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There is More to Social Influence Techniques Than Meets the *Ear*: The Influence of Nonverbal Behavior on the Fear-Then-Relief Technique.

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Abstract

The current experiment extended earlier findings on the impact of the fear-then-relief technique (FTR). People that experience fear followed by immediate relief show higher compliance with a request after this FTR manipulation, this is because FTR makes people function mindless. I argue that nonverbal behavior is a critical factor that determines the success of the FTR technique. Nonverbal behavior (duping delight or distressed deception (Ekman, 2001; Fennis 2006)) was combined with FTR, and state of mind (mindlessness or mindfulness). Results show a significant 3-way interaction between nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind on compliance: duping delight enabled or enhanced the impact of the FTR manipulation for mindless participants, resulting in higher compliance, whereas distressed deception hampered compliance when combined with FTR and mindlessness. Clearly, nonverbal behavior is an important factor for functioning of the FTR technique.

There is More to Social Influence Techniques Than Meets the *Ear*: The Influence of Nonverbal Behavior on the Fear-Then-Relief Technique.

Social influence techniques are used to enhance people's compliance. One of these social influence techniques is the fear-then-relief technique (FTR). The following scenario is an example of how this influence technique works. Picture yourself walking through your local shopping mall. All of a sudden, someone from behind you unexpectedly grabs your shoulders; therefore, you experience quite a scare. You turn around and see a man with large dark sunglasses and a marked stick. The blind man says: "sorry, wrong person." You experience relief, it was a misunderstanding; your feelings of fear were unjust. As you continue your way through the shopping mall, a volunteer for a charitable cause approaches you and requests you to buy and sign postcards to send to political prisoners. Do the emotions of fear and relief, you experienced only a moment earlier increase the probability of your compliance with the request? Research shows it does (Dolinski, Ciszek, Godlewski & Zwadzki, 2002). This rather unorthodox and relatively new social influence technique (SIT), the fear-then-relief technique, has proved to yield significant increases in compliance in several experiments (Dolinski & Nawrat, 1998; Dolinski, 2001; Dolinski et al., 2002).

Suppose that the volunteers, that make the request in the example above, change their nonverbal behavior. Would every type of nonverbal behavior achieve the same results in terms of compliance? Would influence agents that show signs of distress be just as successful in gaining compliance as agents that show signs of excitement? Common sense suggests that agents that show signs of excitement are more persuasive than agents that show signs of distress. Distressed agents are probably less persuasive, because agents in distress appear less credible and less trustworthy (DePaulo et al., 2003). Strangely so, nonverbal behavior has not been studied in combination with the fear-then-relief technique. In fact, the influence of nonverbal behavior has,

to my knowledge, never been studied in combination with *any* SIT. Meta analysis on SIT's typically shows small effect sizes and inconsistent effects (Burger, 1999), perhaps this is because nonverbal behavior was never considered as a factor. Hence, there is a clear need for further study, because of the crucial role that influence agents' nonverbal behavior might have in a social influence setting, and therefore the possibility that nonverbal behavior provides an explanation for the small effect sizes found in SIT research.

Nonverbal Behavior in Social Influence Settings

If we want to study the role of agents' nonverbal behavior, we have to consider the types of nonverbal behavior agents exhibit in social influence settings. Agents who are aware they use a SIT make a deliberate attempt to mislead someone into compliance. In the definition used by experts such as Ekman (2001) and DePaulo (2003): they are lying. Research shows liars behave differently from truth tellers, also in terms of nonverbal behavior (DePaulo et al., 2003). However, liars do not necessarily show the same uniform behavior, and liars do not necessarily display behavior that is harmful to their cause. Nonverbal behavior can be determined by the emotions we experience (Ekman 2001), and liars might feel different emotions when they lie. Liars might feel guilty about their lies, or liars might feel pride when a lie is successful, or excitement about the challenge to succeed in deception. As emotions differ for liars, so does their nonverbal behavior. A guilty liar could show emotional behavior similar to sadness, such as a lower pitch, softer and slower speech, non-genuine smiles, and downward gazing (Ekman, 2001). This is what Fennis (2006) calls "distressed deception". An excited liar on the other hand could show cues to excitement such as a higher pitch, faster and louder speech, genuine smiles, and more use of illustrators, this is what Ekman (2001) calls "duping delight".

Recent research (Fennis, 2006) shows that participants who are asked to deceive in a social influence setting, i.e. a situation in which a SIT is used, show two distinct types of

nonverbal behavior similar to those described above: distressed deception *or* duping delight. It is vital to our knowledge of SIT's that we examine how these types of nonverbal behavior interact with SIT's, and what their influence is on compliance. Will duping delight have a positive impact on compliance and will distressed deception have a negative impact on compliance, as we are inclined to expect them to?

