

The last great fundraising opportunity: How identity can help charities increase legacy giving

September 8 2011

Legacy giving should be a key focus for charity fundraising, say the authors of a study published in *Psychology & Marketing*. The study uses dimensional qualitative research to reveal how charities need to understand the motivational role of identity to increase access to the \$23 billion which is inherited through wills every year.

In a time of austerity cuts to social welfare programs are increasing pressure on charitable organisations, however, while legacy fundraising accounts for 10% of charity income, only 8% of the population include a [charity](#) in their will, a figure which has not increased for over a century.

The study, led by Professor Adrian Sargeant, Robert F. Hartsook Chair in Fundraising at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, examines the motivations for legacy giving, offering practical recommendations for fundraisers on how to increase participation levels.

The research team conducted a series of focus groups using a systematic approach known as dimensional qualitative research (DQR) to uncover the true motives for participants' legacy giving.

"The result was a richer picture of the motives for bequest giving than has emerged in many previous studies," Professor Sargeant. "Our findings indicate that bequest gifts are motivated by a variety of factors, including a lack of family need, a need to live on, a desire to make a

difference to a cause, reciprocity and even spite."

Using DQR, the researchers discovered that identity is also a key motivation behind bequest giving.

"One of the key motives, not identified in the literature before, is identification with a charitable organisation," said Sargeant. "Our research points to a clear need to recognise how this identification occurs, and the need to foster this sense of shared values in a variety of ways."

The study is published as part of a special issue of [Psychology & Marketing](#) which presents examples of qualitative studies that are based on psychological dimensions.

"DQR is a recent approach which makes qualitative research more systematic in application, and more psychological with regard to implications," said journal editor Dr Ray Cohen. "This special issue may be highly influential in challenging researchers to re-evaluate the methods traditionally used to conduct focus groups, individual interviews, and other qualitative studies."

Provided by Wiley

Citation: The last great fundraising opportunity: How identity can help charities increase legacy giving (2011, September 8) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-09-great-fundraising-opportunity-identity-charities.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.