Determinants of Consumer Attitudes Toward Prosocial Products: A Focus on the Communication of Love (vs. Pride, Hope, and Compassion) Within Advertisements

By Heribert Gierl

Marketers often use appeals that emphasize the responsibility and the consequences of consumer decisions to help persons, animals, and nature in need, or they use appeals that evoke the predominantly negative emotion of compassion. We focus on another type of appeal that marketers might use: the promise of experiencing positive emotions. We use broaden-and-built theory to conclude that the promise of experiencing positive emotions when helping others increases consumers' willingness to engage in prosocial behavior. We use emotional-appraisal theory to conclude that the promise of experiencing love is more effective than the promise of experiencing pride or hope. Our research is innovative in that we tested the promise of positive emotions. This kind of message can be used in an advertising environment. We created print advertisements of companies promoting products that promised the experience of love, pride, or hope and ad versions that included an appeal for compassion (supplemented with an emotion-absent condition). The ads promoted fair-trade products aimed at helping farmers in need, products that help endangered animal species, and products that addressed nature as a whole in need. We mostly found support for our hypotheses. However, the promise of experiencing love by taking care of nature by purchasing special products was not effective.

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1. Introduction

1.1. The need for a broader range of measures to affect prosocial behavior

In times of crises, individuals are often called upon to contribute to solutions. Individuals can take many roles. For example, to reduce the climate crisis, people in the role of car drivers are asked to reduce their consumption of mineral oil. People in the role of food consumers are asked to reduce their meat consumption. To limit the pollution of the natural environmental, consumers are requested to avoid using products that are responsible for microplastics in nature. To help farmers in need, consumers are encouraged to purchase goods sold through fair-trade programs. To increase the well-being of refugees, people in the role of citizens are asked for donations. To fight Covid-19, people are requested to take measures to avoid the contagion of others. To mitigate the consequences of "natural disasters (e.g., famine, floods, earthquakes) in many of the poorest areas of the world" (Cavanaugh et al. 2015, p. 658), citizens are asked to donate to the victims.

Since there are many crises and for all these crises individuals should contribute to solutions, marketers as well as NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) need a broader range of measures to induce prosocial behavior in individuals. In other words: The commonly used appeals to elicit prosocial behavior (which are compassion appeals) are likely to decrease in effectiveness as they are used for more and more purposes. To give an analogy from the area of the diffusion of quality marks: If all companies use the same quality mark, the meaningfulness of this signal is low. As the number of compassion appeals increases (due to multiple crises), they lose the

ability to differentiate between senders. From the number of crises, we conclude that marketers and NGOs are well advised to look for alternative types of appeals.

In general, prosocial behavioral intentions describe a person's willingness to benefit other people or society without being obligated to do so (Bierhoff 2002). This definition of prosocial behavior focuses on voluntary behaviors that affect the well-being of others.

1.2. Motivators of the willingness to engage in prosocial behavior

According to Bierhoff (2002, p. 193), the willingness to engage in prosocial behavior is motivated by various factors: 1. The desire to maintain communal (personal) relationships. This could be illustrated by the following example: A person helps his/her neighbor, friend, family member, or colleague to fill out an insurance form. 2. The activation of the norm of reciprocity. For example, if pupil A is helping pupil B with math homework, pupil B might strive to achieve a balanced relationship by inviting A, a shy person who has difficulty to become acquainted with other persons, to her/his party. 3. The activation of social responsibility, and 4. Evoking the emotion of compassion with others in need. Obviously, in corporate and NGO mass media advertising, the first two options cannot be chosen to induce prosocial behavior (they exist in face-to-face contacts). The other mechanisms (activating social responsibility and evoking the emotion of compassion) are used in advertising practice. Below, we provide a brief description of such appeals. In particular, we will focus on another motivator: the promise of experiencing positive emotions.

1.2.1. Appeals that activate social responsibility

Definition: Social responsibility is a personality variable, i.e., some people are more prone and other people are less prone to behave in a prosocial manner. However, this approach presumes that even if there is a high willingness to behave in this way, social responsibility must first be activated by appropriate appeals. According to Latané and Darley (1968, 1969), appeals must draw people's attention to the situation in which someone is in need, they must prompt thoughts about the emergency of help, they must evoke thoughts about one's responsibility to help, and they must generate thoughts about one's ability to help. A similar theory is the norm-activation model developed by Schwartz (1968, 1973). He states that people must develop thoughts about the consequences of helping and thoughts about their responsibility to help which are triggered by appropriate appeals.

Examples: It should be noted that appeals aimed at activating social responsibility are usually verbal information and difficult to visualize. The use of such appeals can be illustrated as follows. Planet Box, a supplier of stainless-steel lunch boxes demands in its ads (translated): "Take responsibility! Together into a good future. Planet box. You decide." The World Wildlife Fund

(WWF), an NGO, is asking for donations with the request (translated): "Cooling the earth with artificial clouds is a solution for tomorrow. Maybe. Would you be today's solution?" Other organizations and companies use appeals that address the consequences of one's own behavior. For instance, Nucao, a company that offers vegan chocolate in Germany, uses the appeal (translated): "Because the plastic problem does not disappear into thin air, this packaging becomes earth." As a result, the consumer knows that her or his choice for this brand has consequences for packaging waste.

1.2.2. Appeals that induce the negative emotion of compassion

Definition: Goetz et al. (2010) define compassion as an emotion that arises in witnessing another's suffering and that motivates a subsequent desire to help. Compassion is rooted in sympathy and empathy with others in need. Escalas and Stern (2003, p. 567) discuss the etymological roots of the German terms "Mitgefühl" (with-feelings, sympathy) and "Einfühlung" (in-feelings, empathy). With-feelings (a predominantly cognitive process) describe "a heightened awareness of another person's state of mind and his or her circumstances stemming from recognition of his or her feelings." In-feelings (a predominantly affective process) are "an emotional response that stems from another's emotional state or condition and that is congruent with the other's emotional state or situation." Similarly, Small and Verrochi (2009, p. 778) propose to use the term "sympathy" to describe an individual's concern for the welfare of other persons and "empathy" to describe the individual's self-experience of the feelings of others. In this sense, compassion is a predominantly negative emotion that results from a merger of with-feelings with needy others ("I think about the problems and negative feelings of the other person") with congruent in-feelings ("The others look so sad, she or he therefore makes me feel sad as well"). Small and Verrochi (2009, p. 778) presume that the latter process, the development of in-feelings, is an emotional contagion. Researchers often presume a compassion-helping effect (Bagozzi and Moore 1994; Liang et al. 2016), also known as the empathy-altruism hypothesis (Coke et al. 1978; Batson et al. 1981; Batson 1991; Batson and Powell 2003; Batson et al. 2005). Compassion is activated by altruistic motives. For example, the Good Samaritan known from the Bible sees a foreign person in need and helps due to compassion without selfish motives.

Examples: In advertising, this type of appeal is almost based on images. For example, the Texas Department of Public Safety used the technique of visual juxtaposition for its Don't drink and drive campaign. It shows a girl's face before and after an accident caused by a drunken driver; compassion with the girl should motivate car drivers to refrain from drinking alcohol. The BUND (a German NGO supporting nature protection) uses the visual metaphor technique by showing the agony of a bear wedged in the clock face that reads five to twelve. The

animal-welfare organization Peta is known for its special images; some of these images replace animal images with images of people in the role of the animals (e.g., they show a female person in a very cramped birdcage) and thereby aim to elicit empathy or compassion with the animals. Compassion appeals are also used in commercials promoting products. For instance, the video entitled Graffiti by Pfizer shows a brother's compassion for his sick sister. In Amazon's Little Man, a girl shows signs of compassion with a small horse. We do not see systematic differences between the use of compassion appeals by NGOs and companies.

A look at advertising practice shows that previous social marketing campaigns of companies and NGOs are almost based on compassion appeals. We cannot provide a clear reason why appeals for compassion dominate. We surmise that in cultures with a long Christian tradition, prosocial behavior has been strongly linked to the concept of caritas (the Latin word meaning compassion or charity) for many centuries, as the virtues of Christians are expressed by "Nunc autem manent fides, spes, caritas, tria haec: maior horum est caritas" (Paul, 1 Cor. 13:13), meaning that the most important human virtue is compassion. An effective variant of compassion appeals refers to a single-identified victim (Kogut and Ritov 2005a, 2005b).

1.2.3. Appeals that promise the experience of positive emotions

The contribution of this work is to show that there may be a third approach that is suitable for triggering the willingness of prosocial behavior via mass media: the promise to experience positive emotions.

Definition: The idea behind this mechanism is that organizations or companies create an exchange situation for consumers – give something of value and receive something of value. Consumers are asked to give money (e.g., donate or pay more for a special product), time, or effort to help others and get something in return: the experience of self-generated positive emotions (i.e., love, pride, or hope). The attitude toward prosocial behavior then results from the difference of an expected reward (positive emotions) and costs expended (money, time, or effort).

Example: Because emotions are addressed in compassion appeals (the appeal aims to induce a genuine emotion) as well as in promises to experience positive emotions (the appeal aims to induce thoughts about emotions that can be experienced), we illustrate the difference between these alternatives with the pair of images shown in *Fig. 1*.

With the image shown on the left, an organization apparently wants to elicit predominantly uncomfortable feelings. Consumers' confrontation with the need or plight of others is likely to elicit the desire for caring to cope with one's negative feelings and to eliminate the reason for these people's suffering. Consumers might think: Oh, I buy a lot of expensive goods, and conversely, children like this poor boy suffer. His face makes me sad. Children like him need my help, so I might spend part of my money on that. At right is an image of a girl in a print advertisement that is unlikely to evoke strong emotions when viewing this ad. The ad states that consumers will experience positive emotion if they help. The promise is: Enjoy a unique friendship – the experience of the emotion of self-generated love with others. In this situation, consumers might think: Yes, I might experience enjoy-

Evoking the emotion of compassion	Promising the experience of the emotion of love
Source: www.feedsa.co.za	Source: www.worldvision.org.hk/en/

Fig. 1: Triggering negative emotions vs. promising positive emotions

ment when I help children like this girl. Helping can make me happy. I will get warm feelings. Helping will warm my heart. In summary, these alternatives differ regarding the type of the emotional claim to motivate prosocial behavior: either through negative emotions (mostly compassion) and demonstrating ways in which this condition can be overcome or through promising the experience of positive emotions and demonstrating ways how to reach this state. The emotion of compassion exists in consumers before they think in detail about the recommended behavior. Conversely, consumers may experience positive emotions such as self-generated love after deciding that they help others in need; just the experience of this feeling can be promised by the marketer before helping.

To avoid a misunderstanding: We do not consider the possibility that consumers may believe that the little girl herself will love or be grateful to the caregiver as an individual because the caregiver is anonymous or a group. For a face-to-face situation, a helping-for-gratitude exchange may also exist (Bartlett and DeSteno 2006). Instead, we consider the possibility that the caregiver herself or himself develops positive feelings such as nurturant or companionate love with others in need, regardless of the response of the people who have received help. The boy and the girl asking for help cannot be proud of the caregiver because there is no personal contact – in contrast, the caregivers can feel pride in their achievement when they have decided to help.

1.3. What distinguishes our research from previous research on the role of positive emotions in influencing attitudes toward prosocial behavior?

1.3.1. Testing the impact of promising positive emotions instead of the impact of triggered genuine (i.e., "real" or "true") emotions

Griskevicius et al. (2010b) postulate that experiencing genuine positive emotions creates a rose-colored-glasses effect. This effect describes the phenomenon that co-present things appear more attractive or desirable in a positive affective state than in a negative affective state, leading to the presumption that positive emotions elicited by advertising campaigns would also increase the likelihood of prosocial consumer behavior. Admittedly, through advertising (e.g., through showing sad faces of children or signs of cruelty on animals or human bodies) it is quite easy to evoke genuine negative emotions in consumers. Like Cavanaugh (2009) and Cavanaugh et al. (2015), we do not examine the role of genuine positive affective states, as we assume that we cannot evoke positive emotions in consumers in the context of prosocial behavior (an exception might be Peta's 2022 Christmas advert that uses the means of humor).

