This is to certify that the
thesis entitled

The Effects of Liking and Obligation on Compliance

presented by

Allison S. Shaw

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master degree in Communication

Major Professor's Signature

12/12/08

Date

THE EFFECTS OF LIKING AND OBLIGATION ON COMPLIANCE

By

Allison S. Shaw

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Communication

2008

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF LIKING ON OBLIGATION ON COMPLIANCE

By

Allison S. Shaw

In the compliance gaining literature multiple studies have established a relationship between pregiving favors and compliance. Despite many attempts to investigate intervening variables the mediating mechanism for this relationship remains unclear. In an attempt to separate the two most commonly proposed mediators of the pregiving-compliance relationship, liking and obligation, three experiments were designed. The results indicated evidence of a liking X obligation interaction effect, suggesting that if an influence target does not like the person providing the favor, no amount of obligation will make them comply (r = .32). Implications of the findings for future compliance gaining research are discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Franklin J. Boster, and my committee members, Dr. Timothy Levine and Dr. Toby Ten Eyck, for their encouragement, and continued support during this rather lengthy process.

Secondly, I would like to thank Dr. Michael Kotowski without whose help this project would have never gotten off the ground and Kyle Andrews without whose help I would have no procedure! I would also like to thank all of my research assistants: Erin Roach, Jenna Bender, Samantha Sharp, Shannon Morey, Michelle Cosier, Brandon Strassberg, Scott Prajzner, Jessica McFadden, Jessica Denbow, Jonelle Pariseau, Becky Elliot, Case Johnson, Lindsey Diggleman, Sarah Haskins, and Ron Christiansen without whose help I would have no data!

Finally, I would like to thank my father, Douglas Shaw, whose support throughout my lifetime has given me the ability to draft the following pages. I appreciate everything you have done for me and only hope that I can one return in kind!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

The extant literature demonstrates consistently that providing a favor to influence target before soliciting their compliance increases the likelihood of the target's compliance with the solicitation (e.g., Greenberg & Frisch, 1972; Regan, 1971; Whatley, Webster, Smith. & Rhodes, 1999; Goei, Lindsey, Boster, Skalski, & Bowman, 2003). Why the relationship between pregiving favors and compliance exists remains unclear. One plausible mediator of the relationship is that the target develops liking for those who provide favors. A second, equally plausible mediator of the relationship is the target's development of feelings of obligation toward those who give favors. Research has provided conflicting evidence regarding which, if either, mediator has the stronger causal force. For example, Goei et al. (2003) attempted a test of the two mediators in question and concluded liking to be the stronger mediator. Conversely, Regan (1971) performed a similar test and found that obligation was the stronger of the two.

Neither of these two studies controlled liking and obligation independently within a pregiving compliance-gaining interaction. As a result, little is known of the necessity of either obligation or liking in the success of pregiving as a compliance-gaining technique. A clearer understanding of the factors mediating the relationship between pregiving favors and compliance would allow for the design of compliance-gaining requests that are adapted to specific compliance-gaining situations. Effective message adaptation in turn increases the likelihood of obtaining compliance in the given situation and makes for a more efficient social interchange. To that end, this study controls obligation and liking independently across three experiments so that the intermediary relationship between pregiving and subsequent compliance can be observed.

Liking is characterized as positive affect that attracts persons toward objects. By providing favors, an agent portrays themselves as generous and kind, which in turn stimulates the target's liking for the agent (Regan, 1971; Whatley et al., 1999). Goei et al. (2003) proposed that increased liking increases the likelihood of gaining compliance because people are motivated to maintain positive relationships with those who are generous and kind. This claim is consistent with other research demonstrating that people tend to comply more with someone with whom they have positive relationships (Baron, 1971; Burger, Soroka, Gonzago, Murphy, & Somervell, 2001). Thus, compliance with an agent's request may in part be due to the target's desire to maintain a positive relationship with the agent.

