

The Future of Fundraising: Motivations for Participating in Facebook Fundraisers and Implications of Social Capital

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In 2017, Facebook created a platform for philanthropic fundraising that allowed users to ask their friends to donate to a specific non-profit organization. This study aimed to identify unique individual and network characteristics of those who choose to donate to these campaigns, as well as explore the potential relationships between bridging and bonding social capital and participation in a Facebook fundraiser, and identify motivations for participation. Results from an online survey of active Facebook users ($N = 167$) demonstrate that

those who donate to Facebook fundraisers have higher scores in social capital, altruism, and self-monitoring, and are motivated to donate by perceived poster genuineness, relation to the organization, and demonstrating their own goodwill to their network. Results from this project can be utilized to help inform the growth of prosocial campaigns on social networking sites.

Keywords: Social Capital, Facebook Fundraiser, Social Media, Prosocial Campaigns

In 2017, Facebook created a charitable giving tool that allowed users to ask their friends to donate to a specific non-profit organization in honor of their birthday or some other milestone. The milestone specific fundraising tool was an evolution of the original charitable giving tool created on Facebook in 2015. By 2018, Facebook reported that these fundraisers generated over \$300 million for non-profit groups, with organizations such as the American Cancer Society and St. Jude's Hospital receiving the greatest share of donations (Sharma, 2018). More recently, in response to the 2019-2020 Australian wildfires, nearly \$32 million was raised via Facebook fundraising for the Trustee for the New South Wales Rural Fire Service and Brigades (Lyons, 2020). Thus, in a short amount of time, Facebook fundraisers have become a rather successful feature of the platform (Hessekiel, 2019; Kim, 2020; Lucas, 2017). The success of this new feature

also introduces questions about the process behind it, including: who amongst Facebook users are donating, why they are compelled to donate, and do those who engage in these fundraising events share a unique set of network characteristics?

Facebook is one of the most commonly used social media platforms, with approximately 69% of American adults reporting that they use it (Perrin & Anderson, 2019), and given the platform's newfound influence on the marketplace for charitable giving, its significant scope demands attention. Furthermore, social capital, or the actual or potential resources afforded by a social network (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 2000), often links to users' Facebook activities (Ellison et al., 2014; Ellison et al., 2011). Therefore, this study also aims to identify the potential relationships between bridging and bonding social capital and participation in a Facebook fundraiser. Moreover, individual characteristics like altruism and self-monitoring have been tied to other prosocial behaviors (McGloin & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2018; Wallace et al., 2017), indicating the possibility of their extension to charitable giving tendencies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To begin, it is important to recognize that the opportunity to solicit and provide donations to other users on the Facebook platform is a very unique type of social support engagement. Social network fundraising (e.g., Facebook Fundraising) differs from crowdfunding platforms (e.g., GoFundMe), as audiences on crowdfunding platforms use the site understanding that the platform is designed for the solicitation of donations, while users of social networking sites like Facebook do not sign up with the intention of donating (Choy & Schlagwein, 2016; Kim, 2020). People have a desire for their social media identities to be consistent with their true identities (Oeldorf-Hirsch et al., 2017; Su & Chan, 2017) suggesting that when people engage with Facebook fundraisers, they are in some ways aligning their identity with the charity. Thus, social network fundraising is critical to consider, as it implies a connection to one's identity, beyond simply asking for donations.

Yet, the concept of asking for support using a social networking approach is not an entirely novel phenomenon, and is often considered one of the key values that users ascertain by having large networks on these platforms (Nabi et al., 2011). In fact, early

research in this area suggested that social media would be an ideal platform for soliciting donations given the network density these platforms afford (Muralidharan et al., 2011; Saxton & Wang, 2014; Waters et al., 2009). Furthermore, social support has been cited as a primary motivation for social media usage (Nabi et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2011). Thus, the development of social media fundraising campaigns was likely a natural evolution of the platform's capability of promoting social support and interaction.

Social media in general, and Facebook in particular, provides users an opportunity to develop their social capital by either expanding their network (bridging), or in some cases, deepening existing relationships (bonding) (Putnam, 2000). Recently, Ellison and colleagues (2014) studied mobilization requests on Facebook, which are defined as specific requests for information or favors from one's network. The authors found that individuals who posted mobilization requests on Facebook also tended to report higher levels of perceived social capital. Additionally, they found that these individuals were more likely to return the favor and reply to others' mobilization requests and considered Facebook to be a great source for information, coordination and networked communication. Therefore, it is possible that users who choose to participate in donation campaigns sponsored by their social media peers may be motivated or influenced by social capital implications.