We also do not test the validity of heuristic rules such as If I feel good, I am likely to do good (e.g., Weyant 1978; O'Malley and Andrews 1983; Dickert et al. 2011), i.e.,

we do not test the effect of genuine emotions. We focus only on the impact that comes from the promise of experiencing positive emotions which proponents of economics of information (Darby and Karni 1973) would classify as an experience claim.

1.3.2. Testing the impact of the promise of positive emotions instead of testing priming effects

There are two main ways to study emotions: *First*, evoking *genuine* emotions in people (e.g., showing a spider unexpectedly to evoke fear or disgust, presenting a very funny video to evoke joy), and *second*, using a *priming* task (i.e., the instruction to think about past events that triggered discrete emotions). We consider a *third* way that could be used in an advertising context and that, to the best of our knowledge, has not previously been used in the context of prosocial behavior thus far: the *promise* to experience emotions. Our research was inspired by results from studies published by Cavanaugh (2009, Study 2) and Cavanaugh et al. (2015, Study 2). These authors published *priming* studies à la Describe three to five events that made you feel hope (in the control group: events where you do everyday things) and write up to three sentences about each situation. How likely is it that you will financially support an organization that promotes the protection of the rainforest in the future (very unlikely ... very likely)? The authors' finding was that the instruction to think of past events in which positive emotions (love or hope) were experienced – in comparison to the instruction to think about everyday events that did not evoke emotions – had a positive effect on the willingness to engage in prosocial behavior. Their findings cannot directly be transferred to advertising practice since a priming task consisting of the instruction to think about *any* emotionally charged event in the past can hardly be implemented in an advertising setting. This is the reason why we are investigating the effectiveness of the promise of emotions.

1.4. Objectives of our research

1.4.1. Providing a contribution to theory

We extend the knowledge from this previous research by extending the ideas behind the experiments of Cavanaugh (2009, Study 2) and Cavanaugh et al. (2015, Study 2) to an advertising scenario that does not allow for priming tasks commonly used by other researchers to manipulate thoughts about emotions (e.g., Tiedens and Linton 2001; Agrawal et al. 2007; Kim et al. 2010). Our goal is to gain insights into the impact of the *promise* – communicated via verbal or visual elements in the print advertisement itself – that consumers will experience positive emotions when they follow the advice to choose the recommended prosocial behavior. We contribute to theory because we use a conceptually different independent variable (promise of the experience of positive emotions instead of instructions to imagine events in the past in which discrete emotions have been experienced).

We test the validity of the predictions derived from the following sequence of presumptions:

(1) We suspect that similar to economic exchange (suppliers promise benefits from using products to customers who pay money for products), a condition of exchange could be created to encourage prosocial consumer behavior: organizations or marketers promise the experience of positive emotions when consumers choose this behavior.

(2) Moreover, based on Fredrickson's (1998) broaden-and-built theory (which has already been applied by Cavanaugh 2009 and Cavanaugh et al. 2015), we suppose that people greatly value or appreciate the experience of positive emotions.

(3) Based on insights from the emotional-appraisal theory (which has also been applied by Cavanaugh 2009 and Cavanaugh et al. 2015), we postulate that when marketers promise to experience a particular emotion, consumers cognitively compare the situation of interest (e.g., helping by buying the products) with other typical situations in which they have already experienced the promised emotion, leading to a fit or misfit condition. We surmise an emotion-congruency effect (Kim et al. 2010) in the sense that the fit condition makes a promise of the experience of positive emotions effective and non-fit makes this promise ineffective for advertising purposes.

(4) We presume that the fit discussed above affects attitudes toward prosocial products through higher perceptions of message credibility and/or processing fluency.

1.4.2. Providing a contribution to improve decisions in practice

Small and Verrochi (2009) report that including images of sad faces, such as the boy's face shown in *Fig. 1,* is one of the most effective ways to motivate consumers to donate to persons in need. However, marketers cannot simply show sad children's faces to promote other topics such as fair-trade products or products that cause no microplastics in nature. Under these conditions, the promise of the experience of positive emotions can be an alternative way to increase the willingness to purchase the recommended product. We want to consider the following:

(1) To substantiate recommendations, we compare the effect of promising to experience positive emotions with the appeal most commonly used to induce prosocial behavior in mass media: the compassion appeal. Note that we have no hypothesis as to whether promising positive emotions or compassion appeals are more effective.

(2) In addition, we will examine the effectiveness of the message that consumers can experience positive emotions for different application areas: if they help people in need (i.e., purchase products offered in fair-trade programs), if they help animals in need, and if they help nature in need. Whether animal protection and nature conservation will benefit future people and are therefore also part of prosocial consumer behavior is only a question of definitions and a question of one's perspective, whether animals and nature are also creatures and creations that are worth protecting.

We have to state that we do not examine any actual prosocial buying behavior in our studies. Instead, we investigate attitudes toward prosocial products. Obviously, the practice does not directly benefit from knowing how to improve attitudes or purchase intent, but rather from insights into how to increase sales. Whether attitudes or purchase intentions can predict purchases has a long tradition in consumer research. For fast-moving consumer goods, previous research finds a linear relationship between intentions on the one hand and likelihoods of actual behavior on the other hand above a threshold on the intention scale (e.g., Kalwani and Silk 1981). This means: If we find, for example, attitude or purchase intention ratings that range between 1 and 3 on a 7-point scale depending on the experimental conditions (e.g., attitude = 1.7 for condition 1 and attitude = 2.4 for condition 2), even significant differences are meaningless in practice. Means must be higher on this scale. We pay attention to this aspect in our investigations.

2. Theoretical considerations

First, we describe the broaden-and-built theory developed by Fredrickson (1998). This approach provides an explanation of why individuals seek positive emotions or – in other words – why positive emotions have value. To encourage prosocial consumer activities, promising positive emotions might be effective because offering the opportunity to experience positive emotions can be considered as a good in an exchange process. However, not all positive emotions may equally be effective in promoting prosocial consumer behavior. *Second*, we therefore refer to emotional-appraisal theory, which suggests that under special conditions (i.e., when the promoted prosocial consumer behavior is chosen), the promise of experiencing a particular positive emotion may or may not match the profile of typical events which are associated with such emotions.

2.1. Broaden-and-built theory

Frederickson's (1998) broaden-and-built theory is a theory about how individuals and societies can arrive at happiness. Her answer to this question is: Individuals should experience as many positive emotions as possible and as often as possible. The core elements of the theory are summarized in *Fig. 2.*

Emotions affect urges and action tendencies. Fredrickson (1998, p. 3) argues that most negative emotions are rooted in the human evolutionary history because they provide people with energy to deal with negatively valanced events, which ensures their own survival. These action tendencies are specific. For instance, anger triggers the urge to attack (an action tendency) the person (a well-de-
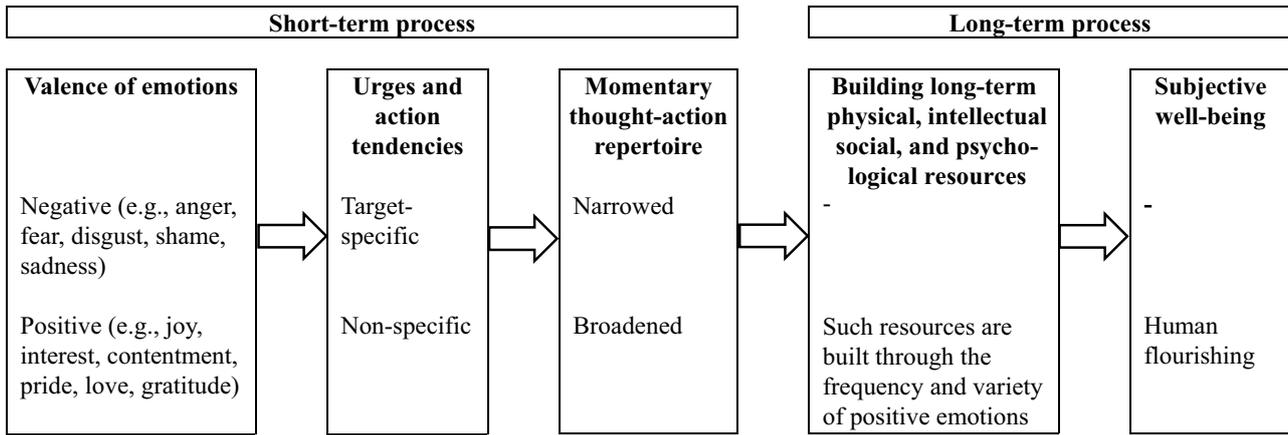
Fig. 2: Overview of Fredrickson's broaden-and-built theory (own illustration)

Valence	Discrete emotion	Urge due to this emotion (consequence)
Negative emotions	Anger	Urge to attack
	Fear	Urge to immediately escape
	Disgust	Urge to leave this environment
	Guilt	Urge to make amends (compensations)
	Sadness	Urge to withdraw from actions
	Compassion	Urge to help the person in need
Positive emotions	Joy (happiness, amusement)	Urge to play and to be playful in a physical, social, intellectual, and artistical sense
	Interest (curiosity, excitement)	Urge of to explore, to increase knowledge, to expand the self
	Contentment (tranquility, serenity)	Urge to enjoy current life circumstances and recent successes, urge to experience 'oneness' with the world around oneself
	Romantic or passionate love	Urge to explore, savor, and play with the people one loves
	Pride	Urge to share news about one's achievement with others and to envision even greater achievements in the future

Tab. 1: Examples of emotions and resulting urges

fined target) who caused the anger. Cavanaugh et al. (2015) add that when consumers witness the suffering of others, there is compassion, which evokes the urge to help. In contrast, for positive emotions, Fredrickson (1998, p. 6–8) argues that these states do not arise from life-threatening events and action tendences are non-specific. For instance, she assumes that experiencing the emotion of joy evokes the urge to play (an action tendency), but not the urge to play with a certain object. Frederickson (2001) adds that pride evokes the urge to inform other persons (not well-defined persons) of achievements (for urges resulting from discrete emotions, see *Tab. 1*).

Action tendencies influence the momentary thought-action repertoire. For the next stage, Fredrickson (1998) argues that target-specific action tendencies (resulting from negative emotions) *narrow* a person's momentary thought-action repertoire which also can be explained with human evolutionary history: The cause of negative emotions often required quick and decisive action. In contrast, non-specific action tendencies (resulting from positive emotions) are assumed to *broaden* a person's momentary thought repertoire (the person is expected to develop individually novel ideas) and action repertoire

(the person is expected to behave in an individually creative and innovative way) (Fredrickson 1998, p. 5; Fredrickson 2004, p. 1367). To illustrate this proposition, she states that "people experiencing certain negative emotions (...) tend to miss the forest for the trees" (Fredrickson 1998, p. 9), while positive emotions lead to an expansion of attentional focus – they primarily see the forest.

Thought-action repertoires affect the building of resources. To further advance the theory, Fredrickson (1998) argues that the broadened thought and action repertoire contributes to *building* multiple kinds of human resources. For instance, physical play (due to the emotions of joy) promotes muscle growth and overall physical and cardiovascular fitness.

Resources affect subjective well-being. For the final stage of the theory, Fredrickson (2001) postulates that these resources improve the people's psychological well-being, physical health, and the ability to manage negative emotions.

In summary, the broaden-and-build theory suggests that frequently experiencing multiple, discrete positive emo-

tions broaden the individual's thought and action repertoire (she or he develops novel ideas and behaves in creative ways), which in turn builds up different types of resources (e.g., physical, social, intellectual), which ultimately lead to a happy life (Frederickson and Joiner 2002, p. 172; Frederickson 2004, p. 136; Fredrickson and Branigan 2005; Fredrickson et al. 2008; Cohn et al. 2009). The theory states that single positive emotions (compared to their absence in the sense of neutral affective states) are valued for their contribution to building resources and enabling a happy life.

