

Research in brief

Toward a theory of situational support: A model for exploring fundraising, advocacy and organizational support



Brooke Weberling McKeever^{a,*}, Geah Pressgrove^b, Robert McKeever^a,
Yue Zheng^a

^a School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208, United States

^b Reed College of Media, West Virginia University, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 16 May 2015

Received in revised form

16 September 2015

Accepted 26 September 2015

Available online 9 October 2015

Keywords:

Theory of situational support

Theory of reasoned action

Situational theory of problem solving

Nonprofit

Survey

Fundraising

ABSTRACT

Through replication with three national survey datasets ($N=658$, $N=673$, $N=208$), this study extends research aimed at developing a new model that combines variables from the situational theory of problem solving and the theory of reasoned action to explain communication and participation related to fundraising events. Findings from the three studies provide empirical evidence for a new model and an emerging theory of situational support, which may help explain how and why individuals come to support certain causes, events or organizations.

© 2015 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

According to The Giving Institute, individual, corporate and foundation contributions to nonprofit organizations in 2014 totaled more than \$358 billion, and the vast majority of donations (72%) for many years now have come from individuals. Many of these organizations rely on peer-to-peer fundraising events such as walks, runs or rides. While some sort of affinity to the cause is often the impetus for participation in such events, we know little else about the motivational and communicative processes that influence individuals' decisions in this area.

Despite much research being conducted related to nonprofits and fundraising (see e.g., Kelly, 1998; Waters, 2008), scholars and practitioners lack a clear model to help explain the antecedents to communication and behavioral intentions as it relates to organizational support. To advance these aims, the authors explore fundraising events as a way to better understand the underlying motivations related to situational support. It is anticipated that findings will not only help nonprofit organizations develop more sophisticated communication for fundraising events, but also provide a foundation for theoretical advancement as it relates to other situational support scenarios such as political campaigns, advocacy or employee engagement initiatives.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: brookew@sc.edu (B.W. McKeever), Geah.Pressgrove@mail.wvu.edu (G. Pressgrove), robert.mckeever@sc.edu (R. McKeever), zheng36@email.sc.edu (Y. Zheng).

¹ Contact the first author for the complete study.

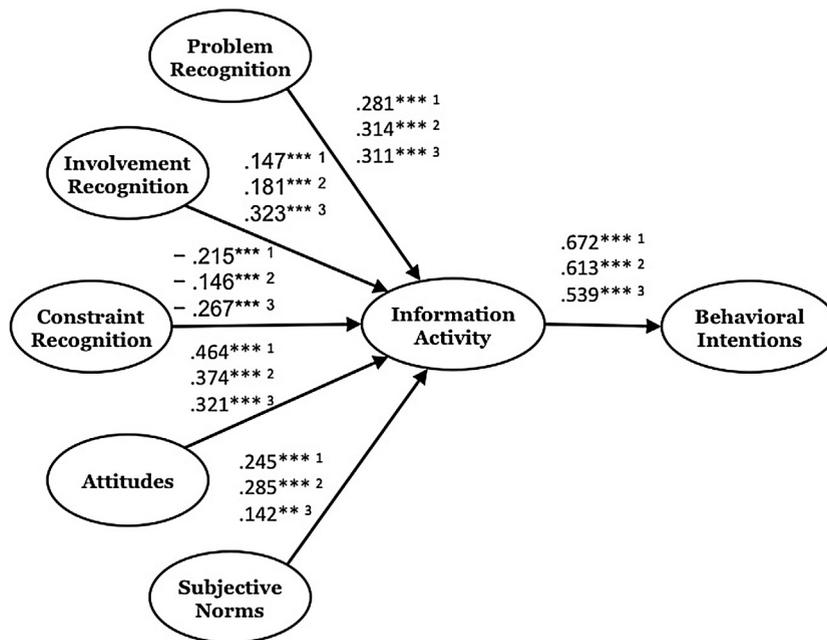


Fig. 1. Mediation model for emerging theory of situational support with path coefficients from studies 1–3.

Note: Unstandardized path coefficients are reported. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. $R^2 = .676, .689, \text{ and } .722$ for the model of behavioral intentions regressed on all independent and mediator variables in studies 1–3, respectively. Numbers in superscripts denote the study number. Study 1 = Relay for Life. Study 2 = Race for the Cure. Study 3 = March for Babies.

Furthermore, scholars have called attention to the lack of theoretical development related to nonprofit communication (Sisco, Pressgrove, & Collins, 2013). This research seeks to fill that gap by combining variables from the situational theory of problem solving (Kim & Grunig, 2011) and the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). These two theories have been used for decades to predict communication and behavior, and they have complementary yet distinct variables that help explain stakeholder motivations. This research extends previous research in this area (McKeever, 2013), by proposing a new model that may be useful for scholars and practitioners interested in understanding the idea of situational support.

2. Method

The study that this research replicates and extends combined variables from the situational theory of problem solving (STOPS) and the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and found that a combination of the theory variables significantly predicted college students' intentions to participate in the campus-based event, Relay for Life benefiting the American Cancer Society. Based on the idea that information activity (information seeking, attending and sharing) might mediate the relationships between the core independent variables of the two theories and behavioral intentions, the current study proposed the following hypotheses and tested a new model for the theory of situational support (Fig. 1) among a national population.

H1–H2. Information activity will mediate the relationship between problem recognition (H1) and involvement recognition (H2) about the health issue and behavioral intentions to participate in health-related nonprofit fundraising events.

H3–H5. Information activity will mediate the relationship between constraint recognition (H3), attitudes (H4) and subjective norms (H5) about health-related nonprofit fundraising events and behavioral intentions to participate in such events.

In order to generate nationally-based respondent pools for three studies, the web-based micro-task platform Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) was used for subject recruitment. At the beginning of the online survey, respondents were asked to "indicate which nonprofit organization and fundraising event you have in your community," among the options of March for Babies benefiting the March of Dimes, Race for the Cure benefiting Susan G. Komen for the Cure, or Relay for Life benefiting the American Cancer Society. Based on this initial choice, respondents were then directed to questions tailored to the mission of each organization and event. Other than tailoring items based on the mission of the organization, the survey questions were identical, and measures were based on previous research (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Kim & Grunig, 2011; McKeever, 2013).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/138666>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/138666>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)