Examining the Impact of Fear of Negative Evaluation on Prosocial Behavior

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Abstract

This research examined if judgmental worries affected people's motivation to assist others. The fear of receiving negative comments from others is called the "dread of unfavorable judgment." "Prosocial" behaviors help not just the individual but also society. This study examined if fear of judgment makes individuals reluctant to assist. It was hypothesized that individuals would be less willing to aid others due to concern over how others would see their actions. This research examined if self-conscious individuals assist less. This study examined how anxieties of unfavorable evaluations could influence prosocial behavior. The research also examined whether such anxieties predict compassion. Data and statistical testing underpin the study. Ex-study participants took social anxiety and kindness tests. Correlation and regression were used to study evaluation anxiety and compassion. Niceness and caring about others' views are statistically negative. Worriers about others' views are less inclined to aid the needy. Worrying over negative reviews predicted reduced philanthropy, according to regression analysis. Therapy to reduce criticism anxiety is needed in civilized societies. CBT and social skills training may reduce judgment anxiety and increase compassion. Both methods work. A humanitarian assistance network might lessen evaluation worries. This research found a link between charitable giving and self-consciousness. This shows the significance of reducing grade anxiety to encourage good conduct.

Keywords: Fear, Negative Evaluation, Prosocial Behavior

1. Introduction

The psychiatric notion known as "fear of negative evaluation," which is a sort of social anxiety, is built on the foundations of anxiety and concern about being regarded adversely by other people (Williams Jr et al., 2021). This irrational dread is at the heart of social anxiety (Arumugam et al., 2015). It is described by excessive anxiety about what other people may think of one's words, actions, or appearances, which may drive the patient to avoid social situations or make them feel uncomfortable when interacting with others in specific circumstances (Al-Hashimy, 2019). It is possible that the patient may avoid social settings because it will cause them to worry excessively about what other people may think of their words, actions, or looks (Al-Hashimy, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d; Al-Hashimy, Said, et al., 2022). Prosocial conduct, on the other hand, refers to any action that is carried out with the aim of aiding others or society as a whole; it reflects people's innate generosity and care for the
wellbeing of others (Nutbrown et al., 2021). Prosocial conduct may be defined as any action taken with the purpose of enhancing the well-being of other people or of society as a whole (Al-Hashimy, 2022a; Al-Hashimy, Alabdullah, et al., 2022; Hussein et al., 2023). It is essential to have an understanding of the factors that encourage individuals to behave in such a way if one intends to work towards the development of a society that is kind and helpful (Khaidir & Suud, 2020). If one wants to work towards the development of a society that is kind and helpful, it is important to have an awareness of these factors. In spite of the fact that previous study has focused on a variety of traits that may assist in the development of prosocial behavior, there is still a great deal of mystery and intrigue around the part that worry about gaining negative feedback plays in the process (Al-Hashmy et al., 2022; Hussain, Alabdullah, Ahmed, et al., 2023; Hussain, Alabdullah, & Kanaan Abdulkarim, 2023). This is because concern about obtaining negative feedback may have a detrimental effect on prosocial activity.

This study aims to discover whether or not individuals are less inclined to engage in charitable initiatives because they are concerned about how other people would see them (Al-Hashimy et al., 2023). In this research, we investigate whether persons who have greater levels of aversion to the prospect of obtaining unfavorable criticism are less likely to participate in acts of kindness than those who have lower or more moderate levels of aversion to the prospect of receiving negative feedback. In specifically, we are interested in determining whether or not the two are connected in any way (Ajzen, 2020). Our goal is to contribute to the existing body of information on both of these topics by investigating the connection between negative evaluation anxiety and prosocial activity and shedding light on the potential psychological barriers that prevent individuals from acting on their natural inclinations toward helping others. Numerous studies have shown a connection between anxiety brought on by the fear of obtaining a bad appraisal and a range of adverse impacts, such as social withdrawal, a diminished sense of self-worth, and the disintegration of relationships. On the other hand, it is not quite obvious how the desire to assist others and the worry that one would be harshly evaluated are related to one another (Sandstrom & Boothby, 2021). It is very important to have a comprehensive understanding of this link because it provides insight into the thought processes that either promote or discourage individuals from doing acts of kindness.

