

The Role of Genuine Human Faces and Social Presence in Charitable Websites

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Abstract. *In the digital age, charitable organizations increasingly rely on websites as crucial platforms for fundraising, outreach, and communication. Integrating human traits to digital interfaces as a mean to improve the user's attitude and experience is a well-researched topic with various case studies. This study investigates the impact of images featuring genuine human faces and perceived social scenarios on user engagement metrics within the context of charitable websites, focusing on trust perception, social media sharing behavior, and donation willingness. A controlled A/B/C test was conducted, presenting participants with three versions of a charitable website: one displaying a stack of books (Version A), another showcasing a stock image of children in school (Version B), and the third featuring a genuine photo of Romanian children engaged in learning activities (Version C). Data was collected from 150 respondents (50 for each version), and quantitative analysis was performed to evaluate the effectiveness of each background image in influencing user behavior. Results shown that authentic photographs evoke more trust and willingness to donate to a cause among Romanian respondents. The conclusions of this paper can be used to further improve the results of online crowdfunding efforts of charitable organizations.*

Keywords: using human faces in websites, perceived social presence in websites, trust in charitable websites, online emotional connection, charitable websites engagement.

Introduction

In the increasingly digital landscape of charitable giving, the design and presentation of online platforms play a pivotal role in soliciting support and fostering a sense of connection with potential donors (Bennett, 2009). Among the many elements that constitute website design, the inclusion of human faces stands out as a potent tool for engaging users and eliciting empathetic responses. The digital realm presents a unique challenge for charities seeking to convey authenticity and establish trust with their online audience. Unlike face-to-face interactions where subtle cues and nonverbal communication contribute to the establishment of rapport, virtual interactions rely heavily on visual stimuli and design elements to convey credibility and sincerity. Since humans tend to be more willing to donate when seeing human eyes, more than inanimate objects (Kelsey, Vaish,

Grossmann, 2018), charitable websites must also follow this design practice in order to drive more donations towards their specific goals.

Designing a trustworthy charitable website in which visitors can be convinced by the good intentions and the urgency of the respective cause can raise some questions, considering the existing danger that a ‘dense’ web page with much detail about an issue may cause information overload and confound the viewer’s understanding of the topic (Hausman, 2000). This is why, in this article, we will try to test how genuine human faces can shift the attitude of a visitor to a donation website into trusting it to a higher extent and willing to contribute to the cause and compare their attitude to a control webpage that features no human faces.

Literature review

Humans, by nature, are social beings. This inherent sociability manifests in various forms, from face-to-face interactions in physical spaces to the dynamic and ever-evolving digital landscapes. Face perception is a crucial part of social cognition, and on a daily basis, we encounter many faces. Faces convey characteristics of the viewed person, like their age, gender, emotional state, and identity. Face identity recognition is particularly important for social functioning as it enables us to identify a familiar person from an unknown individual (Lander, Butcher, 2020). In the modern internet, recognizing genuine human faces from artificial, fake, AI generated, DeepFakes, disguised images and Doppelgangers, has been a topic of research, as they can be maliciously used to attack individuals and deter true information (Kim, Han, Woo, 2019). More recent studies focused on analyzing emerging technologies such as virtual reality as a mean to promote charitable crowdfunding efforts as a persuasion tactic for nonprofit organizations (Kristofferson, Daniels, Morales, 2022). In a study published by McLellan et al. (2010), perceivers were able to distinguish between static genuine and posed happy, sad, and fear facial expressions. Genuine facial expressions were also correctly identified by participants in a later study by McLellan et. al. (2012) from neuroimaging work which showed different patterns of neural activation comparing exposure to genuine versus disguised facial emotions.

Social presence has been defined as the extent to which a medium allows users to experience others as being psychologically present (Fulk et al., 1987). Following the disentanglement of social presence theory recent research identified two other constructs, social space and sociability, that are closely linked with social presence yet separated from it (Kreijns, Xu, Weidlich, 2022). Some researchers characterize the social presence of a medium as its capacity to transmit information about facial expressions, posture, dress and non-verbal cues (Short et al., 1976). The need for connection, communication, and the sharing of experiences has been a driving force throughout human history. This social propensity is deeply ingrained in our psychology, influencing not only our offline interactions but also shaping our online behaviors (Porter, 2010).

