warm lists (Damgaard and Gravert 2018), stopping online voting processes (Exley and Petrie 2018), or avoiding buying opera tickets online after an online fundraising campaign by the opera (Adena and Huck 2020). Andreoni et al. (2017) and Trachtman et al. (2015) find that shoppers take detours to avoid fundraisers at supermarket entrances. DellaVigna et al. (2012) report that fewer households open their doors when informed about an upcoming fundraising campaign.

In light of this downside to repeated asking, the aim of this article is to analyze whether it might be beneficial for charities to deliberately offer an option to avoid the ask. In a utility framework, I consider two opposed channels through which the implementation of an avoidance option might affect charitable giving. Then, I discuss the results of a lab experiment that allows to disentangle the two channels.

The first channel is through social pressure. The implementation of the avoidance option might decrease donations when a substantial proportion of donors donate mainly due to social pressure (see e.g., DellaVigna et al. 2012). The more often individuals are asked for a donation, the higher the perceived social pressure to donate might be. In support of the relevance of the social pressure channel, the field experiments by DellaVigna et al. (2012),

Andreoni et al. (2017), and Exley and Petrie (2018) show lower donations when individuals are able avoid any ask. Lazear et al. (2012) find a similar result in a lab experiment.

The second channel is through reciprocity. The introduction of the ask avoidance option might foster charitable giving, when offering the option is perceived as a friendly act. In an act of gift exchange (Falk 2007), the agent might show positive reciprocity (Fehr and Gächter 2000) and donate more when the avoidance option is introduced. Supporting this channel, Kamdar et al. (2015) report higher total donations when the option to avoid repetition of the ask is implemented.

I contribute here a lab experiment that allows me to disentangle the two channels and analyze their impact on charitable giving. In a Dictator Game with a charity as the recipient (Eckel and Grossman 1996), participants receive an endowment of EUR 10.00 and can donate to a charity. The lab environment can mimic particularly the online fundraising market, which is growing quickly in importance (Adena and Hager 2020). I consider four treatments. In treatment THRICE, subjects are asked three times to donate a share of the initial endowment to a charity. In treatment UNCON, participants can avoid further asking after the first donation decision stage. I assume that this avoidance option decreases social pressure but might induce positive reciprocity. To disentangle the two effects, I introduce treatment CON. In this treatment, subjects can avoid the repetition only when they make a positive donation (of at least EUR 0.10). I assume that here the avoidance option decreases social pressure without inducing positive reciprocity. Treatment ONCE, in which participants are asked one time for a donation, serves as a control treatment.

The results show no negative impact of introducing the ask avoidance option. Instead, a regression analysis exhibits a significantly positive impact of the reciprocity channel on donations to the charity. The social pressure channel does not seem to matter. As a consequence, I observe a slightly higher average donation in UNCON than in THRICE. The difference is not statistically significant, though. Furthermore, I find that around 30 percent of agents avoid the repetitions of the ask, when they have the unconditional option to do so. The subjects in UNCON who do not avoid being asked repeatedly donate significantly more than participants in ONCE.

These findings highlight the benefits of "Don't ask me again" buttons or similar avoidance options during high-frequency fundraising campaigns. The results imply that deliberately offering potential donors the option to avoid

the repetition of the ask might be beneficial for charities. First, the induced reciprocity might increase donations. Second, when each donation request comes with a cost, reducing the number of appeals further increases efficiency. Third, the measure allows for identification of individuals who like to donate repeatedly. These agents are lucrative targets of fundraising.

2 Utility Framework

I propose a utility function U_i of an individual i that is presented in Equation (1). The function gives the utility that the individual derives from a donation g_i . The amount donated can be between EUR 0.00 and the endowment of EUR 10.00.

$$U_i(g_i) = u_i(g_i) + \gamma r_i(g_i) - s_i(g^s - g_i) \quad (1)$$

$$\text{with } s_i(g^s - g_i) \geq 0$$

I include three elements, of which the latter two correspond to the channels discussed in the Introduction. The first element, $u_i(g_i)$, summarizes all factors that might moderate the utility derived from a donation, with the exception of reciprocity and social pressure. This summary element includes the disutility that individuals feel when giving up a share of their endowment. It also includes altruism and warm-glow motives for donating (Andreoni 1989, 1990). I set $u_i(g_i = 0) = 0$ as a reference. The function $u_i(\cdot)$ is concave in g_i for those individuals for which $u(g_i) > 0$ for at least some $g_i > 0$. The function is convex for those individuals with $u(g_i) \leq 0$ for any g_i . I assume that the values of $u_i(g_i)$ are on average identical in all treatments.

