Reactions of Would-Be Helpers Whose Offer of Help is Spurned

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An experiment was conducted to test the proposition that rejection of help by a needy recipient constitutes a negative expectancy violation for the would-be helper. The helper will react to this self-threat by expressing negative affect, unfavorable evaluations of the recipient, low attraction to the recipient, and causal attributions for the rejection that cast the recipient in an unflattering light. To test these hypotheses, college freshmen were prompted to offer rules for word construction to a same-sex recipient (a confederate) who was described as needing remediation on vocabulary and who "failed" a practice task. After rejecting/accepting the help, the recipient failed or succeeded on a comparable task. The results were consistent with these predictions. Dispositionally high expectations of interpersonal success served to amplify helpers' reactions to rejection/acceptance.

Much has been learned about the determinants of help giving (e.g., Derlega & Grzelak, 1982; Rushton & Sorrentino, 1981; Wills, 1982) and help seeking (e.g., DePaulo, 1983; Nadler & Fisher, 1986; Rosen, 1983). Yet, there has been remarkably little investigation of the reactions of either party in a prospective helping relationship to rejection by the other. Our concern is with the reactions of would-be helpers whose offer of help is rejected. We will first outline a framework for considering this problem area, then touch briefly on the scanty empirical literature that has some relevance. Then we will introduce an experiment that deals with a limited portion of this framework. Our model draws considerable heuristic support from that of Fisher, Nadler, and their associates (e.g., Fisher, Nadler, & Whitcher-Alagna, 1982; Nadler & Fisher, 1986) and from their emphasis on the desirability of investigating multimodal rather than merely unimodal threat reactions.

Imagine feeling both able and willing to help a particular individual who appears to need help, then offering it with the expectation that the offer will be accepted. Instead, the offer is rejected. Obviously, for those would-be helpers whose business it is to offer services to others, such rejection can have negative instrumental consequences and therefore constitute an unpleasant experience. Less obvious are the reactions of would-be helpers whose rejected attempts to influence a needy recipient were altruistic, that is, made with little thought of gaining material rewards or social approval.[1]

Given some prior uncertainty as to whether an intended offer of help would be accepted, we propose that the degree of favorability of the outcome, that is, whether the offer is then rejected or accepted, induces psychological arousal in the would-be helper (see Figure 1). The helper will try to cope with this arousal through various reaction modalities. Thus, an unfavorable outcome (rejection of the offer) will elicit more negative affect, more negative evaluation of and less attraction to the recipient, and causal attributions for the outcome that cast the recipient in a more negative light than will a favorable outcome (acceptance of the offer). Persistent attempts to overcome the recipient's resistance will depend on whether the would-be helper still perceives the outcome to be controllable and is still motivated to try again.

We propose further that the impact of outcome favorability is mediated by the degree to which the helper's self-reflective expectations of a favorable outcome are disconfirmed and on the perceived importance of the outcome for the helper's self-image or for the recipient's welfare. Such disconfirmed expectations might reflect negatively on the helper's self-image by inducing self-doubt in the helper about the following: his or her own control over the impersonal environment (task-relevant competence); own efficacy in exerting interpersonal control; own humanitarian concerns; or own concerns about being likable. Such disconfirmed expectations may also threaten the public self-image of would-be helpers in one or more of these same respects (Nadler, Fisher, & Ben-Itzhak, 1983).

Magnitude of expectancy violation and perceived outcome importance are considered in turn to be moderated by personal and situational factors. The personal factors consist of chronic individual differences on those private self-image-relevant aspects of disconfirmed expectations that were noted previously.

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[1] The emergence of a new journal, *The Journal of Compliance in Health Care,* is notable in this context because of its exclusive focus on problems of client noncompliance, including the impact of such noncompliance on the morale of service providers.
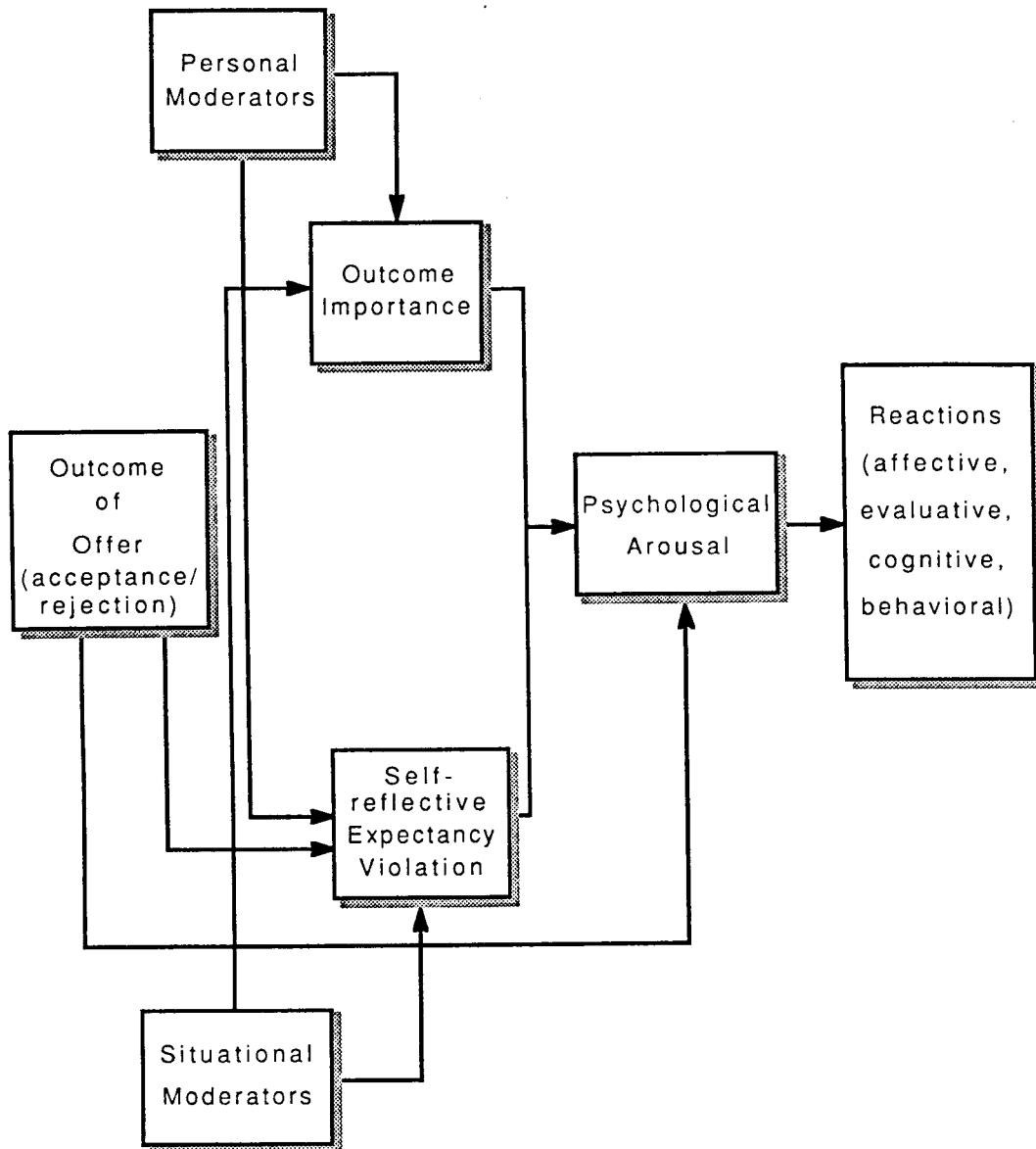
Figure 1. A framework for considering the reactions of would-be helpers to the outcome of their offer of help.

