

AN INVESTIGATION OF MECHANISMS UNDERLYING HELPING IN THE
WORKPLACE: RELATIONAL IDENTITY, EMPATHY, AND HELPING BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

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Given the interdependent and interpersonal nature of organizations, it is not surprising that the beneficial effects of helping behavior for individuals, groups, and their organizations have been well documented (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Podsakoff et al, 2000; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). However, little is known regarding how to elicit such behavior in the workplace. Thus, a more complete understanding of the mechanisms and processes that lead to helping behavior is needed (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002). To begin to explicate this critical process, the present study manipulated state identity level (individual, relational, or collective) in order to stimulate state levels of empathy and perspective-taking and subsequent helping behavior toward a previously unknown other. It was predicted that participants in the state relational identity condition (thinking of oneself in terms of close peer relationships) would experience the greatest empathy and subsequently be the most likely to help. Although this was not supported, several interesting results emerged. Condition and trait relational identity interacted such that relational condition participants high in trait relational identity were significantly more likely to help than individuals low in trait relational identity. Further, participants who described themselves as helpful at the beginning of the study were significantly more likely to help than individuals who did not describe themselves in this way. Finally, the percentage of phrases used to describe oneself that reflected a concern for others was significantly related to the choice to help and the number of hours volunteered.

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INTRODUCTION

"Empathy is forgetting oneself in the joys and sorrows of another, so much so that you actually feel that the joy or sorrow experienced by another is your own joy and sorrow. Empathy involves complete identification with another." -- Dada Vaswani

Helping and other prosocial behavior is critical in today's workplace. The interdependent and interpersonal nature of organizations necessitates the interaction of coworkers, supervisors, subordinates, and consultants, among a multitude of other work-related roles. This means that employees rely on coordination, support and help from one another to accomplish tasks, remain motivated, and succeed (Ragins & Dutton, 2006). Reflecting this institutional interdependence and a focus on employee engagement, the criticality of prosocial behavior for individuals, groups, and organizational effectiveness has been well documented (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Podsakoff et al, 2000; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). However, although it is recognized that organizations benefit from employees helping one another, a key issue that remains is how to promote and elicit such behavior. Thus, a more complete understanding of the mechanisms and processes that lead to helping behavior is needed (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002).

Examining identity, or the extent to which one defines oneself by certain information (e.g., one's organization, gender, personal characteristics, etc.), provides one approach to understanding helping behavior. Identity is a foundation of workplace affect and behavior (Brickson, 2000; Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993; Tyler, 1999), and has been found to be related to interpersonal outcomes (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & de Cremer, 2004).

Relational identity in particular may prove useful for understanding engagement in helping behavior. This aspect of identity reflects the extent to which one defines oneself by relationships with others, focuses on the welfare of others, and thinks of oneself as a relational partner (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010). Given that helping is an interpersonal behavior, it might be better understood by looking at what relationships mean to, or how important relationships are to, a person. Acknowledging the interpersonal nature of organizations, researchers (e.g., Settoon & Mossholder, 2002; Ragins & Dutton, 2006) have emphasized the need to study workplace behavior in general -- and helping behavior in a work context in particular -- from a relational standpoint. Reflecting this perspective, relational identity can provide a lens through which to understand such processes.

In the case of helping behavior, being concerned for the welfare of others and feeling embedded in one's relationships with others (relational identity) may stimulate empathy toward other relational partners in the workplace (i.e., coworkers). Empathy, an "other-oriented emotional response congruent with the perceived welfare of another person" (Batson, 1998, p.300), is the most widely cited and supported antecedent of helping behavior (Batson, 1991). Therefore, through the mechanism of empathy, relational identity may provide a platform for better understanding and stimulating helping behavior in the workplace.

Reflecting this, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between relational identity and helping behavior, utilizing empathy as the means of that effect. In the pages that follow, I first discuss the nature of helping behavior and its role in the workplace. Second, I review the most commonly cited and supported antecedent of helping, empathy, which can be conceptually divided into affective (empathic concern) and cognitive (perspective-taking) components. These components can be conceptualized as trait-based or state-based. Third, I

provide an argument for relational identity as an ignition for state-based empathy, and subsequently, helping behavior toward coworkers. Fourth, a model is developed and hypotheses generated on the linkages of relational identity, empathy, and helping behaviors. Although the relationship between relational identity and helping behavior has been suggested in the literature, it has yet to be empirically tested. The goal of the present paper, therefore, is to further develop and empirically test this model.

Helping Behavior

Prosocial behaviors have been defined as “positive social acts carried out to produce and maintain the well-being and integrity of others” (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986, p. 710). The specific behaviors implied by the term “prosocial behavior” are diverse, including helping others, putting in extra effort, whistle-blowing, and volunteering, among others (Batson, 1998; Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). Of these, helping others has been a primary focus, given its practical and apparent effects. Helping behaviors have been operationalized in many ways, including providing aid to coworkers, helping a researcher with additional tasks, and volunteering time and money to someone in need.

In addition to being studied in social psychology, politics, sociology, and philosophy, helping behaviors have also been investigated in the workplace under the labels of contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993, 1997), organizational spontaneity (George & Brief, 1992), prosocial organizational behavior (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; George, 1990), interpersonal citizenship behavior (Mossholder, Settoon, & Henagan, 2005), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB; Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983).

These constructs are similar in their capturing of prosocial behavior, and more specifically, of helping behaviors, and are often used interchangeably. For example, OCBs in

organizations are “directed at helping or providing support to coworkers or peers” (Podsakoff et al, 2009, p. 126). More specifically, Organ’s (1988) OCB dimensions of altruism, courtesy, cheerleading and peacekeeping are described as capturing an overall helping dimension. Similarly, the dimensions outlined by Organ can be encapsulated by William and Anderson’s (1991) OCB-I dimension, or citizenship behaviors directed toward other individuals. Prosocial behaviors in the workplace also align with the third behavioral pattern that Katz (1964) described as necessary for effective organizations, which are those behaviors that are beyond specific role requirements. Such extra-role behaviors have been cited as an essential ingredient in an effective workplace (Penner et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al, 2009).

The beneficial effects of helping behaviors in the workplace have been studied extensively (Penner et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al., 1997). A recent meta-analysis summarized the literature regarding the relationship of OCBs with outcomes at the individual, group, and organizational levels (Podsakoff et al., 2009). The authors found that OCBs were positively related with job performance, unit performance, unit productivity, and unit efficiency; and significantly negatively related with turnover intentions, absenteeism, individual turnover, customer satisfaction, unit costs and unit turnover. Helping behaviors have been found to be related to the overall effectiveness of groups and organizations, turnover at the individual and group levels, morale and cohesiveness, and customer satisfaction (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

Helping behaviors have also been posited to relate to organizational effectiveness, although this notion was assumed rather than empirically tested until recently (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997). Podsakoff, Ahearne, and MacKenzie (1997) found that helping behaviors in paper mill crews were related to both the quantity and quality of paper produced. Similarly, in a study of limited-menu restaurants, Walz and Neihoff (2000) found that helping behaviors were

related to overall operating efficiency, quality of performance, and revenue to full-time equipment. In this study, helping behaviors, along with sportsmanship and civic virtue, two additional components of OCB, accounted for approximately 29% of the variance in the criterion measures assessed. In addition, there is evidence that helping behaviors are predictive of other organizationally relevant outcomes. For example, Koys (2001) examined human resource outcomes (employee job satisfaction, OCB, and turnover) and organizational effectiveness (profit and customer satisfaction) longitudinally, and found that organizational citizenship behaviors influenced the profitability of the organization. Researchers have put forth many potential reasons for the support of helping behavior's relation to effectiveness measures, including enhancing coworker productivity, freeing up resources for more productive purposes, more effective means of coordinating activity, enhancing performance stability, and enhancing the organization's ability to attract the best candidates (Podsakoff et al., 1997). Borman and Motowidlo (1993) similarly suggested that such effects could be due to contextual performance's support of a positive social environment.

Helping behaviors have been found to predict both turnover intentions and actual turnover in organizations. In a study of 11 companies, Chen, Hui, and Sego (1998) found substantial support for supervisor-rated organizational citizenship behaviors' prediction of employee turnover 10 months later. Likewise, Mossholder, Settoon, and Henegan (2005) found that interpersonal citizenship behaviors among health care employees predicted turnover five years later. At the group level, helping behaviors have also been found to be negatively related to unit-level turnover. For example, in a study of employees from 86 hotels, Sun, Aryee, and Law (2007) found that unit service-oriented OCBs were significantly positively related to unit productivity, and significantly negatively related to unit turnover.

Customer satisfaction has also been found to be related to helping behaviors. For example, Walz and Niehoff (2000) found that helping behaviors were positively related to customer satisfaction, and negatively related to customer complaints. While this relationship may occur for several reasons, Yen and Niehoff (2004) contend that altruistic helping behaviors may promote effective teamwork and cooperation which lead to the group more effectively working with customers.

Additionally, helping behaviors have been found to be related to social outcomes in the workplace, such as morale, spirit, or cohesiveness. George and Bettenhausen (1990) found that group-level prosocial behavior was positively related with group cohesiveness. Further, in a meta-analysis of substitutes for leadership, employee job attitudes, perceptions, and performance; Podsakoff et al., (1996) found that altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue (five aspects of organizational citizenship behavior) were positively related to group cohesiveness. Taken together, these findings illustrate the role of helping behaviors in many positive organizational outcomes.

Empathy: Antecedent of Helping Behavior

Because of the beneficial outcomes associated with helping behaviors, the antecedents of such behaviors have been extensively studied (Batson, 1998). The most widely cited source of prosocial behavior has been empathy (Batson, 1991; Batson, 1998; Davis, 1994; Kamdar, McAllister, & Turban, 2006; Penner et al., 2005), which can be defined as an “other-oriented emotional response congruent with the perceived welfare of another person” (Batson, 1998, p.300).

Empathy’s role in predicting helping behaviors has been widely supported (see Batson, 1991; Batson, 1998; Batson & Shaw, 1991; Dovidio, Allen, & Schroeder, 1990; Dovidio,

Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Penner, 2005; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005 for reviews). These studies have replicated the role of empathy in predicting many prosocial helping behaviors, including cooperation (e.g., Batson & Moran, 1999), donating time or money (e.g., Batson, Cowles, & Coke, 1979), volunteering (e.g., Davis, 1983), and providing assistance to a peer (e.g., Dovidio, Allen, & Schroeder, 1990). Furthermore, as Eisenberg and Miller (1987) noted in response to their meta-analytic findings supporting the relationship between empathy and helping behaviors, “it is likely that researchers will obtain more conclusive evidence of a link between the two as more attention is paid to the operationalization and conceptualization of both empathy and altruism, and the nature of the developmental processes underlying their association” (p. 115).

Components of empathy and their relation to helping behavior. Research on empathy and helping behavior has examined two characteristics relevant to empathy’s underlying nature, i.e., empathy as an affective response or a cognitive response (Duan & Hill, 1996; Gladstein, 1983). Some researchers have described the construct as affective, in terms of feeling the emotions of other people, or having emotional responses for other people (e.g., Stotland, 1969). In contrast, others have conceptualized empathy as cognitive or “intelligent,” in terms of an ability to understand another person’s viewpoint (e.g., Kerr & Speroff, 1954). To establish this distinction and limit confusion resulting from contrasting conceptualizations, researchers have acknowledged this difference and labeled these as two distinct *types* of the same construct. For example, in a comprehensive review of the construct across counseling, developmental, and social psychology perspectives, Gladstein (1983) noted this difference and called for accurate delineation of affective/cognitive empathy across studies. He defined “affective empathy” as

“responding with the same emotion to another person’s emotion” (p.468), and defined “cognitive empathy” as “intellectually taking the role or perspective of another person” (p.468).

