Save the Amazon Rainforest!:
Message Strategies of Charity Advertising in Social Media

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A common advertising message strategy used in gaining donations is utilizing images provoking emotion, statistics that support the need, and anecdotal wording to appeal to empathy. Utilizing the Elaboration Likelihood Model, this research examines the impacts of advertising message strategies on donation intention towards an environmental issue, by using a 2 (anecdotal versus logical appeal) × 2 (visual versus no visual) experiment. In addition, this study seeks to find relationships among other important factors such as the feeling of guilt, prior donation history, message comprehension, involvement, and gender. A result from 591 respondents using AmazonTurk showed that logical appeal influences respondents' intention to recommend the cause to others and donation intention. Females were prone to feel higher amounts of guilt than males, females were more likely to recommend donating to others than males, and previous donors had higher intentions to donate and recommend donating to others. Further theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: ELM, Charity Advertising, social media, message strategies

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Over the years, different organizations across the world have sought donations for a wide variety of different causes. In 2021, environmental protection organizations are among those urgently soliciting donations as threats to the world's oceans, forests, and wildlife become irreparable. In 2016, after experiencing a significant rise in the average temperature of the oceans, the Great Barrier Reef was subjected to coral bleaching - killing 1/3 of the individual reefs that make up the Great Barrier Reef (Schiermeier, 2018). If maximum efforts to stop this problem do not occur soon, then coral reefs are predicted to decline by 70-90% in the next 20 years (Advancing Earth and Space Science, 2020).

This problem does not only reside in our oceans, either. Today, roughly a quarter of our largest rainforest, the Amazon, has been destroyed (Scherer, 2019). The Brazilian Amazon is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world (Silva *et al.*, 2021). From 2004 to 2012, there was a sharp decrease in the annual deforestation rate, but this change soon inversed when Federal Law n. 12.727/2012 was implemented in Brazil. In 2020 alone, over 2,500 major fires were documented over the Amazon, adding up to an estimated 5.4 million acres burnt in total (Kimbrough, 2020). Organizations have been created to prevent irreversible damage to the rainforest. Money raised by these organizations is going directly towards protecting the ecosystems and biodiversity by strengthening protected areas, ensuring landscape connectivity, training individuals on conservation, funding research on innovative ways to conserve the ecosystem, and backing indigenous communities' advocacy efforts in Brazil (Amazon Conservation Association, 2020).

Organizations are facing a decrease in donations after social distancing restrictions have seized many traditional in-person fundraisers and COVID-19 has continued to impact many American citizens' economic positions (O'Reilly, 2020). Organizations are relying greatly on advertisements through multiple platforms to increase donations and awareness of their supported cause. In the last year, online giving has grown by 12.1% (Nonprofit Fundraising Statistics, 2021). Millennial and Gen X donors were reported feeling most inspired to give after seeing a post on social media and Millennials, Gen X, and Baby Boomers all reported preferring to give through an online medium (Nonprofit Fundraising Statistics, 2021). Overall, online revenue has increased by 23% over the past year and donations to environmental and human rights-related missions grew the most (Nonprofit Fundraising Statistics, 2021).

Studies on what aspects of advertisements attract people to donate are crucial to maximizing profit and thus the efforts of the organization. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) serves as a foundation for this study that centers around what persuades an individual to make a purchase intention. The purpose of this study is to identify what advertisement strategies are most effective: those whose content focuses on anecdotal appeals (i.e., words provoking emotion without scientific backing) or those whose content focuses on logistic appeals (e.g., tax-deductible, statistics supporting the need of the cause, or other figures). Then, the study also examines factors affecting donation intentions such as gender, feeling of guilt, previous donation frequency, the use of a visual aspect, and donation intention to aid organizations to better tailor non-profit advertisements and maximize donations. Guilt was chosen as an independent variable during this study because it is among the most commonly utilized tactics when attempting to gain donations (Urbonavicius et al., 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW
Elaborated Likelihood Model

