EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE ADVERTISEMENTS FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS ORGANIZATIONS TO ATTRACT PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEERS: AN ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD PERSPECTIVE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate

School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * *

The Ohio State University
2005

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to expand and test a theory of persuasion for public service announcements (PSAs) designed to lead people to help others in need. More specifically, the present research was designed to broaden the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) by incorporating a newly added personality variable, empathic tendency, into the general framework, and by showing how empathic tendency can play a moderating role in the PSAs. The second purpose, based on the results, was to recommend different and effective PSAs for different target markets. The setting for testing the theory is PSAs that are aimed at potential volunteers for Special Olympics, which provides athletes with mental retardation the opportunity to participate in recreational sports. Disability issues are one of the more important social problems in which appeals are made to the public.

In order test the ELM, a three way 2 (empathy: high versus low) x 2 (argument quality: strong versus weak) x 2 (peripheral cue: celebrity versus non-celebrity status) factorial design was selected for this study. A total of 102 male and 119 female students participated in the study Groups (\(n = 221\)). Empathic tendency was used as a moderator in the experiment, while involvement was used a covariate in each experiment.
The results indicated that both high empathy (HE) subjects and low empathy (LE) subjects had the motivation to process the persuasive messages presented, suggesting both groups followed the central route; however, the primary causes that motivated them to evaluate the information were different. As predicted, HE subjects had the motivation to evaluate the messages contained in the PSAs, because of their empathic tendency. LE subjects were motivated to process the arguments (the strong arguments), because of the persuasive messages contained in the ad that focused on empathy-appeal. More importantly, involvement was found to have a significant influence on the argument processing of LE subjects.

In addition, the results revealed that celebrity status was not served as a peripheral cue for this study. HE subjects had significantly stronger intentions to volunteer for the Special Olympics than LE subjects, and that females are more empathic than males.

This study contributed to the body of knowledge on advertisement in the context of sport marketing by providing insights into how to develop effective PSAs for non-profit charitable sport organizations, a segment which has largely been ignored in our field. In addition, the current study can help practitioners involved with Special Olympics understand the decision-making processes involved in donation and helping behavior. It can also help them develop effective advertising commercials (e.g., empathy evoked ads) to enhance individuals’ volunteer intentions.
Dedicated to my Lord and my family

“But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine....and took care of him.” Luke 10: 33-34
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I thank God for his grace, for his everlasting love, and for giving me the idea of this dissertation, and for teaching me the importance of serving people who are in need. I am truly grateful to Him for meeting all wonderful people to whom I am truly indebted for their teaching, guidance, and support for this research project.

The completion of this dissertation without the dedication, advice and counsel of my co-advisors, Dr. Donna Pastore and Dr. Brian Turner, would have been impossible. I wish to thank my advisor, Dr. Donna Pastore, for being my co-advisor and for her guidance and encouragement throughout my doctoral program. I will never forget a tremendous amount of time and effort that she spent for my entire Ph.D program. She taught me how to be a true scholar and researcher. Without her caring for my family, great patience for my numerous mistakes, and invaluable advice in every moment of my four-year Ph.D study, it would have been impossible for me to complete this dissertation.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Turner for all of his encouragement, time, and effort, which made this dissertation possible. He spent a huge amount of time reading my work and provided me with numerous insightful thoughts. I am also extremely grateful to his critical thinking and persistence in reviewing this draft, and he provided me invaluable advice on the data analysis. Without his careful goal setting, I could not have finished the writing on time.
I would like to thank my other committee member, Dr. Janet Fink who provided me with assistance in the understanding of empathy and involvement. I also appreciate her many helpful comments for my general exam and for the proposal of my dissertation. I also wish to thank Dr. Chelladurai for encouragement, for intellectual support, and for the learning experience that he fostered. This study is enriched with Dr. Curtis Haugtvedt. He helped me get a better understanding of the ELM framework, and provided me much invaluable advice for my proposal and the experimental design. I am truly indebted to all these professors for all that they have done in the enhancement of my education.

The help and support of friends is always important in an undertaking of this proportion. I would like to thank all of my colleagues in the Sport Management programs at the Ohio State University for their encouragement and support. I also thank Gregory Roth and Michael Mattes for their consistent love and prayers.

Most of all, I would like to thank my best friend, my wife, for just being with me every moment. Without my lovely wife and two daughters, my life here might have been very different and much more difficult.
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Public service ads (PSAs), which are an important area of social marketing, have become a critical part of American mass media systems (Andreasen, 1993; Hirschman, 1991; O’Keefe & Reid, 1990). The purpose of PSAs is to increase public awareness and possible solutions of problems perceived to be of general concern to the public at large, and to affect public beliefs, attitudes, and behavior regarding them (O’Keefe & Reid, 1990). Most PSAs come from not-for-profit or governmental organizations. There are two different types of PSAs. The first type is aimed at individuals who are in need of help (e.g., alcoholics) or people who are at risk due to health or other problems (e.g., women with breast cancer, young people exposed to heavy smoke or harmful drugs). The other type is targeted to getting the public to help others, such as a donation to a worthwhile cause or volunteering to help (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994). The second type of PSA is of interest to the current study because it is designed to develop effective PSAs to help people volunteer for the Special Olympics.
The economic effects of PSAs on our society are quite significant. According to Advertising Council (1995), each year more than $ 4 billion is spent on PSAs in the United States alone, and some $ 900 million is donated in free media space.

Mass media audiences seem to be attentive to PSAs and have generally positive perceptions toward them (O’Keefe & Reid, 1990). O’Keefe and Reid also indicated that generally, women, younger adults, and people with children were found to be more attentive to PSAs and to perceive them more favorable. The attitudes of audiences toward PSAs were found to be influenced by the source, messages, and receiver characteristics (Evans, 1978; Lynn, 1974; Lynn, Wyatt, Gaines, Pearce, & Bergh, 1978).

In regards to the impact of PSAs, O’Keefe and Reid (1990) suggested the need to empirically evaluate the advertisements. This type of evaluation will determine whether a campaign was successful or not, and more importantly, identify which factors contributed or hindered the advertisements’ success. However, there has been a dearth of studies that investigate the scientific validity of the evaluations for PSAs. Moreover, few of the completed studies have utilized an experimentally based control (e.g., true experimental design). Due to the lack of scientific validity, it is difficult to understand the psychological processes of audiences exposed to PSAs in depth (Cartwright, 1949), and to understand the extent these individuals were influenced by them.

In order to develop more effective PSAs, O’Keefe and Reid (1990) stressed the importance of integrating theoretical models into public service campaigns, noting that “The more recent successful PSA campaigns have incorporated theoretical models of communication or persuasion in their development” (p. 76).
They indicated two benefits for incorporating theoretical models into those campaigns. First, this approach can provide a guiding model or structure that can aid in understanding the complicated aspects of the campaign. Second, modification to the hypotheses or theory may be possible as a result of the findings.

In addition to the importance of incorporating theoretical models into PSAs for a better understanding of the psychological processes of target audiences, it is also critical to understand the role of individual differences in the effects of PSAs on the information process for those messages. LaBarbera, Weingard, and Yorkston (1998) indicated that individual psychological differences are becoming a more viable foundation for developing advertising messages aimed at each target market. Ruiz and Sicillia (2004) also noted, “As advertisers increasingly seek greater communication effectiveness and new forms of media emerge, psychological differences among individuals are becoming essential criteria in the design of advertising appeals” (p. 657).

From a theoretical point of view, Haugtvedt, Petty, Cacioppo, and Steidley (1988) indicated that personality variables can be useful in understanding how advertisements may affect the generation of an attitude toward a consumer product. Haugtvedt et al. also noted that the use of a dispositional variable can provide a stronger test of hypotheses in experiments designed to assess the importance of issue-relevant thinking in attitude change and attitude-behavior correspondence research. In the context of PSAs, O’Keefe and Reid (1990) also addressed the importance of the study that examines how individual difference can affect the modes of information processing, as PSAs target different audiences than other forms of advertising.
However, Haughtvedt, Petty, and Cacioppo (1992) indicated that the research on personality variables in consumer behavior and advertising have yielded inconsistent results. Regarding this issue, Kassarjian (1971) and Kassarjian and Sheffet (1981) noted that the reason for the disappointing results was that most studies on personality variables were conducted without the guidance of general theoretical frameworks. Thus, Haugtvedt et al. (1992) suggested that the research on personality variables needs to be linked to a general theoretical framework. Two personality variables, that is, self-monitoring (DeBono, 1987; Snyder, 1974; Snyder & DeBono, 1985) and need for cognition (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982) have been successfully linked to general theoretical frameworks and thus have been useful in understanding consumer behavior.

A personality variable pertinent to helping behavior (e.g., volunteering) is of interest in the present research, since it can act as an important factor that can influence processing public service messages. Empathy has been shown to be an important personality variable that predicts an individual’s prosocial behavior, including volunteering which is the dependent variable of the current study.

Empathy is defined as being aware of another person’s internal states and putting oneself in the place of another to experience his or her feeling (Hoffman, 1984). In research conducted by Penner, Fritzscbe, Craiger, and Freifeld (1995), empathy was strongly associated with all aspects of volunteer activities. This finding was consistent with other studies (Allen, 1999; Facteau, Allen, Facteau, Bordas, & Tears, 2000; Negrao, 1997). Bendapudi, Singh, and Bendapudi (1996) also noted that empathy can cause an individual’s altruistic motivation to affect helping behavior.
With respect to empathy as a personality variable, Davis (1983) suggested that there is an individual difference in empathy, meaning that some individuals are more likely to experience empathy when he or she has high empathetic ability (“the tendency to spontaneously adopt the psychological point of view of others”, p. 113-114.).

In addition, findings in behavior genetics (e.g., Emde et al., 1992; Rushton, Fulker, Neal, Nias, & Eysenck, 1986) and in developmental research (e.g., Davis & Franzoi, 1991) indicate that there are stable individual differences in empathy-related characteristics. Eisenberg and Fabes (1992) suggested that individual differences in empathy were contributed, in part, to differences in how an individual deals with emotional arousal.

In the area of advertising, most studies that examined the effect of empathy on attitude/behavioral intention operationalized the construct of empathy as an emotional response (Aaker & Williams, 1998; Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Burke & Edell, 1989; Chebat, Vercollier, & Chebat, 2003; Escalas & Stern, 2003; Stout, Homer, & Liu, 1990). Specifically, the studies by Bagozzi and Moore (1994) and Chebat et al. (2003) explored the role of empathy in public service advertisements. Bagozzi and Moore (1994) found that the advertisement format (rational vs. emotional) influenced negative emotion, empathy, and the decision to help. The study by Chebat et al. (2003) found a moderating role of involvement on relationships among empathy, information processing, and attitudes. However, none of these studies considered empathy as an individual difference variable, called empathic tendency. Therefore, this research is intended to examine empathic tendency and its relationship to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986b).
Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to expand and test a theory of persuasion for PSAs designed to lead people to help others in need. More specifically, the present research was designed to broaden the ELM by incorporating a newly added personality variable, empathic tendency, into the general framework, and by showing how empathic tendency can play a moderating role in the PSAs. The second purpose, based on the results, was to recommend different and effective PSAs for different target markets. The setting for testing the theory was PSAs that are aimed at potential volunteers for Special Olympics, which provide athletes with mental retardation the opportunity to participate in recreational sports. Disability issues are one of the most important social problems in which appeals are made to the public. Dickinson (1996) noted that the 1996 Paralympic Organizing Committee reported nondisabled households ranked people with disabilities as the second most important social issue for corporate America to address.

Even though the issue of persons with disabilities has received little attention among sport management scholars and practitioners for the last few decades compared to the issues of gender and minorities, the issue is beginning to receive attention from scholars in our field (Fay & Wolf, 2002; Hums, 2001). Moreover, at the 2004 North American Society of Sport Management (NASSM) conference, the importance of disability issues was addressed as one area of diversity and recognized as an issue that should be incorporated into the main stream of the domain of sport (Shapiro, Mushett, & Calloway, 2004). In addition to the importance of disability issues, the urgent need of Special Olympics for more volunteers is another reason for creating PSAs aimed at potential volunteers in this current study.
As programs for Special Olympics become larger locally as well as nationally, they need more volunteers and more funding to take care of athletes with mental retardation (Janes, Smith, & Lynch, 1994; Special Olympics, Inc., 2005). In particular, local Special Olympics organizations are always in need of volunteers (Kempton, 2002).

PSAs that address athletes with mental retardation may be effective and worthy. The reason is because the issue related to mental health has a high level of public awareness and thus the general public can have more positive attitudes toward the issue (O’Keefe & Reid, 1990). Indeed, the research by Douglas, Westley, and Chafee (1970), which conducted a 6-month campaign to promote favorable attitudes toward mental retardation, revealed that there was an increase in awareness and more positive attitudes toward the issue of mental retardation.

Statement of the Problem

Special Olympics is a nonprofit program of sports training and competition for children and adults with mental retardation. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides year-round training and athletic competition for more than one million athletes in nearly 150 countries and all 50 states in the United States. It provides them with opportunities to enhance self-esteem, physical confidence, and friendship (Gibbons & Buchakra, 1989). Most local Special Olympics programs are significantly dependent on volunteers and raise funds through private donations, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising projects.

For charitable activities, reaching out to help another in need is considered to be a universal human value (Bendapudi, et al., 1996). From a business standpoint, non-profit organizations have had a significant economic impact on society (Bagozzi & Moore,
For instance, Americans donated nearly $240 billion to charitable causes in 2002 (American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, 2003).

However, soliciting help for charity has always been challenging for non-profit organizations. This challenge will become greater as governmental agencies decide to limit the assistance they provide to people in need (Guy & Patton, 1989). In addition, fierce competition with other charities and increasing demand has aggravated this situation (Benapudi, et al., 1996; Schlegelmich, Diamantopoulos, & Love, 1992). Rothschild (1979) also indicated the difficulties of selling “brotherhood,” which involve charities asking people to donate some resource (e.g., time, money, and blood) with little or no commensurate reward in return.

Local Special Olympics organizations, like other non-profit organizations, are also facing these situations, even though the Special Olympics has been recognized as one of the most successful sport organizations. As programs for Special Olympics become larger locally, as well as nationally, they need more volunteers and more funding to take care of athletes with mental retardation. To overcome in such an environment, non-profit organizations, including Special Olympics, need to develop effective marketing strategies.

**Effective Promotional Strategies of Local Special Olympics**

In order to recruit more volunteers, it is critical for local Special Olympics Organizations to develop effective promotional strategies. Specifically, advertising among promotional strategies can be one of the most effective marketing tools for those organizations. Advertising has been used in marketing communication because it’s reach is broader than other forms of marketing activities (Duncan, 2002). Furthermore, mass
media advertising can be an effective promotional tool to enhance citizens’ awareness. One of the challenges those organizations face, in addition to the problems mentioned before, is a lack of awareness about Special Olympics among the public, and thus, advertising can be one of the most effective marketing strategies for local Special Olympics to enhance citizens’ awareness and to reach more prospective volunteers. The advertisements of Special Olympics organizations can be categorized into PSAs, as they are designed to increase public awareness and are targeted to getting the public to help people with, such as, a donation to a worthwhile cause (e.g., disability issue).

A Dearth of Studies on Promotion of the Special Olympics

Numerous studies (Abratt, Clayton, & Pitt, 1987; Ludwig & Karabetos, 1999; Sandler & Shani, 1989, 1993; Stipp & Schiavone, 1996; Stotlar, 1993; Winters, 1986) on advertising and sponsorship in the domain of business marketing including sport marketing, have been conducted on promotional strategies for profit organizations; however, there is a paucity of studies on advertisements and promotional strategies of non-profit sport organizations, such as the Special Olympics. This scant research attention to non-profit sport organizations in the area of sport marketing is also noticeable in the marketing literature, which is rich in research about promoting for-profit products and services. However, there is a dearth of studies on charitable behavior. Bendapudi et al. (1996), who developed an integrative framework for enhancing helping behavior, pointed out, “Over the past 10 years, less than 1.5% of the articles in the proceedings of the American Marketing Association and Association for Consumer Research deal with helping geared toward charities” (p. 36).
In addition, most research on volunteers has been conducted in the context of organizational behavior in our field (e.g., Cuskelley, McIntyre, & Boag, 1998; Farell, Johnson, & Twynam, 1998; Williams, Dossa, & Tompkins, 1995), few studies on volunteers have been done in the area of sport marketing and advertising. Furthermore, there is a paucity of research on PSAs in our field, even though there are numerous non-profit sport organizations which depend on volunteers and individual donations. Therefore, in order to fill these gaps in the literature, additional research is necessary.

Theoretical Background

In order to design effective PSAs, it is essential for sport marketers who work for Special Olympics to understand the persuasion processes pertinent to PSAs as well as consumers’ helping behavior (e.g., volunteering and donation). As noted earlier, it is important to incorporate theoretical models of communication or persuasion into public service campaigns to create successful PSAs (O’Keefe & Reid, 1990). The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) can offer a great deal of promise in this regard. A review of the literature indicated that only a few studies have attempted to link ELM to PSAs (Chebat, Vercollier, & Chebat, 2003), even though ELM can provide insights into the persuasion processes that audiences experience when they are exposed to PSAs.

*The Elaboration Likelihood Model*

The ELM is a general theoretical framework for categorizing, organizing, and understanding the effectiveness of persuasive messages (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986b). The basic tenet of the ELM, as Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann (1983) noted, is that “different methods of inducing persuasion may work best depending on whether the elaboration likelihood of the communication situation (i.e., the probability of message- or
issue-relevant thought occurring) is high or low” (p. 137). The general framework claims that receivers exposed to persuasive message are thought to use either a “central route” to persuasion, or a “peripheral route.” When the elaboration likelihood is high, the central route to persuasion should be effective in influencing attitude change, but when the elaboration likelihood is low, the peripheral route should be preferable in affecting attitude change.

The ELM contends that as an issue or product increases in personal relevance, it becomes more important. When this is the case, Petty et al. indicated that people are more motivated to spend the cognitive effort in order to evaluate the true merits of an issue or product (central route) when involvement is high, rather than low. The message will have a positive effect on the consumers’ attitudes, provided the content of the message is cogent and persuasive. On the other hand, when a person is exposed to advertising messages which are not personally relevant, he/she may not be motivated to engage in extensive cognitive effort to process and evaluate the central merits of the issue/products. Rather, she/he will focus on product-irrelevant information. Thus, in this case, the peripheral route (e.g., the attractiveness, credibility, or status of the product’s endorsers) has a greater effect on consumers’ attitudes under low rather than high involvement conditions. In order to provide a better understanding of the moderating role of involvement, the researcher created the model, based on the ELM (see Figure 1.1).

In addition to situational factors, such as involvement, scholars in consumer psychology and social psychology have paid attention to individual difference factors that may affect the degree of message elaboration. Need for cognition (NFC) (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; Cacioppo, Petty, Feinstein, & Jarvis, 1996) has been shown to serve as a
motivational component of the ELM. Individuals high in NFC tend to engage in and to enjoy effortful thinking, while individuals low in NFC are unwilling to devote cognitive thinking process. High NFC people, rather than low NFC people, have been found to exhibit more central route processing of persuasive messages (e.g., Cacioppo, Petty, & Morris, 1983). However, individuals in low NFC have been more affected by peripheral cues than those in high NFC (Haugtvedt, Petty, & Cacioppo, 1992).

In designing effective PSAs, it is important for sport marketers in Special Olympics organizations to understand not only consumers’ helping behavior but also individual psychological differences, because individual personality traits can influence the persuasion process of ads. Thus, the focus of the following section is on whether empathic tendency as a personality variable, like need for cognition, could account for individual differences in processing motivation in persuasion situations. Before we examine empathic tendency, it is essential to review the meaning of empathy, in order to gain a better understanding of whether empathic tendency has the potential to serve as a motivational factor of the ELM.
Considerable research in social psychology has paid attention to the concept of empathy, as empathy is thought to be associated with enhancing pro-social behavior, promoting altruistic motivation, and decrease in an anti-social behavior (e.g., aggression). However, there has been a continuous debate as to the content and scope of definitions of empathy in the literature. “Empathy” is a more recent term in English, entering the vocabulary only in the last century (Escalas & Stern, 2003). The term “empathy” was first used by Titchener in 1909, who asserted, "Not only do I see gravity and modesty and
pride and courtesy and stateliness, but I feel them in the mind's muscle. That is, I suppose, a simple case of empathy, if we may coin that term as a rendering of Einfühlung" (p. 21). In German, Einfühlung means "to feel one's way into."

In the modern context, there are divergent views on empathy. Three different perspectives on empathy are addressed in this section. First, some scholars define empathy in terms of a cognitive aspect, that is knowing what another person is feeling (e.g., Ickes, Stinson, Bissonnette, & Garcia, 1990). Hoffman (1984) also indicated that empathy normally is defined in terms of “being cognitively aware of another person's internal states and/or putting oneself in the place of another and experiencing his or her feelings” (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994, p.58). This cognitive component is conceptualized by many scholars in the area of social psychology as ‘perspective taking’. Davis (1980) views perspective taking as the spontaneous tendency of the respondent to adopt the perspective of other people. There are two kinds of perspective taking: affective perspective taking and cognitive perspective taking. Affective perspective taking is defined as the ability to identify and understand how another person is feeling (Enright & Lapsley, 1980; Underwood & Moore, 1982), while cognitive perspective taking is conceptualized as the ability to recognize and understand the thought processes of another (Krebs & Sturrup, 1974; Kurdek, 1978; Oswald, 1996). In a recent study by Oswald (1996), participants in the affective perspective taking condition offered more help than did those in the cognitive perspective taking condition.