Social Influence Techniques

To examine how nonverbal behavior might interact with social influence techniques we first focus on the nature and application of SIT's. The likelihood of compliance to a request partially depends on how the request is embedded within a sales-script, i.e. its verbal presentation. For example, individuals are more likely to comply when the actual request is preceded by a smaller request. If you wanted participants to buy and sign postcards to send to political prisoners (the actual request), you would generally be more successful when you asked them to sign a petition for a better treatment of political prisoners (the smaller request) first. This method is the foot-in-the-door technique (Freedman & Fraser, 1966) and it is *the* classical example of a social influence technique.

There are numerous SIT's designed to increase compliance, and though they are different from each other, most SIT's share the following characteristics. Firstly, most social influence techniques consist of multiple decision moments. The foot-in-the-door technique includes two decision moments: the response to the small first *and* the response to the second large request. Another example is the continued-questions-procedure (Burger, 1999) that uses multiple guiding questions to foster compliance; every question asked constitutes a decision moment.

Secondly, all SIT's are thought to work because they appeal to short-cuts, known as heuristics, used to facilitate decision making (Cialdini, 2001). E.g. the foot-in-the-door technique appeals to the consistency heuristic (Cialdini, 2001; Burger, 1999). Participants say yes to the

first request and base their decision to comply with the larger request on their previous behavior, i.e. compliance to the smaller request. When compliance to the larger request appears consistent with compliance to the smaller request, compliance is more likely.

Thirdly, most SIT's are thought to work especially well under conditions of mindlessness (cf. Cialdini's automaticity, 2004), which is an important factor in SIT research. Of these three characteristics of SIT's: mindlessness, usage of heuristics, and multiple decision moments; mindlessness is the focus of the current research. The next section will further deal with the subject of mindlessness.

If we consider the small effects that are sometimes found (Burger, 1999) it could be assumed that nonverbal behavior influences the effect of SIT's, or vice versa. I expect that when combined with a social influence technique duping delight will facilitate or even enhance compliance, but distressed deception will hamper compliance. In other words, I expect that when nonverbal behavior is combined with a SIT, nonverbal behavior will act as a moderator of the SIT. Although a scenario where the effect of nonverbal behavior on compliance is more of an additive nature could be conceivable, I expect an interaction effect for the following reasons:

Firstly, as stipulated earlier, SIT's typically contain multiple decision moments, these multitudes of decision moments create a longer interaction than when no SIT is used, and hence the chance for nonverbal behavior to be noticed by the target of the influence attempt will be greater, as will its effects.

Secondly, SIT's hinge on the usage of heuristics, when SIT's are used, people employ heuristics to decide whether to comply or not. When people already use heuristics to decide whether to comply or not, I expect an increased probability that they will use other simple cues, such as nonverbal behavior, as well. If nonverbal behavioral cues indicate that the agent is less trustworthy, I expect that this will have a greater effect in terms of a decline in compliance than it

would when people make their decision to comply without usage of heuristics. This expectation is in line with theories of Petty and colleagues (Petty, Wegener, Fabrigar, Priester, & Cacioppo, 1993). Although Petty and colleagues argue that any variable can exert influence under any type of elaboration, cues, like source credibility or attractiveness, form the basis for persuasion based on peripheral processing when they stimulate processes like heuristic engagement or classical conditioning.

Thirdly, as stated, a shared characteristic for SIT's is that they work especially well under conditions of mindlessness. Processing verbal behavior is usually more demanding than processing appearance cues, nonverbal behavior, and vocal behavior (Gilbert & Krull, 1988; McArthur & Baron, 1983). Behavioral and person perception processes operate effectively without mindful consideration, and the investment of more cognitive resources do not necessarily improve the outcome of these processes (Patterson, 1995). In other words, the more automatically we process our messages, the more our ability to process verbal behavior deteriorates, but our ability to process nonverbal behavior remains perfectly intact and as such it's not implausible to expect its influence to grow.

Mindlessness

Mindfulness is a state of conscious awareness in which one is open to novel ideas, whereas in a state of mindlessness one is relying on old concepts and action programs (Langer, 1992). Mindlessness has proved to be a vital factor in compliance research. The first connection between mindlessness and compliance was established in the classic copier experiment by Langer, Blank, & Chanowitz (1978). Someone asked people waiting in line for the copy machine if he or she could go first. Compliance was much higher when this request was accompanied by a reason. Whether this reason was legitimate (‘because I’m in a rush’), or nonsensical (‘because I need to make some copies’) did not make a difference. Apparently, participants did not

thoroughly process the reasons given and reacted mindlessly to the word *because*. When the person skipping in line had to make a lot more copies (20 instead of 5), compliance dropped for the nonsensical reason, but remained higher for the legitimate one. Langer et al. concluded that it was mindlessness in combination with, what Cialdini (2001) calls “the because heuristic”, that enhanced compliance.