The second element, $\gamma r_i(g_i)$, indicates positive reciprocity. The reciprocity dummy γ is set to $\gamma = 1$ when the individual feels gratitude toward the fundraiser. Otherwise, the dummy is set to $\gamma = 0$. In the case of $\gamma = 1$, the additional utility derived from a donation g_i increases linearly by the factor $r_i > 0$.

The third element, $-s_i(g^s - g_i)$, indicates social pressure and taken from DellaVigna et al. (2012). I denote g^s as a social norm, which can take values between EUR 0.00 and EUR 10.00. I consider two values: a low value of $g^s = \underline{g}^s$ and a high value of $g^s = \bar{g}^s$. The function s_i is linear with $s_i > 0$. The social pressure cost is positive, when the donation g_i is smaller than the norm g^s . Otherwise, the element has a value of zero.

2.1 Static treatment comparison

I assume that in THRICE no feelings of gratitude exist, since individuals have no avoidance option. Hence, $\gamma_{THRICE} = 0$. The social norm is high with $g_{THRICE}^s = \bar{g}^s$, since every request increases the norm.¹ In ONCE, I set $\gamma_{ONCE} = 0$, since again individuals have no explicit avoidance option. The social norm is low with $g_{ONCE}^s = \underline{g}^s$, since individuals are asked only once. In UNCON, an unconditional avoidance option is available. Assuming that this creates gratitude, I set $\gamma_{UNCON} = 1$. Yet, the avoidance option decreases social pressure. I assume that some but not all individuals in this treatment choose to avoid the repetition of the ask. Hence, I set the average norm to $\underline{g}^s < g_{UNCON}^s < \bar{g}^s$. In CON, the avoidance option is only available when a donation (of at least EUR 0.10) is made. Following Eckel et al. (2018), I assume that this conditional gift does not create gratitude. The idea here is that a conditional gift is not perceived as a gift. Hence, $\gamma_{CON} = 0$. I assume again that some but not all individuals avoid the repetition. I argue that the marginal implicit cost of EUR 0.10 does not affect the decision to avoid. Hence, I set $\underline{g}^s < g_{CON}^s = g_{UNCON}^s < \bar{g}^s$.

The static treatment comparison allows some initial predictions. Social pressure is higher in THRICE than in CON or ONCE, while gratitude is equally non-existent in all three treatments. Hence, I anticipate finding higher donations in the former.

Hypothesis 1a: Donations are larger in THRICE than in CON.

Hypothesis 1b: Donations are larger in THRICE than in ONCE.

A feeling of gratitude does exist in UNCON but not in CON or ONCE, while social pressure is greater or equal in UNCON compared to the other two treatments. Hence, I anticipate finding higher donations in UNCON than in CON or ONCE.

Hypothesis 2a: Donations are larger in UNCON than in CON.

Hypothesis 2b: Donations are larger in UNCON than in ONCE.

Comparing THRICE and UNCON, the picture is less clear. Gratitude is present in UNCON but not in THRICE. Yet, social pressure is lower in UNCON than in THRICE. Here, I need to consider the dynamics of charitable giving to form a prediction.

¹I assume that the norm is on the total amount donated. From a normative point of view, it is not relevant at which stage the amount is donated.

2.2 Dynamic treatment comparison

In both treatments, THRICE and UNCON, individuals have the opportunity to donate three times. The mental accounting theory (Thaler 1985) predicts that individuals have an incentive to do so. From $u_i(\cdot)$ being concave in g_i for individuals perceiving a donation as a gain and $r_i(\cdot)$ and $s_i(\cdot)$ being linear functions, we can derive that $U_i(\cdot)$ is concave in g_i for those individuals. This shows us that is optimal to donate three times when a donation is perceived as a gain.

In THRICE, individuals donate three times, when they perceive a donation as a gain, i.e. when there exists a $g_i^* > 0$ for which $U_i(g_i^*) \geq 0$. They donate one time when $U_i(g_i) < 0$ for any g_i but a positive donation is optimal due to social pressure. In all other cases, individuals never donate.

In UNCON, the individuals' decision consists of two parts. The first step is to decide whether to avoid the repetition of the ask or not. The second step is the decision on how often and how much to donate.