Obligation, on the other hand, can be characterized as a motivation to perform a task arising from an uncomfortable feeling of indebtedness. The provision of a favor creates a sense of inequity in the relationship between the target and agent. Because the perception of indebtedness is not pleasant, the target is motivated to act in a way that restores equity (Walster, Walster, & Bershcheid, 1978). An opportunity to restore equity in the compliance-gaining scenario is provided by the agent's compliance-gaining request. Gouldner (1960) explicated this rationale as the norm of reciprocity, positing that in most situations people should, and do, help those who have helped them. Therefore, compliance with an agent's request following receiving a favor may result, at least in part, from feelings of obligation in the target.

If the presentation of a favor produces both liking and obligation in the target, it is important to assess the impact of each on compliance. The ability to separate liking and obligation from one another and then examine compliance rates makes it possible to

determine if both liking and obligation are necessary to impact compliance with the agent's request, or if only one of the two is necessary. For instance, if an agent performs a favor for a target, the target may experience both liking and obligation toward the influencing agent. If, however, the agent performs a favor for the target but feelings of obligation are inhibited from developing, the compliant response will arise from the target's liking for the agent. One could imagine this circumstance occurring when the agent performs a favor for the target but it is a favor that the agent would have done for anybody, a favor performed by accident, or the agent does not believe they are providing a favor, thereby not giving rise to feelings of indebtedness (Greenberg et al., 1972). Alternatively, if the agent performs a favor for the target and feelings of liking are inhibited, compliance will arise from the target's feelings of obligation toward the agent. This situation could arise if the agent displays undesirable personality characteristics. On the other hand, inducing both obligation and liking in the target might be necessary to elicit a compliant response. To disentangle these possibilities, the impact of liking and obligation on compliance must be observed by comparing compliance rates arising in situations where obligation and liking are controlled systematically against situations in which obligation and liking are left to vary naturally as a result of the pregiving favor.

To this end, this study controls obligation by varying if the target perceive that the agent feels they have performed a favor or, alternatively, by making the favor rather large. In one instance the favor is performed for the subjects but the agent does not believe that they are performing a favor, whereas in the other condition, the favor has inconvenienced the agent and therefore is perceived as much larger. Concurrently, liking is controlled by varying the agent's behavior toward a third party after the presentation of

the favor. Specifically, the agent acts rudely or in a likeable manner toward the third party. The rude behavior is designed to create the impression that the agent is a surly and insensitive person, and hence, not likeable. On the other hand the likeable behavior presents the impression of a caring and considerate person. These scenarios are compared to a control condition in which the same favor is performed, but with obligation and liking left to vary freely.

Experiment 1

Method

Subjects. The sample consisted of 60 people enrolled in undergraduate communication classes at a large Midwestern university. Subjects (Ss) were offered extra credit in their class in exchange for participation in the study. Each S was assigned randomly to one of three experimental conditions with the constraint that an equal number of Ss were assigned to each condition. The sample consisted of 23 males and 37 females ranging in age from 18 to 27 years old with a mean age of 19.42 years old.

Design. The experiment was a single factor independent groups design with control, no liking and liking conditions. Compliant behavior was examined after the presentation of a pregiving favor. In the control condition, Ss arrived at a room where they were told they could find an experimenter who would assist them in completing the final component of a study in which they were participating. Upon arriving *S*s found a person arranging a collection of books on a book shelf. The person, a research confederate (C1), notified the S that the experiment had been relocated and that they would help the S find the new location, saying, "*I'm sorry, but the experiment has changed rooms. It is downstairs in the...actually I will just show you were it is, it is kind*

of confusing. Follow me." As the S and C1 arrived at the new location, the S delivered a direct request, saying, "*I need to get those books put away by my next class and it is taking longer than I had expected. You don't have to answer now, but when you are done here can you help me organize those books for a little while? If you can, just come back up when you are done here.*"