This theory states that people appreciate positive emotions. Therefore, they will also appreciate their promise. Thus, when positive emotions are promised when behaving in a prosocial manner, people have a favorable attitude toward the promoted prosocial behavior. We postulate:

H1: *If marketers of prosocial products promise the experience of positive emotions, attitudes toward these products are increased (in comparison to the condition in which marketers do not induce emotions). We apply this hypothesis to the positive emotions of love, pride, and hope.*

2.2. Emotional-appraisal theory

Emotional appraisal theory considers the characteristics of events in which individuals experience what they themselves semantically describe as joy, anger, surprise, hate, pride, compassion, jealousy, etc. Another word for these events is appraisal themes, another word for these characteristics is appraisal dimensions, and another word for the affective states that are labeled by these terms is discrete emotions. The theory aims to describe the characteristics that individuals see as typical of events in which they experience a discrete emotion. Researchers want to understand the causes of discrete emotions (Roseman et al. 1996) or the judgments of emotion-eliciting situations (Shaver et al. 1987). Emotional appraisal

means that people associate typical characteristics with such situations, they are a cognitive interpretation of the circumstances in which a discrete emotion is likely to occur (Ellsworth and Smith 1988a). Or stated in the words of Achar et al. (2016, p. 166): "Each specific or discrete emotion is associated with a profile of cognitive evaluations called emotional 'appraisals'."

Discrete emotions. Basically, there are several typologies of self-perceptions of affective states in the literature which are often denoted as discrete emotions (e.g., Mehrabian and Russell 1974; Plutchik 1980; Edell and Burke 1987; Watson et al. 1988; Richins 1997). For instance, Plutchik (1980) considers eight basic discrete emotions (fear, anger, joy, sadness, acceptance, disgust, expectancy, and surprise). Richin's (1997) typology includes a larger set of basic emotions (anger, discontent, worry, sadness, fear, shame, envy, loneliness, joy, love, romantic love, contentment, optimism, peacefulness, excitement, and surprise). There is no consensus on which discrete basic emotions should be distinguished.

Appraisal dimension. Regardless of which discrete emotion typology is used, other researchers aim to identify characteristics of events in which particular discrete emotions were experienced. That is, they need (1) a list of appraisal dimensions and then (2) judgements about what appraisal dimensions are associated with concrete discrete emotions (see overview in *Tab. 2*). However, there is also no consensus on this list of appraisal themes. This is because researchers focus on samples of discrete emotions, and thus, some appraisal themes do not appear to be applicable.

What we needed are findings from studies that included love, pride, and/or hope into their investigations and assign appraisal themes to these emotions.

For instance, in Cavanaugh's (2009) study, people had to imagine an event that evoked hope (or any other of these emotions: love, pride, happiness, contentment, gratitude, and interest) and then related that event to a list of ap-

Source	Discrete emotions
Ellsworth and Smith (1988a)	*Hope*, anger, guilt, sadness, fear, resignation, challenge, surprise, interest
Ellsworth and Smith (1988b)	*Love*, *hope*, happiness, playfulness, surprise, relief, tranquility, sympathy, challenge, interest, fear, envy
Fitness and Fletcher (1993)	*Love*, hate, anger, jealousy in partnerships
Smith and Lazarus (1993)	Anger, guilt, fear/anxiety, sadness
Roseman et al. (1996)	*Pride*, *hope*, surprise, joy, relief, fear, sadness, distress, frustration, disgust, anger, contempt, guilt, shame
Lerner and Keltner (2000)	*Pride,* anger, fear, surprise,
Ellsworth and Scherer (2003)	Joy/happiness, anger/rage, fear/panic, and sadness
Han et al. (2007)	Anger, fear, disgust, sadness
Cavanaugh (2009)	*Love, pride*, *hope,* happiness, contentment, gratitude, interest
Fredrickson (2013) (no empirical study)	*Love, pride*, *hope*, joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, amusement, inspiration, awe
Meta-analysis by So et al. (2015)	*Hope, pride,* anxiety, excitement, anger, shame, fear, envy

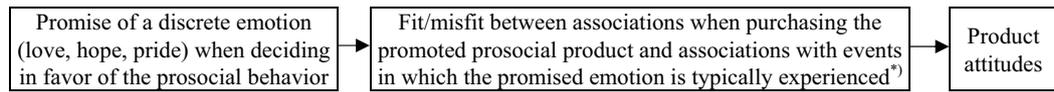*Tab. 2: Overview of studies reporting results about emotional-appraisal theory*

Fig. 3: Model used to derive H2 and H3

[The model shows three connected boxes:]
Promise of a discrete emotion (love, hope, pride) when deciding in favor of the prosocial behavior → Fit/misfit between associations when purchasing the promoted prosocial product and associations with events in which the promised emotion is typically experienced[*] → Product attitudes

[*] Fit/misfit is not examined empirically in our investigations.

praisal dimensions: 1. whether the event was pleasant or unpleasant, 2. whether the person paid high attention to that event, 3. whether she or he was able to control what happened in this event, 4. how certain she or he was about what happened in this event, 5. whether difficulties had to be overcome before she or he could get what she or he wanted during this event, 6. whether the event was caused by the person herself or himself or by another person, 7. how much effort was required to deal with the event, 8. to what extent she or he felt connected to another person or group during this event, and 9. to what extent thoughts or activities were focused on the past, the present, or the future. We focus on emotions that exist in events that are perceived as pleasant (1.). Cavanaugh reports that events in which *love* is experienced are strongly positively connected with social connectedness with others (8.). Events that trigger *pride* are strongly linked to the ability to control that event (3.). And events in which there is *hope* are strongly positively associated with the need to overcome difficulties (5.), with high effort required (7.), and a focus on the future (9.).

In the same way, we looked at the other studies listed in *Tab. 2*. For *love*, Ellsworth and Smith (1988b) report that events associated with this emotion are characterized by low effort required to cope with the event, high perceptions of the importance of this event (a dimension this is not included in Cavanaugh's 2009 list), and the fact that the event was caused by another person. For *pride*, Lerner and Keltner (2000) additionally report that events eliciting this emotion are characterized by a high perception of one's own ability to control this event. For *hope*, findings of other authors are like those reported by Cavanaugh (2009). Ellsworth and Smith (1988a) showed that events associated with this emotion are characterized by high attention paid to these events and high perceptions of the event importance. Similarly, Ellsworth and Smith (1988a) report that events that inspire hope are described as those which are associated with the need to overcome obstacles and requiring a great deal of effort. Roseman et al. (1996) found that people experience strong uncertainty around events that trigger hope. So et al. (2015) highlight the future-oriented focus of thoughts of persons who find themselves in events associated with hope.

Hypotheses development. We predict that when consumers receive information about a marketer's promise that they will experience a specific positive emotion (e.g., love) when they follow the advice (i.e., decide in favor of the prosocial behavior), they judge the congruence between

(1) the profile of the appraisal dimensions of the concrete condition (i.e., the associations with the purchase of the promoted prosocial product) and

(2) the profile of the appraisal dimensions of events in which this emotion (e.g., love) typically was experienced in the past (i.e., the associations with events in which the promised emotion typically was experienced). The latter information is provided by research on emotional-appraisal theory.

The model used to derive the following hypotheses is depicted in *Fig. 3*. Note that we do not assess fit or misfit perceptions; this concept is only used to derive hypotheses.

For the sake of simplicity, we illustrate the ideas derived from this approach by using the example of fair-trade products. Please note that the arguments presented below would be similar if we considered other prosocial consumer behaviors, e.g., the purchase of environmentally friendly products. Also note, that love will be the reference category for comparisons with pride and hope.

Love

Marketers of fair-trade products might promise, *When you buy our products, you experience a sense of connectedness – a kind of affection, or even love – with these people in need. It will warm your heart*. The consumer may imagine (i.e., develop the associations) that she or he will benefit from self-generated feelings of warmth, attachment, and closeness in conjunction with others.

Typical events in which people experience the self-generated feeling of love are characterized by intimacy with others (Cavanaugh et al. 2011). Such events may be described as experiencing a sense of belonging with partners, family members, and friends through shared activities, sympathy (warmth), and physical closeness. Cavanaugh (2009, p. 95) provides evidence to the presumption that when people think about love, they remind social connectedness with others.

Thus, when marketers of fair-trade products promise experiences of belonging, closeness, warmth, and affection with others in need, the description of these characteristics likely *fits* other situations in which people have experienced the feeling of love with others. It should be noted that love is a term that describes different types of positive emotions. Babies experience love for their parents and *vice versa* (called attachment love by Bowlby 1979). People feel companionate love for their family members and friends. Couples feel romantic love. We think of love as nurturant love (Griskevicius et al. 2010a) or companionate love when love and the desire to take care for others merge.

Pride

Marketers of fair-trade products can promise, *If you buy our products, our project will be successful. Your pur-*

chase is an important contribution to this project and the success of the project will make you proud. Consumers are likely to imagine that pride is the compensation for higher costs of buying fair-trade products.

Typical events in which people have experienced pride are described by the characteristic that, before pride is triggered, individuals have successfully compared themselves to similar others, e.g., by winning a sports competition, passing a difficult examination successfully, growing up children who are more successful at school than neighbors' children, or obtaining an attractive person's approval for marriage. Situations in which pride is experienced are therefore typically based on a positive differentiation of oneself from similar others (e.g., neighbors, friends, and colleagues). Achievements are often displayed publicly to raise awareness of the achievements and aim to increase social status in one's ingroups. Cavanaugh (2009, p. 95) found that when people think of an event that aroused pride, they typically recall situations in which they themselves were personally able to influence the achievement and conditions which increased social distance from others (i.e., decreased social connectedness). Griskevicius et al. (2010b, p. 240) also state that events in which pride is experienced are typically situations in which people display their achievements to public to draw attention to themselves and increase their social standing to differentiate themselves from others.

Thus, the typical event characteristics of pride *hardly fit* the characteristics of fair-trade products and their producers since most of these products are usually not consumed in public and thus customers cannot visibly distinguish themselves from others by consuming them in public. While there may be some exceptions for the conspicuous consumption of fair-trade textiles, merely by consuming such products that are visible to the public, customers cannot demonstrate their own contribution to the success of social projects that would be large enough to impress ingroup members. Additionally, a typical characteristic of events where people report to experience pride is reduced social connectedness, which is likely to reduce intentions to help. Thus, we expect the following:

H2: Compared to the condition in which marketers of prosocial products promise the experience of love, promising the experience of self-generated pride of being part of a successful project increases attitudes toward these products to a lower extent.

It should be noted that other authors distinguish different types of pride that may or may not be associated with prosocial behavior (Wubben et al. 2012). In our study, we look at pride as a whole.

Hope

Alternatively, marketers of fair-trade products could promise, *If you want to believe that improvements of the well-being of farmers in need are possible, buy our products. Then, as compensation for higher prices, a positive feeling of longing for something better can be achieved.*

Typical events in which people reported having experienced hope are described as situations that are perceived as unsatisfactory *a-priori*, but can be improved through appropriate, unusual measures. Desired end states can be visualized mentally. Events associated with the feeling of hope are described as situations in which people behave in a cognitively flexible and intelligent manner and have developed ideas about the desired future situation. According to Cavanaugh (2009), people associate the emotion of hope with events that have the following characteristics: *I had a high focus on the future* (time focus), *I felt that I had to make a strong effort to cope with this situation* (high anticipated effort), *There were big problems that had to be solved before I could get what I wanted* (high goal-path obstacle), and *I wasn't sure what would happen in this situation* (low certainty). MacInnis and de Mello (2005 p. 2) state that a further characteristic of events associated with the positive emotion of hope are thoughts about "uncertain but possible goal-congruent outcomes."

Thus, typical event characteristics of hope are also *unlikely to fit* with the characteristics of the promotion of fair-trade projects. For example, in campaigns supporting fair trade, people are reassured that buying fair-trade products will benefit producers in need, while hope exists usually in situations of high uncertainty. Therefore, we test:

H3: Compared to the condition in which marketers of prosocial products promise the experience of love, promising the experience of self-generated hope increases attitudes toward these products to a lower extent.

Because we compared the fit condition (love) to misfit conditions (pride, hope), we do not derive a hypothesis that compares pride to hope.

