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Research on the Impact of Online Charity Feedback Forms on User Response

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Abstract: This paper studies the impact of different online charity feedback forms on user response. Starting from the user behavior, this paper studies the process and mechanism of the influence of feedback forms including the current behavior and the superior goal of behavior on user's subsequent behavior. The experimental results show that when feedback points to the current behavior, it will reduce the user's consistent behavior and increase the inconsistent behaviors such as choosing the hedonics. When the online charity feedback points to the superior goal of the behavior, the user's willingness to donate will be enhanced and more consistent behavior will be increased. This paper highlights the role of different feedback forms in corporate social responsibility and the importance to user behavior.

Keywords: online charity, feedback form, user response

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the enthusiasm of users to participate in online charity has been rising. In this context, online charity presents two main characteristics. One is participation cost for individuals. The low-cost means that users can participate in charity activities without any extra cost. The daily activities of users can be marked as donation behaviors, such as steps donations after the daily exercise, the time donation after reading the e-book, etc. The second feature is to provide immediate feedback, and the online charity instant feedbacks inform participants of the progress of charity activity, etc. Instant feedback plays a significant role in online charity, so it is important to understand what users are responding to online charity feedback.

Research on feedback influencing individual behavior focuses on the impact of different valences of feedback information on individual responses. Previous research focused on the impact of positive and negative feedback on users, and lacked studies on the impact of different forms of feedback on user responses. In view of the problem of how different forms of feedback affect user response, this paper argues that different forms of feedback can have different effects on user response. The current online charity interface can be divided into the following forms: one focuses on the behavior itself, such as "Thank you for donating 10,000 steps"; previous studies have shown that low-cost behaviors cannot activate pro-social goals, and current behaviors make people feel that I have done a good thing, and then permit themselves to take actions that are contrary to the prosocial goals^[1], so when feedback is focused on low-cost behavior itself, users may generate negative user response.

The second form of feedback is concerned with the superior goal of current behavior, such as "the book corner for children in mountainous areas looks forward to your help again." According to the goal theory, the goal is to build in a hierarchy manner^[2]. For example, the superior goal of walking steps donation, reading time donation, etc. is to help someone or a charity project. Fishbach and Dhar Scholars show that when an individual pays attention to the superior goal of the current behavior, the individual will continue to pursue the consistent behavior of the goal^[3]. Therefore, this article focuses on whether the feedback form points to the current

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behavior or the superior goal. The current behavior information indicates that the individual achieves the goal progress, which will lead to inconsistent behavior. On the contrary, when the feedback focuses on the superior goal, indicating that the individual is a firm commitment to the goal, it will lead to consistent behavior.

2. THEORIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Feedback

Feedback can provide valuable information about the quality of individual behavior and can help people learn and improve. Therefore, people like to receive feedbacks^[4] and are more motivated to engage in activities that provide feedback^[5], feedback can also improve management effectiveness and corporate performance. Because of the unique value of feedback, feedback is often used in corporate marketing scenarios, especially in the Internet environment, instant feedback has become one of the main ways for companies to interact with users.

Previous scholars' research mainly reflected the influence of different valences of feedback information on individual subsequent reactions, showing two different viewpoints. According to operational conditioning, some scholars believe that positive feedback will strengthen behavior, but giving negative feedback after behavior will weaken behavior; while others believe positive and negative feedback can allow individuals to strengthen behavior in a short time^[6]. But all scholars have a shared view that feedback allows individuals to self-assess reality and adjust their efforts, regardless of valence^[7]. In short, feedback is critical to the individual who pursues the goal. Thus, feedback influences individuals' understanding of the behaviors they have taken before.

2.2 Goal

2.2.1 Goal hierarchy

According to the goal theory, the goal is a cognitive representation of a specific ideal end point, which is constructed in a hierarchical manner. The hierarchy allows the goal to contain specific behaviors that contribute to the achievement of the goal^[2]. In general, Vancouver and Austin (1996) believe that the goal can be divided into sub-goals, intermediate task goals, superior goals or superordinate goals^[8].

In the literature field of consumer behavior, one of the issues that users have to consider in goal setting relates to how the goal is related to the cause of action. Bagozzi and Dholakia (2016)^[9] regard the goal as a three-level hierarchy. The focus goal can be at the center of the hierarchy, solving the problem of what the individual is pursuing; the lower goal constitutes the means to achieve the goal, the top of the hierarchy is the superordinate goal, which gives the answer to why individuals should pursue the goal. For example, the focus goal of the individual is to lose weight, so exercise and dieting are the means to achieve the focus goal, while the weight loss is for the pursuit of longevity, better look and other higher superior goal. In addition, Kruglanski (2002)^[2] argues that vertical links link goals to behaviors, while horizontal links link behaviors to behaviors. These studies all indicate that the goal has a relationship between the sub-goal and the superior goal. However, in many real-life situations, people hold multiple goals that are associated with multiple subgoals^[10].