The Elaborated Likelihood Model (ELM hereafter) suggests that there are two paths to persuasion based on how invested a person is on the topic: the central path and peripheral path (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The central path is utilized when an individual is interested in the topic and takes time to analyze, think about, and weigh the options. The peripheral path is utilized when the message is not of importance or interest to the receiver and uses stimuli that are favorable to the receiver to draw attention (e.g., celebrities, money, etc.). These paths suggest factors that affect attitude change, such as the evaluation process, amount of effort, and cognitive retention of the message (Petty & Cacioppo,

1986). Yang et al. (2006) showed that consumers with high involvement and low anxiety build their trust via the central route exclusively. Consumers with low involvement and high anxiety build their trust via the peripheral route exclusively, concluding that personalizing the persuasive technique for different consumers is a critical strategy for initial online trust-building. When looking at the role of personality traits and perceived values in persuasion, Chen and Lee (2008) showed that consumers who have higher levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness preferred central route website contents for eliciting practical shopping value while consumers who have higher levels of emotional stability, openness, and extraversion related more to peripheral route website contents in facilitating experiential and hedonic shopping value. The ELM did receive credit for being a useful guide in studying attitude change and persuasion. While there are many differing opinions on this model, it is still widely used and discussed in studies regarding attitude change and persuasion.

The ELM suggests that any singular variable can influence attitude change in a multitude of different ways and can alter persuasion beneficially or detrimentally (Petty et al., 2004). Concurrently, scholars have identified and examined different message types/strategies such as rational messages versus emotional messages in advertisements (e.g., Alt *et al*., 2014;). Alt, Saplacan, and Veres (2014) focused specifically on two general broad categories - emotional and rational appeals on printed ads. The study further condensed these categories by defining rational advertisements as those, "directed at the consumer's practical, functional need for the product or service" (Alt *et al*., 2014, p.26). The study defined emotional appeals as "the consumer's psychological, social, or symbolic needs," (Alt et al., 2014, p.26). They found that the advertisements whose message focused on product features/benefits were more effective than the messages that focused on the consumer's experience or feelings (Alt et al., 2014). Leonidou and Leonidou (2009) examined how rational versus emotional appeals were used in newspaper advertising in terms of copy, art, and layout differences. They define rational advertisements as those revolving mainly around objectivity, functionality, and utilitarianism while emotional advertisements were defined by having the characteristics of subjectivity, emotionalism, and value-expressiveness (Leonidou & Leonidou, 2009). They found that photographs resonate best with emotional appeals while drawings were more commonly found in rational appeals.

In the same line of reasoning, the current study examines anecdotal appeal and logical appeal in charity advertising. Logical appeal correlates to the central route. Individuals who prefer the central route will be calculate carefully considering the benefits of, in this case, donating to the cause. These individuals will need to see that donating to the cause makes sense and is favorable to themselves, or, the argument must provide a strong enough reason of being favorable to others that they are influenced to take action. They are specifically interested in the message of the argument. If the individual determines the message is strong, then it is likely that a positive attitude change will occur. If the individual deems that the message is weak, then it is likely there will be no change or a negative attitude change regarding the topic. Whether an individual finds a message strong or weak is subjective but this experiment and testing the changes in attitude when guilt and visual aspects are included or omitted will help determine a general consensus on what factors benefit or deter the credibility of the message for those who are persuaded by the central route. Emotional appeals are related to the peripheral route to persuasion. In this route, individuals rely on simple cues or shortcuts to process the information that they are seeing. These shortcuts can include visuals, trust in the source, or eliciting

emotion. In this route, it is less about the strength of the actual argument but more about how it makes the individual feel as well as how it has already been perceived by the public.