2.3. What mental process is evoked by the fit of appraisal dimensions?

We additionally examine possible mediating variables between fit/misfit as just explained and product attitudes. Why could this fit have effects? We present our extended model in *Fig. 4*.
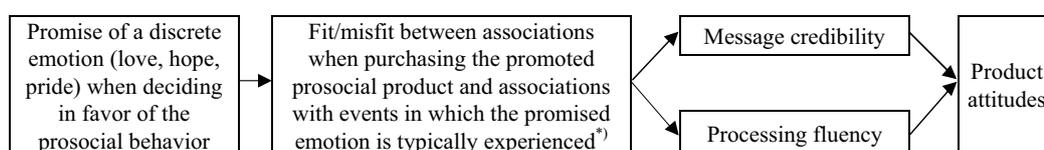
Fig. 4. Model illustrating H4 and H5

*) Fit/misfit is not examined empirically in our investigations.

The impression that things fit together (in our case: fit between association with the purchase of the promoted prosocial product and their producers and association with events in which the promised emotion typically is experienced) may trigger a process of misattribution – fit (misfit) becomes erroneously interpreted as truth (untruth). The literature provides examples for the fact that people often have difficulty in assessing the truth of a message, when the message consists of an experience claim or credence claim (Feick and Gierl 1996). The promise of experiencing an emotion is an experience claim. In this condition, people may consult co-existing and easy-to-recognize cues to infer message credibility. For instance, advertising research found that when models are depicted in ads, their physical attractiveness – an easy-to-recognize cue – serves to judge the believability of the message of this model (Dion et al. 1972). We do not consider attractivity of models but consistency (fit) of thoughts. We presume that people like to believe in the truth of messages when thoughts are internally congruent (i.e., have a high fit). For example, Heckler and Childers (1992) argue that misfit conditions are not understood and therefore less believable. In contrast, fit constellations evoke the impression of predictability. The fit between the associations resulting from the promise to experience the emotion of love when helping farmers in need (i.e., purchasing a fair-trade product) and love-induced thoughts about social connectedness with other loved ones may lead to the consumer's conclusion that experiencing love is truly predictable while experiencing pride or hope is not predictable. The promise to experience love then causes an illusion of truth. We test:

H4: In the fit condition (promise to experience the emotion of love), perceptions of credibility to experience the promised emotion are higher than in the misfit conditions (promises to experience the emotions of pride or hope), what positively spills over to product attitudes.

Researchers often adopt a cognitive-resource view when discussing effects of fit. The basic idea is that people have a fixed amount of cognitive resource available to perform different cognitive tasks at a given point of time (examples in our case: elaborating on the truth of the promise to experience emotions, comprehending other parts of the text contained in the advertisement, remembering past events in which such products have been consumed, thoughts about prices, etc.). When a task can be completed very easily (i.e., when there is a high level of processing fluency regarding this task due to a fit condition; Lee and Labroo 2004; Winkielman et al. 2003), there is a larger portion of resource available for remaining cognitive tasks (Higgins 2005; Lee et al. 2010; Pham and Avnet 2009). If the information processed in the remaining task related to the product is favorable and consumers have more resource to process this information, product attitudes are expected to increase. Furthermore, associative-network theory can be used to predict that the promise of love (fit condition) is more effective than the

promise of pride or hope (misfit conditions); obviously, the term love is strongly associated with people and pets. People can easily (i.e., more fluently) transfer such associations between love they experience with people or pets (or other attractive animals) to a context in which they evaluate prosocial products. We postulate:

H5: In the fit condition (promise to experience the emotion of love), processing fluency is higher than in the misfit conditions (promises to experience the emotions of pride or hope), what positively spills over to product attitudes.

3. Empirical studies

3.1. Study overview

Our four studies examine how the promise of positive emotions impacts consumers' willingness to follow the recommendation to behave prosocially. We first examine the effect of promising the experience of positive emotions when the prosocial behavior benefits other persons in need on the attitude toward prosocial behavior; as an example, we use fair-trade programs (Study 1). Next, we aim to gain deeper insight into the process we have described as congruence between characteristics of *typical events* in which people experience a discrete emotion and characteristics of the *focal event* (purchase or consumption of a prosocial product). We ask: Does congruence affect product attitudes via message credibility or processing fluency (Study 2)? We then expand the scope of prosocial consumer behaviors and examine the effect of the promise to experience positive emotions when animals benefit (Study 3). We do this because many campaigns address prosocial behavior toward animals. Finally, we test the effect of the promise to experience love when we further expand the scope of prosocial consumer behaviors to benefits for the nature as a whole (Study 4). In all studies, we use the attitude toward the promoted prosocial product as the dependent variable.

3.2. Study 1

Test objects. In our first study, we focus on examples of fair-trade products. Such products are characterized by calls by organizations and marketers to consumers to support manufacturers and farmers in need and to pay a premium. Marketers of fair-trade products might promise that customers – as a reward – can experience the feelings of love (with others in need), pride (in one's own effort and achievement), or hope (to improve the well-being of others), justifying the payment of a premium for such goods.

Experimental design. We use *one experimental factor* that we are interested in; it is the ad version that differs regarding the message (1. promise of the experience of love, 2. promise of the experience of pride, 3. promise of the experience of hope, 4. compassion appeal, and 5. absence of emotional appeals). We use findings depending

on this experimental factor for hypotheses testing. We additionally consider *two replication factors* which we primarily use to assess the generalizability of the results. We have no hypotheses regarding these replication factors or interaction effects. The first replication factor (two levels) is the depiction of the farmers. We must depict farmers to create realistic advertisements. We could depict farmers with white skin color or farmers with dark skin color. By doing so, we show farmers benefitting from fair trade who are either spatially close or spatially distant to the targeted consumers. The decision for one option would be arbitrary. We therefore use images that show farmers with white as well as images of farmers with dark skin color (indicating ethnicity; Mittelman and Dow 2018). The second replication factor (five levels) is the product. We must depict products in the ads to create realistic stimuli. There is an abundance of products. The decision for the depicted products becomes less arbitrary when we use a sample of products. We use body lotion of The Body Shop, orange juice of an unknown brand, soymilk of Provamel in two variants, and hand cream of The Body Shop. By combining one experimental factor with five levels and two replication factors with two and five levels, we have 50 conditions, i.e., ad versions (between-subjects design).

The reason for using replication factors. The so-called reproducibility crisis in some areas of psychological and marketing research showed how important it is to consider replication factors in experimental research. Some authors found that the results published by other authors were poorly reproducible. In response to that problem, the *International Journal of Research in Marketing* offered a replication corner for a period (Lynch et al. 2015). However, interest in conducting different variants of replication studies is limited, as journals tend to publish manuscripts with a contribution that goes beyond replication. From our point of view, the main reason for the problem of poor reproducibility is the fact that if researchers calculate for instance 100 relationships because they have many variables, five are significant at the .05 level even though they do not exist. To avoid publishing significant but meaningless results, we follow the recommendation that "replications can be conducted by the same authors in the original publication to strengthen the results" (Camerer et al. 2019, p. 97). Then, the authors collect data using different methods, for various objects, from different samples of test persons, in different settings, etc. For this reason, we included replication factors in our experiments. We do not include replication factors to increase the number of possible statistical analyses or relationships that can be examined, e.g., we are not interested in interaction effects between replication factors or the use of replication factors and control variables as co-variates (Wang et al. 2017).

Pilot study: Each of the advertisements was evaluated by a student sample consisting of approximately twenty persons. The participants evaluated more than one ad version and indicated whether they found it easy or difficult

to recognize the message, which consisted of the promise of the experience of love, pride, or hope, or to read the compassion appeal. If necessary, the message was shown more prominent by using larger letters, bold type, additional symbols (e.g., heart in red, silhouette of a person showing muscles, green ribbon, and anchor). Moreover, we talked with the test participants about whether they understood the meaning of the message (promising the experience of self-generated love, pride, or hope if they buy the promoted product). The ads should not convey the messages that the person receiving help is expressing love with the consumer or that the company or organization is doing business out of love for persons in need. If the message caused such misunderstandings, the wording was modified until the pilot study participants clearly understood the intended message (Agreement to: I can experience self-generated positive emotions when buying the product). Such pilot studies were also conducted to revise the test stimuli until the key message was noticed by all pilot study participants and was understood as intended in the context of Studies 2, 3, and 4.

Test stimuli. For illustration, we show the ad versions for promoting fair-trade orange juice (*Fig. 5*). The picture showed a person harvesting the fruit. In the upper row, a white-skinned person (representing the close-others condition), and in the bottom row, a dark-skinned person (representing the distant-others condition) is shown. Closeness and distance can be assumed as the test participants were current and former students at German universities. All ad versions contained the text (translated): "Orange juice made from fair-trade fruits from producer organizations that meet social and ecological standards." The ad versions for the orange juice differed in terms of the promised emotions. The ads were formulated in the German language; this text can be translated as following: 1. "To do something good" (emotional claim absent), 2. "Because of love, supporting other people," 3. "Because of pride, treating the disadvantaged fairly," 4. "Because of hope for a positive change," and 5. "Because of compassion, doing something good." The ad versions for the other products were created in a very similar way. To illustrate some additional examples (translated), 1. the love version was formulated as: "Out of love for fellow human beings," 2. the pride version was: "Be proud of a good deed" or "Do something today that you can be proud of tomorrow," 3. the text of the hope message for other products was: "Out of hope for better treatment of disadvantaged people," and 4. "Out of compassion for the disadvantaged." We had used two sets of ten soymilk advertisements. While one set was like the ads promoting fair-trade orange juice by using texts to promise emotions, the other set additionally included pictorial elements to symbolize positive emotions (a heart to indicate love, a silhouette of a person displaying muscles to exhibit pride, a green ribbon around the word hope and an anchor to indicate hope, and using letters filled with the image of needy people for expressing compassion). The idea to use symbols for representing
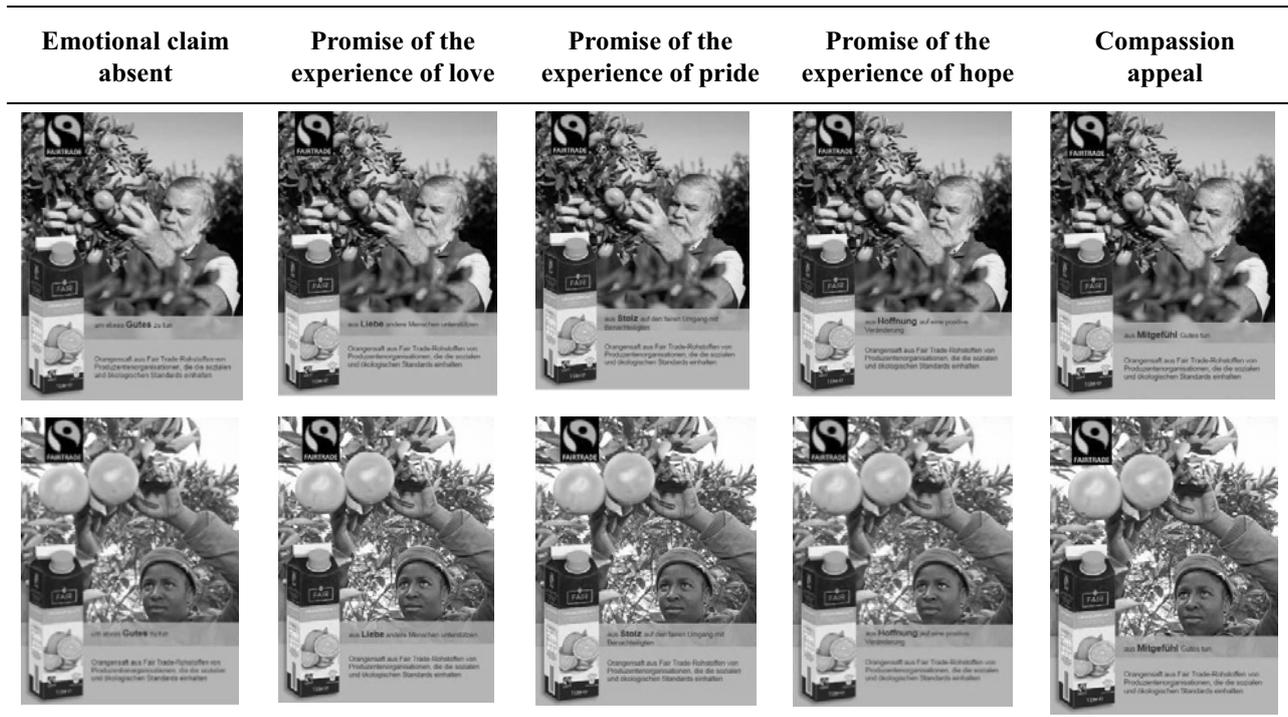
Emotional claim absent	Promise of the experience of love	Promise of the experience of pride	Promise of the experience of hope	Compassion appeal

Fig. 5: Example of the test stimuli used in Study 1

emotions was adopted from Griskevicius et al. (2010b, p. 240).

