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DOI:
10.1111/ssqu.12587

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Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Citation for published version (Harvard):
Hudson, D, Laehn, NS, Dasandi, N & vanHeerde-Hudson, J 2019, 'Making and unmaking cosmopolitans: an experimental test of the mediating role of emotions in international development appeals', *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 100, no. 3, pp. 544-564. https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12587

Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal

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Checked for eligibility: 11/04/2019

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Making and Unmaking Cosmopolitans: An Experimental Test of the Mediating Role of Emotions in International Development Appeals*

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Objective. In this article, we test whether emotions mediate the effect of international development appeals on cosmopolitanism and donation behavior. *Methods.* We design and conduct a lab experiment to test the impact of representations of global poverty on participants' cosmopolitan sentiments and their likelihood to donate to development charities. We use multiple mediation analysis to test the intervening role of six emotional responses—anger, guilt, solidarity, hope, repulsion, and pity—as causal pathways to our two outcomes of interest: cosmopolitanism and donations. *Results.* Hope is the most consistent and powerful pathway through which appeals affect respondents' sense of cosmopolitanism and willingness to donate. Negative imagery and text erode people's sense of hope, but drive donations, particularly via guilt. *Conclusions.* Our findings suggest we should move away from a mono-causal view of emotional responses to disaster and development imagery, and provide a cautionary tale for practitioners: using negative imagery can undermine the public's sense of hope and cosmopolitanism.

On December 26, 2004, pictures of the Asian tsunami disaster were transmitted around the world. As a result of the largest earthquake for 40 years, an estimated 227,898 people were killed, missing, or presumed dead, and a further 1.7 million people were displaced (USGS, 2004; Downman, 2006; Osborne, 2014). The magnitude of the humanitarian response matched the size of the tsunami. Globally, a total of 14 billion U.S. dollars were donated, nearly half of which were from private individuals (Hutchison, 2014). In the United Kingdom alone, the Disaster Emergency Committee's (DEC) appeal raised £392 million from the British public (DEC, 2016). The "graphic and intensely emotional" nature of media broadcasts of the tsunami and its aftermath highlights the centrality of emotions—such as pity, compassion, and solidarity—in how the disaster was understood and responded to. As Hutchison (2014:6) argues: "Recognizing that emotions are bound up

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SOCIAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY
© 2019 The Authors Social Science Quarterly published by Wiley Periodicals, Inc. on behalf of Southwestern Social Science Association
DOI: 10.1111/ssqu.12587

in how the tsunami was represented is a crucial first step to understanding the generation of solidarity and humanitarian action." A similar sequence of graphic representations and emotional responses can be observed across other international disasters: famine in Ethiopia (1983), war in Syria (2013), earthquake in Haiti (2010), the cyclone in Myanmar (2008), or the collapse of the garments factory in Bangladesh (2013). Each event, and its representation, triggers a set of emotional responses that shape understandings, attitudes, and behavioral responses.

But humanitarian disasters are not the only way, or even the most common way, that the public is introduced to the poverty and suffering of distant others. The public is frequently exposed to appeals from international development charities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and television. These appeals are no different than disaster appeals, insofar as they present poverty in a particular way—graphic and emotional—and seek to stimulate a behavioral response, such as donating money, signing a petition, or volunteering. The appeals are premised on the notion of a moral cosmopolitanism—that "every human being has a global stature as an ultimate unit of moral concern" (Pogge, 2002:169). Moral cosmopolitanism is the view that we are all members of a global community and therefore have obligations to others regardless of their nationality.

In this article, we investigate the impact of emotional and frequently negative imagery used in framing and representing global poverty. We ask: Do emotions (and which ones) mediate the effect of international development appeals on cosmopolitanism and donations? We measure two outcomes of interest: (1) *attitudinally*, respondents' sense of cosmopolitanism and (2) *behaviorally*, respondents' propensity to donate. There are two competing claims in the literature: first, it is possible that extreme images of suffering create a "moral shock" and help capture public attention, forge solidarity, and stimulate a cosmopolitan sense of shared humanity (Jasper and Poulsen, 1995; Hutchison, 2014); and second, the same imagery dehumanizes and creates division between the sufferer and witness, ironically undermining a sense of shared humanity (Darnton and Kirk, 2011; Dogra, 2012; Chouliaraki, 2012). Using a lab-based experimental design, we test whether cosmopolitan sentiments and actions can be triggered by development appeals using two paradigmatic representations of global poverty: (1) a more traditional, pity-based appeal we label *individual victim* and (2) an alternative, empathy-based appeal we label *empowered community*. We use multiple mediation analysis to explicitly test the intervening role of different emotional responses—anger, guilt, solidarity, hope, repulsion and pity.

Our contribution is twofold. First, we build on the emerging empirical, quantitative literature on cosmopolitanism, providing the first experimental evidence of the impact of representations on cosmopolitanism. Second, we theorize and empirically show the mediating role of different emotions. Our approach offers a dynamic account of how cosmopolitanism can be triggered and suppressed. Our results suggest that emotions do mediate responses to appeals. Hope emerges as the most consistent and powerful pathway through which the different appeals impact one's sense of cosmopolitanism and willingness to donate. Negative imagery and text in the pity appeal erode participants' sense of hope, but drive donations, particularly via guilt.

Development Appeals, Cosmopolitanism, and the Role of Emotions

Representations and Public Engagement

A body of literature on representations in development campaigning and in the media (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2012) has demonstrated the pervasiveness of negative

imagery in development campaign appeals (Lissner, 1977; Plewes and Stuart, 2007). Scholars have paid specific attention to the effect of race (Burman, 1994; Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004; Harrison, 2010), the use of children (Lissner, 1977; Holland, 1992; Manzo, 2008; Dogra, 2012), and the "othering" of those depicted (Lidchi, 1999; Smith and Yanacopulos, 2004; Harrison, 2010).[1]

Negative images, in the context of development appeals, tends to refer to the extensive use of shocking images of children—often African children—showing visible signs of poverty and suffering, with no broader context provided. Such imagery, referred to as "the pornography of poverty" (Plewes and Stuart, 2007), is used "to induce emotions of pity and guilt on the part of potential donors through images and descriptions of material poverty and images of the helpless 'others' in the global South" (Cameron and Haansra, 2008:1476). Negative appeals tend to reproduce a shallow sense of cosmopolitanism because they focus on the differences rather than the similarities between people in the developed and developing world, something Dogra (2012:22) has argued represents a dual logic of "difference" and "oneness." However, fewer studies have empirically examined the impact of such imagery.