Perspective taking has significant implications for the possible linkage between the construct of empathy and the ELM, meaning that this cognitive aspect of empathy, like need for cognition, may be highly related to the motivation to process persuasive
messages which can determine the route to attitude change. As noted earlier, the extensive ‘cognitive effort’ occurs through the central route when the elaboration likelihood is high. The linkage between perspective taking and the cognitive effort, which occurs in the central route, is based on the several studies. Davis, Conklin, Smith, and Luce (1996) indicated that perspective taking is a controlled effort process that requires substantial resources. Consistent with their view, Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce (1996), who explained the controlled effort processing in more detail, also noted that cognitive as well as affective empathic responses toward other person may lead to a shift in perspective, and this change requires cognitive efforts.

Second, some psychologists define empathy as feeling what another person is feeling (e.g., Eisenberg & Strayer 1987). More specifically, Eisenberg and Strayer, leading scholars in empathy, defined empathy as “an emotional response that stems from another's emotional state or condition and that is congruent with the other's emotional state or situation” (p. 5). They pointed out that most scholars in social psychology and consumer psychology agree that empathy is the act of feeling into another's affective experience. It should be noted that this definition has been widely taken into account in the area of persuasion in consumer behavior (e.g., Escalas & Stern, 2003). In addition to the cognitive perspective on empathy, this view has importance implications in the context of persuasion, as emotional responses to advertisements can influence attitude formation (Burke & Edell, 1989), and empathy as vicarious feeling, among other types of feeling, has been shown to have greater effects on consumers’ attitude (Aaker & Williams, 1998; Esclas & Stern, 2003; Stout et al., 1990).
More specifically, Chebat, et al. (2003), who examined the effect of empathic emotional response on information processing, found that empathy enhanced cognitive responses.

Third, combining both perspectives on empathy, some theorists take a multidimensional approach of empathy, which combine emotional and cognitive components of empathy (e.g., Davis, 1980, 1985; Deutsch & Madle, 1975; Hoffman, 1977). Davis (1983) noted, “One advantage of this multidimensional approach to empathy is that by clearly defining the different types of reactions to others that can be called empathic; we may explore the systematic similarities and differences between these types of empathy, and their implications for other behavior” (p. 169). In fact, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index that Davis developed (1980) has been widely used in research completed on empathy, including consumer psychology (e.g., Bagozzi & Moore, 1994).

These divergent views on the definition of empathy have caused problems with the operationalization of empathy in social psychology and consumer psychology. Although there is still a debate over the dimensions that might be included in the construct of empathy, there are considerable agreements on the role of several dimensions, and most scholars have focused on multi-dimensions of empathy (e.g., Davis, Hull, Young, & Warren, 1987; Stiff, Dillard, Somera, Kim, & Sleight, 1988). Strayer (1987) indicated that the recent trend has been to view empathy as a multi-dimensional construct by including both aspects of affect and cognition.

As noted earlier, this study attempts to examine whether empathy can serve as a motivational component in processing persuasive information. Thus, it is important to
understand individual differences in empathic propensity pertained to processing motivation in persuasion contexts. In this regard, some psychologists adopt a dispositional approach in which empathy is considered as a relatively stable trait or general ability, such as an ability to perceive the feelings of other people (Sawyer, 1975), meaning that some individuals are more able to take the perspective of others, either by nature or by development. Even though there are some debates regarding the likelihood that there are stable individual differences in empathy-related characteristics, findings in behavioral genetics (Rushton et al., 1986) and in developmental studies (e.g., Davis & Franzoi, 1991) indicated that there are stable individual differences in emotional empathy and sympathy. Recently, Eisenberg and Fabes (1992) demonstrated the individual differences in empathy and they suggested the differences were contributed, in part, to differences in how people deal with emotional arousal. In the context of advertising, Escalas and Stern (2003), who examined the role sympathy and empathy in the effect of advertisements, found individual differences in empathic responsiveness. They suggested that some individuals tended to respond more empathetically to media representations including advertisement in general.

Regarding individual differences in perspective taking, Harvey, Hunt, & Schroder (1961) noted that some individuals tend to have higher cognitive complexity, meaning that they have greater cognitive capacity to take others’ perspectives. This point of view is very important because this kind of cognitive ability may be associated with the effortful processing of issue-relevant information which occurs in the central route in the ELM.
Thus, dispositional differences in empathic tendency, like need for cognition (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; Cacioppo, Petty, Feinstein, & Jarvis, 1996), may serve as a factor influencing the extent of message elaboration.

Empathic Tendency and the ELM

Based on the ELM and the construct of empathic tendency, the researcher developed a conceptual framework that explains the moderating role of empathic tendency on the effects of PSAs on prospective volunteers’ attitudes and their intentions to volunteer for the Special Olympics. The framework is divided into six phases (Figure 1.2). The first part presents an antecedent, which is exposure to persuasive messages (e.g. strong vs. weak argument) addressing the reasons for volunteering with the Special Olympics. Exposure to the ads, moderated by empathic tendency, is proposed to influence potential volunteers’ attitudes. The moderator, empathic tendency, may affect the relationship between the antecedent and attitude. Then, the framework proposes that attitude leads to intentions to volunteer for Special Olympic organizations. The specific explanation for the relationships among those variables is provided in the following section. Research hypotheses will also be proposed. The focus of the section is on the moderating role of empathic tendency in the ELM.

Research Hypotheses

Haughtvedt et al. (1992) suggested that research on personality variable needs to be consistent with a general theoretical framework in order to reinforce the usefulness of personality variables in consumer behavior research.
The line of research on empathy seems to offer a great deal of promise for the linkage between empathy and the ELM. Indeed, empathy, like need for cognition, is an individual difference variable that could influence processing persuasive messages. Thus, empathic propensity may have potential to act as a motivational component of the ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b).

According to the ELM, there are the two routes through which an individual’s attitude is affected by persuasive messages. Attitude change via the central route can occur when individuals possess both motivation and ability to process message arguments thoughtfully. In this situation, individuals’ thoughts about the central merits of the messages play a main role in affecting their attitudes (Haugtvedt et al., 1992).
Consistent with this view, Petty et al. (1983), who examined the moderating role of involvement, found that the effect of argument quality was significantly greater under high rather than low involvement. Thus, individuals high on empathic tendency, as opposed to those in low on empathic tendency, are likely to engage in careful and thoughtful scrutiny of the information presented, and the central merits of the information could be evaluated.

On the contrary, attitude change is likely via the peripheral route when individuals do not possess motivation to evaluate the messages and base their judgment on peripheral cues, such as attractiveness of endorsers or source credibility. Haugtvedt et al. (1992), in their study that examined the role of need for cognition on attitude change, noted that the attitudes of low need for cognition persons were more based on the attractiveness of the product endorsers than were the attitudes of high need for cognition individuals. In addition, the study by Petty et al. (1983), who investigated the moderating role of involvement, revealed that the celebrity status (the product endorser) had a significant effect on product attitudes only under low involvement, but not under high involvement.

Thus, persons low on empathic propensity, rather than those in high on the individual variable, may not have the necessary motivation or the ability to spend cognitive efforts on message arguments, focusing on simple peripheral cues inherent in the ads. Those peripheral cues can be the primary determinant of their attitude. In this case, their attitude change can occur via peripheral route. Based on these assumptions, the following hypotheses are proposed:
Hypothesis 1: Individuals high on empathic tendency are likely to produce more positive thoughts than those low on empathic tendency.

Hypothesis 2: The quality of arguments contained in the ads is likely to have greater effect on attitudes of individuals high on empathic tendency than attitudes of individuals low on empathic tendency.

Hypothesis 3: The celebrity status of the endorsers is likely to have greater impact on attitudes under persons low on empathy rather than those high on empathy.

In addition to the postulate for the multiple roles of variables, the ELM model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b) claims that attitude change that occurs via the central route will exhibit a greater prediction of behavior than attitude change that results from the peripheral route. This assumption is important because the purpose of PSAs is to change peoples’ behavior, and thus, sport marketers in Special Olympics may be highly interested in individuals’ intention to volunteer, as well as their attitudes.

Petty, Haugtvedt, & Smith (1995) found that newly formed attitudes that resulted from the central route were more highly correlated to behavior than newly formed attitudes that resulted from the peripheral route. Therefore, based on the ELM’s assumption for the consequences of the elaboration, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4: A stronger correlation between attitudes and volunteer intentions will be found for high empathy individuals, rather than for low empathy individuals.
As noted before, empathy has been shown to be an important personality variable that predicts an individual’s prosocial behavior, such as volunteering and helping behavior. The research on empathy has suggested that empathy was strongly related to all aspects of volunteer activities and was associated with an individual’s altruistic motivation (Allen, 1999; Bendapudi et al., 1996; Facteau et al., 2000; Negrao, 1997; Pener et al., 1995). In addition, scholars in the context of social psychology have found that there are stable individual differences in empathy-related characteristics (Batson, 1991; Carlo, Eisenberg, Troyer, Switzer, & Speer, 1991; Staub, 1984). With respect to advertising, Escalas and Stern (2003) noted that some individuals tend to respond more empathetically to media representations in general. As with gender differences in empathy, most studies on empathy indicated that females scored higher on empathy than males (Hoffman, 1977; Lennon & Eisenberg, 1987). In addition, psychologist Simmon Baron-Cohen noted that women are natural empathizers, while men are better at systemizing in the book, *The Essential Difference*. Based on the literature on empathy, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**Hypothesis 5**: High empathy persons are likely to have stronger volunteer intention than low empathy persons

**Hypothesis 6**: Females are likely to have higher level of empathic responses than men.

**Significance of the Study**

This research contributed to the sport management, consumer behavior, and advertisement literature in several ways. First, this study contributed to the body of knowledge on advertisement in the context of sport marketing, by providing insights into
how to develop effective public service advertisements for non-profit charitable sport organizations, which has largely been ignored in our field. To date, there are no studies in sport management that have examined the promotional strategies for Special Olympics. Second, this study added to the newly emerging body of research which is being completed on disability issues. Despite the importance of disability issues, the issue has received little attention among scholars and practitioners for the last few decades. Third, this study extended the literature on empathy in consumer psychology and advertisement by employing the construct of empathy as a personality variable in the context of persuasion for the first time. To date, empathy has been used as an emotional response to ads in the domain of advertisement (Aaker & Williams, 1998; Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Esclas & Stern, 2003). Several studies (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Esclas & Stern, 2003) in the area of advertisement found that empathy serves as a mediator of the effects of exposure to ads on attitude toward the ads and the decision to help. This present study is the first attempt to examine the moderating role of empathy in the effect of persuasive message on the consumers’ attitudes toward the ads and behavioral intention. Fourth, this research contributed to the line of research on the ELM, by demonstrating empathy as an individual difference variable that affects the degree of message elaboration, like the need for cognition.

There were several practical implications. First, this study provided insight into how exposure to specific advertisements influences the potential donor’s attitude and his or her helping behavior for Special Olympics. By doing so, the current study can help practitioners involved with Special Olympics understand the decision-making processes involved in donation and helping behavior, and it can also help them develop effective
advertising commercials (e.g., empathy evoked ads) to enhance individuals' volunteer intentions. Second, the focus of this study was on the role of personality variables (e.g., empathy) in advertisement effectiveness. Thus, the results from this study can help sport marketers segment their target market and can help them develop different public service advertising messages aimed at each target market.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations in the current study. First, even though the current study employed a factorial design, which is shown to help in controlling certain internal validity threats, such as history, selection, maturation, and regression, the design is exposed to several threats that cannot be controlled. The interaction of background factors (e.g., subject or setting factors) with treatment (e.g., exposure to ads) can be a major threat to external validity for this study (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Lynch (1982) indicated that the external validity of experimental findings depend on whether background factors interact with the manipulated variables, and the interaction will induce a bias in one’s estimate of the population main effect of the treatment. In addition, the attitude of subjects (i.e., the way in which subjects view a study and their participation in it) can generate a threat. The experimental group may perform better (e.g., higher level of attitude) because of the novelty of the treatment rather than because of the nature of the treatment (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

Second, the ambiguities and ongoing debates regarding the definition of empathy may be a potential threat to internal validity. Bagozzi and Moore (1994) noted that given the ambiguity regarding the content and scope of definitions of empathy, researchers should be careful when measuring empathy. Finally, even though empathetic tendency is
supposed to affect participants’ attitude change in this study, other personal or situational variables (e.g. need for cognition) can have the potential to influence the motivation to process the advertising messages used in the study, and this cognitive process may have an influence on attitude change toward the ads or the issues. Even if the random assignment was employed in the current study, it is appropriate to study how to control other extraneous variables. One remedy for controlling those variables can be to put the variables into the research design.

Delimitations of the Study

The accessible population for this study includes students who are enrolled in the Sport Fitness and Health program (SFHP) at The Ohio State University. As O’Keefe and Reid (1990) noted, an individual’s educational level can affect his/her attitude toward persuasive advertisements, when exposed to those messages. Thus, the results of this study cannot be generalizable to volunteers who do not have a high level of educational background.

Given the ambiguity in conceptual definitions of empathy, we should be careful when measuring empathy. Several leading scholars (Davis, 1980; Eisenberg et al., 1989; Larsen, Diener, & Cropanzano, 1987) in the area of empathy have developed different measures for empathy. In this present study, Davis’s Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI, 1980) was used to measure empathy. Even though the measurement has been widely used in most studies on empathy, the results of the present research may not be generalizable to studies that may employ other measurements.
Definitions

The following definitions are utilized in the context of this study:

1. **Central Route**: The route in which persuasion is mediated by effortful scrutiny of argument messages and other related to information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b; Bohner & Wanke, 2002).

2. **Empathic/Empathetic**: “showing empathy or ready comprehension of others' states; "a sensitive and empathetic school counselor" (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2005). Both these words are used interchangeably throughout the study.

3. **Multiple Roles of Persuasion**: The three basic roles to variables in the persuasion process: serving as arguments, serving as peripheral cues, or influencing the amount or direction of elaboration (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b).

4. **Need for Cognition**: The statistical tendency of and intrinsic enjoyment individuals derive from engaging in effortful information processing (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982). Need for cognition was developed to explain for individual differences in processing motivation in persuasion (Haugtvedt et al., 1992).

5. **Peripheral Route**: The route in which persuasion is mediated by one of more simple cues, non-content cues (e.g., the message source and the credibility of the messages), rather than by thoughtful consideration of the issue-relevant information in the message (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b).

6. **Public service Advertisements**: “Promotional materials that address problems assumed to be of general concern to citizens at large” (O’Keefe & Reid, 1990, p. 67).

7. **Strong arguments**: arguments that generate primarily positive cognitive responses and results in more favorable attitude (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b).
8. *Weak arguments*: Arguments that produce mainly unfavorable thoughts and lead to less positive attitude (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b).

Organization of the Study

This dissertation was organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provided a thorough rationale for the study, including a statement of purpose, a statement of the problem, and the potential contribution of the study to the body of knowledge in sport marketing and consumer behavior. In addition, chapter 1 included specific hypotheses, definition of terms, and delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 addressed a review of the relevant literature, focusing on the ELM framework and the relationship between empathy and the ELM. Chapter 3 presented the research methodology. The chapter included the research design, population and sample, instrumentation, and the methodology used to collect and analyze the data. Chapter 4 provided the results of the current study. More importantly, the answers to the research hypotheses stated in Chapter 1 were provided in the Chapter 4. Chapter 5 presented a discussion of the research findings, theoretical and practical implications, limitations of the study, and the area of future studies.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine how a personality variable associated with prosocial behavior, empathic tendency, can aid in understanding how individual differences can systematically influence the processing of public service advertising messages and formation of attitudes toward the issue of mental retardation. In addition, this present investigation explored how the individual difference variable of empathic tendency can be linked to the conceptualization of the persuasion process—the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion. In order to obtain a better understanding of the ELM, this literature review will discuss the related research completed on the ELM. Then, the review of literature will present related studies on the concept of empathy regarding the cognitive aspects of it. Finally, this chapter will focus on how empathic tendency can serve as a moderator in the ELM model in detail by incorporating studies from consumer psychology, advertisement, and social psychology.

An Overview of Special Olympics

In 1968, Eunice Kennedy Shriver founded Special Olympics, because she believed that people with mental disabilities, by participating in sport, could improve competence and achieve their success in schools as well as in the work place. Since then, the Special Olympics movement spread throughout the United States and around the
world. In 1988, the International Olympic Committee officially recognized Special Olympics and sponsored an Olympic partnership (Special Olympics World Winter Games, 2005).

Today, Special Olympics is the world’s largest program of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with mental disabilities. In addition, Special Olympics have become one of the fastest-growing sporting events. The number of athletes who participating in the Special Olympics has dramatically increased, reaching more than 1 million people with mental disabilities from 150 countries, and the number of participants is expected to double by the year 2005 (Special Olympics, Inc., 2005).

Special Olympics have a positive impact on the lives of 1.4 million athletes, their families and their community. Athletes with mental retardation can improve their physical fitness and sports skills, self-confidence, social competence, self-image, and develop and maintain friendships (Castagno, 2001; Gibbons & Bushakra, 1989; Riggen & Ulrich, 1993; Wright & Cowden, 1986) facilitating increased community integration (Dykens & Cohen, 1996). Consistent with these benefits, Shapiro (2003) found that Special Olympics athletes participate to win medals, have time to be with friends, improve their fitness, do something they're competent in, and have fun.

Special Olympics and Volunteers

Volunteers have been a backbone for Special Olympics. Special Olympics would not exist today without the time, effort, dedication and enthusiasm of Special Olympics volunteers. Special Olympics are highly dependent on volunteers in order to provide Special Olympics athletes with a quality sports training and competition experience (Special Olympics, Inc., 2005).
As Special Olympics programs become larger locally as well as nationally, they need more volunteers to take care of athletes with mental retardation. Thus, most local Special Olympics organizations actively recruit volunteer coaches and officials, as well as general volunteers to reach increasing number of Special Olympics athletes. Twice the current number of volunteers will be needed for Special Olympics to achieve its goal of reaching another one million individuals who have mental disabilities.

Consumers’ Decision Process associated with Helping Behavior

In order to reach more volunteers, local Special Olympics need to develop effective promotional strategies. An effective marketing effort is based on understanding the consumer’s behaviors in the market place. Thus, it is critical for sport marketers in Special Olympics organizations to understand how and why consumers decide to engage in donation and volunteering activities. Guy and Patton (1989) suggested that the motivations and the decision-making process involved in donor behavior might be quite different from those involved in other types of consumer behavior. They pointed out that “the marketers of altruistic causes cannot ‘sell brotherhood’ without understanding what needs people satisfy by engaging in brotherhood or how people decide to become brothers.” (p. 28). The following section provides insights into consumers’ decision-making process associated helping behavior. As noted previously, it should be noted that in marketing literature, which is rich in research about promoting for-profit products and services, there is a dearth of studies on charitable behavior (Bendapudi et al., 1996).

A Conceptual Framework of Giving to Charitable Organization

The few studies that have explored helping behavior have primarily dealt with the charitable organizations’ solicitation strategy (e.g., the amount of donation requested, the types of request) and donor characteristics. However, the literature has ignored some
other important issues, such as social norms for helping and donor perceptions, and other dimensions of the organization’s solicitation strategy, such as the familiarity of the charity (Bendapudi et al., 1996). Among the studies, the earlier works by Burnett and Wood (1988) and Guy and Patton (1989) are most important because the authors attempted to integrate all effects of helping behavior and proposed models of the donation process.

Burnett and Wood (1988) proposed a conceptual framework of the donation decision process, which was based on a thorough review of donation behavior. The framework was an initial attempt to incorporate the vast amount of literature into a comprehensive donation decision-making process. The model consisted of three primary components: (1) antecedents states, (2) model dimensions, and (3) the decision process. Antecedents states, which were individual’s inherent qualities, included personal traits (e.g., self-esteem, empathy, and personal competence), demographic traits, and situational factors (e.g., presence of others in an emergency situation or legal considerations). The model dimensions involved the types of organizations (e.g., religious, alumni, political, and charitable), the nature of the resource request (e.g., tangible or intangible), and the nature of the donation exchange dyads (e.g., individual/individual, individual/group, and individual/institution). The decision process involved the following stages: (1) awareness of need, (2) attention (e.g., whether validity of the need is accepted or not), (3) obligation salience (e.g., social norms or personal norms), (4) evaluation (e.g., perceived rewards vs. perceived costs), (5) an intention to act, (6) the actual action, and (7) evaluating the outcome.

In addition to Burnett and Wood (1988)’s conceptual framework, Guy and Patton (1989) also proposed a model of the helping decision process in order to understand why
people help in greater detail. The basic steps in the process were (a) awareness that another person needs help, (b) interpretation of the situation, (c) recognition of personal responsibility, (d) perception of ability or competence to help, and (e) implementation of helping action. The authors also added mitigating factors to the process, which might enhance or reduce an individual’s progress through the basic stages. There were two types of mitigation factors, internal and external factors. Internal factors, were related to the characteristics of the individual, such as demographics, personality variables, social status, mood, and previous experience, while external factors dealt with the characteristics of the situation (e.g., nature of the appeal and other people involved).