Literal translations of all advertisements used in our studies from the German to the English language are available per request.

Procedure. Data collection was carried out with the help of five students who supported us in distributing links to the online questionnaire on a social platform. The questionnaire was programmed using the SoSci Survey software. The social platform was Studydrive, which is used by many thousands of students and alumni in Germany; through this platform, it is quite easy to quickly collect data from many students and from many universities in Germany. Each person first viewed one of the fifty advertisements and then agreed or disagreed to the statements contained in the questionnaire. Within a product condition, data were collected from persons of the same university and faculty.

Sample. A total of 1,875 participants completed the questionnaire in full. 82.1 % stated that they are still studying and 17.9 % indicated that they still are a member of the platform even though they have already graduated. Of all participants, 65.0 % were female and 35.0 % were male persons. The mean age was 25.1 years ($SD = 6.84$).

Measures. After viewing an advertisement, the test participants indicated their attitude toward the product by agreeing or disagreeing with the statements "The product is very attractive," "The product is very appealing," "The product is very likeable," and "The product is very favorable" on a seven-point scale (1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree; Cronbach's $\alpha = .922$; three statements tak-

en from Spears and Singh 2004; the adjective "good" cannot be used directly in the German language, as it indicates quality). Next, for the purpose of a manipulation check, the test participants indicated perceptions of closeness and distance to the persons depicted in the advertisement ("The person shown is from the same culture as me," $M_{close} = 4.28$, $M_{distant} = 1.89$; "The person depicted comes from an industrialized country," $M_{close} = 5.01$, $M_{distant} = 2.12$; "The person depicted comes from an developing country," $M_{close} = 2.58$, $M_{distant} = 5.17$; all $ps < .001$). We used items from different studies to create these three statements. For instance, the phrase "comes from or looks like they are from the same culture as me" is also used by Quach et al. (2017, p. 40). Batra et al. (2014, p. 90) use expressions such as "more economically developed countries" in their scales. The statements aim to assess stereotypes that we do not derive according to ethical principles but with regard to their suitability to assess category knowledge. We asked three exchange students from Africa if they or their friends are offended when we combine dark skin color with developing countries. None of them expressed concerns. Then, we checked whether the manipulation of the thoughts through the message was successful (statements: "The ad promises a strong feeling of love," "The ad promises a strong feeling of pride," "The ad promises a strong feeling of hope," and "The ad induces a strong feeling of compassion"). Results from Scheffé-tests indicate that these measures were consistent with the experimental manipulation (see *Tab. 3*). In addition, data on some control variables (e.g., general attitudes toward fair trade, self-perceptions of one's emotionality, annual amount of donations) were collected, which did not differ signifi-

		Emotional claim absent	Promise of the experience of love	Promise of the experience of pride	Promise of the experience of hope	Compassion appeal
Manipulation check[*]						
Total sample	Feelings of love	2.33 (1.63)[a]	3.15 (1.87)[b]	2.15 (1.52)[a]	2.43 (1.64)[a]	2.43 (1.63)[a]
	Feelings of pride	2.36 (1.67)[a]	2.48 (1.74)[a]	3.05 (1.55)[b]	2.28 (1.60)[a]	2.07 (1.51)[a]
	Feelings of hope	2.41 (1.56)[a]	2.15 (1.24)[a]	2.17 (1.32)[a]	3.64 (1.52)[b]	2.13 (1.30)[a]
	Feelings of compassion	1.89 (.58)[a]	1.89 (.67)[a]	1.83 (.62)[a]	1.90 (.63)[a]	3.24 (1.71)[b]
Attitude toward the product[**]						
The Body Shop body lotion	Close others	3.46 (1.03)	4.92 (1.66)	3.44 (1.55)	3.82 (1.34)	4.94 (1.19)
	Distant others	4.06 (1.35)	4.43 (1.61)	4.39 (1.40)	4.19 (1.39)	4.38 (1.51)
Orange juice	Close others	3.50 (.81)	5.38 (.81)	4.48 (1.37)	4.87 (1.44)	4.82 (1.30)
	Distant others	3.83 (1.45)	4.59 (1.05)	4.47 (1.44)	4.20 (1.56)	4.62 (1.12)
Provamel soymilk #1	Close others	3.14 (1.08)	4.15 (1.20)	3.14 (1.39)	3.36 (1.75)	3.15 (1.45)
	Distant others	3.30 (1.67)	4.08 (1.67)	3.85 (1.84)	2.87 (1.41)	3.63 (1.70)
Provamel soymilk #2	Close others	3.61 (1.02)	4.70 (.97)	3.99 (1.55)	3.96 (1.60)	3.39 (1.48)
	Distant others	3.40 (1.07)	4.51 (1.27)	3.64 (1.53)	4.27 (1.36)	4.12 (1.47)
The Body Shop hand cream	Close others	4.08 (1.49)	4.85 (1.16)	4.36 (1.76)	4.37 (1.48)	3.91 (1.64)
	Distant others	3.95 (1.01)	4.65 (1.18)	4.41 (1.86)	4.51 (1.64)	3.93 (1.82)
Total sample	Close others	3.60 (1.17)	4.82 (1.22)	3.91 (1.64)	4.08 (1.59)	4.02 (1.58)
	Distant others	3.70 (1.32)	4.44 (1.42)	4.18 (1.61)	4.07 (1.54)	4.17 (1.52)
	Overall[c]	3.65 (1.25)[a]	4.61 (1.35)[c]	4.05 (1.63)[b]	4.08 (1.56)[b]	4.10 (1.50)[b]

Notes: [*] Scale ranges from 1 (= ad does not promise this feeling at all) to 7 (= ad promise this feeling very strongly).

[**] Scale ranges from 1 (= very unfavorable product evaluation) to 7 (= very favorable product evaluation).

[a,b]: Different letters indicate significant differences between mean values in a Scheffé test with $p < .05$ per row.

[c] eta = .204 when taking all five message conditions into account.

Data are mean values (standard deviations in parentheses).

Tab. 3: Attitude toward fair-trade products depending on the message and closeness factor (Study 1)

cantly across experimental conditions. Finally, age, gender, and student status were recorded, and the participants were thanked for taking part in the survey.

Results of the manipulation check of the promise of emotions. If we look at the findings per row of data, we see that agreement to the manipulation-check variables is highest for the corresponding emotion. For instance, agreement to having received a promise of experiencing love is highest in the love condition ($M = 3.15$) compared to the pride condition ($M = 2.15$), hope condition ($M = 2.43$), compassion condition ($M = 2.43$), and emotion-absent condition ($M = 2.33$). In general, however, we found rather poor agreement to these manipulation-check variables. We point to one possible reason for this finding. This fact can arise through the use of multi-cue stimuli. In single-cue stimuli, only the experimental factor is contained and varied (e.g., one page has only the text information, "You will feel love if you purchase fair-trade products"). Single-cue-stimuli lack realism. Many cues are contained in multiple-cue stimuli (e.g., brand names, images of oranges, texts, fair-trade logo) and all

cues except the manipulated cue (promise of a discrete emotion) are held constant. As we aim to test advertisements, we must create multi-cue stimuli and accept that attention will also be paid to a large extent to the co-existing cues that reduce the agreement with these manipulation-check variables.

Description of results. Our findings show that there is no notable difference in product attitudes for fair-trade products when the advertisements show either close or distant others. Overall, we observe the most favorable product evaluations in the condition in which the experience of love is promised, although attitudes toward the product were not always significantly better in this condition if we look at the results at the level of the product and the closeness factor (we suspect that such non-significant effects are due to random effects). At least, the promise of experiencing love was never found to be significantly less effective than using the other messages (see *Tab. 3*).

Hypotheses test. We use the data after collapsing them across the closeness and product factor to test the hy-

potheses. H1 indicated that the condition in which the experience of positive emotions is promised results in higher product attitude than the condition in which such promises are absent. This presumption is supported (effect of promising love: $M_{\text{love}} = 4.61$ versus $M_{\text{claim absent}} = 3.65$, $t(753) = 10.159$, $p < .001$; effect of promising pride: $M_{\text{pride}} = 4.05$ versus $M_{\text{claim absent}} = 3.65$, $t(743) = 3.759$, $p < .001$; effect of promising hope: $M_{\text{hope}} = 4.08$ versus $M_{\text{claim absent}} = 3.65$, $t(741) = 4.123$, $p < .001$). H2 postulated that promising the experience of love is more effective than promising the experience of pride what is also supported ($M_{\text{love}} = 4.61$ versus $M_{\text{pride}} = 4.05$, $t(756) = 5.177$, $p < .001$). Finally, H3 postulating that promising the experience of love is more effective than promising the experience of hope is supported as well ($M_{\text{love}} = 4.61$ versus $M_{\text{hope}} = 4.08$, $t(754) = 5.036$, $p < .001$).

Discussion. Overall, the findings are consistent with the hypotheses postulating that the promise of the experience of positive emotions improves the attitudes toward the promoted product and that the promise of the experience of love is advantageous compared to promising the experience of pride or hope. Thus, these results are consistent with the theory that people value positive emotions (even when only promised) and that the theme of love fits better with appeals that motivate consumers to behave in a prosocial way than promises of pride or hope. The messages designed to evoke compassion are as effective as messages that promise the experience of pride or hope ($M_{\text{pride}} = 4.05$, $M_{\text{hope}} = 4.08$, and $M_{\text{compassion}} = 4.10$; no significant differences). However, at the product-factor and closeness-factor level, the findings are more heterogeneous, i.e., do not support all hypotheses in all experimental conditions. This means, that larger samples support hypotheses that smaller samples do not support (at the level of the products, closeness factor, and message, the cell size equals 37.5 persons on average; at the level of the message, there are 375 test participants on average per condition). This difference indicates a considerable instability of the findings. We can only argue that the use of smaller samples leads to deviations from "big picture" and small samples results are more biased due to sampling error.

For deriving H2 and H3, we only used the argument that there is a higher fit between love experiences in other situations and prosocial consumer behavior than between pride or hope experiences in other situations and prosocial consumer behavior. This argument was based on findings from previous research using emotional-appraisal theory. In the next study, we want to gain deeper insights into this fit concept. What is the mental process that explains this relationship?

3.3. Study 2

Study 2 is a replication of Study 1 with the following modification. We include measures that could explain the effects of the fit concept in more detail. For this purpose, we investigate the role of the consumer's belief that the promise to experience a positive emotion when helping the farmers in need is true (credibility of the emotional claim) and the role of the ease of processing this message (processing fluency).

Experimental design. The ad versions promoted fair-trade products. We used *one experimental* factor that was the message (1. promise of the experience of love, 2. promise of the experience of pride, 3. promise of the experience of hope, 4. compassion appeal, and 5. absence of emotional appeals). We did not consider ethnicity as a replication factor because Study 1 has shown that the closeness factor was not an important factor for the effectiveness of the messages that we used for promoting fair-trade products. We included *one replication factor*: the product factor. Again, we want to emphasize that we do not test hypotheses for this replication factor. We use five products (bananas from an unknown brand, nut nougat cream of the Rigoni di Asiago brand, GEPA coffee, banana chips of the Alnatura brand, and apple chips of the Alnatura brand). This procedure resulted in 25 ad versions (between-subjects design).

Test stimuli. Ad versions were created as those used in Study 1. We only slightly modified the wording of the message per product. For example, rhetorical questions were asked in the ads promoting bananas (ad promising the experience of love: "Don't you want to do something good out of love for your fellow human beings too?"; ad promising the experience of pride: "Don't you want to be proud of yourself for doing a good deed too?"; ad promising the experience of hope: "Don't you want to do something good in the hope of a better world too?"; ad with compassion appeal: "Do you want to do something good out of compassion for your fellow human beings too?"). In the ads promoting coffee, a person was depicted in a large image in the ad as well as on the product packaging shown in the ad.