This debate about the effects of negative representations matters because a parallel stream of literature has highlighted declining levels of public engagement with global poverty and links this to the way development organizations appeal to the public (Smillie, 1996; Darnton and Kirk, 2011). Here, research has shown that development NGOs' campaign strategies—particularly their pity-based fundraising appeals—act as a catalyst in the decline in public interest in, and engagement with, issues of global poverty (Dogra, 2012; Darnton and Kirk, 2011; Sireau, 2009; Plewes and Stuart, 2007). This stands in direct tension with the conventional fundraising wisdom that pity-based appeals are most effective when it comes to eliciting donations from the public. This is a live debate within the development sector, and many individual organizations have committed to changing practice, in addition to sector-wide codes of conduct on the use of images (CONCORD, 2006).

Pity, Empathy, and the Cosmopolitan Impulse

International development efforts are premised on the notion of moral cosmopolitanism: the view that we are all members of a global community and so have moral obligations to individuals regardless of their nationality (Pogge, 2002). Cosmopolitanism has been the subject of much attention in the normative political theory literature, particularly as it is linked to the issue of global justice and international development (Pogge, 2002; Beitz, 2005; Kleingeld, 2013). There is also now an emerging empirical literature that explores the characteristics of individuals that tend to exhibit a "cosmopolitan disposition" or see themselves as global citizens (Pichler, 2008, 2009; Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward, 2004; Furia, 2005; Woodward, Skrbis, and Bean, 2008; Morais and Ogden, 2011; Lough and McBride, 2014; Reysen and Katzarska-Miller, 2013; Bayram, 2015). One of the key insights from the sociological literature is that there are different dimensions of and/or approaches to cosmopolitanism (Vertovec and Cohen, 2002); for example, cosmopolitanism as a condition, as a worldview, as a political or institutional project, a set of attitudes or disposition, or as a set of competences. Morais and Ogden (2011) use factor analysis to

[1]We begin from the assumption that development efforts are normatively appropriate, and that, empirically, they are likely to continue. As such, we take a pragmatic approach to considering their effectiveness and do not engage with the postdevelopment literature. For an introduction to postdevelopment, see Sachs (1992), Seabrook (1994), and Dallmayr (1996).

identify three dimensions to global citizenship: (1) social responsibility, that is, a sense of global justice and empathy, (2) global competence, that is, ability to communicate across cultures and knowledge of the world, and (3) global civic engagement, that is, using voice, joining organizations, and activism. Our focus, similar to Morais and Ogden's dimensions 1 and 3, is on the moral dimension of cosmopolitanism: how individuals come to believe that they have moral obligations to individuals, regardless of their nationality, and how they act on them (Pogge, 2002; Anderson-Gold, 2001; Brock and Brighouse, 2005).

Although cosmopolitanism is central to issues of global justice, it is not clear what triggers individuals to feel and act upon cosmopolitan sentiments. Individuals may not be motivated to assist distant others because they typically prioritize the well-being of their compatriots above that of distant strangers (Beitz, 1983; Miller, 2002; Erez, 2015). But, in addition, many individuals may claim that global justice is important, or may hold tacitly cosmopolitan views, but do little to *act upon* those sentiments—the "motivational gap" or "motivational deficit" (Murphy, 2000; Lenard, 2010; Straehle, 2010; Miller, 2013).

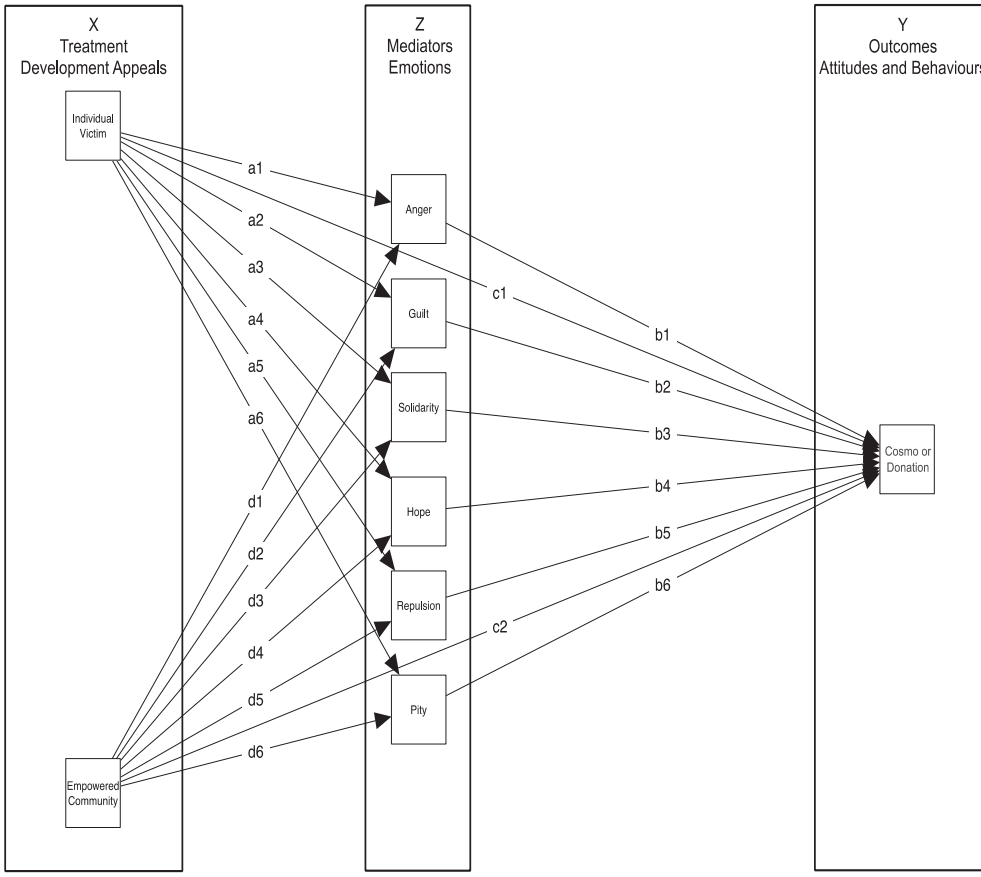
Political theorists have argued that one way the gap can be closed is through cultivating transnational empathy (Rorty, 1993; Nussbaum, 2000; Long, 2009; Woods, 2012). Rorty (1993) has argued that it will not work on rational logic, but through sentimental, or emotional, mechanisms. Likewise, more generally, the problem of motivation has led to a renewed interest in the effect of emotions on behavior (Ekman, 1992), and their role in actions to improve global justice specifically (Long, 2009; Woods, 2012). However, little consensus exists on *how* emotions contribute to one's decision to assist others in need.