Similarly to DellaVigna et al. (2012), I apply backward induction. In the second step, the decision in UNCON is similar to the one in THRICE. Individuals donate three times, one time, or never. Due to the additional reciprocity element, the utility derived from a positive donation is higher in UNCON than in THRICE. This increases the optimal amount donated and the share of individuals perceiving a donation as a gain. In the first step, agents anticipate the donation decisions they make in the second step. Individuals, who would not donate at any stage, avoid the repetition of the ask, since any unanswered request creates social pressure costs. Agents, who would donate one time and only due to social pressure, avoid the repetition of the ask. For individuals who perceive a donation as a gain and would donate three times, the avoidance decision depends on the ratio between the utility gain from donating three times instead of once compared to the utility gain from switching from high to low social pressure.

In total, these theoretical considerations point in the direction of higher donations in UNCON than in THRICE. While the gratitude created by the introduction of an avoidance option affects the donation decision of all agents, the decrease in social pressure is only relevant for a fraction of the repetition-avoiding subgroup. From this, I cautiously derive the hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Donations are larger in UNCON than in THRICE.

Next, I describe the experiment designed to test these hypotheses.

3 Experimental Design

The experimental design builds on a Dictator Game (see e.g. Kahneman et al. 1986, Forsythe et al. 1994) with a charity as the recipient (Eckel and Grossman 1996). Participants receive an endowment of EUR 10.00 and have the option to donate a share of it to a charity (in increments of EUR 0.10). In this study, donations go to the *International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent* (IFRC).

In a between-subjects design, I implement four treatments: THRICE, UNCON, CON, and ONCE. In treatment THRICE, individuals have three opportunities to donate a share of their initial endowment to the charity. I interpret the explicit possibility to donate as an implicit request for a donation. The repetition of the request is announced before the first donation decision is made. In treatment UNCON, individuals are again informed that they have three opportunities to donate. Here, individuals have the option to avoid the repetition of the ask after the first donation stage. To do so, they must click on a checkbox. Avoiding the ask does not come with any monetary costs. Agents have to wait 30 seconds at each donation stage irrespective of their ask avoidance decision. This excludes time-efficiency concerns from being a motive for ask avoidance.

As discussed in the Introduction, offering the ask avoidance option might decrease social pressure and, at the same time, induce feelings of gratitude. To disentangle the two effects, I implement a third treatment. In CON, agents have three opportunities to donate. As in UNCON, they have the option to avoid the repetition of the ask. Yet, to make use of this option they have to make a positive donation of at least EUR 0.10. In line with Eckel et al. (2018), I argue that this conditional gift does not create gratitude. Finally, treatment ONCE serves as a control treatment. Here, individuals are asked one time to donate.

An important feature of the design is that participants receive only one endowment irrespective of the treatment. This mimics a situation, in which individuals receive their income and then have to decide how to spend it, e.g. in a given month. Furthermore, all donations go to the same charity. The donation decision is neutrally framed as a transfer to the receiving organization. Participants receive information about the charity before the first donation stage. The information can be found in English in Appendix A.1 and in German in Appendix A.3. The experimenter states the name of the IFRC and that the German Red Cross is connected to the charity. It is made

common knowledge that the experimenter is not related to the charity and that a receipt of the donation (sum of donations in all experimental sessions) will be posted on a bulletin board. Participants receive no further information about the organization.

The three donation decision stages are embedded into a questionnaire. The same questionnaire is used by Keser and Späth (2021). Participants fill out the questionnaire on a computer in a private cubicle. In their cubicle, subjects find a receipt form and the endowment of EUR 10.00.² A photo of the cubicle can be found in Appendix B. Sound-reducing mats, on which the money is placed, and curtains ensure that participants can make their decision in private.

Between the three donation decision stages, general questions are asked that are unlikely to trigger prosocial behavior. The questions between the first and second request are on demographics. The inquiries between the second and third request are taken from the 10-Item Big Five Inventory by Rammstedt et al. (2013). The items can be found in Appendix A.2 / A.4. After completion of the questionnaire, participants are allowed to keep the coins that are not donated. They fill out the receipt by themselves and put it into a box in the waiting room. The experimenter informs them that the receipts will not be reviewed by anyone related to the experiment.³

The experiment took place between 2017 and 2019 at the University of Goettingen, Germany. In total, I collected 178 observations, with 44 participants in treatments THRICE and CON, and 45 observations in treatments UNCON and ONCE. I used zTree (Fischbacher 2007) and ORSEE (Greiner 2015). Participants were on average 24 years old and 49 percent of them were female.⁴ Within each session, I ran all four treatments in a between-subjects design. This minimized the effect of confounding factors such as session effects. Participants were not aware of the treatment variation.

