

MASTER THESIS

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN
THE EFFECTS OF FRAMING
TYPES ON MONETARY
DONATION BEHAVIOUR IN A
DOOR-TO-DOOR COLLECTION
CONTEXT

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JANUARY 2018

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE Door-to-door collections provide an essential source of income to charitable organisations. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of door-to-door collections in acquiring funds is declining. Prior research shows that framing can improve the effectiveness of charitable appeals. This research aims to gain insights into the effects of framing charitable appeals on donation behaviour in a door-to-door collection context. Framing types included in this research are *beneficiary* (other-benefit; self-benefit; self-and-other-benefit) and *valence* (gain frame; loss frame). These framing types are included since charitable organisations generally emphasise them in their charitable appeals, yet little is known about the effects of these frames in a door-to-door collection context.

METHOD A field experiment, employing a door-to-door collection for the Dutch organisation the Kidney Foundation, using a 2 x 3 between-subjects design was conducted in the Dutch municipality Brummen ($n = 528$). Respondents were aged between 18 and 93 years ($M = 54.0$, $SD = 17.08$). 45.5% of the respondents were male ($n = 240$), 54.5% of the respondents were female ($n = 288$). Donation behaviour was measured by *compliance* and *amount*.

RESULTS Results show that when *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were included in the charitable appeal, less people (77.3%) complied to the solicitation to make a monetary donation compared to when these message elements were not included (96.2%). When *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were included in the solicitation, the results show that the solicitation should best include a loss frame and address both self-and-other-benefits.

CONTRIBUTION Charitable organisations can benefit from this research since it provides insights into the effects of different charitable appeals on donation behaviour. Additionally, this research fills important gaps in current literature by including self-and-other-benefit appeals and by extending research regarding *valence* to the field of ethical decision making.

CONCLUSION In a door-to-door collection context less is more. Merely asking for a monetary donation is found to be most effective in influencing donation behaviour, specifically in influencing *compliance*. Nevertheless, charitable organisations should invest in finding other potential methods to increase monetary donations.

KEYWORDS

Donation behaviour; door-to-door collection; framing; gain appeal versus loss appeal; other-benefit appeal versus self-benefit appeal versus self-and-other-benefit appeal

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1 Introduction

Charitable organisations depend on donations for their survival (Beldad, Snip & Hoof, 2014), of which monetary donations are most important (Hsu, Liang & Tien, 2005). According to the Central Bureau for Statistics, the Dutch population has become more generous towards charitable organisations during the last ten years (CBS, 2015). However, this increase in generosity is not experienced in door-to-door collections. Door-to-door collections have become less effective in acquiring funds since 2001 (CBF, 2017a). Charitable organisations reach a decreasing number of households, for example households do not answer the door, and potential donors are less willing to make a monetary donation. Nevertheless, a diverse range of charitable organisations use door-to-door collections to acquire funds (Landry, Lange, List, Price & Rupp, 2006). Door-to-door collections provide an essential source of income, making them indispensable to charitable organisations (Nierstichting, 2015). More research is needed in order to gain a better understanding of potential methods to increase monetary donations to charitable organisations through door-to-door collections. Therefore, this research will focus on door-to-door collections.

The method that charitable organisations use to request donor support is essential in optimising their charitable appeals (Grace & Griffin, 2006; White & Peloza, 2009). Studies show that framing donation messages can enhance charitable appeals and increase an individual's intention to donate money to charitable organisations (Chang & Lee, 2009; Das, Kerkhof, Kuiper, 2008; Jeong et al., 2011; Ye, Teng, Yu & Wang, 2015). This research aims to gain insights into the effects of framing charitable appeals on donation behaviour in a door-to-door collection context. Two framing types are of interest since charitable organisations generally emphasise them in their charitable appeals. These framing types are the type of beneficiary emphasised in the charitable appeal, and the valence of the charitable appeal (Chang & Lee, 2009; Fisher, Vandenbosch & Antia, 2008). This research will refer to these framing types as the variables *beneficiary* and *valence*. Little is known about the effects of these framing types in a door-to-door collection context. Of interest is the question whether *beneficiary* and *valence* enhance charitable appeals and increase monetary donation behaviour in a door-to-door collection context, or if different effects will occur.

Charitable donations can be directed towards two possible beneficiaries; the donor and another entity, the latter being one or more other individuals or an organisation (White & Peloza, 2009). Charitable organisations can emphasise beneficiaries in their charitable appeals. The literature refers to these appeals as self-benefit appeals and other-benefit appeals. Some

studies compare the effects of self-benefit appeals versus the effects of other-benefit appeals (Fisher et al., 2008; White & Peloza, 2009; Ye et al., 2015), separating the appeal types. It is also possible for charitable organisations to simultaneously emphasise both the donor and another entity as beneficiaries of a charitable donation. For example, a charitable radio commercial for the Brain Foundation states that one in four people has a brain disorder (Hersenstichting, 2017), and that a brain disorder can happen to you, your partner or someone else. By donating, the Brain Foundation can help both you and others. This research will include appeals which emphasise both the donor and another entity as beneficiaries and refer to them as self-and-other-benefit appeals.

Furthermore, charitable appeals can be framed on a continuum from negative to positive *valence*, emphasising the negative outcomes of not making a donation or the positive outcomes of making a donation. The literature refers to these charitable appeals as loss framed and gain framed appeals, respectively (Das et al., 2008). Current literature is ambiguous about the effects of loss framed versus gain framed appeals (Chang & Lee, 2009; 2010; Farrell, Ferguson, James & Lowe, 2001; O’Keefe & Jensen, 2007; Reinhart, Marshall, Feeley & Tutzauer, 2007). It remains unclear how *valence* can affect donation behaviour. More research is needed in order to gain a better understanding of the effects of *valence* on donation behaviour. As such, the research question which is central to this research reads:

RQ To what extent do the beneficiary and valence emphasised in a charitable appeal affect monetary donation behaviour during a door-to-door collection?

This research has important theoretical implications, filling gaps in current literature. Studies show that *beneficiary* and *valence* can affect donation intention (Das et al., 2008; Ye et al., 2015). However, little is known about possible interaction effects between these variables. The gender of the donor might act as a moderator since men and women often react differently to charitable appeals (Brunel & Nelson, 2000). This research will consider possible interaction effects between the *beneficiary* and *valence* emphasised in a charitable appeal and the gender of the donor. Hereby, the variable *beneficiary* will include a self-and-other-benefit frame since prior research merely focuses on self-benefits versus other-benefits and lacks this combined frame.

Second, the variable *valence* is primarily implemented in research regarding health care (Gallagher & Updegraff, 2012; O’Keefe & Nan, 2012; Rothman, Bartels, Wlaschin & Salovey, 2006) and non-financial forms of donating, such as organ and blood donations (Farrell et al.,

2001; Reinhart et al., 2007). This research will extend current literature regarding *valence* by focussing on financial ethical decision making, such as donating money to a charitable organisation.

Third, limited research has been directed toward understanding how diverse charitable appeals can affect men versus women (Brunel & Nelson, 2000). Nowadays, increasing attention has been given to gender related issues in diverse disciplines such as sociology and psychology. This research will extend gender related literature, thereby contributing to the study of gender in advertising, specifically charitable advertising.

Finally, literature into donation intention is extensive but research into actual donation behaviour is limited. This research employs a field experiment measuring actual donation behaviour and should therefore be considered as nonstandard (Harrison & List, 2004), broadening current knowledge about monetary donations.

Apart from theoretical implications this research has important practical implications as well. The findings of this research will benefit charitable organisations through providing insights into the effects of different charitable appeals and through providing executable strategies which can maximise the effectiveness of charitable appeals during door-to-door collections (Ye et al., 2015). Charitable organisations can customise their charitable appeals depending on their target audience, for example men versus women, and possibly collect more funds during door-to-door collections.

2 Theoretical framework

This theoretical framework discusses relevant constructs central to this research. Donation behaviour and door-to-door collections will be briefly elaborated on, after which general framing theory and the framing of the variables *beneficiary* and *valence* are described. For each framing type it is determined how the frame could affect donation behaviour. Finally the role of gender in moderating the effects of *beneficiary* and *valence* will be discussed.

2.1 Donation behaviour

Donation behaviour, the act of donating, may take different forms. Amongst others, it can occur in the form of time, knowledge, belongings, blood, organs or money (Grace & Griffin, 2006). The entire Dutch population donates over €5.7 billion each year to charitable organisations (CBF, 2017b). Monetary donations mainly consist of donations through door-to-door collections, fundraisers, one-time donations or structural donations (Donatiewijzer, 2012).