The no liking and liking conditions replicated the same basic design of the control condition with each including one additional comment made by the C1. In all three conditions, upon arriving with the S at the new location, a second research confederate (C2) exited the room just as the C1 and S arrived. In the control condition the C1 collided with C2, but the bump was only acknowledged nonverbally. In the no liking condition, the C1 collided with the C2 and said, in a hostile manner, "*Watch where you are going, bitch.*" In the liking condition, the same collision occurred but the C1 said, in an apologetic and considerate manner, "*I'm so sorry. Are you okay?*"

Procedure. Ss signed up to participate in a study described as an investigation of how information travels within social networks. Ss arrived at a small auxiliary communication library located on the fourth floor of a campus academic building where they were expecting to find an experimenter. Instead, the C1 was in the library sorting through a pile of books and placing the books onto shelves. Because the S was instructed to arrive at this room, it was typically assumed that the C1 was the experimenter. Hence, the S usually made initial contact by announcing they were there for the experiment. If the S did not say anything upon entering the room, the C1 solicited information by asking, "*Can I help you?*" to which most Ss replied, "*I am here for the experiment.*" It was at this point that the C1 informed the S that the experiment had been moved and was

now in a new location. The C1 then lead the S to the new location, ceasing all interaction between themselves and the S until arrival at the new location.

The new location was a communication research laboratory located in the basement of the same building. While walking down the hall to the laboratory the C1 delivered the request for compliance. By the time the request was completed, the C1 and S had arrived at the laboratory, just as the C2 was walking out. The C1 and C2 collided into one another, upon which the C1 delivered the control, no liking, or liking induction before leaving to return to the fourth floor library.

Waiting in the laboratory was an experimenter (E). The E welcomed Ss to the lab and asked them to take a seat. The E administered a consent form and then provided the S with a packet of two self-report measures. The first measure consisted of demographic questions for use in the present experiment. The second measure was composed of filler items irrelevant to this study. After Ss completed the two measures they were given a debriefing form, after which the E solicited questions and then dismissed the S.

Meanwhile, the C1 waited in the fourth floor library for the S to return. Ss were given 10 minutes after completing the filler items to return to the library before they were considered non-compliant. All Ss were debriefed according to IRB protocol.

Instrumentation. Compliance was assessed by recording whether or not the S returned to the library to help the C1 after completing the filler items. Ss were also debriefed in accordance with IRB protocol once the study was completed.

Pilot Study

Prior to the start of the study, a pilot study was conducted to examine the efficacy of the liking inductions. The pilot study was composed of hypothetical scenarios

mirroring the conditions of the experiment. Pilot study Ss, who were not permitted to participate in the actual experiment, read a scenario and responded to several items comprising liking and obligation indices. A one-way omnibus ANOVA demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the control, liking, and no liking conditions for the liking dependent measure ($F(2, 49) = 11.96, p < .01, \eta^2 = .33$). Trend analysis revealed substantially more liking was generated by the liking induction than by the control, which generated more liking than the no liking induction ($t(1, 49) = 4.69, p < .01, r = .30$) (see Table 1 for means and standard deviations). Because previous research has also identified obligation as a mediating mechanism in the pregiving and compliance relationship, Ss also completed an index of obligation items. Another one-way ANOVA was conducted in order to ensure that obligation was not activated by the liking induction. Results of this analysis found no significant differences in obligation across conditions ($F(2, 49) = 2.19, p = 0.12, \eta^2 = .08$). See Table 1 for means and standard deviations.

Results

A preliminary analysis found that there was no statistically significant effect for sex on compliance ($\chi^2(1, N = 60) = 0.03, , p = 0.86, r = .02$). In addition, analyses were run in order to investigate if there were confederate effects. No statistically significant differences were found for the first confederate ($\chi^2(5, N = 60) = 3.54, p = 0.62$), the second confederate ($\chi^2(4, N = 60) = 4.14, p = 0.39$), or the experimenter ($\chi^2(3, N = 60) = 4.37, p = .22$).

