

The Cross-Pressure Model of Ideology and Charitable Giving:
Exploring the Role of Religiosity and Attributions for Poverty

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Abstract

The current research proposes a cross-pressure model in examining how political orientation is related to charitable behaviors that benefit the poor. This cross-pressure model suggests that liberals and conservatives are differentially “pressured” to participate in charitable behaviors to help the poor. It was predicted that liberals’ willingness to donate money and volunteer would be mediated by their tendency to make situational attributions for poverty. It was also predicted that conservatives’ willingness to donate money and volunteer would be mediated by higher levels of religiosity. Further, the role of political involvement in regards to participation in charity was also explored. Results indicated that religiosity and attributions for poverty mediated the relationship between political orientation and giving for volunteering, but not for donating money to help the poor. Political ideology remained a predictor for donating money when controlling for the mediators, but was not significant when participants were considering volunteering to help the poor. Liberals were more willing to donate money while conservatives were more willing to volunteer to benefit the poor. Further, political involvement was a significant predictor for both donating money and volunteering. These results provide further contextualization for the complex relationship between charitable behaviors and political ideology and suggest that future research should examine differences in the motivating factors between donating money and volunteering.

**The Cross-Pressure Model of Ideology and Charitable Giving:
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Although there was a decline in civic engagement and volunteerism across the country during the latter half of the twentieth century (Costa & Kahn, 2003; Putnam, 2000), there has been a surge in charitable giving in recent years. Americans donated a record-high 373.25 billion dollars to charities in 2015 (Giving USA Foundation, 2016). Moreover, tens of millions of Americans donate their time and money to nonprofit organizations that benefit individuals living below the poverty line every year (Philanthropy Roundtable, 2016). Such patterns of charitable giving beg the question: why do people engage in charitable behaviors and what psychological processes impact charitable giving and volunteerism aimed toward people below the poverty line?

Political ideology may be one factor that shapes an individual's willingness to help nonprofit organizations that benefit the poor. Although, liberals tend to be more supportive than conservatives of government spending on public policies (Jacoby, 2000) including those benefitting individuals below the poverty line (Weiner, Osborne, & Rudolph, 2011), the role that political ideology plays in personal charitable giving and volunteering is unclear. Some evidence suggests liberals participate in charitable behaviors more than conservatives (Vaidyanathan, Hill, & Smith, 2011), whereas other research suggests conservatives actually volunteer more and give more money (Brooks & Lewis, 2001; Derin-Gure & Uler, 2010). Still other research indicates that political involvement, and not the content of one's political ideology, is the strongest

predictor of charitable behaviors (Hart, Donnelly, Youniss, & Atkins, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Smith, 1994).

A lack of consensus about the relationship between political ideology and charitable giving suggests a need to conduct further research regarding the potential link between ideology and giving, as well possible mediators of that link. There is evidence that a number of politically relevant variables may impact people's giving. As will be discussed in greater detail below, attributions for poverty (a variable often predicted by political ideology; Pandey, Sinha, Prakash, & Tripathi, 1982), significantly influences individuals' willingness to help those below the poverty line (Weiner et al., 2011). Likewise, individuals' religiosity is related to their political leanings and also influence acts of charity (Choi & DiNitto, 2012; Guth, Kellstedt, Smidt, & Green, 2006).

In sum, the goal of the current research is to explore the role of political ideology on charitable behaviors toward the poor and to consider a variety of mediating variables in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological processes that drive individuals to help non-profits.

Political Ideology

Decades of theory and research have converged on a definition for the term "political ideology" (Knight, 2006). Political ideology is characterized as a belief system (see Converse, 1964), or framework from which individuals' structure and process political information (Gerring 1997; Larson, 1994). Political ideology impacts the way in which we think about,

process, and react to the world. Some have even suggested political orientations impact individuals' daily activities by influencing people's preferences and activities (Jost, Federico, Napier, 2009).

A wealth of research exploring political orientation has used a unidimensional approach (Jacoby, 1994; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Rosenberg, 1956). This approach posits that individuals identify at one finite point on a single political continuum that varies from liberal to conservative, and that their attitudes across various topics are shaped by their position on that continuum (Hibbing, Smith, & Alford, 2014). For example, if an individual is moderately conservative with their views on gay marriage, they are also likely to be moderately conservative regarding their views of military involvement in the Middle East. This unidimensional approach--typified by the well-known liberal-conservative continuum--has become the dominant conceptualization of political ideology (Morgan & Wisneski, in press). This theoretical framework has led to strong claims about the power and ability of the unidimensional approach to accurately measure individuals' political attitudes (e.g., Thórisdóttir, Jost, Liviatan, & Shrout, 2007). Although there are alternative ways to conceptualize ideology (Feldman & Johnston, 2014; Layman & Carsey, 2002; Morgan & Wisneski, in press), the current research uses the widely popular unidimensional approach to describe individuals' political positions, and to explore how those positions shape people's charitable giving and volunteering.

Charitable Giving and Volunteering

Generally, charitable giving is measured by the amount of money a household or

individual donates in a given period of time (Wiepking & Maas, 2009). Those most likely to engage in charitable giving are non-minorities, individuals who are married (Choi & Chou, 2010), and those with high inequality aversions (Derin & Uler, 2010).

Scholars' definitions of volunteerism vary widely (Carson, 1999). In the context of this research, volunteerism is defined as planned, long-term prosocial behaviors that benefit strangers and take place in some form of organizational setting (Penner, 2002; Piliavin & Siegl, 2007). Those most likely to volunteer are individuals motivated by prosocial behaviors, and an individual's commitment to those they are giving service to (Shantz, Saksida, & Alfes, 2014). Further, individuals who create strong meaningful relationships with the organizations at which they volunteer are more likely to maintain active volunteering habits (Snyder & Omoto, 2008). A multitude of benefits have been cited as consequences of volunteering. For example, an overall increase of psychological well-being (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007), and reduced mortality rates amongst the elderly have been observed, even when controlling for a variety of relevant factors (Oman, Thoresen, & McMahon, 1999).