Other authors have made this distinction as well (e.g., Batson, 1991; Davis, 1983; Feshbach, 1975; Strayer, 1987), including organizational psychologists (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002). For example, affective empathy, also referred to as “empathetic concern,” has been defined as the “emotional experience of compassion and feeling for another in need and is directly associated with empathetic responding outcomes” (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002, p. 258). Cognitive empathy, frequently termed “perspective-taking,” has also been defined as cognitively “adopting the perspective of another” that “may produce feelings of concern and helping behavior” (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002, p. 257), or the spontaneous adoption of the “psychological point of view of others” (Davis, 1983, p. 114).

Although these two types of empathy are found to correlate to some extent (Davis, 1983; Kamdar et al., 2006; Parker & Axtell, 2001), they are considered distinct, both empirically and due to their underlying psychological mechanisms. Thus, although they may be related, it has been widely accepted that these distinguishable elements of empathy exist (Davis, 1983; Duan & Hill, 1996; Gladstein, 1986; Kamdar et al., 2006; Parker & Axtell, 2001). In support of this position, Davis (1983) measured dispositional affective empathy (empathetic concern) and cognitive empathy (perspective-taking), and found that although they were significantly correlated (mean of .33 across samples), they held distinct relationships with other variables of interest. Affective and cognitive empathy were differentially related to variables of interpersonal functioning, including shyness and social anxiety; measures of self esteem; measures of emotionality such as fearfulness; sensitivity to others, such as other-directedness and public self-consciousness; and measures of intelligence. Further, affective and cognitive empathy

demonstrated differential relationships with other pre-existing measures of empathy. Affective empathy held a much higher correlation with a pre-existing emotional measure of empathy, whereas perspective-taking held a much higher correlation with a pre-existing cognitive measure of empathy. Similarly, Eisenberg and colleagues (1994) found that empathic concern and perspective-taking held differential relationships with other variables of interest, including emotionality and regulation indexes. More specifically, while affective empathy was generally positively correlated with emotional intensity and emotional reactivity, perspective-taking was unrelated to most of these emotionality measures. Further, perspective-taking was consistently related to regulation measures, such as attentional control, inhibition control, and emotional regulation, while affective empathy was not. These results support the notion that affective and cognitive empathy should be empirically measured as distinct types of empathy.

Researchers have called for careful measurement and separation of affective (empathetic concern) and cognitive (perspective-taking) types of empathy in order to study the distinct relationships these components may have with various other measures, such as helping behavior. Further, researchers have noted that “overlapping terms of cognitive and affective empathy should be avoided” in order to discover how affective and cognitive empathy may “exist separately, coexist, or influence each other” (Duan & Hill, 1996, p.263). Given the call for conceptual distinction between these two types of empathy and the demonstrated distinctions in relationships with other variables of interest, the present study will assess both affective and cognitive empathy.

Empathy: Trait and State. In addition to the affective-cognitive distinction, empathy has been studied as both a stable trait and as a state-like transient (emotional or cognitive) response. Empathy has frequently been measured as an individual difference characteristic.

Termed dispositional empathy (Davis, 1983), empathic disposition (Hogan, 1969), and interpersonal orientation (Rogers, 1957), trait based definitions describe empathy as an ability to "know another person's inner experience" (Buie, 1981, p.282), or more broadly, as the individual differences in reactions of one individual to the observed experiences of another (Davis, 1983). There is extensive support for the dispositional empathy – helping behavior relationship (see Batson, 1991; Batson & Shaw, 1991; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005, for reviews).

In a review of this relationship, Eisenberg and Miller (1987) compared the methods and measures by contexts in which empathy and helping behavior had been examined. The researchers found this relationship held across many measures of empathy, including responses to self-reported trait empathy scales and other-reported dispositional empathy. Further, the relationship held across a wide array of helping behaviors, including volunteering time and money, sharing, peer reports of helping, altruistic choices in prizes for games, volunteering to help peers, planned helping, aiding in cleaning up, volunteering for additional studies, helping in an emergency, and spontaneous prosocial acts. The researchers concluded that there is general support of the relationship between empathy and prosocial behaviors.

Some researchers have assessed dispositional empathy (affective or cognitive) within organizations (Parker & Axtell, 2001; Settoon & Mossholder, 2002) as well. Given that “fostering effective interpersonal relationships within modern organizations, where pressures for coordination and integration are high” (Parker & Axtell, 2001, p.1088) is a fundamental concern for the workplace, it is necessary to understand the mechanisms underlying OCBs and other other-oriented behaviors. In response to this notion, organizational psychology studies assessing dispositional empathy and subsequent helping behaviors have emerged. For example, in two

studies of engineers in a multinational conglomerate, Joireman, Kamdar, Daniels, and Duell (2006) found that dispositional empathy was related to, and predicted, the dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior such as altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, and courtesy, although not sportsmanship.

Likewise, McNeely and Meglino (1994) examined secretaries' personality characteristics and multisource ratings of prosocial behavior directed toward other individuals and directed at one's organization. They found that while reward equity and recognition for desirable behavior were related to prosocial organizational behavior, dispositional empathy predicted prosocial individual behavior, or prosocial behavior that is directed at another individual. Further, empathy explained significant variance in such behavior beyond job satisfaction. In a study of employees at a regional medical center and a university service division, Settoon and Mossholder (2002) found that dispositional empathy mediated the relationships between relationship quality variables and person focused interpersonal citizenship behaviors.

In two studies of call service employees and library employees, Bettencourt, Gwinner, & Meuter (2001) found that both cognitive (perspective taking) and affective empathy explained unique variance in two of the three forms of service-oriented OCB: Participation and service delivery. As with McNeely and Meglino's (1994) findings, the helping behavior outcomes that empathy predicted were interpersonal, whereas the third service-oriented OCB, loyalty, was organization directed.

Kamdar et al. (2006) found that empathy and perspective taking (correlated at .33) both predicted role-defined interpersonal helping among engineers of a Fortune 500 company. That is, those high in emotional empathy and perspective taking were more likely to view helping as role-defined. Further, both measures significantly predicted interpersonal helping as rated by

supervisors (affective empathy, $\beta = .22$, $p < .01$; perspective-taking, $\beta = .28$, $p < .01$). Thus, dispositional empathy and perspective-taking have shown robust relationships with helping behaviors, both in and out of the workplace.

Empathy has also been conceptualized and measured as a cognitive-affective *state* (e.g., Barrett-Lennard, 1962; Greenson, 1960, 1967; Hoffman, 1984). Also termed “empathetic concern” or “empathetic response,” state empathy can be described as the “other-oriented feelings congruent with the perceived welfare of another person” (Batson, 1994, p. 606), or an “emotional response elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of someone else” (Batson & Coke, 1981, p. 169) within a particular context or time. From this perspective, empathy is situation-specific. That is, empathetic concern can occur in response to a given situation, despite one’s typical standing on dispositional empathy. Because of this, in order to predict behavior, it is critical to go beyond a person’s typical standing on a given trait, to also examine the situations in which certain behaviors may occur (Murtha, Kanfer, & Ackerman, 1996). Reflecting this, there has been a growing concern for better understanding the role of context in psychological research (Rousseu & Fried, 2001).

Research in many areas of organizational psychology has supported the influence of situational effects, beyond or through interaction with, dispositional tendencies (e.g., selective attention, Mischel, Ebbesen, & Zeiss, 1972; ethical decision making, Trevino, 1986; See Kendrick & Funder, 1988 for a review). Further, a psychological state is more proximal to an outcome (e.g. helping behavior) than a dispositional trait is to that behavior (Ford & Oswald, 2003; Judge & Ilies, 2004; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). For example, Judge and Ilies (2004) found that positive and negative mood (state affect) better predicted job satisfaction than did trait positive and negative affectivity. Similarly, Parker, Williams, and Turner (2006) found

that psychological states of role breadth self-efficacy and flexible role orientation better predicted proactive behavior than did dispositional proactivity, and that these states mediated the relationship between dispositional proactivity and proactive behaviors. These approaches reflect the approach of Kanfer (1992) and propose that trait and situational variables are more distal to behavior than transient states, such as mood, emotion, and self-efficacy.

As a result, although predicting behavior from trait characteristics is possible, measuring state variables may predict greater variance in behavior. In this case, the transient empathetic state in a given situation is more proximal to one's helping behavior than one's typical standing on dispositional empathy. To date, when empathy has been measured in organizational psychology, it is often assessed solely as a dispositional trait, neglecting more proximal states. As a result, little is known regarding how to stimulate empathy and subsequent helping behavior in the workplace, despite the substantial support of empathy's influence in this domain.

Further, by viewing empathy as an alterable state, researchers can utilize interventions and training to increase empathetic responses (Duan & Hill, 1996; e.g., Dovidio, Allen, & Schoeder, 1990; Fultz, Batson, Fortenbach, McCarthy, & Varney, 1986; Graziano et al., 2007; Schroeder, Dovidio, Sibicky, Matthews, & Allen, 1988). Notably, empathetic responses, or state empathy, have been successfully induced or manipulated. In fact, in their meta-analysis of the empathy-helping behavior relationship, Eisenberg and Miller (1987) concluded that "most of the experimental procedures used by investigators to manipulate empathetic responding by altering study participants' internal states have shown that state empathy relates positively to prosocial behavior" (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987, p.110).

However, despite the recognition of the importance of assessing states and understanding their antecedents, the state empathy literature is lacking in two regards: It lacks a focus on empathy's antecedents and has utilized inadequate measures of state empathy.

First, research that has conceptualized empathy as a transient state has almost exclusively been done by manipulating empathy directly by telling participants to “take the perspective” of someone or to focus on what another person is feeling. From this literature, there is support for the relationship between empathy and helping behavior, yet we know little about the antecedents of empathy, or how to stimulate it more naturally.

For instance, Graziano and colleagues (2007) examined agreeableness, empathy (conceptualized as state empathetic concern), and subsequent helping in students. The researchers played a “radio broadcast” about a fictional fellow student who had lost her parents and a sibling in a car crash. The participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: An empathetic focus condition, in which they were told to focus on the emotions in the broadcast and imagine what the student was feeling, or a technical focus, in which they were told to pick out the technical methods used by the radio programmers. After hearing the broadcast, participants filled out state measures including empathetic concern, and then were given the opportunity to volunteer their time to help the fellow student. The authors found that state empathetic concern mediated the relationship between agreeableness and later helping behavior.

Dovidio, Allen, and Schroeder (1990) manipulated empathy by creating similar observational set conditions. After playing an audio interview between a radio host and a fellow student in need, the authors told participants to either think about how the person in the tape must be feeling (high-empathy condition) or to pay attention to the situation described (low-empathy condition). Over the course of the study, participants reported their empathetic concern three

times: Following the tape, following a description of a secondary problem listed in a bulletin board statement, and at the conclusion of the study. Participants in the high-empathy condition reported greater empathetic concern and helped more often than those in the low-empathy condition. Further, mediation analyses indicated that empathetic concern mediated the relationship between observational-set and helping behavior.

State empathy has also been assessed using fMRI techniques. In a recent neurological study of empathy, Lamm, Batson, and Decety (2007) showed participants video clips of “patients” undergoing painful auditory stimulation as a type of experimental treatment for a neurological disease. Both self-report and fMRI measures indicated that participants told to take the perspective of the “patient” experienced greater empathetic concern, providing support for the malleability of empathy. Although these studies illustrate the influence of empathy on helping behavior, and that empathy can be manipulated directly, they say little regarding how empathy may be stimulated through potential antecedents.