No statistically significant difference in compliance was found when comparing the three conditions ($\chi^2(2, N = 60) = 5.25, p = 0.07$). Compliance in the liking condition,

however, was substantially higher than in the pregiving control condition ($\chi^2(1, N = 40) = 5.02, p < .05, r = .35$, *Odds Ratio* (*OR*) = 4.50), but not the no like condition ($\chi^2(1, N = 40) = 2.66, p = 0.10, r = .26$, *OR* = 3.00). Furthermore, the no liking condition was not different from the pregiving control condition ($\chi^2(1, N = 40) = 0.40, p = 0.53, r = .03$, *OR* = .75). In addition, a statistically significant difference was found when the pregiving control and the no liking condition were pooled and compared to the liking condition ($\chi^2(1, N = 60) = 4.85, p < .05, r = .28$, *OR* = 3.67) Frequencies used for the chi-square analysis can be found in Table 2.

Discussion

This study demonstrated that inducing liking can lead to a greater rate of compliance when people are presented with a pregiving favor than when presented with the favor alone. This effect is so strong that if one were to use a liking-inducing message, it would increase compliance approximately 4.5 times that of performing a pregiving favor alone. However, the effect of disliking was not as predicted. It is unclear exactly why there was increased compliance in the disliking condition, when it was expected to be lower than the liking condition or the pregiving control. It may be the case that a different mechanism (e.g., obligation) works to increase compliance when liking is not present. It is unclear from these findings whether obligation could also be at work in this causal model. Therefore, a second experiment was performed in order to investigate how obligation may affect the pregiving-compliance relationship

In addition, although not formally documented, it seemed to be the case that those in the no liking condition, in which the C1 was rude toward the C2, often laughed after the delivery of the condition message. It is plausible that Ss in this condition found the

insult to be humorous, as opposed to being rude. Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, and Schwarz (1996) did find that persons from Northern states found a similar insult amusing. It is possible that subjects in this study also found the insult to be humorous and laughed.

Experiment 2

Experiment 1 produced some evidence of an effect of liking on compliance rates. The effect obligation has on compliance rates is still unclear, however. Therefore, Experiment 2 was designed in order to examine this relationship. The procedures and design of the study were carried out in a fashion similar to Experiment 1 in order to eliminate any methodological explanations for differences between the two experiments.

Method

Subjects. Similar to Experiment 1, there were 60 Ss recruited from undergraduate communication courses at a large Midwestern university who participated in exchange for extra credit. Each S was assigned randomly without replacement to one of three conditions. The sample consisted of 24 males and 36 females; other demographic information, such as age or race, was not obtained because there were no differences found in Experiment 1. Undergraduates at the university as a whole are predominately Caucasian, with 8% African American, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% Hispanic, and 1% Native American.

Design/Procedure. The design and procedure of this experiment was similar in all aspects to Experiment 1 except for the messages in each condition. A single factor independent groups design with control, no obligation, and obligation messages was used. In the reduced obligation condition, the C1 walked the S down the hall to the laboratory and delivered the message, "*I am glad you came when you did. I really needed*

a break." Conversely, in the induced obligation condition the C1 said, "*I've had to show people where the room has been changed all day and I haven't been able to get any of my work done.*" In both conditions, the initial message was followed by the request, "*I need to get those books put away by my next class and it is taking longer than I had expected. You don't have to answer now, but when you are done here can you help me organize those books for a little while? If you can, just come back up when you are done here.*" This request was the only message delivered in the control condition. All other procedures of Experiment 2 are the same as Experiment 1.