It seems plausible, for example, that an unfavorable outcome would constitute more of an expectancy violation and would thus reflect more unfavorably on important self-attributes of those who harbor chronically high expectations of interpersonal control than on those who possess lower chronic expectations. Consequently, the reactions to a given outcome of those with the higher chronic expectations are likely to be more extreme, inasmuch as they would be relatively more motivated to reestablish a sense of control.

Relevant situational moderators might include perceived aspects of the helping context, the recipient, and the helper–recipient relationship. Apropos of context, for instance, one might suppose that if the help is perceived to be important for the recipient's welfare, and the task confronting the recipient was considered to be far too difficult for the recipient to accomplish

unaided, then rejection of help would constitute more of an expectancy violation than would acceptance, and thus lead to relatively more negative reactions to the rejecting than to the accepting recipient.

Early Work of Some Relevance

The empirical literature bearing on this model is quite sparse. Of direct relevance are correlational studies indicating that client resistance is stressful for professional helpers (Farber, 1983), that it adversely affects their liking of such clients (e.g., Wills, 1978), and that it may contribute to "burnout," especially among helpers with initially high humanitarian concerns (Pines, 1982).

The most pertinent experimental literature is of indirect rele-

vance because it concerns the reactions of influencing agents whose influence attempts were relatively egoistic, that is, intended to secure compliance on objectives that would benefit the agent primarily. Particularly suggestive is an experiment by Thibaut and Riecken (1955) in which the naive participant tried to influence two alleged competitors to give up certain helpful dictionaries. The confederates refused on the first two rounds but complied on the third. By and large, liking decreased for the noncomplying confederates. Thibaut and Riecken reasoned that participants had been led to expect compliance and that when this expectation was disconfirmed they became annoyed: "An individual ordinarily wants to control his social environment in order to gratify his needs. Complete intractibility on the part of another increases the chances of deprivation and consequently leads to rejection or dislike of the other" (pp. 115–116).

Cialdini, Braver, and Lewis (1974) demonstrated that influencing agents regard a target person as more intelligent and likable if their attempts at persuasion were successful than if the attempts were unsuccessful. These results were said to support Kelley's (1971) view that attributional biases following expectancy disconfirmation may serve to bolster a sense of control. The investigators also showed that third-party observers, having no such motivation, rate noncomplying targets more favorably than they do complying targets. Subsequently, Cialdini and Mirels (1976) demonstrated that influencing agents with high personal control orientations consider a yielding target more intelligent and attractive than they do a resisting person, whereas the opposite pattern is exhibited by those with low personal control orientations.

Of interest, too, are the "threat-to-self-esteem" investigations of Tessler and Schwartz (1972) and of Fisher, Nadler, and associates (Fisher et al., 1982; Nadler & Fisher, 1986), although the threat-precipitating event with which they deal is the act of accepting help, as opposed to having one's offer of help rejected. Their approaches draw on revisions of dissonance theory that maintain that strong expectancy violations, particularly those bearing directly on important aspects of the self-image, are a more potent source of motivational pressure than is the need to cope with cognitive inconsistency per se (e.g., Greenwald & Ronis, 1978; Swann & Read, 1981; Watts, 1968). Tessler and Schwartz showed that participants with high self-esteem seek less help than do those with low self-esteem, if task proficiency is believed to reflect on important self-attributes. The investigators reasoned that poor performance violates consequential expectations of success more for persons with high self-esteem than for those with low self-esteem. If those of high self-esteem then sought help, that would only confirm the perception of inadequacy (low control) implied by task failure (see also Morris & Rosen, 1973).

Fisher, Nadler, and their associates demonstrated that individuals with high self-esteem (as compared with their counterparts) react to being helped with negative affect and negative self-evaluation if task performance reflects on important self-attributes and if the helper is similar to or has a close relationship with the recipient. To reestablish a sense of control they also react with self-help.

Riordan, Quigley-Fernandez, & Tedeschi (1982) examined the interpersonal aspects of being refused help, although their theory seems particularly relevant to the help seeker who has a favorable self-image. According to them, we expect help to be given altruistically when we request it from someone we like. Should the target person violate this expectation by refusing to help us, our attraction toward that person will decline. One might add that the refusal may also imply a disconfirmation of expectations that the target person likes us. Mauss (1925/1967) and Blau (1964) proposed that the rejection of an offer of help may well anger the would-be helper. They reasoned that the rejection is interpreted not merely as a refusal of assistance on a particular problem, but more importantly as a spurning of the would-be helper's overture of friendship that is also implicit in the offer of help.