Another concern of the state empathy literature is the lack of consistent, appropriate measures of state affective empathy and perspective-taking. For instance, acknowledging the need for state measurement of empathy, Parker and Axtell (2001) performed a cross-sectional study of cooperation and helping behavior in the workplace. The researchers conceptualized empathy in the workplace as a state, noting that “organizational factors can change and shape perspective taking” (p. 1086). The researchers assessed the extent to which employees of a large glass manufacturer took the perspective of their suppliers, or those workers that completed a task prior to theirs in the manufacturing process. To assess the situational constraints, they measured job autonomy and amount of interaction with these suppliers as workplace antecedents of perspective-taking, and found that these relationships were mediated by integrated understanding

and production ownership. Further, the authors found that perspective-taking was related to cooperation and helping behaviors. Thus, the researchers took a step toward understanding the antecedents of state empathy. However, state perspective-taking in this case was operationalized as a combination of affective empathy and positive attributions about suppliers (e.g., “I feel concerned with for my suppliers if they are under pressure”), which does not directly align with conceptualizations of cognitive and affective empathy. Further, although the authors acknowledge the importance of assessing state empathy and perspective-taking, “state” in this case seems to refer to long term, as it is not assessed immediately prior to helping behavior. Research is thus needed to further address situational effects on empathy, and how empathy can thus be malleable in a state form.

In summary, empathy (affective and cognitive [perspective-taking]) has been found to be related to helping behaviors across various contexts. These results have been replicated for both dispositional and state conceptualizations of empathy, although state conceptualizations of empathy have remained largely absent from the organizational behavior and psychology literature – and thus has overlooked empathy as an alterable mechanism for stimulating resultant behavior. Further, although state empathy has been successfully induced directly in social psychology (e.g., Batson & Coke, 1981; Dovidio, Allen, & Schroeder, 1990; Stotland, 1969), little research has been done to explicate how empathy can be promoted through antecedents in the workplace or the factors by which it is stimulated.

Moreover, many researchers have called for a greater understanding of antecedents of helping behavior in the workplace (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Parker & Axtell, 2001; Podsakoff et al., 2000; Settoon & Mossholder, 2002). Some have suggested that organizations would benefit from hiring candidates with greater empathetic tendencies (Penner et al., 2005), yet this approach

does not indicate how to stimulate such empathy in order to encourage helping behavior. Rather than additional research into dispositional empathy and its relationship with helping behavior, then, there is a need to investigate how to stimulate empathic feelings and cognitions, thus illuminating how helping behaviors can be promoted (Penner et al., 2005). Additionally, the literature is lacking consistent measures of state affective and cognitive empathy, as a result of generally manipulating them directly.

Therefore, although it is well supported that empathy is related to helping behavior, there is still much to learn regarding the antecedents of state empathy and the ways by which it can be promoted in the workplace. Thus, given that both cognitive and affective empathy have been found to predict helping behavior, both in and out of the workplace, and that state empathetic concern and perspective-taking have been altered successfully in the literature, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1a: Empathetic concern (affective, state empathy) will be related to helping behavior, in that those participants who have a stronger empathetic response will be more likely to demonstrate helping behaviors than those participants who have a weaker or no empathetic response.

Hypothesis 1b: Perspective-taking (cognitive, state empathy) will be related to helping behavior, in that those participants who experience greater perspective-taking will be more likely to demonstrate helping behaviors than those participants who experience weak or no perspective-taking.

Helping situations in the workplace may involve a response to someone in need, such as a coworker with an overwhelming workload and tight deadline, but these situations may not necessarily be emotionally charged. As a result, an affective empathetic response beyond simply taking the person's perspective cognitively, may predict helping behavior further. Thus, empathetic concern (affective empathy) should explain variance in helping behavior beyond that explained by perspective-taking (cognitive empathy).

Relational Identity, Empathy, and Helping Behavior

One approach to understanding how to impact state empathy is through the examination of how one regards his or her relationships with others. Given empathy's interpersonal nature, it is said to be a meso-level approach to understanding prosocial behavior (Penner et al., 2005). Put another way, helping behaviors and empathy are both other-oriented, reflecting outward attention (Eisenberg, Fabes, et al., 1989), and thus should be viewed in terms of feelings or cognitions regarding other people.

Identity, or the extent to which one *defines* oneself by certain information (e.g., one's organization, gender, personal characteristics, etc.), is a foundation of workplace affect and behavior (Brickson, 2000; Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993; Tyler, 1999). Assessing the extent of one's identity with his or her relationships may provide an understanding of how similarly other-oriented empathy and helping occur within a person.

Identification occurs at several levels, such as defining oneself in terms of personal attributes (personal or individual level) or in terms of a collective, such as a team, department, demographic, or other group (collective level). That is, identity is defined in terms of self-construal, or the way by which one considers oneself at a given point in time. This is not to say that a person only construes himself or herself by one level of identity, but rather that one can

move or shift between these levels of self-construal depending on the situation (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). At the individual level, one considers oneself in terms of the unique characteristics and qualities that distinguish oneself from others, and is motivated by self interest. At the collective level, one evaluates oneself by a group prototype, and is motivated to some degree by the welfare of the collective, such as a group or nationality.

Until recently, identity has almost exclusively been defined and studied at the individual or collective (group) levels (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). However, responding to today's dynamic and flexible nature of organizations, which necessitates an interactive and interdependent working style, researchers have begun to investigate the notion of interpersonal self-construal, or *relational* identity in more depth. Relational identity is defined as the "extent to which one defines oneself in terms of a given role-relationship" (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), and reflects what such relationships mean to an individual. In contrast with individual and collective levels, the relational level of self-construal is "derived from connections and role relationships" with others (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 84) and is motivated by another's benefit.

Although similarly tied to other people, this level of self construal is distinct from the collective level (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Millward, 1995). The collective level of identity is based in one's membership to a certain group, unit, or other collective entity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Collective levels of identification are focused on shared, common identities, rather than relationships between people, interpersonally. For example, liking based on a collective level of identity, such as a nationality or political party, is distinct from interpersonal liking of individuals, as it is not formed because of unique personalities or attitudes, but rather common

membership to an in-group (Hogg & Turner, 1985). Similarly, attachments to a group identity are distinct from attachments to group members (Prentice, Miller, & Lightdale, 1994).

Relational identification can be particularized (focused on one specific relationship; e.g., Sarah the coworker with Tom the coworker) or generalized (“a generalized perceived oneness with the role-relationships,” Sluss & Ashforth, 2007, p. 15; e.g., Sarah the coworker). The proposed study focuses on the generalized form of relational identification, to better understand how this might affect helping of various coworkers, rather than one individual, close relational partner.

Put another way, relational identity, as compared with individual and collective orientations, is a tendency to think of oneself as a relational partner (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010). Similar to the ways in which empathy and helping behaviors operate, this reveals a focus on the other individuals who compose these relationships, as such relationships are characterized by a concern for the welfare of the other (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Similarly, cognitive studies have shown that relational identity (also termed relational self-construal) is consistently related to several aspects of considering and thinking about relationships (Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002). Further, examining cognitive frameworks for memory recall, Cross, Morris, and Gore (2002) found that “relational components of the self are chronically activated and persistently influence cognition” (p.414) in individuals who are high in relational self-construal, providing evidence for cognitive influences.

Beyond a trait-like orientation toward a particular level of identity, the construct has also been studied as state-like (e.g., Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2006; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), as individuals shift across the individual, relational, and collective levels of identity depending on the situation at hand (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Identity can be primed by situational cues such

as framing (e.g., reading a scenario with “I” or “he” as the subject versus “we” or “us” as the subject) and observational sets (e.g., having participants describe their own unique abilities versus their relationships with other people or collectives that they belong to) (Gardner, Gabriel, & Hochschild, 2002; Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2006; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Thus, relational identity can be manipulated in order to influence subsequent states and behaviors. In order to examine states as more proximal antecedents of behavior than dispositional traits, altering one’s state identity levels is the focus of the present study.

These other-focused emotional and cognitive states may be the result of an inclination to *extend the self* to include others in given role relationships. This corresponds with the adoption of another’s perspective and decreased discrimination between a relationship partner and oneself. When this occurs, one is more likely to experience negative emotions when the other performs poorly (Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2001; Brewer & Gardner, 1996), and to focus greater attention to the perspective of others (Cross & Morris, 2003). Given that relational identity is essentially this inclusion of others in the self (that is, defining oneself by relationships with others) (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), these other-oriented states and tendencies should result from high relational identity.

Although relational identity is said to be other-oriented in that it is defining oneself in terms of relationships with other people, it should not be conceptually confused with other-orientation, or more specifically, concern for others, a component of other-orientation. Notably, the definition of interpersonal or relational identity is built upon the notion that “connectedness and belonging are not merely affiliations or alliances between the self and others but entail fundamental differences in the way the self is *construed*” (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83, emphasis added). In contrast, other orientation is described as a process by which people “accept

social information without carefully weighing the personal consequences” (Koorsgard et al., 1997, p. 160). More specifically, relational identity is distinct from the other-orientation component concern for others, an “other oriented *value* that reflects the importance individuals place on being helpful and cooperative to others” (emphasis added; Koorsgard et al., 1997). Other orientation, or concern for others, describes a state of attending to and being in tune with social cues more so than on deliberation of personal outcomes. This is distinct from relational identity, defining oneself in terms of relationships with others, which may stem from an extension of the self to others. Further, this self definition does not necessarily imply a lack of self-consideration. Instead, an individual may put more value into such relationships, and therefore be more intent on improving them or helping others in those relationships. In contrast with relational identity, concern for others is a *value* regarding helping others, rather than a self-concept. Thus, relational identity is conceptually distinct from other-orientation’s component of concern for others, although there may be some relationship between these variables given their outward focus. Although a relationship between these variables has been proposed (Cross & Madson, 1997), the author cannot find research that empirically measures other-orientation and relational identity within the same study, and will therefore measure and control for concern for others.

Given that relational identity should stimulate states that are directed toward others (empathy and perspective taking), and that empathy and perspective taking have been found to be related to helping behaviors, the following model is proposed:

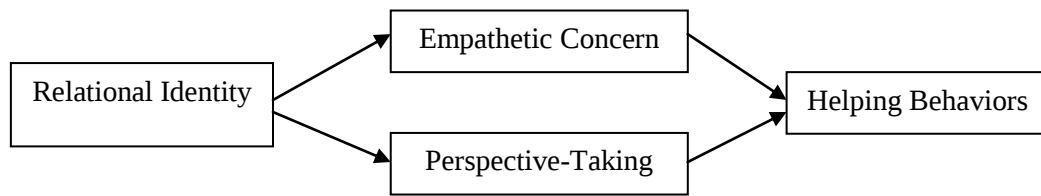


Figure 1. Model of the proposed hypotheses

Sluss and Ashforth (2007) have proposed that high relational identification should correspond with more empathy, understanding, loyalty, cooperation, support, and altruism towards a partner, as well as greater in-role performance. Likewise, Ferris and colleagues (2009) have proposed that attention and respect directed toward another person through a positive work relationship may influence compassion, empathy, and commitment. Such a focus on the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships at a given point in time may be particularly informative in understanding other-oriented states and behaviors, such as empathy and helping behaviors. However, these relationships have not been empirically studied and the process underlying such relationships is unknown. The present study addresses this by manipulating one's state relational identity and empirically testing the linkage between relational identity and state empathy and the linkage of state empathy and helping behaviors (Figure 1).

Research indicates that people high in relational identity tend to “think about the world in terms of relationships,” and are more in tune with others’ relationships (Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002, p. 413). That is, being in a relational identity level of self-concept at a given moment is likely to lead to other-focused affective and cognitive states that incorporate relational others, their needs, and their outcomes. Thus, relational identity, given its inherent focus on the other in interpersonal relations, aligns closely with the emotion and cognitions of empathy and perspective-taking. Although relationships of relational identity with affective empathy and perspective-taking have been proposed (Cross & Madson, 1997), it has not been measured

empirically. Therefore, the alignment between defining oneself in terms of others and the other-focus of empathy indicates that relational identity should be related to affective and cognitive empathy. However, given the conceptual and empirical distinction between affective empathy and perspective-taking, and given that including others in the self should allow a person to understand others' point of view at a higher level, I propose that relational identity may have a stronger relationship with perspective-taking than with affect empathy.