Social Capital and Relational Factors

According to Putnam (2000), there are two primary types of social capital development: bridging and bonding. Bridging social capital relates to the breadth of a social network and suggests that individuals have connections to people in a wide variety of established social groups. Bridging social capital is often associated with weak-tie relationships (Putnam, 2000; Granovetter, 1973), as these relationships are typically used for gathering information, resource allocation, and networking. Often, when someone has a great deal of bridging social capital, it suggests that they have a very large network with associations across a wide variety of communities. In previous research, Facebook use has been associated with higher perceptions of bridging social capital (Ellison et al., 2007), making it an ideal social media platform for studying resource mobilization.

Conversely, bonding social capital relates more to the depth of a social network and is commonly associated with strong ties (Putnam, 2000; Granovetter, 1973). The development of social capital focused on bonding usually results in relationships that are

used for social and emotional support (Putnam, 2000; Williams, 2006). In this context, when an individual has a great deal of bonding social capital, it would suggest that they have meaningful relationships and they could ask a lot of their network because of those significant connections. It is likely that when considering soliciting donations for a cause, individuals may feel a stronger inclination to donate to those in their network with whom they have a closer connection. Further, individuals who have a great deal of bridging social capital also tend to have large social networks (Donath & boyd, 2004; Ellison et al., 2007), which would increase their chances of being exposed to a Facebook fundraiser that they deemed worthy of their time and resources. The literature also suggests that individuals who are more active on Facebook tend to give and receive more social support (Li et al., 2015), which may extend to Facebook fundraiser participation. Furthermore, research supports the notion that stronger social ties in online communities may provide “real-world competitive advantages” especially related to fundraising (Skirnevskiy et al., 2017). Given these previous findings regarding social capital and Facebook networks, we predict:

Hypothesis 1: Those who donate to Facebook fundraisers will have higher (a) bridging and (b) bonding social capital than those who do not donate to Facebook fundraisers.

Individual User Characteristics

In addition to social capital, it is also important to consider individual user characteristics when thinking about the success of Facebook fundraisers. Notably, both bridging and bonding social capital have been linked to a variety of social media characteristics, like network size and usage tendencies (Ellison et al., 2007). For example, Ellison and colleagues (2007) found that Facebook use has a positive correlation with bridging social capital and maintained social capital. Su and Chan (2017) demonstrated similar findings, but instead suggest that perceived desirability of content shapes understanding of users’ Facebook networks and the development of their social capital. Taken together, this literature suggests that social media use variables, like network size and intensity of use, could play a role in the success of Facebook fundraisers.

Similarly, other personality characteristics have been connected to online behaviors. Of interest, altruism, or the “the intention to benefit others as an expression of internal

values, regardless of social or motivational reinforcement” (Price et al., 1995, p. 257), has been linked to online behaviors like knowledge-sharing (Ma & Chan, 2014), social capital (McGloin & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2018), and social support (Oh & Syn, 2015). McGloin and Oeldorf-Hirsch (2018) suggest that altruism predicts social capital, which in turn, predicts pro-social campaign participation. One explanation for the link between altruism and online behaviors is likely related to self-presentation, as social media users have a strong desire for their online content to be consistent with their identity and online self-presentation (Oeldorf-Hirsch et al., 2017; Su & Chan, 2017). Given these previous findings surrounding altruism in social networking behavior, it is likely that participation in online pro-social campaigns may also extend to Facebook fundraiser donation participation, therefore, we predict:

Hypothesis 2: Altruism will be greater in those who donate to Facebook fundraisers than those who do not.

Hypothesis 3: Altruism will be a predictor of social capital, both (a) bridging and (b) bonding.