In an attempt to extend the two models, Bendapudi, Singh, and Bendapudi (1996) proposed an integrative conceptual framework of promotion planning for enhancing helping behavior (see Figure 2.1). Basically, the Bendapudi et al.’s conceptual framework developed the previously mentioned models in two important directions. First, Bendapudi et al.’s creative work placed an emphasis on the role of soliciting charitable organizations in the decision process of helping behavior. Whereas most investigations, including the aforementioned models, on helping behavior have focused on the direct help between the donor to the beneficiary. Thus, the framework by Bendapudi et al. provided marketers in non-profit organizations with valuable insights into how to develop effective promotional strategies. Second, the conceptual framework accounted for the diverse motivations behind helping behavior and explained how diverse motivations affect the person’s donation decision differentially. Even though Burnett and Wood and Guy and Patton indicated the different effects of diverse motivations on the donor’s helping behavior, the different motivational routes were not explained in their models.
Bendapudi et al.’s (1996) conceptual framework for enhancing helping behavior involves antecedents, moderators, and consequences. The researchers presented controllable variables by charity organizations (e.g., promotional activities) as antecedents of helping behavior and the uncontrollable variables (e.g., people's
motivation or the state of the economy) as moderators that influence the relationship between the antecedent variables and the helping behavior.

The conceptual framework was composed of antecedents, moderators, helping behavior, and consequences. The antecedents of helping behavior, the controllable promotional variables, included source variables, message variables, and request variables. Source variables are associated with the charity’s image, such as it is considered to be familiar or effective. Message variables deal with the emphasis non-profit organizations put on when they send a message to their target market (e.g., cause of need or picture appeal). Request variables are concerned with whether the requested help involves money or time.

The effect of the antecedents on helping behavior may be moderated by uncontrollable variables referred to as moderators. Bendapudi et al. (1996) divided moderators into donor variables and non-donor variables. There are two types of donor variables, which are persistent and transient across solicitations. Persistent variables included perceptions (e.g., whether the help for the charity is necessary), motives (whether the motive is egoistic or altruistic), and abilities (e.g., the donor’s physical or financial resources). Transient variables involve mood state, media exposure (e.g., whether the donor watch TV when the solicitation is made), and attention (e.g., whether attention to appeal is distracted in the environment). Non-donor variables include government policies (e.g., tax deductions), the state of economy, social norms (e.g., greater charity at Christmas), technology (e.g., technological development that allows transplanting body parts), and competing charities.
As with helping behavior, they addressed the three different degrees of helping behavior, which involve no help, token help, and serious help. One response might be not to help at all. If the donor decides to choose to help, it might be either token help (e.g., making a modest contribution) or serious help (e.g., a substantial contribution to address the need).

Bendapudi et al. (1996) accounted the consequences in terms of the beneficiary, the charity, the donor’s community, and the individual donors. First, the consequences for the beneficiary are whether their needs are satisfied. Second, the consequences for the charity involve the charities’ level of success and adaptation. Third, there are social, cultural, and economic consequences for the donor’s community. For instance, the charity of interest can have influences on the attitudes of community toward the role of the non-profit organization. Fourth, as consequences of the donor, there are the donor’s future perceptions (e.g., a more positive perceptions led by helping), motives, abilities, and future helping behavior (e.g., repeat donor).

Volunteer Behavior related to Special Olympics

Among the different types of pro-social behaviors, volunteering is of interest, as this present study is designed to develop effective PSAs to reach more volunteers. In order to design effective PSAs to attract more volunteers, it is essential for sport marketers in Special Olympics organizations to understand why individuals engage in voluntary act and what kinds of benefits they can obtain by volunteering for Special Olympics. In addition, sport managers need to understand potential factors that may affect potential volunteers’ initial expectations and their perceived overall experiences (Farrell, Johnson, & Twynam, 1998; Leeuwen, Quick, & Daniel, 2002; Omoto & Snyder,
This understanding will help them to improve planning, management, and recruitment strategies for keeping a strong volunteer base (Williams, Dossa, & Tompkins, 1995).

Antecedents of Volunteering

The antecedents of volunteering include volunteer motivations and personality differences. Before the antecedents are discussed, it is critical to know the concept of volunteerism.

Volunteerism is defined as “long-term, planned, prosocial behaviors that benefit strangers and occur within an organizational setting” (Penner, 2002, p. 448). Volunteering is usually a long-term behavior; a thoughtful and planned action. Thus, volunteering “calls for considerably more planning, sorting out of priorities, and matching of personal capabilities and interests with types of intervention” (Benson, Dohority, Garman, Hanson, Hochschwender, Lebold, Rohr, & Sullivan, 1980, p. 89). Regarding prosocial behavior, Clary, Snyder, Ridger, Copelande, Stukas, Haugen, and Miene (1998) also noted that volunteers actively try to find opportunities to help others and “make a commitment to an ongoing helping relationship that may extend over a considerable period of time and that may entail considerable personal costs of time, energy, and opportunity (p. 1517).

Volunteer Motivation

Volunteer motivations can be egoistic or altruistic, or both. Martin (1994) noted that egoistic motivation has the ultimate goal of increasing a person's own welfare. Thus, volunteers who have egoistic motivation attempt to obtain recognition, a sense of belonging, career advancement, tax advantages, peer prestige, or political gains (American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, 1994). Maslow’s need hierarchy theory
(1954) can be highly related to egoistic motivation in a sense that the five human needs (e.g., physiological needs, safety and security needs, love and social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization) is associated with a person’s own welfare. Thus, volunteering is a type of human behavior that occurs when an individual seek out his/her needs. This view is consistent with a functional approach. Regarding dimensions of volunteer motivation, most dimensions can be classified into this category. For example, Clary et al. (1998) developed a six-dimensional model of volunteer motivations. Except the first dimension values, all the other dimensions –understanding, social, career-related benefit, protective, and enhancement- can be related to egoistic motivation. Caldwell and Andereck (1994) also developed the motivation scale. Among the three dimensions, the two dimensions, such as solidary incentives and material incentives, can be linked to egoistic motivation.

Contrary to egoistic motivation, altruistic motivation has the ultimate goal of enhancing the welfare of the needy even at the expense of a person's own welfare. (Martin 1994). From a theoretical perspective, Brewer, Selden, and Facer (2000) noted, “Social scientists have spent considerable time and effort trying to understand the role of self-interest in human behavior, but they have neglected these socially important motives and behaviors.” (p. 254). Korsgaard and Meglino (1996) also indicated that current hedonistic-based psychological theories (e.g., expectancy theory) cannot explain fully about behaviors directed at benefiting others. However, the Simon model (1990) provided insights into why people exhibit altruistic behavior, without depending on self-interest.

**Personality Variables Associated With Volunteering**

Personality characteristics can be important prosocial personality (Penner, 2002). In most study that examined the personal variables, the two personality variables have
appeared to important predictors for individual’s prosocial behaviors, including volunteering. The two variables are other-oriented empathy and helpfulness. In the study by Penner, Fritzsche, Craiger, and Freifeld (1995), the two dimensions were strongly associated with all aspects of volunteer activities. The findings were consistent with other studies (Allen, 1999; Facteau et al., 2000).

Positive Experiences of Special Olympics Volunteers

Volunteer work experience is significantly related to volunteers’ satisfaction and commitment (e.g., Green & Chalip, 1998). Farrell et al. (1998) noted, “Volunteer satisfaction is integral to the success of the initial event and to the success of future events in a community” (p. 289).

Based on the literature on volunteerism (e.g., Farrell, et al., 1998; Leeuwen et al., 2002; Omoto & Snyder, 1995), several factors were found to affect volunteers’ perceived satisfaction from their experiences. These factors include work related factors (e.g., work itself, task characteristics), organizational factors (e.g., organizational reputation, or organizational commitment), interaction with supervisor/clients, perceived performance of teams/athletes (e.g., win/loss), event operation, and physical facilities.

Volunteers who work for Special Olympics seem to exhibit high levels of satisfaction with their volunteering activities. Among those variables, the direct experience with the athlete with mental retardation may be the most significant factor that affects not only volunteers’ satisfaction, but also their lives. Following are the comments from volunteers who have actually worked for the Special Olympics (Special Olympics, Inc., 2005).
“When I became involved in Special Olympics in 1993, I was inspired when I saw how happy children with mental handicaps were when they participated in sports,” “For this reason, I call on fellow professional athletes around the world to get involved in Special Olympics so we can create more opportunities for these children. We have an obligation to help them.”

Valery Arshaluysovic Abadgian, Russia

"I can't think of a better way to give back to your community than to volunteer for Special Olympics. I was lucky enough to spend the weekend coaching Bocce at the Summer games in Stockton, California. It had to be one of the greatest times of my life. We had lots of laughs, some tears, and experiences we will never forget. I have only been a volunteer for eight months, but have grown so much and spent time with many new friends. I look forward to the time each week I get to spend coaching. When all is said and done, I am so grateful for the opportunity I was given."

Patti Bassett, Northern California (USA)

Based on the comments, those volunteers seem to have very positive experiences with Special Olympics, and the experience had a significant impact on their lives. In addition to the favorable experiences, Special Olympics volunteers exhibited their enhanced positive attitudes toward people with mental disabilities. Omoto and Snyder (1995), in their longitudinal research, found that there were changes in attitudes, including knowledge, among the volunteers. Consistent with the result, numerous volunteers for the Special Olympics found that their volunteer experience has a considerable impact on their attitudes toward people with mental retardation. The following is a quote from one of the volunteers whose attitude toward people with disabilities had been changed. The researcher believes that this kind of positive attitude will make a difference in the lives of people with mental retardation, their families, and our community.
“Being involved with Special Olympics athletes is a humbling experience. It opens your mind so you see individuals with mental handicaps from a different perspective,” she said. “A cousin of my husband’s recently had a son with a mental handicap. If I had not had this experience with Special Olympics I would have been awkward around him. Instead, we often invite him to stay with us. I have tenderness towards him. Being involved as a volunteer has changed the way I feel about individuals with mental handicaps.”

Gignoux, Anahita, Special Olympics France

Research on the Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion proposed by Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo in 1981 represents a general framework for understanding the effectiveness of persuasive communications. Numerous theories related to attitude change have been developed in an attempt to construct a general framework of persuasion. Based on the comprehensive review of the literature, Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann (1983) noted that these theories can be classified into two categories: (a) Central route and (b) Peripheral route. The central route of attitude change involves extensive cognitive activities to evaluate information presented to generate an attitude towards persuasive messages (Cacioppo & Petty, 1980; Cumings & Venkatesan, 1976; Hovland, Janis, & Kelly, 1953; McGuire, 1976), while the peripheral routes emphasize positive or negative cues rather than arguments in a message. Thus, the peripheral route does not involve any elaborated cognitive activities to form an attitude (Maddux & Rogers, 1980; Norman, 1976; Staats & Staats, 1958). In the Elaboration Likelihood Model, Petty and Cacioppo incorporate these two routes into one framework in order to better understand attitude change processes.
Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion

Under the central route, viewers are interested, or motivated, and capable of processing the information within their ability and thus, they carefully scrutinize the message presented (Bohner & Wanke, 2002). In the process, extensive cognitive activities occur. Attitude changed by the central route has been found to be more persistent over time, predictive of behavior, and resistant to change, since it is based on the rational thinking process (Haugtvedt & Petty, 1992).

Contrary to the central route to persuasion, people have either little motivation or ability to think, as they have limited time and are exposed to a great deal of information. In this condition, attitude change occurs under a peripheral route. Thus, the peripheral route does not involve considerable cognitive processes. Laboratory research has shown that attitude changes resulting from peripheral cues are less enduring and less resistant than attitude changes resulting from central route process to persuasion (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986b).

Petty and Cacioppo (1986b) give the seven postulates of the Elaboration Likelihood Model that may help gain a better understanding of their reasoning:

The Seven Postulates of the ELM (adapted from Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b):

1. Underlying motivation: People are motivated to hold correct attitudes.
2. Variations in elaboration: Although people want to hold correct attitudes, the amount and nature of issue-relevant elaboration in which they are willing or able to engage to evaluate a message vary with individual and situational factors.
3. How variables affect persuasion: Variables can affect the amount and direction of attitude change by (a) serving as persuasive arguments, (b) serving as peripheral cues, and/or (c) affecting the extent or direction of issue and argument elaboration.
4. **Objective elaboration**: Variables affecting motivation and/or ability to process a message in a relatively objective manner can do so by either enhancing or reducing argument scrutiny.

5. **Biased elaboration**: Variables affecting message processing in a relatively biased manner can produce either a positive (favorable) or negative (unfavorable) motivational and/or ability bias to the issue-relevant thoughts attempted.

6. **Tradeoff between argument elaboration and peripheral cues**: As motivation and/or ability to process arguments is decreased, peripheral cues become relatively more important determinates of persuasion. Conversely, as argument scrutiny is increased, peripheral cues become relatively less important determinants of persuasion.

7. **Consequences of elaboration**: Attitude changes that result mostly from processing issue-relevant arguments (central route) will show greater temporal persistence, greater prediction of behavior, and greater resistance to counterpersuasion that attitude changes that result mostly from peripheral cues.

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**The Elaboration Likelihood Model**

The important concept of the ELM is elaboration. Petty and Cacioppo (1986b) refer to elaboration in a persuasion context to the degree to which an individual thinks about issue-relevant arguments contained in a persuasive message. Elaboration likelihood is posited to be high when individuals are motivated to engage in issue-relevant thinking; and is low when there is little motivation to engage in issue relevant thinking. Furthermore, the model contends that when the likelihood of an individual to elaborate on issue-relevant information is high, it is highly likely that the person will follow the central route to persuasion. On the other hand, when the elaboration likelihood is low, the person is more likely to follow the peripheral route to persuasion.

The specific processes that lead to attitude change through either the central route or the peripheral route of the ELM is presented in detail in Figure 2.2. First, persuasive messages are presented before the audiences. Then, the next step,
"Motivated to Process," will occur as a prerequisite to the central route of attitude change. They will take either the central or the peripheral route to process the information, depending on the motivation regarding the message.

There are several factors affecting motivation to process a message such as personal relevance (Petty & Cacioppo, 1979), personal responsibility (Petty, Harkins & Williams, 1980), number of sources (Harkins & Petty, 1981), and need for cognition (Cacioppo, Petty & Morris, 1983). The main purpose of the present study is to examine whether individual difference in empathy, like those factors, can affect the motivation to process.

However, motivation itself is not sufficient for a person exposed to a message to follow the central route in his/her attitude change process. In order to follow in the central route, the person not only needs to have motivation (a necessary condition) but also have the ability to process, or understand the message. Otherwise, he/she will take the peripheral route. Several factors that affect this step include distraction caused by other stimuli (Petty, Wells & Brock, 1976), repetition of a message (Cacioppo & Petty, 1980), and message comprehensibility (Regan & Cheng, 1973).
Figure 2.2: Attitude change process in the ELM, Source: Petty and Cacioppo (1986b)
If the receiver can understand the message, he or she can then go to the next stage, “nature of arguments in the message.” If it is a strong and convincing message, the receiver is more likely to perceive it favorably. As long as the message is consistent with the receiver’s previous attitude, there is likely to be a lasting, positive persuasion. For example, a potential volunteer will decide to volunteer for the Special Olympics because s/he was persuaded based on the strength and relevance of the message. However, if the message contains false information, the receiver is likely to reject the message and form negative thoughts and feelings about the message.

If there is a failure in following the central route, the viewer can take the peripheral route. This situation can occur when the receiver is not motivated to think about the message, when he/she is unable to process it. A message using the peripheral route focuses on cues or themes that are not directly related to the subject matter of the message. An example is the use of Michael Jordan in selling a computer. There is no distinguishable tie between Jordan’s reputation as a basketball player and a computer, but a consumer may be persuaded to buy a computer simply because he likes Michael Jordan. In this example, Michael Jordan is a peripheral cue (Moore, 2004).

Variables Affecting the Degree of Elaboration

As described in Chapter 1, the most prominent motivational variable is involvement, that is, the extent to which viewers perceive an issue as personally relevant (e.g., Petty, Cacioppo, 1979; Petty, Cacioppo, & Goldman, 1981). Studies on involvement indicate that audiences who are highly involved in an issue are motivated to evaluate the message on the issue more than those who are not involved. Using a 2 (high vs. low involvement) X 2 (expertise vs. no expertise) X 2 (strong vs. weak arguments) factorial
design, Petty et al. (1981) found that students in a high involvement condition elaborated the persuasive message, which induced them to produce positive thoughts, and thus they reported a more positive attitude. Contrast to this, students did not engage in an extensive cognitive process, but took the peripheral route to persuasion.

Need for cognition has been showed to serve as a individual difference variable that can influence the degree of message elaboration (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; Cacioppo, Petty, Feinstein, & Jarvis, 1996). Research on NFC indicates that individuals high in NFC are more likely to engage in considerable cognitive processes than those low in NFC, and thus tend to take a central route to process information. On the contrary, low NFC individuals are more likely to be affected by peripheral cues, than high NFC individuals.

The Consequences of the Two Routes

Petty and Cacioppo (1981) proposed that the consequences of the two routes to persuasion differ in terms of temporal persistence, resistance to counter-argument, and prediction of behavior. An attitude formed through the central route is expected to be more persistent, more resistant to counter-persuasion, and more predictive of behavior than those formed through peripheral route (Petty, & Cacioppo, 1986b).

Regarding these three aspects, Petty and his colleagues (1995) addressed three mediating mechanisms that could make message elaboration cause stronger attitudes. First, issue-relevant thinking may enhance the structural consistency of an attitude schema, since initial inconsistencies may be detected and resolved in the process. Secondly, by engaging in elaborating a persuasive message, the attitude will be activated repeatedly, making the attitude more accessible. A more accessible attitude has been shown to be stronger predictor of behavior that is less accessible attitude. Finally, the
person may cognitively think that he/she devoted a considerable amount of cognitive 
effort, and thus they become more confident in the attitude caused by the mental effort.

The Construct of Empathy and It’s Role in Persuasion

*The Concept of Empathy and Scale Issues*

In the literature on empathy, empathy has been defined and operationalized in a 
number of different ways. Empathy is perceived as emotional (e.g., Eisenberg et al., 1998), 
cognitive (Ickes, et al., 1990), or multidimensional (e.g., Davis, 1980, 1983; Deutsch & 
Madle, 1975; Hoffman, 1977). It should be noted that Eisenberg and Strayer, leading 
scholars in empathy, viewed empathy as “an emotional response that stems from 
another's emotional state or condition and that is congruent with the other's emotional 
state or situation” (p. 5), and this definition has been widely taken into account in the area 
of persuasion in consumer behavior (e.g., Escalas & Stern, 2003).

As indicated in Chapter 1, there is still a debate over the definition of empathy 
and the dimensions that might be included in the construct of empathy in social 
psychology and consumer psychology. In Table 2.1 and Table 2.2, the researcher, based 
on the review of the literature on empathy, provided the divergent views on empathy and 
measurement issues. However, there is considerable agreements on the dimensions of 
empathy, and most scholars have employed multi-dimensions of empathy (e.g., Davis, 
Hull, Young, & Warren, 1987; Stiff et al., 1988). As suggested by Strayer (1987), the 
recent trend views empathy as a multi-dimensional construct by including aspects of both 
affect and cognition.
Specifically, Davis’s Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI, 1980) has been widely used in most studies on empathy. The IRI is used for this current study, since the scale is an individual difference measure based on a multidimensional view of empathy.

The IRI is a measure that treats empathy as multidimensional phenomenon. It consists of four subscales: the perspective taking (PT), the empathic concern (EC), the personal distress (PD), and the fantasy (FS) scale. PT is a scale that measures the spontaneous tendency of the respondent to adopt the perspective of other people (cognitive aspect of empathy). EC is a measure of the respondent’s tendency to experience feelings of warmth, compassion, and concerns for others. PD is a subscale that assesses feelings of anxiety and distress in uneasy situations. FS is a measure of the respondent’s propensity to imagine themselves in the place of characters in books and movies.