Procedure and sample. The procedure was adopted from Study 1. A total of 886 persons took part in the survey (75.8 % students and 24.2 % alumni; 61.6 % female and 38.4 % male, $M_{\text{age}} = 27.15$ years, $SD_{\text{age}} = 8.78$).

Measures. The measures were also taken from Study 1. Cronbach's α was .795 for the statements used to assess the attitude toward the promoted product. Furthermore, the statements to prove the occurrence of the thoughts through the message were adopted. Additionally, the credibility of the promise to experience positive emotions when following the recommendation to purchase the product was evaluated. Test participants agreed to "The promise to experience love (in the other conditions: pride, hope) is credible," "... is truthful," and "... is believable" on a seven-point totally disagree/totally agree scale ($\alpha = .857$); similar items were used by Cotte et al. (2005). In addition, processing fluency, i.e., the ease of information processing, was measured by the participants' agreement to: "How easy is it for you to read this advert?", "How easy do you find it to process this ad?", and "How easy do you find it to reproduce the content of

		Emotional claim absent	Promise of the experience of love	Promise of the experience of pride	Promise of the experience of hope	Compassion appeal
Manipulation check[*]						
Total sample	Feelings of love	2.11 (1.34)[a]	3.75 (1.18)[c]	2.66 (1.71)[ab]	2.71 (1.76)[b]	2.74 (1.78)[b]
	Feelings of pride	2.15 (1.43)[a]	2.55 (1.70)[a]	3.58 (1.11)[b]	2.59 (1.78)[a]	2.61 (1.79)[a]
	Feelings of hope	2.49 (1.68)[a]	3.60 (1.96)[b]	3.50 (1.89)[b]	4.12 (1.31)[c]	2.73 (1.17)[a]
	Feelings of compassion	2.86 (1.95)[b]	2.53 (.77)[ab]	2.40 (.84)[a]	2.44 (.83)[a]	4.26 (1.36)[c]
Credibility of the promise[*]						
Bananas		-	3.68 (1.53)	3.63 (1.19)	3.49 (1.50)	-
Rigoni di Asiago nut nougat cream		-	3.22 (1.05)	2.97 (1.40)	2.81 (1.38)	-
GEPA Coffee		-	3.56 (.84)	3.73 (1.76)	3.77 (1.80)	-
Alnatura banana chips		-	3.02 (1.13)	3.13 (1.62)	3.18 (1.51)	-
Alnatura apple chips		-	2.92 (1.09)	2.85 (1.34)	2.82 (1.51)	-
Total sample		-	3.25 (1.18)	3.23 (1.50)	3.20 (1.57)	-
Processing fluency[*]						
Bananas		4.42 (1.34)	4.69 (1.36)	4.14 (1.12)	4.30 (.90)	4.23 (1.30)
Rigoni di Asiago nut nougat cream		4.65 (1.49)	4.47 (1.54)	4.05 (1.08)	3.60 (1.33)	4.43 (1.66)
GEPA Coffee		4.46 (1.30)	3.91 (1.25)	3.46 (1.07)	3.63 (.98)	4.27 (1.38)
Alnatura banana chips		3.78 (1.19)	4.46 (1.07)	3.47 (1.06)	3.57 (1.23)	3.49 (1.30)
Alnatura apple chips		3.92 (1.62)	4.03 (1.33)	3.71 (1.36)	3.42 (1.71)	4.03 (1.59)
Total sample		4.24 (1.41)	4.31 (1.28)	3.75 (1.15)	3.70 (1.31)	4.07 (1.47)
Attitude toward the product[**]						
Bananas		3.72 (1.50)	4.62 (1.56)	4.16 (1.33)	4.21 (.93)	4.47 (1.49)
Rigoni di Asiago nut nougat cream		3.45 (1.42)	4.29 (1.57)	3.53 (1.32)	3.58 (1.37)	3.77 (1.24)
GEPA Coffee		3.81 (1.19)	4.44 (1.76)	3.90 (1.63)	4.16 (1.80)	3.55 (1.60)
Alnatura banana chips		3.56 (1.11)	4.36 (1.95)	3.95 (1.01)	4.19 (1.07)	3.83 (1.04)
Alnatura apple chips		3.91 (1.13)	4.83 (1.07)	4.10 (1.14)	3.95 (1.37)	4.23 (1.03)
Total sample[d]		3.68 (1.18)	4.52 (1.17)	3.93 (1.29)	4.03 (1.34)	3.97 (1.32)

Notes: [*] Scale ranges from 1 (= low) to 7 (= high).

[**] Scale ranges from 1 (= very unfavorable product evaluation) to 7 (= very favorable product evaluation).

[a,b,c]: Different letters indicate significant differences between mean values in a Scheffé test with $p < .05$ per row. In the first row of data, 2.11 and 2.66 do not differ significantly (common letter a), 2.66, 2.71, and 2.74 do not differ significantly (common letter b), and 3.75 differs from all other mean values (letter c).

[d] eta = .221 when taking all five message conditions into account.

Data are mean values (standard deviations in parentheses).

Tab. 4: Attitude toward fair-trade products, credibility of the promise, and processing fluency depending on the message (Study 2)

this ad at a later point in time?" on a seven-point scale (α = .749); similar items had been used by Landwehr et al. (2011).

Description of results. First, we find that thoughts about the promised emotions were more intense in the corresponding experimental conditions. *Second,* the findings indicate that the promise's credibility is not contingent on the promised emotion. *Third,* for processing fluency, agreement that the ad is easy to process is higher in the promise-of-love condition compared to the promise-of-pride condition and the promise-of-hope condition (M_{love} = 4.31 versus M_{pride} = 3.75, $t(349)$ = 4.316, $p < .001$; M_{love} = 4.31 versus M_{hope} = 3.70, $t(347)$ = 4.466, $p < .001$). *Fourth*, product attitudes are higher in the

promise-of-love condition compared to the promise-of-pride condition and promise-of-hope condition (see *Tab. 4*).

Hypotheses test. We also use this sample to test our hypotheses. In line with H1, we find a positive effect of the promise of the experience of a positive emotion (effect of promising love: M_{love} = 4.51 versus $M_{claim\ absent}$ = 3.68, $t(352)$ = 6.644, $p < .001$; effect of promising pride: M_{pride} = 3.93 versus $M_{claim\ absent}$ = 3.68, $t(357)$ = 1.916, $p < .05$; effect of promising hope: M_{hope} = 4.03 versus $M_{claim\ absent}$ = 3.68, $t(355)$ = 2.628, $p < .01$). Furthermore, H2 (M_{love} = 4.51 versus M_{pride} = 3.93, $t(349)$ = 4.481, $p < .001$) as well as H3 (M_{love} = 4.51 versus M_{hope} = 4.03, $t(347)$ = 3.649, $p < .001$) are supported.

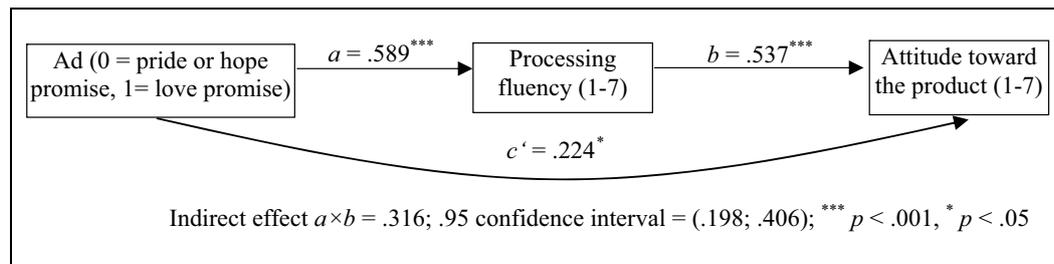*Fig. 6: The mediating effect of perceptual fluency in the promise attitude relationship*

Ad (0 = pride or hope promise, 1= love promise) → $a = .589^{***}$ → Processing fluency (1-7) → $b = .537^{***}$ → Attitude toward the product (1-7)

$c' = .224^{*}$

Indirect effect $a \times b = .316$; .95 confidence interval = (.198; .406); $^{***} p < .001$, $^{*} p < .05$

Message credibility and processing fluency as mediators. It is not statistically meaningful to test the mediating effect of the credibility of the promise because this variable did not differ between the conditions of the promise of love, pride, and hope. Thus, we only test if there is a mediating effect of processing fluency in the relationship between the promised emotion (1: love, 0: pride or hope) and the attitude toward the product. Note, that we do not include the data for the promise-absent condition and compassion-appeal condition into this analysis. Using model 4 of Hayes (2013), we find that processing fluency is influenced by the promise of experiencing a discrete emotion (promising love triggers higher processing fluency than promising pride or hope) and that the attitude toward the promoted product is influenced by processing fluency (*Fig. 6*).

Discussion. At first glance, the ads are asking for help of farmers in need as a fair-trade logo is prominently displayed and the texts refer to calls for help. Most likely, people have stored and can activate heuristic principles such as *Love thy neighbor as thyself* or *Helping is loving and vice versa*, which facilitate the processing of love claims, i.e., which makes such promises acceptable without many thoughts (i.e., easy to process).

The following could be argued as a possible explanation for the non-significant findings on the credibility of the promise to experience positive emotions across the types of emotions:

(1) When reading the promise to experience love, a fit condition exists because emotions of love when helping farmers match other events in which people feel love. Consumers unlikely start a process of thinking because one dislikes thinking about fit conditions (environment is as expected). They therefore do not think much about the credibility of the promise of love.

(2) When reading the promise to experience pride or hope, a misfit condition exists because events in which pride or hope are typically experienced have only few appraisal themes in common with conditions in which one is helping farmers in need. Consumers are prone to think about misfit (environment is not as expected) and to not find a solution of misfit. Although spending cognitive effort, consumers will be skeptical of such promises.

In summary, consumers in the love condition are unlikely to think much about credibility, and in the pride and hope condition, consumers may mistrust the message,

which might explain the finding that credibility perception do not differ across the promise of love, pride, and hope.

We found additional support for the hypotheses for fair-trade products as test objects and were able to add insights into why the promise of experiencing the emotion of love was more effective – it is processed more fluently. In the following step, we want to gain insights into whether the hypotheses are also valid for different topics that require prosocial consumer behavior.

3.4. Study 3

Study 3 replicates Study 1 with one difference: instead of promoting fair-trade products with the depiction of farmers in need, the advertisements show animals in need. Thereby, we intend to analyze whether the results from Study 1 and Study 2 can be generalized from humans to animals.

Test objects. The ads used in this study promote products that aim to reduce animal suffering. The versions differ in terms of the promised experience of positive emotions. In addition, in analogy to Study 1 and Study 2, an emotional-claim-absent condition and a condition containing a compassion appeal are considered.

Experimental design. We use the message as the *experimental factor* (1. promise of the experience of love, 2. promise of the experience of pride, 3. promise of the experience of hope, 4. compassion appeal, and 5. absence of emotional appeals). We add one replication factor (this is a factor that serves to check the external validity of results but is not included for the testing of additional hypotheses): the product. We used three products (bottles of Soulbottles, Provamel soy butter, and The Body Shop body butter). Hence, we have 15 conditions (between-subjects design).