Instrumentation. Similar to Experiment 1, compliance was assessed by recording whether or not the S returned to the library to help the C1 after completing the filler items. The only demographic information recorded in this study was the S's sex. Similar to Experiment 1, all Ss were debriefed according to IRB protocol.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was performed prior to beginning data collection for Experiment 2 in order to determine the effectiveness of the obligation inductions. A set of Ss who had not participated in any of the other portions of this study were used for this study. These Ss were presented with written scenarios that paralleled the experimental inductions. A similar analysis was performed for this pilot study as was done in Experiment 1. A one-way ANOVA demonstrated that the mean obligation scores are within sampling error of zero ($F(2, 45) = 0.67$, $p = 0.52$, $\eta^2 = .08$). A linear contrast was performed in order to examine if hypothesized conditions were in fact different from one another; however, no statistically significant differences were found ($t(1, 42) = 1.13$, $p = 0.26$). Although there was not a significant difference between these three conditions, the means were in the

expected direction and there was a relatively large effect size, $r = .16$, suggesting that with a larger sample differences may be more apparent (see Table 3 for means and standard deviations).

Because liking is known to mediate the pregiving and compliance relationship, levels of liking were measured in addition to levels of obligation. A one-way ANOVA was conducted in order to test if liking varied as a function of the obligation induction. The results indicated no statistically significant differences for liking between the obligation conditions ($F(2, 45) = 0.90$, $p = 0.41$, $\eta^2 = .04$). See Table 3 for means and standard deviations.

Results

Preliminary analysis found that there was no statistically significant sex effect on compliance ($\chi^2(1, N = 60) = 0.95$, $p = 0.33$, $r = .12$). Additional analyses examined confederate effects and found no statistically significant confederate effects for confederate two ($\chi^2(4, N = 60) = 4.14$, $p = 0.38$) or experimenter effect on compliance ($\chi^2(3, N = 60) = 4.37$, $p = 0.22$). A statistically significant effect for confederate one on compliance was found, however ($\chi^2(2, N = 60) = 6.16$, $p < .05$). This effect may be due to an unequal number of subjects and conditions collected by each of the confederates. One confederate collected more than twice as many subjects and due to the conditions being randomly assigned to each confederate this particular confederate also collected more of some conditions rather than others. Furthermore, there was a rather modest effect size, $r = .05$, indicating that there was little effect of confederate one. In addition, further analyses found that neither of the confederates nor the experimenter significantly interacted with any of the conditions.

Chi-square analysis found no statistically significant differences among the three experimental conditions ($\chi^2(2, N = 60) = 3.53, p = 0.17$). Further analysis found no statistically significant differences between the no obligation and the control ($\chi^2(1, N = 40) = 2.56, p = 0.11, r = 0.25$, OR = 2.85) or the obligation and the control condition ($\chi^2(1, N = 40) = 2.56, p = 0.11, r = 0.25$, OR = 2.85). Null effects outcomes were also obtained comparing each experimental condition with the pooled data from the other experimental condition and control group. A comparison between obligation and the pooled findings of the no obligation and control condition yielded no statistically significant effects ($\chi^2(1, N = 60) = 0.88, p = 0.35, r = 0.12$, OR = 1.73). In addition, a comparison between no obligation and the pooled findings of the obligation and control conditions also did not yield statistically significant findings ($\chi^2(1, N = 60) = 0.88, p = 0.35, r = 0.12$, OR = 1.73). Table 4 presents the pertinent frequency data.

Discussion

The findings of Experiment 2 were mixed. Although the induced obligation message did not increase compliance from the control at conventionally accepted levels of statistical significance, it did yield a modest effect, *OR* = 2.85. This result suggests that if obligation messages were employed, they would increase the compliance rate by almost three times that of a control message. Although these findings are consistent with the hypothesis that obligation could increase compliance, the findings of the no obligation message make it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions. Similar to the no liking message, the no obligation condition seemed to have a reverse effect than hypothesized and actually increased compliance over the control, although the effect was insufficiently strong to reject the null hypothesis at conventional levels of statistical

significance. Thus, it was comparable to the obligation message in rate of compliance. It is unclear why in the no obligation condition subjects complied at a rate comparable to the induced obligation condition. It may be the case that there is no effect for obligation. In order to investigate these results further and in order to investigate if obligation and liking interact with one another, a third and final study was conducted.

