Using Psychology to Fundraise

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Overview

After students learn about concepts in persuasion (foot-in-the-door; door-in-the-face; low-balling; central route to persuasion; peripheral route to persuasion), they can apply concepts to scholarly research. This study involves fundraising for a museum. Compliance techniques can be applied to many real-life scenarios.

Alignment with APA's Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major

Goal 1 Knowledge base in psychology

Outcomes

1.1 Describe key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology

Indictors

1.1a Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and theories in psychology to explain behavior and mental processes

1.1c Interpret behavior and mental processes at an appropriate level of complexity

1.1d Recognize the power of the context in shaping conclusions about individual behavior

Alignment with APA's National Standards for High School Psychology

Domain

Sociocultural Context

Content Standard Area

Social Interactions

Anticipated Time (*estimate of time needed)*

20 minutes to answer the essay. If the teacher chooses to go over the assignment as a class, it may take as long as 35 minutes.

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Purpose

Formative Student *(teacher provides feedback to students for the purpose of revision)*

If the teacher chooses to go over the rubric with the class immediately, it gives students the ability to correct their own answers. This approach does not have to have a grade.

Summative Student *(teacher uses assessment data as a part of the student's overall grade)*

Teachers could collect the assignment and give a grade to measure of student understanding without the use of notes.

During class/outside of class

During class

Timing *(when should this assessment be used during the unit)*

Provide this essay to students after teaching or reading about compliance techniques. For a possible reading excerpt on foot-in-the-door, door-in-the-face, and low-balling, see Brownstein & Katzev (1985).

Instructions

Present students with a copy of Brownstein & Katzev (1985). Ask students to apply what they learned.

Researchers chose subjects in a museum setting. 89 subjects were randomly selected and then randomly assigned to one of four conditions. All patrons were told the museum needed money due to budget cuts.

- In the control condition, patrons of the museum were asked to donate $1.00 as they exited.
- In another condition, patrons of the museum were first asked to sign a petition to support the museum as they entered. Then, as they exited (approximately 45 minutes later), the subjects were asked to donate $1.00
- In another condition, patrons of the museum were asked if they would donate $5.00 to the museum as they exited. If they refused the request, they were asked to donate $1.00
- In another condition, as patrons were leaving, they were asked if they would donate 75 cents to the museum. As they reached for their money, they were then told, "we are also asking for an additional 25 cents for children's programs"

Part A

- Apply the term door-in-the-face to one of the conditions. Be sure to explain why this condition fits.
- Apply the term low-ball to one of the conditions. Be sure to explain why this condition fits.
- Apply the term foot-in-the-door to one of the conditions. Be sure to explain why this condition fits.

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Part B

Groups	% of subjects who gave money
Control condition	73%
Petition condition	53%
$5.00 condition	86%
75 cents condition	93%

- Define and apply the term compliance to the study
- Illustrate a bar graph of the results of the study. Be sure to label the axis.
- What is the most appropriate conclusion the researchers can draw about the relationship between the variables in the study.

Part C
Though these techniques were not used in the original study, apply ONE of the following terms hypothetically to the museum fundraiser. How might ONE of the terms below convince patrons to donate?

- Central route to persuasion, or
- Peripheral route to persuasion

Reference

Brownstein, R.J., II. & Katzev, R.D. (1985). The relative effectiveness of three compliance techniques in eliciting donations to a cultural organization. *The Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 15*(6), 564-574.

Materials

Handout of question (see appendix)
Projection of rubric, if formative assessment chosen

Scoring Criteria

Teacher can decide point value for each item. Student either scores or does not score.