In sum, there are meaningful differences in the definitions of and outcomes related to charitable giving and volunteerism. Due to these differences, the current research separately explored willingness to donate money and volunteer, to see if there are differences in motivating factors across both behaviors. Previous research has documented multiple variables that influence willingness to help those living in poverty (Iyengar, 1990; Regnerus, 1998; Tagler & Cozzarelli, 2013), including political ideology (Weiner et al., 2010).

Political Ideology and Charitable Behaviors

Evidence about the relationship between charitable giving and political ideology is mixed (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011). Many have posited that liberals are more likely than conservatives to participate in charitable giving and volunteering. This assumption is in line with the common stereotype that the left is compassionate and charitable toward those living below the poverty line, and the political right is not (Brooks, 2006). These stereotypes have some empirical support. For example, longitudinal research exploring childhood personality and adult political orientation demonstrates a link between compassionate personalities and liberalism and childhood selfishness and conservatism (Block & Block, 2005). Further, some research provides direct evidence that liberals are more charitable than conservatives (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011; Yen & Zampelli, 2013). In attempting to explain this pattern, some have suggested that conservatives are less likely than liberals to give to charity because they are interested in maintaining the status quo, and thus are less likely to help those in need (Jost et al., 2003; Lakoff, 2004).

There is also evidence that conservatives give more than liberals. People that live in states that typically vote for conservative presidential candidates (i.e., red states), for example, give substantially higher proportions of their income to charity than blue states (Catalogue for Philanthropy, 2004; The Chronicle of Philanthropy, 2012). This trend is supported by findings suggesting conservatives give more monetary donations and volunteer with more frequency than liberals. In fact, politically conservative households donate 30% more to charities than liberal

households (Brooks, 2006).

Another possibility is that political involvement—rather than the content of ideology-- may motivate charitable behaviors. Political involvement can be defined as the number of political activities an individual has been involved with during a given period of time (e.g., the number of times a person has contacted a public official or participated in a protest; Yin & Zampelli, 2014). Work exploring the impact of political involvement has provided substantial evidence that political involvement leads to increased charitable giving and volunteering (Chambre, 1987; Fowler & Kam, 2007, Smith, 1994; Smith, Macaulay, & Associates, 1980).

Taken together, the relationship between political ideology and charitable behaviors is unclear. However, work exploring this relationship has highlighted a variety of motivators that may be key in understanding how liberals and conservatives process and participate in both charitable giving and volunteering.

The Cross-Pressure Model of Ideology and Charitable Giving

Ideology, Mediators, and Charity

There is reason to believe that the link between political ideology and giving is unclear because people are “cross-pressured”. On one hand, conservative political ideology is associated with greater dispositional attributions for poverty which, in turn, leads to less charitable behaviors. On the other hand, conservative political ideology leads to greater religiosity, which, in turn, leads to more charitable behaviors toward the poor. The opposite pattern is likely true for liberals. In short, both liberals and conservatives experience conflicting pressures to give (or not

give) to charitable organizations. Conservatism and liberalism are both simultaneously related to variables that increase *and* decrease giving to the poor (see Figure 1). The current research will explore this possibility.

Attitudes and Attributions

Attitudes and beliefs about the poor shape people's willingness to support public policies such as welfare, and can also impact how willing people are to donate money or volunteer their time to help those living below the poverty line (Tagler & Cozzarelli, 2013). Explanations for the causes of poverty vary. Dispositional attributions for poverty focus on character-based explanations (e.g., lack of persistence or motivation). In contrast, situational attributions for poverty emphasize societal and environmental factors (e.g., unfair economic conditions, or lack of job opportunities in one's' community). These attributions impact one's attitudes and stereotypes about the poor (Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001).

There is a stark difference between liberals' and conservatives' attribution tendencies for poverty. In general, conservatives tend to make dispositional attributions about the causes of an individual's poverty, whereas liberals tend to make situational attributions (e.g. environmental factors) for the causes of poverty (Morgan, Mullen, & Skitka, 2010; Pandey et al., 1982).

These differences between liberals' and conservatives' attributions for poverty impact willingness to give to the poor (Weiner et al., 2011). When people make situational attributions for an individual's difficulties, they exhibit a greater willingness to help or act prosocially as compared to individuals' who make dispositional attributions (Halloran & Chamber, 2011). This

tendency leads to a great differentiation between liberals and conservatives and their charitable behaviors. Liberals have greater willingness to provide support for individuals who need assistance, whereas conservatives are more selective in who they help, and choose to not help those whom they believe are at fault for the current challenges (Skitka & Tetlock, 1993). In short, conservatives' tendency to make dispositional attributions may make them less likely to engage in charitable giving to help the poor whereas liberals' tendency to make situational attributions may make them more likely to help the poor. It is important to note, however, that other factors might have the inverse effect on the link between ideology and giving, a topic I turn to next.