Several SIT’s are proven to be effective because they make participants mindless (e.g. the that’s-not-all technique (Pollock, Smith, Knowles, & Bruce, 1998), the disrupt-then-reframe technique (Fennis, Das, & Pruyn, 2004) and the fear-then-relief technique (Dolinski, 2001))

There are manifold manipulations that create mindlessness; two examples are the quick following of emotions, e.g. happiness-disappointment, fear-relief (Dolinski, 2001), and an odd element in a sales script (Fennis et al., 2004; Davis & Knowles, 1999). The copier experiment (Langer et al., 1978) did not use any manipulation to make participants behave mindless; people are often mindless in everyday life (Langer, 1992). Likewise, there are several ways in which people can be made to function mindful (again): by increasing the cost of compliance (Pollock et al., 1998; Langer et al., 1978) or by calling upon peoples’ cognitive recourses (Dolinski, et al., 2000 experiment 1 & 2). The return to mindfulness coincided with a drop in compliance in the above-mentioned experiments. The manipulation of a return to mindfulness creates the possibility to research the influence of mindlessness as apposed to mindfulness, while still subjecting participants to the same mindlessness inducing manipulations.

As people become mindless, they are less capable of thoroughly processing messages (Langer, 1992; 2000). This reduced capability of message processing is demonstrated by evidence that in conditions of mindlessness, individuals are less likely to voice critical comments or questions about the request that is made to them (Dolinski & Nawrat, 1998 exp. 5; Fennis et al., 2004). When persons become less capable of carefully processing messages, they begin to

rely more on peripheral cues such as requester's politeness or nonverbal behavior (Chaiken, 1987; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Sengupta & Johar, 2001). Therefore, it is expected that nonverbal behavior will have more influence on compliance in conditions of mindlessness than in conditions of mindfulness.

Fear-Then-Relief Technique

The fear-then-relief technique is one of the most extensively studied social influence techniques with regard to mindlessness, and therefore focus of the current research. The fear-then-relief technique has been studied by Dolinski et al. (Dolinski & Nawrat, 1998; Dolinski, 2001; Dolinski, Ciszek, Godlewski & Zwadzki, 2002). Their research showed that participants who went through the stages of feeling frightened followed by immediate relief were more likely to comply when they were confronted with a request after this manipulation.

Dolinski (2001) argued that when the sources of fear suddenly retreat or disappear the person is left without an 'action program'. Fear launches reactions aimed at stopping current actions and simultaneously increases cautiousness, to stand still or to run away (e.g. Denny, 1991; Tomkins, 1991; Tuma & Maser, 1985). In the FTR situation the action program launched by fear ceases to be adequate for the changed circumstances, this causes a break between programs. Such a condition will force the subject to act automatically and to rely on old concepts and action programs. Dolinski (2001) assumed that this is how FTR makes individuals function mindlessly.

Experiments by Dolinski et al. (2002 experiment 3 & 4) showed that mindless FTR participants needed more time in a cognitively demanding exercise; recognizing the smiling face between frightened faces or vice versa (experiment 3) or performing a task of mental addition and subtraction of three two-digit numbers (experiment 4). Therefore Dolinski et al. (2002) concluded that FTR indeed created mindlessness.

In two experiments (Dolinski et al., 2002; experiment 1 & 2) participants in the FTR condition were made to function mindful right after the FTR manipulation by asking them a question requiring cognitive recourses. This question was asked by the blind man, played by a confederate, that had just grabbed participants by the shoulder from behind. The blind man asked participants to calculate the number of minutes until a certain time in the future, or asked them "is that you?" whereby participants had to think if they could know the blind man. Both questions established a return to mindfulness. This return to mindfulness coincided with lower compliance, compared to the mindless FTR group.

To my knowledge, the FTR experiment by Dolinksi et al. is the only experiment that created (a return to) mindfulness without increasing the cost of compliance. Other mindfulness-inducing manipulations, like the Langer et al. copier experiment, typically increase the cost of compliance to establish (a return to) mindfulness (recall that the cost of compliance increased when the person skipping in line had to make more copies). The possibility of creating a return to mindfulness without increasing the cost of compliance is what makes FTR especially suitable to research the influence of mindlessness versus mindfulness. Increasing the cost of compliance will result in lowered compliance whether participants are mindless or not, making comparison of the mindfulness and mindlessness condition more problematic.

Overview and Predictions

My overall purpose is to investigate the influence of distressed deception and duping delight on compliance with the SIT of fear-then-relief in combination with mindlessness and mindfulness.

The FTR technique has proved to yield significant increases in compliance in several experiments. When FTR is combined with nonverbal behavior, I expect agents who show signs of excitement, i.e. duping delight, to be more persuasive than agents who shows signs of distress,

i.e. distressed deception, because agents in distress probably appear less credible and less trustworthy (DePaulo et al., 2003). As stated, the shared characteristics of SIT's: reliance on mindlessness, usage of heuristics, and multiple decision moments create a setting where the influence of nonverbal behavior will probably be greater than when no SIT is used.

I expect that under conditions of mindlessness, there is an enhanced focus on peripheral cues like nonverbal behavior; consequently, under conditions of mindlessness I expect a larger impact of nonverbal behavior. In a similar fashion, I expect less impact of nonverbal behavior under conditions of *mindfulness*. As mindlessness is also a required condition for the functioning of the FTR technique, and as this technique in turn is expected to enhance the results of nonverbal behavior, a three-way interaction between nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind is expected.