²The endowment consists of three times EUR 2.00, two times EUR 1.00, five times EUR 0.20, and ten times EUR 0.10.

³In case the actual donation does not coincide with the stated donation, I use the stated amount for the analysis. An expectation is when the participant mentions an own mistake at a later stage.

⁴I find no significant differences in age (Kruskal-Wallis test, $p = 0.229$) or the proportion of females (Fisher's exact test, 0.415) between treatments.

4 Experimental Results

The first subsection reports the comparison of the total donations between treatments. The second subsection presents the dynamics of charitable giving. I require $p = 0.05$ for significance.

4.1 Total Donations

In treatment THRICE, subjects donate on average EUR 1.44 to the charity, while they donate on average EUR 1.96 in treatment UNCON. Participants in treatment CON donate on average EUR 1.36. In the control treatment ONCE, the average donation is EUR 1.26. The average total donations are displayed in Figure 1. The differences between treatments point in the directions predicted by the hypotheses. Donations are larger in THRICE than in CON or ONCE (Hypotheses 1a and 1b). They are larger in UNCON than in CON or ONCE (Hypotheses 2a and 2b). And, they are larger in UNCON than in THRICE (Hypothesis 3). However, a Kruskal-Wallis test shows no significant difference between treatments ($p = 0.479$). This null result is confirmed by binary tests.⁵ The median donation is EUR 1.00 in all four treatments. Hence, I cannot find statistically significant evidence for the hypotheses. At the same time, the results also show no negative impact of the ask avoidance option.⁶

To disentangle the effects of reciprocity and social pressure, I run a regression analysis presented in Table 1. In all models, I include a dummy variable for reciprocity and social pressure. The variable for reciprocity is set to one in treatment UNCON, otherwise its value is zero. The variable for social pressure has the value one in treatment THRICE, otherwise its value is zero. The utility function presented in Equation (1) contains a third element, which is a summary of other factors influencing the utility derived from a donation. Here, I make use of an inquiry into the ratio between the (monetary) loss for the agent and the gain for the charity. Specifically, the

⁵Wilcoxon rank-sum tests: THRICE vs CON: $p = 0.894$, THRICE vs ONCE: $p = 0.499$, UNCON vs CON: $p = 0.309$, ONCE vs UNCON: $p = 0.134$, THRICE vs UNCON: $p = 0.358$, ONCE vs CON: 0.611 .

⁶In a similar setup with about the same sample size but with just one donation decision stage, Keser and Späth (2021) find a significant impact of information about the charity and of a taking frame on charitable giving.

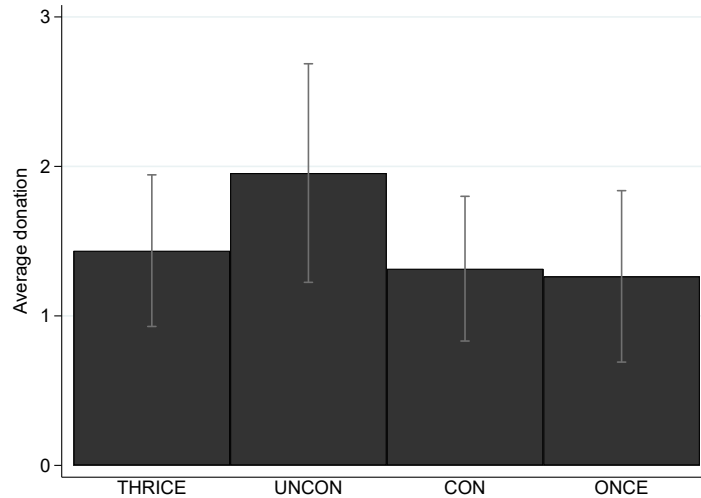


Figure 1: Average total donations per treatment (with 95 percent confidence intervals).

questionnaire item assesses the agreement with the statement "I perceive a donation rather as a loss for me than as a gain for the charity" on a scale from 1 (very little) to 7 (very much). An alternative is to include a measure for the monthly expenses of the individuals and on their evaluation of the IFRC (the latter again on a scale from 1 to 7).⁷ I include only the loss perception variable in Column (1), none of three variables in Column (2), only expenses and evaluation in Column (3), or all three variables in Column (4). Finally, I include variables for age and gender into all specifications of the regression.