Religiosity

Religiosity is associated with conservative political values and attitudes (Guth et al., 2006, Pew Research Center, 2015), and non-religious individuals are more likely to report having more politically liberal leanings (Brooks, 2003; Brooks, 2005). Further, religiosity is also associated with greater participation in volunteering and donating behaviors (Brooks, 2006). Religious individuals are 25% more likely to participate in charity than their more secular counterparts (Brooks, 2003). This holds true when exploring charitable giving to the poor as well. The more religious an individual is, the more they donate to the poor, on average (Regnerus, Smith, & Sikkink, 1998). These claims have been supported by multiple studies focusing on individual religiosity (Choi & DiNitto, 2012; Yen & Zampelli, 2014), but have also been substantiated by findings suggesting more devout countries exhibit higher rates of

volunteering than more secular countries (Ruiter & De Graaf, 2006). Some have suggested that this pattern exists because there is an emphasis by religious institutions to participate in charitable behaviors and have compassion for others (Wuthnow, 1991), and there is social pressure to participate in charity that is related to church attendance (Bekkers & Schuyt, 2008).

In sum, conservatives may be more willing than liberals to engage in charitable behaviors because they tend to be more religious, as compared to liberals (Brooks, 2003; Guth et al., 2006; Pew Research Center 2015).

The Current Research

It is clearly difficult to parse the relationship between political ideology and charitable behaviors, as it seems many other variables influence this relationship. A gap in the literature exploring this relationship and possible mediators suggests a need to conduct more research on this topic.

The Cross-Pressure Model of Ideology and Charitable Giving points to an explanation for the mixed findings of past research exploring charitable behaviors and political ideology. This model posits a complex relationship between ones' political orientation and the frequency with which one engages in charitable behaviors that benefit the poor. Specifically, political orientation is related to attributions and religiosity. Liberals tend to make more situational attributions for the causes of poverty than conservatives, and conservatives tend to be more religious than liberals. In turn, attributions and religiosity are related to charitable giving. Those who posit situational attributions for poverty, and those who are religious, are more likely to participate in

charitable behaviors that benefit the poor. Thus, conservatives and liberals are “cross-pressured”. Conservatives’ religiosity and dispositional focus may have competing influences on the likelihood of giving (increased religiosity may motivate and increased dispositionalism may de-motivate conservatives to give). This pattern for liberals may be a mirror image (decreased religiosity may not motivate, or may even de-motivate and increased situationalism may motivate liberals to give). The cross-pressured model suggests that religiosity and attributions for poverty have opposing influences on the link between political ideology and charitable behavior. This model, therefore, may help explain the mixed findings of previous work exploring how the liberal-conservative spectrum influences charitable contributions and volunteering behaviors.

Based on past research, as well as the framework of the proposed model, it is hypothesized that there may be a relationship between political ideology and charitable behaviors. Moreover, it is hypothesized that religiosity and attributions will predict charitable giving. Of foremost importance, attributions for poverty as well as religiosity, will act as mediators of the link between ideology and giving. Finally, the current research will also explore the role of political involvement as a counter hypothesis to the proposed model; the extent to which an individual is politically involved, rather than their political orientation, may matter most when choosing whether or not to participate in charitable giving.

Method

Participants

Participants were 304 individuals recruited from Amazon.com’s MTurk, a website where

people complete tasks for small sums of money- over the age of 18. There were 176 males and 125 females, with 57% of those individuals reporting liberal political leanings. A complete list of means for study variables can be found in Table 1. Participants completed the study for a one-dollar compensation.

Procedure

As described in more detail below, participants answered a variety of questions regarding their charitable behaviors toward those living below the poverty line. Specifically, participants reported their willingness to donate money to and to volunteer time at different kinds of organizations in the future, including secular, religious, and hybrid non-profits that help families living below the poverty line. Participants also reported past political involvement.

Participants then reported their attributions about the causes of poverty, their level of religiosity, and their political orientation. Finally participants answered a variety of demographic questions (e.g., gender, and level of education).

Measures of Charitable Giving

Future Giving to Religious, Nonreligious, and Hybrid Organizations. Participants answered six questions to indicate how likely they would be to donate to, and to volunteer time with different kinds of organizations that help the homeless or working poor: specifically religious, secular, and hybrid (non-religious organizations that use religious spaces) organizations. Participants stated how likely they would be to donate or volunteer with these non-profits using a 7-point scale that ranges from *very unlikely* (1) to *very likely* (5). All donation

scores were averaged together to create one scale reflecting, willingness to donate to organizations that help the poor, and all volunteerism items were averaged together to create one scale reflecting willingness to volunteer at organizations that help the poor.

Measures of Political Ideology and Involvement

Political Ideology. To measure political ideology, participants answered the following question, “In general, how would you describe your political orientation?” Participants chose one of the following responses; *liberal*, *neither liberal nor conservative*, or *conservative*. Those who answered either liberal or conservative were then asked the following, “How strongly do you identify with your political orientation?” Participants reported by choosing one of the following responses; *slightly*, *moderately*, *very*. Those participants who have reported being neither liberal nor conservative were then asked the following, “You answered that you identify neither as a liberal or a conservative. Are you: *closer to being a liberal*, *closer to being a conservative*, *close to neither*.” These items were recoded into one 9-point political ideology variable ranging from *very liberal* (-4) to *very conservative* (4).

Political Involvement. Participants reported how frequently they participated in a group that took local action for reform (e.g., how much they write letters to elected officials, work to spread awareness, attend town hall meetings, attend political meetings or rallies, signed a petition, participated with a political group, and participated in political demonstration, over the past year; adapted from, Brooks, 2005; Regenrus et al., 1998). Participants reported using a 5 point- scale ranges from, *none* (1) to *a lot* (5). These items were then recoded to create a political

involvement scale.

Measures for Mediators

Attributions for Poverty. Participants reported how much they believe both dispositional and situational attributions are the causes of poverty. To measure individuals' attributions for poverty, participants were asked the following, "To what extent is poverty under ones' personal control?". "To what extent are some people poor due to decisions and behaviors that are under their own personal control?", and, "To what extent are individuals responsible for their situation if they are below the poverty line?". "To what extent is poverty due to aspects of the situation that individuals can not personally control?", and, "To what extent is society responsible for people living below the poverty line?". To measure both dispositional and situational attributions for poverty, participants used a 7-point scale ranging from *disagree strongly* (1) to *agree strongly* (7). Situational attributions for poverty were subsequently reverse coded. Finally dispositional attributions for poverty scores and the reverse coded situational attributions for poverty scores were averaged to create an attributions for poverty scale.