Previous Exploratory Studies

We conducted several exploratory role-play studies (Rosen, Mickler, & Spiers, 1986) partly to pilot test some of the measures that were intended for use in our experiment. Participants were presented with various hypothetical situations in which they supposedly offered help to someone needing it, who then rejected or accepted it. Some were asked, via multiple affective scales, how they felt about that outcome. Others were asked to evaluate the recipient. Consistent with our theorizing, respondents reacted with more negative affect, and with less favorable evaluations of the recipient's sociability and competence, when the offers were rejected than when the offers were accepted. Some support was also found for type of help and type of relationship as situational moderators. Namely, affective reactions to the outcome tended to be more extreme if the help was skill relevant than if it was skill irrelevant or if the recipient was a friend rather than a stranger. Evaluative reactions to the outcome were also more extreme in the case of skill-relevant help.

To determine whether people hold generalized expectations about the outcomes of their offers, some participants were asked to predict whether their offers would be accepted or rejected and to provide reasons for each expected outcome. The predominant expectation was acceptance. The rich assortment of outcome attributions given was surprisingly devoid of self-attribution. Instead, relatively unfavorable recipient attributes such as stubbornness were imputed to the rejecting recipient, whereas relatively favorable attributes such as the desire to be sociable were imputed to the accepting recipient. These kinds of outcome attribution were later transformed into rating scales for use in our experiment.

Such generalized expectations of acceptance may constitute one facet of expectations of success in one's endeavors (Ross, Bierbrauer, & Polly, 1974). An alternative explanation, deriving from Mauss (1925/1967), is that there exists a social norm that obligates us to accept benefits. To explore this normative explanation, we presented the same help-offering scenarios to some undergraduates with instructions to indicate in each case whether most people would agree that it would be improper for the recipient to refuse their help. The typical response was that the recipient should accept the help, regardless of private desires to the contrary.

An Experiment on Reactions to Actual Rejection

Though encouraging, the results of our role-play explorations are at best an inadequate substitute for the experimental inves-

tigation of reactions to actual rejection versus acceptance of help. A peer-tutoring paradigm suggested itself as an appropriate context. Namely, prospective helpers were led to believe that we were conducting a "feasibility" study of whether peer tutoring of college students who needed remediation would be a useful instructional supplement to the regular remedial studies tutorial program.

Outcome of offer constituted the key independent variable of interest. In keeping with our theoretical model, our overall expectation was that rejection of the offer of help would elicit more negative reactions than would acceptance. Recipient's subsequent *task performance* (i.e., performance following the outcome of the offer) and *task difficulty* were included as two contextual moderators of the effects of outcome. We reasoned that task performance per se would induce a state of empathic arousal or mood congruent with the goodness of that performance, and that the affect, evaluations of the recipient, and the desire for association with (attraction to) the recipient would be consistent with the valence of that aroused state. We felt, however, that the recipient's performance would have greater "hedonic relevance" (Chaiken & Cooper, 1973) for the accepted than for the rejected helper, partly because it was more likely that the accepted helper would be perceived as accountable for the recipient's performance (Schopler & Layton, 1972). As for task difficulty, we reasoned that people expect needy individuals to be more receptive to help on difficult tasks than on easy ones (DePaulo & Fisher, 1980). This would make rejection on the difficult task and acceptance on the easy task more of a negative (less of a positive) expectancy violation that would rejection on the easy task and acceptance on the difficult task.

In summary, we predicted that rejection, in contrast to acceptance, would be experienced as a negative expectancy violation and would elicit more negative affective reactions, more negative evaluations of the recipient, less desire for association with the recipient, and more outcome attributions that were unfavorable to the recipient. We also predicted that a subsequent unsuccessful task performance, compared with a successful one, would elicit more negative affect, more negative evaluations of the recipient, and less desired association with the recipient. However, the differential effects of performance would be greater in the case of acceptance than of rejection. Finally, we predicted that rejection on a difficult rather than on an easy task would be experienced as more of a negative expectancy violation and would elicit more negative affect and evaluations. Conversely, acceptance of help on the difficult rather than on the easy task would be perceived as less of a negative expectancy violation and would elicit more positive affect and evaluations.

Dispositional measures of perceived control, self-attributions for success/failure, and empathy were included as possible personal moderators. We were interested in exploring whether would-be helpers with high standing on such personal aspects of self-image would manifest relatively more extreme reactions to the outcome of their offer than would their counterparts with lower standing on those traits. This would be consistent with the rationale (at least for perceived interpersonal control and self-attribution for success) that the outcome of the offer was more important to helpers with higher perceptions of self-image and that rejection would constitute more of an expectancy violation for them.

Method

Participants and Design

We recruited 105 participants (57 women, 48 men) from an introductory psychology research participation pool. The basic experimental design was a 3 (outcome) $\times$ 2 (task performance) $\times$ 2 (task difficulty) factorial. The three levels composing the outcome factor consisted of a rejection condition, a no-offer control condition, and an acceptance condition. Task performance consisted of two conditions: failure or success. Task difficulty also involved two conditions: easy or difficult. Because sex of the participants did not interact with the other factors, it was dropped from further consideration.

Procedure

Participants completed individual difference questionnaires, then reported individually several days later for the experimental session, at which they were told that they would be participating in a feasibility study of whether peer tutoring could serve as a useful instructional supplement to the college Office of Remedial Instruction program for undergraduates needing remedial work in the verbal area. Their "learner" would be working on two word-building tasks that high school seniors had found to be easy/difficult (task difficulty). The first task was for practice. Each task required construction of at least four 3- or 4-letter words within a 3-min period from a pile of cardboard letters. For each task, the participant's job would be to signal the learner when to start, to time the learner, to assess the learner's performance, and to report their impressions using questionnaires. On the basis of a random selection, some participants would also serve in the more active role of tutor, whereas other participants would simply continue in the more passive role of timing, observing, and assessing the learner. The participants were then informed as to whether they were to be tutors as well (these were the experimental participants in the rejection/acceptance conditions), or simply to serve in the more passive role (these were the participants in the no-offer control condition).