The Role of Visuals in Effective Advertising

Messaris (2006) explains that there are three main reasons that utilizing a visual in advertising is effective. Unlike a drawing, photographs are perceived as "direct copies of reality" to consumers (p.vi). This illusion makes the consumer feel as if they are interacting exclusively with the people or places shown in the photograph and can bring forth a variety of "preprogrammed emotional responses" that text cannot (p.xiii). Images additionally serve as evidence that what is being pictured is happening. Individuals often perceive a picture to have more ethos than something that is written or rendered by an advertiser. It allows for the message to appear more credible being as it is backed up with a photograph depicting the situation. Lastly, images can establish a link between the thing being show and the intention to donate or buy (Messaris, 2006).

For charity advertising, Burt and Strongman (2004) found that images of children were found to be particularly powerful in generating emotional reactions and that images showing negative emotions generated significantly larger monetary donations, and significantly larger donations of items and time. Lazard and Atkinson (2014) looked at how visuals impact pro-environmental messages and suggested that individuals are more likely to engage with an environmental message if they are shown an image or an infographic compared to a message that only shows text. It was also concluded that visual contents are an important factor in the process of persuasive messaging (Lazard & Atkinson, 2014). Xue and Muralidharan (2015) showed similar results in that the use of visuals alongside an environmental claim resulted in a more favorable perception of the brand's efforts and a higher positive advertising response.

The Role of Guilt in Effective Advertising and Gender

One of the most commonly utilized strategies of cause-related marketing is the inclusion of guilt within the advertising message itself. A study conducted in 2019 thoroughly explained the effectiveness of guilt in advertisements seeking voluntary time or donations (Urbonavicius et al., 2019). Guilt is an emotion that incites a negative feeling, hence creating a dissonance that humans want to rid of quickly (Urbonavicius et al., 2019). Charities and cause-related marketing use the guilt appeal solely to incite said negative emotions, and then, immediately following it with information about an action that can help reduce that unpleasant, guilty feeling: donating or volunteering. They further this feeling of guilt by pairing it with a societal responsibility to the cause, eluding that if you are not donating or helping, then you become part of the problem (Urbonavicius et al., 2019). Multiple studies have conducted similar research that suggests that advertisements that use guilt within their message provoke a stronger intention to donate to a charity than those advertisements whose message does not include a factor of guilt (Eayrs & Ellis, 1990; Urbonavicius et al., 2019). Eayrs and Ellis (1990) studied donation rates for people with mental handicaps and found that images that were most closely associated with feelings of guilt, sympathy, and pity were most frequently engaged with. Another study further confirmed that there is a direct link between prosocial behavior and guilt- even concluding that males are less likely to be persuaded by guilt advertisements than women are (Torstveit et al., 2016). Utilization of the negative guilt emotion has proven to be effective for many organizations across the board, and thus supports the effectiveness of emotionally driven advertisements.

Another study looked directly at the differences in how males and females react to a law intended to provoke guilt (Muralidharan & Sheehan, 2017). The study focused on if England's guilt-ridden law enforcing a fine with every plastic bag used could change a person's behavior to start using reusable bags. 93 participants were surveyed, and the results proved significant. Women expressed much higher feelings of guilt than did men. The study took this a step further and conducted a second part in which they looked at advertisements that utilized guilt through egoistic concern tactics and biospheric concern tactics. The findings suggested that in promoting sustainable behavior guilt can play a crucial role. Women were much more likely to respond with high levels of guilt to the egoistic advertisement. Meanwhile, the biospheric advertisement instead of provoking guilt provoked skepticism by giving credit to shoppers for pro-environmental behaviors that they may not have done. Women were proven to allocate more cognitive resources and through the egoistic advertisement, they found dual benefits-personal savings and environmental health. This study confirmed both that advertisements that utilize guilt seem to motivate consumers and that women were more influenced by guilt-ridden messages than males (Muralidharan & Sheehan, 2017).