Table 1 shows some evidence that feelings of reciprocity have a positive impact on charitable giving. In three of the four specifications of the regression, the coefficient for reciprocity is significantly positive. The exception is Column (3), where the coefficient points in the same direction but fails to be significant. Social pressure does not have a significant impact on donations. Furthermore, perceiving a donation as a loss significantly decreases charitable giving. The stated monthly expenses of agents do not affect their decisions. Their evaluation of the charity has a significantly positive coefficient in Col-

⁷Monthly expenses: "How large (in EUR) are your monthly expenses (including nutrition, rent, additional costs), approximately?"; Evaluation: "How would you evaluate the IFRC in general?"

Table 1: Ordinary-least-squares regression on donation.

Donation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Reciprocity	0.847* (0.346)	0.707* (0.353)	0.609 (0.356)	0.766* (0.353)
Social pressure	0.168 (0.345)	0.122 (0.355)	0.122 (0.351)	0.163 (0.350)
Loss perception	-0.299** (0.089)			-0.267* (0.091)
Monthly expenses			-0.0003 0.001	-0.0003 (0.001)
Evaluation			0.376* (0.162)	0.278 (0.162)
Age	-0.044 (0.027)	-0.043 (0.028)	-0.033 0.030	-0.035 (0.029)
Female	-0.391 (0.294)	-0.124 (0.292)	-0.087 (0.301)	-0.346 (0.308)
Constant	3.447*** (0.778)	2.368** (0.729)	0.771 (1.084)	2.192 (1.165)
N	178	178	178	178

Note: Standard errors in brackets. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

umn (3). When as in Column (4) the variable for loss perception is added, the effect becomes statistically insignificant. Finally, age and gender have no significant impact on the donation decision.

4.2 Dynamics of charitable giving

Table 2 shows the percentage of individuals donating three times, two times, one time, or never by treatment. For UNCON and CON, Table 2 distinguishes between individuals who choose to avoid the repetition of the request and those who do not. In UNCON, 31 percent of subjects choose to avoid the repetition. In CON, 18 percent of participants opt to avoid it. The difference in shares is not statistically significant (Fisher’s exact test, $p = 0.220$).

Table 2: Share of individuals donating three times, two times, one time, or never per treatment group.

	THRICE	UNCON		CON		ONCE
		Avoiders	Non-avoiders	Avoiders	Non-avoiders	
Three	0.34	-	0.27	-	0.23	-
Two	0.11	-	0.07	-	0.14	-
One	0.18	0.18	0.24	0.18	0.11	0.64
None	0.36	0.13	0.11	-	0.34	0.36

Note: Shares in UNCON and CON are relative to the whole population of the respective treatment. The symbol - indicates that donating the respective number of times was not possible for the subgroup. Shares are rounded.

Considering the share of individuals who never donate, Table 2 exhibits a lower fraction in UNCON (0.24) than in THRICE (0.36), CON (0.34), or ONCE (0.36). Following the theoretical argumentation discussed in Section 2.2, this can be potentially explained by feelings of gratitude making charitable giving more attractive. This variation in the share of donors between treatments is not statistically significant, though (Fisher’s exact test, $p = 0.598$).

Furthermore, I observe a tendency to segregate gains by donating repeatedly. In THRICE, 34 percent of subjects donate three times. Similarly, a large fraction of non-avoiding donors in UNCON (39 percent of non-avoiders)

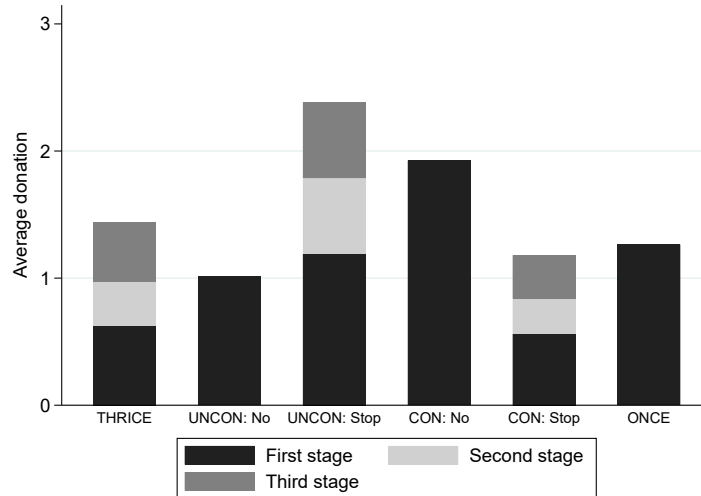


Figure 2: Average donation in each decision stage per treatment and avoidance decision.