Part A

- **Door-in-the-face** is a two-step technique in which a large request is made first, which most individuals will refuse, then a smaller request follows. The **$5 condition** fits this best because patrons are asked for a large amount of money, then a smaller one.
- **Low-ball** is a two-step technique in which an individual agrees to the first request, but then to maintain commitment the request becomes more costly or involves more conditions (e.g. fine print) (Cialdini, Cacioppo, Bassett, and Miller, 1978). The **75 cent condition** fits this best because patrons comply to the $1.00 donation after initially agreeing to donate at a

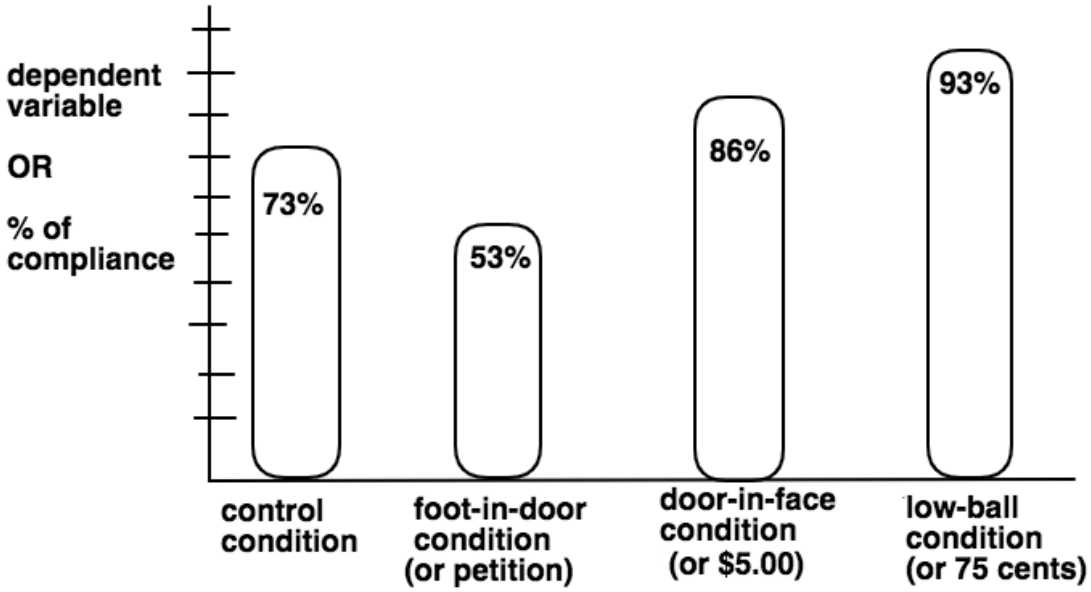
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lower price (.75). After subjects commit to a request, they are given more stipulations in order to complete it. Note: *Some students will confuse this technique with foot-in-the-door, since both low-ball and foot-in-the-door start with a small request. However, in foot-in-the-door, two different requests are completed. In low-ball, the subject commits to a decision (say buying a car or giving to the museum) before completing the act. Then, subjects are informed of extra costs, which they must comply with in order to complete the act.*

- **Foot-in-the-door** is a two-step technique in which an individual complies with a small request, which is then followed by a larger one. The **petition condition** fits this best because when the patrons first walk into the museum, they are asked to follow a small request – to sign a petition. Then those who signed the petition were asked for a larger request - $1.00 donation. Note: *Some students will confuse this technique with low-ball. The person's signature will still be on the petition whether or not they give a $1.00 donation. Individuals do not need to give $1.00 in order to maintain their commitment to the first request- signing the petition.*

Part B

- **Compliance** (College Board, 2012) Students must explain that a demand, request, or rule from the researchers influences the actions of subjects or patrons at the museum. *Example: The techniques used by researchers like asking for $5 then $1 persuaded the patrons to donate money. There must be action on the parts of the subjects - i.e. obeying a request. It is incomplete to only talk about techniques of researchers.*
- Bar graphs should be labeled for full credit. *Numbers could be on y-axis or inside bars.*



- Because researchers conducted an experiment, they may use CAUSAL language in their conclusions about the relationship between the variables. (Clues that an experiment was conducted include: random assignment and manipulation of variables or conditions.) Note: *Conclusions should be specific and not general. Conclusions should not use correlational language or merely summarize the results* (College Board, 2017).
    - Example the scores: The low-ball technique *made* or *caused* more people agree to

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give a donation. OR The low-ball technique *increased* patron's or subject's willingness to comply. OR *If* researchers use the low-ball technique *then* people will be more likely to donate. (*if>then) Causal language*
    - Example that <u>does not</u> score: The low-ball technique is *linked* or *connected* to the percentage of people who comply or give donations. *Correlational language*
    - Example that <u>does not</u> score: The dependent variable changed because of the conditions or independent variable. *Too general; need to identify the variables in the study*
    - Example that <u>does not</u> score: The low-ball technique had the most compliance and the foot-in-the door technique had the least. *Merely summarizes results*.