There has also been evidence showing that the impact of donation size is partly moderated by gender. The research found that differences between genders are not as much innate as they are motivated by "socially attributed gender roles" (Moosmayer & Fuljahn, 2010). Prosocial behavior is looked at specifically during this study, and gender roles regarding empathy in particular. Empathic feelings have consistently been reported being stronger among women. Therefore, studies show that women tend to act in a way that is more prosocial and respond more positively to cause-related marketing campaigns than men. This particular study will serve as a comparison to see if the conclusion that women are more prone to positive feedback to donation advertisements stays consistent (Moosmayer & Fuljahn, 2010).

Research Questions

The current study builds upon previous research by expanding to all cause-related advertising, not only non-profits, and by focusing specifically on gender motivations. Based on the review of previous studies on charity advertising and the ELM model, Figure 1 shows the research model and the following research questions are posed.

RQ1: *Which advertising appeal (i.e., anecdotal versus logical) was more effective in receiving donations for the fabricated organization?*

RQ2: *How does a visual component relate to donation intention?*

RQ3: *How does gender relate to donation intention?*

RQ4: *How does prior donation frequency relate to donation intention?*

RQ5: *How do an individual's involvement, message perception, and feeling of guilt relate, attitudes to donation intention?*
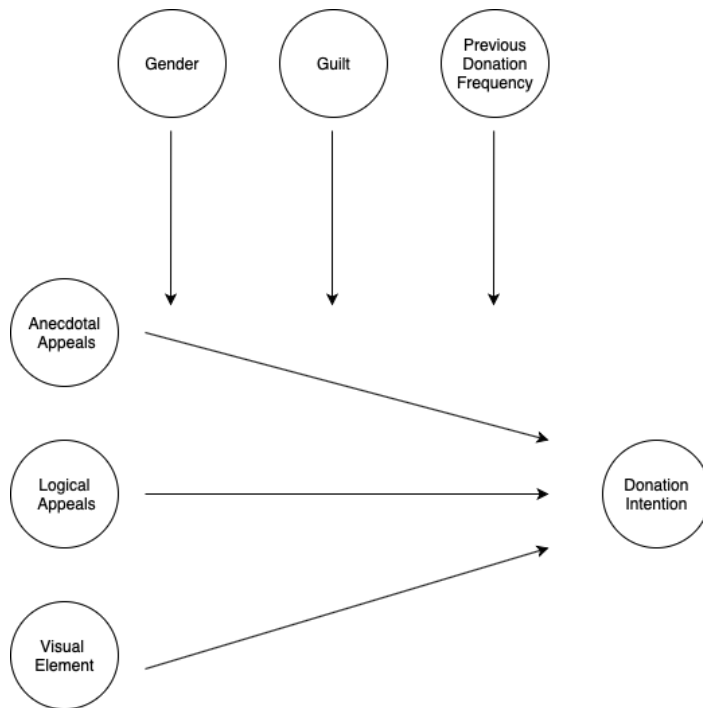
Figure 1. Research model

METHODS

This study uses a 2 (anecdotal vs. logical appeal) × 2 (use of picture vs. no use of picture) experimental design. The subject in this study will center around the topic of environmental concern.

Participants

The online experiment was conducted on Amazon Turk with a $0.20 award for finishing the experiment. A total of 591 participants were included in the final data analysis. Females made up 49.9% of the data (n = 295) and males accounted for 49.1% (n = 290). The majority age group for this data set was 25-34 (n = 202, 34.2%), followed by 35-44 (n =155, 26.2%), 45-54 (n = 81, 13.7%), 18-24 (n = 75, 12.7%). The average annual income was $20,000-$29,999 (n=82, 13.9%), followed by $50,000-$59,999 (n=64, 10.8%), $30,000-$39,999 (n=59, 10%). Of the sample, 44.7% had a highest education of a bachelor's degree (n = 264). Almost 18% of the samples' highest education was a master's degree (n = 109), followed by 17.1% having had some college but no degree (n = 101). Of the sample, 51.3% of the sample had not donated in the last year to an environmental cause (n = 303) while 23.2% had donated 1-3 times (n = 137) and 23% had donated 4-6 times last year to an environmental cause (n = 163).