Their attention was drawn to a card file containing rules for word construction (e.g., separation of vowels from consonants, alphabetization, seldom-occurring letter combinations), that might serve as useful guidelines to the helper in assessing the learner's performance. It was intimated that the rules were provided over time by former participants and that if they wished to do so, they too could add rules to the file. This was done to increase the experimental participants' feelings of involvement in the helping process and to assure them that the help was coming at least as much from them as from the experimenter. Although this procedure presumably made the experimental participants feel more involved than the control participants felt, the latter were certainly more actively involved than if they had been merely third-party witnesses, and their reactions were probably different than one might have obtained from such witnesses (Cialdini et al., 1974).

At this point in the study, the 71 participants who had been assigned to the experimental conditions were also advised that if in their judgment the learner had problems with the practice task, and they considered it appropriate to offer help, they could then offer the learner some of the rules in preparing for the second task. The element of choice was stressed so that the subsequent offer was not perceived as reflecting forced compliance.

Each participant was then ushered into a room that permitted him or her to monitor the learner (a same-sex confederate) through a one-way screen. The learner sat at a table close to the screen. The participant then started and timed the learner's performance on the practice task with the aid of an electric timer. The learner, making use of a watch, invariably failed to complete the task on time. Then the participant completed a pretest questionnaire that addressed his or her own affective reactions and an "assessment" questionnaire dealing with the learner's performance.

Once this was done, the experimental participants were informed that if they wished to offer help, now was the appropriate time to do so, and that if they decided to do so they should select three or four rules from the card file and put them in an envelope. To save time and to minimize the learner's discomfort, the experimenter would then deliver to the learner a preprinted inquiry from the participant that asked whether the learner would like to see some potentially helpful rules for word construction. If the learner agreed to accept the help, the participant would hand the envelope with rules to the experimenter, who would then slip it under the door to the learner's room.

With one exception, all experimental participants chose to offer help. If the memo was typed in all capitals, the learner's response was to return the memo either with the word *no* (rejection condition) or the word *okay* (acceptance condition) written on it. If the learner agreed to accept help, he or she would retrieve the envelope from under the door and appear to study the rules.

Regardless of condition, each participant then started, timed, and assessed the learner on the second task. According to plan, the learner either failed or succeeded (task performance) on the second task. All participants again completed a questionnaire on their affective reactions. In addition, they completed questionnaires that addressed their evaluative and attributional reactions and included manipulation checks. Finally, all were probed for suspicion, debriefed, thanked, and given credit for research participation. None appeared aware of the deception.

Dependent Variables

Expectancy violation. Experimental participants were asked whether they agreed that the learner's response to their offer came as a pleasant surprise. A rating of 1 meant they *disagreed strongly;* a rating of 7 meant they *agreed strongly.*

Affective reactions. Twelve 7-point rating scales were used to measure affective reactions. The scales had been adapted from the work of Archer, Diaz-Loving, Gollwitzer, Davis, and Foushee (1981) and of Davis (1983) and were used in the role-play exploratory studies (Rosen, Mickler, & Spiers, 1986). Participants were asked whether they were currently feeling each particular affective state, where 1 signified *not at all* and 7 signified *very much.* Summed responses to the items *sad, alarmed, hurt,* and *bothered* were considered an index of distress. Summed responses to the items *angry, irritated, insulted,* and *offended* were regarded as an index of irritation. Finally, summed responses to the terms *proud, pleasant, needed,* and *effective* were regarded as an index of joy. Satisfactory internal consistency is evident in the average interitem correlations among the critical second set of affective ratings obtained from the total sample: $r(103) = .53, .62,$ and $.41$ for distress, irritation, and joy, respectively, $p < .0001.$

Evaluative reactions and desire for association. Helper's evaluations of the learner's sociability and competence involved the same indexes used in the role-play simulations, which had been developed and tested in other experiments on helping behavior (Rosen, 1984; Rosen, Tomarelli, Kidda, & Medvin, 1986). The index of perceived sociability consisted of summed responses to six bipolar, 7-point scales: egotistic-altruistic, vain–modest, unsympathetic–sympathetic, insensitive–sensitive, cruel–kind, and not likable–likable. The index of perceived competence, likewise, consisted of summed responses to six bipolar, 7-point scales: incapable–capable, unskilled–skilled, weak–strong, naive–sophisticated, awkward–poised, and incompetent–competent. Two additional items called for judgments on 7-point scales as to whether the learner was not admirable–admirable and ungrateful–grateful.

Two 7-point scales were used to measure desire for association. One called for the participant to indicate willingness, if any, to associate with the learner informally after the study. The other called for an indication of willingness to serve as the learner's regular tutor.

Attributional reactions. The principal set of attributional reactions, consisting of 11 bipolar 7-point scales, had to do with experimental participants' causal attributions for the outcome. The items were based on reasons that participants had generated in one of the role-play studies and addressed the extent to which, in the participant's judgment, the learner's response to the offer was guided by the following: the learner's (lack of) concern about imposing; (lack of) realization of the need for help; perceptions that the helper lacked/had ability or skill; desire (not) to be sociable; (lack of) trust in the helper; desire to acquire a skill with/ without help; (lack of) concern about appearing inferior; (not) being shy; (not) being stubborn; (not) being proud; and (not) being embarrassed.

Another set, included for exploratory purposes, addressed participants' causal attributions for the learner's performance on the second task. Participants were asked, via 11-point scales, to what extent that performance was due to the sort of person the learner is (personality); the way the learner went about working on the task (strategy); and the learner's particular mood at the time (mood).