Introducing human-like qualities into computer interfaces has been a well researched topic ever since computers had been commercially available. Sproull et. al. (1996) shown that perceived social presence in an interactive career counseling system that featured a „talking face display” with a pleasant face and a stern face, compared to a plain text interface. The results concluded that people had better self worth social evaluation, intellectual evaluation when interacting with the „talking face display”. Compared to text, pictures have a stronger effect in creating a sense of social presence (Short et al. 1976). Analyzing the impact of social presence in e-commerce, three versions of a shopping website were tested, depicting low, medium and high social presence. In the low social presence, only functional text and a basic picture appeared, the medium social presence showed a basic product picture with emotive/descriptive text and in the high social presence

condition, the e-commerce website illustrated human figures interacting with the product, including emotive text. The researchers reached the conclusion that, on e-commerce platforms, increased levels of social presence, partially achieved through the inclusion of human figures, had a positive influence on perceived usefulness, trust, and enjoyment. Moreover, as the perceived social presence intensifies, it is expected to have a greater impact on emotions and behavior (Argo et al. 2005). More so, incorporating human faces into online environments provides online users with a stronger sense of community (Donath 2001).

Benefits of social presence in web design

Integrating human traits and identities to computer systems and user interfaces as a mean to elevate the user experience is a well researched topic and one that interested major companies and software developers. Researching existing literature and case studies, we have identified four major benefits of using human faces in web design:

Enhanced User Engagement

The inclusion of human faces in web design serves as a powerful catalyst for increased user engagement. Human beings are naturally drawn to faces, and incorporating them into the visual elements of a website creates an immediate point of connection. This connection, often facilitated through emotions and expressions conveyed by facial features, captivates users and encourages them to explore the content further. As a result, websites employing human faces tend to foster a more immersive and compelling user experience. (Cyr, Head, Larios, Pan, 2009). In a study, Walker, Sproull and Subramani (1994) concluded that „Faces were more engaging than text as measured by how long people spent answering questions and in how much they wrote in response to open-ended questions.” in an experiment that measured people’s performance on interacting with three versions of a user interface: text based, a neutral face and a stern face. Tsai, Liu, Chuan, (2021) concluded that even chatbots with human-like (anthropomorphic) profile design increased the consumer’s engagement with websites.

Establishing Trust and Relatability

Trust is a concept that has been widely studied, however it remains a difficult concept to describe due to its multi-faceted, evolving, and dynamic nature. Although many definitions had been formulated, the most commonly used definition of trust in various contexts is the “willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor” (Mayer et. al, 1995).

A widely acknowledged definition of online trust, which incorporates cognitive and emotional aspects, mentions that trust involves "an attitude of confident expectation in an online situation or risk that one's vulnerabilities will not be exploited" (Corritore et al. 2003, p. 740). Online trust measures the amount of consumer confidence in a website and willingness to rely on the vendor in conditions where the consumer may be placed in a vulnerable position to the vendor such as entrusting with personal, credit card information, and financial commitment by paying in advance (Jarvenpaa et. al. 1999). Considering a crowdfunding charitable website, the visitor must be willing to place his trust into the organization that is managing the website for properly managing it’s funds and securing their personal information. In line with marketing studies, some research has uncovered a relationship between aesthetic beauty of a website and e-trust (Karvonen 2000). Human faces contribute significantly to the establishment of trust and relatability in the digital realm. When users encounter faces on a website, it triggers a sense of authenticity and

human connection. This is particularly crucial for websites representing businesses, brands, or individuals. Jun et. al. (2017) concluded that people would be less likely to fact-check information in websites with perceived social presence, therefore placing a greater amount of trust in them.

Facilitating Emotional Connection

Visual design of the website has the potential to contribute to emotional appeal of a site (Garrett 2003). Emotions play a central role in shaping user experiences. Human faces, with their ability to express a wide range of emotions, serve as powerful tools for eliciting emotional responses from users. Whether through smiling faces conveying positivity or concerned expressions emphasizing empathy, emotional connection enhances the overall impact of the content. Emotions may be amplified or de-amplified; they may be masked, neutralized, or simulated. Masking of emotions may be one way to recruit the help of others or otherwise gain a social advantage (Krumhuber and Manstead, 2009) Websites that successfully tap into these emotional cues create a more memorable and resonant user experience (Walter, Spool, 2011).

