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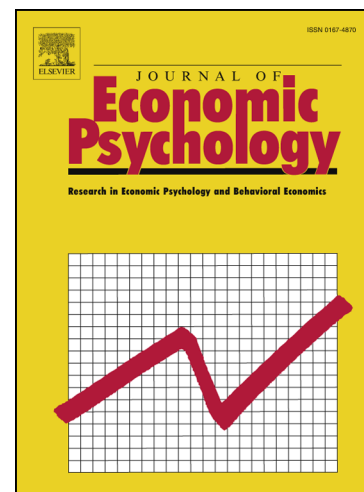
“Facta non verba”: An experiment on pledging and giving

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“Facta non verba”: an experiment on pledging and givingJanuary 19th, 2018

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Abstract: We design an experiment to investigate whether asking people to state how much they will donate to a charity (i.e., to pledge) increases their actual donation. Individuals' endowment is either certain or a random variable. We study different types of pledges, namely, private, public and irrevocable, which differ in terms of the cost to the individual for not keeping the promise. We show that in absence of endowment uncertainty, private and public pledges are associated with lower donations as compared to donations in the no-pledge case: private pledges slightly reduce donations and public pledges reduce them more significantly. Donations increase with uncertainty (in terms of increased endowment dispersion) for both private and public pledge situations, although donations with private pledges remain higher than donations with public pledge.

JEL codes: C91, D03, D64

Keywords: Charitable giving, Pledge, Commitment, Dictator game, Experiments.

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