Hypothesis 2a: State relational identity will be related to empathetic concern (affective, state empathy), in that those participants who report higher relational identity will report greater empathetic responses than those who report lower relational identity.

Hypothesis 2b: State relational identity will be related to perspective-taking (cognitive, state empathy), in that those participants who report higher relational identity will report greater perspective-taking than those who report lower relational identity.

Further, from this attention to and concentration on relational others, individuals in a relational identity frame of mind should be more inclined to act to benefit others (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010), as a highly relational person is likely to want to assist others to preserve positive relationships (Arriaga & Rusbult, 1998). Given the focus on the outcomes and well-being of others, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3: Individuals experiencing high relational identity will be more likely to perform helping behaviors than individuals experiencing low relational identity.

Given the affective and cognitive other-focus (as illustrated by empathetic concern and perspective taking) that is proposed to result from high relational identity (hypotheses 2a and b), and the well-documented relationships of empathetic concern and perspective-taking with helping behaviors (hypotheses 1a and b), I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4a: Empathetic concern (affective, state empathy) will partially mediate the relationship between relational identity and helping behaviors.

Hypothesis 4b: Perspective-taking (cognitive, state empathy) will partially mediate the relationship between relational identity and helping behaviors.

As empathetic concern (affective empathy) and perspective-taking (cognitive empathy) have been found to be empirically and conceptually distinct, and as they have been found to hold differential relationships with other variables of interest, I will assess both as separate mediators of the relationship between relational identity and helping behavior. In addition, as they tap related, though distinct processes (affective and cognitive), I expect that each aspect of empathy should explain unique variance in helping behavior.

METHOD

Sample

Students at Michigan State University were recruited through the university's human participant research pool and received research credits for their classes for taking part in the study. Two hundred and fifty six individuals completed the online assessment of the personality constructs and demographics. The mean age of participants was 19.9, with a minimum age of 18 and a maximum age of 55. The sample was not diverse in terms of gender (77 percent female and 19 percent male, with 4 percent of participants not supplying a response). The sample was slightly more diverse in terms of ethnicity, with 71 percent of participants reporting themselves as Caucasian, 11 percent as Asian, 4 percent as African American, 2 percent as Hispanic, and 1 percent as American Indian or Alaskan Native. Nine percent of participants did not supply this information.

The sample was more diverse by academic major however, with psychology majors representing only 27 percent of the sample. Approximately 19 percent of participants reported a medical or nutritional major (e.g., pre-nursing, pre-medical, and interdisciplinary health), 9 percent reported a business major (e.g., general management, finance, accounting, and human resources), 7 percent reported a physiology-related major (e.g., physiology, kinesiology, and athletic sciences), and 5 percent reported a math or science major (e.g., biology, genetics, and general mathematics). Twenty three percent reported that they were undecided or provided a major that was not widely reported. Approximately 10 percent of participants did not report a major.

Of the 256 that completed the online pre-measures, 168 participants came to the lab one to two weeks following this survey to take part in the in-person lab session. This represents

approximately 66 percent of the number that filled out the survey online. This seems largely due to participants signing up for sessions two weeks in advance and later cancelling as the in-person session drew nearer. Participants had to come to the lab to earn the research credits for the study. Of those that came to the lab, 79 percent were female, 72 percent were Caucasian, and 27 percent were psychology majors. Thus, the in-lab sample was very similar to the overall sample in terms of these demographics. There were 56 participants in the individual condition, 57 in the relational condition, and 55 in the collective condition.

Data collection and procedure

Students first completed pre-lab assessments of dispositional control variables, which are described below and listed in Appendix A, one to two weeks prior to coming to the lab. These included trait identity levels, other orientation, demographics, extroversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism. This separation in time was created to limit effects of common method variance (CMV), or the inflated correlation of variables simply due to being collected by the same method at the same time.

One to two weeks after the participants completed the online measures, they came to a lab room individually, and were told that the present study's goal was to examine cognitive appraisals of news articles. Such deception is necessary in assessing helping behavior in order to limit the effect of social desirability (Batson, 1994). It is important to note that by measuring trait-like relational identity and dispositional empathy prior to manipulating it in the lab, it would be possible to test whether or not such a manipulation promoted helping behavior, regardless of participants' tendency to be high or low in these variables.

To manipulate state levels of identity, the present study implemented the commonly used method of priming through self descriptions (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Johnson, Selenta, &

Lord, 2006; Selenta & Lord, 2005). Participants responded to adapted prompts from Johnson et al. (2006), who asked participants to describe either their unique characteristics that set them and their performance apart from others (individual identity), their relationships and connections with peers (relational identity), or groups that they are a part of (collective identity). These prompts are shown in Appendix B. To assess whether or not the manipulation had been successful, participants then filled out two measures of identity level (see Appendix C). One of these assessed the extent to which one includes others into the self. This inclusion is the proposed mechanism underlying relational identity, and should thus reflect one's level of identity with others. A second identity measure was the Twenty Statement Test, which asks participants to describe themselves in 20 different words or phrases. Following these measures, participants read a news article regarding a fellow Michigan State University student in need, which they were led to believe was factual.

To maintain the story that the study's purpose was to assess news articles and cognitive appraisals, participants then responded to items regarding the article's quality and their cognitive reactions to it (Appendix D). Participants then reported their level of affective and cognitive state empathy (Appendix E).

At this point, the participants were told that the study was complete, and that they would receive the appropriate psychology research credits. While leaving the room to lock up the experiment materials and get a debriefing form, the experimenter then "remembered" and described the helping opportunity. The experimenter explained that another fellow MSU undergraduate had collected the data that she needed to complete her undergraduate thesis, but could not enter the data due to having to return home for personal reasons. They were told that the student was in need of assistance, that no prior experience with entering data was necessary,

and that they had the opportunity to volunteer to aid the student if they desired. They were also told that they would not receive credits for the data entry, but that it would benefit the student in need. At this point, the participants were given an availability and contact form through which to volunteer, which they have the option of filling out. The researcher then left the lab, ostensibly to lock up the participant's materials and to get a debriefing form. Before leaving, the experimenter indicated a box into which the form could be placed, regardless of whether or not it was filled out, thus removing pressure from the participant to volunteer. Upon the return of the experimenter, the participant was then thanked and debriefed.

Measures

Pre-lab survey. Several measures were assessed one to two weeks prior to students coming to the lab. Demographic variables were collected in order to control for their potential effects on the variables of interest, including gender, age, major and educational level.

To assess concern for others, participants completed the Comparative Emphasis Scale, a measure that compares one's top value among four options: concern for others, achievement, fairness, and honesty-integrity (CES; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). Given that this measure aims to understand the prioritization of one's values, it is a forced choice measure, which has demonstrated greater validity than the numerical scale version of the assessment. It has also been developed so that the social desirability of each item in each of the 24 pairs is equally desirable (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). Concern for Others was assessed on a 0 to 12 scale, reflecting the number of statements selected that correspond with this value. The internal reliability for this measure was below the .70 standard, which is likely a result of its binary choice format.

To measure dispositional empathy and perspective-taking, participants completed the Interpersonal Reactivity Index of dispositional empathy (IRI; Davis, 1983). This frequently used

measure assesses four related but distinct components of emotions regarding others: Empathetic concern, perspective taking, fantasy, and personal distress. These four 7-item components have been found to be distinct, each holding various relationships with variables such as self-esteem, emotionality, and sensitivity to others (Davis, 1983). Further, each subscale has demonstrated accurate internal and test-retest reliability (Davis, 1980).

Participants also responded to the individual, relational, and collective components of the Levels of Self Concept Scale (LSCS; Selenta & Lord, 2005). The LSCS was developed based on research regarding the existence of multiple levels of the self (e.g., Brewer & Gardner, 1996). The relational component is composed of nine items on a 1-5 Likert scale, and has been found to generally have a reliability of approximately .74 (Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2005). This component can be broken down into two subscales: Concern for Others and Relational Identity. The 13-item individual identity component can be broken down into three subscales: Comparative Identity, Independence, and Individual Identity. Finally, the 10-item collective component can be broken down into two subscales: Group achievement Focus and Collective Identity. The validity of these components has been demonstrated both through factor analysis (distinguishing between the levels of the self), and through establishing convergent and discriminant validity comparison with other such variables as self-consciousness and values (Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2005).

Due to low Cronbach's alphas, one item was from removed for each of three self-concept scales (Selenta & Lord, 2005): Collective Group Achievement, Relational Identity, and Individual Internal Identity. Examining the content of the items, the poorly performing Collective Group Achievement item seems to assess liking or being liked by other team members, rather than solely assessing group goals, as the other four items do. The poorly

performing Relational Identity item is the only item on the four-item scale that taps into being very similar to one's friends; the other items focus specifically on the importance of close relationships. In the Individual Internal Identity scale, the poorly performing item is the only item of the four-item scale that assesses one's enjoyment of time spent alone, whereas the other items focus only on achieving personal success.

Finally, participants completed a 20 item version of the IPIP to assess and control for the Big Five personality traits of extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, emotional stability, and conscientiousness. This "mini" IPIP has been validated across many samples and studies, and has held consistent adequate internal and test-retest validity (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006). Further, it has demonstrated good convergent and divergent validity with variables such as self-esteem, behavioral inhibition. However, in the present study, the agreeableness and the emotional stability measures yielded Cronbach's alphas below the .70 standard. Because removing any item would not have improved either scale's alpha, all items were retained.

State Identity Levels. As relational identity is thought to involve the inclusion of the other in the self (Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2001; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), participants completed a common pictorial assessment of this, the Inclusion of the Other in the Self Scale (IOS; Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). This graphic measure assesses the extent to which an individual feels that he or she overlaps with, or is included as part of, another individual. This measure can also be used to assess an overlap with another social unit. For the purposes of this study, the experimenter instructed participants to indicate the extent to which they overlap with others that they have peer relationships with. Identity level was also assessed using the Twenty Statement Test (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954), a measure that asks participants to answer the

question “Who am I?” twenty times. Scores on this measure are calculated as the percentage of words or phrases provided that are individually based (e.g., short, Tom, smart), relationally based (e.g., sister, friend, grandson), or collectively based (e.g., female, Hispanic, team member).

State affective empathy. In order to assess state affective empathy, participants completed Batson and Coke’s (1981) empathetic concern/ personal distress adjective list. This measure has been used extensively in state empathy research (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987), primarily as a manipulation check for direct empathy manipulations. The empathetic concern component of this measure contains five adjectives which describe empathetic emotions. This measure, or some variation of this adjective list, has been used in many empathy studies (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997), and is generally considered to have high construct validity. For instance, this measure of affective empathy has been found to be distinct from emotional distress (e.g., Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997; see Baton, 1991); in particular, scores on this component have been found to be significantly higher in people that have been told to focus on imagining a person’s feelings in a sad scenario than people who have been told to focus on objective details of such a scenario. Further, the measure has been found to be highly related to dispositional measures of empathy (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). Similar to numerous studies that found reliabilities for this measure between .79 and .95 (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997), the measure yielded an Cronbach’s alpha of .80 in the present study.

State perspective taking (cognitive empathy). As there is no common measure of state perspective-taking, and that many are confounded with affective empathy items (Duan & Hill, 1996), a six item measure created for this study. These items have been adapted from Davis’ (1983) trait perspective-taking items to reflect a state conceptualization. For example, one trait perspective-taking item reads, “When I’m upset at someone, I usually try to ‘put myself in his

shoes' for a while," while the state version reads (referring to the article), I 'put myself in Sarah's shoes' when I read about her situation." This measure yielded an internal reliability of .82.

