



EMBRACE WEBSITE'S WARMTH AND SOCIABILITY

A mixed methods research investigating the influence of social cues on a charity website on users' perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness and attitudinal loyalty

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Abstract

Objective. Charity websites are becoming more important as traditional ways of receiving donations are more frequently replaced by websites to collect donations. However, it is not yet clear how website cues, like social cues, influence users' emotions, experiences and behaviour on a charity website. Therefore, this research aims to investigate which social cues are important for charity websites and to examine the influence of social cues on users' emotions and experiences (perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness) and behavioural intentions (monetary donation, revisit and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) intention).

Method. Two separate studies, a qualitative and a quantitative study, were conducted and specified to CliniClowns. Study 1 used semi-structured interviews (N = 10) to investigate the importance of different social cues on CliniClowns' website and to provide a better understanding of the proposed effects of social cues in an online charity context. Furthermore, a 2 (colours: warm vs. cold) by 2 (photos: warm vs. cold) by 2 (tone of writing: warm vs. cold) between-subjects experiment using an online survey (N = 306) was conducted in Study 2 to test the effects of social cues on CliniClowns' website. Non-probability sampling strategies were used to gather participants.

Results. Study 1 showed signals that photos, colours, video and tone of writing are important cues for stimulating users' emotions, experiences, monetary donation intention and – except for tone of writing – positive WOM intention. However, Study 1 suggested that social cues do not impact users' revisit intention. Study 2 demonstrated that warm photos are important on charity websites to increase users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention but not for the revisit and positive WOM intention. Also, the perceived website socialness mediated the effect of warm photos on monetary donation intention. Moreover, users' perceived website socialness enhanced users' experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness which, in turn, both strengthened users' monetary donation intention. Finally, the colours and tone of writing showed no effect.

Conclusion. Warm photos are essential for charity websites as they positively impact users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention. Moreover, this research demonstrated that an enhanced perceived website socialness stimulates users' experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness which, in turn, both increase users' monetary donation intention. However, other social cues such as colours, tone of writing, a chat function and a social role model were found to have less or no effect on charity websites. Therefore, this study indicates that not every expectation created by research conducted in online commercial contexts can be copied to non-commercial websites.

Keywords: *charity website, social cue, perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness, monetary donation intention, revisit intention, positive word-of-mouth intention*

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1. Introduction

Charities are increasingly starting to abandon traditional ways of receiving donations and switch to digital platforms, like websites, to collect donations (Kenang & Gosal., 2021). This is because the possibilities to physically collect and organize fundraising events were limited due to COVID-19 (Schulpen et al., 2021; Verwiel & von Piekartz, 2020). Furthermore, the increasing expense and regulatory complexity of hosting traditional physical collection options have stressed the need to investigate and optimize alternative channels (e.g., websites) to collect donations (C. de Bly, personal communication, 8 October 2021). Therefore, charity websites are becoming more important (Kwak, 2014).

According to Bennett (2005), the increased importance of charity websites has stressed the need to comprehend the influence of diverse website features on users' emotions and, in turn, on donor behaviour. Furthermore, Shatnawi and Algharabat (2018) argue that possibilities to improve the online donating experience needs to be examined as donating is an emotional and personal experience for most people. Despite these calls for further research, only a few studies investigated how websites influence users' emotions and prosocial behaviour (e.g., Bennett, 2009; Grimm & Needham, 2012; Slattery et al., 2021). For instance, Bennett (2009), who investigated impulsive donation decisions while people are browsing charity websites, suggests that emotional and informational factors of the website design influence donors' impulsive donation decisions during browsing the website. Besides these studies, most research about the influence of websites on emotions and behaviour has been conducted in commercial contexts (e.g., Harris & Goode, 2010; Lee & Hahn, 2015; Lee & Jeong, 2012).

This research focuses on the influence of social cues on charity websites that stimulate users' perceived website socialness which is the extent to which users experience human warmth and sociability (Wang et al., 2007). Social cues can be defined as human-like characteristics (Reeves & Nass, 1996) that increase human warmth and sociability on websites. Examples of social cues related to organization-to-user interactions are socially rich photos, a chat function or a video. More specifically, socially rich photos are photos of people in an emotional and dynamic environment (Hassanein & Head, 2007; see Figure 1 for an example). A chat function is used to provide personal contact with the organization (Ogonowski et al., 2014; Sohn et al., 2020; see Figure 2 for an example). Finally, a video on a website can also generate human warmth and sociability by showing interactions between humans (Ogonowski et al., 2014; see Figure 3 for an example).

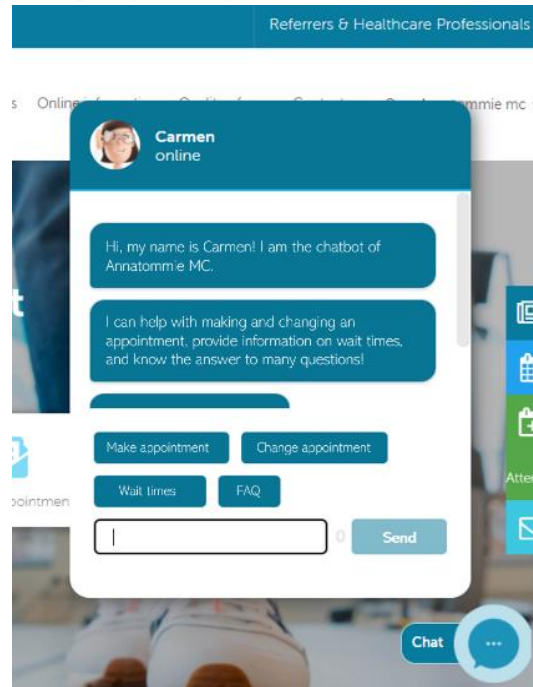
Figure 1

*Example of normal photos (top)
versus socially rich photos (bottom)*



Figure 2

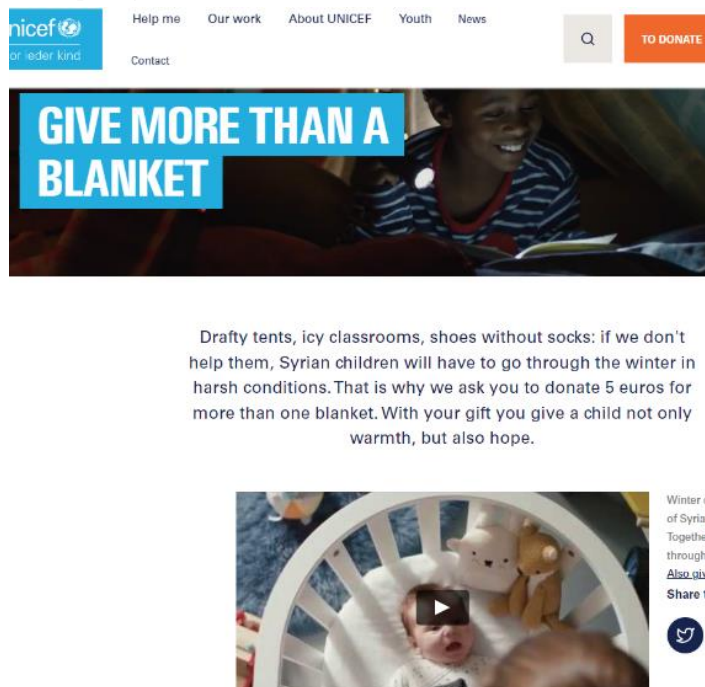
Example of a chat function



Note. Retrieved from Annatommie mc (n.d.)

Figure 3

Example of a video



Note. Retrieved from Unicef (n.d.-b)

In general, stimulating prosocial behaviour (e.g., giving money, volunteering) is often challenging on websites as mediated contexts usually lack human warmth and sociability (Kang & Lee, 2018; Slattery et al., 2019). When no social cues are present, potential donors may feel less encouraged or pressured on a website to provide a gift compared to face-to-face contexts since warmth and sociability can help to foster and build relationships between the charity and the donor (Shatnawi & Algharabat, 2018). This is a concern for charities because they are dependent on monetary donations to survive (Alhidari et al., 2018). Additionally, other loyalty intentions, like the intention to revisit the website or to perform positive WOM are important as well. This is because charities are increasingly losing structural donors and more and more people prefer to donate more flexibly (De Bruijn, 2019; RTL Nieuws, 2019). Therefore, it may be important to add social cues to the website to stimulate the attitudinal loyalty (monetary donation, revisit and positive WOM intentions) of website users.

Most relevant research about the influence of social cues related to organization-to-user interactions on websites are conducted in commercial contexts. For instance, Wang et al. (2007) examined the influence of multiple social cues on the perceived website socialness in online retail contexts. Studies into this topic in non-commercial settings are scarce. Only Zhang et al. (2021) investigated the influence of social cues on users' level of trust and donation intentions but focused on

social cues related to user-to-user interactions (e.g., donor reviews). Thus, it is important to investigate the influence of social cues related to organization-to-user interactions since this is not investigated yet. Beyond this, it is important to examine social cues on a charity website because what works on commercial websites does not inherently work on non-commercial websites. This is because non-commercial organizations are judged differently compared to commercial organizations when using the same types of marketing (Slattery et al., 2019). Moreover, users are asked for a commercial action (e.g., commercial: buy a product, non-commercial: provide a monetary donation) on both types of websites, however, users that provided a monetary donation do not receive something in return.

Previous studies also showed that adding social cues to websites enhances users' perceived website socialness which, in turn, can stimulate users' perceived trustworthiness (Hassanein & Head, 2007; Lu et al., 2016). However, the influence of perceiving website socialness on users' perceived trustworthiness in mediated charity contexts has not been investigated yet. Nevertheless, trust is important for the continuation of charities (Beldad et al., 2015; Gaskin, 1999; Sproull, 2011) as donors must trust that the need of the charity is legitimate before they provide a voluntary gift (Bekkers, 2003; Sproull, 2011). However, in the past decade, some charities have had negative publicity which impacted donors' perceived trustworthiness of charities. For example, in 2010, the scandal of Oxfam Novid, which became public knowledge in 2018, resulted in more than 700 donor resignations from Oxfam Novid (Taha, 2018). Such scandals affect the entire charity sector (RD.nl, 2018) as these news items increase donors' concerns about charities' integrity and the fear that their donations will be used inappropriately (Beldad et al., 2014; Beldad et al., 2015). Therefore, it is interesting to investigate how social cues impact donors' perceived trustworthiness of the charity.

Moreover, it is also interesting to investigate how social cues that stimulate users' perceived website socialness which, in turn, can influence users' experience of hospitality as experiencing warmth is associated with experiencing hospitality (Pijls et al., 2017). Pijls et al. (2017) defined the experience of hospitality as experiencing personal attention through the factors *inviting*, *care* and *comfort*, and previous research suggests that adding social cues to a website makes users feel more comfortable and invited (Sproull et al., 1996; Wakefield et al., 2011). Creating high experiences of hospitality among users is valuable for charities as human warmth is an important aspect of the relationship between donors and the charity (Shatnawi & Algharabat, 2018). Moreover, offering a hospitable experience is valuable to CliniClowns, the charity central to this study, as they highly value making their donors feel good (J. Bos, personal communication, 24 September, 2021). In addition, letting people experience hospitality is relevant for charities as non-profit organizations "tend to be socially responsive and service-oriented" (Shatnawi & Algharabat, 2018, p. 127). Therefore, this study wants to investigate the influence of experiencing hospitality in an online charity context. Until now, many studies focused on how


organizations can offer hospitality, however, how people experience the hospitality offered by organizations is novel in literature. Next to that, the experience of hospitality has not been investigated in a mediated context. Furthermore, the role of hospitality for non-profit organizations, like charities, is not examined yet.

For these reasons, this study aims to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the connections between social cues and users' perceived websites socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness of the charity and attitudinal loyalty (monetary donation intention, revisit intention and positive WOM intention) in a mediated charity context. Therefore, this research will focus on the following two research questions:

RQ1: *Which social cues on a charity website are important regarding users' perceived website socialness and attitudinal loyalty?*

RQ2: *To what extent do social cues on a charity website influence users' perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness of the charity and, in turn, attitudinal loyalty?*

Since most previous studies on this topic are conducted in commercial contexts, it is important to investigate first via a qualitative study whether the proposed effects of social cues sustain in a charity website context. Next to that, diverse social cues can be implemented and which social cues need to be tested in this research needed to be determined in a qualitative study. In addition to the qualitative study, this research also aims to test the effect of social cues in a quantitative study. In all, both qualitative and quantitative research is conducted while focusing on the Dutch charity CliniClowns.



CliniClowns is Dutch charity that started in 1992 with two clowns. Nowadays, over 95 clowns are providing distraction and fun to those diseased children, children with disabilities and people with dementia to let them forget their worries for a while (CliniClowns, n.d.-a; CliniClowns, n.d.-c) CliniClowns highly values making contact. They believe that a person feels better when someone connects with him or her (CliniClowns, n.d.-b).

This report continues with the literature review of the topics related to this research (Chapter 2). After that, the methodology and results of Study 1 are described (Chapter 3). Subsequently, the methodology and the results of Study 2 are presented (Chapter 4). Then, the discussion, including the discussion of results, research limitations, recommendations for future research and theoretical and practical implications, is provided (Chapter 5). The discussion is followed by the conclusion (Chapter 6). This report ends with references (Chapter 7) and appendices (Chapter 8).

2. Theoretical framework

This theoretical framework aims to better understand the theories, concepts and relationships between the concepts that are relevant to this research. This theoretical framework starts by introducing loyalty and its dimensions. This chapter continues by explaining the perceived website socialness, social cues, the experience of hospitality and the perceived trustworthiness of the charity. This chapter ends by presenting the conceptual model and describing the conclusion of the theoretical framework.

2.1 Attitudinal loyalty

It is important for charities that loyalty among (potential) donors is built and maintained. According to Zeithaml et al. (1996), loyal users are creating bonds with the organization and demonstrating positive behaviours, like recommending the organization to others. Previous studies show that loyalty can be split up into attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Alhulail et al., 2019; Ghane et al., 2011; Oliver, 1999; Shatnawi & Algharabat, 2018). Attitudinal loyalty represents users' behavioural intentions while behavioural loyalty displays concrete loyalty behaviours (Oliver, 1999). This research focuses on three attitudinal loyalty dimensions. First of all, users' monetary donation intention is included. These donations can be defined as voluntary gifts (Bekkers, 2003) that can be provided on a structural (e.g., every month) or flexible (e.g., putting something in a collection box) basis (Goede Doelen Nederland, n.d.). In addition, providing monetary donations is part of prosocial behaviour which can be defined as "voluntary behaviour primarily aimed at benefitting another" (Nielson et al., 2017, p.91). Within prosocial behaviour, the distinction can be made between activism (acting to address a social problem), philanthropy (monetary donations) and volunteering (providing time; Slattery et al., 2021). Thus, this research focuses on users' intention to perform monetary donation behaviour (philanthropy). Secondly, this research takes the intention to revisit the website into account (Cuny et al., 2015; Cyr et al., 2007; Gallarza & Saura, 2006), which can be defined as the likelihood that users revisit the website (Abdullah et al., 2016). Thirdly, the intention to perform positive WOM also complies with attitudinal loyalty (Cuny et al., 2015; Gallarza & Saura, 2006) and can be seen as the likelihood to communicate anything positive about the charity to others (Vazquez et al., 2017).

2.2 Perceived website socialness

Another variable central to this research is users' perceived website socialness. When users perceive website socialness, they perceive the website as more friendly, helpful, intelligent, polite, informative and interactive (Wakefield et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2007). In addition, Lee (2012) investigated website

socialness in terms of e-social ambience and argued that a high level of website socialness let users perceive the website as more lively, cheerful, friendly and courteous.

The level of website socialness depends on the level of social presence which is stimulated by social cues (Wang et al., 2007). According to Fulk et al. (1987), social presence can be defined as the extent to which a medium allows a user to experience others as being psychologically present. Biocca et al. (2003) also agree that social presence encompasses “being with another” (p. 456). Ogonowski et al. (2014) took a different perspective, they defined online social presence as “the perception of personal, sociable, sensitive human elements of a website” (p. 482). So their definition focuses on the website’s ability to convey human warmth and sociability on their website (Sohn et al., 2020). These different perspectives can be explained by the three-dimensional model of social presence proposed by Lu et al. (2016). They recognized three dimensions: social presence of the website, social presence as the perception of others and social presence of interaction with sellers. Especially the dimension social presence of the web is related to the website's ability to create human warmth and sociability. The second dimension explains the extent to which other social actors are present (e.g., other website users). Lastly, social presence of interaction with sellers is linked to direct interactions between the organization (sellers) and the website users. Thus, Biocca et al. (2003) focused their definition on the perception of others, while Ogonowski concentrated on social presence of the web. This study adopts the definition of Ogonowski to define social presence since this study is focused on social cues that enhance a sense of human warmth and sociability. When users perceive social presence of the website, they perceive the website as containing a sense of human contact, personalness, sociability, human warmth and human sensitivity (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Therefore, website socialness in this study is defined as the extent to which users experience human warmth and sociability (social presence of the web) as a result of the use of social cues. Following this definition, both website socialness and social presence of the website are included as constructs during data collection. From now on, website socialness is used to refer to this combined construct.