Religiosity. To measure religiosity, a modified version of the Santa Clara faith scale was used. This 12-item measure asked participants to state their agreement with the following items, "my religious faith is extremely important to me", " I pray daily", "I look to my faith as a source of inspiration", "I look to my faith as providing meaning and purpose in my life", "I consider myself active in my faith or congregation", "My faith is an important part of who I am as a person", "My relationship with God is extremely important to me", "I enjoy being around others

who share my faith”, “I look to my faith as a source of comfort”, “My faith impacts many of my decisions”, “My faith defines me as a person”, and “My faith is central to my family”.

Participants reported using a 5-point ranging from *not at all* (1) to *very much* (5). These scores were then averaged together to create a religiosity scale.

Results

It was hypothesized that political ideology may predict charitable giving and volunteering to benefit the poor. Furthermore, it was predicted that political ideology would predict attributions for poverty and religiosity. Specifically, it was predicted that conservatives would report higher levels of religiosity as compared to liberals, and liberals would report higher levels of situational attributions of poverty, as compared to their conservative counterparts. Finally, it was predicted that religiosity and attributions would mediate the relationship between ideology and charitable giving. In other words, it was hypothesized that liberals would be motivated to participate in charitable behaviors to help the poor due to their situational attributions for poverty, whereas conservatives would be motivated to engage in charitable behaviors due to greater levels of religiosity. In addition to these basic hypotheses, I also explored whether there were differences in the role of mediating factors between donating money to help the poor and volunteering time to help the poor. Finally, although there is support for these predictions, it may still be possible that the degree to which an individual is politically involved—and not their ideology-- matters. Therefore, the current research included political involvement as a control variable.

As described below, analysis provided mixed evidence for hypotheses regarding the links between political ideology, the proposed mediators, and charitable giving.

Analysis Strategy

As one can see by the correlations in Table 1, conservatives tended to be more religious than liberals, and liberals tended to make more situational attributions for poverty than conservatives. There is also a significant correlation between high religiosity and volunteering, and attributions for poverty and volunteering. Although it is not surprising that those who are highly religious are more likely to engage in volunteering at organizations that benefit those living below the poverty line, so too were individuals who made dispositional attributions for poverty. This suggests, counter to the hypotheses, that individuals who make situational attributions for poverty are less likely to volunteer than those who exhibit more dispositionalism.

To provide more thorough tests of hypotheses, I conducted a series of regression and bootstrap analyses of multiple mediation using 10,000 bootstrap sample (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). For each outcome variable (donating to an organization that benefits the poor, volunteering at an organization that benefits the poor), I entered political ideology as the predictor variable, both religiosity and attributions for poverty as proposed mediators, and political involvement as a control variable.

Donating Money

As Figure 2 illustrates, regression analyses indicated that liberalism predicted greater willingness to donate to organizations that benefit the poor. Furthermore—and precisely as

expected-- greater conservatism was related to more dispositional attributions for poverty, and greater religiosity. Contrary to expectations, neither religiosity nor attributions for poverty, directly predicted individuals' willingness to donate. Furthermore, when controlling for the mediators, political ideology continued to predict individuals' willingness to donate to charitable organizations that benefit the poor (a pattern which suggests that religiosity and attributions for poverty do not explain the relationship between ideology and donating money). Analyses also indicated that people who were more politically involved were more willing to donate money. However, as can be seen above, political ideology remained a significant predictor even after controlling for political involvement.

Bootstrap mediational analysis indicated that neither religiosity nor attributions for poverty mediated the effect of political orientation on charitable donations to benefit those living below the poverty line. The lower and upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval included 0 for both religiosity (boot coefficient=.022, Lower CI=-.01, Upper CI=.06) and attributions of poverty (boot coefficient=.009, Lower CI= -.01, Upper CI= .03). In summary, both political ideology and political involvement separately predicted charitable donations to the poor. Contrary to expectations, attributions for poverty and religiosity did not mediate the link between political ideology and charitable donations to organizations that benefit those living in poverty.

Volunteering Time

As Figure 3 illustrates, regression analyses indicated that greater conservatism was related to greater willingness to volunteer at organizations that benefit the poor. Furthermore—

and again as expected—greater conservatism was associated with more dispositional attributions for poverty and greater religiosity. In contrast to the above pattern regarding monetary donations, religiosity and attributions for poverty directly predicted individuals' willingness to volunteer. While increased religiosity was associated with increased willingness to volunteer, a finding consistent with expectations, dispositional attributions for poverty predicted increased willingness to participate in volunteering, a finding in opposition of expected results. Furthermore, when controlling for the mediators, political ideology no longer predicted individuals' willingness to volunteer. Analyses also indicated that people who were more politically involved were more willing to volunteer at organizations that benefit the poor, but controlling for political involvement did not eliminate the effects of political ideology

Bootstrap mediational analysis indicated that both religiosity and attributions for poverty mediated the effect of political orientation on volunteering at organizations that help those living below the poverty line. The lower and upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval did not include 0 for either religiosity (boot coefficient=.082, Lower CI=.05, Upper CI=.13) or attributions of poverty (boot coefficient=.02, Lower CI= .01, Upper CI= .04). In summary, political orientation is mediated by attributions for poverty, religiosity, and political involvement when individuals assess their willingness to volunteer at organizations that help the poor.