Test stimuli. The first product is a glass drinking bottle from the Soulbottles brand. Its main benefit is as follows: Buying this bottle will help prevent plastic waste from entering the oceans, which benefits marine animals such as the fish featured in the ads by reducing the likelihood of plastic waste dying. The ads containing an emotion-related appeal differed in terms of the message formulated as a rhetorical question: 1. Shouldn't you give love to sea creatures too? 2. Shouldn't you be proud to have helped protect marine life? 3. Shouldn't you be hoping for an improvement in the living conditions of marine
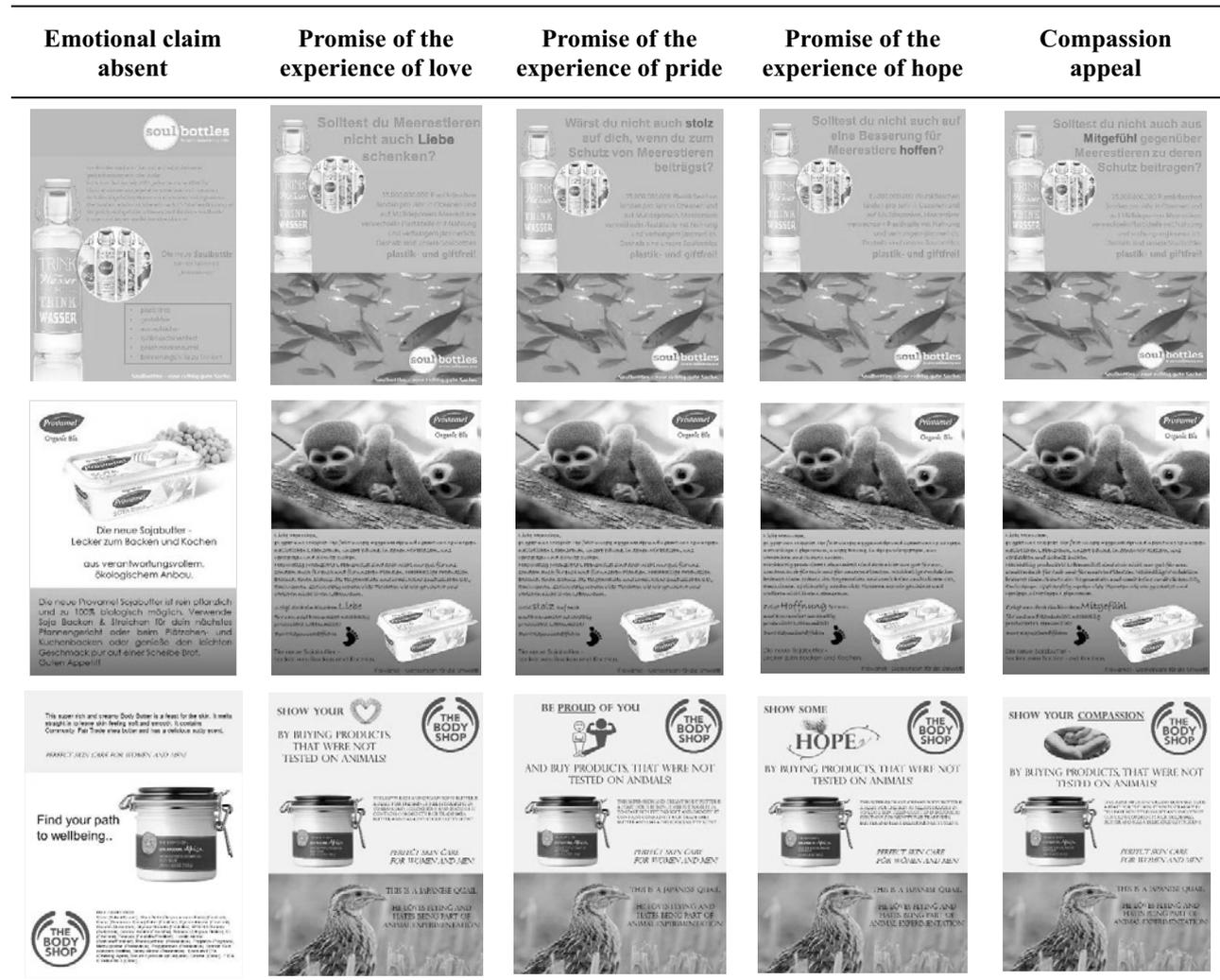
Emotional claim absent	Promise of the experience of love	Promise of the experience of pride	Promise of the experience of hope	Compassion appeal

Fig. 7: Test stimuli used in Study 3

animals too? 4. Shouldn't you also be helping to protect marine life out of compassion for them? The second product is Provamel's soy butter suitable for baking and cooking. The advertisement points out that by using sustainably produced food, deforestation of rainforests can be avoided. As a result, the habitat of the animals living there, including monkeys, is preserved. A fictitious letter from the capuchin monkeys addressed to mankind in the advertisements is intended to encourage people to purchase the products to secure the lives of these animals. The letter of monkeys to people is as follows (translated): "Dear people, we are bad. You are cutting down our rainforests and taking away our natural habitat, our trees, where we climb, hide, and seek shelter. Sustainably produced food is not only good for us, but also for you and our planet. Sustainable production means protecting the rainforest and therefore no additional CO_2 emissions. At the same time, many animal species, like us, are protected and do not lose their habitat." Then, a promise that one will experience love, pride, or hope, or a compassion appeal was inserted in the ads. The third product was body butter of The Body Shop. The brand avoids animal testing for cosmetics. The ad versions show a Japanese

quail, a species which is used by some other producers of cosmetics to test the toxicity of ingredients. The message that differs across the ad versions starts as follows: "Show your (heart symbol)," "Be proud of you (pride symbol)," "Show some hope," "Show your compassion (bird baby in a human hand)" and ends with "and buy products that were not tested on animals." The emotional-claim-absent condition states: "Find your path to well-being." The idea of using the motif of a Japanese quail was taken from a leaflet promoting this brand in Germany. The communication to refrain from using animal testing is essential for The Body Shop, as other brands selling products in the German market must admit that they test ingredients on animals because they also sell these products in the Chinese market, which requires animal testing thus far. The ad versions are shown in *Fig. 7*.

Procedure, sample, and measures. The procedure was adopted from Study 1 and Study 2. We can analyze data from 660 participants (74.5 % students and 25.5 % alumni, 78.1 % female and 21.4 % male, M_{age} = 26.38 years, SD_{age} = 9.68). For the statements measuring the attitude toward the promoted product, we used the items from

		Emotional claim absent	Promise of the experience of love	Promise of the experience of pride	Promise of the experience of hope	Compassion appeal
Manipulation check[*]						
Total sample	Feelings of love	1.81 (.91)[a]	3.32 (1.92)[c]	2.30 (.89)[b]	2.29 (.87)[ab]	2.14 (.89)[ab]
	Feelings of pride	2.02 (.94)[a]	2.55 (.78)[b]	3.75 (2.00)[c]	2.52 (1.79)[b]	2.39 (.86)[ab]
	Feelings of hope	1.85 (.91)[a]	2.08 (.89)[a]	2.09 (.90)[a]	3.10 (1.39)[b]	1.99 (.91)[a]
	Feelings of compassion	1.93 (.92)[a]	2.73 (.62)[b]	2.60 (.75)[b]	2.72 (.65)[b]	4.44 (1.95)[c]
Attitude toward the product[**]						
Soulbottles		4.63 (1.49)	5.48 (1.14)	4.83 (.96)	4.97 (1.72)	5.15 (1.51)
Provamel soy butter		3.57 (1.53)	3.95 (1.65)	3.46 (1.40)	3.44 (1.01)	4.01 (1.25)
The Body shop body butter		4.48 (1.45)	5.19 (1.50)	4.38 (1.01)	3.90 (.74)	4.88 (1.68)
Total sample[d]		4.23 (1.55)	4.89 (1.57)	4.21 (1.27)	4.12 (1.39)	4.68 (1.56)

Notes: [*] Scale ranges from 1 (= low) to 7 (= high).

[**] Scale ranges from 1 (= very unfavorable product evaluation) to 7 (= very favorable product evaluation).

[a,b,c]: Different letters indicate significant differences between mean values in a Scheffé test with $p < .05$ per row.

[d] eta = .202 when taking all five message conditions into account.

Data are mean values (standard deviations in parentheses).

Tab. 5: Attitude toward products protecting animals depending on the message (Study 3)

Study 1 and Study 2 that aimed at product favorability ("The product is very attractive," "appealing," "likeable," and "favorable") and two items targeting at product-self connectedness ("The product suits me and my way of life very well." and "The product is made for me."). The items for the latter concept were adopted from Escalas and Bettman (2005) and Sirgy (1982). The rationale for considering product-self connectedness was the idea that general proneness for prosocial behavior is a personality variable, and thus, attitudes toward prosocial products might result from the contribution of products to the consumer's self. We wanted to see if there was a difference between the impact of the ad versions on product favorability and product-self connectedness. However, due to a high value of Cronbach's Alpha for these items, we randomly selected two items aiming to assess product favorability ("likeable", "appealing") and merged them with the two items that address product-self connectedness, i.e., used an arithmetical average of four items ($\alpha = .905$). We refrained from taking all six items because this would result in lower standard deviations of the aggregated variable, leading to better significance levels and higher eta values. Note, that due to high values of Cronbach's alpha, the results of Study 3 do not depend on whether we use the pooling of two items of brand favorability and two items of product-self connectedness or four items of brand favorability. The measures used to assess the success of manipulating thoughts about emotions were adopted from Study 1 and Study 2.

Description of results. Thoughts about the promised emotional experiences were as intended (see upper half of *Tab. 5*). The lower half of this table contains the findings on the attitude toward the promoted products. A Scheffé test indicates that for the bottles and soy butter,

the mean values do not differ significantly across the five conditions. For the body butter, the promise of love and the compassion appeal led to better product attitudes than the promise of hope.

Hypotheses test. The descriptive analyses at the product level do not provide clear support to the superiority of the promise to experience love. Combined across the products, due to larger sample size, the findings support the hypotheses. In line with H1, we find only a positive effect of the promise of the experience of love ($M_{love} = 4.89$ versus $M_{claim\ absent} = 4.23$, $t(257) = 3.405$, $p < .001$) but no significant effects of the promise of the experience of pride or hope compared to the emotional-claim-absent condition ($M_{pride} = 4.21$ and $M_{hope} = 4.12$ versus $M_{claim\ absent} = 4.23$). H2 predicting that promising the experience of love is more effective than promising pride ($M_{love} = 4.89$ versus $M_{pride} = 4.21$, $t(263) = 4.481$, $p < .001$) and H3 predicting that promising love is more effective than promising hope ($M_{love} = 4.89$ versus $M_{hope} = 4.12$, $t(262) = 4.212$, $p < .001$) are supported.