The original design of the Facebook deactivation page was considered simplistic: a simple message stating „We’re sorry you’re leaving. tell us why Facebook was not useful.”. By adding the profile pictures of a few close friends and changing the main message to „Are you sure you want to deactivate your account? Your (number of friends) friends will no longer be able to keep in touch with you.” managed to lower the deactivation rate by 7% (Anderson, 2011). Users are more likely to trust and relate to a website that incorporates human faces, who perceives the website as more personal, sociable and warm, creating a feeling of human contact (Yoo, Alavi, 2001). Further, research has begun to explore the impact of social cues and “warmth” of websites that impart a feeling of social presence related to the user’s experience of the website, and the hypothesis that pictures and text content can convey a personal presence in the same way as personal photographs and letters can (Gefen and Staub 2003).

Emotional connection with perceived social presence was also studied in the case of interaction with a personality-driven conversational agent in a VR social simulator. An extrovert-based personality conversational agent elicits a higher sense of behavioral involvement in users, compared to a less emotionally-personified agent with no non-verbal behavior (Sajjadi et. al., 2019).

Guiding User Attention

Strategic placement of human faces can be employed as a design tactic to guide user attention effectively. By directing the gaze of a face towards specific content or calls to action, designers can subtly influence the user's focus and navigation path. This not only enhances the visibility of key elements on the website but also aids in steering users through the intended user journey, thereby optimizing the overall user experience. „You look where they look” was the conclusion of a study done for the Baby.com website, where just by replacing the way a baby was facing drastically shifted the user’s eye tracking journey, making them more focused on the actual marketing communication and product features (Strandvall, 2010).

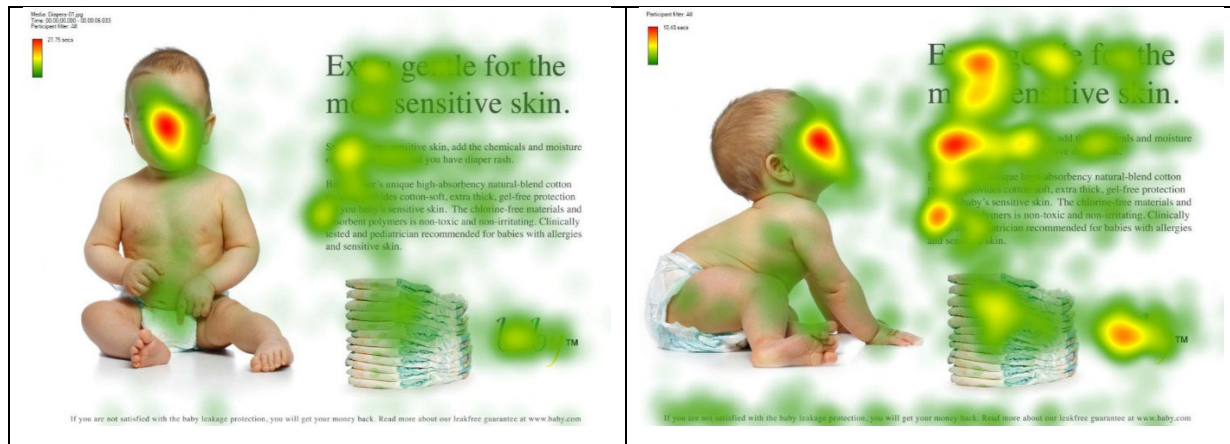


Figure 1. Baby.com case study results

Source: Strandvall, 2010.

Designing trust in charitable websites

Psychology, through its research on marketing, has extensive applications to help charities and various organizations with donation requests. Burnett and Wood (1988) highlight how donating to charity involves a unique social exchange. Unlike regular transactions, there's no direct reward involved in giving. It's not just about exchanging goods or money; it's about addressing serious issues and making a difference. This personal connection means emotions and values play a big role in deciding to donate.