At least as far back as Rousseau, philosophers have identified various forms of pity as the primary emotion felt when confronted with another's suffering. Yet pity, Rousseau argues, has a dual nature. In *Emile,* he describes it as a "barren and cruel" emotion that creates a sense of difference between the self and the suffering other [1762] 1911:213), while also noting that pity can prompt one to consider the plight of the other and to try and ease that suffering ([1762] 1911:183–85). Drawing on the social-psychology literature, we call this latter form of pity "empathy" and retain the term "pity" for Rousseau's "barren and cruel" emotion (Batson and Ahmad, 2009). This distinction is made by Gerdes and Segal (2011:233), who define pity as a "condescending, or contemptuous form of feeling sorry for someone," and empathy as "the psychological experience of feeling what another person is feeling and the cognitive processing of the experience."

NGO appeals based on pity frequently use dehumanizing images and text, which creates a schism between the viewer and the individuals portrayed. The effect of pity-based appeals is to generate a "depersonalized response to the suffering of depersonalized, abstracted others" (Naylor, 2011:184). The characteristics of empathy represent values opposed to those of pity. For example, rather than engaging in dehumanization, or infrahumanization (Demoulin et al., 2004; Cortes et al., 2005; Castano and Giner-Sorolla, 2006), empathy appeals attempt to identify human characteristics to which the public in the Global North can relate, often by showing simple scenes of daily life. The language used in empathy-based campaigns is more cohesive, and avoids the divisive "us" and "them" language of pity-based appeals (Dogra, 2012; Woods, 2012). Furthermore, in empathy-based appeals, those in need are more likely to be given a voice, which contributes to the humanization of those in the Global South, unlike pity-based appeals featuring silent receivers of donations. We use this distinction to motivate the design of our experimental treatments (see X "Treatments" in Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

Causal Path: Theory and Experimental Design



Emotions as Mediators

The literature on cosmopolitanism provides much evidence on individual characteristics that tend to associate with a "cosmopolitan disposition."[2] Yet, as Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013) note, the existing literature is correlational, and they argue the next step should be to experimentally manipulate and try to trigger a sense of cosmopolitanism and associated behaviors.[3] The literature also emphasizes how emotional dispositions form "a crucial component of the cosmopolitan outlook" (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward,

[2]The literature finds that cosmopolitanism is correlated with age (younger), education (more), gender (mixed evidence), income (higher), class (professional and nonmanual workers), union membership (lowers cosmopolitanism), religious denomination (secularism is less cosmopolitan), and ethnicity (nonnationals are more cosmopolitan), openness to change values (positive), conservation values (negative), trust, urban dwellers (more positive than rural), and political ideology (liberals more cosmopolitan) (Bayram, 2015, 2016; Pichler, 2008, 2009; Phillips and Smith, 2008; Woodward, Skrbis, and Bean, 2008).

[3]An important exception to this is the analysis of Lough and McBride (2014) of the impact of international volunteering on participants' sense of global citizenship.

2004:128), noting the role of empathetic concern in increasing cosmopolitanism and anxiety in mitigating against cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006; Woodward, Skrbis, and Bean, 2008; Reysen and Katzarska-Miller, 2013).

Our argument, as summarized in Figure 1, is that development appeals are motivational triggers, these appeals present a scenario and ask the viewer to respond; the response sought is, almost always, an emotional one (Hutchison, 2014; Lidchi, 1999; Plewes and Stewart, 2007; Tallon and McGregor, 2014). As Mercer notes: "Emotion influences how and what one believes, it adds value to facts, and it captures a distinctive way of seeing situations" (2010:6; see also Damasio, 1994; Kinder and Sanders, 1990; Neuman et al., 2007; Hibbert et al., 2007). Moreover, emotional responses are not limited to domestic, or more familiar policy domains: "psychological processes constitute and *mediate* much of the behavior located within the international sphere" (Head, 2016:172, emphasis added; see also Bar-Tal, 2007; Kelman, 2007). In contrast to an undifferentiated or unspecified treatment of "emotions," we take seriously the proposition that different emotions can trigger different psychological and behavioral responses (Solomon and Stone, 2002; Brader and Marcus, 2013). As such, we follow the work of Gross and D'Ambrosio (2004) on the 1992 Los Angeles riots in measuring emotions discretely. They asked subjects whether they experienced anger, sympathy, disgust, pity, and fear while reading newspaper articles. We adapt their list, removing fear and adding hope and solidarity in line with our discussion of appeals above.[4] We mimic this causal pathway in our analysis, by measuring how emotions influence our outcome variables through a mediation process (see Z in Figure 1). We set out our design framework and theoretical expectations in the next section.

A Framework and Experimental Design for Understanding the Impact of Emotions

Drawing on available theory on representations, appeals, and emotions we can now more formally set out the logic of our argument and approach. Our argument is that in order to understand and address declining levels of public engagement with development, we must consider the role of emotions as mediators of individual engagement with development issues. We conceptualize this process, represented in Figure 1, as Y is predicted by X, mediated by Z.