Specifically, when referring to donation behaviour, this research means the act of donating money by a donor after being solicited to do so by a collector during a door-to-door collection. Two dependent variables need to be taken into consideration regarding this form of donation behaviour. First, whether a monetary donation is actually given or not, and thus whether the donor complies with the solicitation to donate (Grant & Dutton, 2012; Ye et al., 2015). This research will refer to this variable as *compliance*. And second, the monetary amount donated per given donation (Grant & Dutton, 2012; Ye et al., 2015). This research will refer to this variable as *amount*.

2.2 Door-to-door collections

Charitable appeals generally include message elements regarding the *beneficiary* and/or *valence* (Chang & Lee, 2009; Fisher et al., 2008). However, during door-to-door collections charitable appeals often do not include such message elements. Instead, these appeals generally provide minimal information in which a collector merely asks a potential donor if he or she would like to give a contribution to a certain charitable organisation. Including message elements regarding the *beneficiary* and *valence*, and thus giving more information, is uncommon in a door-to-door collection context. The potential donor might not expect to receive such information. Including unexpected message elements and engaging the mind of the potential donor, can disrupt the potential donor and reduce resistance to a persuasive attempt (Erickson, 1964; Fennis, Das & Pruyn, 2006).

According to the disrupt then reframe theory, individuals experience tension between approaching and avoiding certain persuasive attempts (Davis & Knowles, 1999). By disrupting, the individual is susceptible to the persuasive attempt. The disruption functions as a distraction and induces mindlessness in processing the persuasive attempt, which directly follows the disruption (Fennis et al., 2006). In the context of charitable giving a potential donor might experience tension between wanting to help and being resistant to the expense. By disrupting, an individual might be susceptible to the solicitation as a persuasive attempt, and be more prone to comply to make a monetary donation (Erickson, 1964; Fennis et al., 2006). Including message elements regarding the *beneficiary* and *valence*, and thus disrupting the potential donor, might therefore increase *compliance*. However, where the persuasive attempt includes a *compliance* aspect, the question if a donor would like to give a contribution is a yes or no question, the persuasive attempt does not include an aspect referring to an *amount*. Disrupting a potential donor should therefore not affect the amount of money donated regardless of the susceptibility to the persuasive attempt. As such, the hypotheses regarding the inclusion of *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements read the following:

- H1a Charitable appeals including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements generate more *compliance* than charitable appeals not including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements
- H1b Charitable appeals including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements and charitable appeals not including *beneficiary* and *valence* message element generate an equal *amount*

2.3 Framing

The notion of framing rests on the fact that a certain issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. When making a specific perspective of an issue more salient in communication, individuals exposed to the framed communication can develop a particular conceptualization of the issue, reorient their thinking about the issue and/or alter their behaviour regarding the issue (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Entman, 1993). Current literature refers to two distinct types of frames; frames in communication and frames in thought (Brewer, 2003; Druckman, 2001). The types of frames are similar since both types regard variations in salience. However, they differ in that the former focuses on the content of the message, while the latter focuses on the perception of the individual. This research will focus on frames in communication. Nevertheless, frames in communication often shape frames in thought. A frame in

communication encourages individuals to think along particular lines by highlighting certain features of a message. This process is called a framing effect (Druckman, 2001).

Framing effects occur when alternative phrasings of the same basic issue produce different evaluations or behaviours (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Kühberger, 1995). In other words, a frame can steer and promote certain evaluations or behaviours while impeding other evaluations or behaviours. Therefore, individuals can interpret varying framed communications of the same basic issue differently (Borah, 2011). Current literature refers to two distinct types of framing effects; equivalency framing effects and emphasis framing effects (Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016; Druckman, 2001). Equivalency framing effects occur when frames in communication which are presented in either a positive or a negative way, however logically and effectively identical, cause individuals to have different preferences regarding the issue presented. Emphasis framing effects differ from equivalency framing effects in that the frames in communication are not logically and effectively identical. Instead, emphasis framing effects cause individuals to focus on certain aspects of an issue instead of other aspects regarding the same issue.

This research will focus on emphasis framing effects through the use of two different frames in communication; *beneficiary* and *valence*. These will be discussed below.

2.3.1 *Beneficiary*

According to the theory of self-interest, people are oriented to pursue their self-interests (Miller, 1999). This implies that even donation behaviour is, subliminally, motivated by some egoistic desire (Fisher et al., 2008; Grace & Griffin, 2006; Holmes, Miller & Lerner, 2002; Ratner & Miller, 2001; Ye et al., 2015). A self is trying to accomplish this desire and wants a result (Cropanzano, Goldman & Folger, 2005), meaning that giving a monetary donation has to result in a possible benefit for the donor in order for the self-interested donor to donate. Acquiring self-benefits can be a powerful motivator in ethical decision making (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Ye et al., 2015), especially when donating money to charitable organisations. Since making a monetary donation is costly (Piff, Kraus, Côté, Cheng & Keltner, 2010), a self-benefit in return can make the act of donating more appealing.

The outcomes of a monetary donation can involve different beneficiaries. Ye et al. (2015) operationalise donation outcomes to be benefits to oneself, as well as benefits to others. It is important to differentiate between beneficiaries since charitable organisations emphasise either one or both in their charitable appeals (White & Peloza, 2009). Fisher et al., (2008) even state that emphasising benefits to oneself and/or benefits to others is a fundamental

characteristic of charitable appeals. Generally, charitable giving is positioned as either egoistic or altruistic. When charitable giving is positioned as egoistic, benefits to the donor are emphasised. On the contrary, when charitable giving is positioned as altruistic, benefits to others are emphasised (White & Peloza, 2009). This research will refer to the former as self-benefit appeals, which are defined as appeals that emphasise the donor as potential beneficiary of the monetary donation, and to the latter as other-benefit appeals, which are defined as appeals that emphasise one or more other individuals or an organisation as potential beneficiary of the monetary donation (Fisher et al., 2008; White & Peloza, 2009).

Holmes et al. (2002) show that a self-benefit in return for a donation generates more and higher monetary donations compared to no self-benefit in return. Helping behaviour is facilitated by self-interested justifications. Holmes et al. (2002) provided an option to buy candles instead of making a mere monetary donation. Participants had little interest in the candles, but contributed more often and higher amounts compared to the mere donation condition. Furthermore, participants contributed higher amounts when the price of the candles was framed as a bargain, in other words an egoistic price, compared to an altruistic price, even though the actual price was the same. Likewise, Landry et al. (2006) found that receiving a lottery ticket in return for a monetary donation increased both the number and the average monetary amount donated per donation. A study by Falk (2007) also illustrates that a self-benefit in return increases the number of monetary donations. When free postcards and envelopes were added to solicitation letters which asked for a monetary donation, more individuals made a donation. The studies by Falk (2007), Holmes et al. (2002), and Landry et al. (2006) include tangible self-benefits, yet according to Briers, Pandelaere and Warlop (2007), even an illusionary or intangible benefit can make the act of donating more attractive (White & Peloza, 2009). The anticipation of intrinsic benefits, such as feeling good, can motivate individuals to donate money to charitable organisations (Chang, 2012; Grace & Griffin, 2006). West (2004) even argues that ethical decision making is “about feeling good, not doing good, and illustrates not how altruistic we have become, but how selfish” (p. 1).

However, some research does illustrate an altruistic side in ethical decision making. By a televised fund-raising study Fisher et al. (2008) show that other-benefit appeals are more effective than self-benefit appeals. The number of donations was higher when individuals believed their monetary donation would help others rather than themselves. Research into organ donation also suggest that altruism is significantly associated with donation behaviour and intention (Morgan & Miller, 2002). Nevertheless, according to an extensive literature research by Bekkers and Wiepking (2011), egoistic motives are dominant in donation behaviour rather

than altruistic motives. Therefore, the hypotheses regarding *beneficiary* read the following:

H2a Self-benefit appeals generate more *compliance* than other-benefit appeals

H2b Self-benefit appeals generate a higher *amount* than other-benefit appeals

In addition, charitable organisations can simultaneously emphasise both the donor and another entity in their appeals as beneficiaries of a charitable donation (White & Peloza, 2009). This research will refer to these charitable appeals as self-and-other-benefit appeals, which are defined as appeals that emphasise both the donor and one or more other individuals or an organisation as potential beneficiaries of the monetary donation. No prior research examines the effects of self-and-other-benefit appeals. However, the study by Holmes et al. (2002) offers an interesting viewpoint regarding this issue. Even though the study did not include an actual appeal emphasising both benefits to the donor and to others, it did offer participants a chance to behave in a simultaneously altruistic and egoistic manner. Participants could support a charitable cause, illustrating altruistic behaviour, by buying a candle for themselves, illustrating egoistic behaviour. The act can be seen as partly altruistic since participants had little interest in the candles. Holmes et al. (2002) state that the major contribution of their research is “the finding that helping behaviour is facilitated when the framing of the helping act permits people to see themselves as altruistic but not unconditionally so” (p. 150). Self-and-other-benefit appeals might allow donors to see themselves this way, and could affect donation behaviour in a different manner than mere self-benefit and other-benefit appeals do.