Since donating is often seen as a form of pro-social behavior (Burnett & Wood, 1988), individuals may be more inclined to give when images evoke specific emotions. Charitable donation advertisements frequently feature images of individuals, ranging from celebrities to depictions of hardships such as starvation, war, or disability. In our research, we aimed to investigate the impact of these images on respondents. Building on the findings of Eayrs and Ellis (1990), we hypothesized that the emotions evoked by these images could offer insights into their effect on viewers. For instance, a sad image of a child might trigger empathy and lead to a willingness to donate, while a happy image may not elicit the same response. However, this can be debated. A happy child in a charitable advertisement could also inspire greater donations by showcasing the positive outcomes of giving. The effectiveness of presenting positive or negative outcomes of the donation act was also analyzed by Erlandsson, Nilsson, Västfjäll (2018), results from four studies indicated that positive appeals generate more favorable attitudes towards the advertisement and the organization, but negative appeals are more effective or equally effective in prompting actual donations. Surprisingly, people's attitude towards the appeal doesn't reliably predict donation behavior, challenging marketing theories linking attitudes to purchase behavior. When developing our experiment, we took into consideration these aspects and we included both of these variables (happy/neutral children) to measure which version evoked more emotion.

One of the biggest inspiration for this research was a study published by Kwak et. al. (2023) that investigated the determinants and effects of perceived interface design consistency on charity websites, drawing upon consistency literature, visual rhetoric theory, and social judgment of warmth and competence. It identifies appeal quality and human images as factors increasing perceived interface design consistency. The study demonstrates that this consistency enhances perceptions of warmth and competence in charity websites, influencing users' intentions to donate. As presented in an earlier study by the same author, individuals with different levels of hedonic

motivation (helper's high) are influenced by attitude toward a trial website (ATW), information content quality (ICQ), and system quality (SQ) in forming attitude toward a finished website (AFW) (Kwak et. al., 2018). Kwak et. al., (2019) introduces a framework for classifying halos based on attributes and dimensions and employs charity websites as a multi-attribute donation channel. The study identifies four types of halos – collective halo, aesthetics halo, reciprocal-quality halo, and quality halo – relevant to charity website evaluation. Structural equation modeling and other analyses support the existence of these halos.

Designing a trustable charitable website is pointless unless it reaches its crowdfunding purpose. Bennett (2016) investigated the factors influencing the likelihood of individuals abandoning the online donation process on a charity website after clicking the 'donate now' button. Findings revealed several significant variables affecting abandonment, including process length, personal information requested, level of 'helper's high', involvement with the cause, donation history, and 'second thoughts'. The study suggests that charity donation pages should be concise, include confidence-building messages, emotive imagery, and evoke feelings of involvement with the cause to reduce abandonment.

Connected to our study, Bataoui & Boch (2023) researched the impact of socially rich photos on donation behavior on charity websites. These photos represent humans involved with or impacted by the cause supported by the organization, aiming to enhance the perception of human presence through digital media. Their research compares photos of donation recipients and donors, offering insights into the potential effectiveness of different types of imagery. Additionally, it explored photography not only as a source of emotional response but also as a means of social presence and immersion, concluding with the undeniable power of genuine photography in evoking emotions.

Methodology

Hypothesis construction

Taking into account the levels of social presence and the willingness of users to contribute to a charitable cause for education, the following hypotheses were formulated based on our quantitative study:

Hypothesis 1: The average trust score on the social presence versions (B and C) would be higher than on the control version (A).

Hypothesis 2: Respondents would be more likely to share the website on their social media with higher social presence.

Hypothesis 3: The genuine social presence version (C) would score the highest trust average score.

Hypothesis 4: Respondents would be more inclined to commit to a monthly donation on the genuine social presence version (C).

These hypotheses serve as guiding principles for exploring the relationships between social presence, user engagement, trust, emotional connection, and sharing behavior within the context of a charitable donation website aimed at supporting education for Romanian children. Through empirical investigation and data analysis, this study aims to validate or refute these hypotheses and contribute to the understanding of factors influencing donation behavior in online environments.