Helping behavior. Helping behavior was measured by both choosing to volunteer (bivariate) and by the number of hours volunteered (continuous) to help a student in need of data entry for her undergraduate thesis. Time options ranged from 30 minutes to "more than 5 hours" in half-hour increments, with declining to fill out the form scored as a zero. Requesting volunteer hours is a common measure of helping behavior (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987), and has been chosen among other helping behaviors for the current study because it applies well to the workplace. For instance, there are numerous volunteer opportunities in organizations, such as joining committees or volunteering to help a coworker when his or her workload is overwhelming. Participants circled the number of hours they were willing to volunteer, listed their availability during the following two weeks, and provided their contact information to "set up" their times to enter the data (see Appendix F).

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Means and standard deviations for all variables can be found in Table 1. Of all participants that came to the lab and did not state that they knew that the helping scenario was fictional, 58 percent helped by volunteering their time. Means for a few of the measures may have been affected by range restriction. The mean for Relational Concern for Others in the Self-Concept scale was 4.52 ($SD = .43$) on a five point scale. Similarly, the means for State Empathy ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.05$) and State Perspective-Taking ($M = 5.18$, $SD = 1.03$) were limited to the higher end of the seven-point scales.

Overall, the conditions did not differ significantly on the pre-measured personality characteristics. However, although the overall ANOVA for trait agreeableness was not significant ($F[2,148] = 2.98$, $MSE = 1.06$, ns), the individual condition ($m = 4.30$, $SD = .53$) was significantly higher on agreeableness than the relational condition ($m = 4.01$, $SD = .69$, $p < .05$).

Demographics

T-tests and one-way ANOVAs were used for demographic groups in order to assess if there were any differences in helping related to gender, ethnicity, or major. In terms of gender, women chose to help (bivariate measure) more often than men, but this difference was not significant ($t[134] = 1.60$, ns). Similarly, women volunteered more hours of help than men, but this also was not significant ($t[143] = 1.52$, ns). There were also no significant differences in the choice to help or number of hours volunteered across ethnicity groups ($F[4,130] = 1.14$, $MSE = .24$, ns ; and $F[4,121] = .80$, $MSE = 1.58$, ns ; respectively). No significant differences were found by major for the choice to help ($F[5,129] = 1.02$, $MSE = .24$, ns) or for the number of hours volunteered ($F[5,120] = .39$, $MSE = .79$, ns). There was a relationship between age and helping,

however. Although age was not significantly related to the choice to help ($r = .11$, *ns*), it was significantly related to the number of hours volunteered ($r = .23$, $p < .05$).

Intercorrelations

The intercorrelations between the variables of interest are listed in Table 1. For the personality measures that were assessed one to two weeks in advance of the lab session, there are approximately 256 participants' data included in the intercorrelations between these. For the lab-session state measures (with the exception of helping measures), there are 168 participants included, as this was the number of individuals that came to the lab portion of the study. For the correlations with helping measures, 16 participants were removed for declaring that they knew that the helping prompt was fictional.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations and Internal Reliabilities

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Condition																
2	Gender			-.06													
3	Indiv. Comparative Identity	3.34	0.75	-.10	.21	<i>.77</i>											
4	Indiv. Internal Identity	4.18	0.56	-.12	-.05	.26	<i>.66</i>										
5	Indiv. Independence	2.85	0.66	.00	.05	.20	<i>.03</i>	<i>.60</i>									
6	Rel. Concern For Others	4.52	0.43	-.06	-.11	.04	.39	-.15	<i>.79</i>								
7	Rel. Identity	4.00	0.68	.05	-.16	-.01	.18	-.27	.38	<i>.71</i>							
8	Coll. Group Achievement	4.18	0.56	-.13	.04	.08	.42	-.25	.40	.16	<i>.70</i>						
9	Coll. Identity	2.71	0.79	.03	.10	.28	-.01	.07	-.08	-.07	.04	<i>.80</i>					
10	Trait Fantasy	4.35	0.89	-.16	-.07	.25	.29	-.06	.31	.20	.18	-.01	<i>.82</i>				
11	Trait Perspective-Taking	4.32	0.77	-.07	-.07	-.09	.15	-.23	.28	.15	.18	-.02	.29	<i>.80</i>			
12	Trait Empathetic Concern	4.76	0.73	-.12	-.15	-.07	.22	-.26	.43	.36	.26	-.10	.43	.51	<i>.79</i>		
13	Trait Personal Distress	3.10	0.84	.03	-.20	.05	-.05	.22	-.10	-.05	-.25	.23	.08	-.11	-.05	<i>.79</i>	
14	Extraversion	3.40	0.88	.01	.01	.01	.17	-.38	.18	.15	.25	.01	.01	.16	.25	-.19	<i>.76</i>
15	Agreeableness	4.14	0.62	-.10	-.10	-.15	.23	-.32	.48	.34	.23	-.15	.34	.49	.69	-.18	.34
16	Conscientiousness	3.64	0.84	-.02	-.14	-.01	.21	.06	.15	.10	.18	-.08	-.02	.05	.13	-.21	-.02
17	Emotional Stability	3.18	0.79	-.10	.16	-.14	.08	-.14	.00	.10	.16	-.11	-.09	.13	-.02	-.27	.05
18	Openness to Experience	3.79	0.74	-.16	.19	.09	.09	-.01	.20	.08	.13	.04	.22	.27	.13	-.18	.12
19	Forced Choice CFO	6.37	2.06	.03	-.16	-.14	-.12	-.14	.20	.16	.04	-.09	.11	.13	.31	.01	-.01

Note. Correlations that are significant at $p < .05$ are presented in bold. Cronbach's alphas are listed along the diagonal in italics. TST = Twenty Statement Test. CFO = Concern For Others. Others Score Percent = scored percentage of phrases on the TST demonstrating concern for others.

Table 1 (cont'd)

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
20	Percent Individual Words	0.83	0.20	-.23	.04	.08	.22	.00	.17	.00	.13	-.08	.10	.13	.11	-.12	.13
21	Percent Relational Words	0.09	0.13	.14	-.07	-.03	-.12	.01	-.16	.00	-.11	.05	-.02	-.05	-.06	.05	-.04
22	Percent Collective Words	0.08	0.11	.26	.01	-.13	-.26	.00	-.13	.01	-.12	.08	-.16	-.17	-.13	.15	-.20
23	TST, Helpful, Bivariate	0.19	0.40	-.09	-.07	-.11	-.02	-.03	-.04	-.11	-.07	-.05	.04	-.01	.17	-.06	.09
24	Others Percent	0.26	0.12	-.14	-.15	-.17	.13	-.13	.08	-.03	.09	-.01	-.05	.09	.17	-.01	.24
25	Others Score Percent	0.31	0.19	-.21	-.20	-.23	.08	-.12	.09	-.08	.07	-.08	-.06	.06	.19	-.01	.20
26	Overlap With Others	4.59	1.34	.04	-.04	-.08	.08	-.38	.11	.21	.07	.00	.08	.07	.25	.06	.26
27	News Evaluation	3.90	0.56	-.02	-.14	-.02	.03	-.06	.08	.07	.12	-.07	.11	.14	.24	-.02	.01
28	State Empathy	5.23	1.05	-.01	-.25	-.15	.18	-.14	.17	.12	.21	-.03	.10	.18	.40	.00	.20
29	State Perspective-Taking	5.18	1.03	-.08	-.15	-.04	-.02	-.01	.13	-.07	.11	-.03	.07	.17	.28	.00	.07
30	Helping, Hours Volunteered	1.22	1.40	-.10	-.13	-.11	.04	-.01	.11	.01	.03	-.23	.09	.16	.12	-.09	.05
31	Helping, Choice	0.58	0.50	.02	-.13	-.12	.02	-.06	.10	.08	-.02	-.20	.04	.10	.11	-.06	.12

Table 1 (cont'd)

	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1 Condition																	
2 Gender																	
3 Indiv. Comparative Identity																	
4 Indiv. Internal Identity																	
5 Indiv. Independence																	
6 Rel. Concern For Others																	
7 Rel. Identity																	
8 Coll. Group Achievement																	
9 Coll. Identity																	
10 Trait Fantasy																	
11 Trait Perspective-Taking																	
12 Trait Empathetic Concern																	
13 Trait Personal Distress																	
14 Extraversion																	
15 Agreeableness	.65																
16 Conscientiousness	.10	.71															
17 Emotional Stability	.01	-.01	.64														
18 Openness to Experience	.22	.02	.09	.72													
19 Forced Choice CFO	.26	-.10	-.07	-.10	.44												

Table 1 (cont'd)

	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
20 Percent Individual Words	.14	.09	.06	.19	.09												
21 Percent Relational Words	-.05	-.05	-.06	-.16	-.16	-.87											
22 Percent Collective Words	-.19	-.11	-.03	-.19	.03	-.82	.44										
23 TST, Helpful, Bivariate	.15	.11	.00	.06	.11	.15	-.10	-.15									
24 Others Percent	.12	.11	-.02	-.01	.07	.25	-.14	-.29	.34								
25 Others Score Percent	.13	.13	-.04	-.02	.11	.30	-.20	-.32	.46	.93							
26 Overlap With Others	.23	-.07	-.06	-.09	.18	.02	-.03	.00	.09	.28	.25						
27 News Evaluation	.11	.07	-.02	-.07	.09	-.01	.02	.01	-.08	.09	.14	.05	.73				
28 State Empathy	.25	.12	-.04	-.16	.13	.10	-.08	-.07	.06	.19	.22	.24	.45	.80			
29 State Perspective-Taking	.15	.07	-.04	.11	.18	.00	.04	-.04	.11	.06	.14	.09	.36	.25	.82		
30 Helping, Hours Volunteered	.17	.04	-.03	.16	.01	.11	-.11	-.08	.15	.13	.17	.16	.04	.09	.04		
31 Helping, Choice	.14	.11	-.06	.07	-.07	.07	-.06	-.05	.19	.21	.18	.15	.02	.07	-.05	.75	

Manipulation Checks

To examine whether or not the manipulation was successful, one-way ANOVAs were used to assess differences in the percentage of individual, relational, and collective words used in the Twenty Statements Test by condition. These percentages were calculated for each participant by two trained coders. If a percentage differed between the two coders for a given participant, the discrepancy was discussed in order to reach 100% agreement. The percentage of individualistic words was significantly different across groups, and was highest in the individual condition ($m = .89$, $SD = .14$) followed by the relational condition ($m = .81$, $SD = .21$) and collective condition ($m = .78$, $SD = .22$; $F[2,165] = 5.03$, $MSE = .19$, $p < .01$). Follow-up Tukey tests indicated that this difference was carried by the significant difference between the individual and collective conditions ($p < .01$). The percentage of relational words was also highest in its respective condition, but this difference was only marginally significant ($F[2, 165] = 2.61$, $MSE = .041$, $p = .08$). The percentage of collective words was indeed highest in the collective condition, and this difference was significant ($F[2,165] = 5.81$, $MSE = .06$, $p < .05$). Similar to the percentage of individualistic words, this overall difference was explained by the significant difference between the individual and collective conditions ($p < .05$). Thus, it seems that the manipulation did generally induce participants to describe themselves in certain ways, depending on their condition. The Inclusion of Others in the Self measure did not differ significantly by condition, however ($F[2,165] = .66$, $MSE = 1.19$, ns).

Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 predicted that empathetic concern (affective, state empathy, 1a) and perspective-taking (cognitive, state empathy, 1b) would be significantly related to helping behavior, in that those participants who had a stronger empathetic or perspective-taking response

would be more likely to demonstrate helping behaviors than those participants who had a weaker response. Support was not found for either of these hypotheses. The correlation between state empathetic concern and the bivariate choice of helping or not helping was .09 (*ns*), and the correlation between state perspective-taking and the bivariate choice of helping was .04 (*ns*).