Additionally, when self-benefit appeals are expected to be more effective in influencing donation behaviour than other-benefit appeals, it is logical to assume that self-and-other-benefit appeals should be more effective in influencing donation behaviour than mere other-benefit appeals. That is, self-and-other-benefit appeals include a self-benefit aspect where mere other-benefit appeals lack this aspect. This research further assumes that when more people can benefit from a monetary donation, a charitable appeal is more effective in influencing donation behaviour. That is, the more people benefit from a monetary donation, the more reasons a donor has to help. This assumption follows the logic of two are better than one. Therefore, additional hypotheses regarding *beneficiary*, specifically regarding self-and-other-benefit appeals, read the following:

H3a¹ Self-and-other-benefit appeals generate more *compliance* than other-benefit appeals

H3a² Self-and-other-benefit appeals generate a higher *amount* than other-benefit appeals

H3b¹ Self-and-other-benefit appeals generate more *compliance* than self-benefit appeals

H3b² Self-and-other-benefit appeals generate a higher *amount* than self-benefit appeals

2.3.2 Valence

Messages can be framed on a continuum from negative to positive valence. These messages are referred to as loss versus gain framed messages (Das et al., 2008). Loss framed messages can refer to negative consequences that will happen and positive consequences that will not happen, whereas gain framed messages can refer to positive consequences that will happen and negative consequences that will not happen (Meyers-Levy & Maheswaran, 2004; Rothman et al., 2006).

Current literature is ambiguous about the effects of loss framed versus gain framed messages. Prospect theory might explain these ambiguous results. According to prospect theory behavioural outcomes can differ when messages emphasise losses versus gains (Farrell et al., 2001; Grau & Folse, 2007). In their widely cited experiment Tversky and Kahneman (1981) posed a problem where a disease is expected to kill 600 people. To combat the disease two alternative programs are proposed. Two gain framed programs, which focussed on saving lives, read:

Program A If this program is adopted, 200 people will be saved

Program B If this program is adopted, there is 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and 2/3 probability that no people will be saved

When asked which program participants preferred, 72% chose program A and 28% chose program B. According to Tversky and Kahneman (1981) “the prospect of certainly saving 200 lives is more attractive than a risky prospect of equal expected value, that is, a one-in-three chance of saving 600 lives” (p. 453). However, when the two alternative programs proposed to combat the disease focussed on lives lost, the opposite occurred. Two loss framed programs read:

Program C If this program is adopted, 400 people will die

Program D If this program is adopted, there is 1/3 probability that no people will die, and 2/3 probability that 600 people will die

When asked which program participants preferred, 22% chose program C and 78% chose program D. The prospect of certainly losing 400 lives is less attractive than a risky prospect of equal expected value, that is, a two-in-three chance of losing 600 lives. Even though all four programs are effectively identical, individuals tend to be risk seeking when messages emphasise losses and risk avoiding when messages emphasise gains (Martino, Kumaran, Seymour & Dolan, 2006). As such, loss framed messages are more effective in promoting behaviour when

the message encourages risky behaviour. In contrast, gain framed messages are more effective in promoting behaviour when the message encourages cautious behaviour (Millar & Millar, 2000; Rothman et al. 2006).

In a study encouraging sunscreen use, illustrating cautious behaviour, Detweiler, Bedell, Salovey, Pronin and Rothman (1999) show that beach-goers exposed to gain framed messages regarding sun-protective behaviours were more likely than beach-goers exposed to loss framed messages regarding sun-protective behaviours to request sunscreen and intended to repeatedly apply sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or higher while at the beach. According to prospect theory, cautious behaviour is perceived as more certain in its consequences. People prefer certain options when they are considering gain framed messages from a neutral reference point. Therefore, gain framed messages are more motivating in encouraging cautious behaviour (Detweiler et al., 1999). Likewise, Farell et al. (2001) found that information presented in a positive frame resulted in more confidence in the safety of blood for transfusion. Farell et al. (2001) argue that the transfusion of blood can be seen as a prevention procedure, focussing on cautious rather than risky behaviour, since it is likely to prevent negative outcomes, such as continuous bleeding, during surgery.

In this context, it is reasonable to assume that donating money to charitable organisations consists primarily of cautious behaviour rather than risky behaviour since it is likely to prevent negative outcomes as well. That is, by donating money to a charitable organisation, the charitable organisation can invest in prevention, education and research regarding the cause of the charitable organisation (CBF, 2017c; Nierstichting, 2015). Therefore, following prospect theory, the hypotheses regarding *valence* read the following:

H4a Gain framed appeals generate more *compliance* than loss framed appeals

H4b Gain framed appeals generate a higher *amount* than loss framed appeals

2.4 Gender as a moderator

Men and women show different patterns of charitable giving (Andreoni & Vesterlund, 2001). Gender could interact with the variable *beneficiary*. According to Brunel and Nelson (2000) women prefer altruistic other-benefit appeals over egoistic self-benefit appeals, where men prefer egoistic self-benefit appeals over altruistic other-benefit appeals. Andreoni and Vesterlund (2001) picture a much more complicated image. During a modified dictator game individuals were given eight different allocation problems where tokens had to be divided between themselves and others. Each problem differed in the number of tokens to be divided

and the amount a token was worth to either themselves and to others. After completing all eight allocation problems, one of the eight problems would be chosen at random and carried out, resulting in individual payoff. By doing this individuals had to think carefully about each allocation decision. Results indicated that men are more likely to be either perfectly selfish or perfectly selfless. Therefore, applied to this research, both self-benefit and other-benefit appeals might be more effective for men in affecting donation behaviour. Women, on the other hand, tend to be equalitarian and prefer to share payoffs evenly (Andreoni & Vesterlund, 2001). Therefore, self-and-other-benefit appeals might be more effective for women in affecting donation behaviour. The hypotheses regarding the moderating effect of gender on the relation between *beneficiary* and donation behaviour read the following:

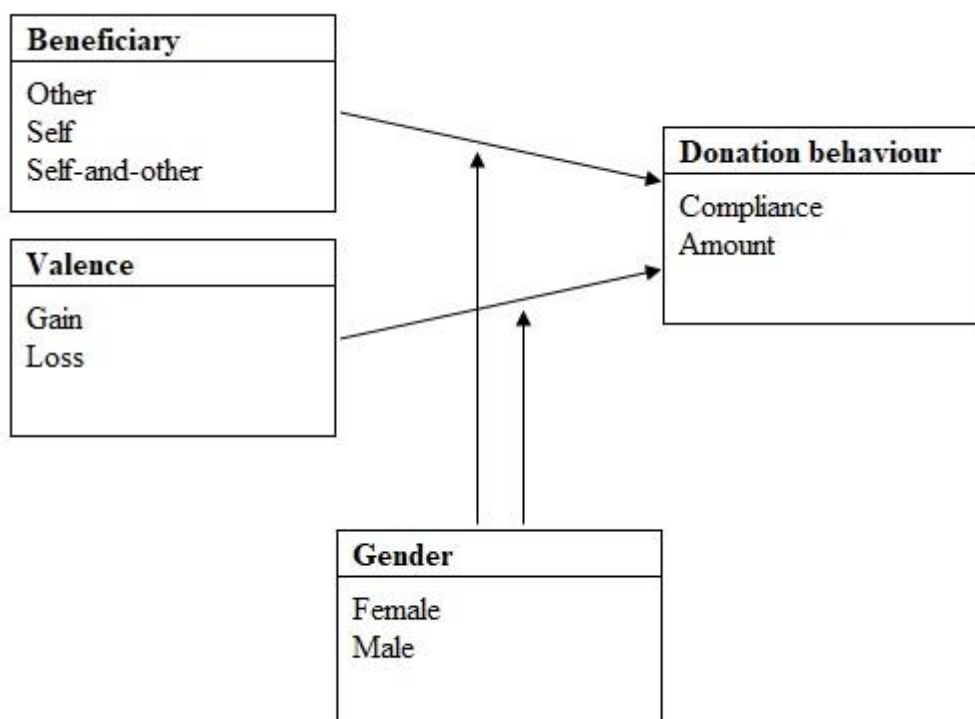
- H5 Gender moderates the direction of the relation between *beneficiary* and donation behaviour
- H5a¹ Self-benefit appeals are more effective for men than for women in affecting *compliance*
- H5a² Self-benefit appeals are more effective for men than for women in affecting *amount*
- H5b¹ Other-benefit appeals are more effective for men than for women in affecting *compliance*
- H5b² Other-benefit appeals are more effective for men than for women in affecting *amount*
- H5c¹ Self-and other-benefit appeals are more effective for women than for men in affecting *compliance*
- H5c² Self-and other-benefit appeals are more effective for women than for men in affecting *amount*