Manipulation and other procedural checks. All participants were asked whether they had been assigned to the more active role of tutor (i.e., were in an experimental or control condition). Only experimental participants were asked whether their offer had been rejected or accepted. All participants were questioned about whether the learner had failed or succeeded on the second task. Certain assessments were elicited partly to make the participant's role appear more consequential and partly as indirect checks on the performance manipulation. For example, participants used 7-point rating scales to indicate whether the learner had worked efficiently, worked with a definite plan in mind, appeared confident, and appeared relaxed. Summed responses to the first two items were considered an index of efficiency, and summed responses to the last two were considered an index of confidence. A subsample of 47 participants was questioned about whether the tasks were described as easy or difficult for high school seniors. To determine whether we had succeeded in having participants view their decision as freely made, we asked them (using an 11-point scale on which 1 meant *entirely* and 11 meant *not at all*) to what extent the decision to offer help was up to them. Finally, as a check on the possible confound of perceived own task-relevant competence (Schopler & Layton, 1972), participants were asked to indicate (on a 7-point scale where 7 meant *completely confident*) how confident they were that they themselves could complete the tasks on time.

Individual Difference Scales

Participants had also been asked to complete several questionnaires at a prior group-testing session, to explore the role of some personal factors as possible moderators of the effects of outcome. The questionnaires consisted of nine scales, namely the Personal Efficacy and Interpersonal Control scales in the Spheres of Control battery (Paulhus, 1983); the four scales (Interpersonal Success, Interpersonal Failure, Noninterpersonal Success, Noninterpersonal Failure) of the Attributional Style Assessment Test (ASAT), an attributional style battery (Anderson, Horowitz, & French, 1983); and three scales (Personal Distress, Perspective Taking, and Empathic Concern) of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), a multidimensional empathic orientations battery (Davis, 1983).

Results

Manipulation Checks and Related Issues

All 105 participants indicated correctly whether they were assigned to the tutorial role or to the less active role, and all 70 experimental participants who offered help correctly stated whether the offer was accepted or rejected. All participants indicated correctly that the learner had failed the practice task and whether the learner had failed or succeeded on the second task.

Three-factor (Outcome × Task Performance × Task Difficulty) analyses of variance (ANOVAS) yielded significant main effects of performance on the indexes of perceived efficiency and confidence, respectively, $F(2, 92) = 80.92, p < .0001$, for efficiency; $F(2, 92) = 15.02, p < .0001$, for confidence. As expected, the learner who succeeded was considered more efficient ($M = 7.20$) and confident ($M = 7.79$) than the learner who failed ($Ms = 5.83, 5.78$, respectively). A three-factor ANOVA on purported task difficulty yielded a significant effect of task difficulty in the appropriate direction, $F(1, 35) = 31.60, p < .0001$ ($M = 1.00$ in easy condition, $M = 0.08$ in difficult condition).

A three-factor ANOVA produced no significant effects on participant's perceptions of whether their decision to help was freely made. The average response ($M = 2.01$) indicated that the situation was indeed perceived as high choice. Likewise, a three-factor ANOVA showed no effects on participants' perceptions of own task-relevant competence. On the average, participants felt quite confident ($M = 6.51$) that they themselves could complete the tasks on time.

Data Analyses

To test the principal predictions, we conducted three-factor multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAS) where multiple indexes of a reaction modality were involved and (unweighted means) ANOVAS alone in the case of single-index reactions. Some of the hypotheses called for Outcome × Performance and Outcome × Difficulty interaction effects. However, inasmuch as task performance principally yielded main effects, whereas task difficulty scarcely exerted any effects, the (largely main) effects of outcome and of task performance and the interaction effects of task difficulty are considered in that order. Their description is followed by an account of the supplementary analyses involving the individual difference measures. It should be noted again that expectancy violation and outcome attribution were only relevant for the 70 experimental participants, whereas the other principal dependent variables were relevant for the entire sample of 105 participants. The Ns in some analyses differed somewhat, due to missing responses. The multivariate test statistic was Pillai's trace.

Effects of Outcome

On expectancy violation. We predicted that rejection would be experienced as more of a negative expectancy violation than would acceptance. A significant effect of outcome was obtained on rated positivity of expectancy violation, $F(1, 62) = 111.24$, $p < .0001$. As predicted, participants in the rejection condition agreed less ($M = 2.32$) than did those in the acceptance condition ($M = 5.47$) that the outcome was a pleasant surprise. This main effect was qualified by an Outcome × Difficulty interaction effect, the details of which are presented in the subsection on task difficulty.

On affective reactions. Our prediction called for more negative affect in the rejection than the acceptance condition. A MANOVA on affective-reaction data from the initial measurement showed no significant variation across experimental conditions. Consequently, the predictions were tested only on the postoutcome data. A MANOVA on those data yielded a main effect of outcome, $F(6, 184) = 4.31, p < .0004$. All three univariate main

Table 1
Mean Reactions to Outcome of Offer

Reaction modality	Outcome of offer		
	Offer rejected	No-offer control	Offer accepted
Affect	1.15$_b$	−0.34$_a$	−0.75$_a$
Evaluation	1.96$_c$	−0.19$_b$	−1.69$_a$
Desired association	−0.33$_b$	0.08$_a$	0.23$_a$
Outcome attribution			
Defensiveness	4.99	—	−4.72
Reticence	0.38	—	−0.41

Note. All means are in standard score form. Except for means on desired association, which are based on a single item, all means are based on composite scores. Higher means on the respective modalities signify relatively more negative affect, more negative evaluation, more desire for informal association, more defensiveness, and more reticence. Outcome attribution was relevant only for experimental participants. Within-row means not sharing the same subscript differ beyond $p = .05$ by Duncan test, on those reaction modalities that were also applicable to the control condition. Fs in the case of defensiveness and reticence were significant at beyond $p = .0001$ and .05, respectively.

effects of outcome were significant at the $p < .03$ level or better. Means for those in the rejection, control, and acceptance conditions were, respectively, 13.44, 10.06, and 10.56, on distress; 10.24, 6.29, and 6.69, on irritation; and 12.82, 13.60, and 16.78, on joy. As predicted, greater negative (or lower positive) affect was expressed in the rejection condition than in the other conditions; reactions of those in the control and acceptance conditions did not differ significantly from one another. It should be noted, too, that the total sample correlation between distress and irritation was positive, $r(103) = .67, p < .001$. These indices in turn tended to be negatively correlated with joy: $r(103) = −.21, p < .03$, between distress and joy; $r(103) = −.12$, *ns*, between irritation and joy.