Note: "Avoid" marks avoiders, while "No" stands for non-avoiders.

and CON (28 percent) donate three times.

Figure 2 provides a further perspective on the dynamics of charitable giving. The figure shows the average donations in each of the up to three decision stages. The figure distinguishes between treatments and, for UNCON and CON, also between subgroups determined by the avoidance decision.

In line with the intuition that non-avoiders are more prone to donate, I find a larger average donation from non-avoiders (EUR 2.38) than from avoiders (EUR 1.01) in treatment UNCON. The difference is significant (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, $p = 0.030$). Figure 2 shows that the difference is driven by donations of non-avoiders after the first decision stage. In CON, I observe the opposite. Here, average donations from non-avoiders (EUR 1.18) are smaller to those from avoiders (EUR 1.93). The difference is not significant (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, $p = 0.079$). Importantly, the average donation of EUR 2.38 by non-avoiders in UNCON is also larger than the average donation in ONCE (EUR 1.26). The difference is significant (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, $p = 0.019$). Clearly, self-selection plays a crucial role. Nevertheless, the

results show that offering the ask avoidance option allows to identify lucrative targets of fundraising.

5 Conclusion

This research article contributes to the discussion on whether charities should deliberately offer ask avoidance options. The starting point is high-frequency fundraising campaigns during which agents are repeatedly requested to donate to a charity. I propose a utility framework in which the optimal donation depends on the perceived social pressure and feelings of gratitude toward the fundraiser. I argue that an ask avoidance option weakens the social pressure to donate. At the same time, the option induces gratitude, which might yield a reciprocal increase in donations. Based on this framework, I designed a laboratory experiment that allowed me to disentangle the two proposed channels. The experimental results show a significant impact of the reciprocity channel on donations. Social pressure does not seem to matter. Consequently, I find that the introduction of the ask avoidance option does not decrease but instead (statistically insignificantly) increases average donations to the charity.

Clearly, the between-treatments variation of social pressure and reciprocity in the current experimental design is only small. The social pressure from asking repeatedly might be greater in face-to-face interactions outside the lab compared to the anonymous lab environment. At the same time, the reciprocity channel might also be stronger outside the lab. At least two reasons come to mind. First, time-efficiency incentives for avoidance do not play a role in the current design but might be important and individuals thus more thankful in many other environments. Second, the reciprocity induced in the experiment is only indirectly. The experimenter is the institution granting the avoidance option, while the charity is benefiting from the reciprocal act of the agents. The effect of reciprocity on giving might be stronger when the charity itself is offering the ask avoidance option. This prediction can be tested in future research.

The main finding that it might be beneficial for charities to offer an avoidance option must be limited to short-term fundraising campaigns. Offering agents the option of a lifetime protection against further requests is most likely not a beneficial strategy for charities. Yet, the experimental findings suggest that it might be a lucrative strategy for charities to announce a

fundraising campaign with repeated requests and, at the same time, offer an unconditional option to avoid the repetition. The implementation of the avoidance option might increase donations and decrease costs. Additionally, an avoidance option can enhance social welfare. Only individuals who like to donate repeatedly are asked repeatedly for donations.

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A Instructions

A.1 Instructions to be read aloud (in English)

You are participating in an economic experiment on decision-making. You can earn money depending on your decisions. You make your decisions anonymously and in isolation from the other participants. From now on, we ask you not to speak to any other participant until the experiment is over. Please switch off your mobile phones and put them away.

In the course of the experiment, you will be asked to complete a survey. Please complete the survey as thoroughly as possible. The survey will be displayed to you on a computer in the next room. If you have a question while completing the survey, please come forward individually.

After the experiment, money might be transferred to the *International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent* (IFRC). The German Red Cross, among others, belongs to this organization. We are not affiliated with this organization. However, you can be sure that the transferred money actually reaches the organization. A receipt will be posted on the bulletin board of the chair for Microeconomics after the conclusion of the experiment.

We now ask you to go to the computer with your participant number. Please close the curtain and keep it closed until the end of the experiment. This ensures that you are not observed during the survey. To start the survey, you must click the *Next* button. Thank you for your participation!