In terms of actual behavior, this three-way interaction implies that I expect higher compliance when participants are confronted with duping delight after a FTR manipulation, when they are mindless. As distressed deception and mindfulness are both thought to hamper compliance, we should see lowered compliance in conditions where these variables are operational. When no SIT is used, compliance is expected to be lowered as well.

Method

Overview and Participants

The objective was to study the influence of nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind on compliance. Compliance was determined by the amount of cards participants bought from a confederate posing as an agent for a charitable cause. Consequently, the experiment was a 2 (Nonverbal Behavior: duping delight vs. distressed deception) x 2 (FTR: present vs. absent) x 2 (State of Mind: mindlessness vs. mindfulness) field experiment based on the experiment of

Dolinski et al. (2002, experiment 1). It was a between subjects factorial design with a continuous dependent variable.

Participants consisted of shopping mall visitors in the center of a large city in the Netherlands. A total of 185 individuals (75 male, 110 female) participated in the experiment (age M = 40.59 years, SD = 15.24). Participants counted as such when they had listened to the entire story of the agent.

When participants entered the shopping mall a blind man, actually a confederate, who performed the FTR and the state of mind manipulation, approached them. After this, when participants continued their way, the participants were approached by a confederate posing as an agent for a charitable cause, who made the actual sales request. Participants were asked to buy and sign postcards to send to political prisoners. The experiment used different agents, two male and two female, to rule out any individual or gender effects on compliance. The agent voiced the following script, which was the same in all conditions:

“Good morning/afternoon, May I ask you a question?” (If the reply was positive, the agent continued)

“I am a volunteer for Amnesty International, do you know Amnesty?” (In case participants answered “no”, which was rare, the agent said: “Amnesty is an organization dedicated to the protection of human rights.”) “We are currently doing a postcard action. This means we send postcards to prisoners held captive for expressing their opinion, prisoners who never had a fair trial, or prisoners who are being tortured. Would you like to sign some postcards? The postcards are one euro (approximately 1.30 dollar) apiece, including postal stamp. You can send as many cards as you want.”

Next in this section, I will describe how the independent variables differed in every condition, and which variables were measured and how they were measured.

Conditions

Social influence technique. Before the agents that made the request approached participants, they were approached by another confederate playing a blind man. The blind man only approached participants that *entered* the shopping mall; this was to make sure that participants were not suspicious of the procedure. Shopping mall personnel were informed of the experiment so they would not interfere with the procedure.

Half of the participants were allocated to the FTR social influence technique. The same method as Dolinski et al. (2002, experiment 1) was used. In the FTR condition the 'blind' confederate grabbed participants, which should induce fear. The relief would come as participants turned around and saw that the man that grabbed them was a blind man, clearly recognizable by large dark sunglasses and a marked stick, not posing a threat to them.

In the *non*-FTR condition the blind man walked towards participants from upfront, not grabbing them, so not inducing any fear or relief. The blind man was deliberately present to rule out any effect he might have on compliance. This is a deviance from the study of Dolinski et al. (2002, experiment 1), where no blind man was present in their control condition. The blind confederate randomly assigned participants to a condition by using a set order of the manipulations he had to perform.

State of mind: mindfulness or mindlessness. Mindfulness was created by calling upon the cognitive recourses of the participants. This was done by the blind man that also performed the FTR / non-FTR manipulation. In the mindfulness condition he would ask participants: "do you know how many minutes it is until …?" stating a time between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in the future. Participants then had to calculate the number of minutes, making them mindful. The mindfulness manipulation was done in both the FTR *and* non-FTR condition, this is another deviance from the study of Dolinski et al. (2002, experiment 1), who did not have a *non*-FTR, mindfulness

condition, only a FTR mindfulness condition. Dolinski et al. did not verify whether the mindfulness manipulation had any effect when it was not combined with FTR.

In the mindlessness condition, the participants did not have to calculate the number of minutes. In this case, the blind man excused himself for grabbing them in the FTR condition, or just said nothing in the non-FTR condition.

Nonverbal behavior. After participants had experienced the FTR or non-FTR manipulation, combined with either the mindfulness or mindlessness manipulation, the confederate that made the request approached them. This agent was about 20 meters away from the blind man, close enough to see which shopping mall visitors were approached, but far enough as to not raise suspicion with participants.

The agents that made the request varied their nonverbal behavior. They showed either the nonverbal behavior of distressed deception or the nonverbal behavior of duping delight. Distressed deception consisted of a lower pitched voice, softer and slower speech, downward gazing, fake (non-Duchenne) smiles, and a static posture. Duping delight consisted of a higher pitch, faster and louder speech, genuine (Duchenne) smiles, and functional arm and body movements (Ekman, 2001) (e.g. when the agents ask participants to sign a postcard, they show the palm of one hand and make a writing movement on it with the other hand). Agents' nonverbal behavior was practiced, and filmed for review before any participants were approached, this was to verify that when the agents simulated distressed deception or duping delight, it was coherent with the characteristics described above.