Part C

- **Central route to persuasion** (College Board, 2013) Student should indicate that the patrons actively process the museum's proposal to give more money (e.g., considers facts, weighs evidence, draws conclusions) OR are influenced by the ideas the museum presents (e.g., logic, facts, statistics). Example: The patrons give money because the museum logically argued that they needed more funds due to budget cuts.

OR

- **Peripheral route to persuasion** Student should indicate that the patrons were influenced by external factors (sound of someone's voice; where the person attended college; the appearance of being an expert) OR superficial factors (attractiveness) that were not connected to the main content of the museum's message. Example(s): The patrons noticed that the museum staff were wearing sweatshirts of their college alma mater, so they donated money. The patrons were influenced by a photograph of an attractive celebrity who donated money to the museum.

Accommodations/Modifications

Some students with additional needs may require modifications to this assessment as listed below: Students who have difficulty with language or writing can be provided with adapted questions in the form of multiple choice. It may even be useful to read the prompt out loud and/or permit students to give verbal responses.

Sample multiple choice questions that address the same objectives (**answers in bold**):

- In one condition, patrons of the museum were first asked to sign a petition to support the museum as they entered. Then, as they exited (approximately 45 minutes later), the subjects were asked to donate $1.00. Which of the following compliance techniques was used?

a. low-ball technique
b. door-in-the-face
c. foot-in-the door

- In another condition, patrons of the museum were asked if they would donate $5.00 to the museum as they exited. If they refused the request, they were asked to donate $1.00. Which of the following compliance techniques was used?
    a. low-ball technique

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   b. door-in-the-face
   c. foot-in-the door
- Which of the following best explains compliance?
   a. When individuals follow a group or copy behaviors, attitudes of others
   b. When individuals obey a request or complete a demand
   c. When individuals perform better in the presence of others
   d. When individuals lose their sense of self-control in a crowd due to arousal or anonymity
- When illustrating a bar graph of the compliance study, which variable(s) will go on the x-axis?
   a. The percentage of patrons who comply or the dependent variable
   b. The different conditions in the experiment or levels of the independent variable (e.g. control, foot-in-the-door, door-in-the-face, low-ball)
- When making a conclusion about the relationship between the variables in this study, which is most appropriate?
   a. The low-ball technique is linked to the percent of people who will comply.
   b. The independent variable will cause changes in the dependent variable.
   c. If researchers use the low-ball technique, then subjects will be more likely to comply or donate money to the museum.
   d. Subjects who were directly asked for $1 were less likely to donate to the museum than subjects who were first asked for a $5 donation followed by a $1 donation.

Why is this Science?

In psychological science, students use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena. In the *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS Lead States. 2013), students analyze and interpret data as part of scientific practice. The NGSS science practices state that scientists "organize and interpret data" through graphs. In addition to applying principles in social psychology, students also demonstrate scientific literacy in this lesson.

References

Brownstein, R.J., II. & Katzev, R.D. (1985). The relative effectiveness of three compliance techniques in eliciting donations to a cultural organization. *The Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 15*(6), 564-574. PDF here

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Appendix: Student Handout

Brownstein and Katzev (1985) chose subjects in a museum setting. 89 subjects were randomly selected and then randomly assigned to one of four conditions.

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Part A

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- Apply the term low-balling to one of the conditions. Be sure to explain why this condition fits.
- Apply the term foot-in-the-door to one of the conditions. Be sure to explain why this condition fits.

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