There is a long-standing debate about the impact of representations of the developing world in campaign literature and imagery on individuals' sense of cosmopolitanism and solidarity. The literature develops a sharp critique of the way in which the poor are represented in development appeals, arguing that the typically negative portrayal of the developing world undermines public interest and understanding of global poverty. We test this here by randomizing respondents to receive either a (1) pity-based, (2) empathy-based, or (3) baseline appeal by way of treatment (X). Because we are interested in when people feel a responsibility to help distant others and whether they choose to act on it, our outcomes of interest (Y) are: (1) a cosmopolitan sense of shared humanity and (2) the willingness to donate, as both one of the main ways that people in rich countries engage with international development and the means through which many NGOs fund their efforts.

Finally, while many have argued that the intervening mechanism is an emotional one, this has not been tested, nor is there any understanding of which specific emotions matter

[4]We settled on solidarity as the closest analogue to empathy that is easily understandable to respondents based on pilot testing with students.

TABLE 1

Descriptive Statistics for Variables

Variable	Measure	Mean/Dist. (*SD*)
Outcome		
Donation	1 = Donated; 0 = No donation	1 = 46%; 0 = 54%
Cosmopolitanism	Factor score variable of cosmopolitan items; range −1.560–1.555	0 (0.579)
Predictor		
Pity treatment	1 = Received pity appeal; 0 = Otherwise	1 = 33%; 0 = 67%
Pathos treatment	1 = Received pathos appeal; 0 = Otherwise	1 = 36%; 0 = 64%
Balance		
Priority	U.K. = give priority to children in the United Kingdom; Eq = give equal priority to children in the United Kingdom and in poor countries; OS = give priority to children in poor countries	
	Control	U.K. = 42%; Eq = 49%; OS = 8%
	Individual victim	U.K. = 36%; Eq = 54%; OS = 10%
	Empowered community	U.K. = 37%; Eq = 49%; OS = 14%
Help others	"It is important to this person to help people"; 1 = Not at all like me; 6 = Very much like me	
	Control	4.5 (1.3)
	Individual victim	4.5 (1.2)
	Empowered community	4.5 (1.2)
Gender	Control	Female = 63%
	Individual victim	Female = 66%
	Empowered community	Female = 64%

relative to one another. We test the claim that emotions (Z) play a crucial intervening role in how people respond to representations. We argue that different emotions provide distinct pathways from the treatments (development appeals) to the outcomes (donation behavior and cosmopolitan sentiments).

Our expectations are, in the first step, that the pity-based appeal activates the emotions of guilt, repulsion, and pity, and the empathy-based appeal activates hope and solidarity. Anger, however, is more ambiguous, as the political psychology literature has noted (Brader and Marcus, 2013). It could be experienced in one of two ways: (1) as anger at viewing the same sad images again and again and feeling emotionally blackmailed, or (2) as outrage at the living conditions experienced by the global poor. We return to this question of anger's ambiguity in our discussion of the results. In the second step, the emotions may then serve to impact a variety of possible attitudes and behaviors. Through multiple mediation analysis, we explicitly test for the fact that multiple emotions may be experienced at one time (Gullestad, 2007).

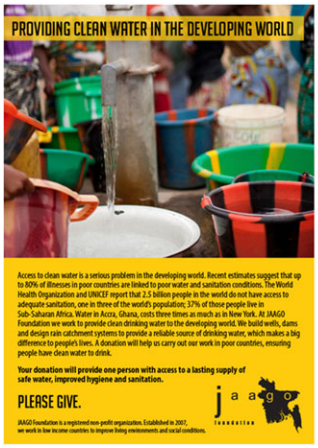
Data and Estimation Strategy

Data for the project were generated using two lab-based experiments, the first at the University of Leeds (February 2014), and the second at University College London (March

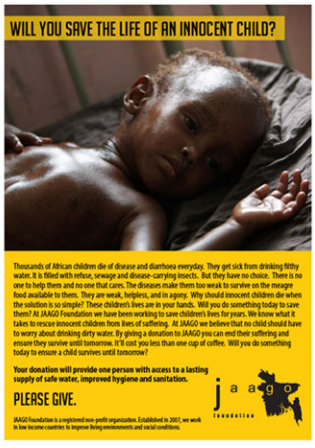
FIGURE 2

Experimental Treatments

Treatment A: Baseline



Treatment B: Individual Victim



Treatment C: Empowered Community

2014). Undergraduate students were recruited across the universities' faculties/schools via *EventBrite* and email alerts.[5] Our sample was 250 participants (150 at Leeds, and 100 at UCL). Respondents were told the survey asked questions on general political attitudes, and asked a series of nonrelated questions before being shown one of the three appeals. We provide further information and report the descriptive statistics in Table 1.

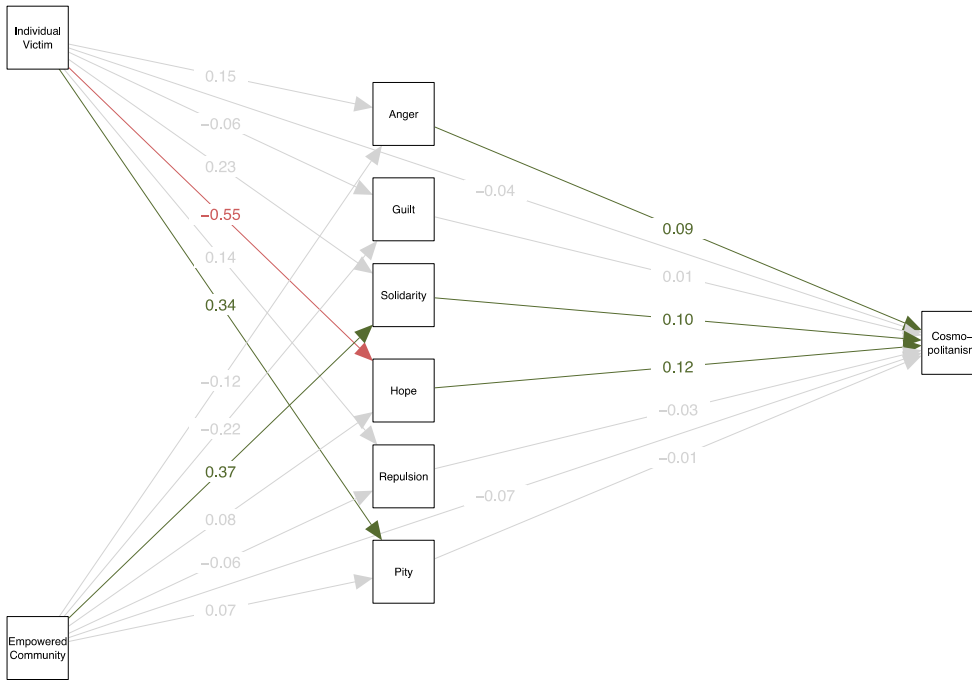
The intervention, through random assignment, exposed respondents to one of three specially designed appeals to support poverty alleviation and development in poor countries (see Figure 2 and extended discussion in the Appendix). Drawing on the literature discussed above and our empirical examinations of appeals from development NGOs, we generated a set of unique characteristics for each appeal. Building upon the theoretical principles of pity and empathy, we construct our appeals to represent an "individual victim" and an "empowered community," respectively. The "individual victim" treatment reproduces a traditional appeal showing a poor and needy victim in need of salvation from a powerful donor; "poverty porn" or "flies in the eyes" images. The "empowered community" treatment reflects efforts by development NGOs to move away from such sensationalist imagery and portray people with dignity and within a wider context (van der Gaag and Nash, 1987; CONCORD, 2006).