*The Role of Empathy in Persuasion*

*The Role of Affect in Advertising Effectiveness*

Before we attempt to realize the role of empathy in persuasion, it is essential to understand the role of feelings in persuasive message, provided that empathy is viewed as a type of feelings. Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel (2001) indicated that feelings can affect the attitude formation during the processing of advertising messages. As Burke and Edell (1989) noted, feelings experienced during persuasive information processing determine consumers' post-message evaluations. Thus, if the ads evoke positive feelings, the viewers tend to have favorable attitudes toward the ads and the brand of the products.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Definition of Empathy</th>
<th>The Role of Empathy</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aaker &amp; Williams</td>
<td>consumer behavior/culture psychology</td>
<td>Empathy as a form of &quot;other-focused&quot; emotions/interpersonal aspects salient in collectivist cultures, opposed to ego-focused emotions</td>
<td>Other-focused appeal led to more favorable attitudes for members of individualist culture</td>
<td>7 scale (1 = not at all, 7 = very strongly) to describe the appeal of the ad and the three empathy-related to emotions: warmhearted, emotional, and moving (Edell &amp; Burke, 1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagozzi &amp; Moore</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Empathy as emotional responses: 1. Perspective taking 2. Protection motivation 3. Compassion/pity 4. Fantasy elaboration</td>
<td>The role of empathy as mediator of the effects of exposure to ads on the decision to help child abuse, and mediator between negative emotions and the decision to help</td>
<td>The four dimensions (Davis, 1980, 1983); Larsen, Diener, &amp; Cropanzano (1987) and measured by disagree/agree on 7 point scales with the six items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnott et al.</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>Empathy as a tendency to respond emotionally to the experience others</td>
<td>Association between the arousal of empathy with enhanced prosocial behavior</td>
<td>Measure of empathy: Emotional Empathy Scale-respondents’ self-reported responses to individual difference scale which assess the respondent’s predispositions to be empathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batson</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>A special type of emotion vicariously experienced by taking perspective of the victim who is perceived to be in need of help</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional responses, a 7 point scale (1 = not at all, 2 = extremely)—how strongly they were feeling each of a series of emotions using a list of 14 adjectives: personal empathy-sympathetic, moved, compassionate, tender, warm, and softhearted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Divergent views on empathy (in alphabetical order)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Definition of Empathy</th>
<th>The Role of Empathy</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlozzi, Bull, Stein, Ray, &amp; Barnes (2002)</td>
<td>Psychotherapy</td>
<td>The relationships between practitioners' perceptions views of empathy and their identification with theories of psychotherapy</td>
<td>A Likert-type scale of 5 theoretical orientations (behavioral, cognitive/behavioral, humanistic/experiential, psychodynamic, and systemic) and 15 theory-specific definitions of empathy. Humanistic/experiential &amp; psychodynamic identifications related to the endorsement of empathy as feelings focused and as a communicative process, and as a skill. Those who endorse behavior theory view empathy as a skill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joireman, Needham, &amp; Cummings (2002)</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>The relationship between dimensions of attachment and empathy</td>
<td>Three of the four subscales of Davis’ (1980, 1983) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI): Empathic Concern (e.g., I often have tender concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me), Perspective taking (e.g., I try to look at everybody’s side of a disagreement before I make a decision), Personal distress (e.g., I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation). Every scale contains seven Likert-type items (1 = never describes me, 2 = always describes me).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasari, Freeman, &amp; Bass (2003)</td>
<td>Child psychology/developmental psychology</td>
<td>Three developmental domains: affective, prosocial, and cognitive contributed to the expression and understanding of empathy</td>
<td>Children with down syndrome and their empathy level</td>
<td>The Feshbach and Roe Empathy Measure - included a serious of slide sequences depicting 6-7 year-old children in a variety of different affective situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.1 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Definition of Empathy</th>
<th>The Role of Empathy</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nelson, Klein, &amp; Irvin (2003)</td>
<td>Applied social psychology</td>
<td>The ability or readiness of people to take the target’s perspective cognitively and the people’s emotional response to the targets’ distress</td>
<td>Fatigue-induced need for cognitive closure as antecedents of empathy</td>
<td>Measures Empathy (Houston, 1990), Cognitive perspective taking-the appropriateness of the target’s emotional reaction-a 7 point scale (1 = very inappropriate, 7 = very appropriate), Emotional response- a 24-item emotion adjective checklist (Batson et al, 1983)-a 7 point scale (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely). Emotional adjectives, 3 factors: personal distress - alarmed, grieved, upset, worried, disturbed, distressed, troubled, perturbed, blue, discouraged, low, afraid, agitated, and desperate/empathic concern-compassionate, soft-hearted, moved, tender, warm, and sympathetic/positive personal affect – happy, calm, satisfied, and quiet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parker &amp; Axtell (2001)</td>
<td>Management/organizational behavior</td>
<td>Perspective taking: adopting another person’s viewpoint</td>
<td>View perspective taking as an antecedents to empathy-Perspective taking is a cognitive or intellectual process that results in the affective response of empathy</td>
<td>Empathy with suppliers (e.g., I feel concerned for my suppliers if they are under pressure, it pleases me to see my suppliers doing well, I understand the problems my suppliers experience)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 2.1 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Definition of Empathy</th>
<th>The Role of Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batson &amp; Coke (1981)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>Responding compassionately to another person’s distress— 1. Empathic concern is the tendency to experience feelings of sympathy and compassion for others 2. Personal distress is the tendency to experience personal feelings of discomfort and unease in the presence of distressed others</td>
<td>Viewed as a cognitive—affective experience that varies with the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batson (1987), Dovidio (1984), Krebs and Miller (1985)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>Taking the perspective of another in need</td>
<td>Associated with intention to help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binmore (1994)</td>
<td>Welfare economics</td>
<td>The imaged change of positions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chebat et al. (2003)</td>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
<td>The heightened awareness of another person in danger or distress and includes an urge to take action to alleviate the other person’s plight</td>
<td>Drama effect: moderating effects of self-relevance on the relationships among empathy, information processing, and attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coke, Batson, &amp; McDavis (1978)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The role of empathy: mediator of helping behavior: taking the perspective of another in need → empathy → motivation to help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis (1980)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Perspective takings, fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Areas</td>
<td>Definition of Empathy</td>
<td>The Role of Empathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dymond (1949)</td>
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<td>The imaginative transporting of oneself into the thinking, feeling, and acting of another and so structuring the world as he or she does—a cognitive component/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egan (1990)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A way of being that is needed to be with and develop an understanding of clients and their world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eisenberg et al. (1989)</td>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
<td>Feeling what another person is feeling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlay &amp; Stephan (2000)</td>
<td>Applied social psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td>The effects of empathy on racial attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fontaine (1997)</td>
<td>Welfare economics</td>
<td>Two forms of empathy: (1) Partial empathetic identification—the imaged change of objective circumstances with another, (2) Complete empathetic identification: the imaged change of objective circumstances and subjective features with another</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fontaine (2001)</td>
<td>Welfare economics</td>
<td>The capacity to imagine oneself in the position of someone else</td>
<td>A key to about how to make interpersonal comparisons of utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldstein &amp; Michaels (1985)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness of another’s feelings, sharing those feelings, and having an urge to help the other)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoffman (1982, 1984)</td>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
<td>Being cognitively aware of an other person's internal states and/or putting oneself in the place of another and experiencing his or her feelings</td>
<td>Dispositional approach: since children are raised differently, they have different predispositions to empathize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornblow (1980)</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Situational determinants of empathic dispositions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ickes et al. (1990)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing what another person is feeling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerem, Fishman, &amp; Josselson (2001)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Both cognitive and affective aspects</td>
<td>Social &amp; personal relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohut (1984)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Experiencing the inner life of another while retaining objectivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: Other empathy related studies
Table 2.2 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Definition of Empathy</th>
<th>The Role of Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leibenstein (1976)</td>
<td>Welfare economics</td>
<td>“Empathy utility” as the satisfaction received from an income transfer spent on someone else</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levenso &amp; Ruef (1992)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>The ability to perceive accurately how another person is feeling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macaskill, Maltby, &amp; Day (2002)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>A tendency to recognize other’s feelings and the individual’s attempts to share the positive correlation with forgiveness of others emotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers (1957)</td>
<td>Consulting psychology</td>
<td>Sensing another person’s feelings as if one were that other person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers (1980)</td>
<td>Consulting psychology</td>
<td>Entering another’s private world</td>
<td>Viewed as a cognitive—affective experience that varies with the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swayer (1975)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>A relatively stable trait or general ability, such as an ability to perceive feelings of other people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelton &amp; Rogers (1981)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>An individual’s emotional arousal elicited by the expression of emotion (usually distress) in another</td>
<td>The role of empathy—mediators between negative emotions and decision to help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stotland (1969)</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
<td>The tendency of an observer to react emotionally because he or she perceives that another is experiencing or is about to experience an emotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strayer (1987)</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>The affective as well as cognitive aspects of empathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tichener (1909)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A rendering of Einfühlung— To feel one’s way into</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wispe (1986, 1991)</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>The attempt by one self-aware self to comprehend nonjudgmentally the positive and negative experiences of another self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are several important reasons that explain the positive effect of affective advertising. First, the consumer may pay greater attention to emotional advertising (Broadbent, 1977; Ittelson, 1973). Second, affect can reinforce the degree of information process (Kahneman, 1973). Third, affective ad executions can have favorable influence on audience’ judgments of the advertised message (Bower & Cohen, 1982). Finally, affective advertising may have greater effect on memory than a cognitive one (Dutta & Kanungo, 1975; Taylor & Tompson, 1982). In addition to the domain of consumer psychology, neuroscience has begun to support the critical role of affect in advertising and consumer decision-making (Ambler, Ioannides, & Rose, 2000). That research indicated that affective ads created a greater focal activation in our brain, and recall and recognition were significantly stronger for affective ads.

*Ad Portrayed Emotions: Emotional Flow*

In addition to affective appeal-advertising, emotions portrayed by actors in ads may be also an important variable in enhancing consumers’ attitudes toward the ad, purchase intentions, as well as empathic emotional responses. Stout, Homer, and Liu (1990), who examined the association of emotions depicted by characters in the ad and those aroused by viewers, found that what was portrayed in the ad influenced what viewers felt in response to the ad. Emotional Flow is defined as “the extent to which emotions portrayed in a commercial are perceived to change in their nature and/or intensity during the course of the commercial.” (Kamp & MacInnis, 1995, p. 20).
As with emotional flow, the ads that describe emotions of the characters as changing (e.g., transition of characters’ emotion from negative to positive) would represent commercials in which emotional flow is dynamic. In contrast, in the ads regarded as static, the emotions depicted by actors do not change during the ad.

There are several studies which showed that changing an emotion is an important variable in advertising effectiveness. Kamp and MacInnis (1995) found that ads regarded as dynamic generated more empathy than ads regarded as static, and when emotional flow was dynamic (verse static), the viewers had a more favorable attitudes toward the ad. Thorson and Friestad (1984) indicated that poignant ads that contained notable changes in emotion, rather than emotionally neutral ads, were more emotional intense and were significantly better in terms of recall.

*The Effect of Empathy as a Emotional Response on Viewers’ Attitudes*

Even though only limited studies on empathy have been conducted in the context of persuasion, most of the studies have found that in line with literature on the topic in social psychology domain, empathy has a positive effect on attitudes toward persuasive messages and on the decision to help.

Empathy can have greater effect on attitude toward the ad, rather than other types of feeling. Studies in general emotion and advertising literature have suggested that there is hierarchical rank in emotional responses. Stout and colleagues (Stout et al., 1990) have found that even though recognized emotion (e.g. sympathy—viewed as “a heightened awareness of another person’s stat of mind) have a considerable effect on positive attitudes to an ad, empathy have an even greater impact. Esclas and Stern (2003) noted that “higher empathy is likely to drive more positive ad attitudes, because when viewers
are absorbed or immersed in ad dramatic ad, they are more inclined to develop positive attitudes toward the ad that encouraged this response.” Aaker, Douglas, & Hagerty (1986) also demonstrated that a positive experience from a feeling of warmth was positively associated with the attitude toward the commercial and the brand and likelihood of purchasing intention.

Escalas and Stern (2003)’s study provided insight into the differences in consumers’ sympathy and empathy responses. In the study, sympathy, which was associated with cognitive component, was referred to as “a heightened awareness of another person’s state of mind and his or her circumstances stemming from recognition.” (p. 567). In the other hand, empathy, based on Eisenberg and Strayer’ notion of empathy (1987) was viewed as “a persons’ absorption in the feelings of another.” (p. 567). This result demonstrated that empathy was a higher level of emotional response than sympathy, and sympathy responses mediate the effect of a drama advertisement’s form on empathy responses. The study by Stout and Leckenby (1986) also supported the results, suggesting that empathy had a greater influence on attitude toward the ads than sympathy.

Aaker and Williams (1998) attempted to examine the effect of emotional appeal on members of collectivist versus individualistic culture. In the study, the concept of empathy was categorized into other-focused emotions. The authors noted that other-focused emotions (e.g. empathy, peacefulness, and shame) were likely to be associated with others in social context, while ego-focused emotions (e.g., pride, happiness, and anger) tended to be linked to individual's internal state, and were associated with the need for individual awareness and experiences. The study found that ego-focused emotional
appeals had a more favorable attitudes for people in collectivist culture, while other-oriented emotions had a more positive attitudes for persons in individualistic culture.

Empathic responses generated by media presentations can positively affect viewers’ attitudes toward the ad as well as characters in the commercial. Batson et al. (1997) found that feeling empathy for a member of a stigmatized group could improve attitudes toward the group as a whole. The process of how empathic feeling can improve attitudes toward a stigmatized group is as follows. Taking the perspective of a needy individual who is a member of a stigmatized group leads to increase empathic feeling for this individual. Then, these empathic feelings lead to a perception of increased valuing of this individual's welfare. Assuming that this individual's group membership is a salient component of his or her plight, the increased valuing should generalize to the group as a whole, enhancing positive beliefs about, feelings toward, and concern for the group.

The Role of Empathy in Public Service Advertisements

Non-profit organizations have primarily used affective advertising to enhance consumers’ empathic emotional responses that can lead to their helping behavior. Most literature on promotional strategies of non-profit organizations has suggested that an empathy-evoking appeal is highly correlated to charitable giving as well as helping behavior in the forms of volunteerism.

Because of the close relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior, some of the studies examine the role of empathy in the context of public service advertisements. Bagozzi and Moore (1994), based on Lazarus's general theory of emotion and adaptation, focused on the role of negative emotions and empathic responses as mediators of the ad effects on helping behavior. The study found that public service ads (PSA) designed to
reduce the incidence of child abuse evoked negative emotions, and the negative emotions led to empathic reactions that influenced the decision to help (refer to Figure 2.3). In addition, Griffin, Babin, Attoway, and Darren (1993), who examined the reactions to charitable appeals, found that a feeling of empathy would lead to higher levels of charitable giving as well as helping behavior in the forms of volunteerism.

![Figure 2.3: The role of negative emotions and empathic responses as mediators of the effects of exposure to anti child abuse ads on the decision to help prevent child abuse: Source, Bagozzi & Moore (1994)](image)

Another study by Chebat et al. (2003) examined the effects of self-relevance on the relationships among empathy, information processing, and attitudes. The results indicated that regardless of the level of self-relevance condition, empathy played a main role in influencing attitudes. The PSA (drama advertisement) enhanced information process through empathy under low self-relevance situations.
The Concept of Involvement

The concept of involvement has had a major impact on understanding an individual’s decision process in the study of consumer behavior (Park, 2001). Although numerous studies have paid attention to involvement, there is currently little agreement about how to best define involvement and how to measure it (Cohen, 1983). The reasons for the diverse definitions and the measures of involvement may be due to the different applications of the term of involvement. (Zaichkowsky, 1985). In the purchase decision research, involvement is defined as “the level of perceived importance and/or interest evoked by a stimulus within a specific situation.” (Blackwell et al., 2001). In the advertising domain, Wright (1974) defined involvement with advertising as the receiver’s perception of the relevancy of the ad content to his/her problem. In the area of product class involvement, Hupfer and Gardner (1971) defined involvement in terms of a general concern about the issue and product.

Based on extensive review of literature on involvement, Zaichkowsky (1985) concluded that the general view of involvement focuses on personal relevance. In addition, Greenwald and Leavitt (1984), noted that despite many specific definitions of involvement within both social and consumer psychology, there is considerable agreement that in high involvement, the persuasive message under consideration has a high degree of personal relevance to the recipient, whereas in low involvement situations, the personal relevance of the message is rather insignificant.
The Relationship between Involvement and Empathy in Persuasion

Before discussing the relationship in the advertising domain, it may be helpful to understand the general theoretical relationship between involvement and empathy. From theoretical perspective, the relationship between the two constructs can be reciprocal in a sense that involvement can serve as a precursor to empathy, while empathy can serve as an antecedent to involvement. In the first case (involvement → empathy), people who are in high involvement situations (e.g., the disability issue) may be more likely to have a higher level of vicarious emotional response. For instance, a woman who perceives the issue of breast cancer to be highly self-relevant tends to have a stronger empathic response, when exposed to victim of the cancer, than those who does not (Eisenberg et al., 1998).

On the other hand, in the latter case (empathy → involvement), people who have experience empathic feelings are more likely to be in high involvement situations (Chebat et al., 2003). For example, when an individual witnesses the death of an abused child in the community, he/she may experience strong empathy.

Then, s/he may be actively involved in supporting the issue of child abuse by volunteering for a Child Abuse organization. However, it should be noted that the first case (involvement → empathy) is not in a direct cause-and effect relationship, since involvement as a ‘state’ of mind, itself cannot cause empathy, as vicious ‘feeling.’ Rather, involvement may be better served as a moderator which enhance or weaken empathic emotional responses. In addition, the two construct can occur simultaneously (Edwards & Ferle, 2003; Kamp & MacInnis, 1995).
This general relationship appears to be different from the one in advertising. Edwards and Ferle (2003) noted, “While these constructs are not mutually exclusive and could occur simultaneously, the implications for advertising effectiveness are somewhat different” (p.47). There have been only limited studies that attempted to incorporate the two constructs in advertising as well as in consumer psychology.

Based on the literature, it is assumed that there are two approaches on the relationship between involvement and empathy in the context of advertisement. First, the first view is that involvement serves as a moderator in the effect of advertising message on empathy which affects the attitudes and behavioral intent. Chebat et al. (2003) examined the moderating role of self-relevance (kinds of involvement) on the relationships among empathy, information processing, and attitudes. Involvement has been used as a moderator, and empathy as a mediator in the effect of ad message on attitudes in most consumer psychology. However, the true merit of this study is that it attempted to not only link involvement to empathy but also to provided insights into the reciprocal relationship between information processing and empathy.

More specifically, the effect of the advertisement formats (Drama vs. Lecture) in public service advertisements was investigated in both high and low self-relevance conditions, using a 2 (format) X 2 (malaria vs. AIDS) factorial design in the study. The findings revealed that in both high and low relevance conditions, empathy played an important role in affecting attitude change. Consistent with the ELM framework, the advertisement format (peripheral cue) enhanced the attitudes under low involvement condition.
In addition, empathy facilitated information processing under low involvement. The psychological process underlying the direction of the relations is that as suggested by Chebat et al. (2003), even though the advertisement topic creates little cognitive process, drama-induced empathy produces ‘deeper cognitive activity,’ under low involvement situation. On the other hand, information processing enhanced empathy under high involvement condition, since empathy may be generated by cognitive thinking process. Eisenberg, et al. (1998) noted, “Empathy may be evoked by retrieving stored information from memory relevant to assessing another’s emotional state or condition (e.g., information about the plight of impoverished people or knowledge about what it feels like to be rejected by peers)” (p. 507).

The second approach is that empathy serves as a mediator in enhancing consumer’s involvement, which leads to attitudes and behavioral intent. This relationship is displayed in Figure 2.4. Edwards and Ferle (2003) found, in their study on empathy-based persuasion, that empathy can act as mediator in the effect of an ad message on consumer involvement. They suggested that “If a person can identify with a depicted experience, then he or she may be more likely to vicariously experience the situation or product being presented and experience greater levels of involvement” (p. 48).

In order to investigate the role of role-taking as a mediator, three serious regression analyses were employed to assess the mediator role (Baron & Kenny, 1986) in the study. The results indicated that interactivity induced by computer-mediated environment (e.g., 3-D), led to a role-taking which influenced the participants’ level of involvement.
The difference between the two approaches, in terms of the perspective on the relationship, may be a result of the different types of involvement being adopted in each approach and in research design. As with the first approach (moderating role of involvement), most studies in the approach used ‘manipulated involvement’. In other words, involvement is manipulated by making the ad “relevant” (high involvement vs. low involvement). After designing the two different levels of involvement, the receiver is personally influenced by the ads, and then engages in motivation to process the message, which lead to empathy. Most studies in consumer psychology tend to use this approach (e.g., Petty & Cacciopo, 1981), even though they do not deal with empathy. On the other hand, the type of involvement used in the second approach is ‘ad induced involvement’ or ‘content-processing involvement’. In this approach, when a person is exposed to an advertisement, he/she perceives what is particularly relevant to their decision (e.g., Wright, 1974).
Empathic Tendency and It’s Linkage to the ELM

The Role of Cognition in Empathy

The cognitive aspect of empathy can be important because it may provide insights into whether empathy can serve as an individual difference variable, like need for cognition, which affects the motivation to process messages. Thus, the perspective on cognitive empathy can provide important implications for the potential role of empathy as a moderator. Several scholars addressed different kinds of cognitive processes involved in empathy. Eisenberg and Strayer (1987) noted that a number of cognitive processes can play an important role in empathy. First, Hoffman (1982) indicated that the ability to differentiate between self and other and one’s own and another’s affective responding is a prerequisite for empathizing. Consistent with their view, Davis et al. (1996), who explained the controlled effort processing in more detail, also noted that cognitive as well as affective empathic responses toward other person may lead to a shift in perspective, and this change require cognitive efforts.

Second, Hoffman (1982) also noted the role of the other cognitive processes in empathy. The mode of empathic responses involves the direct association between cues of another’s emotional state and the potential empathizer’s memories of past experiences of a similar emotion. The example he cites was that of a girl who witness a boy cutting himself and who then cries herself. The sight of blood or some other cue in the situation reminds the girl of her own past experiences of pain and evokes an empathic distress response. Consistent with Hoffman’s view, Eisenberg, et al. (1998) noted, “Empathy may be evoked by retrieving stored information from memory relevant to assessing another’s emotional state or condition (e.g., information about the plight of impoverished people or
knowledge about what it feels like to be rejected by peers)” (p. 507). In line with Hoffman’s view, Karniol (1982) also suggested that people may discern another’s situation by retrieving from memory information related to cues concerning another’s affective state. This perspective has significant implications for the potential role of empathy as a moderator in the advertising effects on audiences’ attitudes, since the cognitive process can influence motivation to process the persuasive information.

Third, another cognitive skill is the ability to take a role. According to Feshbach (1978), two types of cognitive processes are essential for empathizing: (1) the ability to discriminate and label affective states in others, and (2) the ability to take the perspective and role of another person. Eisenberg and Strayer (1987) suggested that the former capability is more basic and is necessary for role taking. Similar to this notion of role taking, Davis (1980) addressed perspective taking, which is referred to as the spontaneous tendency of the respondent to adopt the perspective of other people. Davis, Conklin, Smith, and Luce (1996) indicated that perspective taking is a controlled effort process that requires substantial resources. There are two kinds of perspective taken: affective perspective taking and cognitive perspective taking. Affective perspective taking is defined as the ability to identify and understand how another person is feeling (Enright & Lapsley, 1980; Underwood & Moore, 1982), while cognitive perspective taking is conceptualized as the ability to recognize and understand the thought processes of another (Krebs & Sturrup, 1974; Kurdek, 1978; Oswald, 1996). In a recent study by Oswald (1996), participants in the affective perspective taking condition offered more help than did those in the cognitive perspective taking condition.
Empathetic Tendency and Argument processing

This study examines the impact of individual differences in empathy on the cognitive and psychological processes they engage in when exposed to a persuasive message. Thus, the focus is on whether empathy can serve as a personality variable that motivates an individual to engage in elaborate cognitive processing of the information presented. Drawing on the previous studies on the effects of personal relevance (e.g., Petty et al., 1981).