2.3 Social cues

2.3.1 Defining social cues

Social cues in physical environments are important factors that influence people’s experiences (Wall & Berry, 2007). Looking at charities, this means that the behaviour and appearance of, for example, fundraisers who perform door-to-door collections influence the experience of people they visit. Even though online environments originally lack some sort of human warmth and sociability (Kang & Lee, 2018), Wang et al. (2007) argued that people’s responses to the organization–consumer interactions in physical environments can be evoked similarly in online environments by using social cues. Miettinen et

al. (2005), who investigated the effect of social cues in virtual learning environments, defined social cues as signals that provide information about the presence of other users in a mediated context. Conversely, Wang et al. (2007) took a more broad definition of social cues into account in their investigation of the effect of social cues in online shopping environments. They considered social cues as human-like characteristics (Reeves & Nass, 1996) which can stimulate warmth and sociability. In their study, they examined social cues that increased the presence of organizations' representatives. So, social cues can be related to organization-to-user interactions (e.g., avatar) or user-to-user interactions (e.g., reviews of other donors; Zhang et al., 2021). This study focuses on the social cues associated with the interactions between the charity and donors.

2.3.2 Different social cues

Previous studies investigated different social cues related to organization-to-user interactions, as shown in Table 1. To illustrate, Wang et al. (2007), who investigated the influence of different social cues in an online retail context, argued that language is a social cue. Language represents written and spoken communication. When websites contain both written and spoken communication, it contributes to a higher level of website socialness (Wakefield et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2007). Another social cue is voice which comprises the human-sounding voice (Keeling et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2007). This is a social cue since people appear to react differently to dissimilar voices on one computer compared to an identical voice on two separate computers which was perceived as a single social actor (Nass & Steuer, 1993). A third social cue is website interactivity (e.g., an interactive social role model; Wang et al., 2007), which includes active control, two-way communication and synchronicity (Liu & Shrum, 2002; Matikiti-Manyevere et al., 2021), and can be seen as a social cue since mere interactivity in communication simulates interpersonal communication (Ha & James, 1998). Having a general social role model is another social cue that increases the social presence on a website (Qiu & Benbasat, 2009; Wang et al., 2007). In addition, Lee (2012) and Lee and Hahn (2015) mentioned the tone of writing as a social cue since an informal tone of writing (natural expressions of emotions, symbols of emotion and relying on first or second person narration) compared to a formal tone of writing (structured and relying on third-person narration) is more stimulating the human-like character of a website. Ogonowski et al. (2014) also identified informal texts (similar to a conversational tone of writing) as a social cue, which encompasses texts aimed at eliciting positive emotions (Hassanein & Head, 2007). Other social cues are socially rich photos (Ogonowski et al., 2014), which can be seen as photographs in which people are situated in emotional and dynamic settings (Hassanein & Head, 2007). Next to that, support of service representatives via an online video (Ogonowski et al., 2014), a live chat function (Ogonowski et al., 2014; Sohn et al., 2020) and face-to-face video chats with service representatives of the organization are social

cues as well (Ogonowski et al., 2014). Table 1 provides a summary of the different social cues that can be used on websites.

Table 1

Overview of different social cues

Social cues			
Informal tone of writing ^{abc}	Human voice ^{df}	Interactive social role model ^d	
Spoken and written language ^d	Support via online video ^c	Online chat function ^{ch}	
Socially rich photos ^{ce}	Social role model ^{dg}	Face-to-face video chat ^c	
^a Lee (2012)	^c Ogonowski et al. (2014)	^e Steinbrück et al. (2002)	^g Qiu and Benbasat (2009)
^b Lee and Hahn (2015)	^d Wang et al. (2007)	^f Keeling et al. (2010)	^h Sohn et al. (2020)

This research did not include all social cues that are presented in Table 1 as this research focuses on the relevant social cues in this context. These relevant social cues are an informal tone of writing, socially rich photos, human voice, support via online video, social role model, interactive social role model and online chat function. The social cue spoken and written language is eliminated for the selection as the home page of CliniClowns does not contain much text. Furthermore, face-to-face video chats are excluded from this study as the feasibility for organizations to implement this is likely to be low.

2.3.3 The influence of social cues on attitudinal loyalty

The signalling theory (Spence, 1973) suggests that signals like social cues can be used in order to impact behaviour (Mavlanova et al., 2016) since signals communicate something about the organization or a product that is unobservable (Connelly et al., 2011). Therefore, social cues likely influence users' attitudinal loyalty. Furthermore, Keeling et al. (2010) showed that an avatar on a website positively influences users' patronage intentions, showing that social cues directly influence decision-making. Therefore it is hypothesized that adding social cues can increase users' monetary donation, revisit and positive WOM intentions:

H1: Adding social cues to CliniClowns' website leads to higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention among users of the website of CliniClowns.

2.3.4 The influence of social cues on the perceived website socialness

Social cues can also enhance users' perceived website socialness and this can be explained by the social response theory (Reeves & Nass, 1996). This theory explains that people similarly respond to social cues in an online environment as to organization-donor interactions in physical environments (Wang et al., 2007). This is because people perceive computers as social actors, instead of a medium, when computers

carry social cues. Furthermore, this theory suggests that people treat computers like social actors even when they are aware of interacting with computers (Moon, 2000; Reeves & Nass, 1996). To illustrate, Nass et al. (1999) have shown that people who were interviewed by a computer performed the same polite responses as the people who were interviewed by a person. This phenomenon can be explained by people's mindlessness. Mindlessness represents the unconscious attention to the computers' contextual cues like human characteristics or social cues (Nass & Moon, 2000). Therefore, people automatically react in, for example, a polite way to computers that provide courtesy.

Previous studies also show that social cues can be implemented to increase users' perceived website socialness. To illustrate, Lee (2012) argues that users perceive a high level of website socialness when a website includes multiple social cues that contribute to the interpersonal dynamics of the online environment. Furthermore, Ogonowski et al. (2014) add that the perceived website socialness depends on the type of social cue that is used. They explain that informal texts on a website lead to a lower perceived website socialness compared to face-to-face video chats with service representatives of the organization. In all, it is expected that adding social cues to the website leads to a higher perceived website socialness:

H2: Adding social cues on the website of CliniClowns leads to a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns.

Furthermore, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model suggests that environmental stimuli affect an individual's emotional and cognitive responses which in turn influence specific intentions or behaviours (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Therefore, users' perception of website socialness, which is expected to be affected by social cues, can influence loyalty. Shim et al. (2012) also showed in their research that when users perceive the website as socially supportive (e.g., the website offers help, cares about the user, is comforting) it leads to higher patronage (similar to loyalty) intentions and reduces barriers while completing transactions on commercial websites. Furthermore, Wakefield et al. (2011) showed that users of commercial websites with a high level of website socialness stimulated by social cues resulted in higher purchase intentions. Because of these reasons, it is expected that perceiving website socialness mediates the relationship between social cues and the dimensions of attitudinal loyalty:

H3: Adding social cues to CliniClowns' website leads to a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which, in turn, leads to higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (mediation effect).

2.4 Experience of hospitality

It is expected that a high level of website socialness positively influences users' experience of hospitality. However, before explaining why this effect is expected, it is important to distinguish different perspectives of hospitality research.

2.4.1 Different research perspectives on hospitality

To start, Pijls et al. (2017) argue that most research about hospitality was focused on how organizations can offer hospitality to their guests. Several researchers that investigated how organizations can offer hospitality took the exchange perspective which focuses on the guest-host relationship (e.g., Brotherton, 1999; Selwyn, 2001). To illustrate, Brotherton (1999) defined hospitality as “a contemporaneous human exchange, which is voluntarily entered into, and designed to enhance the mutual wellbeing of the parties concerned through the provision of accommodation and food or drink” (p. 168). Contrary to the exchange perspective, other research investigated how individual representatives of organizations can offer hospitality (e.g., Blain & Lashly, 2014; O'Connor, 2005). Within this perspective, most researchers focused on the host as an individual who offers hospitality to guests (Pijls-Hoekstra, 2020). For example, Blain and Lashly (2014) characterized being hospitable as a host as the desire to put guests before yourself, the desire to make guests happy and the desire to make guests feel special. However, research into the individual perspective of the person who receives hospitality is scarce. Pijls et al. (2017) started investigating how people experience hospitality and this research builds on that by examining users' experience of hospitality.

2.4.2 Defining experience of hospitality

The experience of hospitality can be defined as experiencing personal attention in which the factors *inviting*, *care* and *comfort* can be distinguished (Pijls et al., 2017). One of the sub-dimensions of *inviting* is welcome, like open, warm, friendly, courteous, polite, approachable and welcome feelings. Furthermore, autonomy is another sub-dimension of *inviting* which encompasses feelings of being in control, freedom and having influence and choice. The second dimension of the experience of hospitality, *care*, encompasses feelings of servitude which refer to feelings of helpfulness, relief of tasks, sincerity and availability. Another sub-dimension of *care* is empathy, like the feeling of being understood and supported. The third sub-dimension of *care* is acknowledgement. This comprises feelings of being important, respected and taken seriously. Lastly, *comfort* is associated with feeling at ease such as feeling safe, secure, at home, comfortable and relaxed. Table 2 provides a complete overview of the dimensions and sub-dimensions of the experience of hospitality.

Table 2*Dimensions and sub-dimensions of experience of hospitality (Pijls et al., 2017)*

Inviting		Care			Comfort
Welcome	Autonomy	Servitude	Empathy	Acknowledgement	At ease
Open	Being in control	Helpful	Understanding	Contact	Safe
Inviting	Having influence	Available	Understanding	Feeling	Secure
Welcome	Having choice	Relief of tasks	needs	important	At home
Warm	Independence	and worries	Involvement	Appreciation	At ease
Approachable	Freedom	Effort to take care	Support	Interest	Comfortable
Courteous		Sincere	Same	Respect	Relaxed
Friendly		Treated like a	wavelength	Taken seriously	Knowing
Polite		king/queen		Taking time	what's coming

2.4.3 Experience of hospitality as a serial mediator

Perceiving website socialness may evoke feelings of being served (*care*: servitude; Wang et al., 2007). Moreover, Sproull et al. (1996) argue that social cues create a more natural human-computer interaction which in turn can lead to consumers feeling more comfortable (*comfort*: at ease). As explained, Wakefield et al. (2011) state that higher website socialness perceptions are associated with stronger feelings of friendliness and politeness (*inviting*: welcome) but also helpfulness (*care*: servitude). Furthermore, when users perceive interactivity on a website, they feel in control (*inviting*: autonomy) and they experience two-way communication. This reciprocal communication can be experienced as positive feelings of acknowledgement (*care*) since consumers may feel important and experience interest from the organization when asked for a response (Liu & Shrum, 2002). Furthermore, perceiving website socialness evokes emotional responses and interpersonal warmth (*inviting*: welcome; Thabet & Zghal, 2013; Zhang et al., 2021). In all, perceiving website socialness can stimulate users' experience of hospitality.

Following the SOR model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), users' experiences of hospitality, which are expected to be affected by social cues and the perceived website socialness, can influence users' attitudinal loyalty. Moreover, Schwarz (2012) argues that people use their feelings as a source of information for cognitive processes. So experiences of hospitality may be used as information to perform cognitive evaluations like providing a monetary donation. In addition, Slattery et al. (2014) suggested that positive emotions are useful in persuading people to volunteer. A high experience of hospitality can also be seen as a positive emotional feeling since it represents the positive feelings of *inviting*, *care* and *comfort*. Moreover, having a good online donor experience, which likely can be enhanced by experiencing hospitality, is related to people's likelihood of providing a monetary donation (Shatnawi & Algharabat, 2018). Therefore, it is expected that high experiences of hospitality positively affect the attitudinal loyalty dimensions of users. In sum, it is hypothesized that the experience of hospitality mediates the effect between social cues, perceived website socialness and the attitudinal loyalty dimensions:

H4: Adding social cues to CliniClowns' website leads to a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which enhances users' experience of hospitality (*inviting, care and comfort*) which, in turn, leads to a higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (serial mediation effect).

2.5 Perceived trustworthiness of the charity

Next to people's experience of hospitality, the perceived website socialness is likely related to trust. However, many different definitions of trust exist in the present body of knowledge. Therefore, trust and its dimensions are defined first.

2.5.1 Trust and its dimensions

According to Ingenhoff and Sommer (2010), many definitions of trust exist due to the complexity of the construct. Furthermore, they state that trust can be built generally for others or an exchange partner. Ingenhoff and Sommer (2010) defined trust as "an attitude of a trustor toward a trustee in a risky situation for the trustor" (p. 340). Dealing with risk is an important aspect when defining trust as a need for trust evokes when risks and uncertainty emerge (Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2010; Mayer et al., 1995; McKnight et al., 2002). The definition of trust used in this study is "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712). In other words, trust is about the willingness of the donor to provide a gift and to rely on the fact that the charity will use that gift appropriately which cannot be verified.

Even though trustworthiness and trust are often seen as resembles, Ingenhoff and Sommer (2010) make a clear distinction as trust towards a charity is based on donors' perceived trustworthiness. They state that the perceived trustworthiness of donors "is based on the subjective evaluation of various characteristics and behaviours of the trustee" (p. 341). Therefore, as many scholars agree on, trust can be seen as a multidimensional construct encompassing multiple dimensions that donors use to evaluate the level of trust towards a charity (e.g., Amin et al., 2021; Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2010). The dimensions central to the concept of trust are *ability*, *integrity* and *benevolence* (Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2010; Mayer et al., 1995; McKnight et al., 2002). *Ability* represents the competence and skills a charity deploys to perform its goal. Next, *integrity* is related to donors' perception of charities' acts upon principles that are acceptable to the donor. Lastly, *benevolence* involves the extent to which a donor believes the charity genuinely wants to do good (Mayer et al., 1995).

2.5.2 Trust cues

Previous studies have shown that different website dimensions can influence users' level of trust. For example, Mpinganjira (2018) found that information usefulness positively influences users' level of trust in the health-related virtual community. Furthermore, Liu et al. (2017) showed that the quality of the website and the convenience to complete a transaction impact users' perceived credibility of a charitable crowdfunding project. In addition, Shatnawi and Algharabat (2018) found that the usability of a non-profit organization's website positively influences the perceived trustworthiness of the website. Moreover, Theng et al. (2012) distinguished five more specific types of trust inducing cues for health websites: graphical cues (e.g., pastel colours or cool colours with a low brightness), cues related to the website's structure (e.g., simplicity, consistency, white spaces), content cues (e.g., seals of approval), social cues (e.g., photos, video) and system cues (e.g., secure infrastructure). Huh and Shin (2014) add to content cues the inclusion of website identity information (e.g., 'about us' page, contact information) and information currency.

2.5.3 Perceived trustworthiness as a serial mediator

Social cues, which stimulate the level of website socialness, have been shown to be important factors influencing trust since human interaction is considered a prerequisite of trust (Lu et al., 2016). Furthermore, Hassanein and Head (2007) found in their study focused on online shopping that users with high perceptions of social presence perceived the online vendor as more trustworthy. Moreover, users perceive more transparency when they perceive website socialness since social cues, that stimulate the perceived website socialness, provide more information (Lu et al., 2016). Above that, social cues stimulate trust because these cues help users to develop trust towards online transactions, provide more information and transparency and, lastly, diminish the social space between the website user and the organization (Amin et al., 2021; Lu et al., 2016). Next to that, according to Sproull (2011), social cues are expected to be important for charities as well since online contexts need to contain trust indicators, like social cues, to attract, engage and retain donors. Even though most of these previous studies are conducted in commercial contexts, the findings of these studies provide relevant insights to expect that a high perceived website socialness, which is stimulated by social cues, is positively related to all three dimensions of perceived trustworthiness of the charity.