Furthermore, gender could interact with the variable *valence*. Gender might enhance possible effects of gain and loss framed messages on donation behaviour. That is, according to prospect theory individuals tend to be risk avoiding when messages emphasise gains (Martino et al., 2006; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Women tend to be more risk averse than men (Eckel & Grossman, 2008). In contrast, according to prospect theory individuals tend to be risk seeking when messages emphasise losses (Martino et al., 2006; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Men tend to be more risk seeking than women (Eckel & Grossman, 2008). Therefore, the possible effects of gain framed appeals on donation behaviour might be stronger for women compared to men, and the possible effects of loss framed appeals on donation behaviour might be stronger for men compared to women. The hypotheses regarding the moderating effect of gender on the relation between *valence* and donation behaviour read the following:

- H6 Gender moderates the strength of the relation between *valence* and donation behaviour
- H6a¹ The effect of gain framed appeals is stronger for women than for men in affecting *compliance*
- H6a² The effect of gain framed appeals is stronger for women than for men in affecting *amount*
- H6b¹ The effect of loss framed appeals is stronger for men than for women in affecting *compliance*
- H6b² The effect of loss framed appeals is stronger for men than for women in affecting *amount*

Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical model which is central to this research.

Figure 1 Theoretical model illustrating the hypothesised effects of the independent variables beneficiary, valence and gender, and the dependent variable donation behaviour



3 Method

In this research the effects of *beneficiary* (other-benefit appeal versus self-benefit appeal versus self-and-other-benefit appeal) and *valence* (gain framed appeal versus loss framed appeal) on monetary donation behaviour (measured by *compliance* and *amount*) during a door-to-door collection were examined by a field experiment ($n = 528$) using a 2 x 3 between-subjects design. Prior to the main experiment a pre-test was performed which can be found in the appendix.

3.1 Main experiment

The main experiment consisted of seven conditions, including one control condition and six manipulated conditions (see table 1). The field experiment was conducted from 18 to 23 September 2017, from 16:00 to 20:00 hours, in the municipality Brummen and represented a door-to-door collection with the addition of *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements for the manipulated conditions. The researcher acted as collector during the door-to-door collection. Since appearance of the collector might influence donation behaviour (Landry et al., 2006) the collector wore the same outfit and hairdo during the entire collection period. The collector rang the doorbell of the household and, after the potential donor answered the door, asked the potential donor to make a monetary donation to the Dutch charitable organisation The Kidney Foundation conform the charitable appeals shown in table 2. Each day, the order of solicitations was randomized (see table 3).

Table 1 Distribution of manipulations for the independent variables beneficiary and valence across seven conditions

Independent variable	Condition						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 ^a
Beneficiary	Self	Other	Self-and- other	Self	Other	Self-and- other	-
Valence	Gain	Gain	Gain	Loss	Loss	Loss	-

Note

^aExperimental condition 7 is the control condition and does not include manipulations

Donation behaviour was measured through two dependent variables, *compliance* and *amount*. The collector carried an official collection tin from the Kidney Foundation which was sealed. The design of the slit in the collection tin allowed the collector to see what exact *amount* was

donated. The collector wrote down this *amount*. After the potential donor gave, or did not give, a monetary donation the (non-)donor was told that the collector was conducting an experiment. The collector ensured (non-)donors anonymity in research participation. Donors were ensured all contributions were donated to the Kidney Foundation. When the (non-)donor agreed to participate in the study demographic information was collected regarding the age and gender of the respondent and manipulation checks were performed (resulting in a sample of $n = 528$).

Table 2 Charitable appeals used for soliciting for a monetary donation across seven conditions

Condition	Beneficiary	Valence	Charitable appeal ^{ab}
1	Self	Gain	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you. With your donation The Kidney Foundation can help you. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
2	Other	Gain	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to others. With your donation The Kidney Foundation can help others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
3	Self-and-other	Gain	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you and others. With your donation The Kidney Foundation can help you and others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
4	Self	Loss	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you. Without your donation The Kidney Foundation cannot help you. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
5	Other	Loss	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to others. Without your donation The Kidney Foundation cannot help others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
6	Self-and-other	Loss	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you and others. Without your donation The Kidney Foundation cannot help you and others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
7	-	-	Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?

Note

^aThe main experiment was conducted in Dutch. Table 2 shows a translation

^bThe charitable appeals focussed on intangible benefits

Table 3 Randomised order of solicited conditions across collection period from 18 to 23 September 2017

Order of conditions	Date					
	Monday 18-09-‘17	Tuesday 19-09-‘17	Wednesday 20-09-‘17	Thursday 21-09-‘17	Friday 22-09-‘17	Saturday 23-09-‘17
	7 ($n = 10$)	2 ($n = 10$)	4 ($n = 10$)	6 ($n = 10$)	3 ($n = 10$)	5 ($n = 10$)
	1 ($n = 10$)	6 ($n = 10$)	3 ($n = 10$)	5 ($n = 10$)	2 ($n = 10$)	7 ($n = 10$)
	2 ($n = 10$)	4 ($n = 10$)	5 ($n = 10$)	1 ($n = 10$)	7 ($n = 10$)	3 ($n = 10$)
	3 ($n = 10$)	7 ($n = 10$)	6 ($n = 10$)	4 ($n = 10$)	1 ($n = 10$)	2 ($n = 10$)
	4 ($n = 10$)	5 ($n = 10$)	2 ($n = 10$)	7 ($n = 10$)	6 ($n = 10$)	1 ($n = 10$)
	5 ($n = 10$)	1 ($n = 10$)	7 ($n = 10$)	3 ($n = 10$)	4 ($n = 10$)	6 ($n = 10$)
	6 ($n = 10$)	3 ($n = 10$)	1 ($n = 10$)	2 ($n = 10$)	5 ($n = 10$)	4 ($n = 10$)
	1 ($n = 5$)	6 ($n = 5$)	3 ($n = 5$)	4 ($n = 5$)	2 ($n = 5$)	7 ($n = 8$)
	3 ($n = 5$)	2 ($n = 5$)	5 ($n = 5$)	7 ($n = 5$)	3 ($n = 5$)	
	5 ($n = 5$)	4 ($n = 5$)	2 ($n = 5$)	6 ($n = 5$)	1 ($n = 5$)	
	7 ($n = 5$)	1 ($n = 5$)	6 ($n = 5$)	5 ($n = 5$)	4 ($n = 5$)	
Total ^a	$n = 90$	$n = 90$	$n = 90$	$n = 90$	$n = 90$	$n = 78$

Note

^aIncluded in the table are the $n = 528$ respondents who wanted to participate in the study. Excluded cases ($n = 33$) are not represented, they were excluded during the field experiment

3.2 Manipulation check

Manipulation checks were performed by two spoken closed-ended questions. The first question measured the effectiveness of the manipulation for the independent variable *beneficiary*. The question read: *Who was emphasised in the charitable appeal? Was this yourself, others or yourself and others?* The second question measured the effectiveness of the manipulation for the independent variable *valence*. The question read: *Did the charitable appeal emphasise the positive outcomes of donating or the negative outcomes of not donating?* The results of the manipulation check are presented in table 4. In total $n = 450$ respondents answered both questions of the manipulation check correct, these respondents were included in the research. A few respondents ($n = 3$) answered the question measuring the effectiveness of the manipulation for the independent variable *beneficiary* incorrect. These respondents were excluded from the research during the field experiment to ensure 100% manipulation.

Table 4 *Distribution of answers to the manipulation check across six conditions*

	Condition					
Manipulation check	1	2	3	4	5	6
Correct	$n = 75$ (98.7%)	$n = 75$ (100%)	$n = 75$ (100%)	$n = 75$ (100%)	$n = 75$ (100%)	$n = 75$ (97.4%)
Incorrect ^a	$n = 1^b$ (1.3%)	$n = 0$ (0.0%)	$n = 0$ (0.0%)	$n = 0$ (0.0%)	$n = 0$ (0.0%)	$n = 2^b$ (2.6%)

Note

^aRespondents ($n = 3$) who answered the manipulation check incorrect were removed from the sample during the field experiment to ensure 100% manipulation

^bIncorrect answer for the manipulation of the independent variable *beneficiary*

3.3 Participants

A total of $N = 959$ Dutch households residing in the municipality Brummen were approached to make a monetary donation to the Kidney Foundation through a door-to-door collection. Some households ($n = 398$) did not answer the door, in most cases no residents were at home. These households were removed from the sample, resulting in a participation rate of 58.5%. Another $n = 33$ respondents were removed from the sample since they donated money to the Kidney Foundation through different means ($n = 12$), were under aged ($n = 2$, respondents under the age of 18 years were excluded due to ethical reasons), did not comprehend the Dutch language ($n = 4$), did not answer the manipulation check correct ($n = 3$), had money ready when they answered the door ($n = 9$), or did not want to participate in the study ($n = 3$). The final sample included $n = 528$ Dutch households. Respondents were aged between 18 and 93 years with the average age of the sample being $M = 54.0$, $SD = 17.08$ years. Age is divided equally across conditions (see table 5) and will therefore be excluded from further analysis. In total 45.5% ($n = 240$) of the respondents were male, and 54.5% ($n = 288$) of the respondents were female. Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents' gender across the seven conditions.