Experiment 3

The Experiment 1 results suggest that there may be an effect for liking, and the Experiment 2 results indicate no effect for obligation. These findings seem to support previous research that has demonstrated that there is an effect for liking, while there is no effect for obligation (Goei et al., 2003). Nevertheless, previous theory and research claim that there is an obligation effect on compliance after a presentation of a favor (Gouldner, 1960; Regan, 1971). It is possible that the effect of obligation is only apparent when it interacts with liking. Therefore, a third experiment was designed that varied both liking and obligation simultaneously.

In addition, the first two experiments differ in an important way, which may explain the difference in compliance rates between the two studies. In Experiment 1 the liking induction occurred after the request for compliance; whereas, in Experiment 2 the obligation induction occurred before the request for compliance. This order confound was eliminated in the third study by having the request follow both the liking and obligation inductions.

This experiment has the added advantage of allowing the non-additive effect of liking and obligation on compliance, if it exists, to be estimated. Put another way, it

allows the investigator to examine the possibility that the effect of liking on compliance is contingent on obligation, or the reverse.

Method

Subjects. The sample consisted of 44 people enrolled in undergraduate communication classes at a large Midwestern university. Ss were offered extra credit in their class in exchange for participation. Each S was assigned randomly to one of four experimental conditions with the constraint that an equal number of Ss were assigned to each condition. The sample consisted of 18 males and 26 females.

Design. This experiment was a 2 (liking, no liking) x 2 (obligation, no obligation) independent groups factorial design. Compliant behavior was examined after the presentation of a pregiving favor. The liking induction was worded, "*I'm so sorry! Are you okay?*" The no liking condition message was modified slightly to, "*Watch where you are going!*" Obligation was induced with the following message, "*I've had to show people where the room has been changed all day and I haven't been able to get any of my work done.*" The no obligation message was, "*I am glad you came when you did, I needed a break.*"

Procedure. The procedure was similar to that in Experiments 1 and 2, the only exception being that the bump between the two Cs occurred just after the C1 and S exited the elevator to the basement (where the second room was located). As the C1 rounded the corner the C2 was waiting and ran into the C1. The liking messages were then delivered as in Experiment 1. This delivery was then followed a few seconds later by the obligation message and then finally the request, "*I need to get those books put away by this evening and it is taking longer than I anticipated. You don't have to answer now, but when you*

are done here can you help me organize those books for a little while? If you can, just come back up when you are done here."

Instrumentation. Compliance was measured by recording whether or not the *S* returned to the library to help the C1 after completing the filler items as in the first two experiments. Similar to Experiments 1 and 2, Ss were debriefed according to IRB protocol.

Results

Preliminary analyses investigated whether there were effects for confederates or experimenters. Although all of the confederates and experimenters differed from each other, these factors did not interact with the liking or obligation inductions.

An ANOVA produced no evidence of a main effect for obligation ($F(1, 40) = .47$, $p = 0.50$, $r = .12$). However, a statistically significant main effect for liking was found ($F(1, 40) = 4.19$, $p < .05$, $r = .30$) such that compliance was higher in the liking condition than in the no liking condition (see Table 5). Furthermore, there was a statistically significant interaction between liking and obligation ($F(1, 40) = 4.19$, $p < .05$, $r = .30$).

Upon examining the pattern of results in table 5 it appears that there is an effect for liking when obligation is present, but no effect for liking when obligation is absent. In order to test this effect a contrast analysis was performed, and the relevant contrast coefficients are presented in Table 6. An examination of condition means indicated that this contrast model fit the data well ($F(1, 40) = 4.53$, $p < .05$, $r = .32$).