Moreover, it is expected that people's perceived trustworthiness is influencing donation intentions since trust is a critical factor in the decision to provide a monetary donation (Bekkers, 2003; Bennett, 2009; Slattery et al., 2014). Furthermore, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) argue that emotional and cognitive states (e.g., perceived trustworthiness) mediate the effect between stimuli and responses. Previous studies provide evidence for the mediation effect of trust between social cues, perceived website

socialness and responses. To illustrate, Alhulail et al. (2019) showed in their study that social presence can enhance users' level of trust in a social commerce website which, in turn, positively impacted users' loyalty behaviour (e.g., continue using the website, making purchases, recommend the website to others). Next to that, Gefen and Straub (2004) found that the social presence of the website impacts consumers' trust which, in turn, influences purchase intentions. Moreover, Zhang et al. (2021) found that social cues positively influenced people's level of trust (cognition and affect-based trust), which in turn, positively influenced donation intentions. Because of these reasons, it is expected that the perceived trustworthiness of the charity mediates the effect between social cues, perceived website socialness and the attitudinal loyalty dimensions (monetary donation, revisit and positive WOM intention):

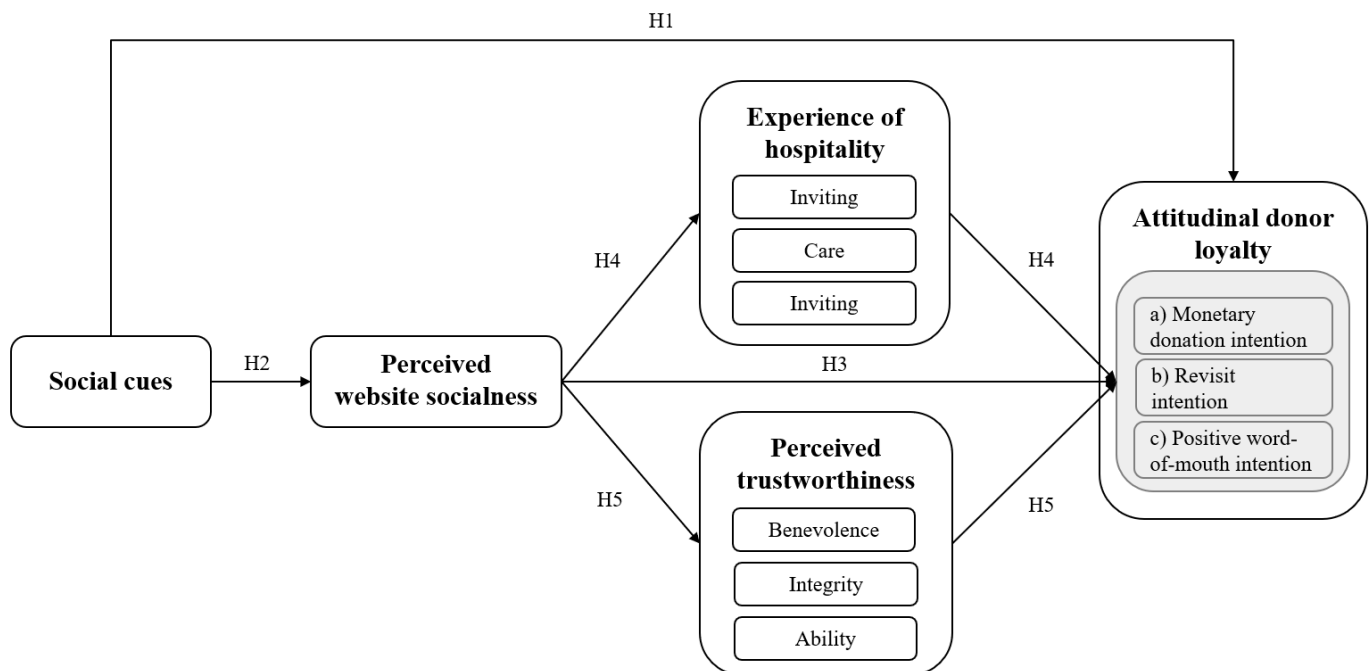
H5: Adding social cues to CliniClowns' website leads to a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which enhances the perceived trustworthiness (*ability*, *integrity* and *benevolence*) of CliniClowns which, in turn, leads to a higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (serial mediation effect).

2.6 Conceptual model

The conceptual model central to this research is displayed in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Conceptual model



2.7 Conclusion

Up to now, many studies show that stimuli influence peoples' emotions and cognitive states, which, in turn, influence people's responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). This study aims to investigate the influence of social cues on a charity website on users' perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness of the charity and, in turn, users' attitudinal loyalty. As described in the previous sections of this chapter, previous studies provide insights into the effects of these variables. However, most of these studies were focused on mediated commercial contexts (e.g., online retail). Slattery et al., (2019) argue that the websites of commercial organizations are different to charity websites. They say that what works on commercial websites does not inherently work on non-commercial websites. Conversely, Kwak et al. (2018) argue that the effectiveness of charity websites is similar to the effectiveness of commercial websites. Since literature does not agree on this, it is important to examine the legitimacy of the hypotheses for an online charity context before the hypotheses are tested. Therefore, this research started with a qualitative study. Next to that, the qualitative study provides an opportunity to define which social cues are most relevant in this context. Afterwards, a quantitative study is employed to get a comprehensive understanding of the proposed relationships between the variables in an online charity context.

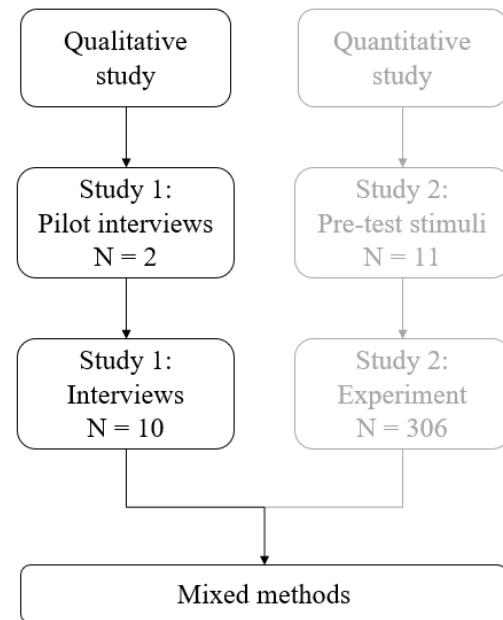
3. Study 1: Interviews

3.1 Research design and methods Study 1

To provide answers to the research questions and to test the hypotheses, a mixed methods approach is used. First, a qualitative study (see Figure 5) was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of diverse social cues and the relations between the variables in a mediated non-commercial context. A qualitative study is used since previous studies on this topic mainly focused on commercial contexts. Since best practices in commercial contexts may not be simply duplicated in non-commercial contexts (Slattery et al., 2019), interviews were used to dive deeper into the expectations summarized in the conceptual model (Boeije, 2010). Study 1 contained two pilot interviews to verify the interview guide and ten semi-structured interviews. The results of this study are summarized and used as input for Study 2, a quantitative study.

Figure 5

Visual overview of mixed methods research design – focus Study 1



3.1.1 Participants Study 1

Participants of the qualitative study were Dutch people aged 18 or higher. The two respondents that participated in the pilot interviews were a colleague and a family member of the researcher. Next, ten respondents were chosen to interview to provide enough insights in the time that was available. These respondents were gathered via a quota sampling strategy. The quota was based on the characteristics of the personas of CliniClowns (see Figure 6).

One of the personas is Wendy (38). She experiences the pleasure that the CliniClowns gives her child. Out of gratitude, she donates annually to the charity. In doing so, she decides how and when to support CliniClowns. The second persona is called Saskia (43). She gets a good feeling from being of assistance to others but has no personal experiences with CliniClowns. Saskia also appreciates that she can decide how, how much and when to donate. Gerard (58), the third persona, really cares about diseased children in hospitals nearby. Therefore, he provides a monetary donation on a structural basis to CliniClowns. The final persona is called Anja (67). She has had personal experiences with CliniClowns. Anja always worked with children and deeply cares about children. Hence, she supports CliniClowns on a structural basis.



Figure 6

Visual overview of CliniClowns' personas



The researcher used a short questionnaire (see Appendix A) to determine which participants, that were recruited via her own (social) network, meet the appropriate characteristics. The potential participants were asked which of the three motivations (see dark blue rectangles in Figure 6) most appealed to them. Next to that, their preference for donating was asked and whether they know someone who had had a visit of CliniClowns. Lastly, demographic questions were asked. Table 3 provides an overview of the characteristics that were used as a quota to select participants.

Table 3

Overview quota for selection participants interview

Persona	Preference for providing a donation	Motivation
At least 1 Anja	4 participants prefer a structural donation	4 participants appeal most to: "It makes you feel good when you can do something for someone else"
At least 1 Wendy	6 participants prefer a flexible donation	3 participants appeal most to: "Together, we make the world a little more beautiful"
At least 1 Saskia		3 participants appeal most to: "A child's smile is worth gold."
At least 1 Gerard		
Gender	Personal experience with CliniClowns	
3 participants are male	4 participants have a personal experience with CliniClowns	
7 participants are female	6 participants do not have a personal experience with CliniClowns	

3.1.2 Materials Study 1

Semi-structured interviews were chosen since interviews are usually not entirely pre-structured as qualitative researchers are pursuing a real understanding of a phenomenon (Boeije, 2010). An interview guide was created to perform these semi-structured interviews (see Appendix B). The topics and questions were related to the theoretical framework of this research (see Chapter 2). During the interview, also examples of social cues on CliniClowns' website (see Appendix C) were used to make it easier for respondents to comprehend and determine the influence of different social cues.

3.1.3 Procedure Study 1

The session started with an introduction of the researcher and small talk. Then, the conversation continued by thanking the respondent for his or her time and collaboration. This was followed by the introduction to the research in which the topic and purpose of the interview were explained. Furthermore, this introduction contained a short explanation of the types of questions. Next to that, the respondent was informed about the nature of the interview, that the answers he or she provides would be processed anonymously and confidentially, the respondent was asked for consent and the respondent's permission for recording the session was asked. This introduction ended by asking whether the respondent had questions in advance (Boeije, 2010). Subsequently, the interview started with 'low key' questions. After that, the interview continued with the topic questions presented in the interview guide. The first topic was website socialness and started by showing the respondent websites of three other charities called Unicef, Kika and Diabetes Fonds (see Appendix D). After seeing these websites, the respondent was asked which website came across as the most social one. Then, factors that contribute and do not contribute to their perceived website socialness were discussed. This topic ended by asking the respondent to assess the seven different social cues on contribution to their perceived website socialness. The second topic was focused on the influence of social cues on their attitudinal loyalty. During the third topic, the respondent was asked about the influence of social cues on the experience of hospitality and the influence of experiencing hospitality on attitudinal loyalty. The final topic focused on the influence of social cues on perceived trustworthiness and the influence of perceived trustworthiness on attitudinal loyalty. Furthermore, questions about the influence of trust cues on websites on the perceived trustworthiness and the balance between such cues and social cues were asked. While following the interview guide, probing techniques (e.g., asking why, asking for more information) and stimulating techniques (e.g., nodding, 'yeah', mirroring, summarizing; Boeije, 2010) were used. Close to the end, the researcher provided a summary and asked the respondent whether he or she wants to add something. Finally, the respondent was thanked for their answers and participation. The interviews took approximately 60 minutes to complete.

3.1.4 Data processing Study 1

After the completion of the interviews, the data was prepared for data analysis. This phase started with summarizing the interviews. Because of time constraints, it was chosen to summarize the interviews instead of transcribing them. Summarizing the interviews has not proceeded chronologically, but iteratively. In other words, each interview was summarized soon after completion and starting summarizing was not postponed until all interviews were completed. Subsequently, the summaries were coded in Excel to categorize the summary to the topics of the interview guide.

3.2 Results Study 1

3.2.1 Influence of social cues on the perceived website socialness – Study 1

Table 4

Overview of factors that do (not) contribute to perceiving website socialness

Factors that contribute	Photos ¹ (6), amount of information (6), colours (3), personal stories (3), the usability of the website (3), video ¹ (2), chat ¹ (2), design of the website (1), consistency (1), phrases (1)
Factors that do not contribute	Information (7), photos ¹ (5), tone of writing ¹ (5), colours (3), usability (3), cleanliness of the website (1), inconsistency (1)
¹ Social cue that is included in the theoretical framework	

Respondents explained that multiple factors do and do not contribute to perceiving website socialness (see Table 4). Between the parentheses is displayed how many respondents mentioned that factor. Photos enhanced respondents' perceived website socialness as it comes across as friendly, likeable and personal. However, they argued that photos only work when these are positive, warm (e.g., warm colours) and include smiling faces. Respondents also explained that photos that are showing something negative or exclude faces do not contribute to their perceived website socialness. Also, a negative or pushy tone of writing decreased respondents' perceived website socialness since it comes across as less friendly and courteous. Beyond this, according to the respondents, it is important to create a balance in providing information since a website does not need to contain too much information to make it friendly, likeable and courteous. Furthermore, respondents explained that the right colour combination or warm colours can make websites more friendly and warmer. Moreover, good usability (e.g., easy navigation) helped respondents to perceive the website as more helpful while bad usability (e.g., many clicks needed to complete a goal) decreases the perceived website socialness. Finally, respondents explained that personal stories make a charity website more personal.

Looking at the seven social cues defined in Chapter 2, respondents assessed the extent to which they perceived website socialness per social cue ranging from a low level of website socialness (1) to a high level of website socialness (7; see Table 5).

Table 5*Overview ranking of social cues per respondent*

	Socially rich photos	Video	Informal tone of writing	Chat function	Human sound fragment	Social role model	Interactive social role model
Average	5.9	5.9	4.6	3.3	3.2	2.7	2.4

It appears that socially rich photos, video and an informal tone of writing scored the highest perceived level of website socialness. Photos were perceived as social by respondents because of the use of real photos, photos including people that smile or photos in which happy people are shown. These photos helped respondents to understand who CliniClowns is. Furthermore, including a video comes across as personal, helpful, informative (e.g., to understand who the organization is), and friendly for respondents since people are shown. Moreover, an informal tone of writing made respondents feel addressed and made the website friendly. Next, a chat function and the human sound fragment were assessed as having a medium level of website socialness. For some respondents a chat function and a human sound fragment were helpful, personal and friendly, however, these social cues were not of every respondent's interest. Then, a social role model and an interactive social role model were assessed as having the lowest level of website socialness. Most respondents were not interested in an (interactive) social role model because they did not like it or found it immature and impersonal. Moreover, these medium and low levels of website socialness cues were not preferred by multiple respondents on a charity website.

3.2.2 Influence of social cues on attitudinal loyalty – Study 1

Social cues that stimulated the perceived website socialness (e.g., photos, tone of writing, video) can positively influence the monetary donation intention of most respondents. Respondents argued that this is because social cues illustrate the work of CliniClowns which can confirm that the money is spent well. Also, social cues that enhanced the perceived website socialness can increase respondents' feelings of sympathy towards CliniClowns which can enhance to goodwill factor to provide a donation. Moreover, photos and a video turned out to be the most important social cues to increase monetary donation intentions.

Then, most respondents argued that social cues were not impacting the intention to revisit the website since social cues do not trigger their intention to revisit the website. One respondent explained that: "I will not be intrinsically motivated to revisit the charity website, I will need a trigger." However, social cues turned out to be not these triggers for respondents. Moreover, no specific social cue appeared to be the most important to increase users' revisit intention.

Finally, most respondents argued that social cues do not affect their positive WOM intention as social cues do not trigger them to share something about CliniClowns or to become an ambassador of

CliniClowns. Only multiple respondents mentioned that video is an important social cue for stimulating their positive WOM intention. On the other side, a chat function, human sound fragment and an interactive social role model led to negative WOM intentions instead of positive for a few respondents.

In general, six respondents explained during the interview that their behavioural intentions also depend on other reasons. To illustrate, all six respondents indicated that how close they are personally attached to the cause the charity is supporting, influences their behavioural intentions.

3.2.3 Experience of hospitality – Study 1

Most respondents defined experiencing hospitality as welcome and warm feelings (*inviting*: welcome). To illustrate, one respondent said: “hospitality is also about that everyone is welcome, in other words, you are welcome the way you are.” Next to that, many respondents also explained that experiencing hospitality is related to the feeling that the organization values its visitor (*care*: acknowledgement). Moreover, multiple respondents explained that experiencing hospitality is associated with the feeling that the organization makes an effort and that the people are there when they are needed (*care*: servitude).

Before asking for the influence of respondents’ lowest and two highest perceived website socialness cues on their experience of hospitality, they were asked which factors on a website increase their experience of hospitality. Photos, welcoming or personal texts, (warm) colours, easy navigation, a short description of the charity and the right balance in providing information were the mentioned factors. Looking at the social cues identified in Chapter 2, most respondents argued that the social cues that stimulated the perceived website socialness, so photos, informal tone of writing and video, can contribute to their experience of hospitality on websites. These social cues can provide respondents a welcome feeling (*inviting*) and show some effort (*care*). Furthermore, an informal tone of writing does not feel distant which enhances feelings of welcome (*inviting*) and acknowledgement (*care*). However, social cues did not influence their experience of hospitality of some respondents as charities do not have much to do with hospitality.

A positive experience of hospitality on the website positively influenced the monetary donation intention of most respondents. To illustrate, respondents explained that feeling welcome can stimulate their willingness to provide a monetary donation or convince people to do so. Furthermore, it can create feelings of sympathy towards the charity which can increase the goodwill factor that stimulates donation. Conversely, a few argued that other reasons influence the donation intention and experiencing hospitality is not something that will convince people to donate. Then, a positive experience of hospitality also positively influences the revisit intention of most respondents as experiencing hospitality can give a ‘wow’ feeling and makes users feel connected which creates the intention to revisit the website. However, for some respondents, experiencing hospitality did not influence their revisit intention as this behavioural

intention depends on other reasons like how much affinity the respondent has towards the cause the charity is supporting. Finally, most respondents argued that experiencing hospitality on a website enhanced their positive WOM intention as having a nice and warm experience may stimulate this. However, multiple respondents mentioned that they likely only share it with others when the conversation is about, for example, charities. Furthermore, for a few respondents, experiencing hospitality does not influence their positive WOM intention at all. To illustrate, some argued that personal experiences are stimulating their positive WOM intention, not experiencing hospitality.

3.2.4 Perceived trustworthiness – Study 1

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the perceived trustworthiness of a charity can be defined by three dimensions: *ability*, *integrity* and *benevolence*. Most respondents defined perceiving a charity as trustworthy by using the dimension of *integrity*. To illustrate, having trust in a charity depends on whether the money is spent well which deals with honesty. Besides *integrity*, some respondents related to the *ability* dimension by perceiving a charity as trustworthy when they do their work well.

Before asking for the influence of respondents' lowest and two highest perceived website socialness cues on their perceived trustworthiness, they were asked which factors on a website can increase their perceived trustworthiness. These factors appeared to be photos, information about how the money is spent, videos, personal stories, facts and numbers and, lastly, a clean website. Looking at the social cues identified in Chapter 2, most respondents argued that the social cues that stimulated the perceived website socialness, especially photos and video, contributed the most to respondents' perceived trustworthiness of the charity. This is because these social cues show what the organization does and how the money is spent. Conversely, an informal tone of writing did not increase or decrease the level of trust of most respondents as it did not contribute much to respondents' perceived trustworthiness.