Whereas previous studies have examined either behavior or attitudes as outcome variables, we take a two-dimensional approach. The first outcome estimates the effect of the appeals on cosmopolitanism (an attitudinal measure), which taps into subjects' sense of connectedness, understanding, and similarity. We measured respondents' cosmopolitan sentiments through

[5]While there are concerns about the use of student samples (Hooghe et al., 2010), see Druckman and Kam (2011) for a defense. They show through simulations that student samples do not pose a problem for a study's external validity and only pose a statistical problem for inference when there is insufficient variation in an important covariate of interest. As reported in Table 1, our *Priority* variable varies sufficiently and in line with nonstudent samples, which means that we can be confident that our results are an unbiased estimate of the true underlying treatment effect. Moreover, Meyer et al. (2011) found that more than 40 percent of students in the United Kingdom were nationalistic or ethnocentric, suggesting that there is a sizeable proportion of students who do not fit a global idealist stereotype.

FIGURE 3

Path Diagram of the Cosmopolitan Model



three questions asking students how "connected" they feel to those in other parts of the world, whether they can "understand" the lives of these individuals, and whether they believe they are "similar to" these individuals. Each item was measured on a 1–5 scale and then aggregated to form the latent measure cosmopolitan sentiment.[6] Our second outcome measure is likelihood to donate, a behavioral measure that uses a form of dictator game, where the participant was asked whether he or she wanted to donate to the charity named in the appeal (Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler, 1986; Engel, 2011). Participants were given £15 in Amazon vouchers and were not told at the outset that they would be asked to donate some, none, or all of the vouchers to the Jaago Foundation.

We conduct multiple mediation analysis to test our hypothesis that emotions mediate an individual's response to development campaign advertising. Mediation analysis allows us to move away from only estimating average treatment effects and to quantify the effect of the mechanisms (Hicks and Tingley, 2011). The mediation analysis works as a two-stage model (Baron and Kenny, 1986). In the first stage, we look for direct, significant effects of the treatment on the emotions individuals expressed. If an individual received the empowered community treatment, for example, we would expect her to report higher levels of hopefulness on our 1–5 scale. In the second stage of the model, we examine the subsequent, indirect effect of hope on our behavioral and relational outcome measures (Hicks and Tingley, 2011). Because we do not assume only one of our six emotions

[6]We use the *mirt* package in R to construct a latent trait estimate, or factor score, of respondents' "cosmopolitan-ness" (Chalmers, 2012). The package fits an unconditional maximum likelihood factor analysis model. We used the expectation-maximization (EM) algorithm approach (Bock and Aitken, 1981) and the graded item class given the polytomous nature of the items. We extracted a single factor.

TABLE 2

Results of the Multiple Mediation Analysis Investigating Emotions as a Mediator Between Appeals and Cosmopolitanism

Normal Theory Test	Label	Est.	*SE*	*z*	*p*
Effect of individual victim appeal on anger	a1 path	0.149	0.188	0.793	0.428
Effect of individual victim appeal on guilt	a2 path	−0.059	0.196	−0.304	0.761
Effect of individual victim appeal on solidarity	a3 path	0.227	0.148	1.531	0.126
Effect of individual victim appeal on hope	**a4 path**	**−0.547**	**0.163**	**−3.346**	**0.001**
Effect of individual victim appeal on repulsion	a5 path	0.143	0.167	0.858	0.391
Effect of individual victim appeal on pity	**a6 path**	**0.338**	**0.141**	**2.392**	**0.017**
Effect of anger on cosmopolitanism	**b1 path**	**0.091**	**0.036**	**2.490**	**0.013**
Effect of guilt on cosmopolitanism	b2 path	0.007	0.030	0.218	0.828
Effect of solidarity on cosmopolitanism	**b3 path**	**0.099**	**0.045**	**2.204**	**0.028**
Effect of hope on cosmopolitanism	**b4 path**	**0.117**	**0.039**	**3.038**	**0.002**
Effect of repulsion on cosmopolitanism	b5 path	−0.026	0.036	−0.733	0.463
Effect of pity on cosmopolitanism	b6 path	−0.015	0.041	−0.358	0.721
Effect of empowered community appeal on anger	d1 path	−0.117	0.179	−0.652	0.514
Effect of empowered community on guilt	d2 path	−0.218	0.193	−1.127	0.260
Effect of empowered community on solidarity	**d3 path**	**0.371**	**0.151**	**2.456**	**0.014**
Effect of empowered community on hope	d4 path	0.082	0.167	0.493	0.622
Effect of empowered community on repulsion (d5 path)	d5 path	−0.063	0.176	−0.361	0.718
Effect of empowered community on pity	d6 path	0.071	0.157	0.453	0.651
Direct effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism	c1 path	−0.045	0.100	−0.447	0.655
Direct effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism	c2 path	−0.071	0.086	−0.825	0.409
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Label	Est.	*SE*	*z*	*p*
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through anger	a1*b1 path	0.013	0.018	0.739	0.460
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through guilt	a2*b2 path	0.000	0.007	−0.059	0.953
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through solidarity	a3*b3 path	0.023	0.019	1.209	0.227