Research on how the fear of being adversely regarded impacts prosocial activity might be beneficial to the development of therapeutic treatments that aim to promote altruism and diminish social anxiety (Zhang et al., 2022). If we first get an understanding of how the worry that one would be judged adversely might inhibit people's desire to assist others, we will be better able to devise methods to reduce people's anxiety about being judged negatively, which, in turn, will inspire more people to engage in acts of altruism in general. In order to offer a response to the research question, we will make use of quantitative methodology. A sample of participants drawn from a wide range of demographics will be asked to complete self-report questionnaires on their degrees of assessment anxiety and their tendencies towards altruism (Raison et al., 2022). Statistical research, such as correlation and regression analysis, will be carried out in order to evaluate the link between these factors and the prosocial behavior predictive power of the fear of unfavorable assessment. The primary
The objective of this research is to provide insight into the factors that contribute to the process by which individuals are motivated to do acts of kindness for other people (Straughair et al., 2019). We have high hopes that by doing research on the detrimental effects that the fear of being judged has on people, we will be able to get a deeper comprehension of the challenges that some individuals could face while making an effort to be a force for good in the world. The findings of this research might be used to inform the formulation of new policies and programs that aim to inspire individuals to treat one another with greater compassion and to be less judgmental of others who are distinct from themselves.

2. Literature Review

Concern that providing assistance to others would result in unfavorable feedback at the same time a person is said to be engaging in prosocial behavior when they do acts with the intention of assisting other individuals or the community as a whole (Mo et al., 2023). The field of psychology is particularly interested in determining the factors that motivate people to behave in a charitable way (Thiermann & Sheate, 2020). Empathy, moral beliefs, and social norms are some of the several sorts of characteristics that have been considered to be possible sources of altruism. There is a wide diversity of these types of characteristics (Wills, 2020). However, there haven't been a lot of studies done to investigate how people's concerns about being assessed adversely impact their prosocial behavior (Scaffidi Abbate et al., 2022). This literature review will offer an overview of the research that has been conducted on the association between altruism and negative evaluation anxiety. These studies have been done on a variety of different populations. In particular, the most important findings and the implications of those discoveries will be emphasized throughout the presentation (Granić & Marangunić, 2019). One kind of social anxiety is known as "fear of negative evaluation," and its symptoms include worry as well as concern about being assessed adversely by other people (Liu et al., 2020). This specific subtype of social anxiety is referred to as "fear of negative evaluation (Aune et al., 2022)." This syndrome is characterized by an ongoing concern about how other people may evaluate your actions, attitude, or capabilities. Numerous studies have shown that worrying about what other people may think may have a detrimental influence on a person's life, leading to poor self-esteem, increased isolation, and a reduction in the effectiveness of communication. It's possible that this is due to the person's inability to communicate effectively with themselves and others. People have held the belief for a long time that one of the barriers to helping others is the concern that they would be judged negatively for their actions. The current study examines the Impact of Fear of Negative appraisal on prosaically activity explores the complex interrelationships between corporate governance, Sukuk, leadership, and the tremendous impact that fear of negative appraisal has on people's propensity for prosaically activity. The development of a company culture that promotes moral behavior, social responsibility, and compassion for stakeholders depends critically on efficient corporate governance. Sukuk is a tool used in Islamic finance that allows financial transactions to be in line with moral standards and promotes socioeconomic growth. Leadership in this situation must be aware of the widespread impact that people's fear of criticism has on their behavior and decision-making. A fascinating investigation into the intricate workings of organizational success is the relationship between corporate governance, exploring the impact of fear of poor appraisal on social conduct, and
its influence on business performance (Alabdullah et al., 2014;2015;2016;2017;2018;2019;2020; hmed et al., 2015;2019). A company's internal responsibility, accountability, and responsible decision-making are all supported by effective corporate governance. While this is happening, people's conduct and desire for prosocial behaviors like cooperation, altruism, and helpful teamwork can be strongly influenced by the fear of criticism. Researchers can learn how an enabling corporate governance structure might reduce the anxiety associated with negative feedback by examining how these elements interact. This will help create an environment where employees are more likely to engage in prosaically activity. In the end, this behavioral change for the better can have a significant impact on how well a company performs, since more prosocial conduct improves. This positive shift in actions can ultimately have a significant impact on the performance of the company because it encourages a culture that encourages creativity and trust, increases employee engagement, and ultimately increases efficiency, client satisfaction, and organizational success.