When respondents perceive CliniClowns as trustworthy while browsing the website of CliniClowns, it increases the monetary donation intention of almost all respondents. To illustrate, having a high perceived trustworthiness of CliniClowns confirms that the money is spent well which, in turn, stimulates monetary donations. Furthermore, having trust in a charity creates a bond which increases the feelings of sympathy towards the charity. Then, a high perceived trustworthiness of CliniClowns does not influence the revisit intention of most respondents. Most of them explained that when they have provided a donation, they will not revisit the website because they have no reason for it. Others explained that revisiting the website has not much to do with having trust in the charity. Lastly, a high perceived trustworthiness of CliniClowns can increase the positive WOM intention of most respondents as they want to share it with others when they trust a charity. However, most respondents will only perform positive WOM when, for example, the conversation they have with others is about charities.

Furthermore, trust cues (e.g. quality marks, good navigation, the presence of contact information, etc.) positively influence the perceived trustworthiness of a charity for most respondents. However, an answer to the question whether social or trust cues are more important to enhance users' perceived trustworthiness of the charity cannot be given. To illustrate, for some respondents, trust cues are more important as these are conditional. However, for other respondents social cues are more important as these create a feeling which relates to their level of trust, say more about the charity and establish bonds. Finally, for some respondents both social and trust cues are important.

3.3 Concluding remarks of Study 1

To conclude, Study 1 provided useful insights into cues that contribute to the perceived website socialness in a charity context. To start, this study found that out of the seven social cues identified in Chapter 2, photos, videos and the informal tone of writing contributed the most to the perceived website socialness. Next to the social cues identified in Chapter 2, the respondents mentioned that a good balance in the amount of information, colours, stories and usability positively influenced the website's socialness.

Furthermore, it appears that the social cues that stimulated the perceived website socialness the most (photos, video and tone of writing), in most cases positively influenced users' experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness. Looking at users' attitudinal loyalty, it turns out that social cues that stimulated the perceived website socialness likely increase monetary donation but not users' revisit intention and positive WOM intention. Moreover, Study 1 demonstrated that experiencing hospitality can positively influence all attitudinal loyalty dimensions. Furthermore, perceiving the charity as trustworthy likely increases the monetary donation and positive WOM intention but not the revisit intention. Nevertheless, based on these ten interviews no definitive conclusion about these relationships can be made. Therefore, it is important to test the different effects within a bigger sample in Study 2.

Based on these outcomes, photos, colours and tone of writing were selected as social cues to continue using in Study 2 since these were some of the most frequently mentioned social cues. Other social cues that were mentioned multiple times were not selected since some of them were less compatible to test in an experiment. Furthermore, only three social cues could be selected because of the available time of the researcher. Next, it is important to note that it were the positive photos like photos that include smiling people (from now on called warm photos) that contributed the most to the level of website socialness. Furthermore, respondents indicated that especially warm colours do make websites more social. Fenko et al. (2010) also explained that red and orange are seen as warm colours since these colours are likely to evoke warm feelings. Contrary, blue and green are examples of cold colours. Moreover, respondents mentioned that a negative or pushy tone of writing decreases the level of website socialness while a positive and informal tone of writing (from now on called a warm tone of writing)

increases the perception of a personal and warm website. Based on these outcomes, all hypotheses are revised (see Table 6).

Table 6

Revised hypotheses

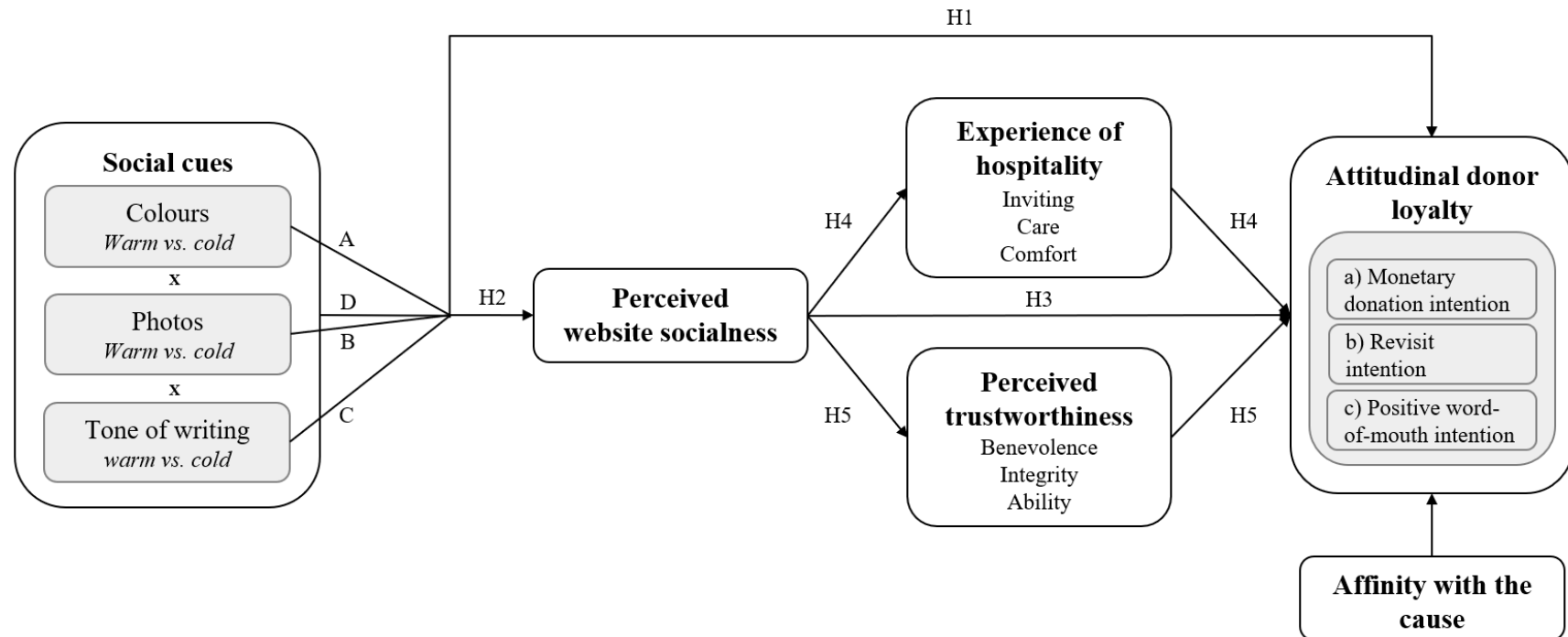
No.	Hypothesis
	[A] Warm (compared to cold) colours, [B] warm (compared to cold) photos, [C] a warm (compared to cold) tone of writing and [D] congruency (compared to incongruency) of warm social cues in the website design of CliniClowns lead to ...
H1	... higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention among users of the website of CliniClowns.
H2	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns.
H3	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which, in turn, leads to higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (mediation effect).
H4	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which enhances users' experience of hospitality (<i>inviting, care and comfort</i>) which, in turn, leads to a higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (serial mediation effect).
H5	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which enhances the perceived trustworthiness (<i>ability, integrity and benevolence</i>) of CliniClowns which, in turn, leads to a higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (serial mediation effect).

In addition, it cannot be disregarded in Study 2 that more than half of the respondents mentioned that how much they are personally attached to the cause is also influencing their loyalty. This can be seen as having affinity with the cause the charity is supporting. Beldad et al. (2014, 2015) showed that having affinity positively influences a repeat donation intention. Furthermore, Burgoyne et al. (2005) also showed that people of whose relatives had cancer are more likely to provide a monetary donation to charities dedicated to cancer research. So, affinity with the cause can be influential for users' attitudinal loyalty. Therefore, affinity with the cause can be seen as an essential variable in this research to determine attitudinal loyalty since it is related to the dependent variables central to this study. However, affinity with the cause is not seen as a variable of main interest so this additional variable can be seen as a covariate variable. Therefore, the following research question is added to the research of this study. Because of this addition and the revised hypothesis one, the conceptual model of this research is revised (see Figure 7) before was continued with Study 2.

RQ3: *Is affinity with the cause that the charity is supporting a covariate towards the dimensions of attitudinal loyalty?*

Figure 7

Revised conceptual model



4. Study 2: Experiment

4.1 Research design and methods Study 2

As described, to be able to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, a mixed methods approach is used. A quantitative study was conducted to test the hypotheses and to yield a more comprehensive understanding of the topic central to this study (Babbie, 2018). The combination of using qualitative and quantitative data collection methods resulted in a mixed method research design (see Figure 8) in which this chapter focuses on the right part. Looking at Study 2 more specifically, a three-factor between-subjects experimental design was used since that is an appropriate method for hypothesis testing (Babbie, 2018). The experiment took place in an online environment and was conducted via Qualtrics. In the online experiment, respondents were exposed to a website with warm or cool colours, warm or cold photos and a warm or cold tone of writing. This resulted in eight different experimental conditions (see Table 7). Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions which demonstrates that the experimental design is between-subjects.

Figure 8

Visual overview of mixed methods research design – focus Study 2

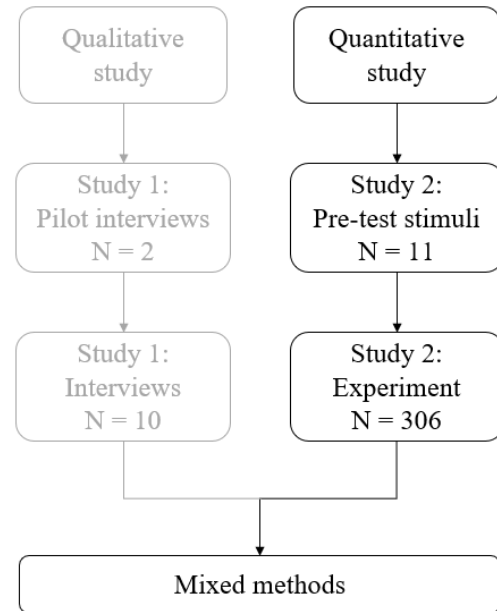


Table 7

Experimental conditions

Experimental condition	Colours	Photos	Tone of writing
1	Warm	Warm	Warm
2	Warm	Warm	Cold
3	Warm	Cold	Warm
4	Warm	Cold	Cold
5	Cold	Warm	Warm
6	Cold	Warm	Cold
7	Cold	Cold	Warm
8	Cold	Cold	Cold

4.1.1 Pre-test Study 2

Based on the theoretical framework and input of Study 1, the social cues photos, colours and tone of writing were selected to manipulate these eight conditions. To test which photos are perceived as warm and cold and which tone of writing is perceived as warm or cold, a pre-test is conducted. The respondents of the pre-test were family members and colleagues with different professions (visual designers, developers, marketers, office manager) of the researcher. Looking at the photos, the researcher selected several photos and exposed four respondents to multiple pairs of photos and asked which one was considered the warmest. After that, multiple photos were excluded and three warm photos and three cold

photos remained and were exposed in pairs to eleven other respondents (see Appendix E). Again the question ‘which photo is the warmest for you’ was asked. The two warmest and coldest photos were selected to include in the experiment. The selection of photos was determined by counting the number of times the photos were chosen as the answer to the question ‘which photo is the warmest for you?’ The two warm photos with the highest scores were used as warm photos, while the two cold photos with the lowest scores were used as cold photos (see Appendix F). Furthermore, two texts with a different tone of writing (see Table 8) were shown to six respondents and they were asked which text is the warmest. All respondents mentioned the warm text. Therefore, these texts were used to manipulate the tone of writing.

Table 8

Tested warm and cold tone of writing

Warm tone of writing	Cold tone of writing
Help je mee?	Steun CliniClowns
Ja, ik laat graag kindjes zoals Owen en Norah even vergeten dat ze ziek zijn	met een maandelijkse of eenmalige bijdrage

Finally, this study focuses on the effect of different hues of colours. Besides the hue, colours can be defined by their brightness and saturation (Thompson et al. 1992). Valdez and Mehrabian (1994) argue that colours (all dimensions) can impact perceptions, emotions and behavioural intentions. Furthermore, Fenko et al. (2010) argued that red and orange hues are seen as warm colours and blue and green hues as cold colours. This study only considers the hue of colours since Fenko et al. (2010) provided insights into the influence of different hues. Another reason is that the brightness and saturation of the monitor, and therefore of the colours, can be adjusted by respondents (Cheng et al., 2009). Therefore, the following warm and cold hues of colours are used in the stimuli materials of the main experiment (see Table 9).

Table 9

Warm and cold colours

Warm colours			Cold colours		
#FFDCCB	#CC4306	#AE2424	#CBEAFF	#8ACC06	#242BAE

4.1.2 Stimulus materials Study 2

Based on the pre-test, stimulus materials were designed to create eight experimental conditions. Furthermore, the home page was used in the stimulus materials as this page is one of the most important website pages for CliniClowns. Furthermore, the stimulus materials are presented in a mobile version since most visitors of CliniClowns’ website use their mobile phones. Figure 9 shows the eight different stimulus materials.

Figure 9

Stimulus materials of experiment



4.1.3 Procedure Study 2

The respondents involved in this study were primarily gathered via a convenience sampling strategy. As such, respondents were approached on social media or WhatsApp to fill in the survey by following the link attached. In addition, some participants were approached via snowball sampling as

colleagues/friends/family of the researcher shared the link in their (social) network. Above that, CliniClowns used a pop-up with the link on their website. When respondents followed the link, they were forwarded to the survey in Qualtrics. In Qualtrics respondents were exposed to an informed consent (see appendix G). After that, an introduction of the goal and mission of CliniClowns was provided. This was followed by questions about their affinity with the cause that CliniClowns is supporting. Subsequently, respondents were informed that they are going to see the website of CliniClowns which they have to watch carefully. Then, the respondents were randomly exposed to one of the eight conditions. This was followed by questions about the perceived website socialness and social presence of the website. Subsequently, the respondents saw the same website again. After that, they had to answer questions about their experience of hospitality. Before continuing with the questions about perceived trustworthiness, respondents were able to view the same website another time. Respondents have seen the website one last time before they were exposed to questions about their monetary donation intention, revisit intention and positive WOM intention. After that, the respondents answered the manipulation checks. Subsequently, demographic questions and questions about the personas of CliniClowns were asked. Finally, respondents were thanked for their participation and they were able to leave their e-mail address to participate in the lottery of the CliniClowns Dopper.

4.1.4 Manipulation checks Study 2

To check the manipulation of the different stimulus materials, a manipulation check was included. At the end of the survey, the respondents were asked to what extent photos, colours and tone of writing on the website they have seen were warm assessing on a scale ranging from cold (1) to warm (7). Starting with colours, an independent samples t-test showed that the website with warm colours ($M = 5.33$, $SD = 1.121$) was assessed significantly warmer than the website with cold colours ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.404$) ($t(284.762) = 4.626$, $p < .05$). Secondly, an independent samples t-test showed that the website with warm photos ($M = 5.99$, $SD = 0.765$) was assessed significantly warmer than the website with cold photos ($M = 5.06$, $SD = 1.368$) ($t(238.625) = 7.375$, $p < .05$). Finally, an independent samples t-test showed that the website with a warm tone of writing ($M = 5.27$, $SD = 1.149$) was assessed significantly warmer than the website with a cold tone of writing ($M = 4.9$, $SD = 1.298$) ($t(304) = 2.626$, $p < .05$). However, for all social cues, the mean of the cold versions laid in all cases above the midpoint of the seven-point Likert scale. Therefore, conclusions about the warmth of the colours, photos and the tone of writing should be carefully drawn.

4.1.5 Participants Study 2

The sample of Study 2 consisted of 523 Dutch participants. However, only 325 participants completed the survey. Five of the 193 uncompleted surveys finished 96% and were therefore added to the selection. The

other 188 participants were removed from the selection. Next to that, six participants of the remaining selection finished the survey below three-and-a-half minutes and were therefore excluded. Moreover, three participants had an age below 18 which also led to removal. Finally, four teen participants did not answer the reversed question in line with the not reversed question about the revisit intention. This indicates that these participants were not paying much attention to the questions. Therefore, they were excluded from the selection. In sum, a total of 306 participants was selected for further analysis. These 306 participants were divided over eight conditions (see Table 10). The different characteristics of the participants turned out to be equally distributed over the eight conditions. This was because the differences in characteristics over the diverse conditions turned out to be insignificant as the Pearson's Chi-Square and one-way ANOVA tests showed insignificant results (see X^2 / F column in Table 10).

Table 10

Participants' characteristics per experimental condition

			Experimental condition									
X^2 / F			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	
n			39	39	38	40	38	37	36	39	306	
%			7.5	7.5	7.3	7.6	7.3	7.1	6.9	7.5	100	
Av. Age			$F(7, 294) = 1.129, p = .35$	45.54	41.49	41.03	47.55	39.55	44.78	44.94	39.5	43.04
Gender	Male	$X^2(21, N = 306) = 11.34, p = .66$	11	13	11	10	12	10	15	8	90	
	Female		28	26	27	29	26	27	20	31	214	
	Prefer not to say		0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	
	Total		39	39	38	40	38	37	36	39	306	
Education ^a	Low	$X^2(21, N = 306) = 18.06, p = .20$	5	4	3	6	3	8	5	6	40	
	Medium		15	7	10	9	9	16	13	11	90	
	High		19	28	25	25	26	13	18	22	176	
	Total		39	39	38	40	38	37	36	39	306	
Living region ^b	North	$X^2(21, N = 306) = 17.17, p = .67$	5	6	3	5	3	3	3	1	5	
	East		22	26	21	22	27	21	18	26	22	
	South		8	4	9	9	4	6	10	10	8	
	West		4	3	5	4	4	7	5	2	4	
	Total		39	39	38	40	38	37	36	39	306	

Note

^a Low: \leq VMBO; Medium: MBO 2 – HAVO/VWO; High: \geq propaedeutic diploma HBO/WO

^b North: Drenthe, Friesland, Groningen; East: Flevoland, Gelderland, Overijssel; West: Noord-Holland, Utrecht, Zeeland, Zuid-Holland; South: Limburg, Noord-Brabant

4.1.6 Measures Study 2

To measure the variables central in this study, scales with items about the constructs that are related to the variables were used (see appendix H). The respondents were asked to assess all items on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (7). One item was reversed to improve the reliability of this study and all items were translated from English to Dutch to ensure understandability for the participants. To inspect the reliability of the scales, Cronbach's Alphas were calculated. These scores showed that all scales were proved to be reliable (see Table 11).