General Discussion

Previous research has debated which mechanism, liking or obligation, mediates the pregiving favor-compliance relationship. In this paper three experiments were

designed to investigate the mediating mechanisms of a pregiving favor on compliance. Experiment 1 and 2 both found mixed findings for the effect of liking and obligation on compliance. In Experiment 1 the inconclusive findings were due to problems with the no liking treatment, in which some Ss laughed at the no liking induction. Mixed findings were found in Experiment 2 as well; it was unclear why there was an equal compliance rate in the no obligation condition and the obligation condition, when it was hypothesized that the no obligation condition would have the lowest rate of compliance. Therefore, a third experiment was designed to remedy the problems of the previous experiments and to examine if, and how, liking and obligation interact. The findings of Experiment 3 indicate a main effect for liking.

The interaction performed in the omnibus ANOVA did yield a significant finding. A contrast was performed in which the no liking, obligation condition was compared to the liking, obligation condition, which found a significant difference with a strong effect of $r = .32$. This result indicates that the effect for liking is contingent on feelings of obligation. Specifically, the effect for liking is strongest when there are accompanying feelings of obligation. This supports Gouldner's (1960) claim that states that the norm of reciprocity is strong and prevalent, which has not been demonstrated satisfactorily in previous work in the area of pregiving favors and compliance (Goei et al., 2003). Specifically, this study demonstrated that obligation is important because of its impact on increasing compliance when coupled with liking.

Another consistency among many pregiving studies is that the request for compliance is a prosocial one. It may be that the norm of reciprocity extends to non-prosocial requests as well. Obligation with a pregiving favor may function very

differently with an anti-social request than a prosocial request. To date, only one study (Boster, Fediuk, & Kotowski, 2001) has examined how a pregiving request would function when the request for compliance was anti-social (i.e., not reporting a confederate who was cheating on an exam), and the authors report that participants do not feel a sense of obligation to comply with such a request. They suggest that the feelings of obligation that arise from a pregiving favor are eliminated when the request for compliance is anti-social, or that the pregiving favor is reinterpreted as a bribe and not a favor at all, which would negate any effect a favor might induce. It is worthwhile for future research to examine how pregiving favors and their mechanisms are affected by different types of requests. Examining anti-social requests further and the cognitive processing of pregiving favors may elucidate the norm of reciprocity further and give a richer understanding of social interaction.

Although Gouldner (1960) states that the norm of reciprocity is both strong and prevalent, the present study notwithstanding, there has been considerable difficulty in documenting this claim. The pregiving and compliance literature would benefit from a meta-analysis in order to examine the effect of obligation across studies and possible moderators of the effect. It could be that the norm of reciprocity is not nearly as strong, or prevalent, as Gouldner (1960) suggests. It may also be the case that human cognitive development has implications for the norm of reciprocity. A large majority of pregiving studies are performed on student samples, and it is possible that those in this age range are not yet highly susceptible to normative pressure such as the norm of reciprocity.

Finally, mediators other than liking and obligation have yet to be examined carefully. Goei and Boster (2005) suggest that participants may comply with a request not

because of feelings of obligation, but instead due to feelings of gratitude toward the favor doer. Goei and Boster (2005) do in fact find that participants have increased feelings of gratitude toward the favor doer, but do not have increased feelings of obligation toward the favor doer. In addition, they found that gratitude has a positive effect on compliance, whereas obligation did not. Additionally, Barlett and DeSteno (2006) found that gratitude has an impact on prosocial compliance behavior that is distinctly different than general positive affect. To date only these two studies have examined gratitude as a potential mediator. There appears to be great potential for gratitude as a possible explanatory mechanism for pregiving and compliance that future research should continue to examine.