Additionally, self-monitoring, or the way that an individual intentionally regulates his or her behaviors according to social cues and norms (Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986), is important to consider in relation to the presentation of the online self. While self-monitoring has been linked to other important personality characteristics, like narcissism (Kowalski et al., 2018), it has also been attributed to online behaviors. For example, self-monitoring levels have been shown to influence preferences for certain social media platforms (Kim et al., 2017), Facebook addiction, and one’s likelihood to provide social support on Facebook (Pornsakulvanich, 2018). Ranney and Troop-Gordon (2020) studied adolescent behaviors online and found that while popularity predicted prosocial behaviors online for adolescent boys, high digital self-monitoring in the same group led to less prosocial online behaviors. Finally, in direct relation to the current investigation, Wallace et al. (2017) found that high self-monitors are less likely than low self-monitors to actually donate to charities online. These findings suggest that self-monitoring influences online behaviors, particularly prosocial behaviors. A second explanation for this connection could be that individuals who are higher self-monitors are more image conscious than their low self-monitor counterparts (O’Cass, 2000), and thus, may be

apprehensive to associate themselves with other individuals or organizations. Given these previous findings regarding self-monitoring and donation to Facebook fundraisers, we predict:

Hypothesis 4: Individuals who donate to Facebook fundraisers will have lower scores of self-monitoring than those who do not donate.

Motivation to Donate

A wide body of literature has dedicated efforts to understanding motivations behind providing social support in a variety of capacities, including charitable giving tendencies and prosocial online behaviors. Li and McDougle (2017) suggest that positive personal experiences and information about an organization positively influence individuals' choices to volunteer for nonprofits, but these are not motivators for donating money. In fact, social network characteristics seem to play a stronger role in online donations than other factors (Saxton & Wang, 2014). In regards to support online that is not financial, Oeldorf-Hirsch and McGloin (2017) found that network norms, ease of participation, and perceived usefulness predicted likelihood to participate in Pictivism campaigns (changing profile pictures to support a cause) on Facebook.

While some motivations may be practical, other relational implications may be considered when making decisions to aid a network member. Regarding social support on Facebook, Chang et al. (2018) sought to identify users' motivations to provide social support to those in their online networks utilizing a qualitative methodology. The study concluded that closeness was a critical factor in the process, such that users would almost always reply to a strong relational tie, but more considerations would be necessary for a weak tie. The authors identified seven motivations that they believe users process when they decide whether or not to provide social support to a weaker tie on Facebook. These motivations include 1) perceived acuity and seriousness of content, 2) consistency in posting patterns, 3) perceived capacity to provide support, 4) history of reciprocity, 5) resonance with the poster, 6) perceived motivations of the poster, and 7) perceptions of other viewers.

Based on these findings, it is unclear how motivations to donate relate to questions of social capital, donations, and other network or individual characteristics. For example, when considering donation characteristics in relation to donation motivations, it would be

helpful to uncover if particular motivations to donate tended to yield higher amounts of money donated. In an effort to examine the potential link between these seven social support motivations (Chang et al., 2018) and financial social support, we propose the following research questions:

Research question 1: How do motivations to donate to Facebook fundraisers relate to relational closeness, bridging social capital, and bonding social capital?

Research question 2: How do motivations to donate to Facebook fundraisers relate to donation characteristics?

METHODS

Procedure

The primary aim of this study was to investigate social network differences and individual differences between those who donated to Facebook fundraisers and those who did not. In order to assess the proposed hypotheses and research questions, an online survey was developed and distributed to a sample of Facebook users.

An anonymous online Qualtrics survey that was approved by a university research ethics board was utilized for data collection. Prior to completing the survey, participants provided consent to participate. In this survey, participants were asked if they had ever donated to a fundraiser on Facebook. If participants said yes, they had donated, they were asked questions about their most recent donation (e.g., to which organization they donated, how much they donated, goal of overall fundraiser), motivations for donating, previous donation experiences and relational closeness with the person to whom they donated. If participants said no, they had never donated, they were asked if there was a particular reason that they had never donated. After the donation-based questions, participants completed measures of altruism, social capital, Facebook usage behaviors, number of Facebook friends, daily use of Facebook, and demographic measures.

Recruitment and Participants

Participants ($N = 167$) were recruited using a method of snowball sampling on Facebook. A link to the survey was originally shared by the researchers and network associations were able to share the survey link with their own Facebook networks as desired. As an incentive, participants were offered the opportunity to enter into a drawing

to win one of five \$20 Amazon gift cards. The sample was 77% female and 84% white. Participants had a wide range in age from 18 to 84, with a mean age of 38.84, $SD = 17.35$. On average, participants used Facebook for approximately 60 minutes per day ($M = 59.08$, $SD = 52.84$, 0 – 360 minutes) and had just over 500 friends ($M = 507.78$, $SD = 441.88$, 10 – 2527). The sample was well-educated and of higher socioeconomic status, with 83.2% having earned a bachelor's degree or higher and 61.1% making over \$60,000 per year. These statistics are also relatively consistent with current Facebook demographic information (Cast from Clay, 2018; Statista Research Department, 2016).