Summary of Results

The results supported some, but not all, of the proposed hypotheses. It was predicted that political ideology would both predict attributions for poverty and religiosity. This prediction was

supported, conservatives reported higher levels of religiosity than did liberals, and conservatives reported stronger dispositional/ weaker situational attributions for poverty than did liberals. It was also predicted religiosity and attributions for poverty would mediate any documented relationship between political ideology and giving. This hypothesis was partially supported by the volunteerism model but not by the monetary donation model. The relationship between political ideology and volunteering was mediated by both attributions for poverty and religiosity. Individuals were motivated to volunteer due to dispositional attributions for poverty. More specifically, conservatives were more likely to volunteer due to higher levels of religiosity (and were likely further motivated due to their dispositionalism). Further, conservatives were more willing to volunteer than liberals. When controlling for both attributions of poverty and religiosity, political ideology was no longer a significant predictor of volunteerism. Unlike volunteerism, the cross-pressure model was not supported by monetary donations. Although political ideology did predict attributions for poverty and religiosity, neither of these proposed mediators actually mediated the relationship between political ideology and donating money. In fact, when controlling for both religiosity and attributions for poverty, political ideology remained a significant predictor of charitable giving, with liberal participants indicating greater willingness to donate money than conservative counterparts.

Further, political involvement was a significant predictor of volunteering, suggesting that both the degree to which an individual is involved with politics, and whether they are liberal or conservative matter when considering volunteering to help the poor.

In sum, these findings suggest that there are differences in the ways individuals' process donating money versus volunteering. The proposed mediating factors play a larger role in our processing of volunteerism than when considering donating money to help the poor. Further, liberals and conservative are differently motivated to participate in volunteering behaviors. Conservatives are motivated due to higher levels of religiosity, and dispositional attributions for poverty while liberals are likely demotivated due to lower levels of religiosity and situational attributions for poverty. Finally, political involvement matters with either form of charitable behavior. The greater the degree to which an individual participates in politics, the greater the likelihood they will donate money and volunteer to help the poor.

Discussion

The current research exposes the factors that motivate individuals' willingness to participate in charitable behaviors that benefit individuals living below the poverty line. In particular, this research suggests that there are differences in the reasons that individuals (a) donate money to versus (b) volunteer at charitable organizations that help the poor. Overall, based on our analyses, when people consider donating money, their political ideology and political involvement matter, as both were significant predictors of this form of charitable giving. Conservative individuals were more religious and were more likely to explain poverty through dispositional factors. Somewhat unexpectedly, and in opposition to the cross-pressure model, neither religiosity nor attributions for poverty influenced individuals' willingness to donate money. Rather, political ideology alone influenced people's willingness to give money.

Furthermore, the extent to which an individual is politically involved was significant, but did not eliminate the effects of ideology. When controlling for political ideology, religiosity, and attributions for poverty, the more a participant was politically involved, the more willing they were to donate money to an organization that helped the poor. This suggests that not only does one's political orientation matter when making decisions about donating money, but it also matters how involved they are with politics as well.

The pattern of results differed when it came to the factors that motivated people to volunteer time at an organization that benefitted individuals living below the poverty line. In regards to volunteerism, results partially supported the cross-pressure model. Conservatism predicted volunteerism until religiosity and attributions for poverty were controlled for. Conservatives were more highly religious and liberals were more likely to explain poverty through situational attributions for poverty. However, unlike the donating money analysis, religiosity and attributions for poverty both predicted willingness to volunteer. The more religious a participant was, the more willing they were to say they would be willing to volunteer time at an organization, furthermore the more a participant explained the causes of poverty through dispositional attributions, the more willing they were to say they would volunteer time. Furthermore, when controlling for religiosity and attributions for poverty, political ideology was no longer a significant predictor of volunteering time. Political involvement predicted willingness to volunteer. The more politically involved an individual was, the more willing they were to state they would volunteer in the future. Finally, and perhaps of most relevance to the

cross-pressure model, the effect of a participants' political orientation on their willingness to volunteer was mediated by the extent to which they were religious and whether or not they made dispositional attributions for poverty. These findings show that religiosity and attributions for poverty are meditational pathways for the relationship between political ideology and volunteerism to benefit the poor in the future.

Implications

These findings suggest the importance of acknowledging monetary donations and volunteerism as separate forms of charitable behaviors, a distinction not clarified by much of the past literature. Understanding the differences in factors that influence donating money as compared to volunteering to benefit the poor may further explain the disagreements amongst researchers regarding whether liberals or conservatives participate in charity at different rates.

The current research provides partial evidence for the proposed cross-pressure model. In regards to volunteering, conservatism is associated with increased dispositionalism and religiosity, both of which have influences on willingness to volunteer. Further, liberalism is associated with increased situationalism and decreased religiosity, which have demotivating influences on volunteering. Understanding these nuances in regards to the relationship between political ideology and charitable behaviors may explain the opposing findings within past literature. Some past research has suggested conservatives participate more so in charitable behaviors (Brooks, 2006), whereas other research has posited that liberals give and volunteer more (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011). The current research adds to this literature by suggesting there

are a multitude of mediating factors that make the relationship between political ideology and charitable behaviors to the poor, complex. Further, these findings suggest an importance in making a distinction between donating money and volunteering due to the ways in which a variety of factors differentially shape both forms of charitable behaviors.

Practical Applications

This research not only benefits our understanding of the theories of ideology and prosociality, but also has practical applications for the non-profit sector. Recognizing the differences in factors that influence individuals' willingness to donate money or volunteer is crucial in not only understanding the motivators of current donors and volunteers, but also will aid in future recruitment. For example, organizations can use these findings to differentially attract both donors and volunteers. If an organization with a mission of helping those below the poverty line needs more donors, they may want to focus on recruiting highly politically involved individuals. This research also suggests that liberal populations may be more willing to donate money, making them a key pool of individuals these organizations will want to recruit from. On the other hand, if an organization is seeking a greater volunteer base, they may consider reaching out to both highly politically involved individuals, and those with more conservative political leanings.