continued

TABLE 2

continued

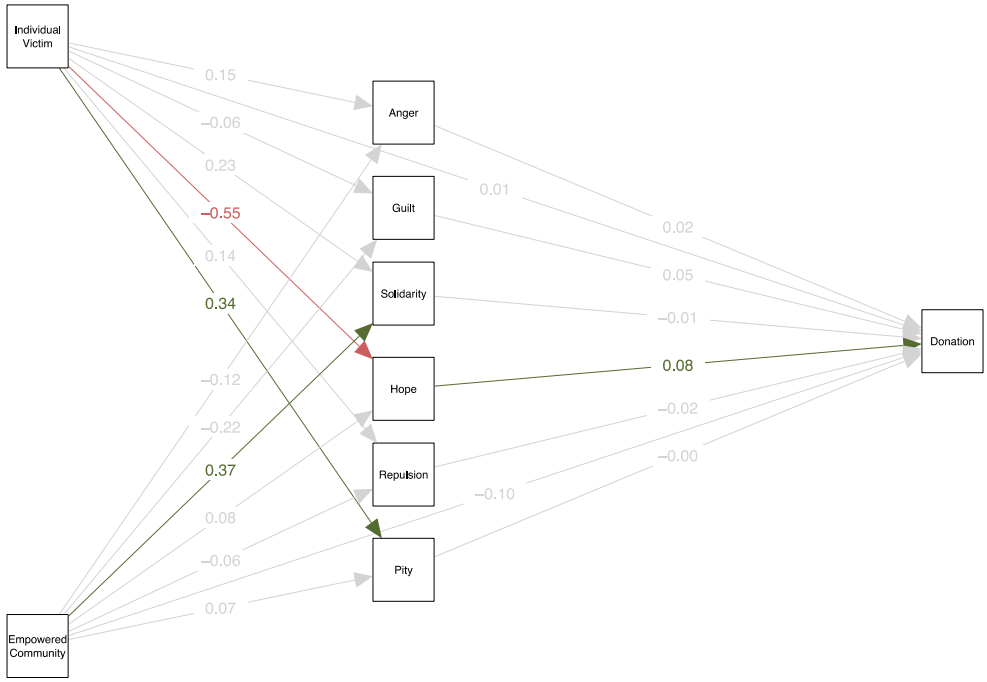
Normal Theory Test	Label	Est.	*SE*	*z*	*p*
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through hope	**a4*b4 path**	**−0.064**	**0.030**	**−2.122**	**0.034**
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through repulsion	a5*b5 path	−0.004	0.009	−0.419	0.675
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through pity	a6*b6 path	−0.005	0.015	−0.329	0.742
Indirect effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism through anger	d1*b1 path	−0.011	0.018	−0.595	0.552
Indirect effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism through guilt	d2*b2 path	−0.001	0.009	−0.163	0.870
Indirect effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism through solidarity	d3*b3 path	0.037	0.023	1.586	0.113
Indirect effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism through hope	d4*b4 path	0.010	0.020	0.481	0.631
Indirect effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism through repulsion	d5*b5 path	0.002	0.008	0.210	0.834
Indirect effect of empowered community on cosmopolitanism through pity	d6*b6 path	−0.001	0.007	−0.141	0.888

is activated when viewing a development appeal we use multiple mediation analysis to estimate the effects of all six emotions simultaneously (MacKinnon, 2008; Preacher and Hayes, 2008).[7] In the following section we report our results using the labels shown in Figure 1 for each pathway. For example, a6 is the effect of the "individual victim" treatment on pity, b1 is the effect of pity on the outcome of interest, c2 is the direct (unmediated) effect of the empowered community treatment on the outcome of interest, and d4xb4 is the indirect effect of the individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism via hope.

[7]We report the main effects. However, the results are robust to the inclusion of a series of typical predictors of cosmopolitanism and donations. We ran the analysis with a range of covariates taken from the existing literature on donations, support for aid, and public engagement provide us with a set of likely covariates. These include sex, education, ethnicity, ideology, political engagement, religious beliefs, knowledge, and travel (Bayram, 2017; Henson and Lindstrom, 2013; Milner and Tingley, 2013; Paxton and Knack, 2012; Prather, 2011; vanHeerde and Hudson, 2010).

FIGURE 4

Path Diagram of the Donation Model



Results and Discussion

First, analyzing the effects of the treatments on the six emotions (X → Z), we find that three emotions are activated when viewing the appeals—solidarity, hope, and pity (see Figure 3). When compared to the baseline treatment, the individual victim treatment significantly depresses hope (a4 path) and activates pity (a6 path). The empowered community treatment significantly increases one's sense of solidarity (d3 path), compared to the baseline. These results are in line with our expectations. We do not find significant effects of the treatments on anger, guilt, and repulsion. The strongest relationship that we find is the negative effect of the individual victim treatment on hope (a4 path estimate = −0.547). In terms of the effects of emotions on cosmopolitanism (Z → Y), the decomposed model shows that increases in feelings of anger, solidarity, and hope are positively correlated with increased cosmopolitan sentiments (paths b1, b3, and b4).

Putting the two halves of the model together suggests that the empowered community appeal increases feelings of solidarity, and that increased solidarity is positively related to cosmopolitanism. However, it is worth noting that the *overall* indirect effect falls just outside of the 0.10 confidence interval (d3*b3 path; we report full results in Table 2). The indirect effect that is significant is the *negative* effect of the individual victim appeal on cosmopolitanism through hope (a4*b4 path, $p < 0.05$). In other words, individual victim type appeals have unintended consequences—while they stimulate participants' feelings of pity as intended, they also undermine a sense of cosmopolitanism by suppressing feelings of hope.