Table 5 *Distribution of respondents' age (n = 528) across seven conditions*

[illegible]

Table 6 Distribution of respondents' gender (n = 528) across seven conditions

Gender	Condition						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Male	<i>n</i> = 35 (46.7%)	<i>n</i> = 38 (50.7%)	<i>n</i> = 33 (44.0%)	<i>n</i> = 35 (46.7%)	<i>n</i> = 30 (40.0%)	<i>n</i> = 35 (46.7%)	<i>n</i> = 34 (45.3%)
Female	<i>n</i> = 40 (53.3%)	<i>n</i> = 37 (49.3%)	<i>n</i> = 42 (56.0%)	<i>n</i> = 40 (53.3%)	<i>n</i> = 45 (60.0%)	<i>n</i> = 40 (53.3%)	<i>n</i> = 44 (54.7%)
Total	<i>n</i> = 75	<i>n</i> = 75	<i>n</i> = 75	<i>n</i> = 75	<i>n</i> = 75	<i>n</i> = 75	<i>n</i> = 78

3.4 Context

The Dutch charitable organisation the Kidney Foundation was contacted for collaboration since the charitable organisation met two criteria. First, the goals and activities of the charitable organisation had to be applicable to all ages since households consist of individuals from various age categories. And second, the charitable organisation had to be located in The Netherlands and the cause the charitable organisation supported had to be relevant for the Dutch population since the research would be conducted in The Netherlands. The Kidney Foundation agreed to collaborate and was therefore included in this research. The Kidney Foundation is founded in 1967 and has since committed itself to the prevention of kidney diseases.

In The Netherlands a charitable organisation can only collect funds through a door-to-door collection during a specific assigned collection week (CBF, 2017d). The assigned collection week for the Kidney Foundation in 2017 was from 17 to 23 September. Due to religious reasons, no door-to-door collection was held on Sunday 17 September 2017. The door-to-door collection was held from 16:00 to 20:00 hours every day, since people would most likely be home during this timeframe.

This research employed a field experiment measuring actual donation behaviour, therefore the location of the experiment was critical. Bureau Louter compared 371 Dutch municipalities, with a population of at least ten thousand, on 106 indicators (divided over economic innovation, economic structure, education, labour, location/infrastructure, politics/society, population dynamics, prosperity, and residential market/environment) and ranked them to the degree in which they deviate from the Dutch average (Louter, 2015), resulting in a list with municipalities which are considered most average to least average. Of the top ten most average municipalities in The Netherlands, the municipality Brummen in the province Gelderland (number four on the list of most average municipalities) was selected as

location for the door-to-door collection in consultation with the Kidney Foundation. No other collectors would raise funds for the Kidney Foundation in Brummen during the collection week. Residents of Brummen would only be exposed to the door-to-door collection for this research.

4 Results

This research aimed to gain insights into the effects of framing charitable appeals on donation behaviour in a door-to-door collection context. Framing types included in this research were *beneficiary* and *valence*. A total amount of € 636.65 was collected for the Kidney Foundation during the door-to-door collection. On average respondents, who complied to the solicitation and were included in the research, donated $M = € 1.48$, $SD = 1.06$ to the charitable organisation. In total $n = 423$ respondents complied to the solicitation and made a monetary donation to the Kidney Foundation through the door-to-door collection, and $n = 105$ respondents did not comply to the solicitation and did not make a monetary donation to the Kidney Foundation through the door-to-door collection. Table 7 shows the distribution of *compliance* across seven conditions. Tables 8 and 9 show the distribution of *compliance* for the variables *beneficiary* (table 8) and *valence* (table 9). Table 10 shows the distribution of *amount* across seven conditions. Data were analysed with the use of SPSS Statistics.

Table 7 Distribution of compliance across seven conditions ($n = 528$)

Compliance	Condition						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Yes	58 (77.3%)	57 (76.0%)	64 (85.3%)	54 (72.0%)	55 (73.3%)	60 (75.0%)	75 (96.2%)
No	17 (22.7%)	18 (24.0%)	11 (14.7%)	21 (28.0%)	20 (26.7%)	15 (25.0%)	3 (3.8%)
Total	$n = 75$	$n = 75$	$n = 75$	$n = 75$	$n = 75$	$n = 75$	$n = 78$

Table 8 Distribution of compliance for the independent variable *beneficiary* ($n = 450$)

Compliance	Beneficiary		
	Other	Self	Self-and-other
Yes	112 (74.7%)	112 (74.7%)	124 (82.7%)
No	38 (25.3%)	38 (25.3%)	26 (17.3%)
Total	$n = 150$	$n = 150$	$n = 150$

Table 9 *Distribution of compliance for the independent variable valence (n = 450)*

Compliance	Valence	
	Gain	Loss
Yes	179 (79.6%)	169 (75.1%)
No	46 (20.4%)	56 (24.9%)
Total	<i>n</i> = 225	<i>n</i> = 225

Table 10 *Distribution of amount across seven conditions (n = 423)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Amount	<i>M</i> = €1.08.. <i>SD</i> = .69	<i>M</i> = €1.39 <i>SD</i> = .97	<i>M</i> = €1.51 <i>SD</i> = 1.05	<i>M</i> = €1.59 <i>SD</i> = 1.04	<i>M</i> = €1.67 <i>SD</i> = 1.27	<i>M</i> = €1.53 <i>SD</i> = 1.09	<i>M</i> = €1.59 <i>SD</i> = 1.15
Total	<i>n</i> = 58	<i>n</i> = 57	<i>n</i> = 64	<i>n</i> = 54	<i>n</i> = 55	<i>n</i> = 60	<i>n</i> = 75

4.1 Inclusion of message elements

It was hypothesised that charitable appeals including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements generated more *compliance* than charitable appeals not including these message elements (H1a), and that the inclusion of *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements would not affect *amount*, that is, no difference was expected in *amount* between charitable appeals including and not including these message elements (H1b). For the variable *compliance* the effectiveness of including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements was tested by Logistic Regression Analysis. Table 11 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 11, including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements has a significant main effect ($B = -1.989$, $S.E. = .600$, $p < .05$) on *compliance*. When *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were included less individuals were willing to comply to the solicitation to make a monetary donation compared to when no message elements were included. This significant main effect was not conform research expectations, therefore the results lend no support for H1a. Additionally, the gender of the donor has no significant main effect on *compliance* ($B = .196$, $S.E. = .221$, *n.s.*).

Table 11 The effectiveness of including beneficiary and valence message elements for the dependent variable compliance

	B	S.E.	Sig.
Gender ^a	.196	.221	.375
Message elements ^b	-1.989	.600	.001

Note: tested by Logistic Regression Analysis

^aThe first category is the reference category. For gender 'female' is shown in the table, 'male' is used as reference

^bThe first category is the reference category. For message elements 'message elements included' (manipulated conditions) is shown in the table, 'message elements not included' (control condition) is used as reference

For the variable *amount* the effectiveness of including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements was tested by Univariate Analysis of Variance. Table 12 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 12, including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements has no significant main effect ($F(1, 419) = .947, n.s.$) on *amount*. For both, when *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were included and when *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were not included, the *amount* remained equal. The results lend support for H1b. Additionally, the gender of the donor has no significant main effect on *amount* ($F(1, 419) = .984, n.s.$).

Table 12 The effectiveness of including beneficiary and valence message elements for the dependent variable amount

	df	F	Sig.
Gender	1	.984	.322
Information	1	.947	.331

Note: tested by Univariate Analysis of Variance

Even though including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements is less effective than not including these message elements in affecting donation behaviour, specifically *compliance*, *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements might affect donation behaviour differently depending on what frame is included in the charitable appeal. To test how *beneficiary* and *valence* affect donation behaviour, the control condition is excluded from further analysis since the control condition does not include *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements.