Further, organizations may want to focus on changes in recruitment tactics dependent on the audience demographics. For example, when speaking to liberal individuals, organizations may want to play up how the individuals they are speaking with have been highly active

politically within the community to emphasize the political involvement pathway to volunteerism. When speaking to a more conservative audience, organizations may consider playing up the importance of the relationship between religiosity and charity. Further, organizations may consider speaking about the dispositional attributes that caused clients' poverty, however this is strategy would need to be thoughtfully considered as such a strategy could lead volunteers to overstate the fault of those living in poverty. These findings can therefore benefit organizations by highlighting the strategies that organizations can use to increase the likelihood of individuals from both liberal and conservative backgrounds to be willing to participate in charitable behaviors.

More generally this research points to the benefits of non-profits taking a psychological approach to understanding their donors and volunteers. This perspective sheds light on the motivating factors that drive individuals to choose to help non-profits that benefit the poor. Understanding these motivating factors can aid development teams at non-profits to establish more effective strategies to gain more donors and volunteers by pulling from the populations that are most likely to benefit the organization.

Limitations

As with any study, the current research included some limitations. By design, this research focused narrowly on charitable behaviors that exclusively benefitted those living below the poverty line. It is possible that these findings may not be generalizable to charitable behaviors at large. For example, when individuals consider participating in charitable behaviors

that benefit children with cancer, it is unlikely there will be differences in attributions for the causes of childhood cancer across the political spectrum. Overall, people will posit situational attributions or purely “bad luck” or chance as the reason the child has cancer, rather than suggesting dispositional attributions. Likewise, attributional patterns may differ when people consider giving to victims of natural disaster, many sorts of illnesses, animal shelters, or a variety of other charitable causes. Understanding charitable behaviors at large is important in understanding human nature in regards to giving and even altruistic behaviors. However, this research is the first step in understanding the complex nature of why individuals choose to participate in donating and volunteering behaviors.

In this study, religiosity was also investigated in a fairly general sense (i.e., depth of religious commitment). Religious affiliation was not explored, thus making it difficult to assert a) the religious affiliations of participants and b) whether variance in religious affiliations matters when considering charitable behaviors toward the poor. Further investigation into the components of religiosity and its’ relationship with charity would allow the academic community to explore variance of charitable behaviors across different forms of religiosity. For example, perhaps there is variance in willingness to help charity across religions. Although these topics are left unaddressed with the current research, this work still takes further steps in understanding how depth of religious commitment can differentially act as a mediator with volunteering and donating money.

In this study, the dependent variables (i.e. willingness to donate money and volunteer)

were self-report measures. There may be differences in individuals' reported willingness to participate in charitable behaviors in the future, and their actual willingness to complete such acts in the future. Although this limitation is meaningful, a multitude of past research exploring charitable behaviors has also relied on self-report measures (Choi & Chou, 2010; Jonas, Schimel, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2002; Shantz et al., 2014), suggesting this form of survey methodology is sound for researching willingness to participate in charitable behaviors in the future.

The participant sample was slightly liberal leaning, meaning more liberals than conservatives participated in this study. Further, more individuals classified themselves as "slightly conservative" than as "conservative" and "very conservative". This pattern suggests the conservative participants in this study may not be representative of the typical conservative population. Although the participant pool was not evenly representative of the political spectrum, conservative participants still played a crucial role within analyses. This suggests that while the participants were liberal leaning, this did not significantly impact results.

Finally, past research has questioned the viability of the unidimensional approach to political ideology used in the current research. This approach posits individuals are consistent in their political ideology across issues. For example, if an individual is slightly conservative in regards to tax reform, they will also be slightly conservative on issues such as same sex marriage. On the other hand, multidimensional approaches suggest there is variability within individuals regarding their political stances across political issues. Researchers suggest the need

for measuring political ideology using a multidimensional approach to gain a better measurement of individuals' political ideology (Morgan & Wisneski, in press). While this multidimensional approach is ideal, little research has explored effective ways in which to measure political ideology using this framework (Feldman & Huddy, 2014), thus making the unidimensional approach to political ideology necessary for the current research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current research suggests mixed evidence regarding the relationship between political ideology and charitable giving to benefit the poor. Liberals were more willing to state they would donate money to help the poor in the future, while conservatives were more willing to state they would volunteer in the future. Further, political involvement acted as a significant predictor for both forms of charitable behaviors.

There is also mixed evidence for the proposed cross pressure model. This model did not seem to apply to donating money. Both religiosity and attributions for poverty did not act as mediators. This model was partially applicable to volunteerism. The relationship between ideology and volunteering to help the poor was mediated by religiosity and attributions for poverty. Specifically, those who were highly religious and, somewhat surprisingly, those who made dispositional attributions for poverty were most willing to volunteer. While dispositionalism being a predictor of volunteering is puzzling, the reasons this may be the case make sense when considering how dispositional attributions were measured. Participants stated their level of agreement with items such as, "To what extent is poverty under ones' personal

control?” and “To what extent are some people poor due to decisions and behaviors that are under their own personal control?” While these statements still hold the poor accountable for living in poverty, they do not measure hostility towards the poor. This suggests that participants may have not held a hostile position towards the poor but perhaps a benevolent stance. Benevolence may lead individuals’ to be more willing to help the poor because they believe the poor cannot help themselves.

