

The Effect of Feeling the Sense of Power on Donation

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Extended Abstract

As how we get the gains influences our spending decisions, our power feeling should do so as well. For instance, a boss might differently spend an unanticipated (windfall) bonus than her/his subordinates. Also, the lottery spending should be dissimilar for a winning sport team's fan than a losing team's fan. In this research, I examine the moderating effect of feeling the sense of power on the relationship between the type of gains (windfall vs. anticipated) and donation.

The influence of power feeling on various experiences and behaviors has already been demonstrated. Indeed acquiring power can help people in many situations such as providing them with courage. Anderson and Galinsky (2006) found that powerful individuals intend to be more optimistic when they perceive risk. Rucker, Dubois, and Galinsky (2011) found that as compared to powerless people, powerful people intend to spend more money on themselves than on others. However, spending is a different concept than donation in many dimensions such motivations. People spend because they want to live better, enjoy live, improve their skills, etc. In contrast, people give to charity to enhance their feelings of self-esteem, public recognition, and relief from feelings of guilt and obligation (Amos 1982; Dawson 1988).

Thaler (1990, 1999) defend mental accounting as the set of cognitive operations that used by people to organize, evaluate, and keep track of financial activities. Also

Shefrin and Thaler (1988) categorize the household into three accounts: the future income account in which the managerial propensity to consume (MPC) is close to zero, the asset income account in which MPC between zero and one, and the current income account in which any additional funds placed will be more spendable than other funds in the other types of account.

As it is unanticipated, the windfall gains are one of the current income account examples and are spent more readily than other types of assets (Arkes et al. 1994). Also refer it as “playing with house’s money”, gamblers who have experienced a windfall gains also are more likely to take risks Chakravarty and Ma, Y. (2009). In lining with what I’m proposing in this study, windfalls gains invoke less selfish behavior comparing to earned money (Cherry et al. 2002) particularly in a charitable context, people donate more from windfall gains than from their earned money (Reinstein and Riener, 2009a; Carlsson et al. 2010). The logic behinds why the windfall gains are more spendable is based on the windfall gains’ unanticipated characteristic so because consumers have not assigned them for specific spending the windfall gains will be placed in the current income account Soman and Cheema (2001). However, the spendability of windfall gains might change based on feeling the sense of power. Building upon the construal level theory, I claim that feeling high the sense of power will make people to place windfall gains on the asset account rather than on the current income account. Because powerful people maintain enough resource of power they are less likely to spend the windfall gains rapidly or donate larger part of them instead they will think more abstractly and carefully about this unexpected gains. In the other hand, powerless people are more likely to spend windfall gains because their priority is to elevate their power status as they think concretely. Therefore, donating money will enhance powerless people’s level of power as

doing so might show them that they are in better situation than the donation's beneficiaries.

H1: Powerless people are more likely to donate more amount of money from their windfall gains rather than anticipated gain than powerful people who are going to donate more from their anticipated gains rather than windfall gains.

Results & Discussion

160 participants (77 men and 83 women) got paid for participating in the study. Participants' age ranged from 19 to 76 with mean of 35.6 and standard deviation of 12.7. The ANCOVA test roughly supported the moderating role of power, as the interaction is marginally significant. Particularly, powerless people are more likely to donate windfall gains than earned money ($M_{\text{Low Power}} = 3.02$, $M_{\text{High Power}} = 2.85$, $F(1, 160) = 3.68$, $p = .057$); however, powerful people are more likely to donate anticipated gains than windfall gains ($M_{\text{High Power}} = 2.41$, $M_{\text{Low Power}} = 3.25$; $F(1, 160) = 3.68$, $p = .057$).

The study addresses the importance of feeling the sense of power that can be experienced consciously and unconsciously and affect decision-making process (Smith and Galinsky 2010). Building on the notion that social life has many incidents that affect people's level of feeling the sense of power, power's variation can play an important role in some decisions such as helping behaviors and giving to charity. Particularly, charities might enhance their efforts that focus on getting charity from anticipated endowments when targeting powerful people while understanding that powerless people are more likely to give up or donate their windfall gains.

Lastly, two main reasons might affect the result of this study. Because I used a scale to measure power rather than priming power, this scale possibly measures the

chronic power rather than feeling the sense of power which is can varies continuously through life events indeed by doing so it might have affected the expected results.

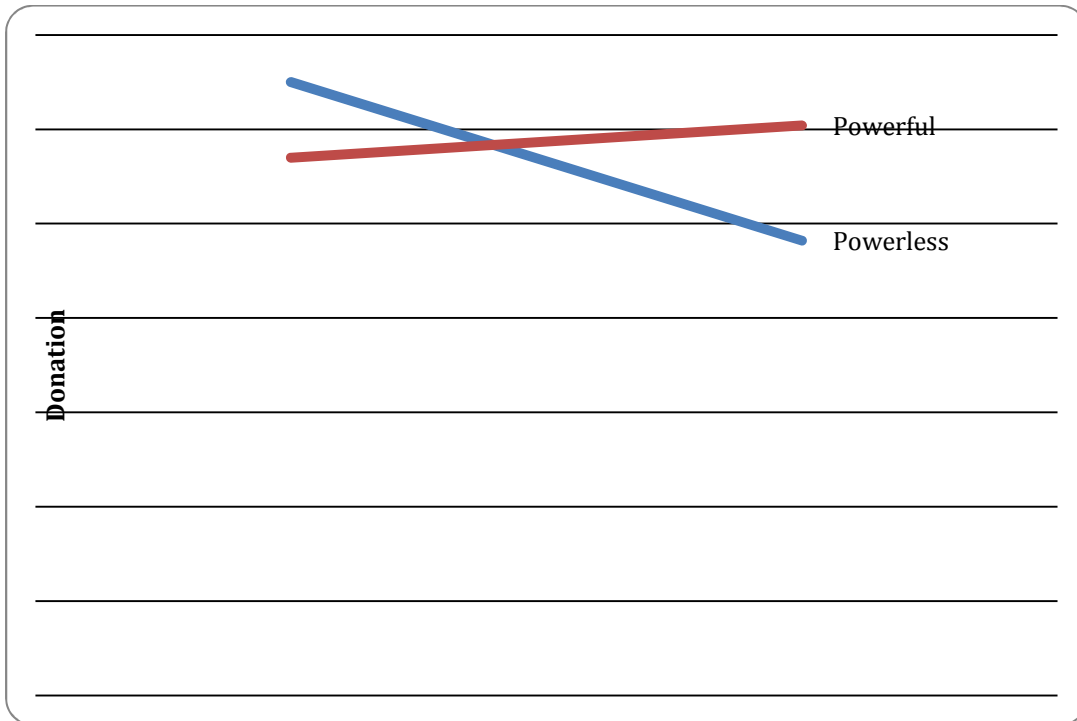
Second, because type of gains was manipulated hypothetically that might have also influenced the results and respondents might have not fully convinced by the imaginary scenarios.

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Figure 1: The Effect of Type of Gains and Power on Donation



ANCOVA Table: Power's Effect on Type of Gains and Actual Donation

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	30.802 ^a	5	6.160	1.723	.133	.583

HC14029

Intercept	28.623	1	28.623	8.004	.005	.803
Gender	3.225	1	3.225	.902	.344	.157
Age	10.757	1	10.757	3.008	.085	.407
Type of Gains	.314	1	.314	.088	.767	.060
Power	2.647	1	2.647	.740	.391	.137
Type of Gains * Power	13.168	1	13.168	3.682	.057	.479
Error	543.577	152	3.576			
Total	1902.000	158				
Corrected Total	574.380	157				