4.2 Beneficiary

It was hypothesised that self-benefit appeals would generate more *compliance* (H2a) and a

higher *amount* (H2b) than other-benefit appeals. For the variable *compliance* Logistic Regression Analysis was used to test whether different effects would be generated for self-benefit appeals compared to other-benefit appeals. Table 13 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 13, no significant main effect was found for self-benefit appeals compared to other-benefit appeals ($B = -.003$, $S.E. = .266$, $n.s.$). Self-benefit appeals do not generate more *compliance* than other-benefit appeals. The results lend no support for H2a. Additionally, the gender of the donor has no significant main effect on *compliance* ($B = .157$, $S.E. = .267$, $n.s.$).

Table 13 The effects of self-benefit appeals and other-benefit appeals^a on the dependent variable compliance

	B	S.E.	Sig.
Gender ^b	.157	.267	.557
Other-benefit ^c	-.003	.266	.992

Note: tested by Logistic Regression Analysis

^aSelf-and-other-benefit appeals are excluded from analysis

^bThe first category is the reference category. For gender 'female' is shown in the table, 'male' is used as reference

^cThe first category is the reference category. For *beneficiary* 'other-benefit' is shown in the table, 'self-benefit' is used as reference

For the variable *amount* Univariate Analysis of Variance was used to test whether different effects would be generated for self-benefit appeals compared to other-benefit appeals. Table 14 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 14, no significant main effect was found for *beneficiary* ($F(1, 216) = 2.337$, $n.s.$). Self-benefit appeals ($M = €1.34$, $S.E. = .096$) do not generate a higher *amount* than other-benefit appeals ($M = €1.55$, $S.E. = .097$). The results lend no support for H2b. Additionally, the gender of the donor has no significant main effect on *amount* ($F(1, 216) = .616$, $n.s.$).

Table 14 The effects of self-benefit appeals and other-benefit appeals^a on the dependent variable amount

	df	F	Sig.
Gender	1	.616	.433
Beneficiary	1	2.337	.128

Note: tested by Univariate Analysis of Variance

^aSelf-and-other-benefit appeals are excluded from analysis

4.2.1 Self-and-other-benefit appeals

It was hypothesised that self-and-other-benefit appeals would generate more *compliance* than other-benefit appeals (H3a¹) and self-benefit appeals (H3b¹). It was also hypothesised that self-and-other-benefit appeals would generate a higher *amount* than other-benefit appeals (H3a²) and self-benefit appeals (H3b²). For the variable *compliance* Logistic Regression Analysis was used to test whether different effects would be generated for self-and-other-benefit appeals compared to other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals. Table 15 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 15, no significant main effects were found for self-and-other-benefit appeals compared to other-benefit appeals ($B = -.486, S.E. = .287, n.s.$) and self-benefit appeals ($B = -.481, S.E. = .287, n.s.$). Self-and-other-benefit appeals do not generate more *compliance* than other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals. The results lend no support for H3a¹ and H3b¹. Nevertheless, table 15 shows a trend which is not statistically significant for $p < .05$ but would be for $p < .10$, indicating that self-and-other-benefit appeals might be able to generate more *compliance* compared to other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals.

Table 15 The effects of beneficiary and valence on the dependent variable compliance

	B	S.E.	Sig.
Gender ^a	.279	.277	.219
Other-benefit ^b	-.486	.287	.090
Self-benefit ^b	-.481	.287	.094
Valence ^c	-.266	.228	.242

Note: tested by Logistic Regression Analysis

^aThe first category is the reference category. For gender ‘female’ is shown in the table, ‘male’ is used as reference

^bThe last category is the reference category. For *beneficiary* ‘other-benefit’ and ‘self-benefit’ are shown in the table, ‘self-and-other-benefit’ is used as reference

^cThe first category is the reference category. For *valence* ‘loss’ is shown in the table, ‘gain’ is used as reference

For the variable *amount* Univariate Analysis of Variance was used to test whether different effects would be generated for self-and-other-benefit appeals compared to other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals. Table 16 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 16, no significant main effect was found for *beneficiary* ($F(1, 336) = 1.409, n.s.$). Self-and-other-benefit appeals ($M = €1.53, S.E. = .094$) do not generate a higher *amount* than other-benefit appeals ($M = €1.55, S.E. = .099$) and self-benefit appeals ($M = €1.34, S.E. = .098$). The results lend no support for H3a² and H3b².

Table 16 *The effects of beneficiary and valence on the dependent variable amount*

	df	F	Sig.
Gender	1	1.061	.304
Beneficiary	2	1.409	.246
Valence	1	5.935	.015

Note: tested by Univariate Analysis of Variance

4.3 Valence

It was hypothesised that gain framed appeals would generate more *compliance* (H4a) and a higher *amount* (H4b) than loss framed appeals. For the variable *compliance* Logistic Regression Analysis was used to test whether different effects would be generated for gain framed appeals compared to loss framed appeals. Table 15 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 15, no significant main effect was found for *valence* ($B = -.266$, $S.E. = .228$, $n.s.$). Gain framed appeals do not generate more *compliance* than loss framed appeals. The results lend no support for H4a. Additionally, the gender of the donor has no significant main effect on *compliance* ($B = .279$, $S.E. = .277$, $n.s.$).

For the variable *amount* Univariate Analysis of Variance was used to test whether different effects would be generated for gain framed appeals compared to loss framed appeals. Table 16 shows the results of this analysis. As shown in table 16, a significant main effect was found for *valence* ($F(1, 336) = 5.935$, $p < .05$). Loss framed appeals ($M = €1.61$, $S.E. = .081$) generate a higher *amount* than gain framed appeals ($M = €1.34$, $S.E. = .078$). This significant main effect was not conform research expectations, therefore the results lend no support for H4b. Additionally, the gender of the donor has no significant main effect on *amount* ($F(1, 336) = 1.061$, $n.s.$).

4.4 Gender as a moderator

It was hypothesised that gender moderates the direction of the relation between *beneficiary* and donation behaviour (H5) and that gender moderates the strength of the relation between *valence* and donation behaviour (H6). Two Univariate Analyses of Variance were used to test for possible interaction effects. Table 17 shows the results of the analysis for *compliance* and table 18 shows the results of the analysis for *amount*.

Table 17 *Interaction effects between beneficiary, valence and gender on the dependent variable compliance*

	df	F	Sig.
Gender*Beneficiary	2	.320	.726
Gender*Valence	1	.039	.844
Beneficiary*Valence	2	.026	.975
Gender*Beneficiary*Valence	2	.297	.743

Note: tested by Univariate Analysis of Variance

Table 18 *Interaction effects between beneficiary, valence and gender on the dependent variable amount*

	df	F	Sig.
Gender*Beneficiary	2	.038	.963
Gender*Valence	1	.084	.772
Beneficiary*Valence	2	1.822	.163
Gender*Beneficiary*Valence	2	.394	.675

Note: tested by Univariate Analysis of Variance

As shown in table 17, no significant interaction effects were found for *compliance*. Gender does not moderate the direction of the relation between *beneficiary* and *compliance* ($F(1, 438) = .320, n.s.$). Self-benefit appeals are equally effective for men and women in affecting *compliance* (no support for H5a¹), other-benefit appeals are equally effective for men and women in affecting *compliance* (no support for H5b¹), and self-and-other-benefit appeals are equally effective for men and women in affecting *compliance* (no support for H5c¹). Furthermore, gender does not moderate the strength of the relation between *valence* and *compliance* ($F(1, 438) = .039, n.s.$). The strength of the effect of gain framed appeals on *compliance* is equal for men and women (no support for H6a¹), and the strength of the effect of loss framed appeals on *compliance* is equal for men and women (no support for H6b¹).

As shown in table 18, no significant interaction effects were found for *amount*. Gender does not moderate the direction of the relation between *beneficiary* and *amount* ($F(1, 336) = .038, n.s.$). Self-benefit appeals are equally effective for men and women in affecting *amount* (no support for H5a²), other-benefit appeals are equally effective for men and women in affecting *amount* (no support for H5b²), and self-and-other-benefit appeals are equally effective for men and women in affecting *amount* (no support for H5c²). Furthermore,

gender does not moderate the strength of the relation between *valence* and *amount* ($F(1, 336) = .084, n.s.$). The strength of the effect of gain framed appeals on *amount* is equal for men and women (no support for H6a²), and the strength of the effect of loss framed appeals on *amount* is equal for men and women (no support for H6b²).

In sum, the results lend no support for H5 and H6. Furthermore, no interaction effects were found between the independent variables *beneficiary* and *valence* for both *compliance* and *amount*, and no three-way interaction effects were found between the variables *beneficiary*, *valence* and gender for both *compliance* and *amount*.

Table 19 provides an overview of the support for the research hypotheses.