Within the sample, 77 participants reported that they had donated to a Facebook Fundraiser, while 90 participants reported that they had never donated to a Facebook Fundraiser. Individuals who reported that they had donated to a Facebook fundraiser were asked to report the nature of the organization to which they donated. Most individuals had donated to a health-related charity (19.8%), like the American Cancer Society or Autism Speaks. Those who reported never donating were asked to provide their rationale. The top responses for not donating included reasons related to distrust (13.2%) and financial restrictions (9.6%). A comparison of those who did and did not donate to Facebook fundraisers demonstrated that the groups were relatively equal in regards to their daily Facebook use ($t(165) = .81$, $p = .42$), social network size ($t(165) = .45$, $p = .66$), and sex ($\chi^2(2) = 1.95$, $p = .38$). However, there were some significant differences between the two groups, specifically, individuals who donated were older than those who had not ($t(165) = 4.20$, $p < .001$) and tended to be of a higher socioeconomic status ($t(165) = 3.40$, $p < .001$).

Measures

Social Capital. To measure bridging and bonding social capital, the Facebook-specific bridging and bonding social capital scales (Ellison et al., 2014) were utilized. Nine items were used for the bonding scale ($M = 3.30$, $SD = .79$), like “when I feel lonely, there are several people in my Facebook network I can talk to,” and achieved an acceptable level of reliability ($\alpha = .84$). Ten items were used for the bridging scale ($M = 3.50$, $SD = .66$), like “interacting with people in my Facebook network gives me new people to talk to,” and similarly achieved an acceptable level of reliability ($\alpha = .85$). Both scales were measured on five-point scales from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*.

Altruism. Altruism was measured using the Price et al. (1995) five item measure of altruism ($M = 4.14$, $SD = .64$). Participants were asked to rank the importance of items like “to give to others” and “to be unselfish,” on a five-point Likert scale of (1) *very unimportant* to (5) *very important*. The scale achieved an acceptable level of reliability ($\alpha = .88$).

Self-Monitoring. To measure self-monitoring, a scale from Lennox and Wolfe (1984) was used ($\alpha = .80$, $M = 3.74$, $SD = .50$). This scale includes 13 items, including items such as “once I know what the situation calls for, it’s easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly.” Participants indicated their level of agreement with each item on a five-point Likert scale of (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*.

Relational Closeness. Relational closeness was measured using the unidimensional relationship closeness scale created by Dibble et al. (2012; $\alpha = .98$). At the recommendations of Dibble et al. (2012), one item from the original scale was removed due to questionable discriminant validity, resulting in 11 items ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.62$). Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements like “this person is a priority in my life,” and “my relationship with this person is close,” on a seven-point Likert scale from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*.

Motivations. Chang et al. (2018) investigated motivations for providing social support on Facebook and, based on interviews, discovered seven primary motivations. In this study, these seven motivations were adjusted slightly to reflect motivations to donate. These motivations included perceived immediacy and seriousness of the cause, consistency in posting patterns, perceived capacity to provide financial support, history of reciprocity, personal resonance with the organization, perceived motivation or genuineness of the poster, and perceptions of other viewers viewing one’s own goodwill. Each item was used to assess motivations for donating to a Facebook fundraiser by asking participants to indicate their agreement with the statements on a five-point scale of (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. The full list of items with means and standard deviations can be found in Table 1.

Table 1
Motivation to Donate Scale with Means and Standard Deviations

Chang et al. (2018) Online Social Support Motivation	Motivation to Donate Item	Mean (SD)
Perceived acuity and seriousness of content	<i>I donated because the cause was urgent and very important</i>	3.83 (1.22)
Consistency in posting patterns	<i>I donated because this person doesn't ask for much, so I felt compelled to donate</i>	3.68 (1.04)
Perceived capacity to provide support	<i>I donated because I had the financial means to</i>	4.10 (.66)
History of reciprocity	<i>I donated because in the past, this person supported a cause that was personal to me and I wanted to return the favor</i>	3.06 (1.37)
Resonance with the poster	<i>I donated because I have a personal connection to the cause they were raising money for</i>	3.58 (1.32)
Perceived motivations of the poster	<i>I donated because I felt like this person had genuine intentions in asking for donations for this cause</i>	4.57 (.72)
Perceptions of other viewers	<i>I donated because I wanted to demonstrate my goodwill to my friends</i>	3.33 (1.41)