2.2.2 Goal-based behaviors

The effect of a sub-goal on subsequent behavior depends on whether one's attention is on a particular subgoal itself or on its superior goal^[3]. When we focus on subgoals, progress along this subgoal indicates that similar behavior is extra, but when we focus on superior goals, the same progress on subgoals is considered relatively small, and individual is more likely to consider superior goals. When individuals consider subgoals are achieved, they will experience some of the benefits such as satisfaction, indicating that they acquire enough goal progress. Goal progress refers to the pursuit of a previously defined goal (outcome: progress in moving

toward the goal. It will prompt them to deviate from the current goal and pursue other competitive goals. But when individuals focus on the superior goals, the same level of goal achievement highlights the commitment to the superior goals. Goal commitment is defined as an inference concerning the strength of a goal^[8], this kind of goal commitment will lead consistent behavior and inhibit the pursuit of competitive goals. Therefore, the sub-goal completion effect is depend on our relative focus on abstract superior goals or on specific subgoals in the associated goal network. Feedback is an important way to inform individuals about their level of commitment to the goal or their rate of progress^[11].

3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS

3.1 Research model

Based on the different effects of the goal hierarchy on behaviors, this paper studies the different effects of the feedback forms on the user's behavior, as well as the mediating role of the user's understanding of the initial behavior as goal progress or goal commitment through the feedback. The model is shown in figure 3-1 below.

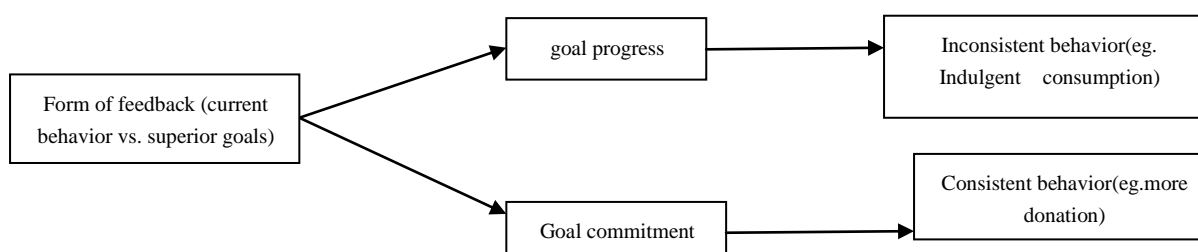


Figure 3-1 research model

3.2 Research hypothesis

According to the goal theory and the goal-based behavior decision literature, it can be concluded that when individuals pay attention to their own behavior, they will perceive the behavior as goal progress, which leads people to pursue behaviors that are inconsistent with the current goal^[3]. Therefore, when the feedback information refers to the current behavior, people will consider their charity participation as the goal progress, which leads to inconsistent behavior, such as choosing hedonics and indulgent consumption. Therefore, this paper proposes the hypothesis:

H1a: Feedback information pointing to current behavior can lead to inconsistent behavior, such as more indulgent consumption.

H1b: The influence of feedback pointing to behavior on inconsistent behavior is mediated by goal progress.

Similarly, when individuals focus on the superior goals of current behavior, they interpret behavior as a commitment to the goal. The commitment to the goal indicates a firm attitude towards the pursuit of the current goal, which leads to people's pursuit of the behavior consistent with the superior goal^[3]. Therefore, when the feedback information points to the superior goal of the behavior, people will perceive the behavior as a commitment to the goal, and then continue to pursue the goal and adopt a consistent behavior related to help charity. Therefore, this paper proposes the hypothesis:

H2a: Feedback information pointing to the superior goal of current behavior leads to consistent behavior, such as participation in other charity activities.

H2b: feedback information pointing to the influence of the superior goal on consistent behaviors is mediated by goal commitment.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study uses experimental methods and is expected to require five experiments. Only one experiment is carried out in this paper. The purpose of experiment is to verify the main effect of online charity feedback form on consistent behavior.