Research Methodology and Experimental Design

This study aimed to investigate the influence of visual stimuli on user engagement and donation behavior on a charitable website dedicated to supporting education for Romanian children. Three

versions of the website were developed, each featuring distinct visual elements: a stack of books background, a stock image portraying children learning, and an authentic picture of Romanian children studying. Identical questions were presented to participants across all versions to ensure consistency in data collection and analysis.

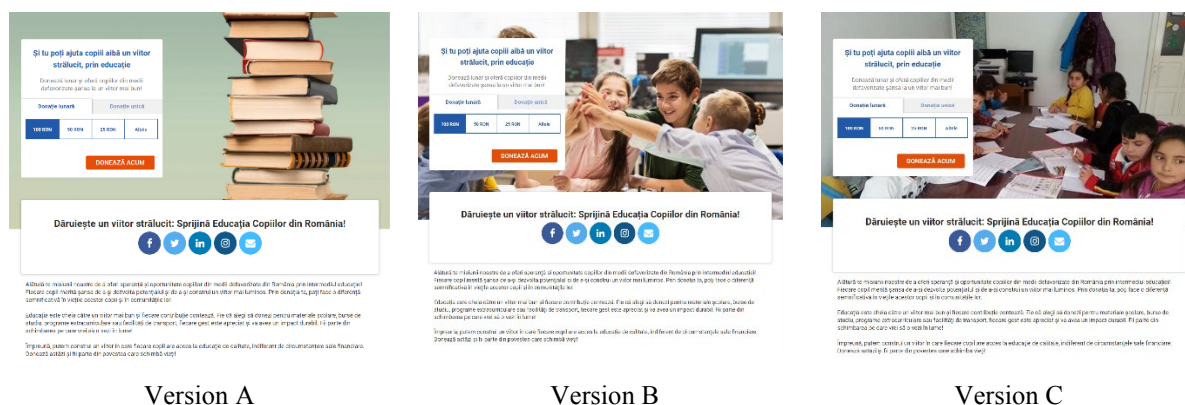
This study employs an experimental design, specifically A/B/C testing, to compare the effectiveness of a donation campaign website with differing levels of social presence. The independent variable in this design is the background picture placed in the design of the donations page, while the dependent variables encompass user engagement metrics, survey responses, and eye tracking data. Control variables include consistency in website layout, content, text, structure and functionality across all experimental conditions.

The study employed A/B/C testing with three versions of the donations website, with different background images:

Version A: A stack of books - used as a control version, it will act as a reference

Version B: A stock photo of children learning in a clean and modern institution – existing social presence but considered artificial and lacking emotion

Version C: A genuine photo of Romanian children from disadvantaged backgrounds learning in a public school. – existing social presence with the authenticity of a genuine photo



Version A

Version B

Version C

Figure 2. The three versions of the charitable website

Source: Authors' own research.

Quantitative data testing with surveys

Participants were first briefed about the nature of the study and provided informed consent. To assess the willingness to support this cause, we implemented three identical surveys, featuring every version of the website. Upon receiving the survey URL, participants were instructed to carefully examine the website screenshot and provide their responses based on their perceptions of the observed version. Participants (N = 150) were randomly assigned to view one of the three content versions. Each version presented information regarding a charitable cause and solicited engagement and donations. Trust levels were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, while social media sharing and donation willingness were assessed as binary (yes/no) responses. Donation amounts and frequency were also recorded.

Results and discussions

Raw data and analysis

The resulting data of the survey was centralized and analyzed using various methods such as averages and percentages. As the processed data shown in Table 1, the lack of social presence was heavily taxed by the viewers, the „books background” version received just a 2.5/5 trust score, while the other versions that featured a perceived social presence received better trust score averages, of 3.46 and 4.1 out of 5. This increased trust was also shown in the willingness to share the cause on social media, 43,3% and 46,7% of users said that they would share the pages featuring social presence of real children compared to the control version of just 16,7%.

Table 1. Survey results

	Version A	Version B	Version C
Respondents	50	50	50
Trust average	2,5/5	3,6/5	4,14/5
Social media sharing	14%	44%	56%
Donation willingness	30%	50%	68%
>100 RON	0%	12%	11,4%
100 RON	20%	12%	20%
50 RON	33,3%	52%	40%
25 RON	40%	20%	25,7%
<25 RON	6,7%	4%	2,9%
One time	73,3%	68%	48,6%
Monthly	26,7%	32%	51,4%

Source: Authors' own research.