These results justified further consolidation. Accordingly, the scores on joy were transformed by reverse keying. Each affective distribution was then standardized, and the standard scores of each participant were summed across indexes. A three-factor ANOVA on the composite negative affect scores yielded the expected significant main effect of outcome, $F(2, 93) = 9.66, p < .0002$. The composite affective means, presented in Table 1 in standard score form, again showed significantly more negative affect in the rejection than in the other conditions ($p < .05$, by Duncan test), but no significant difference was found between the other conditions.

On evaluative reactions. We had predicted that rejection would elicit more negative evaluations of the recipient than would acceptance. A MANOVA on the set of four evaluative measures (sociability, competence, admirability, and gratitude) yielded a significant main effect of outcome, $F(8, 180) = 4.58$, $p < .0001$. All four univariate main effects were significant as well ($p < .03$ or better). Consistent with predictions, evaluative ratings were most negative in the rejection condition and least so in the acceptance condition. Specifically, they were significantly more negative in the rejection than in the control condition on all four measures. Ratings in the control condition were more negative than in the acceptance condition, but these differences were only significant in the case of sociability and

gratitude. The average total sample intercorrelation among these four evaluative measures was .54(100), $p < .0001$. Further consolidation was therefore carried out by standardizing each index, then summing across the four indexes. A three-factor ANOVA on the composite evaluation scores yielded, of course, a significant main effect of outcome, $F(2, 92) = 14.84$, $p < .0001$. The composite evaluative means, presented in Table 1 in standard score form, again were significantly more negative in the rejection than in the other two conditions; this time, however, evaluations were significantly more negative in the control than in the acceptance conditions.

On desire for association. We predicted that rejected helpers would desire less association with the recipient than would accepted helpers. A three-factor MANOVA on the two measures involving desire for association showed no significant effects. The ANOVA on willingness for informal association only showed a marginal effect, $F(2, 93) = 2.77$, $p < .07$. According to Duncan test, however, significantly less desire for informal association was expressed in the rejection than in the other two conditions ($p < .05$); less desire was expressed in the control than in the acceptance condition, but this difference was not significant. Furthermore, in most of the supplementary regression analyses alluded to in the next section, the main effect of outcome on willingness for informal association was significant at the .05 level or better. Means are shown in Table 1 in standardized form.

On attributional reactions. It was predicted that rejected helpers would make relatively unfavorable outcome attributions to the learner. A three-factor MANOVA on the 11 items dealing with outcome attributions produced a significant main effect of outcome, $F(11, 51) = 26.26$, $p < .0001$. All the ANOVAs, except that performed on concern about imposing, showed significant main effects of outcome ($p < .03$ or better).

To explore the structure of these 11 outcome attributions, a principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed. Two factors accounted for 45% and 15% of the variance, respectively. The seven items that loaded at least .50 on Factor 1 but less than .20 on Factor 2 were selected for further consolidation. These items were need realization, desire to be sociable, trust in helper, desire for skill acquisition, stubbornness, pride, and embarrassment. Ignoring signs, the average total intercorrelation of the seven items was $r(69) = .56$, $p < .001$. *Defensiveness* suggested itself as an appropriate label for this cluster. Scores on each item were standardized (reverse keying was performed on stubbornness, pride, and embarassment), then composite scores were obtained by summing across the items. A three-factor ANOVA on this attributed defensiveness composite yielded, as expected, a main effect of outcome, $F(1, 62) = 226.60$, $p < .0001$. The means, which are given in standard score form in Table 1, show greater attributed defensiveness in the rejection than in the acceptance condition. All other Fs were less than 1.00.

Concern about imposing and shyness were found to load highly (.68 and .74, respectively) on Factor 2, but relatively weakly ($-.20$ and $-.31$, respectively) on Factor 1. Their total correlation was $r(68) = .44$, $p < .0002$. *Reticence* was determined an appropriate label for this cluster. Composite scores were obtained through standardization and then summation across items. A three-factor ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of outcome on reticence, $F(1, 62) = 4.14$, $p < .05$; all other

Fs < 2.00. The means, shown in standard score form in Table 1, indicate greater attributed reticence in the rejection than in the acceptance conditions.

Three-factor ANOVAs were conducted on the three items pertaining to performance attribution (the learner's personality, strategy, and mood), although no hypotheses were proposed about the effects of outcome on those attributions. Performance was attributed more to personality in the rejection than in the other conditions; this effect was marginal, according to the ANOVA, $F(2, 93) = 2.80$, $p < .066$, but significant in Duncan tests, $p < .05$. The control and acceptance conditions did not differ. No main effects of outcome on strategy and mood were found.

Effects of Task Performance

Main effects of task performance and Outcome × Task Performance interaction effects were predicted with respect to affective reactions, evaluative reactions, and desire for association. Instead, only main effects of performance emerged in the first two cases, and no significant effects were obtained on desire for association. Specifically, a MANOVA revealed a significant main effect of performance on affective reactions, $F(3, 91) = 9.83$, $p < .0003$. The univariate main effects, likewise, were significant in all three cases at the .03 level or better. The main effect of outcome on the *composite* affect scores was, of course, significant, $F(1, 93) = 28.94$, $p < .0001$, with more negative reactions occurring in the failure condition ($M = 1.06$) than in the success condition ($M = -1.00$).