While it is still not known why political ideology is differentially related to donating money and volunteering, it could be theorized that the degree to which effort is put forth for each act of charity, matters. Perhaps it is the case that when an individual is deciding whether or not to participate in a more taxing activity such as volunteering, more factors influence individuals’ processing. For example, when considering volunteer to help the poor, people may be more likely to think of their religious commitments and their belief about the causes of poverty than when they are simply writing a check for an organization, as volunteerism is a more effortful activity than donating money. The observed differences between donating and volunteering may point to an explanation as to why there are such mixed findings regarding ideology and willingness to participate in charity in previous literature. This suggests future research should continue to parse charitable behaviors into more defined forms of action. Further, the current research points to a complicated relationship between ideology and charity. Some factors may influence individuals to give more while other factors may simultaneously influence individuals to give less. Addressing the complexities between ideology and giving has provided a step

toward more fully recognizing and accounting for the motivating factors used when individuals consider whether to donate money or volunteer to benefit the poor.

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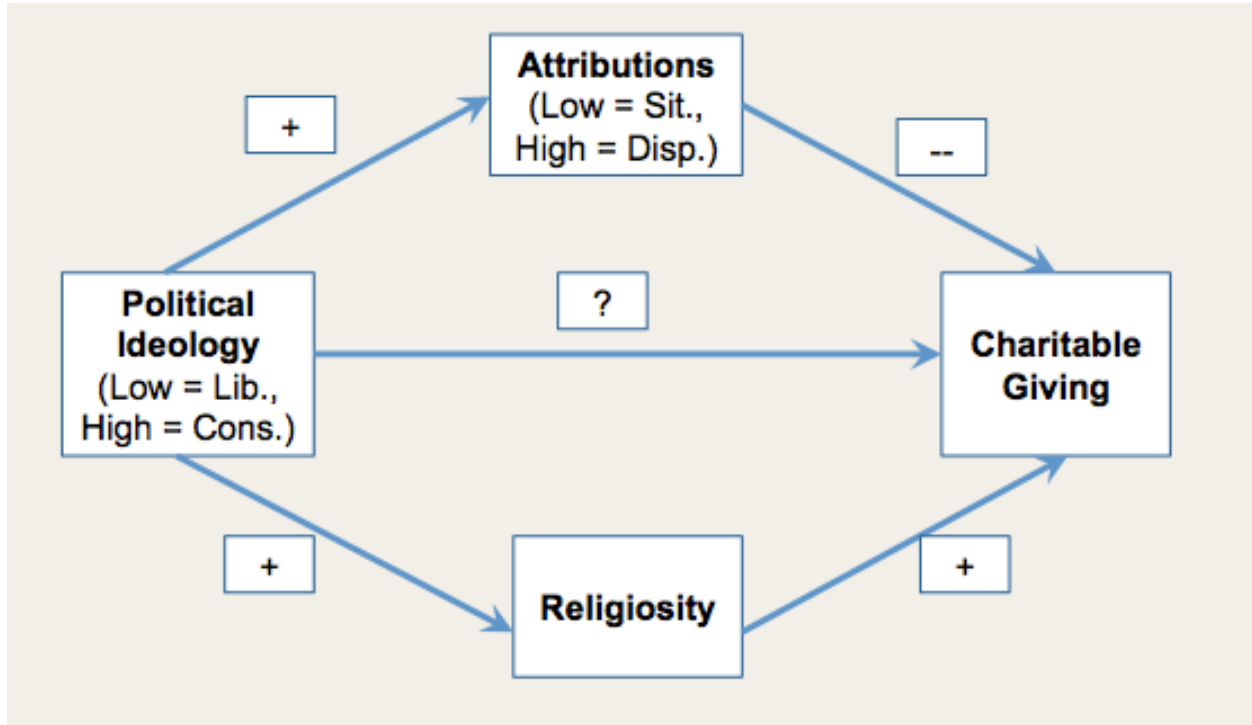


Figure 1. The proposed cross-pressure model of political ideology and charitable giving.