Hypothesis 2a predicted that state relational identity would be significantly, positively related to empathetic concern (affective, state empathy). A one-way ANOVA did indicate that state empathetic concern was highest in the relational condition ($m = 5.35$, versus $m = 5.17$ for the individual and $m = 5.13$ for the collective conditions), though this difference was not significant ($F[2,164] = .575$, $MSE = .64$, *ns*). State relational identity was assessed through both the Inclusion of Others in the Self (IOS) measure and the percentage of words written in the Twenty Statement Test that were coded as relational (any word or phrase that refers to a specific relationship, such as brother, daughter, uncle, roommate, etc.). The percentage of relational words on the TST was not significantly related to state empathetic concern ($r = -.08$, *ns*). However, the IOS measure, or the extent of overlap that a person perceives between himself or herself and his or her relational peers, was significantly, positively related to state empathetic concern ($r = .24$, $p < .01$). Thus, partial support was found for hypothesis 2a.

Similarly, hypothesis 2b predicted that state relational identity would be significantly, positively related to perspective-taking (cognitive, state empathy). A one-way ANOVA indicated that state perspective taking was highest in the individual condition ($m = 5.36$, versus $m = 5.02$ in the relational condition and $m = 5.16$ in the collective condition), though this difference was not significant ($F[2,165] = 1.52$, $MSE = 1.62$, *ns*). In this case, neither the TST nor the IOS was significantly related to perspective-taking ($r = .04$, *ns*; $r = .09$, *ns*, respectively). Support was not found for hypothesis 2b.

Hypothesis 3 stated that individuals experiencing high relational identity would be more likely to perform helping behavior than individuals experiencing low relational identity. A one-way ANOVA indicated that choosing to help (bivariate helping measure) was not significantly different between conditions ($F[2,147] = .96, MSE = .23, ns$). Similarly, number of hours volunteered (continuous helping measure) did not differ significantly between conditions ($F[2,138] = 1.82, MSE = 3.45, ns$). Interestingly, although not a significant difference, the number of hours volunteered was highest in the individual condition (individual = 1.50 hours, relational = .97 hours, collective = 1.18 hours). Using the TST, the percentage of relational words was not significantly related to helping behavior ($r = -.06, ns$). In examining the IOS, overlap between the self with others was related to helping behavior, although this relationship was only marginally significant ($r = .15, p < .10$).

Hypothesis 4a and 4b predicted that empathetic concern (affective, state empathy, 4a) and perspective-taking (cognitive, state empathy, 4b) would partially mediate the relationship between relational identity and helping behavior. However, as hypotheses 1-3 were not fully supported, I was not able to test this final hypothesis.

Conditions as a Situational Press

Despite the lack of support for the hypotheses across conditions, it seems as though the conditions acted as constraints, moderating the relationships between some of the study's key variables. For example, trait relational identity was significantly related to the choice to help in only the relational condition ($r = .31, p < .05$). A moderated logistic regression indicated that condition significantly moderated the relationship between trait relational identity and the decision to help ($\beta = 1.22, p < .05$; see Table 2). This indicates that being in the relational condition versus the other two conditions significantly strengthened the relationship between

one's trait relational identity and the choice to help (see Figure 2). It may be that in this condition, one's relations (or lack thereof) to others became more salient, affecting the degree to which this came into play in one's decision to help.

Similarly, in the relational condition only, empathy was significantly, positively related to the choice to help ($r = .29, p < .05$). A moderated logistic regression was not significant at the .05 level, but the interaction between state empathy and condition was marginally significant ($B = .66, p = .09$).

Table 2

Logistic Regression of Condition and Trait Relational Identity Predicting the Decision to Help

	β	<i>SE</i>	Wald's χ^2	<i>Exp(B)</i> (odds ratio)
<i>Step 1</i>				
Relational Identity	0.21	0.26	0.66	1.71
Condition	-0.43	0.36	1.45	0.65
<i>Step 2</i>				
Relational Identity	-0.26	0.35	0.55	0.77
Condition	-0.40	0.38	1.14	0.67
Rel. ID by Condition	1.22*	0.58	4.43	3.40

Note. Condition is coded as Relational condition = 1, Collective and Individual condition = 0. $n = 152$. * $p < .05$.

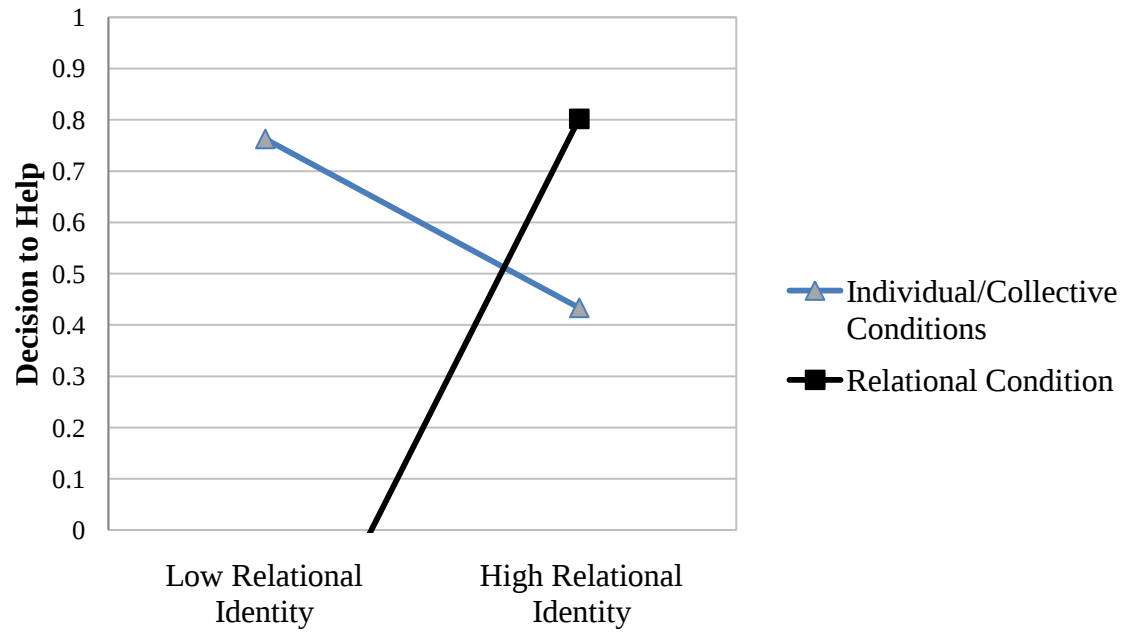


Figure 2. Interaction plot of condition and trait relational identity for predicting the choice to help. For interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this thesis.

Exploratory Analyses: Concern for Others and Helpfulness as an Identity

In addition to the traditional coding of the Twenty Statement Test, the responses to this measure were also coded for the extent to which the words and phrases demonstrated a concern for others. First, three trained experts coded commonly used words and phrases on the extent to which they demonstrated a concern for others on a scale of 0 (not related to a concern for others) to 2 (very related to a concern for others). Using this information, two trained coders then coded the TST for every participant. This yielded two scores: the percentage of concern for others words or phrases used (the number of such words divided by the number of words/phrases provided) and the score percentage for these words (scoring each word that demonstrated a concern for others as 1 or 2 points according to the previous coding, adding the score for each word on a TST into a participant score, and dividing this by the number of words or phrases provided).

The concern for others percent was not significantly different across conditions ($F[2,165] = 1.71$, $MSE = .02$, ns). However, the score percent was significantly different across conditions, with the individual condition having the highest percentage on this score ($m = .35$, $SD = .21$), followed by the relational condition ($m = .32$, $SD = .18$) and the collective condition ($m = .31$, $SD = .16$; $F[2,165] = 4.01$, $MSE = .14$, $p < .05$). Follow up Tukey tests indicated that only the individual and collective conditions were significantly different on the score percentage ($p < .05$). Both the concern for others percent and score percent were significantly, positively related to the decision to help ($r = .21$, $p < .01$; and $r = .18$, $p < .05$; respectively). Concern for others score percent was also significantly related to the number of hours volunteered ($r = .17$, $p < .05$).

Interestingly, almost one fifth of the participants described themselves as “helpful” in the Twenty Statements Test, although this did not vary significantly by condition ($F[2,165] = .92$,

$MSE = .14, ns$). Reporting this as a self-descriptor was significantly related to the choice to help ($r = .19, p < .05$). Those participants that reported themselves as such were significantly more likely to choose to help ($t[148] = 2.39, p < .05$). This description of oneself as “helpful” was also significantly related to trait empathetic concern ($r = .17, p < .05$).

DISCUSSION

The present study sought to examine helping behavior as an outcome of relational identity and state empathy. Although the relationship between empathy (both cognitive and affective) and helping behavior has been well established, little is known regarding the process by which this occurs or the possible antecedents of state-based empathy. Further, helping behavior toward a target (e.g., person described as being in need) is typically measured as an outcome of empathy toward the same target. In contrast, the connection between feeling empathy in general and helping behavior toward an unknown peer is less clear. Because helping behavior has been well-supported as benefitting workers and their organizations (e.g., Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Podsakoff et al, 2000; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009), discovering the process through which helping can be stimulated would be advantageous to both theory and practice.

Summary of Findings

To examine the hypothesized process model, the present study attempted to manipulate identity level in order to measure differences in subsequent state empathy, perspective-taking and helping behavior. Although the hypotheses were largely unsupported, several interesting and informative findings emerged. Hypothesis 1 predicted that state empathy (hypothesis 1a) and state perspective-taking (hypothesis 1b) would be related to helping behavior. However, these hypotheses were not supported. This may be due to range restriction in state empathy and perspective-taking, as responses to these two measures were consistently close to the high end of the scale.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that state relational identity would be significantly, positively related to state empathetic concern. This hypothesis was supported using one of the two

measures used to assess relational identity. Although the percentage of relational words provided in the Twenty Statement Test was not significantly related to state empathy, the extent to which one reported overlap with peers using the Inclusion of Others in the Self measure was significantly related to empathy. Empathetic concern was highest in the relational condition, but this relationship was not significant. This suggests that thinking about one's relationships may be linked with subsequent empathy towards others, but that the conditions did not fully operate as expected. This may be the result of many participants in the individual condition describing their "unique abilities" as being able to understand or cooperate well with others, thus stimulating a concern for others or a making others' needs more salient. This may also have resulted because of the nature of the news article, which elicited high state empathy from most participants. Hypothesis 2b predicted that state relational identity would be significantly, positively related to state perspective-taking, but this hypothesis was not supported with either measure of relational identity.

Hypothesis 3 posited that those participants high in state relational identity would be more likely to help than those experiencing low relational identity. Neither the decision to help nor the number of hours volunteered differed significantly between the conditions, although the number of hours volunteered was highest in the individual condition. This finding may be explained by the emotional content of the article used to assess empathy and perspective-taking. Assuming the proposed mediation model reflects reality, if the article created a strong enough situation to "wash out" differences in empathetic concern and perspective-taking, the relationship between relational identity and helping would be difficult to discover. Strong situations can overcome differences regarding helping between individuals (and in this case, between conditions) (see Batson, 1998, for a review).

Relational identity as measured by the percentage of relational words provided on the TST was not significantly related to helping behavior, but the extent to which one reported overlap with others (using the IOS) was marginally related to helping behavior. Because the relationship between state relational identity and empathy and the relationship between state empathy and helping behavior did not hold, the proposed mediation model could not be tested.

Although results indicated that state relational identity did not predict helping behavior, the condition manipulation interacted with trait relational identity to predict helping behavior. More specifically, one's level of trait relational identity positively predicted helping behavior for those participants in the relational condition only. In this condition, participants were instructed to think and write about their relationships with others. Following this manipulation, reading an article about a student in need, evaluating the article, and reporting their state empathy and perspective-taking, those participants high in trait relational identity were more likely to help than those low in trait relational identity. It seems as though thinking about one's closeness or relationships with peers made such relationships more salient, prompting those who strongly identify with their relationships to help an unknown student. In contrast, those who were low in trait relational identity were less likely to choose to help the unknown student. Similarly, although only marginally significant, a moderated logistic regression indicated that for those in the relational condition, empathy was related to helping behavior. For those participants in the relational condition, perhaps the relationship between empathy and the choice to help was stronger because the connection between the two was made more salient (e.g., "in peer relationships, I often help others if they are in need").