As stated in the opening section, most SIT's have multiple decision moments; the FTR technique is an exception to this. To make sure there was some interaction between the agent and the participant, the sales-script contained two questions ("May I ask you a question?" and "Do you know Amnesty?") the questions were in the script intentionally for two reasons. Firstly, to

simulate the multiple decision moments that take place in most SIT's; and secondly, to increase the chance participants noticed the nonverbal behavior of the agents.

Dependent Measures

Compliance. Another confederate that stood at approximately two meters from the agent, and had no role in the sales pitch, wrote down how many cards were bought. The number of cards written and bought counted as compliance, the dependent variable in this study.

Message processing. As stated in the introduction section, mindless participants are less likely to ask any questions about the request that is made to them (Dolinski & Nawrat, 1998 exp 5; Fennis et al., 2004). To test whether the mindfulness and mindlessness manipulations were successful the confederate made a notation of the number of explicitly stated objections, critical comments, and questions in response to the sales script.

Demographic variables. In addition, the confederate asked, after the interaction with the agent was over, if the participants would be so kind to give their age. The confederate then wrote down age and sex. If participants refused to give their age, which was rare, the agent and the confederate made an estimation of their age and noted this.

Results

Message Processing

The amount of explicitly stated objections, critical comments, and questions in response to the sales script is an indication for the state of mind of participants, with a larger amount of questions indicating mindfulness. These data were analyzed using a simple one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), with state of mind as independent variable. Indeed it was found that in the mindfulness conditions the amount of critical comments and questions in response to the sales script tended to be higher than in the mindlessness conditions $M = 0.30$ ($SD = 0.74$) vs. $M = 0.19$ ($SD = 0.62$), however this difference was not significant $F(1,183) = 1.34$, $p = .25$. Also the

amount of critical comments and questions tended to be higher in the distressed deception conditions than in the duping delight condition $M = 0.33$ ($SD = 0.86$) vs. $M = 0.14$ ($SD = 0.36$), and this difference approached significance $F(1,183) = 3.59$, $p = .06$. The increased amount of critical questions posed by participants in the distressed deception condition, could be an indication that the requests of distressed agents create more suspicion, because they are perceived as less trustworthy.

Compliance

All data were analyzed using univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), with nonverbal behavior (duping delight vs. distressed deception), FTR (present vs. absent), and state of mind (mindlessness vs. mindfulness) as independent variables, and compliance as dependent variable.

A three way interaction between nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind was expected. It was expected that the usage of the FTR technique would create a setting where the impact of nonverbal behavior was larger. When combined with FTR, duping delight would enable or enhance compliance whereas distressed deception would hamper compliance. As mindlessness is a key factor for the functioning of the FTR technique and is expected to enhance the results of nonverbal behavior, mindfulness should diminish the effects of nonverbal behavior and FTR on compliance.

Indeed, nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind form a significant three way interaction that supports the previously stated hypothesis $F(1,177) = 7.97$, $p < .01$. No other significant interactions or main effects were found. A visual presentation of the results can be seen in figure 1.

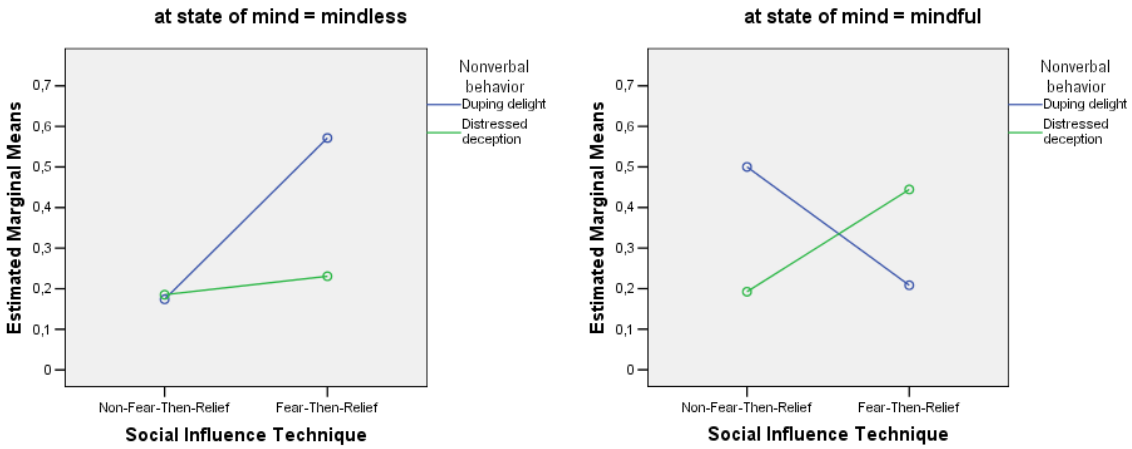

Figure 1. Visual Presentation of the Estimated Marginal Means of Compliance (i.e. Number of Cards Written and Bought) in the Mindlessness Condition (left) and Mindfulness Condition (right) for the Non-Fear-Then-Relief and the Fear-Then-Relief Condition with Different Colored Lines for Nonverbal Behavior.