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1 predicted that those who donated to Facebook fundraisers would have higher bridging and bonding social capital than those who did not donate. To test this, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare levels of social capital in both groups. Results demonstrated a significant difference in bridging social capital between those who donated to Facebook fundraisers ($M = 3.61$, $SD = .63$) and those who did not (M

= 3.40, $SD = .67$), $t(165) = 2.14$, $p = .03$, $d = .32$. Similarly, results demonstrated a significant difference in bonding social capital between those who donated to Facebook fundraisers ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .73$) and those who did not ($M = 3.11$, $SD = .79$), $t(165) = 3.46$, $p < .01$, $d = .54$. Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported as those who donated had higher bridging and bonding social capital.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that altruism would be greater in those who donated to Facebook fundraisers than those who did not. Results from an independent samples t-test demonstrated a significant difference in altruism between those who donated to Facebook fundraisers ($M = 4.25$, $SD = .67$) and those who did not ($M = 4.05$, $SD = .60$), $t(165) = 2.04$, $p = .04$, $d = .31$. Given these results, hypothesis 2 was also supported.

Next, hypothesis 3 predicted that altruism would be a significant predictor of both bridging and bonding social capital. To test this hypothesis, two separate hierarchical regression models were conducted. After controlling for sex and socioeconomic status in block one, altruism showed to be a significant predictor of bridging social capital ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$; model $F(3, 163) = 3.34$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .06$) and bonding social capital ($\beta = .28$, $p < .001$; model $F(3, 163) = 5.58$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .09$). Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that those who donated to Facebook fundraisers would have lower self-monitoring scores than those who had not donated. Results from an independent samples t-test demonstrate significant results, but in the opposite direction of what was predicted. Specifically, those who donated to Facebook fundraisers ($M = 3.82$, $SD = .49$) had higher self-monitoring scores than those who did not donate ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .51$), $t(165) = 1.86$, $p = .03$, $d = .28$. Interestingly, self-monitoring demonstrated a significant positive correlation with altruism, $r(167) = .28$, $p < .001$. Nonetheless, although significant, hypothesis 4 was rejected.

Research question 1 asked about the relationship between motivations for donating to Facebook fundraisers and levels of relational closeness and social capital. Bonding social capital was not significantly correlated to any of the motivations to donate. However, bridging social capital demonstrated a significant ($p < .05$) correlation to three of the motivations. First, those who had high bridging social capital also had a higher motivation to donate because they wanted to reciprocate support, $r(77) = .23$, $p = .02$. Second, those with high bridging social capital also had a high motivation to donate

because they wanted to demonstrate their own goodwill to their network, $r(77) = .25, p = .02$. Last, those with high bridging social capital demonstrated a high motivation to donate because they had the money to do so, $r(77) = .27, p = .01$. Of note, bridging social capital also demonstrated significant correlations with daily time spent on Facebook ($r(77) = .33, p < .001$) and network size ($r(77) = .14, p = .04$). Taken together, these findings suggest that those who donate to Facebook fundraisers have high bridging social capital and donate because they have the means to do so, because they have a personal connection to the organization, and because they want to demonstrate their own goodwill to their network.

Relational closeness was not a predictor of the amount of money donated, $\beta = .10, p = .65, n. s.$ However, there were significant correlations between relational closeness and motivation to reciprocate support ($r(77) = .47, p < .001$), motivation because of a personal connection to the organization ($r(77) = .31, p < .01$) and motivation to demonstrate goodwill ($r(77) = .38, p < .001$). This finding is particularly interesting because, while relational closeness was closely linked to some of the motivations for donating, there was no association between closeness and social capital (bonding social capital, $r(77) = -.04, p = .38, n. s.$; bridging social capital, $r(77) = .02, p = .43, n. s.$).