To measure the perceived website socialness (mediator), both the scale of social presence (Gefen & Straub, 2004) and website socialness (Wakefield et al., 2011) were used. As can be seen in Appendix H, the scale of the perceived website socialness consisted of seven items (e.g., ‘The website page I have seen, I would describe as friendly’) and the scale of social presence contained five items (e.g., ‘The website page I have seen gives a sense of human contact’). Furthermore, scales about the experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness were used to measure these constructs. Looking at the experience of hospitality (mediator), the scale of Pijls et al. (2017) was used to measure this construct including twelve items divided over three subdimensions: *inviting*, *care* and *comfort*. Moreover, one general item was added (‘On the website page I have seen, I experience hospitality’). Furthermore, the scale of (Wiencierz et al., 2015) was used to measure perceived trustworthiness (mediator). In total, twelve items were divided over three subdimensions: *ability*, *integrity* and *benevolence*. An example of an item is ‘When I look at this website page, I expect CliniClowns to be competent at what it does.’ The monetary donation intention (dependent variable) was measured by the scale of Basil et al. (2008) that included two items and the researcher added one similar item (‘After looking at the website page, I will make a donation when a collector from CliniClowns is at the door in the near future’). Then, the revisit intention (dependent variable) was measured by using the scale of Cuny et al. (2015; ‘After looking at the website page, I would like to revisit the website.’ Moreover, the researcher added a second item by reversing the first item. The positive WOM intention (dependent variable), was measured by a scale consisting of three items (Alhulail et al., 2019; e.g., ‘After looking at the website page, I would recommend CliniClowns to my friends and/or family’). Finally, the scale of Beldad et al. (2015) was used to measure affinity with the cause (covariate). This scale included four items like ‘I feel a strong connection to the mission of CliniClowns.’

4.1.7 Factor analysis Study 2

To investigate whether the scales of the variables included in this study measured the intended constructs, a factor analysis is performed. This analysis used the principal component analysis as the extraction method. Furthermore, the varimax with Kaiser Normalization was used as the rotation method. Moreover,

the factor analysis suppressed small coefficients (below 0.40). After running the factor analysis, eight components with an eigenvalue above 1.0 were identified (see Table 11). Furthermore, the cumulative explained variance was 70.9% and therefore was the criterium of a cumulative explained variance of at least 50% fulfilled. Next, most items are loaded together with the related items on a factor. However, it is remarkable that items of website socialness and social presence are divided over two factors (components three and eight). Since component eight only includes items of website socialness, the researcher decided to focus on component three concerning measuring the perceived website socialness. In addition, the subdimensions of both the experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness were not all loaded on separate factors. The researcher decided not to take subsequent actions because of this result, however, conclusions about the experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness have to be carefully drawn. The same goes for attitudinal loyalty, all three subdimensions loaded on the same factor, while the analysis continues by separating these subdimensions. Then looking at the correlation coefficients, some items have loaded on multiple factors. Therefore, WOM.1, WS.2, IV.2 and BE.2 were excluded before further analysis.

Table 11

Factor analysis

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Perceived trustworthiness (integrity, ability) - $\alpha = .951$								
								Mediator variable
IN.4 – act responsibly in what it does	.799							
AB.1 – be competent in what it does	.790							
AB.4 – have specialist knowledge in what it does	.782							
IN.2 – be credible in what it does	.749							
AB.2 – be successful in what it does	.739							
AB.3 – know what needs to done to do its job	.737							
IN.3 – base its actions on tolerable principles	.703							
IN.1 – be honest in what it does	.627							
Attitudinal loyalty								Dependent variables
Monetary donation intention – $\alpha = .837$								
DI.2 – I would like to make a donation to CliniClowns in the future	.753							
DI.1 – there is a big chance I will be making a donation to CliniClowns	.715							
DI.3 – I will make a donation when a collector from CliniClowns is at the door in the near future	.544							
Revisit intention – $\alpha = .878$								
RV.1 – I would like to revisit the website	.722							
RV.2 – I would not like to revisit the website	.663							
Positive WOM intention – $\alpha = .900$								
WOM.3 – I will tell my friends and/or family to support CliniClowns	.701							
WOM.2 – I would recommend CliniClowns to my friends and/or family	.660							

WOM.1 – There is a big chance I will say positive things about CliniClowns to my friends and/or family^a .475 .572

Website socialness (1) – $\alpha = .910$	Mediator variable							
SP.4 – human warmth								.727
SP.1 – human contact								.701
SP.5 – human sensitivity								.670
WS.5 – likable								.631
WS.1 – friendly								.629
SP.2 – personalness								.595
SP.3 – sociability								.567
WS.2 – helpful ^a								.481
								.459

Experience of hospitality (care) – $\alpha = .935$	Mediator variable							
CA.3 – I feel like I am being treated like a king or queen								.760
CA.2 – I feel like CliniClowns helps me								.756
CA.5 – I feel like CliniClowns is interested in me								.735
CA.4 – I feel like CliniClowns has made an effort for me								.705
CA.1 – I feel like CliniClowns understands me								.681
CA.6 – I feel important								.629

Experience of hospitality (inviting, comfort, general item) – $\alpha = .926$	Mediator variable							
CO.3 – I feel relaxed								.762
CO.1 – I feel at ease								.752
CO.2 – I feel relaxed								.745
IV.3 – I feel free to do what I want								.740
IV.2 – I experience openness ^a	.432							.572
EH.1 – I experience hospitality								.551
IV.1 – I feel invited								.536

Perceived trustworthiness (benevolence) – $\alpha = .849$	Mediator variable							
BE.3 – consider the wishes of its donors								.731
BE.4 – act in the interest of its donors								.677
BE.1 – look out for the well-being of its donors								.664
BE.2 – make its donors feel good by donating ^a	.437							.498

Affinity with the cause – $\alpha = .752$	Covariate variable							
AF.4 – CliniClowns supports a cause that is important to me								.749
AF.3 – I feel a strong connection to the mission of this charity								.733
AF.2 – The cause of CliniClowns is related to an important aspect of my life								.729
AF.1 – I admire the mission of CliniClowns.								.602

Website socialness (2)	Mediator variable							
WS.4 – informative ^a								.708
WS.6 – intelligent ^a								.593
WS.7 – interactive ^a								.512
WS.3 – polite ^a								.505

Explained variance	14.3%	10.6%	10.1%	10.0%	9.7%	5.9%	5.5%	5.0%
Eigenvalue	22.240	2.729	2.486	1.776	1.736	1.417	1.238	1.103

Note

^a Removed before further analysis

4.2 Results Study 2

4.2.1 Descriptive statistics – Study 2

The descriptive statistics (see Table 12) show that the mean score of perceived website socialness for warm colours, photos and tone of writing is higher than for cold colours, photos and tone of writing. Moreover, the mean score of perceived website socialness for the condition with all warm social cues is higher than for the condition with all cold social cues. Furthermore, the mean scores of monetary donation, revisit and positive WOM intention for cold colours are slightly higher than for warm colours. Looking at photos, the means of monetary donation, revisit and positive WOM intention for warm photos are higher than for cold photos. Finally, the means of monetary donation, revisit intention and positive WOM intention for a warm tone of writing are slightly higher than for a cold tone of writing.

Table 12

Descriptive statistics of perceived website socialness and attitudinal loyalty across different colours, photos and tones of writing

				Perceived website socialness		Attitudinal loyalty						
						Monetary donation intention		Revisit intention		Positive WOM intention		
				n	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Cold colours	Cold photos	Cold tone	39	5.088	1.043	4.641	1.637	4.962	1.462	4.718	1.584	
		Warm tone	36	5.266	1.004	4.389	1.550	4.431	1.720	4.542	1.587	
		Total	75	5.173	1.022	4.520	1.590	4.707	1.603	4.633	1.578	
	Warm photos	Cold tone	37	5.838	0.645	5.171	1.132	5.257	1.217	5.203	1.175	
		Warm tone	38	5.549	0.856	4.983	1.173	4.895	1.316	4.737	1.422	
		Total	75	5.691	0.768	5.076	1.149	5.073	1.273	4.967	1.319	
	Total	Cold tone	76	5.453	0.945	4.899	1.430	5.105	1.347	4.954	1.412	
		Warm tone	74	5.411	0.935	4.694	1.392	4.669	1.533	4.642	1.498	
		Total	150	5.432	0.938	4.798	1.410	4.890	1.454	4.800	1.459	
Warm colours	Cold photos	Cold tone	40	5.307	1.248	4.483	1.541	4.550	1.709	4.513	1.563	
		Warm tone	38	5.398	1.012	4.711	1.374	4.961	1.249	4.750	1.427	
		Total	78	5.352	1.133	4.594	1.457	4.750	1.507	4.628	1.493	
	Warm photos	Cold tone	39	5.828	0.771	4.615	1.496	4.590	1.564	4.654	1.483	
		Warm tone	39	5.985	0.614	4.949	1.117	5.026	1.437	5.231	1.261	
		Total	78	5.907	0.697	4.782	1.322	4.808	1.508	4.942	1.398	
	Total	Cold tone	79	5.564	1.066	4.549	1.511	4.570	1.629	4.582	1.516	
		Warm tone	77	5.696	0.880	4.831	1.248	4.994	1.339	4.994	1.358	
		Total	156	5.629	0.978	4.688	1.390	4.779	1.503	4.785	1.450	
Total	Cold photos	Cold tone	79	5.199	1.149	4.561	1.581	4.753	1.595	4.614	1.567	
		Warm tone	74	5.334	1.004	4.554	1.461	4.703	1.510	4.649	1.501	
		Total	153	5.264	1.080	4.558	1.519	4.729	1.550	4.631	1.530	
	Warm photos	Cold tone	76	5.833	0.708	4.886	1.352	4.915	1.436	4.921	1.362	
		Warm tone	77	5.770	0.770	4.965	1.138	4.961	1.371	4.987	1.357	
		Total	153	5.801	0.738	4.926	1.245	4.938	1.399	4.954	1.355	
	Total	Cold tone	155	5.510	1.007	4.720	1.477	4.832	1.516	4.765	1.473	
Warm tone		151	5.556	0.916	4.764	1.318	4.834	1.442	4.821	1.435		
		Total	306	5.533	0.962	4.742	1.399	4.833	1.478	4.793	1.452	

4.2.2 Inferential statistics – Study 2

Testing direct effects

For hypothesis testing, a factorial multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was carried out. This analysis produced multivariate tests that contains a Wilks' Lambda of the combined effect of social cues on the perceived website socialness, monetary donation intention, revisit intention and positive WOM intention (see Table 13). These tests showed that photos have a significant effect on the combined perceived website socialness, monetary donation intention, revisit intention and positive WOM intention ($F(4,294) = 7.262, p < .05$, Wilks' $\Lambda = .910$, partial $\eta^2 = .090$). Also, the effect of the covariate affinity with the cause turned out to be significant. ($F(4,294) = 29.670, p < .05$, Wilks' $\Lambda = .712$, partial $\eta^2 = .288$). However, it appears that colours and tone of writing do not have a significant effect on the combined perceived website socialness, monetary donation intention, revisit intention and positive WOM intention. Also, the interaction between colours, photos and tone of writing does not show a significant effect. Based on these outcomes, all hypotheses related to A, C and D cannot be supported.

Table 13

The outcome of multivariate tests

Effect	Wilks' Lambda					
	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	p	η^2
Affinity with the cause (as a covariate)	.712	29.670	4	294	.001	.288
Colours	.973	2.043	4	294	.088	.027
Photos	.910	7.262	4	294	.001	.090
Tone of writing	.995	.364	4	294	.834	.005
Colours*photos	.985	1.146	4	294	.335	.015
Colours*tone of writing	.986	1.013	4	294	.401	.014
Photos*tone of writing	.993	.504	4	294	.732	.007
Colours*photos*tone of writing	.985	1.094	4	294	.360	.015

The factorial MANCOVA analysis also generated a test of between-subjects effects and which provided the observed effects on each dependent variable (see Table 14). These results are used to check which hypotheses related to B are supported. Moreover, since only photos and the covariate affinity showed significant effects on the combined mediator and dependent variables, the test of between-subjects is discussed in more detail for these variables.

Table 14

The outcome of the test of between-subjects effects for affinity with the cause and photos

Source	Dependent variable	F	p	η^2
Photos	Monetary donation intention	5.157	.024	.017
	Revisit intention	1.150	.284	.004
	Positive WOM intention	3.875	.066	.011
	Perceived website socialness	26.919	.001	.083
Affinity with the cause (as a covariate)	Monetary donation intention	85.946	.001	.224
	Revisit intention	78.011	.001	.208
	Positive WOM intention	87.209	.001	.227
	Perceived website socialness	54.385	.000	.155

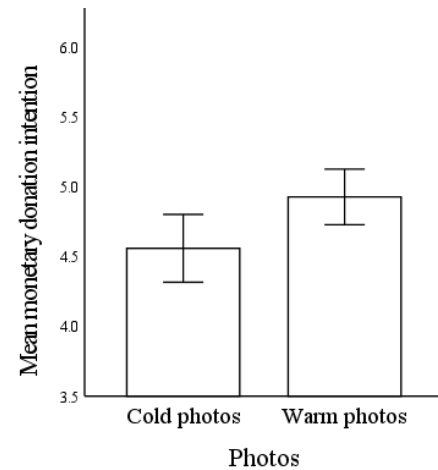
The test of between-subjects (see Table 14) shows that a significant effect of photos on monetary donation intention ($F(1,294) = 5.157, p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .017$; see Figure 10), while controlling for affinity with the cause. The effect of photos on the other two attitudinal loyalty dimensions (revisit and positive WOM intention) is not significant. Therefore, hypothesis 1Ba can be supported while hypotheses 1Bb and 1Bc cannot be supported. Moreover, it is found that photos have a significant effect on the perceived website socialness ($F(1,294) = 26.919, p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .083$; see Figure 11). So, hypothesis 2B can be supported. Furthermore, the covariate affinity with the cause has a significant effect on monetary donation intention ($F(1,294) = 85.946, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .224$), revisit intention ($F(1,294) = 78.011, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .208$) and positive WOM intention ($F(1,294) = 87.209, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .227$). These results indicate that affinity with the cause positively impacts attitudinal loyalty.

Testing single mediation effect of perceived website socialness

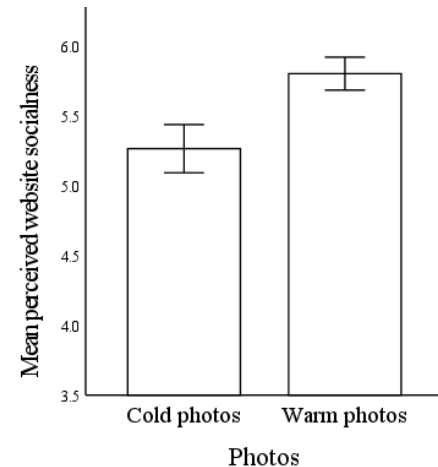
To test the mediation effects, model 4 (for single mediation) and model 6 (for serial mediation) of PROCESS v4.0 by Hayes are used. Starting with website socialness as a single mediator for the effect of photos on monetary donation intention.

Figure 10

Mean monetary donation intention for photos including 95% confidence intervals

**Figure 11**

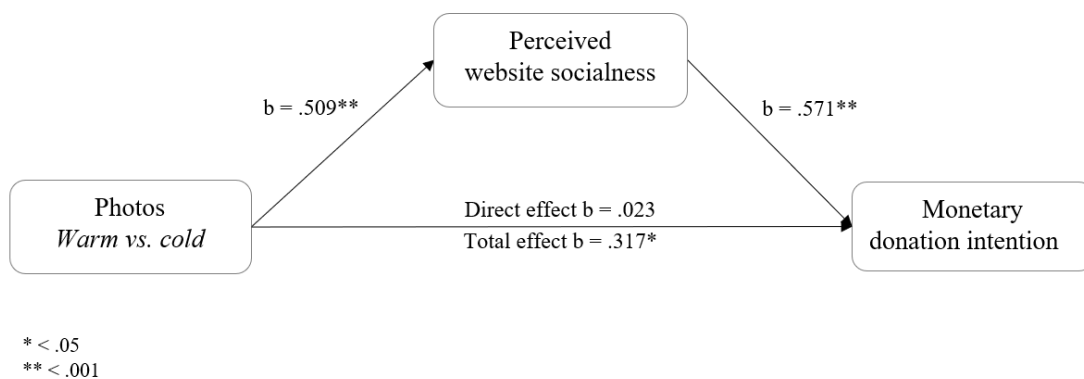
Mean perceived website socialness for photos including 95% confidence intervals



The mediation analysis, in which affinity with the cause is adjusted, demonstrates that photos was a positive predictor of the perceived website socialness ($b = .509$, $SE\ b = .098$, $t(2,303) = 5.218$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, it appears that the perceived website socialness ($b = .571$, $SE\ b = .076$, $t(2,303) = 7.514$, $p < .001$) positively influenced monetary donation intention. Looking at the total effect in this mediation model, it turns out that photos have a significant effect on monetary donation intention ($b = .317$, $SE\ b = .140$, $t(2,303) = 2.261$, $p < .05$). Furthermore, the indirect effect of perceived website socialness is significant (effect = .291, $SE = .065$, 95% CI [.167, .426]) while the direct effect of photos on monetary donation intention is not significant ($b = .027$, $SE\ b = .135$, $t(2,303) = .198$, $p > .05$), it appears that the perceived website socialness fully mediates the positive effect of photos on monetary donation intention. Figure 12 provides an overview of these relationships. Based on these outcomes, hypothesis H3Ba is supported.