Table 19 Overview of the support for research hypotheses

Hypothesis	Support for hypothesis	
	Supported	Not supported
H1a		Not supported ^a
H1b	Supported	
H2a		Not supported
H2b		Not supported
H3a ¹		Not supported ^b
H3a ²		Not supported
H3b ¹		Not supported ^b
H3b ²		Not supported
H4a		Not supported
H4b		Not supported ^a
H5		Not supported
H5a ¹		Not supported
H5a ²		Not supported
H5b ¹		Not supported
H5b ²		Not supported
H5c ¹		Not supported
H5c ²		Not supported
H6		Not supported
H6a ¹		Not supported
H6a ²		Not supported
H6b ¹		Not supported
H6b ²		Not supported

Note

^aSignificant effect was not conform research expectations

^bNo significant effect was found for $p < .05$, but the effect did indicate a trend for $p < .10$

5 Discussion

The main research question posed in this research reads: *To what extent do the beneficiary and valence emphasised in a charitable appeal affect monetary donation behaviour during a door-to-door collection?* This section discusses the research results, providing an answer to the research question. Furthermore, theoretical and practical implications, future research directions and limitations are discussed.

5.1 Discussion of research results

This research measures actual monetary donation behaviour through a door-to-door collection. Overall, the results show that including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements in the solicitation to donate is counterproductive. Less people complied to the solicitation when these message elements were included, compared to when these message elements were not included. However, when *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were included in the solicitation, the results show that the solicitation should best include a loss frame and address both self-and-other-benefits.

5.1.1 Inclusion of message elements

The research results show that the inclusion of *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements did not affect *amount*. For both, when these message elements were and were not included, the *amount* remained equal. The present finding is compatible with the research expectations. However, the research results also show that when *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements were included in the charitable appeal, less people were willing to comply to the solicitation to make a monetary donation compared to when these message elements were not included. The present finding is not compatible with the research expectations. It was expected a potential donor would be disrupted and more susceptible to the charitable solicitation by the inclusion of unexpected message elements and engaging the mind of the potential donor, and hence increase *compliance*. The present finding might be explained by the way the message elements were applied in the charitable solicitations.

The effectiveness of disrupt then reframe theory hinges on inducing the potential donor to be mindless (Davis & Knowles, 1999; Fennis et al., 2006), which can be achieved by confusing the potential donor in the disruption. Erickson (1964) confused individuals by play of words, for example by the statement “a man lost his left hand in an accident and thus his right (hand) is his left” (p. 183). Davis and Knowles (1999) confused individuals by formulating

the price an individual had to pay for a pack of note cards as 300 pennies. Merely including *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements in order to disrupt the potential donor might not have been confusing enough, and might have failed to induce the potential donor to be mindless. Therefore the potential donor might not have been susceptible to the charitable solicitation, and hence less willing to comply to the charitable solicitation.

5.1.2 Beneficiary

The research results show that self-benefit appeals and other-benefit appeals generate equal *compliance* and *amount*. The present findings are not compatible with the research expectations. Based on the theory of self-interest, it was expected self-benefit appeals would generate more *compliance* and a higher *amount* than other-benefit appeals. The present findings might be explained by the way the benefits were expressed in the charitable solicitations.

Making a monetary donation to a charitable organisation is costly (Piff et al., 2010). To motivate a potential donor to comply to a charitable solicitation, a self-benefit has to result from the monetary donation (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Ye et al., 2015). A less desirable self-benefit is less motivating for a donor to pursue than a more desirable self-benefit. Actions that produce tangible benefits are more motivating and desirable than actions that do not produce tangible benefits (Loewenstein, Brennan & Volpp, 2007). Additionally, following present-biased preferences, individuals like to receive benefits soon and delay costs (O'Donoghue & Rabin, 1999). The self-benefits expressed in this research did not follow these patterns. Instead, they focussed on intangible self-benefits in the (near) future. Since the act of making a monetary donation involved an immediate cost, while the less desirable intangible self-benefit was delayed, a potential donor might not have been motivated enough in the self-benefit conditions to make a charitable donation. Therefore, self-benefit appeals might not have been more effective in influencing donation behaviour than other-benefit appeals.

The research results show that self-and-other-benefit appeals generate equal *compliance* and *amount* compared to other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals. Nevertheless, the results show a trend (which is not statistically significant) for *compliance*, indicating that self-and-other-benefit appeals might be able to generate more *compliance* compared to other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals. The present finding is a major contribution to existing literature since no prior research focusses on self-and-other-benefit appeals. This result is in line with the study by Holmes et al. (2002). People want to be altruistic, yet a self wants to benefit from the altruistic act as well. Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation might

explain the present finding further.

According to Maslow (1943) motives and values are critical in order to understand human behaviour (Reiss & Haverkamp, 2005). By distinguishing higher and lower motives a hierarchy of needs is created. First people tend to lower needs. When a lower need is fairly well satisfied, people tend to a higher need. This higher need serves as “the center of organization of behavior, since gratified needs are not active motivators” (Maslow, 1943, p. 395). Primarily people tend to their psychological, safety and love needs. When these needs are satisfied, people tend to their esteem and self-actualisation needs (Reiss & Haverkamp, 2005). One could argue that households have satisfied their psychological, safety and love needs. First, households have access to food, water and a bed to sleep in. Second, households have access to a roof above their heads in a familiar environment. Third, households consist of families gratifying affection and belonging. Therefore, higher needs such as esteem needs might be dominant motivators of household behaviours. People have the need for self-esteem, including independence and freedom, and the need for esteem of others, including recognition and appreciation (Maslow, 1943). Self-and-other-benefit appeals might gratify these esteem needs more so than mere self-benefit appeals and other-benefit appeals do. That is, mere self-benefit appeals can induce self-esteem and inhibit esteem of others. The donor would donate due to self-interested motivations, inhibiting feelings of recognition and appreciation. In contrast, mere other-benefit appeals can induce esteem of others and inhibit self-esteem. The donor would donate due to other-interested motivations, inhibiting feelings of freedom and independence (Holmes et al., 2002). Since esteem needs might be met to a lesser extent, individuals might be less prone to comply to a charitable solicitation for self-benefit appeals and other-benefit appeals. However, self-and-other-benefit appeals can induce both self-esteem and esteem of others. That is, self-and-other-benefit appeals can induce feelings of recognition and appreciation without having to feel less free and independent. Therefore, self-and-other-benefit appeals might be able to generate more *compliance* than other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals.

5.1.3 Valence

The research results show that gain framed appeals and loss framed appeals generate equal *compliance*. Furthermore, the research results show that loss framed appeals generate a higher *amount* than gain framed appeals. The present findings are not compatible with the research expectations. Based on prospect theory, it was expected that gain framed appeals would generate more *compliance* and a higher *amount* than loss framed appeals. The present findings might be explained by loss aversion.

Initially formalised as a component of prospect theory (Brenner, Rottenstreich, Sood & Bilgin, 2007), loss aversion states that individuals' responses to losses are more extreme than individuals' responses to gains (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Losses seem to have a greater hedonic impact compared to gains of equal magnitude (Bilgin, 2012; Kermer, Driver-Linn, Wilson & Gilbert, 2006), hence the popular phrase: losses loom larger than gains (Brenner et al., 2007). In the context of charitable giving, not being able to help might seem more negative than being able to help might seem positive. Therefore, a potential donor might respond more extreme to loss framed appeals compared to gain framed appeals, which is reflected in the act of making a monetary donation resulting in a higher *amount*. Hence, loss framed appeals generate a higher amount than *gain* framed appeals.

5.1.4 Gender as a moderator

The research results show that gender does not moderate the direction of the relation between *beneficiary* and donation behaviour, and that gender does not moderate the strength of the relation between *valence* and donation behaviour. The present findings are not compatible with the research expectations. It was expected that gender would moderate the direction of the relation between *beneficiary* and donation behaviour, and that gender would moderate the strength of the relation between *valence* and donation behaviour. The present findings might be explained by the context of this study.

The present study involves a door-to-door collection where households are approached to make a monetary donation. Gender differences found in prior research are often based on decisions of an individual. Yet, according to Burgoyne, Young and Walker (2005) donation behaviour is a joint family activity in accordance with the money management of the household. The money management of the household influences autonomy over donation behaviour of individuals of the household. According to Pahl (1995) nearly half of the households use a pooling system (Einolf, 2011) where all or the majority of the income is combined and shared. Decisions regarding whether and how much of this income to donate to charitable organisations, are made jointly (Andreoni, Brown & Rischall, 2003). In a door-to-door collection context, charitable giving might not classify as an individual spending but as part of household expenditure. Therefore, the gender of the individual donor might be less influential.