A.2 On-screen instructions, decision stages, and inquiries from before and in-between decision stages (in English)

You will find 10-Euros on the mat. These are destined for you. On this mat, there are three 2-Euro coins, two 1-Euro coins, five 20-cents coins and ten 10-cent coins. Please count the money and put it back on the mat.

While filling in the survey, you will have [once, thrice] the opportunity to reduce your initial endowment in order to increase the amount dedicated to the IFRC. No other participant will know how you decided. Regardless of how you decide, you will have to wait 30 seconds to complete the survey.

First, some questions about your personal situation:

- How much (in EUR) are your monthly expenses (including nutrition, rent, additional costs), approximately?
- What are your main income sources?
- How satisfied are you with your current life situation in general?
- How fair is the world in which we live?

- How well do you know the *German Red Cross*?
- How would you evaluate the *German Red Cross* in general?
- How well do you know the IFRC?
- How would you evaluate the IFRC in general?
- How would you evaluate the work of the IFRC?

How well do the following statements describe you?

- I think that one can generally trust people.
- I consider the global political situation threatening.
- I worry about my professional future.
- I am in general a person prepared to take risks.

– Beginning of first decision stage –

You now have the opportunity to reduce your endowment in order to increase the amount dedicated to the IFRC.

Before your decision:

The amount destined for you in EUR: 10.00

The amount destined for the organization in EUR: 0.00

Please enter how much you would like to transfer from your initial endowment to the account of the organization. Enter an amount between 0 Euros and 10.00. Choose an amount rounded to 0.10 Euro.

Transferred amount (in euro):

After the 30 seconds, you can confirm the amount by clicking OK.

[In *ENDOGENOUS* (with checkbox):] I don't want to be asked again for a transfer. In this case, this will be the last request and you won't be asked three times. You will still have to wait thirty seconds.

– End of first decision stage –

- What is your gender?
- What is your age?
- How big was the city where you grew up?
- What is the highest level of education your parents have completed?
- Are you a university student?
- If so, in which stage of your studies are you?
- If so, which degree program do you feel most likely to be assigned to?

– Second decision stage –
(identical to first, with updated amounts)

– –

How well do the following statements describe you?

- I am reserved.
- I am generally trusting.
- I do a thorough job.

- I am relaxed, handle stress well.
- I have few artistic interests.
- I am outgoing, sociable.
- I tend to find fault with others.
- I tend to be lazy.
- I get nervous easily.
- I have an active imagination.

– Third decision stage –
 (identical to first, with updated amounts)

– –

A.3 Instructions to be read aloud (in German, original language)

Sie nehmen an einem wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Entscheidungsexperiment teil. Abhängig von Ihren Entscheidungen können Sie bares Geld verdienen. Sie treffen dazu Ihre Entscheidungen anonym und isoliert von anderen. Ab jetzt, bitten wir Sie nicht mehr mit anderen zu kommunizieren bis das Experiment beendet ist. Bitte schalten Sie zudem Ihre Mobiltelefone aus und stecken Sie sie weg.

Im Laufe des Experiments werden Sie gebeten einen Fragebogen auszufüllen. Füllen Sie den Fragebogen bitte so gewissenhaft wie möglich aus. Der Fragebogen wird Ihnen an einem Computer im Nachbarraum angezeigt. Falls Sie während des Ausfüllens eine Frage haben, so kommen Sie bitte einzeln nach vorne.

Nach dem Experiment wird gegebenenfalls Geld an die *Internationale Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmond-Bewegung* (IFRC) transferiert. Zu dieser Organisation gehört unter anderem das Deutsche Rote Kreuz.

Wir stehen in keiner Verbindung zu dieser Organisation. Sie können sich jedoch sicher sein, dass das transferierte Geld die Organisation tatsächlich erreicht. Eine Quittung wird nach Abschluss des Experiments am Schwarzen Brett der Professur für Mikroökonomik ausgehängt.

Wir bitten Sie nun, sich zu dem Computer mit Ihrer Teilnehmernummer zu begeben. Bitte schließen Sie den Vorhang und halten Sie ihn bis zum Ende

des Experiments geschlossen. Dies gewährleistet, dass Sie während Ihren Entscheidungen unbeobachtet sind. Um mit dem Fragebogen zu beginnen, müssen Sie auf die *Weiter*-Taste klicken. Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!

A.4 On-screen instructions, decision stages, and inquiries from before and in between decision stages (in German, original language)

Auf der Matte vor Ihnen finden Sie 10 Euro. Diese sind für Sie bestimmt. Auf dieser Matte befinden sich drei 2 Euro Münzen, zwei 1 Euro Münzen, fünf 20 Cent Münzen und zehn 10 Cent Münzen. Bitte zählen Sie das Geld nach und legen es anschließend zurück auf die Matte.