116 subjects were randomly assigned to one of two feedback conditions: behavior-feedback condition and superior goal-feedback condition. First, with the charity activity “donation reading time” of E-book mobile application as the background, we instructed subjects to imagine that they were reading the e-book at night. The detailed description is "Imagine that you have been working for a day today, some tired, go home and open an e-book App, ready to read some books on skills improvement, at the same time the TV series/movie you are interested in is updated today, but you still have to choose to read book because of your work requirement. When you read 90 minutes, you receive a message: You can donate your reading time, which can be converted to the charity fund donated to ' building book corners for children in the mountain areas' charity project, and your current reading is 90 minutes ", then telled all the participants to click the " Agree to donate " button, then received the feedback interface. In the behavior-feedback condition, the content is "You have donated 90 minutes, thank you." In the goal feedback condition, the content is “the book corner for children in mountainous areas looks forward to your help again.”The second part is an unrelated scrambled-sentence task that refers to the research of Bargh and Chartrand^[12] scholars, the purpose is to fuzzy experiment purpose. The third part is the item that measures the consistency behavior. Specifically, the subjects are asked compared with watching TV series or movies, whether they would like to continue to read current books, pay attention to charity information and participate in other charity projects, using the Likert7 scale, 1 means very disagree, 7 means very agree. The fourth part is to instruct the participants to recall the feedback interface they received before, and then make the purchase decision in two scenarios after donating the reading time. One scenario informed the participant that he can make a choice between 40 yuan milk tea vouchers or notebooks set with a same price due to their good credit of shopping. In the following scenario, the subjects were told that the vacuum cups and movie card they planned to buy were on sale for 200 yuan, but their current online account balance was only enough to buy one of them and made a purchase decision.

Finally, participants reported how much they think feedback interface message is more focused on the current donation behavior or the goal of helping children, 1 indicates that the information is concerned with the current donation behavior, and 9 indicates that the goal of helping children is concerned, and the personal information is filled in at the end.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1 Reliability Analysis

In this paper, SPSS20.0 is used to analyze the reliability of the data. The results show that the alpha coefficient of consistent behavior is above 0.8, see Table 5-1.

Table 5-1 Consistency behavior reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
.852	3

5.2 Manipulation Test

One-way ANOVA was performed on the data collected from questionnaire. The results are shown in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2 One-way ANOVA

	Sum of squares	df	The mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	486.139	1	486.139	111.710	.000
Within Groups	496.102	114	4.352		
Total	982.241	115			

It can be seen from Table 5-2 and 5-3 that the participants in different conditions have significant differences in the perception of feedback information ($F(1, 114) = 111.710, P < .01$). When feedback content is “You have donated 90 minutes, thank you”, the mean value of the participants report is 3.38 ($SD_{\text{behavior feedback}} = 2.536$), which is significantly lower than the participants report when feedback content is “The book corner for children in mountainous areas looks forward to your help again” ($M_{\text{goal feedback}} = 7.49, SD_{\text{goal feedback}} = 1.368$), that is, the behavior-feedback is more focused on the current donation behavior, and the goal-feedback is more focused on the goal of helping the children. The above data indicates that the manipulation is successful.

5.3 Hypothesis Test

5.3.1 Consistent behavior

For the consistency behavior variable, the homogeneity test of variance is performed. According to Table 5-4, the calculated P value is 0.410 and greater than 0.05. Under the premise that the given significance level α is 0.05, the variance test is used to satisfy the premise of variance analysis. The results are trustworthy.

Table 5-3 Homogeneity test of variance

Consistency Behavior			
Levene Statistics	df1	df2	Sig.
.684	1	114	.410

The results of the consistency behavior analysis showed that there was a significant difference in the consistent behavior of the subjects in the two conditions ($F(1, 114) = 11.622, P < .01$). The mean of behavior-feedback and goal-feedback is 3.619048 and 4.408805 ($SD_{\text{behavior feedback}}=1.2796409; SD_{\text{goal feedback}}=1.1976500$), indicating that the feedback reflecting the goal of helping children will generate more consistent behaviors than the feedback reflecting the behavior of donating reading time, namely, they are more willing to continue reading current books, pay attention to charity information and participate in other charity projects, thus verify H2a, as shown in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4 One-way ANOVA

consistent behaviors					
	Sum of squares	df	The mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	17.953	1	17.953	11.622	.001
Within Groups	176.111	114	1.545		
Total	194.064	115			

5.3.2 Inconsistent behavior

The χ^2 test was performed on the inconsistent behavior data. In the context of choosing between the milk tea vouchers and the notebooks set, 44.45% subjects chose the milk tea voucher in the behavior-feedback condition, this percentage is higher than in the goal-feedback condition (16.98%; $\chi^2 = 9.994$, $P < .01$), see Table 5-5. Similarly, in the context of choosing to buy between vacuum cup and a movie card, 44.44% subjects choose the movie card in the behavior-feedback condition, this percentage is also higher than in the goal-feedback condition (22.64%; $\chi^2 = 6.057$, $P < .05$). As we predicted, when the feedback points to the current behavior rather than superior goal of the behavior, subjects selected more hedonic and indulgent options, that is, generate more inconsistent behaviors, verify H1a, see Table 5-6.