A review of literature on empathy and involvement (Eisenberg, et al., 1998; Hoffman, 1982; Karniol, 1982) implies that empathic tendency can play a moderating role (e.g., involvement and need for cognition) in the effects of persuasive messages on consumers’ attitudes and behavioral intentions. There are the two approaches that support individual difference in empathy can serve as a variable in the ELM that affect motivation and/or ability to process a persuasive message.

The first approach for the potential role of individual difference in empathy as a moderator comes from Hoffman (1982) and Karniol (1982)’ view on the cognitive process of empathy that explains the direct association between cues of another’s emotional state and the potential empathizer’s memories of past experiences of a similar emotion. They suggested that people may discern another’s situation by retrieving from memory information related to cues containing another’s affective state. Based on their view, it is possible that when exposed to advertisements depicting another’s affective state (e.g., the plight of impoverished people), persons high in empathic propensity, rather than those low in empathic tendency, are more likely to focus on the information and to relate the ads to their own memorized information (Eisenberg, et al., 1998;
Hoffman, 1982; Karniol, 1982; Wells, 1988). These cognitive processes enhance information processing. Thus, high empathy persons, compared to low empathy individuals, are likely to be more motivated to process the information. Therefore, consistent with the ELM, they are assumed to engage in extensive elaboration of the message information and thus they can use a “central route” to persuasion.

Consistent with this approach, the study by Chebat et al. (2003), which examined the moderating role of self-relevance on the relationships among empathy, information processing, and attitudes, revealed that empathy enhanced information processing, especially in low involvement condition. While the study explored the moderating role of self-relevance, it has an important implication in that empathy facilitated information processing. The psychological process underlying the direction of the relations is that as suggested by Chebat et al. (2003), even though the advertisement topic creates little cognitive process, drama-induced empathy produces ‘deeper cognitive activity,’ under low involvement situation. Even though the study used empathy as a situational variable, which was ad-induced empathy, not empathy as a personality variable, the underlying psychological processes in both cases are the same, as in the case where involvement (a situational variable) plays the same moderating role in the ELM as need for cognition (a personality variable). Thus, it is likely that people high in empathy may involve deeper cognitive activity, than those low in empathy.

The second approach is based on the direct relationship between empathy and involvement, which refers to the receiver’s perception of the relevancy of the ad content to his/her problem. In other words, empathic propensity can have an influence on individuals’ involvement with the issue that is supposed to affect the amount and the
nature of issue-relevant elaboration (ad exposure $\rightarrow$ empathic tendency $\rightarrow$ involvement $\rightarrow$ information processing $\rightarrow$ attitude). The rational for the relationship comes from the research conducted by Edwards and Ferle (2003), which found that empathy, can act as mediator in the effect of an ad message on consumer involvement. They suggested that “If a person can identify with a depicted experience, then he or she may be more likely to vicariously experience the situation or product being presented and experience greater levels of involvement. Greater involvement causes increased message processing which lead to increase memory for the information and enhance positive attitudes (Park & Young, 1986). In line with their view, Schlinger (1979) noted, “when a person empathizers or identifies, he assumes some imaginary role in the situation and feels an emotional involvement with what is going on. Such involvement can be a personally rewarding experience…..” (p.41).

Regarding individual differences in empathy, Kamp and MaCinnis (1995) indicated that to the extent that the viewers understand what the characters in the ad are feeling and vicariously feel the same feeling they are experiencing in the ads, there appears to be a clear association between the characters in the ads and the viewers. Thus, it is assumed that the greater the viewers’ empathic tendency, the stronger the association between the characters (or the social issue) and themselves. Therefore, high empathic individuals exposed to a persuasive message, rather than low empathic individuals, are more likely to think that the issues in the ad are important to them and are highly relevant to them.

According to the ELM, when an issue is relevant to the individual or the individual is highly involved in the issue, he or she is more likely to focus on the quality
of the arguments of the message rather than the peripheral cues in the context. In this case, the central route is likely to occur. On the contrary, if the issue is irrelevant to the individual, or the individual has very little involvement with the issue, he or she is more apt to focus on the peripheral cues in the message rather than the quality of the arguments. In this instance the peripheral route to persuasion is likely to be followed. Based on the ELM, it is assumed that people, who have high level of empathic propensity, rather than those who have low level of empathic tendency, tend to think that the issue in the ad is more relevant to them. Therefore, high empathic people are more apt to focus on strong arguments than their counterparts. In addition, low empathic people, as compared to high empathic people, are more likely to focus on peripheral cues, since they tend to think that the issue may be less relevant to them. The relationship between empathic tendency and peripheral cue will be explained in greater detail in the following section.

**Empathic Tendency and Peripheral Cues**

A great deal of research in consumer behavior and social psychology indicates that individuals are not always willing or able to engage in extensive cognitive effort to evaluate message arguments and product attributes (Bettman, 1986; Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). Based on guidance of the ELM, Scholars from those fields attempted to predict certain aspects of persuasive appeal that are most likely to be important influences in attitude formation under different kinds of situational conditions or for different kinds of individuals. Research have shown that persuasion can occur when individuals do not have the motivation and ability to elaborate message arguments.

As mentioned previously, in situations where motivation and ability to evaluate the message is low, persuasion may occur through peripheral cues (e.g., source credibility,
attractiveness of endorsers) that affect attitude change without the scrutiny of arguments (Haugtvedt, et al., 1988). For instance, Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann (1983) showed that peripheral cue of celebrity endorsement affected attitudes under the low involvement condition in greater extent.

Because of the conceptual relationship between empathic tendency and different levels of motivation to process the information presented in the message, the researcher hypothesized that individuals low in empathy tendency will be affected by peripheral cues than individuals high in empathic tendency. Individuals low in empathic tendency may have lower level of motivation and ability to process a message than individuals high in empathic tendency.

Thus, the attitudes of low empathic persons are likely to be affected by peripheral route. This rationale is based on the two approaches indicated in the previous section that empathy involves cognitive processes that can induce motivation to evaluate the information presented in the message.

Regarding the first approach on cognitive processes of empathy, Eisenberg, et al., (1998), Hoffman (1982), and Karniol (1982) indicated that people may discern another’s situation by retrieving from memory information related to cues containing another’s affective state. Considering the cognitive aspects of empathy, persons low in empathic propensity, rather than those high in empathic tendency, are less likely to scrutinize the information and are less likely to relate the ads to their own memorized information.

The second approach explains the direct relationship between empathy and involvement (ad exposure $\rightarrow$ empathic tendency $\rightarrow$ involvement $\rightarrow$ information processing $\rightarrow$ attitude). It indicates that persons with low level of empathic tendency,
compared to those with high level of empathic tendency, tend to think that the issue in the ad may be irrelevant to them. The reason is because individuals high in ET are less likely to vicariously experience the situation or the issue being presented and experience lower level of involvement, than individuals low in ET. Therefore, the presence of a simple associative cue in the persuasive context (e.g., attractiveness of endorsers) can induce attitude change for them.

Empathic Tendency and Attitude–Behavior Correspondence

The ELM model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b) claims that attitude changes as a consequence of extensive cognitive processing or elaboration of the content of the message tend to last longer and are more predictive of behavior or behavioral intention. Petty et al. (1995) found that newly formed attitudes that resulted from processing issue-relevant arguments (central route) were more highly correlated to behavior than newly formed attitudes that resulted from processing the peripheral cues. This ELM prediction is important because the main purpose of public service advertisements is to change peoples’ behavior. In addition to the ELM prediction, the literature on empathy and altruistic behavior also support the positive relationship between empathic tendency and volunteer intention. Davis (1994) suggested that donors may experience altruistic motivation, especially if they experience empathy. Altruistic motivation has the ultimate goal of enhancing the welfare of the needy (Martin, 1994), even at the cost of a person’s own welfare. In contrast, egoistic motivation has the ultimate goal of increasing a person’s own welfare (Martin, 1994). People motivated by altruistic concerns are more likely to provide serious help (e.g., strong desire to volunteer) than making a normal contribution (Clary & Orenstein, 1991).
Summary

The purpose of this study was to develop and test a theory of persuasion for Public Service Advertisements (PSAs) designed to lead people to volunteer for Special Olympics. The focus of the current study was on the moderating role of empathic tendency on the effect of PSAs on prospective volunteers’ attitudes toward the ads and their intentions to volunteer for Special Olympics. This chapter presented the research design and methodological procedures used for testing the research hypotheses stated in Chapter 1.

This study employed an experimental design to test the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). A three way 2 (empathy: high or low) X 2 (argument quality: strong or weak) X 2 (peripheral cue: celebrity or noncelebrity status) factorial design was selected for this study. Argument quality and peripheral cue was manipulated in the 2 X 2 X 2 factorial between subjects design. Empathic tendency was used as a moderator in the experiment. Involvement was used a covariate in each experiment. Questionnaire booklets, containing advertisement stimuli and dependent variables, were designed for each of the experimental groups. The dependent variables included subjects’ attitude toward the ads, intention to volunteer, and cognitive responses.
Participants and Procedures

The accessible population for this study was students enrolled in the lecture classes in the Sport, Fitness, and Health program (SFHP) at The Ohio State University. The main purpose of the SFHP is to enhance the health and quality of life of students through the promotion of an active lifestyle. The rationale for selecting the sample was that a relatively homogeneous sample was desirable in research that examines the ELM, because effect testing is enhanced when study subjects are more similar than dissimilar (Calder, Phillips, & Tybout, 1981). The participants were quite homogeneous because most of them were undergraduate students who were enrolled in the School of Physical Activity and Educational Services at the same university.

Before collecting the data, permission to conduct this investigation was secured from the Human Subjects Review Committee at The Ohio State University. Then, the researcher contacted the Coordinator of the SFHP program and the SFHP Oversight Committee in order to obtain research approval for using the students enrolled in the SFHP as sample. After the approval from the Coordinator and the Committee, the researcher contacted each instructor of the program to obtain permission to take a survey to their students.

A total of 102 male and 119 female students enrolled in the lecture classes participated in the study \( n = 221 \). Subjects were assigned randomly to the cells of a 2 (argument quality: strong or weak) \( \times \) 2 (peripheral cue: celebrity or non-celebrity status) between-subjects factorial design. Subjects participated in groups of 50 to 56. Then, the participants in each cell were divided into the two groups (high or low empathy), based on scores from the Multidimensional Empathy Scale (Davis, 1983).
Instrumentation

Independent Variables

A questionnaire booklet was created and modified for application to eight different groups: (1) high empathy/strong argument/celebrity condition, (2) high empathy/strong argument/non-celebrity condition, (3) high empathy/weak argument/celebrity condition, (4) high empathy/weak argument/non-celebrity condition, (5) low empathy/strong argument/celebrity condition, (6) low empathy/strong argument/non-celebrity condition, (7) low empathy/weak argument/celebrity condition, and (8) low empathy/weak argument/non-celebrity condition.

The booklets included the independent measures as well as the dependent measures. The independent variables used in the study contained empathic tendency, involvement, argument manipulations (strong vs. weak argument), and peripheral cue manipulations (celebrity vs. noncelebrity). Davis’s (1983) Multidimensional Empathy Scale (1983), which is called Interpersonal Reactivity Index, was used to measure participants’ empathic tendency. The dependent variables included volunteer intentions, attitudes, and cognitive responses.

Empathic Tendency

After subjects were assigned randomly to the cells of a 2 (argument quality: strong or weak) X 2 (peripheral cue: celebrity or non-celebrity status) between-subjects factorial design, the participants in each cell were asked to complete the 28-items Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1983), which has been widely used in most studies on empathy.
As indicated in Chapter II, the IRI consists of four subscales (Refer to Appendix E): the Perspective Taking (PT), the Empathic Concern (EC), the Personal Distress (PD), and the Fantasy (FS) scale. The validity of the subscales was confirmed by several studies (Davis, 1980, 1983). Davis (1980) reported on its psychometric properties when developing the questionnaire. The factor structure of the 28-items questionnaire appeared quite stable over repeated administration to different samples. In addition, the internal and test-retest reliabilities of the subscales also were satisfactory. Internal reliabilities for the four scales range from .71 to .77, and test–retest reliabilities from .62 to .71 (Davis, 1980). Davis (1983) also demonstrated the discriminant validity of the IRI subscales by comparing the relations between each of the subscales and measures of social competence, self-esteem, emotionality, and sensitivity to others.

Among the four subscales, the Perspective Taking scale and the Empathic Concern scale were considered in the study, since these scales possess a good degree of convergent and discriminant validity (Giancola, 2003). Perspective taking was consistently related with better social functioning and higher self-esteem. On the contrary, empathic concern was less consistently associated with social function, and was more strongly linked to an emotional sensitivity to other’s thoughts and feelings, and a selfless concern for the welfare of others (Davis, 1980). In addition, Davis (1980) found that the Empathic Concern and the Perspective-Taking subscales had internal consistency coefficients of .71 and .73, respectively. Reliability coefficients for this study were .74 and .72, respectively.

All subjects in the current study responded to the Multidimensional Empathy items on a 5-point scale (ranging from extremely uncharacteristic of me [1] to extremely
characteristic of me [5]). One hundred thirty two subjects whose empathy scores were placed in the bottom 30% and top 30% of the distribution were categorized into the two groups: a group with high empathy level and a group with low empathic level. The reason for using these quotes (the bottom 30% and top 30% of the distribution) is that the participants whose empathy scores are in the middle range in the distribution (40% close to the mean) may not be representative for either high or low empathic individuals. For example, the study conducted by Haugtvedt et al. (1992) which examined the moderating role of need for cognition (an individual difference variable) in the ELM, used the same quotes, when measuring need for cognition.

Involvement

As noted in the literature review, involvement has a significant effect on a consumer’ attitude toward ads, by affecting motivation to process the information in the ads (Petty et al., 1983). Thus, it was necessary to control the effect of involvement. Zaichkowsky's (1985) 20-items Personal Involvement Inventory was used to measure a person's perceived relevance of Volunteering for Special Olympics. Subjects responded 20 items regarding the public service advertisements, and rated the 20 items using a 7-point semantic differential scale. Zaichkowsky's (1985) Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) is one of the most popular scales for measuring involvement. In developing the involvement scale, Zaichkowsky examined test-retest reliabilities of the 20 items over four new products categories. The 20 item involvement score test-retest correlations for each product were as follows: Calculators, $r = .88$; mouthwash, $r = .89$; breakfast cereals, $r = .88$; and red wine, $r = .93$. These product categories were also examined for internal consistency. The Cronbach alpha ranged from .95 to .97 over the four products.
Argument Quality Manipulations

The booklets contained two different versions of arguments (either strong or weak). The strong argument message was a report that contains five strong and valid arguments in favor of volunteering for Special Olympics, while the weak argument message was a report that includes five weak and specious arguments in favor of volunteering for Special Olympics. Participants in the high empathic tendency or in the low empathic tendency were exposed to one of the two conditions.

Strong arguments are those that elicit predominately favorable cognitive responses and lead to more positive attitudes. On the country, weak arguments produce mainly unfavorable thoughts and result in less positive attitudes (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b). The methodology varied argument quality to study how variables influence the degree of message processing (Bohner & Wanke, 2002).

The strong and weak arguments utilized in this study were based on Petty and Cacioppo’s definitions and on the published examples of strong and weak arguments used in previous studies on ELM (Boher, Erb, & Crow, 1995; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b). In developing strong and weak arguments that might fit into the context of volunteering for Special Olympics, the researcher reviewed the literature to find valid and persuasive factors pertinent to empathy that may motivate people to want to volunteer for Special Olympics and made those factors the strong arguments. Then the researcher attempted to find very frivolous reasons that would not be perceived as motivating factors and made them the weak arguments.

Three professors from marketing and sport marketing areas who were experts on the ELM provided valuable advice on how to develop those arguments and reviewed
those arguments to examine whether those arguments fit into Petty and Cacioppo’s definitions. In addition, four experts in sport management (e.g., Ph.D. candidates) also offered suggestions in developing those arguments. See Appendix A for a copy of the strong arguments and Appendix B for a copy of the weak arguments.

Peripheral Cue Manipulations

In the “famous celebrity” condition, the headline accompanying the advertisement read “A Famous Movie Actor Supports Volunteering for Special Olympics.” In addition, the ad featured a picture of Irish film Actor Pierce Brosnan, who was an official supporter for the 2003 Special Olympics. In the “nonfamous endorser” conditions, the headline read, “James from California supports volunteering for Special Olympics,” and the ad featured a picture of an average looking person who was unfamiliar to the subjects. The average citizen in the ad was characterized as coming from California to minimize perceptions of similarity to the subjects. California is far from Ohio where most participants of this current study come from, and thus, the subjects had low levels of relevance and would not be familiar with the man in the picture. Recognition for the endorser was assessed in the pilot test as well. See Appendix C for the ad that contained the famous endorser and Appendix D for the ad that contained the non-endorser.

Dependent Measures

Attitude Measures

Participants were asked to indicate their overall impression of the ads. In order to measure attitudes, previous ELM studies (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a; White & Harkins, 1994) have used multi-item semantic differential scales with bipolar adjectives from the evaluative dimension as anchors (such as good/bad), as well as single-item rating scales.
(such as strongly agree = “9” or strongly disagree = “1”) in which subjects responded to evaluative statements regarding an issue. In cases where both type of scales have been used (e.g., White & Harkins, 1994), the responses to each were summed and standardized into one attitude score, to obtain a measure of attitude toward the issue or stimulus (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a). This study used two measures to obtain one attitude score.

In each experiment condition, attitudes about volunteering for Special Olympics was obtained in two measures by having the participants respond to: (a) a 9-point scale ranging from strongly agree (9) to strongly disagree (1), and (b) to several 9-point semantic differential scales (good-bad, beneficial-harmful, wise-foolish, favorable-unfavorable).

The Cognitive Responses

After being exposed to the persuasive communications, a measure of the amount of cognitive activity was assessed immediately. The focus of this cognitive response approach is on active effortful processing (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Petty, Ostrom, and Brock (1981) noted that attitude change in persuasion is affected by cognitive responses. In order to provide a better understanding of the cognitive approach, the researcher describes the basic assumptions of the approach in the following section (Bohner & Wanke, 2002, p.131):

1. Individuals who are exposed to a persuasive message actively relate the content of this message to their issue-relevant knowledge and pre-existing attitude toward the message topic, thereby generating new thoughts or cognitive responses.

2. Attitude change is mediated by these cognitive responses.
3. The extent and direction of attitude change are a function of the cognitive responses’ valence in relation to the message’s content and position. In this sense, cognitive responses can be (a) favorable, (b) unfavorable or (c) neutral.

4. The greater the proportion of favorable responses and the smaller the proportion of unfavorable responses evoked by a message, the greater the attitude change in the direction advocated by the message should be.

In order to measure cognitive responses in persuasion, the thought-listing technique (Brock, 1967; Cacioppo, Harkins, & Petty, 1981; Greenwald, 1968) was generated. Research subjects were instructed to list any thoughts that have come to mind when they read or hear a persuasive message. Then, these thoughts were content-analyzed and categorized depending on their favorability (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a).

In the present research study, the participants were requested to list all their thoughts they have about the topic of volunteering for Special Olympics as they examine the messages. They were informed that their thoughts needed to be related to the messages, or anything else going through their mind which pertains to the topic of volunteering for Special Olympics.

Once cognitive responses were obtained, trained three judges (Ph.D candidates in the Sport Management area) categorized each thought according to valence (positive, neutral, or negative). Frequency counts was used for each of the valence, as suggested by Cacioppo et al. (1981) who claimed that frequency counts of the items with each category of cognitive responses provide a satisfactory measure of the relative profile of the different cognitive responses categories. The inter-rater reliability was approximately
90% (201/221); two out of three judges agreed on 90% of cognitive responses. In cases where all three raters came up with different numbers of frequency counts, disagreements were resolved by discussion.

**Volunteer Intention**

Following the attitude measures, subjects were instructed to indicate their intentions to volunteer for Special Olympics. Volunteer intentions were measured via eight 9-point scales. There were three dimensions that assessed the intention: (1) short-term intention to volunteer, (2) long-term intention to volunteer, and (3) intention to help with mental disabilities. The first two dimensions were modified from the volunteer motivation scale (Clary et al., 1998). The responses to each was summed and standardized into one intention score.

**Demographic items**

The third part of the booklet incorporated four demographic items (e.g., gender, age, income, and educational background). As indicated in Chapter 1, gender is an important variable that accounts for individual differences in empathy (Batson, 1991; Carlo et al., 1991; Staub, 1984). Most studies on empathy indicated that female scored higher on empathy than men (Hoffman, 1977; Lennon & Eisenberg, 1987). In addition, research studies in advertisement have suggested that there is a gender difference in processing advertisements in relation to the argument quality (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b). The other demographics variables, such as age, income, and education background, will be also examined, since these variables have been shown to predict an individual’s intention to volunteer (Guy & Patton, 1989).
Data Analysis

The data analysis involves the use of various descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to address test the hypotheses. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages) was employed to characterize each of the variables and provide a demographic profile of the respondents.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA), and independent samples t-tests were used for various manipulation checks. An independent samples t-test was employed to examine the differences between the two groups in the total number of positive thoughts (Hypothesis 1). A two-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), using involvement as a covariate, was used to test the interaction and main effects of the quality of the arguments in the PSAs (Hypothesis 2). The interaction and main effects of the celebrity status of the endorsers (Hypotheses 3) was examined by using a two-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), using involvement as a covariate. In addition, a two-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to measure the valence of the thoughts (cognitive responses). In order to measure the relationship between empathy and involvement, correlation analysis was employed. Specifically, the current study focused on an empathic tendency X argument quality interaction as well as an empathic tendency X endorsement interaction.