Procedure

Participants were shown at random an Instagram post asking for donations to the Amazon Rainforest. These Instagram posts varied in the different controlled tactics utilized. Once they were shown an Instagram post, questions were asked to measure their donation intention immediately, their donation intention in the future, their likelihood of recommending donating immediately, their likelihood of recommending donating in the future, as well as any attitude change that occurred post

advertisement. Upon completion of the questionnaire, participants were thanked for their time and given an option to include their name for extra credit if that applied to them or to enter a code to get paid.

Stimuli Development

The fabricated organization selected in the current study was environmentally oriented and regarded the destruction of the Amazon Rainforest. Each stimulus contained an omission or addition of a visual element and either an anecdotal or logical caption. The advertisement mimicked a native advertisement utilized on social media. The social media site used was Instagram and the postings were made under a fake account called "for the amazon." The wording and visuals used remained consistent in the questionnaire for both female, male, and other participants. For the visual stimuli, only one identical photo was shown or omitted. This photo was a stock image of the Amazon Rainforest. It was not meant to elicit any strong emotion either negatively or positively. Four conditions are listed in Appendix.

Measures

Feeling of guilt. After respondents were exposed to an advertisement, respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree using a 5-point likert scale with the statements: I feel guilty about not donating to the Amazon Rainforest, I feel bad about doing nothing to help the Amazon Rainforest (Gangemi & Mancini, 2006), Helping is good thing to do, and I have a responsibility to do what I can to help the Amazon Rainforest (Basil et al., 2006). The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .818.

Attitude. To measure attitude a question asked, "In general, what do you think of donating to an environmental cause/organization?" Respondents were able to answer on a 7-point Likert scale. The answers ranged from sad-happy, motivated-unmotivated, responsible-irresponsible, and negative-positive. The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .914.

Involvement. To measure involvement a statement read, "The following questions are to measure your interest or involvement in the social media post you just saw. Check the number that best represents your opinion regarding the Instagram post. Respondents were able to answer on a 7-point Likert scale. The answers ranged from unimportant-important, irrelevant-relevant, of not concern-of concern to me. The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .927.

Message perception. To measure involvement a question asked, "In general, what do you think of the social media post you just saw?" Respondents were able to answer on a 7-point Likert scale. The answers ranged from unbelievable-believable, unconvincing-convincing, not credible-credible, not trustworthy-trustworthy, not dependable-dependable, unreliable-reliable, unreputable-reputable, dishonest-honest, phony-genuine, unethical-ethical, biased-unbiased. The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .953

Donation intention. After respondents were exposed to an ad at random, respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with statements utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. The scale ranged from 1, "Not at all" to 7 "Very Much." The statements used mimicked that of the study done Ye, Teng, Yu and Wang in 2015. In addition, there was a multiple-choice question asking the respondent if they were to be given $100 how much of it, they would be willing to donate to the Amazon Rainforest (Choi & Choi, 2014**).** To measure longevity of donation intention, questions were also asked regarding how likely they were to donate in the future as well as refer to someone else.

First, donation intention was measured using four questions: I am willing to make a donation to the Amazon Rainforest, I intend on making a donation to the Amazon Rainforest, I am very likely to make a donation to the Amazon Rainforest, I will make a donation to the Amazon Rainforest. The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .969. Secondly, repeated donation intention was measured by four questions: I am willing to make a donation regularly (monthly, bi-monthly, or annually) to the Amazon, I intend on making a donation regularly (monthly, bi-monthly, or annually) to the Amazon, I am very likely to make a donation regularly (monthly, bi-monthly, or annually) to the Amazon, I will make a donation regularly (monthly, bi-monthly, or annually) to the Amazon. The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .980. Thirdly, recommendation intention was measured by using three questions: How likely are you to recommend donating to this cause to others? How likely are you to say positive things about donating to this cause to others? How likely are you to encourage others to donate to this cause? The reliability was high at the Cronbach alpha at .939.