The results indicate a significant variation in trust perception across the three versions of the website. Participants exposed to Version C, with a genuine photo of Romanian children, exhibited the highest average trust rating (4.14 out of 5), suggesting that the inclusion of authentic human faces positively influences trust perception. Version B, featuring a stock image of children in school, also elicited a relatively favorable trust perception, albeit to a lesser extent (average rating of 3.6 out of 5). Conversely, Version A, displaying a stack of books, received the lowest trust rating (average of 2.5 out of 5), implying that abstract imagery may not be as effective in building trust compared to images depicting genuine human faces or social scenarios.

Analysis of social media sharing behavior reveals notable disparities among the three versions of the website. Participants exposed to Version C exhibited the highest inclination towards sharing the website on social media platforms, with 56% expressing a willingness to do so. This finding underscores the influence of genuine human faces and social scenarios in stimulating user engagement and virality. In contrast, participants exposed to Version A showed the lowest propensity for social media sharing, with only 14% indicating a willingness to share. Version B, featuring a stock image of children in school, demonstrated an intermediate level of social media sharing behavior, with 44% of participants expressing a willingness to share.

The most important indicator of a successful donations campaign, the „willingness to act” proved heavily influenced by the perceived social presence, up to 50% and 68% of respondents were willing to donate to the cause compared to the 30% on the control „books-only” version. Out of the two latter perceived social presence, the genuine social presence created stronger trust with

the visitors compared to the generic social presence, netting a difference of 18% more people willing to donate. This was also shown in the willingness to commit with a monthly recurring donation, a strategy that would better help the cause of the donations campaign. Respondents were also willing to pledge a greater amount of money on the genuine social presence version of the donation webpage. Further analysis of donation behavior reveals nuanced patterns in donation amount and frequency preferences. Participants exposed to Version C demonstrated a higher propensity for larger donations, with 11.4% willing to contribute over 100 RON. Versions B and A exhibited varying distributions in donation amounts, with Version B showing a higher percentage of donations over 100 RON (12%) compared to Version A (0%). Interestingly, Version A attracted a higher percentage of one-time donations (73.3%), whereas Versions B and C demonstrated a higher preference for monthly donations, suggesting a potential correlation between background imagery and donation frequency preferences.

Hypotheses review

The hypotheses proposed in the study have been examined against the empirical findings presented, aiming to ascertain their accuracy and alignment with observed patterns in user behavior within the context of online campaigns.

Hypothesis 1 posited that the average trust score on versions of the website featuring social presence (Versions B and C) would surpass that of the control version (Version A). The empirical evidence substantiates this hypothesis, as participants exposed to Versions B and C indeed exhibited higher average trust scores compared to those exposed to Version A. Thus, the hypothesis is congruent with the observed data.

Similarly, Hypothesis 2 anticipated a positive relationship between the presence of social cues and the likelihood of users sharing the website on social media platforms. The study's findings support this hypothesis, revealing that participants exposed to versions with higher social presence were more inclined to share the website on social media compared to those exposed to the control version. Therefore, the empirical data aligns with the proposed hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 conjectured that the genuine social presence version (Version C) would yield the highest average trust score among the three versions. Analysis of the empirical data corroborates this hypothesis, demonstrating that Version C, featuring authentic imagery of Romanian children, indeed garnered the highest average trust score. Thus, the observed patterns in user trust perception support the validity of Hypothesis 3.

Lastly, Hypothesis 4 postulated that respondents would demonstrate a greater propensity for committing to monthly donations when exposed to the genuine social presence version (Version C). Examination of the empirical findings reveals that participants exposed to Version C exhibited a higher preference for committing to monthly donations compared to those exposed to other versions. Consequently, the observed donation behavior lends support to Hypothesis 4.

In summary, the proposed hypotheses align well with the empirical findings presented in the study. The observed patterns in user trust perception, social media sharing behavior, and donation preferences provide empirical validation for the hypothesized relationships between visual cues (social presence) and user responses in the realm of online campaigns.