Während des Ausfüllens des Fragebogens werden Sie 1x [3x] die Möglichkeit erhalten, den für Sie vorgesehenen Betrag auf Matte zu reduzieren, um damit den Betrag für die Internationale Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmond-Bewegung zu erhöhen. Kein anderer Teilnehmer wird erfahren wie Sie sich entschieden haben. Unabhängig davon, wie Sie sich entscheiden, müssen Sie 30 Sekunden warten bis Sie den Fragebogen weiter ausfüllen können.

Zunächst einige Fragen zu Ihrer persönlichen Situation:

- Wie hoch (in Euro) sind Ihre monatlichen Ausgaben ungefähr (inklusive Verplegung, Miete, Nebenkosten)?
- Welche sind Ihre hauptsächlichen Einnahmequellen?
- Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit Ihrer gegenwärtigen generellen Lebenssituation?
- Wie gerecht ist die Welt, in der wir leben?
- Wie gut kennen Sie das *Rote Kreuz*?
- Wie würden Sie das *Rote Kreuz* allgemein bewerten?
- Wie gut kennen Sie die *Internationale Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmond-Bewegung* (IFRC)?
- Wie würden Sie die *Internationale Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmond-Bewegung* (IFRC) allgemein bewerten?
- Wie würden Sie die Arbeit der *Internationalen Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmond-Bewegung* (IFRC) bewerten?

Wie sehr treffen die folgenden Aussagen auf Sie zu?

- Ich glaube, dass man Menschen generell vertrauen kann.
- Ich sehe die weltpolitische Situation als bedrohlich an.
- Ich mache mir Sorgen um meine berufliche Zukunft.
- Ich bin im Allgemeinen ein risikobereiter Mensch.

– Begin of first decision stage –

Sie haben nun die Möglichkeit den für Sie bestimmten Betrag zu reduzieren, um damit den Betrag für die Internationale Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmond-Bewegung zu erhöhen.

Vor Ihrer Entscheidung:

Der für Sie bestimmte Betrag in Euro: 10.00

Der für die Organisation bestimmte Betrag in Euro: 0.00

Bitte tragen Sie ein, wie viel Sie von dem für Sie bestimmten Betrag zu dem für die Organisation bestimmten Betrag übertragen möchten. Tragen Sie dazu einen Betrag zwischen 0 Euro und 10.00 Euro ein. Wählen Sie einen auf 0,10 Euro gerundeten Betrag.

Übertragener Betrag (in Euro):

Nach Ablauf der 30 Sekunden können Sie den Betrag mit einem Klick auf OK bestätigen.

[In *ENDOGENOUS* (with checkbox):] Ich möchte nicht weiter nach einem Übertrag gefragt werden: In diesem Fall war dies die letzte Anfrage und Sie werden nicht 3x nach einem Übertrag gefragt. Sie müssen jedoch weiterhin die 30 Sekunden warten

– End of first decision stage –

- Was ist Ihr Geschlecht?
- Wie alt sind Sie?
- Wie groß war die Stadt, in der Sie aufgewachsen sind?
- Was ist der höchste Bildungsabschluss Ihrer Eltern?
- Studieren Sie?

- Wenn ja, in welchem Studienabschnitt befinden Sie sich?
- Wenn ja, welchem Studiengang fühlen Sie sich am ehesten zugeordnet?

– Second decision stage –
 (identical to first, with updated amounts)

– –

Wie sehr treffen die folgenden Aussagen auf Sie zu?

- Ich bin eher zurückhaltend, reserviert.
- Ich schenke anderen leicht Vertrauen, glaube an das Gute im Menschen.
- Ich bin bequem, neige zur Faulheit.
- Ich bin entspannt, lasse mich durch Stress nicht aus der Ruhe bringen.
- Ich habe nur wenig künstlerisches Interesse.
- Ich gehe aus mir heraus, bin gesellig.
- Ich neige dazu, andere zu kritisieren.
- Ich erledige Aufgaben gründlich.
- Ich werde leicht nervös und unsicher.
- Ich habe eine aktive Vorstellungskraft, bin fantasievoll.

– Third decision stage –
 (identical to first, with updated amounts)

– –

B Photos



Cubicle with computer, mouse, keyboard, money, the receipt and a pen.