In examining participant responses to the Twenty Statement Test, it became clear that the answers provided differed not only in the percentage of individual (e.g., tall), relational (e.g.,

sister), and collective (e.g., on the hockey team) phrases, but also in the percentage of words used that displayed a concern for others. To investigate this further, the author and two trained coders rated words based on the extent to which they demonstrated such a concern. Then, two trained coders calculated the percentage and score of these words for each participant's TST. Two interesting results emerged with related implications. First, the percentage score of words coded as demonstrating a concern for others was significantly, positively related to the choice to help as well as the number of hours volunteered. Second, approximately one fifth of the study participants described themselves as being "helpful" or a "helper." The participants that reported this aspect of identity were significantly more likely to help than those who did not describe themselves in this way.

Contributions and Implications

Although the primary model of this study was not supported, the results yield several theoretical and practical contributions. One contribution is the finding that for participants who were prompted to think about their relationships with their peers, their trait relational identity was related to helping behavior. This extends previous prosocial research by finding that relational identity may be related to greater helping, as proposed by Sluss and Ashforth (2007). It also suggests that there are specific conditions under which this relationship occurs, indicating that one must be attentive to potential boundary conditions.

Reflecting this finding, supervisors may want to consider relational identity when attempting to increase subordinate engagement in organizational citizenship behavior. That is, if employees are prompted to think about their peer relationships, they may be more likely to help one another if they are high in trait relational identity. Similarly, if a team is composed of members high in relational identity, prompting them to think about their relationships in general

may be beneficial for cooperation and helping within the team. However, if team members are low in relational identity, this may not be advantageous.

The present study also extends prior literature that has tended to focus on helping others with whom one has had some sort of reaction to or interaction with (e.g., feeling empathy toward the help target, liking the target, taking the target's perspective). The present study indicates that prompting someone regarding their peer relationships in general, or regarding specific individuals in their lives, may make them more likely to help other, unknown individuals.

This may be explained by transference, or the process by which a relationship with a significant other (e.g., a family member, spouse, friend, etc.) affects an encounter or interaction with a new individual (Andersen & Chen, 2002). Transference occurs when a person's (the perceiver) mental representation of a significant other is activated during contact with an unknown individual. This then prompts the perceiver to "interpret" the new person in "ways derived from the representation" of the significant other (Andersen & Chen, 2002, p. 620). The perceiver also responds "emotionally, motivationally, and behaviorally to the person" in ways he or she would respond to the significant other (Andersen & Chen, 2002, p. 620; Anderson & Glassman, 1996). In the context of the present study, participants' mental representations of significant others could have been activated through describing their relationships with close peers, and these representations may have been transferred to the fictional student in need of assistance. Transference could be used as a framework to illuminate future research into organizational promotion of generalized identities and roles that would benefit both workers and their organizations. Given the difficulty of developing interventions for every dyadic pair within a workplace, a broader intervention that involves helping unknown others (perhaps through transference) is likely to be of more use.

Beyond relational identity, other relationships of identity and helping behavior stood out as well. For example, trait collective identity was significantly, negatively related to both the choice to help and the number of hours volunteered. This is an interesting finding, as Johnson et al. (2006) found that trait, or chronic, collective identity was positively related to both OCB directed toward other individuals within the organization and toward the organization as a whole. However, while Johnson and colleagues measured OCB using self-report survey responses regarding overall citizenship behavior, the present study used volunteer behavior toward an unknown individual. These two distinctions (measure of helping behavior and the target of the helping behavior) may explain the sizeable difference. Perhaps when considering one's collective identity and helping behavior, one focuses on his or her tendency to help members of specific, salient collectives he or she is a part of. In contrast, thinking about one's role in groups in general may not relate to helping an *unknown* individual peer.

Another contribution of the present study is the finding regarding "helper" identities. Some individuals seem to define themselves in terms of being likely to help others, and the present study found that such a self definition predicted the choice of whether or not to help an unknown peer with a boring and possibly taxing task. In addition, the percentage of words one uses to describe oneself was found to have effects. For example, a person that defined himself or herself as compassionate, friendly, and welcoming was likely to help another person with whom he or she had no prior contact. This measure of concern for others goes beyond a trait measure of a concern for others value, in that this measure may reflect how central such a concern is to one's identity.

This self definition could potentially be explained by role expansion. In the workplace, one's responsibilities and duties are encapsulated by one's role. Role expansion, then, occurs

when “individuals choose to incorporate a broader set of responsibilities” into their definition of their role (Grant & Hoffman, 2011, p. 12). That is, they begin to consider discretionary behavior (in this case, helping behavior) as a requirement or expectation (Morrison, 1994). Over time, a person’s definition of his or her role results in continued behavior supporting that definition (Grant & Hoffman, 2011). The one fifth of the present study’s participants that described themselves as “helpful” or as a “helper” may see their role, either in encounters with others in general or as a student, as encompassing helping behavior. It could be that over time, one’s expanded definition of his or her role may come to be an essential aspect of one’s identity. Together, the results of this study indicate that the ways in which one defines oneself, whether in terms of relationships, helping, or a concern for others, has implications for helping behavior.

Finally, although state empathetic concern did not emerge as a predictor of helping behavior, trait empathetic concern was positively related to several variables of interest. This individual difference was significantly related to one’s identity as a “helper,” the percentage score of words used that demonstrated a concern for others in the TST, overlap with others (used as a measure of relational identity), state empathy, and state perspective-taking. This supports the finding that trait empathy is a meaningful individual difference in determining the extent to which a person is focused on others and relationships with those others.

Limitations

One limitation of the present study is the finding that several of the measures yielded low Cronbach’s alphas. Several of these low internal reliabilities were found for the short form measures of the Big Five, including agreeableness and emotional stability, although these scales have been found to have strong reliability and validity in others studies (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006).

Another limitation of the present study is the range restriction found for state empathy and perspective-taking. Both of the means for these scales were approximately 5 on a 7 point Likert scale, with standard deviations of approximately 1. This may partially explain why no relationships involving either form of empathy was found for either helping behavior or relational identity. Again, it may be that the news article used to measure empathy, one which described a fellow student whose family member was injured in a natural disaster, created a strong situation in which empathy was induced across a wide range of participants.

A third limitation is that the prompt for the individual condition may not have operated as anticipated. The condition manipulations did result in significantly different percentages of both individual and collective words used in the Twenty Statement Test, indicating that the conditions did make various levels of identity more salient. Likewise, it does seem that the conditions affected the salience of certain considerations, like the nature of one's relationships with peers. However, in thinking and writing about their individual characteristics, participants in the individual condition often wrote about their abilities in helping others, being kind to others, or understanding others. Thus, this may be more of a relational focus, whereas participants in this condition were intended to write about how they are better than others and perform better than others (i.e., to distinguish oneself from others and focus only on the self).

This is likely a result of similarity between the manipulation prompts. The individual identity prompt requested that participants describe how their performance or abilities were superior to the performance of "friends, coworkers, classmates, etc." Though intended to stimulate thought regarding one's abilities and individuality, referencing others for comparison purposes seems to have induced consideration of one's peers. This salient focus on others and subsequent description of one's abilities to interact well with them may have then prompted

participants in this condition to help. To induce a truly self-oriented state identity, future research should focus more on individual accomplishment without referring to others. One way of doing this could be providing a scenario that describes a highly competitive workplace characterized by individual accomplishment and achievement orientation. Following this scenario, the participants could be asked to describe their knowledge, skills, and abilities that would allow them to succeed in such a climate. Although individuals have some extent of each identity level at all times, and the salience of these levels is variable, they have a chronic tendency or orientation toward a certain level (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010; Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2006). Because of this, manipulations to influence these need to be very strong.

Future Research

Although the primary hypotheses of this study were not fully supported, some interesting themes emerged that may be insightful for future research. First, although relational identity and helping behavior were not related across conditions, they were related for participants in the relational condition. Similarly, empathy was significantly correlated with helping behavior in the relational condition, although when tested in a moderated regression, this was only a marginally significant relationship. Future research should investigate the process through which thinking about one's peer relationships affects the linkage between trait relational identity and helping behavior. One potential explanation may be relationship quality with peers. That is, if one has many high-quality peer relationships, thinking about these relationships may prompt him or her to help another. In contrast, if one thinks about his or her weak, poor quality relationships, and how he or she does not have close peers to rely upon, he or she may be less likely to help.

Another implication of the present study is that some individuals may hold a generalized "helper" identity. One fifth of the study participants described themselves in this way, indicating

that this view of the self was salient enough for the participants to describe in the two minutes allotted for the Twenty Statement Test. Subsequently, these individuals were significantly more likely to help an unknown fellow student with what one might consider a boring task (coming back to the lab to enter data). It is interesting that not only do people “think” in terms of others, such as through relational identity, but also consider being a “helper” as a core aspect of their identity. There is some research that supports the existence of long-term volunteer identities, but these have been primarily studied in terms of a specific organization or type of volunteering. For example, much of this research has been done on blood donors and the process by which they come to *identify* themselves as blood donors (e.g., Finkelstein, 2009). This is used as an explanation of long-term and consistent volunteering in a single organization.

This research area could be extended by examining the extent to which one holds more generalized “helper” identities, in that one identifies as someone who helps when the opportunity arises. It may be that this view of the self is related to prosocial orientation, the tendency for one to consider cooperation as the most appropriate choice in social dilemma situations (Van Lange et al., 2011). Extending this finding, future research could begin to explain how a specific and well-developed volunteer identity functions in comparison with a more generalized helper identity. This could also be a potential avenue for examining who helps unknown others or aiding in unfamiliar situations. Future research should also investigate how these helper identities develop over time. This could contribute to a clearer understanding of the long-term processes that either build up or diminish the extent to which one sees himself or herself as a helpful individual. Such an approach may be informative to organizations, in that this could then be stimulated and developed through socialization, training, and long-term development on the job.

Conclusion

The present study indicates that when certain aspects of the self are made salient, the ways in which one defines oneself becomes important for determining whether or not he or she chooses to help another. One's perspective of his or her identity may be a heuristic for making decisions regarding whether or not to invest time or effort into aiding a coworker. Because of this, greater attention to the role that identity may play in predicting helping behavior, whether relational identity or a helper identity, may prove to be a fruitful venture for future research. Additionally, further clarity behind the process of helping behavior, rather than solely proximal, target-specific antecedents, is needed, given the importance of helping behavior in the workplace. If able to establish the ways in which identities related to helping behavior can be shaped, researchers and practitioners may be able to stimulate and maintain helping behavior in the workplace, to the benefit of organizations and employees alike.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Online Pre-Lab Measures

Note: All labels, titles, and names were removed prior to administration.

Levels of Self-Concept Scale (LSCS): (Selenta & Lord, 2005)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Individual Level

Comparative Identity (I)

I thrive on opportunities to demonstrate that my abilities or talents are better than those of other people.

I have a strong need to know how I stand in comparison to my classmates or coworkers.

I often compete with my friends.

I feel best about myself when I perform better than others.

I often find myself pondering over the ways that I am better or worse off than other people around me.

Internal Identity (II)

I place a high value on my personal successes.

It is important for me that I success on the basis of my own merit.

I become upset when I fail to reach my personal goals.

I enjoy to the I have to myself.

Independence (III)

I find that I can accomplish more when I work on my own.

I would rather work alone on a project so that I receive more recognition for a good job.

I dislike the idea of having roommates or having to share an office with coworkers.

I am most comfortable in situations that do not emphasize social interactions.

Relational Level

Concern for Others (I)

I value friends who are caring, empathetic individuals.

It is important to me that I uphold my commitments to significant people in my life.

If a friend were having a personal problem, I would help him/her even if it meant sacrificing my time or money.