We will look at simple main effects to further investigate the results within the several cells, and to verify whether these results are as expected.

As you may recall it was expected that the nonverbal behavior of duping delight would result in higher compliance for participants that were mindless as well as confronted with the fear-then-relief manipulation, whereas distressed deception would hamper compliance for these participants. If we look at the results of nonverbal behavior in the FTR, mindlessness condition, we see that this is so. Analysis of simple main effects showed that FTR mindless participants approached with duping delight bought more cards then those approached with distressed deception $M = 0.57$ ($SD = 0.75$) vs. 0.23 ($SD = 0.43$), $F(1,177) = 4.19$, $p < .05$.

It was expected that the effect of nonverbal behavior would only occur for mindless participants that were confronted with the FTR manipulation, for mindless participants not confronted with a FTR manipulation we should find no difference in effect of nonverbal

behavior. Indeed, analysis of simple main effects showed no significant difference in the mean number of cards bought for different types of nonverbal behavior in the non-FTR, mindless condition: $M = 0.17$ ($SD = 0.39$) for duping delight vs. $M = 0.19$ ($SD = 0.40$) for distressed deception, $F(1,177) = 0.00$, $p = .96$. This affirms the expectation that the usage of FTR creates a setting where the influence of nonverbal behavior increases.

We compared the amount of compliance for duping delight and distressed deception for mindless FTR participants, this showed us that duping delight resulted in significantly higher compliance. In a similar fashion, we should see higher compliance when FTR is used compared to the non-FTR condition for participants that are in the mindless condition and are approached by agents showing duping delight. Again, the expectations are confirmed, simple main effects show a significant difference: $M = 0.57$ ($SD = 0.75$) for the duping delight, *FTR*, mindlessness condition, vs. $M = 0.17$ ($SD = 0.39$) for the duping delight, *non-FTR*, mindlessness condition, $F(1,177) = 5.88$, $p < .01$.

To summarize, for mindless participants the combination of FTR and duping delight results in significantly higher compliance compared to those conditions where either duping delight or FTR is not applied. So, does the mindfulness manipulation reduce the compliance that the FTR induced mindlessness caused? If we look at the simple main effects of the mindfulness manipulation we see that compliance is lower in the duping delight, FTR, *mindfulness* condition compared to the duping delight, FTR, *mindlessness* condition, $M = 0.21$ ($SD = 0.42$) vs. $M = 0.57$ ($SD = 0.75$), $F(1,177) = 4.85$, $p < .05$. The mindfulness manipulation does indeed seem to attenuate the effects of FTR induced mindlessness.

I had expected the mindfulness manipulation to reduce the effects, i.e. higher compliance of the SIT and the nonverbal behavior completely. However, effects in the mindfulness condition do not seem to be entirely as expected, as the results in figure 1 show, the reduction of effects

only seems to occur in the FTR mindfulness condition. There were no significant simple main effects in the mindfulness condition, however analysis of simple main effects show an almost significant difference in compliance between duping delight and distressed deception in the non-FTR, mindfulness condition: compliance is higher for duping delight than for distressed deception, $M = 0.50$ ($SD = 0.83$) vs. $M = 0.19$ ($SD = 0.40$), $F(1,177) = 3.52$, $p = .06$. Although non-significant, this could be an indication that the mindfulness manipulation only had the expected effects for the FTR participants; this will be further discussed in the discussion section.

Discussion

Social influence techniques are designed to enhance people's compliance, however, research has shown this is not always very effective (Burger, 1999). One would expect that agents that show signs of excitement are more persuasive than agents that show signs of distress. The current research shows this is so, when this nonverbal behavior is combined with the SIT of FTR, and mindlessness. Nonverbal behavior proved to be a critical factor determining the success-rate of the FTR technique.

Nonverbal behavior has up until now not been studied in combination with the fear-then-relief technique. In fact, the influence of nonverbal behavior has, as far as I know, up until now, never been studied in combination with any SIT. The current research indicates that nonverbal behavior is an important factor for the FTR technique, and as such could be an important factor for other influence techniques as well. Indeed influence agents' nonverbal behavior might be a crucial factor in social influence settings, and could therefore provide an explanation for the small effect sizes typically found in SIT research. Obviously, further research has to verify this assumption.

Despite the fact that nonverbal behavior in its own right has received plenty of attention in the scientific literature (there are several scientific journals dedicated solely to nonverbal

behavior), it appears to be an overlooked factor when SIT's are concerned. The objective of the current study was and is to change this.

Most SIT's share in common that they have multiple decision moments and make use of heuristics (Cialdini, 2001, 2004). The FTR technique is an exception to both these characteristics; therefore, generalization to other SIT's must be done with some caution.