The correlation between attitudes and volunteer intentions for high empathy subjects and for low empathy subjects was analyzed to test Hypothesis 4, by using correlation analysis. In addition, independent samples t-test was used to examine gender differences in empathy (Hypothesis 5) and the difference in volunteer intention between high and low empathy (Hypothesis 6).
The Pilot Study

A pilot test was conducted to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire. The pilot study was also served as a manipulation check for the advertisements. After collection and analysis of the data of the pilot study with feedback from a panel of experts, the questionnaire was revised and finalized for the main study. Prior to the pilot study, permission to conduct the study was secured from the Human Subjects Review Committee of the Institution Review Board of The Ohio State University. This section includes the demographics of participants, data collection procedure, internal consistency, and manipulation checks.

The Demographics of Participants

A sample of 136 college students enrolled in the SFHP at The Ohio State University were selected for the pilot study. The demographics of participants were indicated in Table 3.1. Fifty-four percent of the participants were males, while 45.3% were females. The sample included nearly 3% African-Americans, 13% Asian & Pacific Americans, 4% Hispanic & Latino, 77% Whites. Approximately 99% of the subjects were between 19 and 35 years old. Almost 98% of the participants had 4-year college degree or were pursuing the degree. Because the sample was students, the income range of the majority of the participants (93%) was under $20,000.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity/Race</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic &amp; Latino</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>77.4</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 – 35</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>High school Diploma</td>
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<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
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<td>56.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Under $ 20,000</td>
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<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000 - 30,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$31,000 – 45,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$46,000 – 60,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Demographic characteristics of the pilot study participants

Data Collection Procedures

A 2 X 2 X 2 (argument quality X celebrity status X empathic tendency) experimental design was employed to examine the effects of each PSA and the moderating role of empathic tendency. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four treatment groups: (1) strong arguments, (2) weak arguments, (3) celebrity status, and (4) non-celebrity status. Then, the participants in each cell were divided into two groups (high or low empathy), based on their scores from the Multidimensional Empathy
Scale (Davis, 1983). Ninety one participants whose empathy scores were placed in the bottom 30% (33 points out of 56) and top 30% (41 points) of the distribution were categorized into the two groups: a group with high empathy level and a group with low empathic level.

Internal Consistency

Internal consistency estimates (Cronback’s Alpha) for each scale were computed to confirm the reliability of the scales used in this study. A summary of the reliability analysis results is presented in Table 3.2. The reliabilities estimates for all variables were above the cutoff of .70.

The internal consistency for attitude toward volunteering for Special Olympics was .84. Volunteer intention demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .90$). The Cronbach coefficients for perceived argument quality and empathic tendency were .86 and .74, respectively. Involvement demonstrated the greatest reliability (.99) among those variables. Therefore, the reliabilities of the measures quite were quite satisfactory (Nunnally, 1978).
Table 3.2: Summary of reliability analysis for dependent variables and covariate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale (Items)</th>
<th>Cronback’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attitude toward volunteering for Special Olympics Section I: Item 1-3 (a 9-point Likert type scale) Item 4-8 (a 9-point Likert type scale with bipolar adjectives)</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Overall Volunteer Intention Section II: Item 1-8 (a 9-point Likert type scale)</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perceived argument quality Section III: Item 1-3 (a 11-point Likert type scale with bipolar adjectives)</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Empathic Tendency Section IV: Item 1-14 (a 5-point Likert type scale)</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Involvement with Special Olympics Section V: Item 1-20 (a 7-point Likert type scale)</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Summary of reliability analysis for dependent variables and covariate

*Manipulation Checks*

Three questions were asked to measure the effectiveness of the argument quality manipulation. The first asked subjects to indicate “the reasons for volunteering for the Special Olympics as described in the public service advertisement” on an 11-point scale anchored by “unpersuasive” and “persuasive”; the second questions instructed respondents to rate the reasons on an 11-point scale anchored by “weak reasons” and strong reasons.” The third question asked them to rate the reasons on an 11-point anchored by “unbelievable” and “believable.”
The results showed that subjects who were exposed to the strong arguments indicated they were more persuasive \((M = 25.5, SD = 4.50)\) than did subjects exposed to the weak argument \((M = 22.3, SD = 5.14; t(135) = 3.810, p < .001)\).

In order to assess the effectiveness of the endorser manipulation, two questions were asked. First, participants were asked if they recognized the person depicted in the ad. When the famous movie actor was employed, 93\% (65/70) indicate “yes,” while when the average citizen was employed, 97\% (67/69) indicated “no.” In addition, participants were instructed to rate the extent to which they liked the people depicted in the advertisement, on an 11-point scale, with 1 indicating “liked very little,” and 11 indicating “liked very much.”

However, the endorser manipulation for this item was not successful. There was no significant difference between participants who were exposed to the ad that contained the famous movie actor \((M = 7.84, SD = 1.86)\) and those who were exposed to the ad that contained the average citizen \((M = 7.70, SD = 1.87; t(135) = 0.441, p = .660)\). It was considered that study participants had high levels of favorable attitudes toward the average citizen who supported the important social cause. There was a need to develop an item that could be more appropriate for measuring the status of celebrity for the main study. Based on the advice from an expert, the item was changed into “Please rate how famous is the person depicted in the second advertisement (the picture ad) on a 11-point scale, with 1 indicating ‘not famous et all,” and 11 indicating “very famous.”
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter provides the results of the data analysis procedures conducted for this study. The results of this study were presented in sixth sections. The first section contains the demographics of participants, and the second section includes research design and procedures. The manipulation checks for the validity of each PSA are discussed in the third section. The fourth section contains correlations among the variables of the study. The fifth section presents reliability analysis of each variable. Finally, the sixth section contains the results of hypotheses testing.

The Demographics of Participants

Data was collected from 221 college students enrolled in the lecture classes in the Sport, Fitness, and Health program (SFHP) at The Ohio State University. As indicated in Table 4.1, 46.2% of the participants were males, while 53.8% were females. The sample included approximately 6% African-Americans, 9% Asian & Pacific Americans, 10% Hispanic & Latino, 83% Whites, and 1% listed as other. Nearly 99% of the subjects were between 19 and 35 years old. Regarding education level, almost 95% of the participants had 4-year college degree or were pursuing the degree. The income range of the majority of the participants (62%) was $21,000 - 30,000.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>46.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>53.8</td>
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<td>Ethnicity/Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9.1</td>
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<td>Hispanic &amp; Latino</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Income Level: (Annual)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $ 20,000</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>32.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>$21,000 – 30,000</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>$31,000 – 45,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$46,000 – 60,000</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$61,000 – 75,000</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the subjects in this study

Research Design and Procedures

The effects of each PSA and the moderating role of empathic tendency were tested using a 2 X 2 X 2 (argument quality X celebrity status X empathic tendency) experimental design. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four treatment groups: (1) strong arguments, (2) weak arguments, (3) celebrity status, and (4) non-celebrity status. Each group consisted of between 50 and 56 participants. Then, the
participants in each cell were divided into two groups (high or low empathy), based on their scores from the Multidimensional Empathy Scale (Davis, 1983).

The formation of the eight different groups and the number of the participants in each cell were indicated in Table 4.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empathic Tendency</th>
<th>Argument Quality</th>
<th>Celebrity Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Strong arguments</td>
<td>Famous Endorser</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-famous Endorser</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak arguments</td>
<td>Famous Endorser</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-famous Endorser</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Strong arguments</td>
<td>Famous Endorser</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-famous Endorser</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak arguments</td>
<td>Famous Endorser</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-famous Endorser</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Eight cell groups and the number of the participants in each group

The booklets containing the different versions of the PSAs corresponding to the individual subjects' treatment group and the questionnaire were distributed during the study session. Participants were instructed that they would have 2 minutes to view the advertisements, after which the participants would be asked to complete a questionnaire asking their impressions, attitudes toward Special Olympics, and volunteer intentions. After the print-PSAs were shown, the participants completed the questionnaire.
Manipulation Checks

In order to check the argument persuasiveness manipulation, three questions were asked. The first asked subjects to rate “the reasons for volunteering for the Special Olympics as described in the public service advertisement” on an 11-point scale anchored by “unpersuasive” and “persuasive”; the second questions required respondents to rate the reasons on an 11-point scale anchored by “weak reasons” and strong reasons.” The third question asked them to rate the reasons on an 11-point anchored by “unbelievable” and “believable.” The results revealed that subjects who were exposed to the strong arguments indicated they were more persuasive ($M = 23.3, SD = 5.15$) than did subjects exposed to the weak argument ($M = 21.5, SD = 5.83; t(217) = 2.361, p = .019$).

To assess the effectiveness of the endorser manipulation, two questions were asked. First, study participants were asked if they recognized the person depicted in the ad. When the famous movie actor was employed, 90% (103/115) indicate “yes,” while when the average citizen was employed, 84.6% (99/117) indicated “no.” In addition, study participants were asked to rate how famous they thought the person depicted in the ad was on an 11-point scale, with 1 indicating “not famous at all”, and 11 indicating “very famous.” An analysis of this measure showed that the famous endorser ($M = 8.93, SD = 1.75$) was recognized more than the average citizen ($M = 2.92, SD = 1.97; t (217) = 23.819, p < .001$). Based on the results, manipulation checks for this study were successful. Copies of the four advertisements are included in Appendices A-D.

Correlations among the Variables of the Study

The correlations among the variables of the present study are presented in Table 4.3. Empathy was positively correlated with attitude ($r = .31, p < .001$) and intention ($r$}
In addition, empathy was positively associated with gender ($r = .32, p < .001$) and involvement ($r = .35, p < .001$). The correlation between empathy and argument quality was .18 ($p < .05$). More importantly, the highest correlation of .68 ($p < .001$) was between attitude and involvement, indicating the participants’ attitudes toward the ads were significantly influenced by their involvement with Special Olympics. Involvement was also significantly correlated with Intention ($r = .58, p < .001$). Attitude was also positively related with volunteer intention. The persuasiveness of arguments in the PSAs was positively correlated with attitude ($r = .50, p < .001$) and intention ($r = .34, p < .001$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Argument</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fame</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Persuasiveness</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Empathy</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Attitude</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Intention</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.60*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gender</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>8. Involvement</td>
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<td>-.06</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.68*</td>
<td>.58*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4.3: Correlations among variables in this study

**Reliability Estimates**

Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients confirmed the internal consistency of these items within their respective factors, with values between .79 and .99 (see Table 4.4). The Cronbach coefficient for attitude toward volunteering for Special Olympics was .84.
Volunteer intention demonstrated good reliability \( (\alpha = .90) \). The internal consistencies for perceived argument quality and empathic tendency were .83 and .79, respectively. Involvement demonstrated the greatest reliability (.99) among those variables. All of the variables were above acceptable levels of .70, as suggested by Nunnally (1978).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale (Items)</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attitude toward volunteering for Special Olympics&lt;br&gt;Section I: Items 1-3 (9-point Likert type scale)&lt;br&gt;Items 4-8 (9-point Likert type scale with bipolar adjectives)</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Overall volunteer intention&lt;br&gt;Section II: Items 1-8(9-point Likert type scale)</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perceived argument quality&lt;br&gt;Section III: Items 1-3 (11-point Likert type scale with bipolar adjectives)</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Empathic tendency&lt;br&gt;Section IV: Items 1-14 (5-point Likert type scale)</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Involvement with Special Olympics&lt;br&gt;Section V: Items 1-20 (7-point Likert type scale)</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Summary of reliability analysis for dependent variables and covariate

Hypothesis testing

*The Effect of Empathy on Positive Thoughts*

Hypothesis 1 predicted that persons with high empathetic tendency after being exposed to public service advertisements would generate more positive thoughts than
those with low empathetic tendency. Subjects high in empathy ($M = 2.4, SD = 1.53$) produced more positive thoughts than subjects low in empathy ($M=1.8, SD = 1.51$; $t(136) = -2.12, p = .036$). Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported.

The Effect of Argument Quality and Empathy on Attitudes

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the quality of arguments contained in the ads would have a greater influence on attitudes of individuals high on empathic tendency than attitudes of individuals low on empathic tendency.

A 2 X 2 (strong arguments vs. weak arguments x high empathy vs. low empathy) analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on the attitude measure was used to test hypothesis 2. Because involvement can have an effect on viewers’ information processing and their attitudes, involvement was used as a covariate. The ANCOVA revealed a main effect for involvement ($F (1, 141) = 130.86, p < .001$); however, no significant effects emerged on attitudes (see Tables 4.5 and 4.6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Empathy</th>
<th>High Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weak Arguments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strong Arguments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 24)</td>
<td>(n = 42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude</strong></td>
<td>7.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SD = 1.11)</td>
<td>(SD = 1.48)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Mean attitudes as a function of empathic tendency and argument quality
When involvement was not included in the model, a 2 x 2 (strong arguments vs. weak arguments x high empathy vs. low empathy) analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed a main effect of empathy ($F(1, 142) = 10.678, p = .001$), which is shown in Table 4.7.

### Table 4.6: Source table for 2 (strong vs. weak arguments) x 2 (high vs. low empathy) ANCOVA using involvement as a covariate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>90.154</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90.154</td>
<td>130.855</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>1.142</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.142</td>
<td>1.658</td>
<td>.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy *</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>97.143</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When involvement was not included in the model, a 2 x 2 (strong arguments vs. weak arguments x high empathy vs. low empathy) analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed a main effect of empathy ($F(1, 142) = 10.678, p = .001$), which is shown in Table 4.7.

### Table 4.7: Source Table for 2 (Strong vs. Weak Arguments) X 2 (High vs. Low Empathy) ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>14.084</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.084</td>
<td>10.678</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>.920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy *</td>
<td>1.471</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.471</td>
<td>1.115</td>
<td>.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>187.297</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>1.319</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The purpose of our study was to examine whether empathy can serve as a motivational factor that affects viewers’ information processes. Thus, it is important to
know whether subjects had the motivation to process persuasive messages, and whether they spent extensive cognitive efforts. The cognitive response approach can provide evidence for active effort processing (Bohner & Wanke, 2002).

A 2 X 2 (strong arguments vs. weak arguments x high empathy vs. low empathy) analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on the positive thoughts was performed to investigate how much subjects expend cognitive effort to process the information. An analysis of the number of positive thoughts elicited by subjects showed main effects for the argument quality, $F(1,133) = 4.14, p < .05$ and involvement, $F(1, 133) = 13.56, p < .001$ (refer to Tables 4.8 and 4.9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Empathy</th>
<th>High Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak Arguments</td>
<td>Strong Arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$(n = 21)$</td>
<td>$(n = 39)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of positive thoughts</td>
<td>1.33 $(SD = 1.31)$</td>
<td>2.08 $(SD = 1.56)$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8: Mean positive thoughts as a function of empathic tendency and argument quality
Table 4.9: Source table for 2 (strong vs. weak arguments) x 2 (high vs. low empathy) ANCOVA using involvement as a covariate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>28.286</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28.286</td>
<td>13.564</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>6.724</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.724</td>
<td>3.224</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>8.627</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.627</td>
<td>4.137</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy * Argument</td>
<td>3.093</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.093</td>
<td>1.483</td>
<td>.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>277.354</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2.085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simple main effects tests showed that high empathy subjects (HE subjects) did not produce a different number of favorable thoughts toward the weak versus strong versions of the ad ($t(76) = .927, p = .357$). However, for low empathy subjects (LE subjects), the marginally significant effect indicated that LE subjects generated more favorable thoughts to the strong ($M = 2.07, SD = 1.56$) verses the weak ads ($M = 1.33, SD = 1.32; t(58) = 1.85, p = .069$). This result suggested that LE subjects might experience a thoughtful consideration of issue-relevant arguments. No significant effects were presented on the number of unfavorable thoughts listed.

In addition to the effects of argument quality and empathy on positive thoughts, the effect of argument quality and empathy on negative thoughts was analyzed by using a 2 X 2 (strong vs. weak arguments x high vs. low empathy) ANCOVA. The results revealed a main effect of involvement ($F(1, 133) = 8.54, p = .004$). No other significant effects appeared (see Tables 4.10 and 4.11).
Table 4.10: Mean number of negative thoughts as a function of empathic tendency and argument quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>14.466</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.466</td>
<td>8.540</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.127</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.127</td>
<td>1.846</td>
<td>.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>1.482</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.482</td>
<td>.875</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy *</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>225.285</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1.694</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11: Source table for 2 (strong vs. weak arguments) x 2 (high vs. low empathy) ANCOVA on the number of negative thoughts

The Role of Famous Endorsers

Hypothesis 3 predicted that the celebrity status of the endorser would be likely to have a greater effect on the attitudes of HE subjects than the attitudes of LE subjects. A 2 X 2 (famous endorser vs. non-famous endorser x high empathy vs. low empathy) analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on the attitude measure revealed a main effect for involvement \(F(1, 141) = 135.8, p < .001\).

The results were presented in Tables 4.12 and 4.13. No significant effects were present for attitude; there were no difference in attitudes of subjects between a famous
endorser ($M = 7.28, SD = 1.14$) and non-famous endorser ($M = 7.25, SD = 1.10$; $t (219) = .235, p = .815$). Thus, hypothesis 3 was not supported.

However, it is important to note that the mean scores of both HE and LE subjects toward famous and non-famous endorsers were relatively high (7.2 out of a 9 point scale). In addition, as indicated in hypothesis 2, this result suggested that both HE and LE subjects had the motivation to process the information presented, and they all followed the central route, not the peripheral route.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Empathy</th>
<th>High Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Famous</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-famous</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endorser</strong></td>
<td><strong>Endorser</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($n = 30$)</td>
<td>($n = 36$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7.02$</td>
<td>$6.79$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($SD = 1.51$)</td>
<td>($SD = 1.22$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Famous</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-famous</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endorser</strong></td>
<td><strong>Endorser</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($n = 38$)</td>
<td>($n = 42$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7.55$</td>
<td>$1.07$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($SD = 0.93$)</td>
<td>($SD = 0.97$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12: Mean attitude as a function of empathic tendency and celebrity status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>$SS$</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>$MS$</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>$92.192$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$92.192$</td>
<td>$135.833$</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>$.915$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$.915$</td>
<td>$1.349$</td>
<td>.248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrity</td>
<td>$.002$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$.002$</td>
<td>$.003$</td>
<td>.959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy *</td>
<td>$1.504$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1.504$</td>
<td>$2.215$</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>$95.699$</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>$.679$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13: Source table for 2 (famous vs. non-famous endorser) x 2 (high vs. low empathy) ANCOVA on attitude
Simple main effect tests revealed that HE subjects had more positive attitudes toward the non-famous endorser \( (M = 7.53, SD = 0.97) \) than LE subjects \( (M = 6.79, SD = 1.22; t (76) = -3.002, p = .004) \). Even in the low elaboration situation (LE subjects in the weak arguments), celebrity status did not have an influence on the attitudes of LE subjects.

There were no differences in LE subjects’ attitudes between the famous endorser \( (M = 7.03, SD = 1.51) \) and the non-famous endorser \( (M = 6.79, SD = 1.22; t (64) = 0.709, p = .481) \).

**The Consequences of Elaboration**

Hypothesis 4 predicted that HE subjects would have a stronger correlation between attitudes and volunteer intentions than LE subjects. On the contrary, the result showed that LE subjects had a stronger correlation (.689) than HL subjects (.545). Both correlations were significantly different \( (p < 0.001) \). This result suggests that LE individuals took the central route to persuasion to a greater extent than HL individuals. Thus, hypothesis 4 was not supported.

However, it should be noted that the correlation for HE subjects (.545) was almost the same as to the correlation for high involvement subjects (.590) in the Petty and Cacioppo’s study (1983), suggesting that HE subjects had considerable cognitive activity to evaluate the message and might follow the central route.

**The Relationship Between Empathic Tendency and Volunteer Intention**

Hypothesis 5 predicted that HE individuals would have stronger volunteer intentions than LE individuals. An independent samples \( t \)-test showed that, as predicted, HL subjects had stronger intentions to volunteer for the Special Olympics \( (M = 39.3, SD \)
= 12.50) than LE subjects ($M = 33.1$, $SD = 13.96$; $t(144) = -2.812$, $p = .006$). Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

There were no differences in volunteer intentions toward the strong versus the weak argument. The researcher also attempted to examine the separate effect of empathic concern (EC) and perspective taking (PT). Consistent with the literature on empathy, the correlation between EC and behavioral intention (.293) was stronger than the correlation between PT and behavioral intention (.147).

**Gender Differences in Empathic Tendency**

Hypothesis 6 predicted that females would have greater empathic tendency than males. As predicted, an independent samples $t$-test showed that female subjects ($M = 39.8$, $SD = 6.22$) had significantly higher levels of empathetic tendency that male subjects ($M = 35.2$, $SD = 7.39$; $t (219) = -5.00$, $p < .001$). In addition, female participants ($M = 114.79$, $SD = 15.5$) were found to have significantly higher levels of involvement than male participants ($M= 104.77$, $SD = 15.5$; $t (218) = -4.237$, $p < .001$).

Consistent with female participants’ higher level of involvement, they also produced more positive thoughts ($M= 2.36$, $SD = 1.68$) toward the persuasive messages than male participants ($M = 1.83$, $SD = 1.31$; $t (136) = -2.019$, $p < .05$).