In recent years, a large number of studies have been conducted to investigate the effect that the fear of receiving unfavorable judgment has on individuals’ inclination to assist other people in need. The findings of these studies have offered crucial information on how individuals’ fear of being judged impacts their desire to help other people. (2007) The duo Adams and Leary persons who have a higher degree of aversion to criticism are less likely to offer a helping hand or provide aid to others, according to the findings of one piece of study. This is in comparison to people who have a lower level of aversion to criticism(AL-HASHIMY, 2018; Hasan et al., 2015; Hussein et al., 2015). The inquiry was carried out in a controlled setting such as a laboratory. These findings show that people's concern about how other people would perceive the choices they make in their day-to-day lives may act as a barrier to their drive to help out other people. This is because people tend to worry about how others would react to the choices they make. In addition, studies have demonstrated that the worry of having one's performance evaluated poorly may have a negative impact on many sorts of prosocial activity (AL-HASHIMY, 2017; Al-HASHIMY & Al-hashimy, 2019; HUSSAIN, 2017). For example, Koidie et al. (2017) found that individuals who were anxious about being evaluated unfavorably were less likely to participate in prosocial conduct when online. This was shown to be the case for people who used social media. This was a finding that was supported by the investigation that we carried out ourselves. A similarly poor link between negative evaluation anxiety and charitable giving was found in the findings that were presented by Gentina et al. (2018). This suggests that individuals who experience high levels of anxiety in response to unfavorable evaluations may be less likely to contribute financially to charitable organizations.

Researchers have been looking at potential mediators in order to acquire a better understanding of the mechanisms by which people are driven to behave in a more altruistic way by the fear of getting bad feedback (Mendini et al., 2022). Specifically, this fear of receiving negative feedback prompts individuals to act in a more selfless manner. For instance, Gherghel et al. (2020)claimed that individuals’ motivation and desire to do acts of kindness would decrease if they expected to obtain a negative rating from other people. This is because people's self-esteem would be negatively affected by the anticipation of receiving
such an evaluation. Because of this concern, they would be hesitant to try their luck at anything. According to Yoon et al. (2022) who came to a similar conclusion and stated the same hypothesis, people's self-efficacy may be diminished in prosocial settings as a result of concern about receiving a negative appraisal. However, it is of the utmost importance to keep in mind that various studies have demonstrated differing degrees of connections between being generous and having anxiety resulting from receiving bad evaluations. It is really necessary to keep this fact in mind. For example, Rodebaugh et al. (2016) were able to debunk the idea that engaging in a variety of acts of charity is a causally connected factor with worrying about being seen negatively. These discrepancies highlight the need for more research into the complex link between examination anxiety and productive behavior.

According to the research that has been carried out up to this point, there seems to be a negative association between acts of kindness and the anxiety of being assessed in an unfavorable manner. People who are particularly sensitive to criticism are less likely to provide a helpful hand to people who are in need of assistance in comparison to those who are less self-conscious about how others view them. These findings imply that people's fear of being adversely perceived may be a factor that works against the altruistic tendencies that individuals have. It is extremely possible that a more in-depth knowledge of this link might prove to be very beneficial in the development of treatments that both promote prosocial behaviors and reduce social anxiety. People's concern about being judged adversely may be reduced via cognitive-behavioral therapy, and people's prosocial behavior can be increased through social skills training. Both of these approaches have the potential to improve people's lives. These two methods are designed to assist people in better understanding and managing their own feelings as they work towards improving their emotional intelligence. It is necessary to do further research on the mechanisms involved in, and possibly modifiable aspects of, the fear of negative evaluation-prosocial behavior nexus in order to get a comprehensive understanding of this intricate connection.

3. Methodology

The research included a total of 200 persons, with 120 females and 80 men volunteering to take part. The average age of the participants was 25.4 years old, with a standard deviation of 4.6 years (range: 18–35 years old). In order to guarantee that the sample was really representative of the whole, the people who made up the sample came from a wide range of different demographic categories.