Furthermore, under some restriction this study was a successful replication of the experiment by Dolinski et al. (2002, experiment 1). The restriction consist of an assumption on the nonverbal behavior in the experiment of Dolinski et al.. If we assume the nonverbal behavior in the experiment of Donlinski et al. was duping delight or at least not distressed deception, the results of this study can be considered similar; i.e. high compliance in the FTR condition and lower compliance in both the control condition (non-FTR, mindlessness), and the mindfulness (FTR-mindfulness) condition. In addition to the Dolinski et al. experiment, there also was a mindfulness manipulation for participants that were not in the FTR condition.

I had expected mindful participants to be less compliant. However, in the *non*-FTR, mindfulness condition compliance tended to be higher for duping delight. Even though this difference only approached significance, I will discuss this result. There is a speculative explanation for a seeming lack of the functioning of the mindfulness manipulation in the control condition. As written in the introduction of this article we assume that FTR works because the quick following of emotions leaves a person in need of a new action program. The lack of an action program causes a person to react automatically. If we elaborate on this, the mindfulness manipulation is like 'inserting' a new action program into the participants. If you would try to insert a new action program, without erasing the current action program, you would probably not be successful. Indeed, it did happen that when the blind confederate asked the number of minutes for a time between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in the future, participants just mentioned the number of

minutes until the nearest hour instead of the hour that the blind confederate asked for. In order not to risk exposure, the confederate was unable to tell participants their calculations were incorrect. Still, this reasoning might explain why the results in the mindfulness non-FTR condition tended to be different from the mindfulness FTR condition in terms to reaction to nonverbal behavior, it does not explain why compliance is higher for the duping delight condition. Certainly one might expect that if the mindfulness manipulation did not work, behavior would have been the same as in the mindlessness non-FTR condition. A possible explanation is that the request of the blind man served as a foot-in-the-door manipulation (Burger, 1999).

I assumed that duping delight would be more successful in gaining compliance in the mindless FTR condition; this study proved it did so. However, I have not established *why* this is. I assumed that agents showing duping delight would be perceived as more trustworthy than agents showing distressed deception. The amount of critical comments and questions that had a propensity to be higher for participants approached by agents displaying distressed deception might entice us to this conclusion. However further research has to verify if perceived trustworthiness is indeed a mediating variable for compliance in this experimental setting.

Causal Relations Between the Independent Variables

The current study cannot provide certainty on the exact role of the independent variables, i.e. nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind. Why do people need to be in a mindless state for FTR to have an effect on compliance? Is this because FTR works because participants are mindless? Or does the FTR technique work because mindless participants focus more on peripheral cues such as nonverbal behavior? Does the functioning of the FTR technique depend on the type of nonverbal behavior, or does the effect of nonverbal behavior hinges on the application of FTR? These questions cannot be answered by the current research. Causal relations

between independent variables cannot be established from an interaction effect (see Baron & Kenny, 1986) However, the interaction effect found in this study reveals that compliance as a result of nonverbal behavior, FTR, and state of mind is clearly a function of moderation.

Simulation of Nonverbal Behavior

The confederates simulated the nonverbal behavior of distressed deception and duping delight. Even though they were indeed deceiving the participants it is possible that the nonverbal behavior they displayed was not the nonverbal behavior that would have been displayed in an compliance interaction where both interactors are unaware of the focus on nonverbal behavior. Firstly, there is the fact that nonverbal behavior is simulated and there is no certainty whether this simulation is convincing or similar to the nonverbal behavior in a real situation. For example duping delight is characterized by a genuine, Duchenne smile, however, only 10 percent of a research population in a study by Ekman, Roper & Hagen (1980) was able to voluntarily move a certain part of the orbicularis oculi muscle that is moved in a Duchenne smile. Secondly, as stated in the opening section nonverbal behavior might be the result of an interaction. In an interaction, nonverbal behavior might start of as neutral and go to duping delight or distressed deception, depending on the type of feedback. In this experiment nonverbal behavior was independent of the interaction and nonverbal behavior was either immediate duping delight, or immediate distressed deception, this might lead to different effects. Further “double blind” studies where both agents and targets are unaware of the experimental focus on nonverbal behavior must be done to further examine if the found effects will be the same as in a ‘real-life’ interaction.

Although there is a downside to simulating nonverbal behavior, described in the previous paragraph, it also offers some advantages. As duping delight and distressed deception typically emerge when someone is using a SIT there would be no duping delight or distressed deception in control conditions, therefore nonverbal behavior’s influence in a control condition can only be

established by simulation of nonverbal behavior. If we were to rely on the emergence of nonverbal behavior instead of simulating it, no interaction could have been found.