RESULTS

Manipulation checks

For the manipulation of logical appeals, three statements were provided. Participants were asked to answer how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: This social media post conveys more functional features than the emotional features of the cause (Albers-Miller & Stafford, 1999), This social media post uses mainly descriptive explanations and narratives (Feeley et al., 2006), and when you looked at the post, how easy was it to recognize that statistics appears? The t-test yielded a significant difference in measuring their perception on logical reasoning (t = 11.53, df = 577, p< .000, $M_{logical}$ = 4.16, $SD_{logical}$ = .69 vs. M_{annec} = 3.36, SD_{annec} = .95). For the manipulation of anecdotal appeals, two statements were provided. Participants were asked to answer how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: This social media post conveys more emotional features than the logistic features of the cause (Albers-Miller & Stafford, 1999), and this social media post uses mainly descriptive explanation and narratives (Feeley et al., 2006). The t-test yielded a significant difference in measuring their perception on emotional reasoning (t=-9.93, df=576, p<.000, $M_{anecdotal}$=3.89, $SD_{anecdotal}$=.82 vs. $M_{logical}$=3.05, $SD_{logical}$=1.18). For the manipulation of the visual element, one question was asked: When you looked at the post, how easy was it to recognize the picture as a forest? The t-test yielded a significant difference in measuring their perception on visual presentation (t=-9.93, df=576, p<.000, M_{visual}=3.89, SD_{visua}=.82 vs. M_{no_visual}=3.05, SD_{no_visual}=1.18).

Findings

The first research question asked to see which ad appeal (i.e., anecdotal vs. logical) was more effective in donation intention, donation intention regularly, and recommendation intention. A series of t-tests were conducted, and the results showed that there is a significant difference between logical appeal and anecdotal appeal on recommendation intention, t = 2.188, df = 586, p = .029, $M_{logical}$ = 4.81, $SD_{logical}$ = 1.85 vs. M_{annec} = 4.48, SD_{annec} = 1.79. In other words, people exposed to the logical appeal have a higher intention to recommend the cause to others than people who were exposed to the anecdotal appeal.

The second research question asked if there was a correlation between omission or addition of a visual aspect and donation intention. There was no significant difference in the visual aspect and donation intention.

The third research question investigated the differences between gender and donation intention. A series of t-tests were performed to see the differences between gender and donation intention. There was no significant difference in willingness, likeliness, or intention to donate among males and females. However, there was a significant difference in donation recommendation between males and females, $t = 2.0$, $df = 580$, $p = .032$, $M_{males} = 4.49$, $SD_{males} = 1.89$ vs. $M_{females} = 4.79$, $SD_{females} = 1.75$. This means that women were significantly more likely to recommend donating to other people than males were.

The fourth research question investigated the relationship between 1) an individual's donation history and feeling of guilt and 2) an individual's donation history and donation intention. First, a series of one-way ANOVA tests was conducted to see the relationship between an individual's donation history and feeling of guilt. The mean of guilt among groups who didn't donate last year was 2.45 (SD = 1.26), the mean of feeling of guilt among a group who donated 1 to three times last year was 3.36 (SD = 1.17), and the mean of feeling of guilt among a group who donated four to six times last year was 3.86 (SD = 1.01). To see the group differences (i.e., no donation history, 1-3 times donation history group, and 4-6 times donation history group) on feelings of guilt, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted. The results showed that there was a significant difference, $F=35.51$ (3, 587), $p <$ 0.01. The post-hoc analysis showed that the difference between individuals who did not donate at all last year (M = 2.45, SD = 1.26) and individuals who donated 4-6 times (M = 3.86, SD = 1.01) was statistically different. Then, to explore the relationship between an individual's donation history and donation intention, a series of one-way ANOVA tests was conducted. The mean of donation intention among groups who didn't donate last year was 3.05 (SD = 1.72), the mean of a group who donated 1 to three times last year was 5.18 (SD = 1.44), and the mean of a group who donated four to six times last year was 5.71 (SD = 1.03). For donation intention, the results showed that there was a significant difference, $F=101.89$ (3, 584), $p <$ 0.01. The post-hoc analysis showed that the difference between individuals who did not donate at all last year (M = 3.05, SD = 1.72) and individuals who donated 4-6 times last year (M = 5.71, SD = 1.03) was statistically different.