**The Relationship Between Empathy and Involvement**

As noted in the literature, correlation analysis showed the positive relationship between empathy and involvement ($r = .345$, $p < .001$). In addition, an independent samples $t$-test showed that there was a significant difference in the levels of involvement between HL subjects ($M = 114.9$, $SD = 15.07$) and LE subjects ($M = 103.9$, $SD = 22.58$;
\( t(68) = -3.45, p = .003 \). However, it should be noted that even LE subjects exhibited high levels of involvement with Special Olympics (103.9 out of 140).

*The Influences of Involvement and Perceived Argument Quality on Attitudes*

A stepwise-multiple regression was employed to examine the contribution of each variable to the dependent variable (attitude). The model was significant, and involvement \((\beta = .618)\) was the most significant predictor which explained 60.5% of the variance. Additional 6.5% of the variance was explained when perceived argument quality \((\beta = .300)\) was included as a predictor (see Table 4.14).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>( R )</th>
<th>( R^2 )</th>
<th>( \Delta R^2 )</th>
<th>( Adj R^2 )</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( t )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>.778</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>7.200***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Perceived argument quality</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>.670</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>3.482**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable = Attitude. ** \( p < .01 \) *** \( p < .001 \)

Table 4.14: Stepwise regression analysis with involvement & perceived argument quality as the independent variables and attitude as the dependent variable (LE subjects, \( n = 65 \))

For the HL subjects, involvement \((\beta = .529, \Delta R^2 = .349)\) and perceived argument quality \((\beta = .276, \Delta R^2 = .072)\) accounted for 42% of the variance (see Table 4.15).

However, it should be noted that the two variables accounted for a greater proportion of attitudes of LE subjects than those of HL subjects.
Separate Effects of Empathy and Involvement

In order to examine the separate effects of involvement and empathy, the researcher categorized the two high and low empathy groups into the four subgroups: (1) low empathy (LE) - low involvement (LI), (2) high empathy (HE) – low involvement (LI), (3) low empathy (LE) - high involvement (HI), and (4) high empathy (HE) – high involvement (HI) subjects. As in the case where the participants were divided into the two groups based on the scores from the Empathy Scale (the bottom 30% and top 30% of the distribution), the sample was split into the 30th and 70th percentiles of the distributions of the Personal Involvement Inventory scale (Zaichkowsky, 1985).

In order to control the effect of involvement, the two groups, LE-LI and HE-LI subjects, were compared in terms of the number of positive thoughts. A 2 X 2 (strong arguments vs. weak arguments X LE-LI vs. HE- LI) ANOVA on the positive thoughts did not show significant main effects (see Table 4.16). However, it is important to note that the pattern was quite consistent with the results that argument quality had an influence on the attitudes of HE subjects as well as on the LE subjects. LE-LI subjects produced more favorable thoughts to the strong ($M = 1.42, SD = 1.08$) and to the weak arguments for the ads ($M = 0.89, SD = 1.27$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>$\text{Adj } R^2$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>.591</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td>5.951***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Perceived argument quality</td>
<td>.649</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.406</td>
<td>.276</td>
<td>3.101**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable = Attitude. ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 4.15: Stepwise regression analysis with involvement & perceived arguments quality as the independent variables and attitude as the dependent variable (HE subjects, $n = 80$)
Regarding the number of unfavorable thoughts, HE-LI subjects generated more negative thoughts toward the weak \( (M = 1.9, SD = 1.79) \) versus strong versions of the ad \( (M = 1.0, SD = 1.41) \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Empathy-Low Involvement</th>
<th>High Empathy-Low Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak Arguments</td>
<td>Strong Arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable Thoughts</td>
<td>.89 ((SD=1.27))</td>
<td>1.42 ((SD=1.08))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable Thoughts</td>
<td>1.33 ((SD=1.0))</td>
<td>1.76 ((SD=1.42))</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.16: Mean number of thoughts as a function of empathic tendency and argument quality when separating the effect of involvement

Since there was a positive relationship between empathy and involvement, the researcher attempted to examine the differences in the number of positive thoughts between LE-LI and HE-HI subjects.

A 2 X 2 (strong arguments vs. weak arguments X LE-LI vs. HE-HI) ANOVA on the positive thoughts revealed a main effect of LE-LI and HE-HI \( (F (1, 46) = 17.24, p < .001) \). No other significant effects appeared (see Tables 4.17 and 4.18).
### Table 4.17: Mean number of thoughts as a function of combined empathy and involvement and argument quality when separating the effect of involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Empathy-Low Involvement</th>
<th>High Empathy-High Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak Arguments (n = 9)</td>
<td>Strong Arguments (n = 12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Thoughts</td>
<td>0.89 (SD = 1.27)</td>
<td>1.42 (SD = 1.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.08 (SD = 1.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.94 (SD = 1.93)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.18: Source table for 2 (low empathy-low involvement vs. high empathy-high involvement) x 2 (strong vs. weak arguments) ANOVA on number of positive thought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE LI - HE HI</td>
<td>41.089</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41.089</td>
<td>17.235</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
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CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if an empathic tendency served as a moderating factor that affected viewers’ motivation to process persuasive messages contained in the ads. The results indicated that both HE and LE subjects had the motivation to process the persuasive messages presented, suggesting both groups followed the central route; however, the primary causes that motivated them to evaluate the information were different. As predicted, HE subjects had the motivation to evaluate the messages contained in the public service ads, because of their empathic tendency. LE subjects were motivated to process the arguments (the strong arguments), because of the persuasive messages (the strong arguments) contained in the ad that focused on the empathy-appeal. More importantly, involvement was found to have a significant influence on the attitudes of both HE and LE subjects. Celebrity status was not served as a peripheral cue for this study.

Extensive Cognitive Activities of Low Empathy Individuals

Contrary to the prediction, LE individuals had issue-relevant elaboration on the message and followed the central route to persuasion. As the results of the cognitive responses indicated, the effect of argument quality on positive thoughts was
marginally significant ($p = .069$). The fact that LE individuals devoted a considerable amount of cognitive activities and argument quality had a greater effect on the attitudes of low than high empathy subjects was confirmed by the following several reasons.

First, in order to indicate the routes to persuasion, Petty and Cacioppo (1986b) examined whether high elaboration subjects displayed a stronger correlation between post message attitudes and perceived message quality than low elaboration subjects. Verplanken (1991), who examined the combined effect of involvement and need for cognition on message processing, also confirmed the stronger correlation between the two variables for high elaboration subjects than for low elaboration subjects. Consistent with the results, the current study showed a stronger correlation for LE subjects than for HE subjects. The correlations between attitudes and perceived message quality in LE – and HE subjects were .627 and .394, respectively ($p < .001$). These figures support the view that LE subjects, rather than HE subjects, had greater elaboration on the information presented and followed the central route to persuasion. Thus, LE individuals had the motivation to evaluate message arguments thoughtfully followed the central route to persuasion than HE subjects. However, this result did not mean that HE subjects did not have the motivation to process messages arguments and follow the peripheral route to persuasion. It should be noted that the correlation in HE subjects in this study (.394) and in high elaboration subjects in Verplanken’s study (.450) was almost same, though it is difficult to compare the two studies.

Second, another indication of the route to persuasion is to investigate the consequences of elaboration (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b). The ELM contends that attitudes formed via the central route will be more predictive of behavior than attitudes
via the peripheral route. As a way to indicate the route to persuasion, Petty and Cacioppo (1983) measured the correlation between attitudes and behavioral intentions for high and low involvement subjects. The correlation for this current study for LE subjects was .689 and .545 for HE subjects. This result suggested that LE individuals took the central route to persuasion to a greater extent than HL individuals. However, it should be noted that the correlation for HE subjects (.545) was similar to the correlation for high involvement subjects (.590) in the Petty and Cacioppo’s study (1983), suggesting that HE subjects had considerable cognitive activity to evaluate the message and might follow the central route. However, the level of information process that HE individuals experienced was lower than that of the information process that LE individuals experienced.

Third, involvement had significant effects on the argument processing of LE subjects. The results of this current study indicated that they exhibited high levels of their involvement with volunteering for Special Olympics (103.9 out of 140 points), though they had relatively lower levels of involvement than those of HL subjects. Furthermore, the result of the stepwise-multiple regression showed that involvement was the most significant predictor that explained the greatest proportion of the attitudes of LE subjects (see Table 4.14). In addition, involvement had a greater influence on the attitudes of LE subjects than the attitudes of HE subjects (see Tables 4.14 and 4.15). Regarding the role of involvement in the context of PSAs, Bator and Cialdini (2000) noted, "Central processing usually occur when the audience for a persuasive message is motivated and able to take the time to consider the content. Central processing is more likely when the issue at hand is personally relevant to the audience" (p.531).
Fourth and finally, perceived argument quality (the extent to which participants were persuaded by the argument messages), in addition to involvement, affected the message processing of LE participants. The multiple regression analysis revealed that perceived argument quality was the second important variable that predicted the attitudes of LE subjects (see Table 4.15), indicating that LE subjects were significantly persuaded by the messages contained in the PSAs. Consistent with this result, the cognitive responses that LE subjects exhibited when exposed to the PSAs showed how they were persuaded by the messages in greater detail.

The Cognitive Responses of LE Individuals and Their Empathic Responses

LE individuals’ considerable amount of cognitive effort may be attributed to empathic emotional responses to the public service ads. The results of the cognitive responses showed their positive or negative emotional feeling related to empathy. Given the positive relationship between empathy and involvement, (Chebat et al., 2003; Edwards & Ferle, 2003; Kamp & MacInnis, 1995), their feeling of empathy might be cause by their high level of involvement (see Table 5.1).

When the strong arguments were developed, the researcher, based on the literature on empathy and advertisement, attempted to design the arguments to evoke the response of empathy. Although the current study did not test for the mediation of empathic emotional responses, the cognitive responses of this study showed the emotional feeling that the participants experienced. The literature on empathy suggests that negative emotions served as mediators of attitude toward helping in advertisement appeals (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Rodgers & Mewborn, 1976; Thompson, Cowan, & Rosenhan, 1980). Bendapudi et al. (1996) and Davis et al. (1987) addressed the
effectiveness of a PSA that asked donors to imagine how the beneficiary must be feeling. A feeling of warmth (e.g., vicarious experience of a love, family or friendship) created by a commercial that is associated with empathetic emotional response was found to be significantly associated with favorable attitudes toward the ad (Aaker et al., 1986; Coke, Batson, & McDavis, 1978). Based on the literature, the strong arguments contained those important factors related to empathic response, such as the suffering of people with mental disabilities, the benefits of Special Olympics athletes, and the positive experiences of Special Olympics volunteers.

The cognitive responses from LE subjects who were exposed to the strong arguments provide insights into their empathic responses to the PSAs and into how their empathic responses led to issue-relevant elaborations. A large number of LE subjects indicated their positive feeling for volunteering for Special Olympics. Some showed a negative feeling toward the suffering of persons with mental retardation, whereas some displayed vicarious feeling toward the benefits athletes with mental disabilities can obtain by participating in Special Olympics.

The following are the comments containing positive feelings for helping athletes with disabilities that LE subjects might have if they were to volunteer for Special Olympics indicated:

- Volunteers make a world of difference in helping with the Special Olympics.
- I think that it is a wonderful thing.
- It is wonderful that it has such a positive impact for them.
- An amazement of how a seemingly small thing- playing a sport- can have such a strong impact on someone.
- I think that volunteering for the Special Olympics would be a great way for anyone to give back to their community.
• I was impressed with the impact the Special Olympics has on mentally handicapped individuals in their daily life.

LE subjects, exposed to the strong arguments, had emotional responses that were congruent with the emotional state or situation of people with mental disabilities (e.g., Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). Some significant comments are as follows:

• It made me sad to realize how many individuals with mental disabilities are out there.
• I understand why they are a poor group considering they probably can only get jobs that are around minimum wage.
• I was surprised many disabled people have trouble finding housing or their own houses.
• I was shocked to realize that many people would not want to be a Special Olympics volunteer because of the stigmas assigned to the various disabilities.
• Sadness for all those people suffering from mental illness
• The following the intro, the information about people with mental disabilities really started to make me feel sympathetic for them.
• I felt quite that I hadn’t done more to help the problem of how mentally retarded are treated in society.

In addition to the negative emotional responses to the suffering of people with mental disabilities, some LE subjects attempted to identify how Special Olympics athletes might be feeling by participating in the Special Olympics (Enright & Lapsley, 1980; Underwood & Moore, 1982). The following are the comments that LE individuals made:

• Good that people volunteer for Special Olympics to make people with mental retardation feel good about themselves.
• Like the idea that the athletes involved improved well being from being involved
• I also think that the Special Olympics are a great way for the disabled to learn and have a good time away from everyday life.
• I hope that mental retardation people have prosperous lives.
• Special Olympics is a great organization that gets all of the mentally ill a great opportunity to interact with many others.
• Volunteering for the Special Olympics benefits the athletes, as well as the volunteers.
• The special Olympics allows people with mental disabilities to participate in activities that they normally would not be able to do.

Some subjects exhibited the changes in their emotional state as they went through the persuasive message. The following comments also showed the extensive cognitive activities that LE subjects experienced to process persuasive messages:

• At first when I thought about volunteering, I was afraid that I wouldn’t know how to act around people with mental disabilities, I was afraid of volunteering also. Also, I believe that I wouldn’t have time or desire to volunteer. However, reading this article make me think and feel otherwise. But glad for my own well being too.
• At first, my thoughts were unfavorable because of the frustration and difficulties which undoubtedly occur when assisting mentally handicapped people. However, as I continued to read, my thoughts turned favorable because I realized these frustrations are what make the end results- the success stories and victories- all the more fulfilling and rewarding.

Based on the cognitive responses, the empathic responses had an influence on LE individuals’ motivation to process the information. Thus, it is imperative to note that empathic responses affect the amount of attitude change by serving as persuasive arguments (3rd postulate of the ELM, Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b). Consistent with this view, Chebat et al. (2003) found that under low self-relevant conditions, empathy enhanced information processing. In addition, Isen, Shalker, Clark, & Karp (1978) and John and Tversky (1983) indicated that even mild affective states can significantly influence cognitive processing and social behavior.
More importantly, the effect of empathic responses on information processing supported the view that the cognitive aspects of empathy can be associated with the motivation to process messages which can determine the route to attitude change.

Argument Processing of High Empathy Individuals

Even though HE subjects were not affected by the quality of arguments as much as LE subjects, HE individuals had the motivation to evaluate the persuasive messages enough to follow the central route to persuasion for the several reasons.

First, as the result of hypothesis 1 indicated, HE individuals generated more positive thoughts ($M = 2.4$, $SD = 1.53$) than LE individuals ($M = 1.8$, $SD = 1.51$; $t(136) = -2.12$, $p = .036$), regardless of argument quality. Even though it was not statistically significant, HE subjects produced more favorable thoughts toward the strong arguments ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.22$) than LE subjects ($M = 2.08$, $SD = 1.56$). In addition, HE individuals generated more unfavorable thoughts toward the weak arguments ($M = 1.41$, $SD = 1.50$) than LE individuals ($M = 1.14$, $SD = 0.96$). Considering LE subjects devoted considerable cognitive activities (the central route) to process the information, the fact that HE subjects generated more thoughts than LE subjects suggested that HE subjects exerted a considerable amount of cognitive efforts required to evaluate the issue-relevant arguments presented.

Second, the attitudes of HE subjects toward the public service messages ($M = 7.54$, $SD = 0.94$) was greater than those of LE subjects ($M = 6.90$, $SD = 1.35$; $t(144) = -3.38$, $p = .001$). In particular, HE subjects ($M = 7.69$, $SD = 0.74$) held more positive attitudes toward the strong arguments than LE subjects ($M = 6.83$, $SD = 1.48$; $t(68) = -2.85$, $p = .006$).
Third, as indicated in the previous section, the correlation between attitudes and perceived message quality for HE subjects (.394) was parallel to that of high elaboration subjects (.450) in other studies that examined the ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986b; Verplanken, 1991). Finally, the correlation between attitudes and behavioral intentions for HE subjects (.545) was almost as strong as the correlation for high involvement subjects (.590) in other ELM research (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983). These four reasons were supported by the cognitive responses that HE subjects experienced when they were evaluating the PSAs.

*The Cognitive Responses of HE Individuals and Their Information Processing*

The cognitive responses showed that HE subjects, rather than LE subjects, processed the message more extensively and more in depth toward the strong arguments. HE individuals, more than their counterparts, were likely to focus more on the benefits for the beneficiary (i.e., athletes with mental disabilities), and they tended to have a higher level of satisfaction than they might obtain by volunteering for the Special Olympics. Some important comments for HE individuals included:

- Volunteering is a very rewarding and thoughtful effort that not only affects people with mental disabilities, but also makes a huge impact on your life personally.
- By volunteering, you allow the opportunity and joy to be achieved by people with handicaps, which in the past has been overlooked due to social viewings.
- Volunteering would be a rewarding time commitment and would help support a very giving/special organization.
- It makes me feel that my effort as a volunteer would really make a difference.
- Volunteering for the Special Olympics could affect the lives of 1.4 million people with disabilities.
- I believe that it is such a positive influence that you could impact on some peoples’ lives.
• I wish to find more organizations like Special Olympics to eliminate the unfortunate isolation and companionship many individuals with disabilities have.
• It seems like it would be a great way to help people who do not get the ordinary things that most people take for granted everyday.

With respect to HE subjects’ unfavorable thoughts toward the weak arguments, the cognitive response approach provided insights into the extensive cognitive process that they experienced. In addition, the cognitive responses revealed a tendency for HE subjects to hold negative perceptions toward egoistic motivation to gain reward as evident in the weak arguments. It should be noted that some LE subjects also indicated their negative perceptions toward egotistic volunteer motivation. Following are the comments from HE subjects regarding the weak arguments.

• The first three paragraphs described the mission of the event was objective, while the next of the paragraphs seemed to over-emphasize the benefits that volunteers can get from their opportunity.
• The benefits addressed here may interest some volunteers who enjoy, but they may not be responsible for taking care of the athletes with mental disabilities.
• It doesn’t even mention the fact that you will be doing a good and therefore could feel better about yourself.
• I felt like the article didn’t talk enough about the actual program and focused too much on what you get if you do volunteer.
• You should volunteer because you want to, not for a line on a resume.
• The reasons for serving as a volunteer are not convincing at all
• It says you should join to benefit your reputation, rather than helping others.

**Biased Elaboration for HE Individuals and the Role of Involvement**

Even though the results of the cognitive responses data indicated that empathetic tendency can have an influence on message processing, an argument quality x empathic
tendency interaction toward attitude did not occur for several reasons. First, there was biased elaboration for HE subjects. The ELM’s biased elaboration assumption (postulate 5) contends that variables (e.g., empathetic tendency) affecting motivation or ability to process message in a biased manner can facilitate either positive or negative elaborations. In line with this view, Bohner and Wanke (2002) noted, “Well-developed schemata and prior knowledge may enhance recipients’ ability to elaborate externally presented arguments that are consistent with their prior attitude” (p. 150). Consistent with the ELM’s biased elaboration postulate, Cacioppo, Petty, and Sidera (1982), in their study on the effect of proattitudinal messages on abortion, found that subjects produced a large number of favorable cognitive responses, and considered the message more persuasive, when the arguments fit their self-schema. In the current study, HE subjects held positive attitudes toward the strong arguments as well as toward the weak arguments because their high level of empathic tendency might cause them to view the weak arguments favorably and because they might want to help athletes with mental disabilities. Consistent with this view, the cognitive responses showed relatively numerous positive thoughts that HE subjects generated toward the weak arguments, though they produced more negative thoughts. It seems that as long as PSAs contain an important social cause, individuals high in empathy tend to consider the messages convincing, even if the message is less persuasive.

Second, argument manipulation had an influence not only on HE subjects’ attitudes, but also on those of LE subjects. As noted before, the cognitive responses data indicated that the thoughts of LE subjects were significantly affected by the persuasive
message; they expend much more cognitive effort. Thus, they were found to exhibit central route processing of persuasive messages.

Third, involvement had significant effects on attitudes of subjects (see Table 4.15). Most of the study participants had significantly high levels of involvement with the Special Olympics and people with mental retardation. One of the reasons for the high degree of subjects’ involvement with Special Olympics might be that the issue of mental health is a topic that people generally agree upon (O’Keefe & Reid, 1990). Dickinson (1996), based on a survey by the 1996 Atlanta Paralympics Organization, also noted that most American citizens addressed the importance of the issue of disability. Thus, given the fact that involvement is the most important motivational factor that can affect persuasive messages (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo, 1979; Petty et al., 1981), the extensive cognitive efforts that LE subjects experienced when exposed to the strong arguments, might be due to their personal relevance to the issue of mental disability.

Famous Endorser as a Peripheral Cue

Hypothesis 3 predicted that the celebrity status of the endorsers would have greater impact on the attitudes of LE subjects than on HE subjects. However, the result revealed that celebrity status did not serve as a peripheral cue. These results can be explained by the several reasons. First, the peripheral cue is effective when viewers have low levels of motivation to process messages; however, as suggested in previous sections, both HE and LE subjects had high levels of motivation to evaluate the persuasive messages, because of their high involvement with the issue of mental disability. Regarding this view, Bator and Cialdini (2000) noted, "The use of peripheral persuasion
cues is rarely successful in producing change when the target audience has prior knowledge of or interest in the issue" (p.530).

Second, the fact that even in a low elaboration situation (LE subjects in the weak arguments condition), a famous endorser did not affect the attitudes of the subjects suggests that celebrity status may not fit into the context of PSAs. Consistent with this view, Moore (2005) found that PSAs using actors instead of an everyday people can reduce the effectiveness of the advertisement. In addition, Bator and Cialdini (2000) suggested that the peripheral cue can be dangerous for any type of PSA.