Figure 12

Overview of unstandardized regression coefficients of single mediation effect of perceived website socialness between photos and monetary donation intention



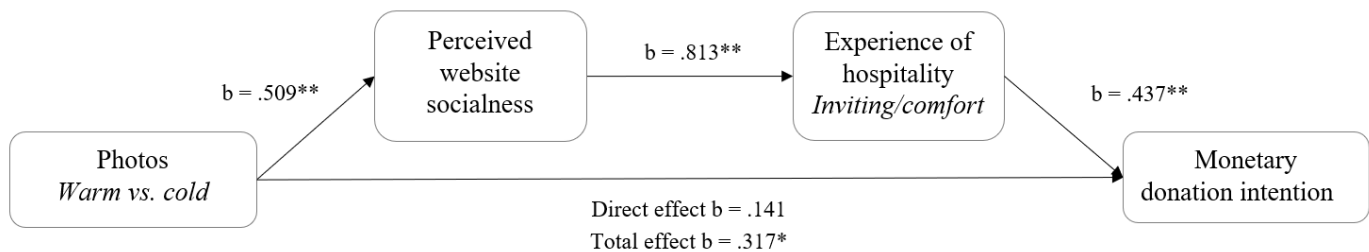
Testing serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and experience of hospitality

Then looking at the serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and the experience of hospitality. The mediation analysis is performed for the dimensions *inviting/comfort* and *care* separately. The mediation analyses, in which affinity with the cause is adjusted, demonstrates that photos is a positive predictor of the perceived website socialness ($b = .509$, $SE\ b = .098$, $t(2,303) = 5.218$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, it appears that the perceived website socialness positively influenced *inviting/comfort* ($b = .813$, $SE\ b = .051$, $t(2,303) = 15.807$, $p < .001$) and *care* ($b = .803$, $SE\ b = .068$, $t(2,303) = 11.768$, $p < .001$). Moreover, *inviting/comfort* ($b = .437$, $SE\ b = .081$, $t(2,303) = 5.365$, $p < .001$) and *care* ($b = .291$, $SE\ b = .062$, $t(2,303) = 4.688$, $p < .001$) demonstrated to have a significant effect on monetary donation intention. Looking at the direct effect in the serial mediation model of *inviting/comfort*, it turns out that

photos do not have a significant effect on monetary donation intention ($b = .141$, $SE b = .131$, $t(2,303) = 1.081$, $p > .05$). The direct effect in the serial mediation model of *care* also shows no significant effect of photos on monetary donation intention ($b = .115$, $SE b = .132$, $t(2,303) = .874$, $p > .05$). In the serial mediation models of both dimensions, the total effect of photos on monetary donation intention is significant is ($b = .317$, $SE b = .140$, $t(2,303) = 2.261$, $p < .05$). Lastly, since the indirect effect of perceived website socialness and *inviting/comfort* (effect = .181, $SE = .052$, 95% CI [.086, .289]) and the indirect effect of perceived website socialness and *care* (effect = .119, $SE = .036$, 95% CI [.057, .195]) are significant, it appears that the perceived website socialness and the experience of hospitality mediates the positive effect of photos on monetary donation intention. Figure 13 provides an overview of these relationships for the subdimension *inviting/comfort* and Figure 14 demonstrates it for the subdimension *care*. Based on these outcomes, hypothesis H4Ba is supported.

Figure 13

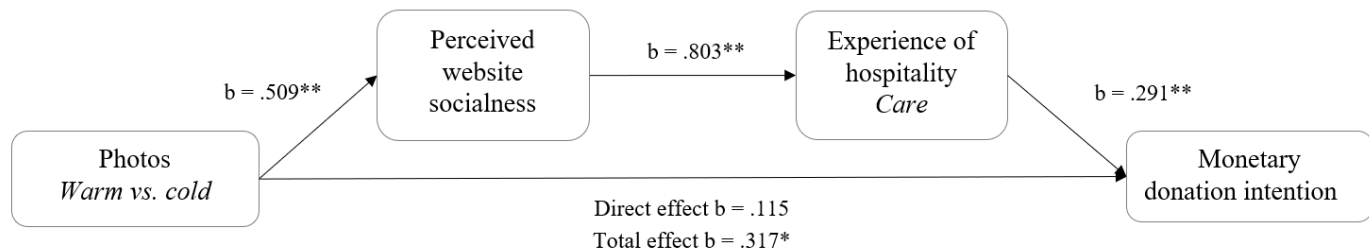
Overview of unstandardized regression coefficients of serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and inviting/comfort between photos and monetary donation intention



* < .05
** < .001

Figure 14

Overview of unstandardized regression coefficients of serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and care between photos and monetary donation intention



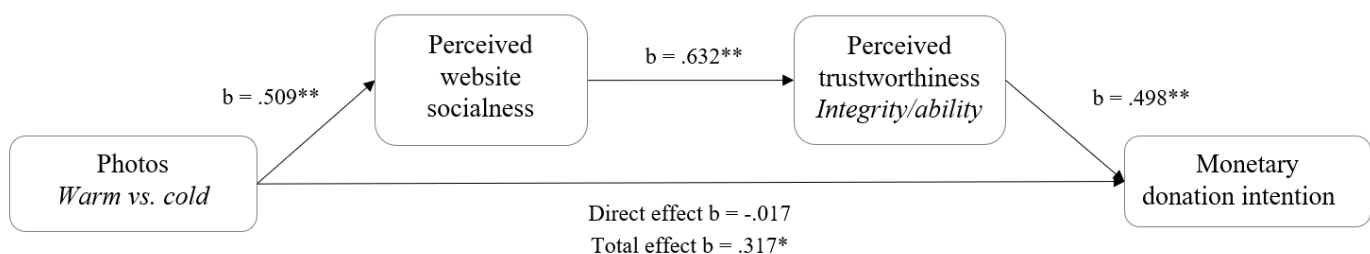
* < .05
** < .001

Testing serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and perceived trustworthiness

Finally looking at the serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and perceived trustworthiness of the charity. The analysis is performed for the dimensions *integrity/ability* and *benevolence* separately. The mediation analyses, in which affinity with the cause is controlled, demonstrates that photos is a positive predictor of the perceived website socialness ($b = .509$, $SE b = .098$, $t(2,303) = 5.218$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, it appears that the perceived website socialness positively influenced *integrity/ability* ($b = .632$, $SE b = .048$, $t(2,303) = 13.211$, $p < .001$) and *benevolence* ($b = .613$, $SE b = .072$, $t(2,303) = 8.541$, $p < .001$). Moreover, *integrity/ability* ($b = .498$, $SE b = .087$, $t(2,303) = 5.720$, $p < .001$) and *benevolence* ($b = .323$, $SE b = .058$, $t(2,303) = 5.557$, $p < .001$) demonstrated to have a significant effect on monetary donation intention. Looking at the direct effect in the serial mediation model of *integrity/ability*, it turns out that photos do not have a significant effect on monetary donation intention ($b = -.017$, $SE b = .128$, $t(2,303) = -.123$, $p > .05$). The direct effect in the serial mediation model of *benevolence* also shows no significant effect of photos on monetary donation intention ($b = .150$, $SE b = .130$, $t(2,303) = 1.149$, $p > .05$). In the serial mediation models of both dimensions, the total effect of photos on monetary donation intention is significant is ($b = .317$, $SE b = .140$, $t(2,303) = 2.261$, $p < .05$). Lastly, since the indirect effect of perceived website socialness and *integrity/ability* (effect = .160, $SE = .049$, 95% CI [.079, .272]) and the indirect effect of perceived website socialness and *benevolence* (effect = .101, $SE = .028$, 95% CI [.052, .1613]) are significant, it appears that the perceived website socialness and the perceived trustworthiness mediates the positive effect of photos on monetary donation intention. Figure 15 provides an overview of these relationships for the subdimension *integrity/ability* and Figure 16 demonstrates it for the subdimension *benevolence*. In sum, hypothesis H5Ba is supported.

Figure 15

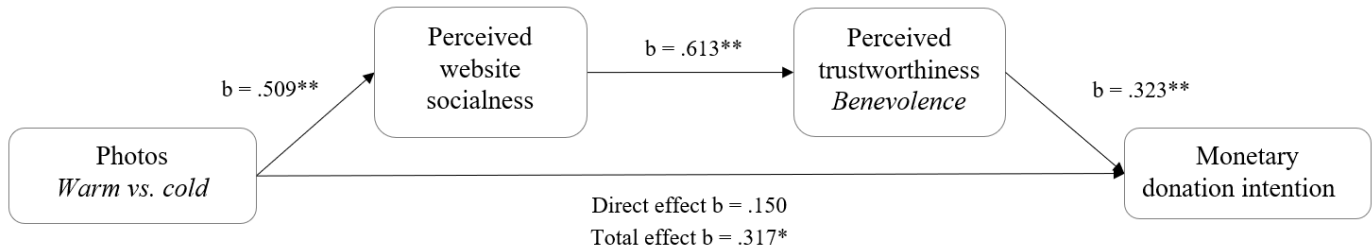
Overview of unstandardized regression coefficients of serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and integrity/ability between photos and monetary donation intention



* < .05
** < .001

Figure 16

Overview of unstandardized regression coefficients of serial mediation effect of perceived website socialness and benevolence between photos and monetary donation intention



* < .05
** < .001

4.3 Concluding remarks of Study 2

In sum, all hypotheses related to colours (A), tone of writing (C) and congruency of the social cues (D) are not supported by Study 2. This means that colours, tone of writing or congruency of social cues in the website design of the website of CliniClowns do not influence users' perceived website socialness and attitudinal loyalty (monetary donation, revisit, positive WOM intention). However, Study 2 showed that some hypotheses related to photos (B) are supported. To illustrate, warm photos on the website of CliniClowns showed to positively influence users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention. An enhanced users' perceived website socialness, in turn, increases users' monetary donation intention. Above that, an enhanced users' perceived website socialness also increases users' experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness which both, in turn, strengthened the monetary donation intention. A summary of all tested hypotheses is provided in Table 15.

Table 15*Overview of the tested hypotheses*

Hypothesis		Result
[A] Warm (compared to cold) colours, [B] warm (compared to cold) photos, [C] a warm (compared to cold) tone of writing and [D] congruency (compared to incongruency) of warm social cues in the website design of CliniClowns lead to ...		
A		
H1 – H5		Not supported
B		
H1	... higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention among users of the website of CliniClowns.	H1Ba is supported H1Bb is not supported H1Bc is not supported
H2	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns.	H2B is supported
H3	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which, in turn, leads to higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (mediation effect).	H3Ba is supported H3Bb is not supported H3Bc is not supported
H4	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which enhances users' experience of hospitality (<i>inviting, care and comfort</i>) which, in turn, leads to a higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (serial mediation effect).	H4Ba is supported H4Bb is not supported H4Bc is not supported
H5	... a higher perceived website socialness among users of the website of CliniClowns which enhances the perceived trustworthiness (<i>ability, integrity and benevolence</i>) of CliniClowns which, in turn, leads to a higher a) monetary donation intention, b) revisit intention and c) positive WOM intention (serial mediation effect).	H5Ba is supported H5Bb is not supported H5Bc is not supported
C		
H1 – H5		Not supported
D		
H1 – H5		Not supported

5. Discussion

This research aimed to investigate the effect of social cues on users' emotions and behavioural intentions on a charity website. Most previous studies on this topic were conducted for commercial websites. Some authors argue that what works on commercial websites can be copied to non-commercial websites (Kwak et al., 2018) while some authors disagree with that (Slattery et al., 2019). So, this research was initiated to address the lack of knowledge about the influence of social cues on charity websites. The influence of social cues on users' perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness and attitudinal loyalty was first investigated via a qualitative study (Study 1). Based on the outcomes of that study, a quantitative study (Study 2) tested the diverse effects of photos, colours and tone of writing. This chapter provides a discussion of the results, limitations of this research, practical and theoretical implications and future research directions.

5.1 Discussion of results

This research investigated multiple social cues on charity websites. Study 1 showed signals that photos, colours, video and tone of writing are important cues for stimulating users' perceived website socialness and, in turn, their experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness. These social cues have also been shown to increase users' monetary donation intention. Furthermore, Study 1 predicted that photos and video can have a positive influence on the positive WOM intention of users while none of the social cues was expected to impact users' revisit intention. Study 2 demonstrated that warm photos are essential on charity websites to increase users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention but not for the revisit and positive WOM intention. Furthermore, the perceived website socialness mediated the effect of warm photos on monetary donation intention. Moreover, users' perceived website socialness enhanced users' experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness which, in turn, both strengthened users' monetary donation intention.

5.1.1 The effect of warm photos on charity websites

Photos appeared to be influential on websites of charities. Especially warm photos, which are photos including an interaction between the charity and a victim, showed to enhance users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention. Because of this finding, this research corroborates with the study of Cyr et al. (2009) in an online commercial context as they also showed that warm photos led users to perceive the website as warmer. Next to that, this result extends the findings of Wang et al. (2014), who found that product pictures including humans enhanced users' perceived website socialness, to a mediated charity context. Furthermore, an explanation for the positive influence of warm photos on users'

monetary donation intention can be based on the empathy altruism hypothesis which states that someone's motivation to show helping behaviour, like providing monetary donations, is stimulated by empathic emotions (Batson et al., 2014). To evoke empathy among potential donors, it is important to let potential donors be able to imagine what victims experience and how they feel when the charity has done its work (Kogut & Ritov, 2005). Warm photos have possibly helped users to make these imaginations since these showed the work of the charity. In addition, another explanation can be that warm photos identified the victims which stimulated users' willingness to donate money. This effect is also known as the identifiable victim effect which explains that donations enlarge when victims are identified by, for example, names or pictures (Jenni & Loewenstein, 1997; Small et al., 2007). This reasoning is in line with the comments of respondents of Study 1 that explained that social cues like photos and videos contribute to their monetary donation intention since these website features show what the charity does.

The results of Study 2 did not support the prediction of Study 1 that photos can enhance users' positive WOM intention, however, Study 2 did show some signals that photos can be important for users' positive WOM intention. The reason why it did not show a significant effect can be that social cues do not make users ambassadors but only increases the positive WOM intention when the conversation with others is already about charities, as the respondents of Study 1 mentioned. Furthermore, even though warm photos were perceived as warmer than the cold photos in Study 2, the average score of the cold photos laid above the midpoint of the scale ranging from cold photo (1) to warm photo (7). Therefore, it could be that the difference between cold and warm photos was not large enough for affecting users' positive WOM intention. These reasons could have caused the absence of the effect of warm photos on users' positive WOM intention.

5.1.2 The absence of the effects of colours, tone of writing and congruency on charity websites

While photos showed an effect on the perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention on charity websites, colours, tone of writing and congruency of social cues did not show effects on users' perceived website socialness and attitudinal loyalty. Starting with colours, this research did not validate the results of Chen and Wu (2016) and Valdez and Mehrabian (1994) that website colours generated more positive emotions (e.g., perceiving website socialness) and higher behavioural intentions (e.g., monetary donation intention) among users. Multiple reasons for this finding can be speculated. Firstly, even though several studies showed that warm colours are perceived as warmer than cold colours (Chen & Wu, 2016; Fenko et al, 2010), multiple studies challenged this reasoning. To illustrate, cool colours can also be perceived as more positive, relaxed and calm than warm colours (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992; Rizomyliotis et al., 2018). Beyond this, the appropriateness of colours for organizations and websites may play a role. To

illustrate, the corporate colours of CliniClowns are mainly cold colours. Since people are possibly used to this corporate identity, it can be hard to show the effect of warm colours on the website of CliniClowns. Another explanation can be based on the reasoning that users can carefully and actively consider information on a website (central route) or use a less cognitively demanding and more associative process (peripheral route; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Kwak (2014) showed that charity website users with high personal involvement are motivated to follow the central route rather than the peripheral route. Since colours are seen as peripheral cues (Rizomyliotis et al., 2018), it could be that colours only had an effect among users with low personal involvement. In addition, since it turned out to be important to identify victims to stimulate users' monetary donation intention (Jenni & Loewenstein, 1997; Small et al., 2007), colours could not stimulate users' willingness to donate money as colours do not identify victims compared to warm photos. Moreover, Yi and Kang (2020) showed in their research focusing on physical spaces of shopping malls that the hue of colours, the aspect Study 2 focused on, did not affect individuals' behaviour whereas the saturation and brightness of colours appeared to influence behavioural intentions. This reasoning could explain the absence of the effect of colours in this research. In all, these reasons suggest that the effect of warm colours on users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention is not as straightforward as predicted and that warm colours likely work less effectively on charity websites than expected.