Next we turn to our behavioral outcome of interest: donations (see Figure 4). The first step of the model—the effects of the treatments on the mediators (X → Z)—is the same

TABLE 3

Results of the Multiple Mediation Analysis Investigating Emotions as a Mediator Between Appeals and Likelihood to Donate

Normal Theory Test	Label	Est.	*SE*	*z*	*p*
Effect of individual victim appeal on anger	a1 path	0.149	0.181	0.822	0.411
Effect of individual victim appeal on guilt	a2 path	−0.059	0.204	−0.292	0.771
Effect of individual victim appeal on solidarity	a3 path	0.227	0.147	1.541	0.123
Effect of individual victim appeal on hope	**a4 path**	**−0.547**	**0.166**	**−3.287**	**0.001**
Effect of individual victim appeal on repulsion	a5 path	0.143	0.164	0.872	0.383
Effect of individual victim appeal on pity	**a6 path**	**0.338**	**0.141**	**2.398**	**0.016**
Effect of anger on cosmopolitanism	b1 path	0.016	0.033	0.483	0.629
Effect of guilt on cosmopolitanism	b2 path	0.053	0.028	1.850	0.064
Effect of solidarity on cosmopolitanism	b3 path	−0.011	0.040	−0.278	0.781
Effect of hope on cosmopolitanism	**b4 path**	**0.081**	**0.036**	**2.257**	**0.024**
Effect of repulsion on cosmopolitanism	b5 path	−0.017	0.033	−0.528	0.598
Effect of pity on cosmopolitanism	b6 path	−0.002	0.038	−0.050	0.960
Effect of empowered community appeal on anger	d1 path	−0.117	0.176	−0.666	0.505
Effect of empowered community on guilt	d2 path	−0.218	0.192	−1.137	0.256
Effect of empowered community on solidarity	**d3 path**	**0.371**	**0.151**	**2.457**	**0.014**
Effect of empowered community on hope	d4 path	0.082	0.161	0.513	0.608
Effect of empowered community on repulsion (d5 path)	d5 path	−0.063	0.177	−0.359	0.719
Effect of empowered community on pity	d6 path	0.071	0.153	0.463	0.643
Direct effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate	c1 path	0.008	0.090	0.086	0.931
Direct effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate	c2 path	−0.103	0.082	−1.257	0.209
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Label	Est.	*SE*	*z*	*p*
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate through anger	a1*b1 path	0.002	0.008	0.292	0.770
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate through guilt	a2*b2 path	−0.003	0.012	−0.256	0.798

continued

TABLE 3

continued

Normal Theory Test	Label	Est.	*SE*	*z*	*p*
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate through solidarity	a3*b3 path	−0.003	0.011	−0.224	0.822
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate through hope	a4*b4 path	−0.044	0.025	−1.778	0.075
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate through repulsion	a5*b5 path	−0.002	0.008	−0.320	0.749
Indirect effect of individual victim appeal on likelihood to donate through pity	a6*b6 path	−0.001	0.013	−0.049	0.961
Indirect effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate through anger	d1*b1 path	−0.002	0.007	−0.258	0.796
Indirect effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate through guilt	d2*b2 path	−0.011	0.013	−0.881	0.379
Indirect effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate through solidarity	d3*b3 path	−0.004	0.016	−0.258	0.796
Indirect effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate through hope	d4*b4 path	0.007	0.014	0.465	0.642
Indirect effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate through repulsion	d5*b5 path	0.001	0.007	0.162	0.871
Indirect effect of empowered community on likelihood to donate through pity	d6*b6 path	0.000	0.007	−0.021	0.983

as in the cosmopolitanism model: the individual victim appeal reduces hope (a4 path) and increases pity (a6 path) and the empowered community appeal increases solidarity. However, the effects that these emotional mediators have on the likelihood to donate are different. We find two significant relationships between our mediators and likelihood to donate. Hope (b4 path) and guilt (b2 path, $p < 0.1$) are positively associated with propensity to donate ($Z \rightarrow Y$). Again, as reported in Table 3, the only overall indirect effect that is statistically significant at the 0.1 level is that the individual victim appeal reduces one's likelihood to donate through suppressing hope (a4*b4 path, $p < 0.1$). In other words, when people see appeals using negative images, a decrease in hopefulness reduces their willingness to donate.

When introducing our theoretical expectations we noted that participants may actually experience two different types of anger when being shown the individual victim appeal. Is it that individuals' anger represents annoyance at being asked to donate, or outrage at the state of the world? In other words, is anger aligned with pity or empathy? Our findings are revealing. Note that in the cosmopolitanism model we find a positive relationship between reported feelings of anger and one's sense of cosmopolitanism (b1 path in cosmopolitanism model). However, there is no significant relationship from anger to donations (b1 path

in donation model). In other words, when participants report feelings of anger they also express a stronger sense of cosmopolitanism. We infer this to suggest that emotional anger expresses a feeling of outrage over perceived injustices rather than annoyance at being asked to donate.

With respect to the conventional wisdom around the effectiveness of negative imagery on donations, our results suggest that there may be more than one way to secure donations. Our findings suggest that we can, and should, move away from one-dimensional, pity-based approaches. Key here is the strong and consistently statistically significant effect that hope has on likelihood to donate, and also boosts cosmopolitanism. Furthermore, it is clear that the negative imagery and text in the individual victim appeal erodes participants' sense of hope. These findings have important and direct implications for NGOs and charities fundraising for international development efforts. The sector has long relied upon sad, pity-based images with considerable success in terms of fundraising. However, these results show that there is a tradeoff: using negative images may well bring in the money, but it kills hope that directly reduces people's sense of connection, understanding, and similarity to the distant others for whom NGOs are fundraising. Short-term fundraising success may come at the expense of deeper engagement with international development.

Conclusion

In this article, we ask whether emotions mediate the effect of international development appeals on cosmopolitanism and donations? Our findings show evidence that pity and empathy-based appeals generate different emotional responses—solidarity, hope, and pity—and these emotions influence both attitudinal and behavioral responses. We find that traditional pity-based appeals undermine cosmopolitan sentiments by suppressing respondents' feelings of hope, but that cosmopolitanism is also boosted when participants reported feelings of solidarity and anger. Moreover, pity-based appeals also undermine hope, which is a positive driver of the likelihood to donate.