5.2 Theoretical and practical implications

The research results have important theoretical and practical implications. The theoretical contribution of this research is threefold. This research contributes (1) to insights into self-and-

other-benefit appeals, where prior research has overlooked this frame, (2) to the scientific knowledge regarding *valence* by extending it to the field of ethical decision making, and (3) to insights into actual donation behaviour, where prior research mainly focusses on donation intention. Nevertheless, the practical issue of increasing monetary donations through door-to-door collections is still pressing. The research results show that including message elements in the solicitation to donate is counterproductive. Despite this finding, charitable organisations should invest in finding potential methods to increase monetary donations, and should adjust the current form of door-to-door collecting since the effectiveness of door-to-door collections is declining (CBF, 2017a; Nierstichting, 2015).

5.3 Future research directions

This research has provided a groundwork in fivefold for future research. Future work should (1) focus on self-and-other-benefit appeals and extend the findings of this research in order to determine if self-and-other-benefit appeals could be more effective than other-benefit appeals and self-benefit appeals in influencing donation behaviour, (2) compare the effectiveness of tangible and intangible benefits in influencing donation behaviour, (3) broaden knowledge regarding the effects of *valence* in ethical decision making, (4) determine whether and how households influence donation behaviour in a door-to-door collection context, and (5) focus on other possible methods to increase monetary donations in a door-to-door collection context.

5.4 Limitations

The strength of this research also bears its most pressing limitation. The design and method of this research represented a door-to-door collection with the addition of *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements. Respondents did not know they were participating in a research until after they complied, or did not comply, to the charitable solicitation and a monetary donation was, or was not, made. Their behaviour represents unbiased and natural behaviour. Unfortunately, during a door-to-door collection a collector has limited amount of time at the door of a household. Lingering on might raise suspicion in other households regarding the collection since a collection generally does not take a lot of time. The short timeframe limits what information can be gathered from respondents. Therefore, merely age, gender and manipulation checks were assessed. Information regarding the consistency of the household, the education and income of the (non)donor and affiliation with the charitable organisation were not assessed. These variables could affect donation behaviour during a door-to-door collection as well.

6 Conclusion

This research provides insights into the effects of framing charitable appeals on donation behaviour in a door-to-door collection context. Frames included in the research are *beneficiary* and *valence*. When *beneficiary* and *valence* message elements are included in the charitable solicitation, the solicitation should best include a loss frame and address both self-and-other-benefits. However, merely asking for a monetary donation is found to be most effective in influencing donation behaviour, specifically in influencing *compliance*. In a door-to-door collection context less is more.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Kidney Foundation for their collaboration and the University of Twente, specifically dr. A. Beldad and dr. J. J. van Hoof, for their guidance during this research.

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Appendix

Pre-test

A pre-test was performed on respondents ($n = 12$) who did not take part in the main experiment to test the instrument and the manipulations for usability in the main experiment. If necessary, the instrument and the manipulations could be adjusted. Respondents (6 males, 6 females, $M_{age} = 39.7$, $SD = 15.66$) were verbally exposed to one of six charitable appeals that varied in terms of *beneficiary* and *valence* (see table 20).

Table 20 Charitable appeals used to test the instrument and the manipulations during the pre-test across six conditions

Condition	Beneficiary	Valence	Charitable appeal ^{ab}
1	Self	Gain	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you. With your donation The Kidney Foundation can help you. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
2	Other	Gain	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to others. With your donation The Kidney Foundation can help others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
3	Self-and-other	Gain	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you and others. With your donation The Kidney Foundation can help you and others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
4	Self	Loss	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you. Without your donation The Kidney Foundation cannot help you. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
5	Other	Loss	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to others. Without your donation The Kidney Foundation cannot help others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?
6	Self-and-other	Loss	The amount of Dutch people suffering from kidney failure is increasing. This could happen to you and others. Without your donation The Kidney Foundation cannot help you and others. Do you have a contribution for The Kidney Foundation?

Note

^aThe pre-test was conducted in Dutch. Table 20 shows a translation

^bThe charitable appeals focussed on intangible benefits

After exposure to one of the charitable appeals, eight written seven-point scaled items ranging from 1 “*strongly disagree*” to 7 “*strongly agree*” measured the usability of the manipulations. Two items per manipulation were used to check its usability. The items were derived from prior research (Chang & Lee, 2009; White & Peloza, 2009; Ye et al., 2015). The two items measuring self-benefit read: *this message is focused on helping oneself* and *this message is focused on looking out for one’s own interests*. The two items measuring other-benefit read: *this message is focused on helping others* and *this message is focused on looking out for the interests of others*. The two items measuring gains read: *the valence of this message is mostly positive* and *this message is focused on gains*. The two items measuring losses read: *the valence of this message is mostly negative* and *this message is focused on losses*.

Self-benefit appeals should focus on self-benefit rather than other-benefit, other-benefit appeals should focus on other-benefit rather than self-benefit, and self-and-other benefit appeals should focus on both self-benefit and other-benefit. Gain framed appeals should focus on gains rather than losses, and loss framed appeals should focus on losses rather than gains.

T-tests were performed to test for differences and to determine if these differences were statistically significant. Respondents ($n = 4$) exposed to self-benefit appeals rated the appeals to be focussed on self-benefit ($M = 5.88$, $SD = .48$), where respondents ($n = 4$) exposed to other-benefit appeals rated the appeals not to be focussed on self-benefit ($M = 1.38$, $SD = .48$). A t-test yielded a t-value of $t = 13.29$, $p < .001$, indicating a significant difference between the two appeal types regarding the focus on self-benefit. Respondents ($n = 4$) exposed to other-benefit appeals rated the appeals to be focussed on other-benefit ($M = 6.50$, $SD = .41$), where respondents ($n = 4$) exposed to self-benefit appeals rated the appeals not to be focussed on other-benefit ($M = 2.00$, $SD = .41$). A t-test yielded a t-value of $t = -15.59$, $p < .001$, indicating a significant difference between the two appeal types regarding the focus on other-benefit. Respondents ($n = 4$) exposed to self-and-other-benefit appeals rated the appeals to be focussed on both self-benefit ($M = 5.88$, $SD = .25$) and other-benefit ($M = 6.13$, $SD = .25$). A t-test determining the statistical significance of the differences between the mean scores and the average of the Likert scale (for a seven-point Likert scale, the average value and thus the test value is 4) yielded two t-values of $t = 15.00$, $p = .001$ for self-benefit and $t = 17.00$, $p < .001$ for other-benefit, indicating that self-and-other-benefit appeals were focussed on both self-benefit and other-benefit.

Respondents ($n = 6$) exposed to gain framed appeals rated the appeals to be focussed on gains ($M = 6.25$, $SD = .41$), where respondents ($n = 6$) exposed to loss framed appeals rated the appeals not to be focussed on gains ($M = 1.58$, $SD = .49$). A t-test yielded a t-value of $t = 17.71$,

$p < .001$, indicating a significant difference between the two appeal types regarding the focus on gains. Respondents ($n = 6$) exposed to loss framed appeals rated the appeals to be focussed on losses ($M = 6.50$, $SD = .45$), where respondents ($n = 6$) exposed to gain framed appeals rated the appeals not to be focussed on losses ($M = 1.58$, $SD = .49$). A t-test yielded a t-value of $t = -18.12$, $p < .001$, indicating a significant difference between the two appeal types regarding the focus on losses.

In addition, one seven-point scaled item ranging from 1 “*strongly disagree*” to 7 “*strongly agree*” measured whether the manipulations would be suitable for usage during a door-to-door collection. The item read: *this message is likely to be used during a door-to-door collection*. Respondents ($n = 12$) rated all manipulated charitable appeals likely to be used during a door-to-door collection ($M = 6.25$, $SD = .62$). A t-test determining the statistical significance of the difference between the mean score and the average of the Likert scale (for a seven-point Likert scale, the average value and thus the test value is 4) yielded a t-value of $t = 12.54$, $p < .001$, indicating that the manipulated charitable appeals were likely to be used during a door-to-door collection.

After completing the written pre-test, two spoken closed-ended items measured the effectiveness of the manipulations as well since the manipulation check during the actual field experiment would be nuncupative. The first item measured the effectiveness of the manipulation for the independent variable *beneficiary*. The item read: *Who was emphasised in the charitable appeal? Was this yourself, others or yourself and others?* The second item measured the effectiveness of the manipulation for the independent variable *valence*. The item read: *Did the charitable appeal emphasise the positive outcomes of donating or the negative outcomes of not donating?* All respondents ($n = 12$) correctly identified the frame of the corresponding manipulation. The results of the pre-test indicated that the instrument and the manipulations were suitable to be used in the main experiment. No adjustments were made.