Looking at the absence of an effect of the tone of writing on charity websites, this research contradicts the findings of Lee and Hahn (2015) who suggested that a warm tone of writing on a fashion website increased the level of website socialness. Furthermore, this result is not in line with the predictions based on Study 1 and the prediction that social cues can influence behaviour (Mavlanova et al., 2016; Spence, 1973). A possible explanation for the absence of an effect of tone of writing on users' perceived website socialness can be that a warm tone of writing has a smaller contribution to users' perceived website socialness compared to warm photos (Ogonowski et al., 2014) and, above that, the website screenshot that was tested included only two sentences which could have been too briefly to test the effect of the tone of writing. Furthermore, another reason why the tone of writing did not affect users' monetary donation intention can be that the tone of writing, compared to warm photos, does not identify victims which showed to increase users' monetary donation intentions (Jenni & Loewenstein, 1997; Small et al., 2007). In all, these reasons could have caused the absence of an effect of the tone of writing.

Furthermore, Study 2 failed to demonstrate an interaction effect of the different social cues. Therefore, it appeared that (in)congruency between photos, colours and tone of writing did not affect users' perceived website socialness and attitudinal donor loyalty dimensions. A possible reason for this finding can be that users perceive a website holistically which means that the effect of diverse cues can be strengthened when these are combined (Cheng et al., 2009). However, Study 2 did not show the direct

effects of colours and the tone of writing and, therefore, it may be that the congruency of social cues did not enhance the effect.

5.1.3 The effect of the perceived website socialness on charity websites

This research also demonstrated the important role of users' perceived website socialness on a charity website. First of all, the findings showed that users' perceived website socialness functions as a mediator between warm photos and monetary donation intention. This result corroborates the findings of previous studies conducted in online commercial contexts (Shim et al., 2012; Wakefield et al., 2011) and extends it to an online non-commercial context. A possible explanation for this mediation effect can be that perceiving website socialness reduces barriers to provide a donation (Shim et al., 2012).

Secondly, Study 2 also showed that users' perceived website socialness, which is stimulated by warm photos, motivated users' experience of hospitality which, in turn, increased monetary donation intentions. This result is in line with the findings of Wang et al. (2014) and Kwak (2014). Potential reasons for the existence of this effect are that perceiving website socialness can let users feel welcomed (*inviting*) and cared (*care*; Lee & Hahn, 2015). Furthermore, Bennett (2013) argued that the quality of the services the charity offers is important for the donor experience and subsequent attitudes and behaviour. In other words, experiencing hospitality, which corresponds with providing a good service quality, is essential for a good donor experience that influences users' behaviour.

Finally, Study 2 demonstrated that users' perceived website socialness, which is enhanced by warm photos, stimulates users' perceived trustworthiness which ultimately increased monetary donation intentions. This result corroborates the findings of previous studies (Alhulail et al. 2019; Cyr et al., 2009; Gefen & Straub, 2004) and extends it to an online non-commercial setting. A reason for the existence of this effect can be that perceiving website socialness evokes a feeling of human interaction which, in turn, contributes to perceiving the charity as trustworthy (Lu et al., 2016). Furthermore, a high level of website socialness is perceived as more transparent since social cues provide some information. This reasoning also appeared in Study 1 as respondents explained that warm photos can show what the charity does which, in turn, enhances their perceived trustworthiness. Moreover, perceiving website socialness reduces the perceived social distance between users and the charity which enhances the perceived trustworthiness among users (Lu et al., 2016; Pavlou et al., 2007). Then, the enhanced perceived trustworthiness likely increases users' monetary donation intention because perceiving the charity as trustworthy is an important factor in the decision to donate (Bennett, 2009). Furthermore, multiple respondents in Study 1 argued that they want to be sure that they can trust the charity whether they spend the money well. Thus, when users get this confirmation while browsing the website, they are more likely to provide a monetary donation.

5.1.4 Potential differences between commercial and non-commercial websites

Another reason for the absence of an effect of colours and tone of writing can be that these social cues work differently on charity websites than on commercial websites (Slattery et al., 2019). To illustrate, Alberts and van der Geest (2011) found that a blue background colour on a commercial website was perceived as most trustworthy. However, Study 1 showed signals that especially warm colours were perceived as more trustworthy on charity websites. So, it could be that these colour associations work differently for users on a charity website compared to users on a commercial website. In addition, text is an important communication tool on commercial websites between the organization and its customers. Therefore, the tone of writing is essential as well (Lee & Hahn, 2015). Looking at non-commercial websites, it could be that the importance of the text is weaker on charity websites as photos are meaningful. Therefore, the tone of writing could be less influential on websites non-commercial versus commercial organizations.

In addition, Study 1 showed preliminary results demonstrating that the social cues chat function, human sound fragment, social role model and interactive social role model were not or were negatively influencing users' perceived website socialness or attitudinal loyalty. This contradicts the previous studies conducted in commercial contexts and which, for example, showed that a live chat increases the perceived website socialness which, in turn, increased the level of trust (Ogonowski et al., 2014). A reason for this discrepancy between commercial and non-commercial websites can be that these types of social cues are less suitable for charities, as respondents of Study 1 explained. So, this research showed signals that the social cues chat function, human sound fragment, social role model and interactive social role model may work differently on charity websites.

Besides the results of these multiple social cues, this research has additional results that contradict the findings of previous studies in commercial settings. To illustrate, this research did not show an effect of social cues on users' revisit intention which challenges the prediction that social cues can influence revisit behaviour (Mavlanova et al., 2016; Spence, 1973). An explanation for this result can be that users' revisit intention on a charity website is different to this behavioural intention on commercial websites which suggests that users visit commercial websites with different purposes compared to visiting a non-commercial website. To illustrate, respondents of Study 1 explained that they do not revisit charity websites often because when they have provided a donation, there is no specific need to return. Finally, this chapter already discussed reasons for the absence of an effect of social cues on users' positive WOM intention. Above that, another reason for this could also be related to differences between non-commercial and commercial websites. To illustrate, Jayawardhena and Wright (2009) found that positive emotions enhance the WOM intention of customers of online shopping websites while Study 1 found that especially personal experiences and how much persons are attached to the charity, influence their positive

WOM intention. In all, potential differences between non-commercial and commercial websites could have caused the absence of effects.

5.2 Theoretical implications

This research provides several relevant theoretical implications. First of all, to the researcher's knowledge, this research was the first attempt to test the influence of social cues that stimulate a website's warmth and sociability in a charity context. Therefore, this study added insights into the influence of social cues and perceived website socialness on subsequent behaviour. Above that, this research also provided new insights into the role of hospitality for charities and how users experience hospitality on a website. Furthermore, this study did not only corroborate findings about the influence of social cues of previous studies (e.g., Keeling et al., 2010; Lee & Hahn, 2015; Wakefield et al., 2011) but also extended the findings to a non-commercial context. Moreover, this research especially stressed the importance of photos on charity websites which is a relevant theoretical addition since the importance of photos seems to be different in diverse contexts. To illustrate, Wang et al. (2014) found that human images are important for entertainment products (e.g., clothing) as well, however, users do not pay much attention to photos of utilitarian products. Whereas Wang et al. (2014) described human images as irrelevant to utilitarian products, this study showed signals that social cues like a chat function, a human sound fragment, a social role model and an interactive social role model are irrelevant on charity websites. Therefore, this research indicates that some features that work on websites in particular contexts cannot be copied to other contexts. In other words, this research implies that it is important to investigate the effects of social cues in commercial and non-commercial contexts.

Furthermore, this research has responded to several research requests. First of all, this research started answering the request of Slattery et al. (2019) to investigate prosocial behaviour in a mediated context and to examine how to use the website most effectively to stimulate prosocial behaviour. Secondly, Bennett (2005) asked for a better understanding of the emotions evoked by the design of charity websites and this research showed that social cues can enhance users' perceived website socialness and, in turn, users' experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness. Thirdly, Shatnawi and Algharabat (2018) called to investigate possibilities that improve the donor experience and this study showed that perceiving website socialness led to a higher experience of hospitality which is related to the donor experience.

5.3 Limitations and future research directions

While interpreting the findings of this research, it is important to mention the limitations of this research. First, this research is conducted for an existing charity, CliniClowns, which could have caused that the respondents had pre-existing beliefs which impacted their answers. Above that, an existing charity has an established corporate identity which could have influenced the effects of the website design. For example, respondents could have been familiar with the corporate colours of CliniClowns which could have influenced their answers about the colours of the stimulus material. Moreover, multiple types of charities exist (e.g., health, protection of the environment, animals) while this study only focused on one specific charity. Therefore, the findings of this research cannot be generalized since social cues on websites of other types of charities can work differently (Kwak, 2014). Another limitation is that half of the respondents of Study 2 were gathered via convenience sampling strategies. These strategies were used to gain enough respondents in a short amount of time. However, it could have led to an unrepresentative sample since, for example, fellow students of the researcher who worked on their research as well and therefore know how experiments work participated in Study 2. Furthermore, it was not possible to control respondents' environment in Study 2 (e.g., the brightness of the screen, monitor size) which may have threatened the validity of this research as these conditions influence the perception of the website design. Beyond this, Study 2 only tested the home page of CliniClowns' website and via a screenshot. This is not in line with usual website visits in which users visit multiple pages. Therefore, users' experiences on running websites may be different than experiences related to the screenshot they have seen. Moreover, participants of Study 2 have seen the same screenshot multiple times which risks that participants, for example, view the screenshot more in detail after the first time which, in turn, can influence their subsequent answers. In sum, these limitations should be taken into account when interpreting the results. Finally, the cold colours, photos and tone of writing in Study 2 scored above the midpoint of the seven-point Likert scale ranging from cold (1) to warm (7). This means that the difference between cold social cues were assessed as warmer than intended which could have influenced the results since the difference between warm and cold social cues was possibly not large enough.

Based on these limitations, future research should examine the influence of social cues on users' emotions and behaviour while using multiple website pages or the complete website to create a holistic experience. Moreover, it is advised to use probability sampling strategies in future research to test effects among a representative sample. Furthermore, the findings of this research need to be tested for other types of charities. Beyond this, it would also be prudent to repeat this research for a fictitious charity to eliminate pre-existing beliefs of respondents. In addition, this research also raised new questions that can be explored in future research. For example, future research could investigate which other social cues on charity websites also impact users' behaviour. Study 1 showed signals that video can be an important

social cue which, therefore, could be investigated in subsequent studies. Finally, this research showed signals that some effects, like the effect of photos on subsequent emotions and behaviour, are similar in non-commercial and commercial contexts. However, this research also demonstrated signals that some effects, like the effect of colours, work differently in non-commercial and commercial contexts. Therefore, it is difficult for charities to decide whether to rely on the best practices of commercial contexts or not. Because of that, it is important to further examine which social cues work best in non-commercial contexts, commercial contexts and both.

5.4 Practical implications

From a practical perspective, the findings of this research suggest that charities should carefully choose the photos they use on their website. This is because this research has shown that warm photos, which are photos including a positive interaction between the charity and the victim work, most effectively regarding users' perceived website socialness and monetary donation intention. Furthermore, it is advised to test which other social cues enhance users' perceived website socialness since having an enhanced perceived website socialness among users leads to an improved experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness which, in turn, both increase monetary donation intentions. This is recommended since monetary donations are essential for charities to survive (Alhidari et al., 2018). Moreover, based on the findings of this research the advice to charities is to test (e.g., A/B testing) best practices of commercial websites before implementing them on their website. Finally, although colours did not show an effect on users' emotions and behaviour, this research showed some signals that warm colours are important. However, at the same time, it turned out that the influence of colours on websites cannot be simply clarified. Therefore, it is important to have a careful look at the colours used in the corporate identity and, if necessary, to test different colours since diverse colours can provide different associations in different contexts.

6. Conclusion

The first aim of this research was to investigate the influence of diverse social cues on websites of charities to answer the following research question: *“Which social cues on a charity website are important regarding users’ perceived website socialness and attitudinal loyalty?”* This research has shown that photos are essential for charities’ websites. Moreover, especially warm photos, which include interaction between the charity and victim and radiate positivity, appeared to influence users’ emotions and behaviour. To illustrate, this research demonstrated that warm photos increased monetary donation intentions. Moreover, this research demonstrated that warm photos positively influenced users’ perceived website socialness which enhanced users’ experience of hospitality and perceived trustworthiness which, in turn, both increased users’ monetary donation intention. The existence of these effects also fulfils the second aim of this study to examine to what extent social cues, perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness and attitudinal loyalty relate to each other. Moreover, these findings answered the second research question: *“To what extent do social cues on a charity website influence users’ perceived website socialness, experience of hospitality, perceived trustworthiness of the charity and, in turn, attitudinal loyalty?”* since once the perceived website socialness is stimulated, it can positively influence users’ emotions and behaviour. Finally, the last aim of this research was to answer the third research question: *“Is affinity with the cause that the charity is supporting a covariate towards the dimensions of attitudinal loyalty?”* This research has shown that the extent to which users have affinity with the cause positively influenced users’ attitudinal loyalty.

In sum, out of multiple social cues examined in this study, photos were found to have the biggest influence on charity websites. Other social cues such as colours, tone of writing, a chat function and a social role model were found to have less or no effect on charity websites. Therefore, this study indicates that not every expectation created by research conducted in online commercial contexts can be copied to non-commercial websites.

7. References

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8. Appendices

Appendix A Short questionnaire to select participants for Study 1

1. Which of the following statements most appeals to you?
 - “Together we make the world more beautiful”
 - “It feels good when you can do something for someone else”
 - “The smile of a child is worth gold”
2. Do you know someone who has been visited by a CliniClown?
3. If you were going to donate to CliniClowns, what would you prefer?
 - A flexible donation that allows you to decide how and when to support
 - A structural donation, e.g. every month or every year, which you do not have to worry about very much
4. What is your gender?
5. What is your age?

Appendix B Interview guide Study 1

Introductie

- Bedanken voor tijd en medewerking
- Introductie onderzoek
- Uitleg verloop interview
- Akkoord voor recording vragen
- Laatste vermeldingen (geen foute of goede antwoorden, anonimiteit, duur van het interview en vrijwillige deelname)

Body

Low key questions

- Ken jij CliniClowns?
 - Zo ja, kun je kort erover vertellen wat je ervan weet?
- Stel je gaat naar een website van een goed doel, waar let je dan op? Waar kijk je naar?

Topic questions

Introductie thema's

Gastvrijheid

- Algemeen gezien, wat is gastvrijheid ervaren voor jou? Welke gevoelens roept dat op?
- Is er iets wat een goed doel op haar website kan doen zodat jij gastvrijheid ervaart?
 - Zo ja, wat zorgt ervoor dat jij gastvrijheid ervaart? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Vertrouwen

- Wat betekent vertrouwen in een goed doel voor jou?
- Is er iets wat een goed doel op haar website kan doen zodat jouw vertrouwen het goede doel versterkt wordt?
 - Zo ja, waarom zorgt dat ervoor dat jouw vertrouwen versterkt wordt? Zo nee, waarom niet?

[Samenvatten]

Website socialness

Introductie website socialness

- Ik ga je nu drie websites van goede doelen laten zien [websites van top 3 klantvriendelijkste goede doelen van Nederland laten zien]. Welke van deze website komt op jou het meest vriendelijk,

sympathiek, beleefd, behulpzaam, informatief, intelligent, interactief maar ook warm, gezellig en persoonlijk over?

- Waarom?
- Wanneer komt een website van een goed doel vriendelijk, behulpzaam, beleefd, sympathiek, intelligent, informatief, interactief maar ook warm, gezellig en persoonlijk over?
 - En wanneer juist niet? Waar zit het hem dan in?

[Samenvatten]

Sociale elementen

Introductie voorbeelden van sociale elementen (Appendix C)

- Kun je deze sociale elementen op volgorde leggen van hoog (7) naar laag (1), waarbij hoog de sociale elementen weergeeft die een grote bijdrage leveren aan de vriendelijkheid, behulpzaamheid, de mate waarin de website informatief en interactief is, maar ook warmte, gezelligheid en persoonlijk contact uitstraalt. Laag staat daarentegen voor de elementen die een kleine bijdrage leveren aan een vriendelijke, behulpzame, informatieve, sympathieke, intelligente en interactieve website.

Invloed van sociale elementen op loyaliteit

- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 7 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, zou
 - dat jouw donatie bereidheid kunnen verhogen, blijft het gelijk of verlagen?
 - je sneller, minder snel terugkomen naar deze website? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - je sneller, minder snel het met anderen over deze website hebben of aanraden eens te bezoeken? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - Waarom? Op welke manier beïnvloedt dit sociale element het?
- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 6 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, zou
 - dat jouw donatie bereidheid kunnen verhogen, blijft het gelijk of verlagen?
 - je sneller, minder snel terugkomen naar deze website? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - je sneller, minder snel het met anderen over deze website hebben of aanraden eens te bezoeken? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - Waarom? Op welke manier beïnvloedt dit sociale element het?
- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 1 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, zou
 - dat jouw donatie bereidheid kunnen verhogen, blijft het gelijk of verlagen?

- je sneller, minder snel terugkomen naar deze website? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - je sneller, minder snel het met anderen over deze website hebben of aanraden eens te bezoeken?
- Of heeft het er geen invloed op?

- o Waarom? Op welke manier beïnvloedt dit sociale element het?

- Welk sociaal element is voor jou het meest belangrijk om jouw bereidheid om een donatie te doen/terug te keren naar de website/WOM, te verhogen?
 - Waarom dit element?