We make three important contributions. First, almost all of the emerging empirical, quantitative literature on cosmopolitanism tends to rely on cross-sectional survey data and limits itself to associational analysis of the correlates of cosmopolitanism. In this article we have leveraged an experimental design to causally test the triggers of cosmopolitanism in both an attitudinal and behavioral sense. Second, we disaggregate the differential effects of particular emotions on cosmopolitanism, taking us beyond the blanket claim that there is an emotional and affective component to cosmopolitanism. Third, we show that the anger that individuals feel about seeing global poverty comes from a place of righteous anger about the state of the world as opposed to anger at feeling emotionally blackmailed to give money to a charity.

These findings have policy implications for development organizations. While development practitioners aim to reduce global poverty, the methods they use in doing so may be detrimental to that goal. In other words, conscious and strategic decisions to boost donations through graphic and negative emotional appeals have unintended consequences on interest and engagement with global development. This is important because NGO appeals are informed by, even if tacitly, a notion of cosmopolitanism, that is, a shared sense of humanity and responsibility. Although the extensive use of traditional pity-based appeals has worked for many years in attracting donors, the decline of public engagement with global poverty suggests that an alternative approach may be needed. Rather than rely on

difference and dehumanization, NGOs may be better served by activating the emotions that both increase one's propensity to donate and the cosmopolitan sentiments necessary for longer-term engagement. The empathy-based alternative, which highlights an empowered community, increases one's sense of solidarity, without robbing people of hope—the most fundamental emotion in determining whether one will donate and whether one considers himself or herself a cosmopolitan.

Our results suggest that moving away from the dominant pity-based appeal is less risky than commonly assumed: we find no evidence that using an empathy-based appeal diminishes an individual's likelihood to donate. Moreover, a move to "empowered community" appeals may mitigate the negative consequences of the pity-based appeals. Not only does the empathy-based appeal not diminish donations—it increases cosmopolitanism—a potentially important component of deeper or long-term engagement.

This research provides a first step in understanding the mediating impact of emotions on development appeals. However, more work needs to be done. This is only one data point. Our analysis relies on a student sample, and one from the United Kingdom, which may pose threats to external validity.[8] Replicating our experiment with different samples through an embedded survey experiment or field experiment is an ideal next step. Additionally, though we asked participants about six different emotions, there may be others we did not consider, and they may affect long- and short-term engagement differently. We have investigated the role of these appeals on a respondent's likelihood to make an immediate donation. However, there may be different measures of donation behavior—that is, signing up for a standing order or direct debit, a common method of retaining donors—that are more interesting for future work. Finally, there are also other forms of engagement, such as likelihood to volunteer, sign a petition, or contact an elected representative, for which pity and empathy may work differently. These forms of engagement may have different emotional triggers and responses.

Appendix

Experimental Design

The "individual victim" appeal incorporates many of the common features seen in recent NGO campaigns: the focus on a poor, small, African child suffering from disease. The appeal highlights differences between the "giver" and "receiver," as seen in the strapline "Will you save the life of an innocent child?" Like many of the appeals used by NGO charities, it is designed to tap one's sense of pity and guilt as the dominant emotional response.

The "empowered community" appeal features members of a small community accessing clean water and the story of Fidosi, a young girl who likes many of the things British children do. Importantly, it provides contextual elements, like the representation of a community of adults and children, which serve to humanize those depicted in the appeal. It emphasizes commonalities and prompts feelings of hope and solidarity via the strapline, "Sharing just a little builds a brighter future for us all."

Our baseline appeal—the "facts" frame—provides basic information about the 2.5 million people worldwide who lack access to clean water and sanitation. The strapline,

[8] Pichler (2009) finds that there is significant variation in cosmopolitanism across countries—with southern Europeans, Nordic, and British residents being more cosmopolitan than the rest of Europe—so we are wary of generalizing our results.

"Providing clean water in the developing world" and graphic focus attention on the benefits of clean water on health and well-being.

We compare our two appeals to the baseline group. We do not assume that the "fact-based" appeal is a placebo, only that it provides a baseline from which to compare the effects of the two principle-based appeals. In constructing our treatments, we were guided by the findings from the psychological and economic literature on donations. For instance, detailed description about specific victims and people in need increases donations more than providing information about the breadth of a problem; the "identified" versus "statistical victim" (Kogut and Ritov, 2005; Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic, 2007).[9] We sought to keep such frames consistent across all of treatments.

With permission, we used the name and logo of a small, but established, international charity, the Jaago Foundation,[10] to craft the three treatments. We pilot tested the appeals on a set of 60 undergraduate students at the University of Leeds. They were asked to rank a set of possible treatment pictures in terms of how much pity and solidarity the images aroused. We performed this preassessment to see whether the manipulation was a valid measure of the two principles, pity and empathy. We then chose two pictures: one that received the highest "pity" scores and one that received the highest "solidarity" scores to represent pity and empathy, respectively. These served as the basis for the appeals.[11]

We used a randomized block design[12] to allocate respondents into one of three treatments based on their response to the following question: "Thinking about helping others less fortunate than ourselves, to what extent do you think we should prioritize children in the United Kingdom or children in poor countries?"[13] The randomized block design allows us to create homogenous groups—in this case based on respondents' relative priorities on helping children at home versus poor countries—before randomly assigning the treatments. The effect is to reduce the overall level of variance in the data and better estimate the treatment effects.

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[9]For example, by just varying the detail about a child in need of medical treatment—providing an age, name, and picture versus not providing these details—increased willingness to donate, on average, by around 60 percent (Kogut and Ritov, 2005). The focus on a single victim works by eliciting feelings of sympathy (Kogut and Ritov, 2005; Dickert and Slovic, 2009).

[10]The Jaago Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the educational needs of less privileged children in Bangladesh. See ⟨http://jaago.com.bd⟩ for more information. We chose the charity because it was small and not well known to avoid branding effects.

[11]Students who participated in the pilot test were excluded from participating in the experiment.

[12]Blocked randomization is a preferred design when there is reason to think the variable blocking on significantly affects the treatment(s).

[13]The item was measured using a 0–10 scale where 0 = we should give priority to children in the United Kingdom; 5 = give equal priority to children in the United Kingdom and in poor countries; and 10 = we should give priority to children in poor countries. Respondents were grouped as follows: 0–3 = U.K. priority group 1; 4–6 = equal priority group; and 7–10 = poor country priority group.

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