Finally, to investigate research question 2, a linear regression was utilized to see which of the seven motivations was the best predictor of the amount of money donated to a Facebook fundraiser. Closeness was also added into this equation, as Chang et al. (2018) suggested that it was a critical variable when deciding whether or not to provide social support. Out of the eight predictors included in the model, the results demonstrated that perceived genuineness of the person requesting donations was a significant predictor of donation amount, $\beta = .26, p = .05$. This finding suggests that people will donate more money to individuals who are perceived to be more genuine in their requests. Of interest, motivation to donate because of the perception of the poster's genuineness demonstrated a significant negative correlation with daily Facebook use, $r(77) = -.21, p = .04$. In other words, it appears that those who use Facebook more often are also more skeptical of the intentions of other users when asking for money. On the other hand, those who use Facebook less, may also be less sensitive to the genuineness of requests for support.

DISCUSSION

Given the rise of popularity and success in Facebook fundraisers, the primary aim of this study was to determine unique personal and network attributes that differentiated those who tend to donate from those who do not. Results from this study indicate individual and network differences between those who donate and those who do not. Further, results demonstrate that the motivations to donate, particularly perceived genuineness, are important factors when analyzing the reasons why someone did or did not donate. An understanding of these differences may be helpful for predicting the success of future online fundraising campaigns.

The results of this study have a set of important implications for research on social capital, especially within the Facebook platform. The first hypothesis predicted that levels of bridging and bonding social capital would be higher among those who donated to Facebook fundraisers than those who did not donate, while the third hypothesis addressed the link between social capital and altruism. The results indicate a significant link between altruism and social capital, such that those who are more altruistic have higher bridging and bonding social capital than those who do not. These findings are in line with a recent study by McGloin and Oeldorf-Hirsch (2018), which also identified a significant relationship between social capital and altruism in online prosocial campaigns. Taken together, it seems that altruistic individuals are more likely to have greater social capital. From a social exchange perspective, which proposes that individuals desire maximum benefit and minimum cost when maintaining relationships (Emerson, 1976), maintaining a relationship with a very altruistic person would likely be beneficial not only for an individual, but for an entire community. Thus, people who give freely on social networking sites likely garner more social capital as a result. Put differently, humans are attracted to and like to have altruistic individuals in their network, so naturally, it is plausible to presume that these people get drawn into more networks much easier than their less altruistic counterparts.

Contrary to the fourth hypothesis, and to previous literature (Pornsakulvanich, 2018; Ranney & Troop-Gordon, 2020), those who donated to Facebook fundraisers were higher self-monitors than those who did not donate. In one previous study, Wallace and colleagues (2017) linked self-monitoring to online posts about charities, while secondarily

measuring actual intention to donate. Meanwhile, other researchers have linked self-monitoring to prosocial social media behaviors without mentioning charitable donations specifically (Pornsakulvanich, 2018; Ranney & Troop-Gordon, 2020). Therefore, it is possible that when combining the social pressures of social media with public prosocial opportunities like donating, the relationship between these concepts change. The positive relationship between self-monitoring and online donations falls in line with a suggestion by Walther (2007), which posits that social media users are typically trying to portray the best version of themselves online, and may aim to make an online profile that reflects their best qualities. Therefore, high self-monitoring users who want to be seen as generous or supportive may be more likely to donate, given that it would help support their intentions to have others in the network see them in this manner. This finding also suggests that targeting high self-monitoring users for social media donation campaigns may result in the greatest level of support.

The current study also provides important context about the relationships between donation motivations, social capital, closeness, and donation characteristics. Specifically, results indicate that individuals that held feelings of relational closeness to the person whom they donated were more motivated to donate by reciprocity, connection to the organization, and demonstrating their own goodwill. Results also indicated that bridging social capital was related to motivations to donate due to reciprocity, financial abilities, and demonstrating one's goodwill. These findings are in line with research that suggests that the nature of a relationship is likely to have a substantial influence on how individuals react to certain calls for help or action (Chang et al., 2018; Egan et al., 2013; Rains & Brunner, 2018). Specifically, these findings imply that people may use reciprocal donations to maintain weak tie relationships, but will not necessarily do the same for strong tie relationships. With that said, relational closeness was not significantly related to bridging or bonding social capital and closeness did not necessarily influence the amount of money an individual chose to donate. Given these disparities, it is possible that relational closeness pertains more to one-on-one relationships while bonding social capital captures broader social networking relationships, suggesting a difference in the way that closeness is conceptualized in contrast to bonding social capital. These findings are also unique in that bonding social capital was not as important in this study as it was in other

studies regarding prosocial campaigns (McGloin & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2018). Thus, it is possible that closeness is important for primarily direct forms of social support while bonding social capital pertains more to providing a general, less involved, sense of support toward a cause.