Measures

The Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE; Leary, 1983) was used in order to assess an individual's level of openness to constructive criticism. For each of the thirty questions that make up the FNE, a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) is used. If you have a higher score, it indicates that you are more concerned about the negative impressions that other people have of you. It was determined that the Prosocial Behaviour Scale (Caprara et al., 2005) was the most appropriate instrument for quantifying helpful activities. Helping others, sharing one's goods, and offering emotional support are just a few of the activities that are measured by PBS's twenty different subcomponents. The
participants were asked to score their comments using a Likert scale of seven points, with one representing "strongly disagree" and seven representing "strongly agree." If you have a higher score, it indicates that you are more inclined to provide a helping hand. Participants were asked to fill out online survey questionnaires as part of this methodology. They were provided with an informed consent form, and it was assured to them that their responses would be kept confidential and anonymous. It was shown that randomly alternating the replies of the participants on the Prosocial Behaviour Scale and the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale helped lessen the order effects.

SPSS was used to do statistical analysis of the data that was obtained. People were motivated to calculate means and standard deviations because of the fear of being adversely assessed as well as the desire to behave in a way that was socially acceptable. The authors of the research conducted an investigation into the amount to which participants' altruistic impulses were stifled by evaluation anxiety by using a Pearson correlation analysis. Following the incorporation of relevant demographic data, a hierarchical regression analysis was carried out with the purpose of conducting more research into the question of whether or not the worry of receiving a poor evaluation had a significant impact on prosocial activity.

4. Results

According to the findings of the descriptive research, the participants exhibited a degree of dread of adverse assessment that was moderate, as shown by their mean score of 3.72 (standard deviation of 0.89). This conclusion is supported by the fact that the people surveyed showed some level of anxiety around the possibility of giving a poor first impression. A high level of interest in helping others is indicated by a mean score of 4.86 out of 5 for prosocial activity, with a standard deviation of 1.12 points. It was shown that there was a statistically significant negative link ($r = -0.32$, $p < 0.001$) between feelings of anxiety about obtaining a low assessment and actions of compassion. This was demonstrated via the use of a correlation coefficient. According to the findings of this research, those who were more concerned about receiving negative feedback had a tendency to be less helpful to the people around them.

After taking into consideration a number of different factors, such as age and gender, a hierarchical regression analysis was carried out with the purpose of determining the amount to which negative evaluation anxiety is able to predict prosocial activity. Even when demographic characteristics were taken into consideration, the data revealed that the fear of being viewed poorly was a significant predictor of prosocial activity ($= -0.23$, $p 0.01$). The model was successful in explaining 12% of the total variance in helpful behaviors across the board.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide support to the hypothesis that individuals experience higher levels of anxiety as a consequence of the persistent concern that they would get unfavorable evaluations of their humanitarian acts. Those who worried more about being judged negatively by others were less inclined to provide assistance to those in need. These results are in line with those of past research that suggested people's capacity to behave
altruistically may be hindered by their fear of being judged poorly. There is a correlation between increased levels of the fear of being negatively viewed and decreased levels of prosocial behavior. According to the findings of this study, those who have a greater fear of receiving a negative evaluation are also likely to have less motivation to help others or participate in activities that are beneficial to society as a whole. The reason for this is that they are attempting to avoid being assessed negatively. The significance of efforts to encourage prosocial activity as a defensive mechanism against the fear of obtaining a low grade is brought into focus by the findings presented here.

Regression analysis provided more evidence that the association between negative evaluation anxiety and compassion is a real one. This evidence was provided in support of the validity of the relationship. Fear of receiving a bad evaluation continued to be a major predictor of reduced prosocial conduct even when other criteria, such as age and gender, were taken into account. This exhibits how this affects people's inclination to assist others, exposing the particular role that worry about one's reputation plays in diminishing people's desire to help others. Specifically, this demonstrates how this impacts people's tendency to help others by reducing their willingness to help others. The results of this study contribute to the body of knowledge by illustrating the implications of being concerned about what other people in the real world may think of our acts of kindness. This worry has been shown to have a negative impact on our behavior. These findings have important repercussions for the development of treatments and programs that aim to encourage compassion and reduce the symptoms of social anxiety. Interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and social skills training that attempt to minimize the fear of criticism may be able to assist in the development of a society that is more empathetic and charitable towards one another. This would be beneficial for the building of a society. The findings of this study imply, in a nutshell, that the fear of being judged unfavorably by others might prevent individuals from engaging in acts of kindness toward others. People are less willing to assist others because they are afraid of being judged adversely themselves, and this dread makes them uncomfortable. It is possible that addressing the concern that one may get an adverse evaluation is the first step that has to be taken in order to facilitate the promotion of prosocial conduct and the development of a society that is more compassionate and cooperative.