Table 5-5 χ^2 test

	value	df	Progressive Sig. (two sides)	Precise Sig. (two sides)	Precise Sig. (single side)
Pearson χ^2	9.994 ^a	1	.002		
Continuous correction b	8.770	1	.003		
Likelihood ratio	10.403	1	.001		
Fisher's exact test				.002	.001
Linear and linear combination	9.908	1	.002		
McNemar test				.000c	
N in the valid case	116				

Table 5-6 χ^2 test

	value	df	Progressive Sig. (two sides)	Precise Sig. (two sides)	Precise Sig. (single side)
Pearson χ^2	6.057a	1	.014		
Continuous correction b	5.130	1	.024		
Likelihood ratio	6.194	1	.013		
Fisher's exact test				.018	.011
Linear and linear combination	6.004	1	.014		
McNemar test				.148c	
N in the valid case	116				

6. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION EXTENSIONS

6.1 Research conclusions

This paper studies the impact of different forms of online charity feedback on user response.

(1) Online charity feedback information pointing to current behavior can lead to inconsistent behavior, such as more indulgent consumption. Previous studies have shown that low-cost prosocial behavior licenses individuals to do behaviors inconsistent to prosocial goals^[1]. This paper shows that when feedback focuses on low-cost behavior itself, it cannot activate the superior goal of helping others. The attention on the current behavior makes people feel that they have done a good thing and had high goal progress perception level, which

allows them to give up the current behavior and turn to inconsistent behavior.

(2) The online charity feedback forms pointing to the superior goal of the behavior lead to consistent behavior. Scholars show that the impact of a sub-goal on follow-up behavior depends on whether one's attention is on a particular sub-goal itself or on its superior goal^[3]. When the focus is on the superior goal, the individual perceives the participation as the goal commitment, that is, the individual consciously prevents the deviation from the current goal, so when the feedback focuses on the upper level goal of the behavior, the individual is a firm commitment to this superior goal, which leads to consistent behavior.

6.2 Contribution

(1) Expanding relevant literature on the role of feedback in corporate social responsibility;

Previous scholars affirmed the important role that feedback plays for individuals. Levy (1995) pointed out that individuals are willing to actively seek feedback because feedback reduces the need for uncertainty^[13]. In addition, scholars have focused on the effects of different feedback valences on individual behaviors, but the feedback is not put into the CSR field to examine its significance. Therefore, this paper makes up for the lack of research in the past and examines the role of different feedback forms in corporate social responsibility.

(2) The application of empirical test goal theory in corporate social responsibility;

Early scholars have clarified the application of goal theory in corporate social responsibility. For example, Margetts and Kashima scholars have clarified the possible effects of goal theory in prosocial behavioral spillovers, but the results show that the role of goal theory is not clear^[14]. Other scholars pay attention to the study of the goal hierarchy in individual behavior, but do not focus on the empirical test of the goal theory in corporate social responsibility, so this paper further tests the application of goal theory through empirical evidence in corporate social responsibility.

(3) Help companies provide effective feedback in the online charity background.

By adjusting the content of the instant feedback information, the enterprise can influence the user's understanding of the initial participation behavior, and then affect the user's subsequent response. When the feedback form points to the superior goal of donating behavior rather than behavior itself, such as "children's book corner is looking forward to your help again", the user will feel that their behaviors are still not enough, likely to focus on the commitment to superior goals, and then continue to participate in charity activities. Therefore, the company needs to provide information about the superior goals in feedbacks, rather than the information of the completed current behaviors.

Finally, this paper only conducts one experiment, which verifies that the two forms of feedback will lead to different behavior of users. However, the mediating roles of goal progress and goal commitment are not verified and will be examined by subsequent experiment. Secondly, this article selects the material of online charity activity more singularity. Therefore, in the future, online charity activities materials can be further added to expand the universality and effectiveness of online charity feedback effects.

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