Caring deeply about another person such as a close friend or relative is very important to me.

Knowing that a close other acknowledges and values the role that I play in their life makes me feel like a worthwhile person.

Relational Identity (II)

My close relationships are unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.

Overall, my relationships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.

My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am.

I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close friends and understanding who they are.

Collective Level

Group Achievement Focus (I)

Making a lasting contribution to groups that I belong to, such as my school or work organization, is very important to me.

When I become involved in a group project, I do my best to ensure its success.

I feel great pride when my team or work groups does well, even if I'm not the main reason for success.

I would be honored if I were chosen by an organization or vluc that I belong to, to represent them at a conference or meeting.

When I'm part of a team, I am concerned about the group as a whole instead of whether individual team members like me, or whether I like them.

Group Identity (II)

If I were to describe myself to someone, a large part of the description would consist of the organizations and groups that I belong to.

I judge myself by the standards of the organizations or groups that I belong to.

When I think of myself, I often think of the groups (e.g., university students, business women) that I belong to.

My most intense emotional reactions are typically the result of what people think of the groups (e.g., social, gender, religious) that I belong to.

I am rather sensitive to what people think of the groups that I belong to.

Interpersonal Reactivity Index: Dispositional Empathy
(Davis, 1983)

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 number on the scale of: 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the number next to the item number. Answer as honestly as you can.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not at all like me	Moderately unlike me	A little unlike me	A little like me	Moderately like me	Very much like me

I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me.
I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.
Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.
In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease.
I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.
I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.
I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation.
I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me.
When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm.
Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.
If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.
After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.
Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.
When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.
I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.
I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.
I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.
I tend to lose control during emergencies.
When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.
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.
When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.
Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

Big Five Personality: IPIP 20 Item
(Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006)

Please rate the following statements on how accurately each statement applies to you. Please use the response scale provided to answer in terms of how you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Additionally, describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate

I am the life of the party.
I sympathize with others' feelings.
I get chores done right away.
I have frequent mood swings.
I have a vivid imagination.
I don't talk a lot.
I am not interested in other people's problems.
I often forget to put things back in their proper place.
I am relaxed most of the time.
I am not interested in abstract ideas.
I talk to a lot of different people at parties.
I feel others' emotions.
I like order.
I get upset easily.
I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
I keep in the background.
I am not really interested in others.
I make a mess of things.
I seldom feel blue.
I do not have a good imagination.

Comparative Emphasis Scale
(Ravlin & Meglino, 1987)

INSTRUCTIONS: Sometimes people must choose between two things they feel they should do. In these choice situations they must place more emphasis on one activity over another. Below are pairs of statements which describe activities which people feel they should do. Read each statement carefully, and then place a check next to the statement which you feel you should emphasize more in your behavior at work.

Example:

- ___ Always being in control of your emotions while under stress
- X Looking forward to the future with a positive outlook

Both of the above statements represent activities many people feel are important and should be done. Imagine you're in a situation in which you can only do one of them. Your task is to select the one statement of the pair that you feel should be emphasized in your behavior. In the above example, this particular person felt the second activity should receive more emphasis than the first. Of course another person might feel just the opposite.

Please read the following 24 pairs of statements and indicate which one in each pair you feel should receive more emphasis. Some choices will probably be difficult for you, but please do the best you can. Do not leave any questions blank.

1. ___ Taking care of all loose ends on an assignment or project
 ___ Being impartial in dealing with others
2. ___ Taking actions which represent your true feelings
 ___ Trying to avoid hurting other people
3. ___ Encouraging someone who is having a difficult day
 ___ Considering different points of view before taking action
4. ___ Speaking your mind even when your views may not be popular
 ___ Working to meet course requirements even when your personal schedule must be rearranged
5. ___ Making decisions which are fair to all concerned
 ___ Expressing your true opinions when asked
6. ___ Continuing to work on a problem until it is resolved
 ___ Trying to help a fellow student through a difficult time
7. ___ Trying to help reduce a friend's burden
 ___ Admitting an error and accepting the consequences

8. ___ Being impartial in judging disagreements
 ___ Helping others on difficult projects or assignments
9. ___ Taking on additional tasks to get ahead or gain recognition
 ___ Admitting to making a mistake rather than covering it up
10. ___ Offering help to others when they are having a tough time
 ___ Doing whatever work is required to advance in your academic career
11. ___ Always being truthful in dealing with others
 ___ Taking steps to be sure that everyone has an equal opportunity at school
12. ___ Judging people fairly based on their abilities rather than only on their personalities
 ___ Seeking out all opportunities to learn new skills
13. ___ Trying to be helpful to a friend
 ___ Being sure that any assignments you make are fair to everyone
14. ___ Refusing to take credit for ideas of others
 ___ Maintaining the highest standard for your performance
15. ___ Being determined to be the best at your work
 ___ Trying not to hurt a friend's feelings
16. ___ Trying to bring about a fair solution to a dispute
 ___ Admitting responsibility for errors made
17. ___ Finishing each assignment or project you start even when others do not
 ___ Making sure that rewards or credit are given in the fairest possible way
18. ___ Refusing to tell a lie to make yourself look good
 ___ Helping those who are worried about things at school
19. ___ Trying as hard as you can to learn as much as possible about your coursework
 ___ Taking a stand for what you believe in
20. ___ Sharing information and ideas which others need to do their work
 ___ Always setting high performance goals for yourself
21. ___ Refusing to do something you think is wrong
 ___ Promoting fair treatment for everyone
22. ___ Making sure each person has an equal chance to get rewards or credit
 ___ Taking on more responsibility to advance in your academic career

23. ___ Correcting others' errors without embarrassing them
 ___ Holding true to your convictions
24. ___ Providing fair treatment for each person
 ___ Lending a helping hand to someone having difficulty

Appendix B

Identity Manipulation Prompts

Identity Prompts

(Adapted from: Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2006)

Individual identity:

“In the blank lines that follow, briefly list and describe your abilities and talents that distinguish you and your performance from that of friends, co-workers, classmates, etc. What motivates you as an individual?”

Relational identity:

“In the blank lines that follow, briefly describe close peer, coworker, or classmate relationships you share with other individuals. Describe your connections and emotional ties to these others and what your role is in these relationships. How do you think your relationships with other people motivate you? What’s your contribution to these relationships?”

Collective identity:

“In the blank lines that follow, briefly list and describe some groups to which you belong (e.g., based on work teams, clubs, gender, etc.). Choose one or two in particular and describe yourself in terms of your membership in these groups and what your membership role entails. How does your membership with these groups motivate you? Describe your connection to these groups.

Appendix C

Measures of Identity

Inclusion of the Other in the Self Scale (IOS; Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992)

Please circle the picture below which best describes your relationships with peers:

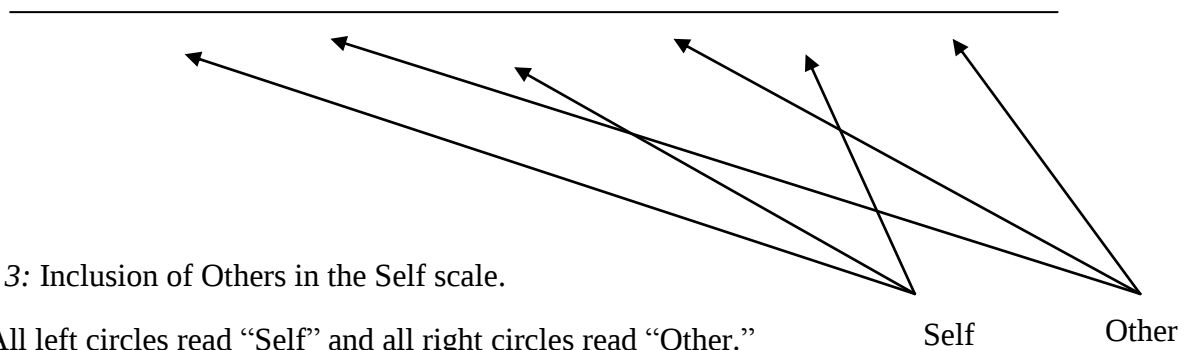
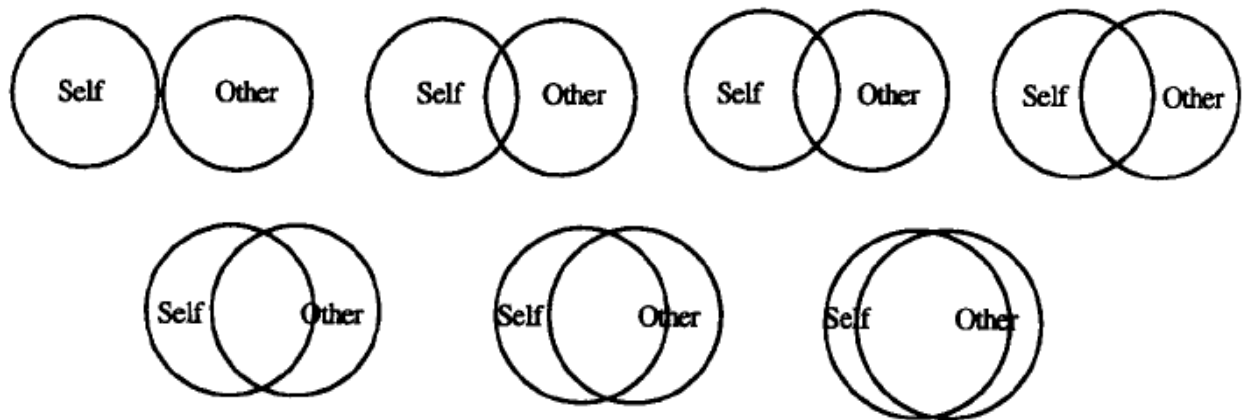


Figure 3: Inclusion of Others in the Self scale.

Note. All left circles read “Self” and all right circles read “Other.”

Twenty Statement Test
(TST; Kuhn & McPartland, 1954)

There are twenty numbered blanks on the page below. Please write twenty answers to the simple question 'Who am I?' in the blanks. Just give twenty different answers to this question. Answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not to somebody else. Write the answers in the order that they occur to you. Don't worry about logic or importance. Go along fairly fast, for time is limited.

Appendix D

News Article Questionnaire

Please respond to the following items regarding the article using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

_____The article had many rich descriptions.

_____The author used an appropriate level of readability for a college student audience.

_____The author described the people in depth.

_____I was engaged in the news story.

_____This article will be interesting to a college audience.

_____This type of article is important for students to have access to.

_____This article made me think about the lives of students at MSU.

Appendix E

State Lab Measures

State Affective Empathy (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997)

Please indicate the degree to which you experienced each emotion while hearing about Sarah's situation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all	Hardly at all	A small amount	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much	Extremely

_____ Sympathetic

_____ Softhearted

_____ Warm

_____ Compassionate

_____ Tender

State Perspective-Taking (State Cognitive Empathy)
(Created for this study)

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

_____ I can see what Sarah must be feeling right now.

_____ I understand that it must be like to be in Sarah's shoes right now.

_____ It's easy for me to see this situation from Sarah's perspective.

_____ I "put myself in Sarah's shoes" when hearing about Sarah's situation.

_____ I imagined what I would feel like if I were in Sarah's place.

_____ I can understand what facing this situation must seem like.

Appendix F

Helping Behavior Measure

If you would like to volunteer to help Katie, **please circle the number of hours that you would be willing to participate:**

.50	.75	1	1.25	1.5	1.75	2	2.25	2.5	2.75	3	3.25	3.5	3.75	4	4.25	4.5	More than 5
-----	-----	----------	------	-----	------	----------	------	-----	------	----------	------	-----	------	----------	------	-----	--------------------------

Please list your availability for the next two weeks:

Next Week:

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Sunday:

Week after Next:

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Sunday:

Please list your contact information so that we can reach you to set up a time that works for you:

Name: _____

Email: _____

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