Yet another possible mediator is reputation. It is possible that participants comply with a pregiving request because not to comply would threaten their reputation. If one is concerned about reputation one might engage in impression management strategies in order to maintain a positive reputation. Not complying with a request after someone performs a favor may lead to a negative evaluation by others. Therefore, in order to avoid the negative evaluation, and possible negative social sanctions, one complies with such requests. Taking an impression management approach to understanding how the pregiving and compliance relationship is mediated might give new insight into human interaction. Future research would benefit greatly from examining the possibility and effect of such a mediator.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Pilot Study for Experiment 1: Liking

	Condition		
	Control	No Liking	Liking
Liking			
Mean	1.75	0.39	2.17
SD	1.05	1.40	0.75
Obligation			
Mean	0.01	-0.44	0.54
SD	1.38	1.47	1.18

Table 2

Compliance Rates for Experiment 1: Liking

	Condition		
Compliance	Control	No Liking	Liking
Complied	8 (40%)	10 (50%)	15 (75%)
Did Not Comply	12 (60%)	10 (50%)	5 (25%)

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Pilot Study for Experiment 2: Obligation

	Condition		
	Control	No Obligation	Obligation
Liking			
Mean	0.12	-0.33	0.32
SD	1.23	1.87	1.75
Obligation			
Mean	2.01	1.69	1.48
SD	1.16	0.91	1.22

Table 4

Compliance Rates for Experiment 2: Obligation

	Condition		
Compliance	Control	No Obligation	Obligation
Complied	9 (45%)	14 (70%)	14 (70%)
Did Not Comply	11 (55%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)

Table 5

Compliance Rates for Experiment 3

	Message-First		Message-	
Second				
Compliance	No Liking	Liking	No Liking	Liking
Obligation	0 (.00)	6 (.54)	5 (.45)	4 (.36)
No obligation	4 (.36)	4 (.36)	1 (.09)	5 (.45)

Table 6

Contrast Coefficients for Experiment 3

	Message-First (only)	
Compliance	No Liking	Liking
Obligation	-1	1
No obligation	0	0

References

Baron, R.A. (1971). Behavioral effects of interpersonal attraction: Compliance with requests from liked and disliked others. *Psychonomic Science, 25*, 325-326.

Boster, F.J, Fediuk, T.A., & Kotowski, M.R. (2001). The effectiveness of an altruistic appeal in the presence and absence of favors. *Communication Monographs, 68*, 340-346.

Boster, F., Rodriguez, J., Cruz, M., & Marshall, L. (1995). The relative effectiveness of a direct request message and a pregiving message on friends and strangers. *Communication Research, 22*, 475-484.

Burger, J.M., Soroka, S., Gonzago, K., Murphy, E., & Somervell, E. (2001). The effect of fleeting attraction on compliance to requests. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*, 1578-1586.

Cohen, D., Nisbett, R.E., Bowdle, B.F., & Schwarz, N. (1996). Insult, aggression, and the southern culture of honor: An "experimental ethnography". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70*, 945-960.

Goei, R., Massi-Lindsey, L.L., Boster, F.J., Skalski, P.D., & Bowman, J.M. (2003). The mediating roles of liking and obligation on the relationship between favors and compliance. *Communication Research, 39*, 178-197.

Gouldner, A.W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American Sociological Review, 25*, 161-178.

Greenberg, M.S., & Frisch, D.M. (1972). Effect of intentionality on willingness to reciprocate a favor. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 8*, 99-111.

Marwell, G., & Schmidt, D.R. (1967). Dimensions of compliance-gaining behavior: An empirical analysis. *Sociometry, 30*, 350-364.

Regan, D.T. (1971). Effects of a favor and liking on compliance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 7*, 627-639.

Walster, E., Walster, G.W., & Bershcheid, E. (1978). *Equity: Theory and Research.* Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Whatley, M.A., Webster, J.M., Smith, R.H., & Rhodes, A. (1999). The effect of a favor on public and private compliance: How internalized is the norm of reciprocity? *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 21*, 251-259.