Ethics

Even if the scare participants got from the FTR treatment could be unpleasant, I believe that it is within the boundaries of what is appropriate for scientific research. I did not think the participants were seriously affected by the manipulation other than that they became temporarily mindless. There are various methods that create mindlessness, why did I choose this one? The answer is that this was the only manipulation that had proved to be able to establish a return to mindfulness without changing the request size. Of course, using the manipulation of a changed request size was a possibility, but its disadvantage is that changing the request size also influences compliance, making comparison between various conditions more problematic. I think the advantages justify the use of a marginally more unpleasant manipulation. However, for further research on the subject I would propose more emphasis to methods that are less personally intrusive. E.g. one could think of using the disrupt-then-reframe technique and adding a mindfulness manipulation to this technique. The classic example of disruption is stating a price of the object for sale in pennies: “these cards are 300 pennies… that’s 3 $, it’s a bargain.” A mindfulness manipulation, by calling upon the cognitive recourses of participants, could consist of the following: “these cards are 300 pennies… do you know how much that is in dollars?” and after waiting for the answer saying: “it’s a bargain”. This is just one example of how the mindfulness manipulation could be added to current research on mindlessness and SIT’s. Nonetheless, further research has to clarify whether a mindfulness manipulation like the one used in the current study is applicable to other mindlessness inducing techniques. Asides from ethical reasons there is another reason to prefer other mindlessness inducing manipulations. The reactions of participants to the FTR manipulation by the blind man differed per participant. Some

participants turned around with quite a scare, but there were also participants that calmly turned around to have a look who grabbed their shoulder. It seems to me that a manipulation like DTR is probably more consistent in its effect on participants, and would be preferred over a more erratic technique like FTR.

Implications

This study showed that besides mindlessness, nonverbal behavior is important in social influence settings. If we transform this theory into practice, it implies sales-people have to consider their nonverbal behavior when they are using social influence techniques. Nonverbal behavior similar to distressed deception will probably be harmful to their cause, whereas duping delight will probably generate more success. However, it cannot be concluded that duping delight is the most successful influential behavior, and that it is such in all settings. The two types of nonverbal behavior are a simulation of nonverbal behavior that emerge in deception. This was not a study for what type of nonverbal behavior is most successful in gaining compliance. This *was* a study that tried to find an explanation for small effect sizes typically found in SIT research. I think that nonverbal behavior is an overlooked factor that might seem insignificant, but could turn out to be crucial in SIT research.

Ever since Social Influence Techniques first appeared in scientific research, investigators have tried to clarify and specify the functioning of these techniques and discovered new social influence techniques along the way. If this past research can tell us anything, it is that, for social influence techniques, the devil is in the details. Even small variations in the way the request is embedded in a sales-script, can generate very different results. Yet, the primary focus on verbal presentation proves to be too narrow. The results of this study show that differences in nonverbal behavior can generate very different results as well. In other words, this study clearly shows there is more to social influence techniques than initially meets the *ear*.

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Note

This study was not funded or supported by Amnesty International. Amnesty *did* provide the addresses of political prisoners and the 131 cards sold in this experiment were sent to these political prisoners.

Appendix 1 scripts

Script confederate 1

Confederate 1 has a marked stick and wears large dark sunglasses. Confederate 1 acts as a blind man. When the other confederates are ready, confederate 1 will come into action. Confederate 1 is to perform four different types of treatments. A participant is counted as such when they have listened to the entire story of the sales confederate. The sales confederate will then signal the “blind” confederate that he can move on to the next condition. A treatment will go on until it results in a participant.

When the previous participant is out of sight the next person entering the shopping mall on its own is approached. This is to ensure a random subjection to the treatments. The treatments are:

1. Approach persons from up front and make sure that your are noticed. (non-FTR, mindless)
2. Approach persons from up front and ask: “excuse me do you know how many minutes it is until ..” (stating a time between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in the future. (non-FTR, mindful)
3. Grab persons from behind (unseen) at the shoulders, wait untill they turned around and say : “sorry wrong person.” (FTR, mindless)

4. Grab persons from behind (unseen) at the shoulders, wait untill they turned around and say : “excuse me do you know how many minutes it is until ..” (stating a time between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in the future. (FTR, mindful)

Script agent

This agent plays the role of a volunteer for amnesty international. The agent approaches persons who where approached by confederate 1. Whilst making the sales pitch the agent will show distressed deception or duping delight.

Distressed deception consists of:

1. a lower pitch
2. softer and slower speech
3. non-genuine smiles
4. downward gazing

*Duping delight c*onsists of:

1. a higher pitch
2. faster and louder speech
3. genuine smiles
4. more use of illustrators

Salesscript:

“Good morning/afternoon, May I ask you a question?” (If the reply is positive, continue)

“I am a volunteer for Amnesty International, do you know Amnesty?” (In case participants answer “no” say: “Amnesty is an organization dedicated to the protection of human rights.”) “We are currently doing a postcard action. This means we send postcards to prisoners held captive for expressing their opinion, prisoners who never had a fair trial, or prisoners who

are being tortured. Would you like to sign some postcards? The postcards are one euro apiece, including postal stamp. You can send as many cards as you want."

When the interaction with the participant is over, signal to the "blind" confederate that he can move on to the next treatment.

Script Confederate 2

Stand near the agent. After the interaction of participants with the agent, ask participants if they would be so kind to give their age. Write down age and sex. Write down the number of card written and bought. Write down the amount of refutation.