Likewise, a MANOVA on evaluative reactions produced a significant main effect of performance, $F(4, 89) = 2.91$, $p < .03$. Of the four univariate analyses, only the main effect on sociability was marginal: $F(1, 92) = 2.78$, $p < .10$. A significant main effect was, of course, obtained on the composite evaluation scores, $F(1, 92) = 9.58$, $p < .003$, with more negative reactions occurring in the failure condition ($M = .99$) than in the success condition ($M = -0.87$).

No predictions had been made regarding the effects of task performance on expectancy violation, outcome attributions, and performance attributions. A three-factor ANOVA revealed a significant main effect on expectancy violation, $F(1, 62) = 6.33$, $p < .02$, such that less pleasant surprise was expressed in the failure condition ($M = 3.47$) than in the success condition ($M = 4.39$). There were neither main nor interaction effects of performance on outcome attribution, but a significant main effect was obtained on attribution of the learner's performance to the learner's strategy, $F(1, 93) = 6.11$, $p < .02$. This was qualified by an Outcome × Performance interaction effect, $F(2, 93) = 7.44$, $p < .001$, such that attribution to the learner's strategy was greatest ($M = 2.59$) in the rejection–failure condition, and least in the rejection–success condition ($M = 6.29$).

Effects of Task Difficulty

An Outcome × Task Difficulty interaction effect was obtained only with regard to expectancy violation, $F(1, 62) = 4.56$, $p < .04$. As predicted, less pleasant (more unpleasant) surprise was registered in the rejection–difficult task condition ($M = 2.12$) than in the rejection–easy task condition ($M = 2.53$), whereas more pleasant surprise was elicited in the acceptance–difficult condition ($M = 6.00$) than in the acceptance–

easy condition (M = 5.05). Examination of this interaction effect revealed that the effect of task difficulty was significant in the acceptance condition $F(1, 62)$ = 4.87, p < .05, but not in the rejection condition (F < 1.00). Contrary to predictions, no significant Outcome × Difficulty interaction effects were obtained either on affective reactions or on evaluative reactions.

Supplementary Analyses

To explore the possible contribution of the individual difference measures as personal moderators of the effects of outcome, 9 three-variable regression analyses were conducted. Outcome and task performance served as two of the independent variables; task difficulty, given its limited contribution, was replaced in each case by one of the nine individual difference measures. Expectancy violation, desire for informal association, and the composite measures of affect, evaluation, and defensiveness, respectively, served as the dependent variables. For our purposes, only those interactions of an individual difference measure with the outcome factor that satisfied the .10 level or better were considered noteworthy.

None of the three empathy scales interacted significantly with outcome. Of the two Spheres of Control scales used, only Personal Efficacy interacted significantly with outcome, namely on the evaluation composite, $F(1, 91)$ = 4.21, p < .05. The Attributional Style scales were most productive. An Outcome × Interpersonal Success interaction effect was obtained on affect, $F(1, 92)$ = 16.54, p < .0001, and on evaluation, $F(1, 91)$ = 4.22, p < .05. Likewise, significant Outcome × Noninterpersonal Success interaction effects were obtained on affect, $F(1, 92)$ = 3.04, p < .10, and on evaluation, $F(1, 91)$ = 5.90, p < .02. Also found were significant Outcome × Interpersonal Failure and Outcome × Noninterpersonal Failure interaction effects on affective reaction, $F(1, 92)$ = 7.85, p < .007, and $F(1, 92)$ = 3.08, p < .09, respectively.

To examine the patterning of these interaction effects, three-factor ANOVAs were computed that included dichotomized versions of the individual difference scores. Inspection of the means revealed that the differences due to outcome were greater, by and large, for those scoring above the median on their respective individual difference scales, than for those scoring below the median. However, although empathic concern did not interact significantly with outcome in the regression analyses, an ANOVA on the median-split version of this measure yielded more extreme affective reactions to the outcome by those of low empathic concern than by their counterparts of higher empathic concern (p < .032).

Discussion

The evidence supports most of the predictions made as to how would-be helpers would react to the outcome of their offer. Those whose offer of help was rejected expressed more negative expectancy violation, more negative affect, and more unfavorable evaluations of the recipient than did those whose offer was accepted. The effects of outcome on expressed desire for association, though in the expected direction, were marginal. Perhaps our participants were ambivalent about the prospect of further association with a remedial student, even one who accepted help. As for the reactions expressed in the control condition,

although they generally fell as hoped between those in the rejection and those in the acceptance conditions, they tended to be closer to those in the latter condition. The reason for this is unclear. Perhaps the lack of direct contact with the recipient served to water down the extent of arousal produced in accepted helpers.

It might be noted that the direction of the effects of outcome on evaluation and desire for informal association with the recipient resemble the findings of Cialdini et al. (1974). Although attempted influence in our study context was altruistic, whereas attempted influence in their experiment was egoistic, such parallel results cast doubt (see also Wills, 1978) on the view espoused by Kipnis (1976) that helping behavior is not germane to the area of social power. More direct comparison is needed, however, to determine not only the commonalities but also the boundary conditions separating egoistic from altruistic influence.

The predicted effects of outcome attribution by those in the experimental groups were clearly supported: Rejected helpers made relatively more unfavorable attributions about the recipient by locating the cause for the recipient's response to the offer in what could be characterized as defensiveness and (to a lesser extent) reticence in the recipient. It was as though the spurned helpers tried to cope with the threat to their own self-image by imputing the rejection to the threat that the offer posed for the recipient's self-image. Thus far, however, we lack direct evidence that rejection was threatening to the helper's self-image.

According to Jones and McGillis (1976), a person who does not appear to realize the consequences of his or her actions is exempted from correspondent inferences by the perceiver. Why then did our rejected helpers not only attribute the rejection to a lack of realization on the recipient's part of the need for help, but at the same time impute unfavorable characteristics, such as stubbornness, to the recipient? Adding to the anomaly is that the rejection was a disconfirmation of a "category-based" expectancy, namely that students categorized as being in the remedial program would be fully aware of needing remediation and therefore receptive to an offer of relevant help. A possible explanation is that rejected helpers reinterpreted the question on need realization to mean that the recipient was actively engaging in self-deception about his or her poor verbal skills.