[Samenvatten]

Invloed van sociale elementen op gastvrijheid

- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 7 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, wekt dat gevoelens van gastvrijheid op?
 - o Zo ja, waarom? Wat voor gevoel ervaar je?
 - o Zo nee, waarom niet? En waar komt dat door?
- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 6 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, wekt dat gevoelens van gastvrijheid op?
 - o Zo ja, waarom? Wat voor gevoel ervaar je?
 - o Zo nee, waarom niet? En waar komt dat door?
- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 1 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, wekt dat gevoelens van gastvrijheid op?
 - o Zo ja, waarom? Wat voor gevoel ervaar je?
 - o Zo nee, waarom niet? En waar komt dat door?
- Welk sociaal element is voor jou het meest belangrijk om gastvrijheid te ervaren?
 - Waarom dit element?

[Samenvatten]

- Wanneer je gastvrijheid ervaart op de website van CliniClowns, zou
 - o dat jouw donatie bereidheid kunnen verhogen, blijft het gelijk of verlagen?
 - o je sneller, minder snel terugkomen naar deze website? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - o je sneller, minder snel het met anderen over deze website hebben of aanraden eens te bezoeken? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - Zo ja, waarom? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Invloed van sociale elementen op vertrouwen

- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 7 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, kan dat jouw vertrouwen in CliniClowns versterken?
 - Zo ja, waarom? Zo nee, waar komt dat door?
- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 6 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, kan dat jouw vertrouwen in CliniClowns versterken?
 - Zo ja, waarom? Zo nee, waar komt dat door?
- Als we dan kijken naar [no. 1 sociaal element]. Stel je voor dat de website van CliniClowns dit sociale element bevat, kan dat jouw vertrouwen in CliniClowns versterken?
 - Zo ja, waarom? Zo nee, waar komt dat door?
- Welk sociaal element is voor jou het meest belangrijk om jouw vertrouwen in CliniClowns te verhogen?
 - Waarom dit element?

[Samenvatten]

- Wanneer je de website van CliniClowns als betrouwbaar beschouwt, zou
 - dat jouw donatie bereidheid kunnen verhogen, blijft het gelijk of verlagen?
 - je sneller, minder snel terugkomen naar deze website? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - je sneller, minder snel het met anderen over deze website hebben of aanraden eens te bezoeken? Of heeft het er geen invloed op?
 - Zo ja, waarom? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Trust cues

Introductie trust cues (een simpele navigatie, witte ruimtes, keurmerken, vermelden van contact informatie, koele/pastel kleuren).

- Hebben dit soort elementen op een website ook invloed op jouw vertrouwen in het goede doel?
 - Zo ja, waarom? Waar komt dat door?
 - Zo nee, waarom niet?
- Zijn sociale elementen op een website vergeleken met [overige trust cues] belangrijker, even belangrijk of minder belangrijk om jouw vertrouwen in een goed doel te versterken?

[Samenvatten]

Einde

- Slotvraag: stel jij bent voor een maand lang de directeur/directrice van een goed doel en jij zou gaan werken aan het vriendelijker, behulpzamer, etc. maken van de website, wat zou je als eerste aanpakken?

[Samenvatting van het interview]

- Dus als ik het goed heb begrepen... Wil je daar nog iets aan toevoegen? Heb je nog vragen?

Hartelijk dank voor jouw medewerking en tijd. Ik ben erg tevreden met het verloop van het gesprek en de informatie die ik heb verkregen. Fijn dat het interview op deze manier heeft kunnen

Appendix C Example social cues used in Study 1

Figure C1

Example of informal tone of writing



Figure C2

Example of a human sound fragment

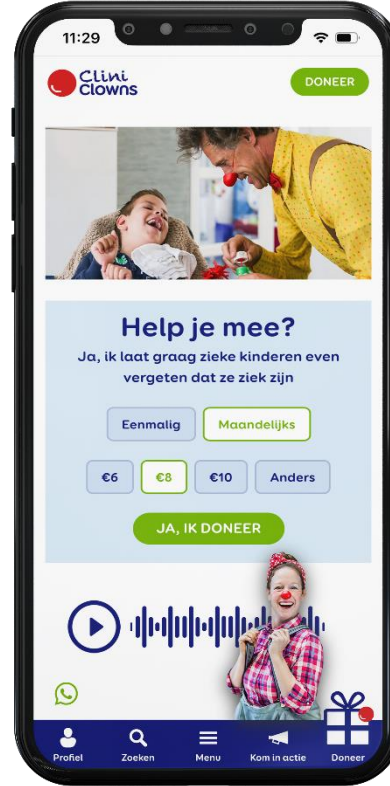


Figure C3

Example of a video



Figure C4

Example of socially rich photos



Figure C5

Example of a chat



Figure C6

Example of a social role model

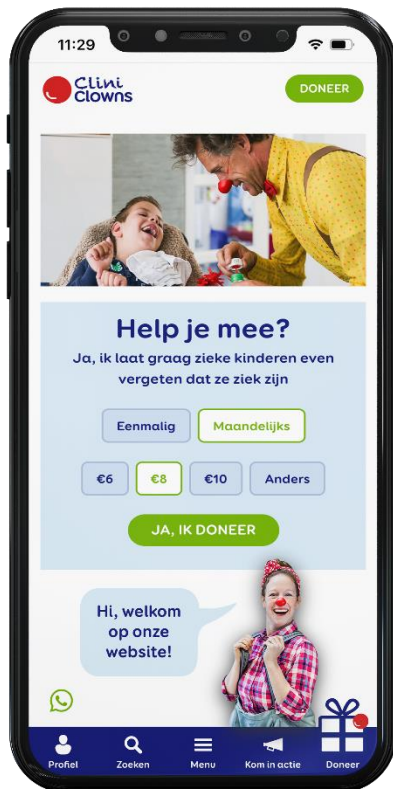


Figure C7

Example of an interactive social role model



Appendix D Websites of other charities used in Study 1

Figure D1

Website of Unicef (Unicef, n.d.-b)

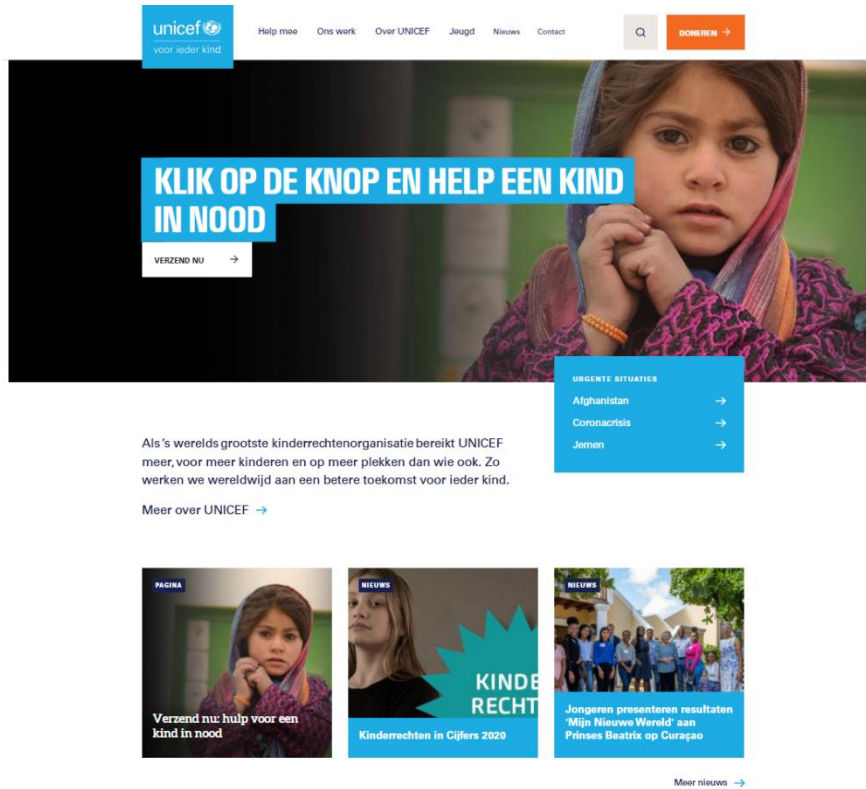


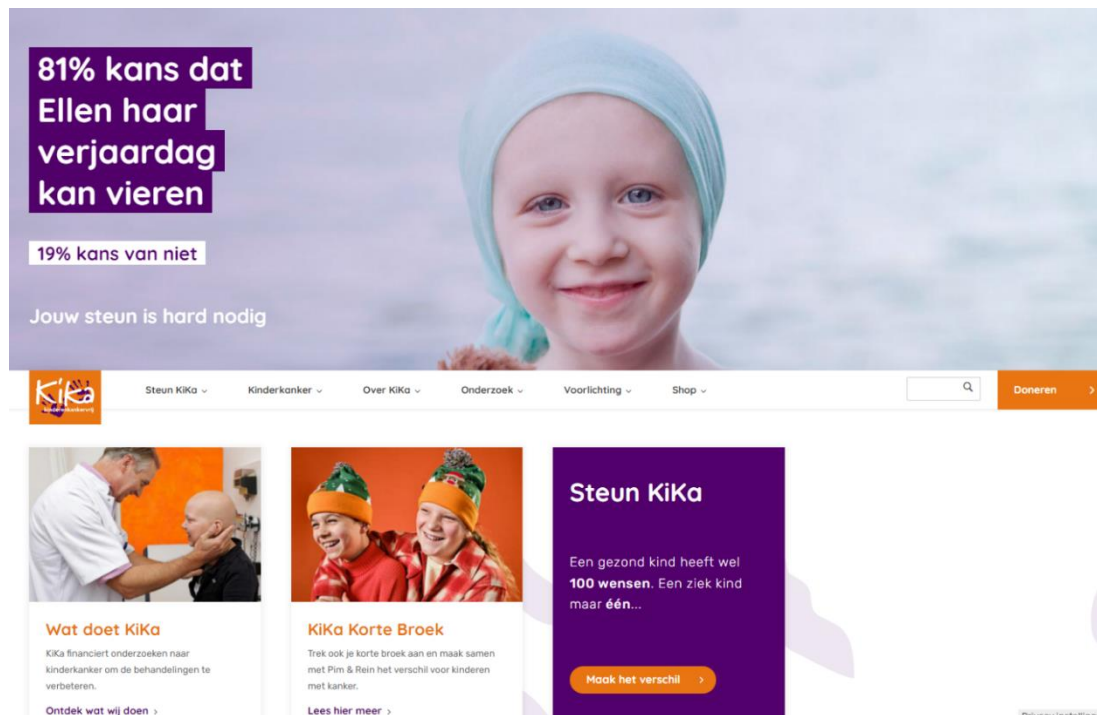
Figure D2

Website of Diabetes Fonds (Diabetes Fonds, n.d.)



Figure D3

Website of Kika (Kika, n.d.)



Appendix E Materials pre-test Study 2

Table E1

Remaining warm and cold photos






Warm photos	Cold photos
<div>W.1</div> <div></div>	<div>C.1</div> <div></div>
<div>W.2</div> <div></div>	<div>C.2</div> <div></div>
<div>W.3</div> <div></div>	<div>C.3</div> <div></div>

Table E2

Pairs of warm photos that were exposed to the respondents

Which photo is the most warm?	
<div>A</div> <div></div>	<div>B</div> <div></div>
Which photo is the most warm?	
<div>A</div>	<div>B</div>



Which photo is the most warm?

A

B



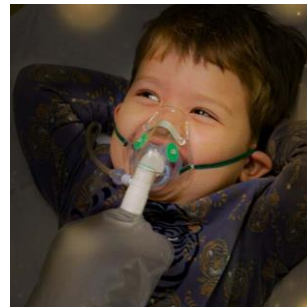
Table E3

Pairs of cold photos that were exposed to the respondents

Which photo is the most warm?

A

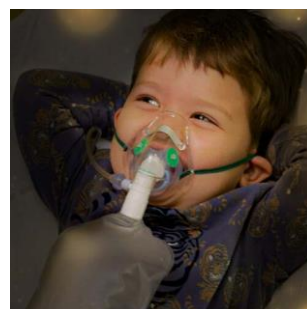
B



Which photo is the most warm?

A

B



Which photo is the most warm?

A








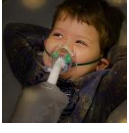
B



Appendix F Assessment of pre-test materials Study 2

Table F1

The number of times that the photo was chosen as the answer

	Warm photos				Cold photos	
						
R1	1	2	0	2	1	0
R2	2	0	1	1	2	0
R3	2	1	0	0	2	1
R4	1	0	2	1	0	2
R5	0	1	2	1	0	2
R6	2	1	0	1	0	2
R7	1	0	2	0	2	1
R8	0	2	1	1	0	2
R9	2	1	0	1	0	2
R10	1	2	0	1	0	2
R11	0	1	2	1	0	2
Tot.	12	11	10	10	7	16

Appendix G Informed consent Study 2



UNIVERSITY
OF TWENTE.

Beste deelnemer,

Jouw deelname aan dit onderzoek wordt zeer op prijs gesteld. In dit onderzoek van CliniClowns en Universiteit Twente vragen wij naar jouw reactie op de website van CliniClowns. Dit onderzoek is onderdeel van het afstudeeronderzoek van Daniek voor de master Communicatiewetenschappen. Bij voltooiing van de vragenlijst maak je kans op een **CliniClowns Doppler t.w.v. €15**. Hierover lees je meer aan het einde van de vragenlijst. Het invullen van de vragenlijst zal 5 tot 10 minuten duren.

Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden op de vragen. Met jouw persoonlijke gegevens zal vertrouwelijk worden omgegaan en jouw antwoorden zijn anoniem. Bovendien kun je je op elk moment terugtrekken uit het onderzoek zonder consequenties. Door op "start" te klikken ga je ermee akkoord dat je 18 jaar of ouder bent, vrijwillig deelneemt aan dit onderzoek, de bovenstaande voorwaarden hebt gelezen en toestemming geeft voor het gebruik van jouw antwoorden. Als je vragen hebt voor, tijdens of na het invullen van de vragenlijst, aarzel dan niet om contact op te nemen met de onderzoeker (d.snip@student.utwente.nl).

Namens CliniClowns en Daniek Snip (student Universiteit Twente), alvast bedankt!

Start

Appendix H Scales used to measure constructs in Study 2

Table F1

List of scale items used in main study

Construct	Item	Source
Affinity with the cause (covariate variable)	AF.1 – I admire the mission of CliniClowns.	Beldad et al. (2015)
	AF.2 – The cause of CliniClowns is related to an important aspect of my life	
	AF.3 – I feel a strong connection to the mission of this charity	
	AF.4 – CliniClowns supports a cause that is important to me.	
Website socialness (mediator variable)	<i>The website page I have seen, I would describe as...</i>	Wakefield et al. (2011)
	WS.1 – Friendly	
	WS.2 – Helpful ^b	
	WS.3 – Polite ^b	
	WS.4 – Informative ^b	
	WS.5 – Likeable	
	WS.6 – Intelligent ^b	
Social presence of the website (mediator variable)	<i>The website page I have seen gives a sense of...</i>	Gefen and Straub (2004)
	SP.1 – Human contact	
	SP.2 – Personalness	
	SP.3 – Sociability	
	SP.4 – Human warmth	
	SP.5 – Human sensitivity	
Experience of hospitality (mediator variable)	<i>On the website page I have seen....</i>	Pijls et al. (2017)
	<u>Inviting</u>	
	IV.1 – I feel invited	
	IV.2 – I experience openness ^b	
	IV.3 – I feel free to do what I want	
	<u>Care</u>	
	CA.1 – I feel like CliniClowns understands me	
	CA.2 – I feel like CliniClowns helps me	
	CA.3 – I feel like I am being treated like a king or queen	
	CA.4 – I feel like CliniClowns has made an effort for me	
	CA.5 – I feel like CliniClowns is interested in me	

CA.6 – I feel important

Comfort

CO.1 – I feel at ease

CO.2 – I feel comfortable

CO.3 – I feel relaxed

General item

EH.1 – I experience hospitality

Benevolence

BE.1 – Look out for the well-being of its donors

BE.2 – Make its donors feel good by donating^b

BE.3 – Consider the wishes of its donors

BE.4 – Act in the interest of its donors

Integrity

IN.1 – Be honest in what it does

IN.2 – Be credible in what it does

IN.3 – Base its actions on tolerable principles

IN.4 – Act responsibly in what it does

Ability

AB.1 – Be competent in what it does

AB.2 – Be successful in what it does

AB.3 – Know what needs to be done to do its job

AB.4 – Have specialist knowledge in what it does

Monetary donation intention (dependent variable)	<i>After looking at the website page ...</i>	Basil et al. (2008)
	DI.1 – There is a big chance I will be making a donation to CliniClowns	
	DI.2 – I would like to make a donation to CliniClowns in the future	
	DI.3 – I will make a donation when a collector from CliniClowns is at the door in the near future	
Revisit intention (dependent variable)	<i>After looking at the website page ...</i>	Cuny et al. (2015)
	RV.1 – I would like to revisit the website RV.2 – I would not like to revisit the website ^a	

Positive WOM	<i>After looking at the website page ...</i>	Alhulail et al.
intention (dependent	WOM.1 – There is a big chance I will say positive things about	(2019)
variable)	CliniClowns to my friends and/or family ^b	
	WOM.2 – I would recommend CliniClowns to my friends and/or	
	family	
	WOM.3 – I will tell my friends and/or family to support	
	CliniClowns	

^a item is reversed for this study

^b item is removed before analysis