Third, this result can be also explained by the match-up hypothesis, which suggests that endorsers can be more effective when there is a fit between them and the product that they are supporting (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Kamins, 1990; Till & Busler, 2000). The Irish film actor Pierce Brosnan might not be perceived to be associated with the Special Olympics, even though he was an official supporter for the 2003 Special Olympics. Hence, based on the match-up theory, famous celebrities whose images are matched with the image of mental disabilities or of the Special Olympics (e.g., Eunice Kennedy Shriver) may have an influence on the attitudes of viewers.

It is interesting to note that the average citizen had more positive effects on the attitudes of HE subjects than that of LE subjects. Consistent with this result, the pilot study also showed the greater impact of the average citizen on the attitudes of HE individuals. Based on the match-up hypothesis, average persons who have volunteer experiences for the Special Olympics, rather than famous celebrities, may be a better fit for HE individuals.
Finally, the limited effects of the famous endorser might be explained by the fact that consumers tend to have negative perceptions toward celebrities (corporations) who want to improve their image through charitable events (Barone & Norman, 2003).

Consequences of Elaboration

With respect to consequences of elaboration (the final postulate in the ELM), Petty and Cacioppo (1986b) noted that attitudes created via the central route tend to be more persistent and resistant to counter persuasion and more predictive of behavior than those created via the peripheral route.

Based on this assumption, the researcher predicted that HE subjects would follow the central route and they have stronger correlation between attitudes and volunteer intentions than LE subjects (Hypothesis 4). Contrary to the researcher’s expectation, the result revealed that a stronger correlation was found for LE subjects than HL subjects.

This finding, as indicated before, signifies that LE subjects expend an extensive amount of cognitive activity to process the message, and their change in attitude occurred through the central route to persuasion. In addition, LE subjects might have higher levels of motivation to process the issue-relevant messages than HL subjects. However, this result did not mean that HL subjects followed the peripheral route, considering that a relatively strong correlation was found for HE subjects parallel to that of the high elaboration subjects (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983).

This finding suggested that empathic responses (situational factor) LE subjects’ experienced, rather than dispositional empathy, may have greater effects on attitudes. Findings in the general emotional response and advertisement literature supported the significant effect of empathic emotional response on attitudes. A study by Aaker and
Williams (1998) revealed that in an American individual cultural context, empathy had a significant effect on attitudes toward the ad. Consistent with this finding, Stout and Leckenby (1986) found that empathic responses, rather than other emotions (e.g., sympathy) had a greater effect on viewers’ attitudes.

Empathic Tendency and Volunteer Intention

Regarding the relationship between individual differences in empathy and volunteer intentions, the results of hypothesis 5 showed that HL subjects had significantly stronger intentions to volunteer for the Special Olympics than LE subjects. This result is of importance in the sense that the purpose of PSAs is to affect behavior.

This finding was consistent with the literature on empathy that showed a significant positive relationship between empathy and altruism (Eisenberg, 1986; Eisenberg et al., 1991; Hoffman, 1984; Rushton, 1980; Staub, 1978). Regarding the relationship, Batson (1991) and Coke et al. (1978) suggested that empathy mediated altruistic behavior. Coke et al. (1978)’s study showed that taking the perspective of another in need of help (defined as ‘perspective taking’) evoked empathy, which enhanced a person’s motivation to help. Bagozzi and Moore (1994) suggested that negative emotions led to empathic reaction, and, in turn, the empathic reaction induced pro-social behavior.

The researcher also attempted to examine the separate effect of empathic concern (EC) and perspective taking (PT). Consistent with the literature on empathy, the correlation between EC and behavioral intention was stronger that the correlation between PT and behavioral intention.
Gender Differences in Empathy

Hypothesis 6 predicted that females would have greater empathic tendency than males. As predicted, the result indicated that female subjects had significantly higher levels of empathetic tendency than male subjects. This finding supported the view that females are more empathic than males. Gender differences in empathy can be attributed to differences in traditional social roles, in which males are supposed to deal with tasks that make the family and society function, while females are supposed to be concerned with harmony within the family (Parsons & Bales, 1955). As another explanation regarding gender differences in empathy, Lennon and Eisenberg (1987) noted that the differences may be due to the differences in socialization, suggesting that girls tend to be socialized to be more adjusted to other’s emotions than are boys.

Regarding gender differences in volunteering, female subjects were found to have stronger volunteer intentions for the Special Olympics than male subjects. Female participants’ higher level of volunteerism may be due to their higher levels of empathic tendency. The Independent Sector (2003) also indicated that women in the United Sates were more likely to have volunteered than were men (46% and 42% respectively) in 2001.

An argument quality X gender interaction occurred; female subjects produced more positive thoughts toward the strong arguments than male subjects. These findings suggested that women are viewed as being more concerned with social harmony than men (Eagly, 1978; Petty & Cacioppo, 1983). In addition, the findings indicated that females tend to expend a higher level of cognitive effort, which is required to evaluate a message, than males do.
Implications for Sport marketers

The results of this study have practical implications for sport markers who work for the Special Olympics. As noted in the introduction, Special Olympics Organizations (SOOs) need more volunteers and more funding to allow the organizations to function. In order to reach more volunteers, it is crucial for local SOOs to develop effective PSAs that can motivate them to volunteer for Special Olympics. Given the fact that people in modern society are exposed to numerous persuasive messages, sport marketers need to develop advertisements that can enhance viewers’ motivation to process persuasive messages. They also need to focus on the content of the message. Regarding this view, Petty et al. (1983) indicated that scholars in both social psychology and consumer behavior have tended to emphasize the persuasion process induced by a thoughtful evaluation of issue-relevant arguments and product-relevant attributes (central route), rather than by simple decision rules or positive or negative cues. Regarding this issue, Fishbein and Ajzen (1981) noted:

The general neglect of the information contained in a message….is probably the most serious problem in communication and persuasion research. We are convinced that the persuasiveness of a communication can be increased much more easily and dramatically by paying careful attention to its content…than by manipulation of credibility, attractiveness….or any of the other myriad factors that have caught the fancy of investigators in the area of communication and persuasion (p.359).

The results of this study, based on the ELM, suggested that HE subjects as well as LE subjects had the motivation to process the information and devoted extensive cognitive effort, when they were exposed to advertisements that contained strong and cogent messages. Especially, LE subjects engaged in extensive cognitive activities to
evaluate the messages, because of empathic response that the ad evoked. This finding indicated that emotional ads, rather than rational ads can be more effective in affecting viewers’ prosocial behavior (Aaker & Williams, 1998; Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Chebat et al., 2003; Escalas & Stern, 2003). Empathy appeal ads, rather than other emotional ads, can have a greater impact on consumers’ attitudes toward ads and their helping behavior (Stout et al., 1990). In order for viewers to have empathic emotional responses, PSAs need to contain some important elements, such as negative feeling, a feeling of warmth, or positive image of the beneficiary (Aaker et al., 1986; Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Bendapudi et al., 1994). Therefore, when sport marketers devise persuasive messages, they can maximize the effect of empathy, by including those elements in their PSAs.

Bohner and Wanke (2002) noted that because of limited time and resources, people cannot focus on the details of every message contained in ads, thus peripheral cue can be effective tool in affecting viewer’s attitudes. Petty and Cacioppo (1983) also noted, “although the informational content of an advertisement may be the most important determinant of product attitudes under some circumstances, in other circumstances such as noncontent manipulations as the celebrity status or credibility of the product endorsers may be even more important” (p.143). Even though this current study did not show the effect of peripheral cue (famous endorser), celebrities, based on the match-up theory, can be effective when there is a fit between them and the issue of mental disability that they are supporting (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Kamins, 1990; Till & Busler, 2000). Thus, as indicated before, famous celebrities whose images are matched with the image of the Special Olympics may have an effect on prospective volunteers’ attitudes and their intentions to volunteer for Special Olympics.
The present study showed that involvement with the issue of mental disability had a significant impact on subjects’ attitudes and their intentions. Thus, it may be important for Special Olympics organizations to reach people with disabilities, since they possess higher levels of involvement with the issue (Hums, 2001; Park & Pastore, 2005). Based on the ELM, they, due to their high levels of involvement, may carefully scrutinize the information on Special Olympics.

The disabled market is a significant market. There are nearly 50 million people with disabilities live in the United States (U. S. Bureau of Census, 2002). This number represents almost 20% of the population. The disabled population represents an $800 billion buying power (Dickinson, 1996). Burks (2001) further indicated that the disposable income of persons with disabilities might exceed that of the African-American and Hispanic populations combined. In addition, Hums (2001) suggested that persons with disabilities and their families are extremely brand-conscious and brand-loyal to corporations that are supportive of individuals with disabilities.

This study can help practitioners in sport organizations for disability related-sports to attract more volunteer, by providing insights into how to develop effective PSAs. Not only Paralympics organizations, but also numerous sport organizations for the disabled in the U. S., such as the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA), Disability Sport U. S., and other national or local sport organizations, which might have difficulties to recruit volunteers, can benefit from the results of this study.

Future Research

In this present study, the researcher examined the effects of empathetic tendency in a public service advertising context. This study provides helpful information for further
research. First, as indicated in the previous section, prospective volunteers’ involvement with Special Olympics, in addition to empathic tendency, had a significant effect on their argument processing and attitudes. Even though this study attempted to investigate the separate effects of empathic propensity and involvement, it was difficult to examine those effects, due to the limitation of the research design of this study (e.g., a lack of sample size in each cell group and using involvement as a covariate). Thus, future studies need to the combined effect of involvement and empathic tendency to obtain the differences in affecting argument processing. Regarding this issue, Haugtvedt et al. (1992) noted:

It may be useful to combine situational (e.g., involvement) and dispositional measures to obtain maximal differences in messages processing and maximum predictability of attitudes or beliefs over time….By combining such factors, what may be subtle situational and personality influences in their own right can be observed of their combined influence on a common underlying process specified by theory. Making use of the combined influence of situational and personality variables may have considerable practical utility (p.257).

Second, it was relatively difficult to examine how much empathy as a personality variable could affect on viewers’ information processing, since involvement significantly affected on the argument processing at the same time. Therefore, future research could choose less involved issues in our field, in order to maximize the effect of empathic tendency on volunteers’ argument processing and their attitudes.

Third, most of the literature on empathy in advertisement context has examined the influences of empathy as an emotional responses (Aaker & Williams, 1998; Bagozzi & Moore, 1994; Chebat et al., 2003; Escalas & Stern, 2003). However, the current study did not test for the mediation of empathy as an emotional response. Thus, future research is required to investigate the effect of emotional empathy. Since it is hard for sport
marketers to control individuals’ empathy tendency in a short time, it would be more useful to examine the effects of empathy-appeal PSAs. Those studies that build on this can provide invaluable insights into develop effective PSAs and into how to reach potential volunteers who have low levels of empathic tendency.
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APPENDIX A

STRONG ARGUMENTS
Volunteers are Vital for Special Olympics

You are needed! There are several reasons why volunteering for the Special Olympics is important. Special Olympics would not exist today — and could not have been created — without the time, energy, commitment and enthusiasm of Special Olympics volunteers. Twice the current number of volunteers will be needed for Special Olympics to achieve its goal of reaching another one million individuals who have mental disabilities.

According to the U. S. Census (2000), there are about 14.3 million individuals with mental disabilities, including 1.9 million with Alzheimer’s disease, senility or dementia, and 3.5 million with learning disabilities. The sad truth is that people with mental retardation often suffer isolation due to the stigma attached to this condition. In addition, Steve Eidelman, Executive Director of the national organization for people with mental retardation, noted that they are, on average, among the poorest Americans, and often face severe difficulties in obtaining housing of their own.

Today, Special Olympics is the world’s largest program of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with mental retardation, inspiring greatness in more than 1 million athletes and 150 nations worldwide.

Volunteer with Special Olympics and make a difference in the lives of almost 1.4 million athletes, their families and your community. According to a recent Yale University study, Special Olympics athletes benefit from: improved physical fitness and sports skills, enhanced self-confidence and social competency, greater readiness for employment, better preparation for independent living, and improved friendships and
family relationships. As a Special Olympics volunteer, you will take pride in knowing that you are an important part of a global movement that provides athletes with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to experience the excitement, joy, and personal fulfillment associated with sports training and competition. Patti Bassett, volunteer with Special Olympics Northern California (USA) noted, "I can't think of a better way to give back to your community than to volunteer for Special Olympics…. It had to be one of the greatest times of my life. We had lots of laughs, some tears, and experiences we will never forget.”

Many organizations utilize volunteers. But only with Special Olympics can you walk out on the athletic field and see how your time and effort has made an immediate impact. Special Olympics athletes work hard to overcome the odds, and they can do it — with your help. They deserve the chance to compete, the chance to grow and the chance to lead both on and off the playing field. Give them that chance and you will find it will be an incredibly rewarding experience for you, too.
APPENDIX B

WEAK ARGUMENTS
Volunteers are Needed for Special Olympics

The Special Olympics are looking for volunteers who are willing to help persons with mental retardation participate in sports. Special Olympics, which is supported by numerous volunteers, has been recognized as one of the most successful sport organizations.

According to a recent survey, there are many individuals with mental disabilities. They sometimes have difficulties enjoying their lives, because of their illnesses. In addition, persons with mental retardation, compared to regularly able people, have less opportunity to participate in recreational activities, due to the lack of facilities.

Today, Special Olympics is a national non-profit sport organization that provides people with mental retardation the sports training and athletic competition they need, helping more than 1 million athletes enjoy their lives.

There are several reasons why volunteering for the Special Olympics is important.

As someone who volunteers regularly or looks to volunteer, Special Olympics provides you the opportunity you seek and is just as a good cause as any other special event. According to a recent survey on volunteer, 55 percent of individuals volunteered in the United States. Therefore, since you will volunteer anyway, why not volunteer for Special Olympics?

Joining Special Olympics as a volunteer will give you something better to do during your leisure time than watching television or reading a book, especially, when seeking to enjoy the weather outdoors. Join Special Olympics because many of its major events occur during the best months of the year; spring and summer time!
As a Special Olympics Volunteer, you will enhance your resume or academic vitals for possible job acquisition and advancement. In addition, volunteering for Special Olympics helps you gain the reputation or respect from others you seek as a responsible, good, and caring person.

Volunteering for Special Olympics will not only provide a less restrictive environment, but additionally, you will have the freedom to enjoy the competition as a volunteer and a spectator.
APPENDIX C

A FAMOUS ENDORSER
A Famous Movie Actor Supports Volunteering for Special Olympics

“Volunteer for the Special Olympics, and you will never forget one of the greatest experiences in your life. Special Olympics is about opportunities for success and improving lives. I am proud to support a sport organization that is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children and adults with intellectual disabilities, their families, and our community.”

Amy, a special olympic athlete, and Irish Film Actor, Pierce Brosnan

Become a Special Olympics volunteer. You’ll never be more inspired.

Call us at,
1 (800) 700 - 8585
www.specialolympics.org
APPENDIX D

NON-FAMOUS ENDORSER
James from California Supports Volunteering for Special Olympics

“Volunteer for the Special Olympics, and you will never forget one of the greatest experiences in your life. Special Olympics is about opportunities for success and improving lives. I am proud to support a sport organization that is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children and adults with intellectual disabilities, their families, and our community.”

Amy, a special olympic athlete, and James

Become a Special Olympics volunteer. You’ll never be more inspired.

Call us at,
1 (800) 700 - 8585
www.specialolympics.org
APPENDIX E

MULTIMENTIONAL EMPATHY SCALE:
INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX
The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, check the letter column next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Not well</th>
<th>Statement describes me</th>
<th>Very well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the &quot;other persons&quot; point of view.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease. (PD)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I tend to lose control during emergencies.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to &quot;put myself in his shoes&quot; for a while.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F
INVolVEMENT SCALE
Personal Involvement with Sport Programs for athletes with Mental Disabilities

Instruction: Please circle the number that best represents how you feel about sport programs for athletes with mental retardation on each of the scales below.

To me, sport opportunity for athletes with mental disabilities is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</th>
<th>Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of no concern</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Of concern to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevant</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means nothing to me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Means a lot to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useless</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worthless</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Valuable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trivial</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Fundamental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not beneficial</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Beneficial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t matter</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Matters to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninterested</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superfluous</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Vital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexciting</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Exciting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unappealing</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Appealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundane</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Fascinating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonessential</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Wanted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not needed</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>Needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS
Instruction: Please list all the favorable and unfavorable thoughts you were having about the topic of volunteering for Special Olympics and the issue of mental retardation as you were reading the text public service advertisement (the written section). Your thoughts may pertain to the message or anything else going through your mind associated with the topic of volunteering for Special Olympics. Please take 2 minutes to list all the thoughts.
Instruction: The following set of statements refers to your reactions to the public service advertisements you have just been exposed to. Please circle the number on the scale which best represents how you feel. **Base your responses on the advertisements in the previous pages.**

1. It is important to volunteer for Special Olympics organizations that provide sports training and competition for children and adults with mental retardation.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9
   Strongly Disagree
   Strongly Agree

2. Athletes with mental retardation deserve the chance to experience joy and personal fulfillment by participating in sport competition.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9
   Strongly Disagree
   Strongly Agree

3. Mental retardation is one of the most important issues that most Americans should care about.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9
   Strongly Disagree
   Strongly Agree

Instruction: Please rate how you feel about volunteering for the Special Olympics on each of the scales below by circling one number.

4. **bad**

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | **good**

5. **unfavorable**

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | **favorable**

6. **harmful**

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | **beneficial**

7. **satisfactory**

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | **unsatisfactory**

8. **wise**

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | **foolish**
**Volunteer Intention**

Instruction: The following set of statements refers to your reactions to the public service advertisements you have just been exposed to. **Base your responses on the advertisements.** Please circle the number that best represents your behavioral intention. Circling “1” means that it is extremely unlikely that you agree with that statement, circling “9” means that it is extremely likely that you agree with that statement.

### Intention to Volunteer (Short-term) Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Extremely Unlikely</th>
<th>Extremely Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I will volunteer for the Special Olympics this quarter</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I will volunteer for the Special Olympics next quarter</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Intention to Volunteer (Long-term) Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Extremely Unlikely</th>
<th>Extremely Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I will be a volunteer 1 year from now</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I will be a volunteer 3 year from now</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I will be a volunteer 5 year from now</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Intention to Help People with Mental Retardation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Extremely Unlikely</th>
<th>Extremely Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I will donate some money to support the Special Olympics</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I would like to learn more about mental disability</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I would like to recommend volunteering for Special Olympics</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instruction: Please write down everything that you can remember from the advertisements regarding the reasons for volunteering for Special Olympics.
**Persuasiveness of the Public Service Advertisements**

*Instruction:* Please rate the reasons for volunteering for the Special Olympics as described in the first public service advertisement (*the text ad*) on each of the scales below by circling one number.

1.  
   ![Scale](image)
   Unpersuasive 
   Persuasive

2.  
   ![Scale](image)
   Weak reasons 
   Strong reasons

3.  
   ![Scale](image)
   Unbelievable 
   Believable

**The Effectiveness of the Endorser**

*Instruction:* Please place an “X” in the appropriate box in the following question.

Did you recognize the person who was with the Special Olympics athlete in the second advertisement (*the picture ad*)?

   Yes _____                  No____

*Instruction:* Please rate how famous you think the person depicted in the second advertisement (*the picture ad*) is on the scale below (Circle one number).

   ![Scale](image)

   Not famous 
   Very famous

   at all
### Demographic Information

Instruction: Please check (X) the appropriate choice given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male ___</th>
<th>Female ___</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>White___</td>
<td>Black or African American _____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian &amp; Pacific ___</td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Level</td>
<td>19 – 35___</td>
<td>56 – 65___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36 – 45___</td>
<td>66 &amp; up___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46- 55___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>High school Diploma___</td>
<td>Graduate Degree___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some college /Undergraduate Degree___</td>
<td>Doctoral Degree___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other, please specify_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Level (Annual)</td>
<td>Under $ 20,000___</td>
<td>46,000 – 60,000___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$21,000 - 30,000___</td>
<td>61,000 – 75,000___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$31,000 – 45,000___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H

COVER LETTER
Dear Participants,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. You must be at least 18 years of age to take part.

The purpose of this study is to broaden a theory of persuasion for Public Service Advertisements (PSAs) designed to lead people to volunteer for the Special Olympics that provide sport training and competition for athletes with mental retardation. The second purpose, based on the results, is to recommend effective PSAs for the Special Olympics in order to attract potential volunteers.

This study is being completed as a part of the Ohio State University doctoral dissertation. There are two parts to the survey. Section 1 asks for your responses to the print advertisements associated with volunteering for the Special Olympics. Section 2 asks for your responses to items related to your empathic tendency and personal involvement with the issue of mental disability. It is estimated that this survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. Individual responses will not be identified or reported. The survey has an identification number for mailing purposes only so your name can be checked off when the survey is returned. As the conclusion of the study, the mailing list and corresponding numbers on the questionnaires will be destroyed and disposed. The published and reported results of the study will not be linked to the name of any individual or institution, and any discussion will be based on group date.

You may contact any of the research investigators at any time. It is estimated that the research project will be completed in one year. If you wish to have a copy of the results, please contact one of the researchers. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Meungguk Park
445 Larkins Hall, OSU
337 W. 17th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210
Phone: (614) 688-9987
E-mail: park.551@osu.edu

Donna L. Pastore, Ph.D
453 Larkins Hall, OSU
337 W. 17th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210
Phone: (614) 292-2504
E-mail: pastore.3@osu.edu