The consistent negativity of rejected helpers' reactions across the various response modalities is noteworthy in a number of respects. It suggests, for instance, that an interactive model for considering the various reaction modalities is inappropriate in the present context. In view of the evidence, too, it seems plausible that the expression of outcome attributions and evaluations unfavorable to the recipient did not serve as (intellectualizing) alternatives to the expression of negative affect. It may even be true that the attributional attempts to reestablish a sense of control over the environment were invigorated by the negative affect.

We had predicted that task performance not only would exert main effects on helpers' affective, evaluative, and associative reactions, but would also qualify the effects of outcome on those reactions. Instead, task performance exerted only main effects on affective and evaluative reactions, such that relatively more negative reactions were elicited by the recipient's failing performance. The finding that helpers expressed relatively more pleasant surprise at the recipient's reaction (less negative expec-

tancy violation) if the recipient then succeeded is consistent with these main effects. In short, it seems that outcome and performance exert additive effects, with reactions being most negative under rejection–failure and least negative under acceptance–success.

Perhaps the simplest explanation is that the helpers failed to draw the necessary causal linkages between the outcome of the offer and the recipient's ensuing performance. This could have happened in part because they were not asked explicitly about the possible influence that they had had on that performance and about the role that the outcome of the offer had played. It may be, too, that they were simply too distracted by situational pressures to think about the possible linkages.

The prediction that task difficulty would interact with outcome in influencing judgments of expectancy violation, affective reaction, and evaluative reaction were supported only with regard to expectancy violation. In retrospect, it seems probable that the manipulation of task difficulty was simply too weak in its present form to serve well as a moderator of outcome. For instance, the impression given by participants in the difficult condition was that the task could hardly be described as difficult for college freshmen.

We are encouraged by the results of our initial search for personal moderators of the effects of outcome. This is particularly the case for the interpersonal success scale, which revealed relatively more extreme affective and evaluative reactions to the outcome on the part of those would-be helpers given to characterological self-attributions for interpersonal successes. Such findings are consistent with the view that these individuals are particularly motivated to confirm or to reestablish a sense of control. They suggest, too, that our understanding of alternative motivations for helping (Rosen, Tomarelli, Kidda, & Medvin, 1986), perhaps also of reactions to being helped (Nadler & Fisher, 1986), might be furthered by considering the impact of such moderators in those contexts.

In summary, we were reasonably accurate in our predictions about would-be helpers' reactions to the outcome of their offer of help. Our attempts to sample some of the proposed moderators of the effects of outcome were only partly successful; these attempts could stand improvement. This will not suffice, however, inasmuch as we have only been operating thus far at the fringes of the proposed model. Empirical verification is now needed for some of its more central features. For instance, if it is correct that rejection of the offer threatens the would-be helper's self-image, we should expect to find that rejection has a relatively unfavorable effect on the helper's self-evaluations or on the helper's comparative evaluations of self and recipient. This should be particularly true if the outcome is important to that helper.

We should note, too, that our outcome attribution measures, guided by the failure to elicit self-attributions from participants in our earlier studies, were designed to reflect directly on the recipient, and only indirectly at best on the helper. Nevertheless, the possibility that self-attributions could be evoked and measured in the present context should be pursued (see Burger & Rodman, 1983).

Also needed is a determination of which stimulus conditions threaten what particular aspect of the self-image. When does the rejection imply a spurning of friendship, a redefinition of the existing relationship, a repudiation of the helper's task com-

petence or status, or a distrust of the helper's motives? For example, if the help offered is largely the provision of some convenient service or courtesy, then its rejection might reflect more unfavorably on one's perceived likability than on one's task skills. Thus, although evaluations of and outcome attributions to the recipient might continue to be unfavorable, the details might differ from the data we examined, at least in emphasis.

According to the model, expectancy violation mediates, in part, the effects of outcome on psychological arousal, hence on arousal reactions. Yet in our experiment, expectancy violation was treated as a dependent variable.[2] A stronger case could be made if expectancy violation were manipulated experimentally to determine how it interacts with outcome in influencing reactions to the outcome. Furthermore, there is no necessary reason for regarding multimodal reactions as concurrent events. In fact, systematic variation in the temporal order with which affective reactions, as opposed to outcome attributions, are evoked might prove informative with respect to the question of whether affect mediates, or is mediated by, attribution (Dollinger, 1986; Stephan & Gollwitzer, 1981), at least in the context of our study.

A macroscopic analysis might suggest that our spurned "Good Samaritan" is cast in a rather egocentric mold. It is probably the case, for instance, that our would-be helper was confronted by situational constraints that emphasized task performance and deemphasized interpersonal closeness. Had the helper been induced to empathize with the recipient, that is to feel and view the situation from the recipient's perspective before offering help, it might well be that a more forgiving pattern of outcome reactions would have been forthcoming. Such a possibility is suggested by the finding (see also Rosen, Tomarelli, Kidda, & Medvin, 1986) that helpers with chronically high empathic concern exhibited *less* extreme reactions to rejection and acceptance than did their counterparts with lower empathic concern. Still, inasmuch as the rejection was partly attributed to the rejecter's desire not be sociable, it seems plausible that the rejection was experienced not merely as a refusal of task-relevant help but also as a personal rejection, and therefore as providing "just cause" for the spurned helper's negative reactions (see again Mauss, 1925/1967; Blau, 1964).

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[2] It should be noted that the present measure of expectancy violation is flawed because the same item addresses both magnitude and valence of expectancy violation. This problem has since been addressed by exposing a new sample of participants to the outcome manipulation and asking them to rate (a) the extent of their surprise at the learner's response to their offer and, (b) assuming that they were a little bit surprised, the extent to which that surprise was pleasant. The results clearly indicate that the rejected helpers were not only more surprised than the accepted helpers, but that they also found their surprise to be less pleasant than did the accepted helpers.

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