Discussion

The findings presented in this study offer valuable insights into the impact of visual cues, particularly the presence of authentic human faces and social scenarios, on user trust perception, engagement, and donation behavior within the context of online campaigns. The discussion below highlights key implications and potential avenues for future research based on the observed results.

Firstly, the stark contrast in trust perception among the three versions of the website underscores the significance of visual elements in shaping user perceptions. The substantial increase in trust ratings from Version A (2.5/5) to Version C (4.14/5) suggests that the inclusion of authentic human faces, especially those depicting real Romanian children, significantly enhances trustworthiness. This finding aligns with prior research indicating that human faces evoke emotional responses and foster a sense of authenticity and connection, which are essential factors in building trust online.

Moreover, the observed disparities in social media sharing behavior further emphasize the influential role of visual stimuli in driving user engagement and virality. Participants exposed to Version C, featuring genuine human faces, exhibited the highest willingness to share the website on social media platforms, indicating that relatable imagery enhances the likelihood of content dissemination. Conversely, Version A, with abstract imagery, elicited the lowest propensity for social media sharing, underscoring the limitations of non-human-centric visuals in capturing user attention and stimulating sharing behavior.

Furthermore, the study sheds light on the critical link between perceived social presence and donation willingness. The substantial increase in donation propensity from the control version (Version A) to versions featuring genuine social presence (Versions B and C) highlights the persuasive power of authentic imagery in inspiring charitable contributions. Notably, participants exposed to Version C demonstrated the highest willingness to donate and pledge larger amounts, suggesting that genuine human faces and social scenarios evoke empathy and altruism, thus motivating individuals to support the cause financially. The nuanced patterns observed in donation frequency and amount preferences across the different versions underscore the importance of aligning visual cues with donation strategies. While Version A predominantly attracted one-time donations, Versions B and C exhibited a higher preference for monthly contributions, indicating that the perceived authenticity of imagery may influence individuals' commitment levels and donation behavior. This finding suggests that organizations can optimize donation campaigns by leveraging authentic visuals to encourage sustained engagement and recurring contributions.

Limitations

This study, while providing valuable insights into the influence of content versions on trust, social engagement, and donation behavior, is subject to several limitations that warrant consideration. Firstly, the sample used in this study may limit the generalizability of the findings. The participants were drawn from a specific demographic group, potentially restricting the applicability of the results to broader populations. Future research should aim to include more diverse samples to ensure the representativeness of the findings across various demographic segments. Secondly, the artificial setting in which the study was conducted may have influenced participants' responses and behaviors. Controlled laboratory or online environments may not fully replicate real-world scenarios, potentially limiting the ecological validity of the findings. Future studies could benefit from incorporating more naturalistic settings to enhance the external validity of the results.

Moreover, while efforts were made to control for extraneous variables, potential confounding factors may have influenced the results. Variables such as prior exposure to similar content, individual differences in altruistic tendencies, or external events could have impacted participants' responses and behaviors, warranting consideration in future research. Despite these limitations, this study contributes valuable insights to the field of charitable communication. Addressing these limitations in future research endeavors will enhance our understanding of effective communication strategies aimed at maximizing engagement and support for social causes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the impact of real human faces and perceived social presence on trust, social engagement, and donation behavior. The results underscore the significance of content optimization in driving desired outcomes within the realm of charitable communication. Version C emerged as the most effective in fostering higher levels of trust perception, as evidenced by its superior trust ratings compared to Versions A and B. Additionally, Version C stimulated greater social media engagement, with a significantly higher percentage of respondents expressing willingness to share the content on social platforms. Moreover, Version C elicited the highest levels of donation willingness among respondents, indicating its effectiveness in motivating support for the charitable cause. The variations observed in donation amounts and frequency further highlight the nuanced effects of content versions on donor behavior. While Versions B and C prompted larger donation amounts, Version C was particularly successful in encouraging ongoing, monthly contributions.

These findings have practical implications for organizations seeking to enhance their outreach and fundraising efforts. By leveraging the emotional responses of the genuine human pictures of the causes they support, following a strategy of trust-building, emotional resonance, and social appeal, organizations can optimize their communication approaches to maximize engagement and support from their target audiences.

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