The last research question asked to see how factors including involvement, message perception, and guilt, affect donation intention and recommendation intention. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations among IVs and DVs.

To see how feeling of guilt, attitude, involvement, and message perception affect the donation intention and recommendation intention, regression analyses were conducted. The results from multiple linear regression analysis indicated that the feeling of guilt (β = .47), attitude (β = .19), message perception (β = .15) and involvement (β = .13) are significant predictors on donation intention [R^2 = .60, adjusted R^2= .60, F(4, 583) = 216.97, $p <$ .001]. For recommendation intention, the results from multiple linear regression analysis indicated that the feeling of guilt (β = .34), message perception (β = .16), and involvement (β = .29) are significant predictors on recommendation intention [R^2 = .54, adjusted R^2= .54, F(4, 583) = 173.18, $p <$ .001]. In other words, feeling of guilt, message perception, and involvement were important factors in both donation intention and recommendation intention, but attitude is significant predictor only for donation intention.

Table 1.
Descriptive statistics and Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Guilt	3.22	1.08	-								
2. Donation Intention	4.35	1.91	.69**	-							
3. Recommendation	4.64	1.83	.61**	.80**	-						
4. Post Attitude	5.61	1.28	.50**	.62**	.60**	-					
5. Post Involvement	5.47	1.42	.56**	.64**	.67**	.81**	-				
6. Message Perception	5.42	1.19	.41**	.55**	.57**	.66**	.73**	-			
7. Gender (dummy)	.51	.50	.10*	n/s	n/s	n/s	.10*	n/s			
8. Message type (dummy)	.49	.50	n/s	n/s	.11*	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	-	
9. Visual (dummy)	.51	.50	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	-

Note. *significant at *p*< .05, ** significant at *p*< .001

DISCUSSION

Due to the current pandemic, many charitable organizations are having to find alternative ways to gain donations. Social distancing and stay-at-home orders have caused many in-person fundraising events to be canceled. Charities have thus turned to social media advertising and online outlets to continue to raise awareness and funds for a variety of given causes (O'Reilly, 2020). Given this situation, this research explored the different aspects of an Instagram advertisement that could influence an individual's decision to donate to a fabricated environmental organization focused on protecting the Amazon Rainforest.

Logical Evidence and Visual Component

The result of the first research question showed that using logical appeals (i.e. statistics, figures, scientific reasoning) in charity ads made individuals possess higher intentions of recommending the cause to others. This finding suggests that in order to reach a larger donation audience, it would be beneficial for charitable organizations to include statistics, figures, and or logical reasoning in their advertisements. Also, this finding supports the previous findings by Alt. et al. (2004), who showed that advertisements that highlighted the benefits and features of a product were more effective than the advertisements that highlighted emotional aspects of a product. For spending actual money, logistical appeals yielded higher effectiveness and for charitable organizations, logistical appeals yielded higher recommendation power.

Research showed that a visual component did not prove significant for donation intentions. This was a surprising finding compared to prior research. Burt and Strongman (2004) showed that images that depicted strong negative emotions received significantly stronger donations. A reason that these findings may have differed is that in their research, multiple different photographs were used among a wide variety of causes. Another reason for this may be that the picture used in this thesis study was not meant to incite any kind of emotion either positively or negatively. The goal was to utilize a neutral picture in order to measure visual impact alone. Previous studies used multiple pictures that were meant to incite emotion (Burt Strongman, 2004). Being as strong emotion is not likely tied to a picture of a forest, and a visual aspect alone may not contribute highly to donation intention. The image of the forest chosen was not meant to elicit a strong emotional response being as logical and emotional appeals were among the studies' independent factors.