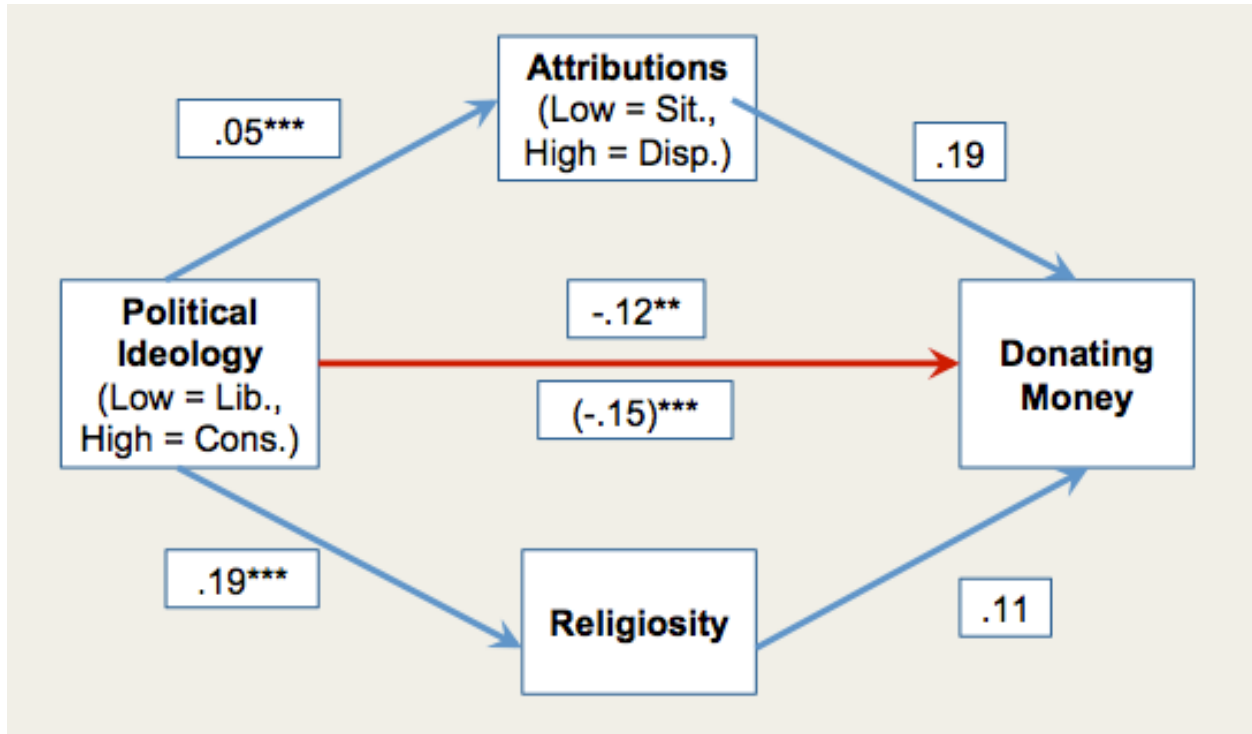


Figure 2. The effects of political ideology, attributions for poverty, and religiosity on willingness to donate an organization that serves the poor.

Notes. ***<.001, **<.01, *<.05, †<.10. Numbers represent unstandardized betas. For the political ideology- charitable behaviors path, (a) the number above the arrow represents the effect of political ideology on charitable behaviors to the poor, and (b) the number in parentheses below the arrow represents the effect of political ideology on charitable behaviors to the poor controlling for mediators.

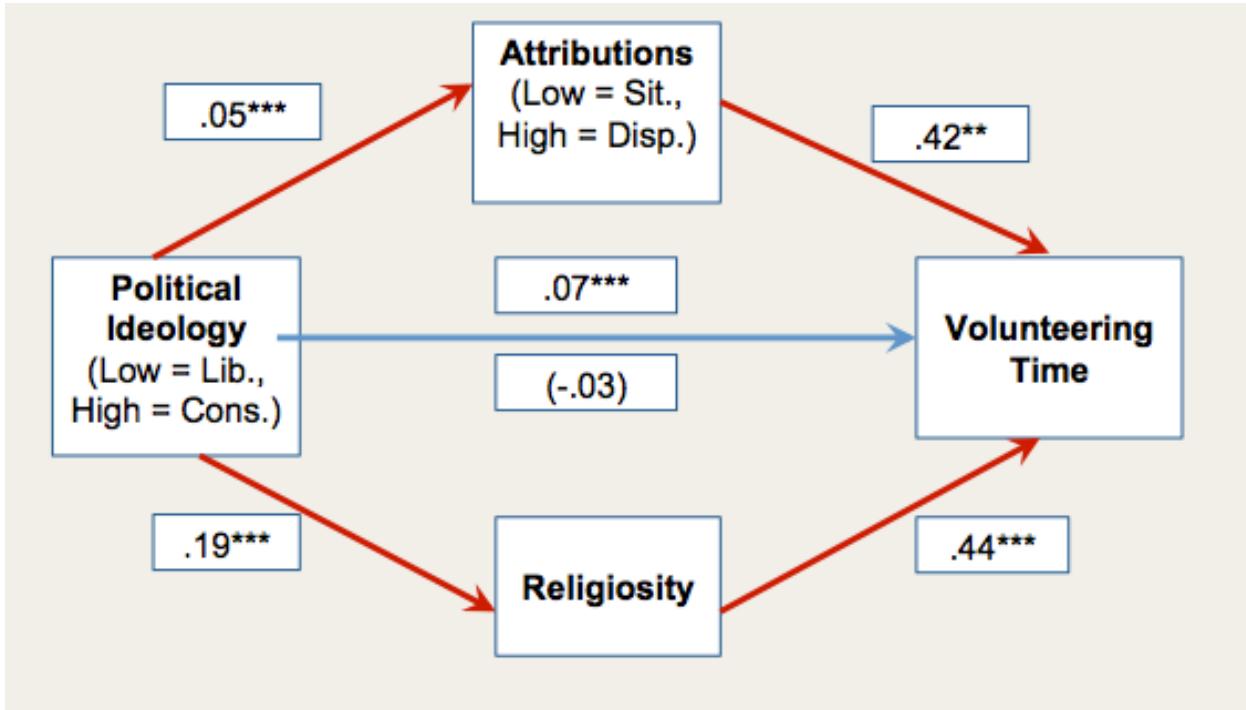


Figure 3. The effects of political ideology, attributions for poverty, and religiosity on willingness to volunteer at an organization that serves the poor.

Notes. ***<.001, **<.01, *<.05, †<.10. Numbers represent unstandardized betas. For the political ideology- charitable behaviors path, (a) the number above the arrow represents the effect of political ideology on charitable behaviors to the poor, and (b) the number in parentheses below the arrow represents the effect of political ideology on charitable behaviors to the poor controlling for mediators.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations among Study Variables

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	<u>5.</u>	<u>6.</u>
1. Political Ideology	-.91	2.56	1.00					
2. Political Involvement	2.27	.71	-.14*	1.00				
3. Attributions for Poverty	-.41	.62	.23**	-.21**	1.00			
4. Religiosity	2.13	1.34	.33**	.12*	.10	1.00		
5. Donating Money	.18	1.78	-.22**	.34**	-.04	.05	1.00	
6. Volunteering Time	-.65	1.65	.07	.32**	.12*	.40**	.58**	1.00

Note: Bolded numbers indicate significant correlations, **<.01, *<.05