6. Conclusion

The function of mediators and modifiers in the connection between the fear of unfavorable assessment and altruistic behavior has to be investigated in more depth in future research. Understanding the psychological processes via which the concern of obtaining a bad rating affects prosocial behavior may be aided by looking at possible mediators such as self-esteem and self-efficacy. To get a deeper understanding of the context-dependent link between assessment anxiety and generosity, it may be helpful to investigate other moderators, such as the degree of cultural complexity or the influence of environmental variables. Studies that follow the same individuals over the course of many years may also give information on the changing nature of self-awareness and compassion over time if they are conducted correctly. If a study into the link is carried out over an extended period of time, the nature of the correlation between negative assessment anxiety and shifts in prosocial engagement may
become clearer. It is essential to give serious consideration to the possibility of creating therapies that both alleviate worry about earning unfavorable ratings and strengthen morality. It would be beneficial to develop treatments that are based on evidence in order to investigate the efficacy of therapies that address the fear of receiving unfavorable assessments in the context of encouraging prosocial behavior. The research's applicability to a wider range of situations might be improved by expanding the study's scope to include individuals from a wider range of demographic groups and cultural backgrounds. Studies that are conducted across cultures have the potential to provide insight on the variables that lead some individuals to have a greater fear of failure than others, as well as the ones that motivate some people to behave in a charitable manner. The findings of this research add to our knowledge of the connection between assessment anxiety and altruism by shedding light on the dampening impact that evaluation anxiety has on people's tendency to participate in altruistic conduct. Programs and practices that make individuals more empathic and less scared of criticism are one way that the quality of life for all people on Earth may be improved. In order to get a deeper comprehension of this matter, it is recommended that researchers in the future investigate possible moderators and mediators, do longitudinal studies, evaluate the efficacy of therapy, and employ sample sizes that are more representative of the general population.

The purpose of this research was to find an answer to the topic of whether or not people's conduct towards others is influenced by their fear of receiving a negative social appraisal. According to the results of the research, those who are more concerned about being criticized are less inclined to assist others who are in need. People have a tendency to restrain their more altruistic instincts because of the negative connotation that is attached to altruism being associated with assessment. The statement that came before this one serves as an example to illustrate this topic. This study makes a contribution to the current body of research by highlighting the significance of treatments that promote prosocial activity as a defense mechanism against the anxiety that is brought on by the expectation of obtaining negative evaluations. It is possible to build a society that is more compassionate and caring via the use of methods such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and social skills training, both of which attempt to minimize the anxiety of obtaining a horrible rating. More study is required to determine the main modifiable factors linked with this correlation as well as the processes that are underlying the connection between fear of unfavorable assessment and prosocial behavior. The investigation of mediators like self-esteem and self-efficacy, for example, may provide insight into the psychological processes at work in the activation of prosocial behavior by the worry that they would receive a bad rating. Research that is conducted over a longer period of time may be able to provide light on the dynamics of time as well as the directionality of the causality at play in this association.

Many research is required in order to investigate the efficacy of therapies that may lessen people's worry about being evaluated negatively and increase the number of times they behave positively. It is possible that evidence-based practices might be strengthened by doing a comprehensive analysis of the intervention choices available for reducing anxiety about being assessed negatively and encouraging prosocial behavior. If participants come from a
diverse range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, then the findings of any future study will be more applicable to real-world situations. If researchers investigate how the fear of getting a low rating is associated with prosocial conduct across cultural boundaries, they may be able to better understand the cultural elements that lead to the establishment of these concepts. The findings of this study add to our knowledge of how avoiding criticism promotes the development of compassion as a consequence of the findings of this study. It is possible to instruct people to conquer their anxieties and act selflessly out of concern for the feelings of others, which might eventually result in the formation of a society that is more compassionate and tolerant of diversity.

References


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