Guilt, Gender, and Donation History

This study found no link between the feeling of guilt and advertisement appeal (i.e., logical versus anecdotal). Guilt yielded consistent results among both advertisements that used anecdotal approaches and advertisements that used logical approaches. This finding is important because guilt has proven to be a crucial factor in gaining donations previously (Eayrs & Ellis, 1990; Urbonavicious et al., 2019). Also, the feeling of quilt was an important predictor for the donation intention. However, the current study found no differences between the two appeals. Further studies try to find the factors affecting the feeling of guilt in donation intention. For gender differences in the feeling of guilt, females feel significantly higher amounts of guilt than males do and this finding supports multiple prior studies. It is consistent with Moosmayer and Fuljahn's (2010) study, where it showed that empathic feelings were higher among women. Another research study is supported in which a law intended to provoke guilt was implemented (Muralidharan & Sheehan, 2017). The conclusion they made was that women expressed much higher feelings of guilt than men.

As expected, the result showed that women were significantly more likely to recommend donating to other people than males were. Prior research on the topic of gender differences in relation to donation intention was similar to the current study. This result implies that women responded more positively to cause-related marketing campaigns and were more likely to engage in prosocial behavior than males (Moosmayer & Fuljahn, 2010).

For the donation history, the current study found that individuals who donated frequently in the past experienced significantly higher levels of guilt and showed a much higher donation intention. Prior research on this topic has been limited and this finding contributes to an important aspect of charitable advertising. This finding alongside the notion that the feeling of guilt results in increased donation intention (Eayrs & Ellis, 1990; Urbonavicious et al., 2019), suggests that if charitable advertisements tailor their advertisements to those who are frequent donors then they will see significantly higher donation rates than advertisements that are tailored to first-time donors.

ELM

Multiple factors were evaluated regarding donation intention specifically, and the results showed a few significant results. First, individuals who experienced higher guilt also had a higher intention to donate. These results support prior research done by Urbonavivious et al. (2009) and Eayrs and Ellis (1990). It was also found that those who were likely to donate were also more likely to recommend donating, individuals who had a higher attitude perception had a higher intention to

donate, and individuals who had a higher involvement also experienced higher donation tendencies. It was also concluded that individuals who experienced the message more positively also scored higher in donation intention. A few interesting things were found when looking deeper into the results. Although each factor (i.e. involvement, message perception, guilt, attitude, donation history) all significantly affected an individual's donation intention, the least significant factor was the use of visuals. According to the ELM model, there are two paths to persuasion. These paths directly correlate to involvement. The central route is used when an individual has high involvement, and the peripheral route is used when an individual has low involvement. Involvement was one of the significant factors in donation intention. Therefore, this result confirmed the role of involvement in the central route of ELM to persuasion may be more effective when looking at charitable organizations. The stimulus used to attract an individual may be more effective than the individual's involvement in the cause/organization. This is useful for charitable advertisers to know because it allows their target audience to extend from a niche group that is already interested in the topic to a broader audience that can be persuaded through enticing tactics.

LIMITATIONS and FUTURE STUDY

The design of this study was made as diligently as possible. However, some limitations became evident while conducting the experiment. There was limited time for advertising presentations for participants - the respondents only saw the advertisement for a short period of time. The advertisement should be shown repeatedly during a period of time before a significant advertising effect could be produced. Secondly, there was a limitation on the response to the experimental advertisement. This study focused on the participant's immediate response. If the experiment's duration was longer, then a more accurate reading on future responses could occur.

For future studies, it is recommended to expand the range of persons being studied. Studies can be produced to see the different preferences between individuals in the United States and individuals in other countries. Secondly, future studies should test the effects of a visual with the intention to elicit emotion. A neutral visual did not produce significant findings, so using a visual that is likely to stir emotion can provide subsequent results. Lastly, future studies can use different social media platforms since the current results were conducive to Instagram. To test if these results stay consistent, the same experiment can be done for other social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.

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