Finally, this study sought to determine what motivations users had to participate in Facebook fundraisers in relation to their social capital and other donation characteristics. Generally, it seems that perceptions of network reactions are an important element of behaviors online. For example, demonstrating one's own goodwill and perceptions of a poster's genuine intentions were notable motivators for donating to Facebook fundraisers. Relatedly, perceived genuineness was also a significant predictor of the amount of money that individuals donated to a fundraiser. These findings propose that users consider motivations of their network members, and how network members will perceive their motivations. In a practical sense, as user experience researchers and non-profit organizations aim to create more successful online fundraisers, consideration of genuineness and presentation of information can become a central focus in the design of online fundraisers. Further, findings from this study suggest that perceptions of others' intentions affect personal decision-making, a conclusion that has often been observed in the nonverbal communication literature (Dawel et al., 2017; Gosselin et al., 2002; Krumhuber & Kappas, 2005). In line with these findings, Chang and colleagues (2018) differentiated between genuine posts and network requests and their contrast with posts that considered attention-seeking. From the viewpoint of Facebook fundraisers, some individuals may create fundraisers in order to seek attention and communicate a philanthropic message of themselves to their network, while others may share fundraisers out of genuine concern for the organization and the cause it seeks to support. These implications go hand-in-hand with research that suggests some users will engage in selective self-presentation in online networks in an effort to create an idealized version of themselves (Oeldorf-Hirsch et al., 2017; Walther, 2007).

It is also of interest to note reasons that some participants did not donate to Facebook fundraisers. For many, the top reason for not donating to Facebook fundraisers revolved around distrust. Specifically, many participants indicated a distrust of the platform itself (Facebook), as well as not having a clear understanding in how their

donation would be used. These results help provide important insight into the notion of trust and transparency in the success of fundraisers, particularly those online.

These findings provide important information for the future of fundraising efforts. In some ways, the results indicate that the social network aspect of fundraising provides great incentive for participation. Charitable giving on its own has been linked to happiness and life satisfaction (Dunn et al., 2008; Song et al., 2019), but charitable giving on a social networking platform can afford personal, more tangible benefits for users in the form of recognition. Some studies have even shown that people may broadcast their support of organizations and pledge to donate, but not follow through (Lacetera et al., 2016). This phenomenon could speak to the positive association between altruism and self-monitoring found in this study, such that people are more likely to exhibit their altruistic qualities when they have the potential to be recognized for it. Practically speaking, these findings may guide future fundraising efforts and can encourage an increase in the utilization of social networking platforms to incentivize participation. Specifically, fundraisers can gear their efforts toward users on social media platforms who have strong social networks and those who are more altruistic, and also provide an opportunity to showcase donations.

Limitations, Future Directions, and Conclusions

One limitation of this project is that it was cross-sectional and the results from this study do not allow for more causal inferences to be made. In the future, a longitudinal design could be implemented, such that individual personality and network characteristics could be assessed and then a subsequent follow up with participants could be performed at a future point to see if they made any donations during the time that had passed. Future research could also employ a field experiment in which donation appeals are analyzed and coded to investigate which types of messages garner the most support. Moreover, the study found that those who did not donate were commonly deterred by factors like distrust and financial limitations. While the present investigation did not assess these factors in depth, it may be likely that trust and transaction fees associated with online donations could play a role in someone's decision to donate (Hager & Hedberg, 2016; Lacetera et al., 2016). A future study could analyze these links more specifically. Finally, building on research from Chang et al. (2018), this project presented seven motivations that

individuals may experience when donating to fundraising campaigns. The motivations to provide social support were assessed using single item measures and while these they provided valuable insights, the measure of these motivations should be developed further in future studies, potentially through a more extensive instrument.

Taken together, the results from this project illuminate differences among those who donate and do not donate to fundraisers posted on Facebook. In particular, those who donate seem to have more social capital, more altruistic tendencies, and more self-monitoring tendencies than those who do not donate. Further, among those who donated, individuals were motivated by reciprocity, poster genuineness, and demonstrating their goodwill to their network. Finally, individuals tended to donate more money when they perceived the poster to be very genuine in their intentions. Findings from this project will be crucial for future researchers and leaders of philanthropic entities aiming to create successful fundraising campaigns online by providing a deeper understanding of foundational differences between those who do and do not donate.

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