Discussion. We have found that promising to experience the emotion of love is more effective compared to promising the experience of pride or hope or refraining from promising such positive emotions. The compassion appeal is as effective as the love promise. The main difference to the results of Study 1 and Study 2, in which persons in need were shown, is that for animals in need, only the promise of the experience of love is an effective mean to promote products if positive emotions are promised. Why are claims that promise the experience of pride or hope less effective for products that emphasize animal protection than for products that are associated with the help of persons in need? We can only speculate
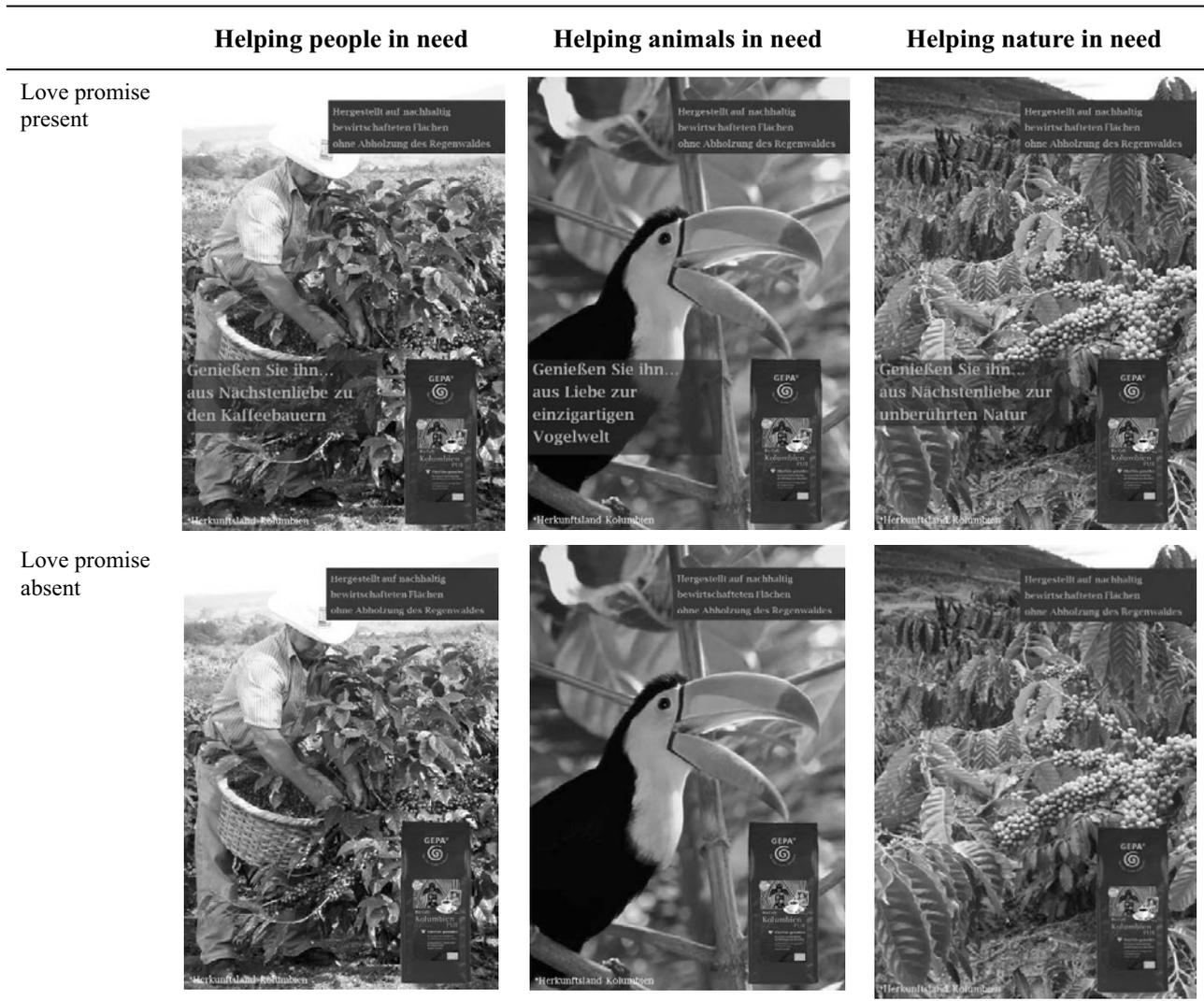
	Helping people in need	Helping animals in need	Helping nature in need
Love promise present			
Love promise absent			

Fig. 8: Example of test stimuli used in Study 4

about the reasons. It is likely that need/protection on the one hand and love on the other are highly connected in human's associative brain networks and therefore the promise of love works for appeals to take care of animals as well (for examples of publications considering love toward animals, see Archer 1997; Beck and Madresh 2008; Dotson and Hyatt 2008; Beck 2014). We provided evidence to the presumption that H1 is valid for ads depicting persons in need and is partly valid for ads demanding for care for animals. Moreover, we found support for the presumptions that a promise to experience love is superior to a promise to experience pride (H2) and a promise of hope (H3) in the context of humans as well as animals in need. Taken together, these results suggest that the promise to experience love is an effective way to motivate consumers to engage in prosocial behavior (if we count animal care to prosocial consumer behaviors as well). These results lead to our final question: Can marketers and organization effectively promise love toward humans in need and toward animals in need as well as toward nature as a whole, given the choice between these options?

3.5. Study 4

Study 4 examines if the effectiveness of the promise to experience love when purchasing and consuming the promoted product depends on the object of love: experiencing love toward people in need, experiencing love toward animals in need, or experiencing love toward the endangered nature as a whole.

Experimental design. We cannot simply vary the motif (people, animal, nature in general) to examine in which condition the promise to experience love is most effective because the motif itself (e.g., the depiction of a person versus the depiction of an animal) also is likely to have an impact on product attitudes. For example, if depicting attractive people and ugly animals or *vice versa*, the likeability of these images also spills over to product attitudes. Thus, we use *one experimental factor* (promise to experience love: present, absent). We calculate the promise present minus promise absent difference for the product attitude to quantify the love effect per object. In addition, we include *two replication factors. First,* to check if the scope of prosocial behavior could be ex-

Promoted product	Target message	Image of a person	Image of an animal	Image of nature
True Fruits mango smoothie	Experience the love to …	Male farmer	Leopard	Landscape
True Fruits orange smoothie	Because your love to …	Farmer	Panda	Plantation/landscape
Provamel omega 3 soymilk	Experience the love to …	Female farmer	Koala	Jungle
Provamel natural soymilk	Experience the love to …	Male farmer	Golden hamster	Plantation/landscape
Provamel calcium soymilk	Out of love to …	Male farmer	Orangutan	Jungle
GEPA coffee	…out of charity to …	Male farmer	Toucan	Plantation/landscape
The Body Shop body cream	Experience ♥	Female farmer	Orangutan mother/child	Landscape
Weleda calendula care cream	Out of love to …	Male farmer	Red admiral (butterfly)	Meadow with marigolds
Bihophar honey	Out of love to …	Beekeeper	Honeybee	Field with sunflowers

Tab. 6: Description of the main elements of the ad versions used in Study 4

panded when the marketer promises to the experience the emotion of love, we vary the object of love (people, animals, nature in general). Note that we neither developed nor test a hypothesis about whether the effect of promise of love depends on these topics (human, animal, nature) – we just want to see if there are limits to our presumptions; only if such limits can be found, future research might develop hypotheses in the next step. *Second*, we must include products (otherwise, we cannot create advertisements). The second replication factor is therefore the promoted product. We use the following: True Fruits mango smoothie, True Fruits orange smoothie, Provamel omega 3 soymilk, Provamel natural soymilk, Provamel calcium soymilk, GEPA coffee, The Body Shop body cream, Weleda calendula care cream, and Bihophar honey. Note that we do not have a hypothesis that there will be differences in the effectiveness of the love promise across these products; the use of a larger number of products is only for the purpose of checking external validity of the results, i.e., the generalizability across products and other elements. Combining the message (two levels) with the topic (three) and the product (nine) results in 56 combinations (between-subjects design).

Test stimuli. As an example, in *Fig. 8* we show the set of advertisements that was created to promote GEPA coffee. The helping-people-in-need versions show a farmer harvesting coffee beans. The helping-animals-in-need versions depict a toucan, and the helping-nature-in-need versions show a plantation/landscape image (there is a plantation in the foreground and "untouched nature" in the background of the image). The love-promise-present conditions contain the text (translated): "Enjoy it. ...out of charity to the coffee farmers," "...out of love to the unique world of birds," and "...out of love to untouched nature." Note that all ad versions passed the pilot study successfully. We developed similar sets of ads for the remaining eight products. The texts expressing the promise of experiencing the emotion of love (translated) and the images of a person, an animal, and the nature used in the ad versions are described in *Tab. 6*.

Procedure, sample, and measures. The procedure was adopted from the other studies. We analyze data from 1,929 participants (69.7 % students and 30.3 % alumni, 74.8 % female and 25.2 % male, M_{age} = 23.76 years, SD_{age} = 5.16). To assess the attitude toward the promoted product, we adopted the items from Study 1 and Study 2 ("The product is very favorable," "... very appealing," "... very likeable," and "... very attractive;" seven-point scale ranging from 1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree, α = .929).

Description of results. In *Tab. 7*, we present the results of the manipulation check and the mean values calculated for the attitude toward the product depending on the experimental condition. If we aggregate the data across the topics (people, animals, nature), test participants agree more strongly with "The ad promises a strong feeling of love" when the ad promises the experience of love compared to the promise-of-emotion-absent condition $M_{love\ promise}$ = 4.61, $M_{promise\ absent}$ = 3.14, $t(1927)$ = 13.260, $p <$ .001). Agreement with manipulation-check statements stating that there are promises of other emotions in the ads is lower. There is the tendency that the promise of the experience of love affects product evaluations positively when the objects of love are persons in need or animals in need. Promises to experience love with the nature in need do not affect product attitudes. However, at the product level, data are more heterogeneous. We can only explain these product-specific differences with sampling effects.

Test of hypothesis 1. We use the data to test the part of hypothesis 1 that postulates that the presence of a promise of the experience of a positive emotion (here: love) results in more favorable product attitudes compared to the promise-absent condition. For persons in need as objects of love, the promise to experience love has a positive effect ($M_{present}$ = 4.39, M_{absent} = 4.03, $t(646)$ = 3.295, p < .001). For animals in need as objects of love, there is also a positive effect of the promise to experience love on product evaluations ($M_{present}$ = 4.51, M_{absent} = 4.18, $t(646)$ = 2.940, p < .01). In contrast, for the nature as a

		Promise of the experience of love			Promise of emotions absent		
		Helping people in need	Helping animals in need	Helping nature in need	Helping people in need	Helping animals in need	Helping nature in need
Manipulation check[*]							
Total sample	Feelings of love	4.55 (1.18)	4.68 (1.02)	4.59 (1.29)	3.20 (1.81)	2.99 (1.20)	3.24 (1.85)
	Feelings of pride	3.13 (1.82)	2.82 (1.76)	2.64 (1.72)	3.19 (1.88)	2.80 (1.72)	2.76 (1.55)
	Feelings of hope	3.44 (1.91)	3.38 (1.93)	3.40 (1.91)	3.47 (1.69)	3.37 (1.96)	3.55 (1.90)
	Feelings of compassion	3.39 (1.96)	3.17 (2.06)	2.59 (1.64)	2.90 (1.54)	3.27 (1.91)	2.56 (1.59)
Attitude toward the product[**]							
True Fruits mango smoothie		4.62 (.81)	4.92 (1.04)	4.00 (1.47)	4.19 (1.27)	4.66 (1.29)	4.17 (1.66)
True Fruits orange smoothie		4.90 (1.64)	4.99 (1.69)	5.18 1.53)	4.86 (1.02)	4.55 (1.06)	4.97 (1.84)
Provamel Omega 3 soymilk		4.15 (1.23)	4.39 (1.30)	3.77 (1.50)	4.03 (1.50)	4.57 (1.30)	3.91 (1.23)
Provamel natural soymilk		4.58 (1.32)	4.16 (1.69)	4.42 (1.34)	4.03 (.93)	3.70 (1.37(	4.63 (1.86)
Provamel calcium soymilk		3.50 (1.07)	3.73 (1.68)	3.30 (1.06)	2.84 (1.41)	3.40 (1.65)	3.02 (1.68)
GEPA coffee		4.31 (1.40)	4.21 (1.62)	4.35 (.94)	3.93 (1.28)	4.06 (.90)	4.18 (1.47)
The Body Shop body cream		4.38 (1.68)	4.76 (1.41)	4.77 (1.17)	4.18 (1.26)	3.93 (.97)	4.85 (1.56)
Weleda calendula care cream		4.53 (1.42)	4.96 (1.74)	5.64 (.86)	3.96 (1.02)	4.49 (.87)	5.22 (1.21)
Bihophar honey		4.38 (1.72)	4.38 (1.83)	4.75 (1.41)	4.02 (1.04)	4.08 (1.07)	4.51 (1.26)
Total		4.39 (1.44)	4.51 (1.60)	4.48 (1.44)	4.03 (1.29)	4.18 (1.23)	4.41 (1.65)
Total across all three topics[a]			4.46 (1.49)			4.21 (1.41)	

Notes: [*] Scale ranges from 1 (= low) to 7 (= high).

[**] Scale ranges from 1 (= very unfavorable product evaluation) to 7 (= very favorable product evaluation).

[a] eta = .084 when comparing the love-promise-present to the promise-absent condition.

Data are mean values (standard deviations in parentheses).

Tab. 7: Attitude toward products depending on the message (Study 4)

whole in need as object of love, there is no effect of the promise to experience love on product evaluations ($M_{present}$ = 4.48, M_{absent} = 4.41, $t(640)$ = .569, *n.s.*). Pictures that show landscapes, jungles, meadows full of blooming marigolds, fields with sunflowers, etc. obviously are not suitable for evoking thoughts about love for these objects.

Which object of love is advantageous? We estimate the effect of inserting a promise that one can experience love when helping people in need by calculating the difference of product attitudes between the promise-present condition ($M_{present}$ = 4.39) and the promise-absent condition (M_{absent} = 4.03) which results in $\Delta_{people} = M_{present} - M_{absent}$ =.35. Using analogous calculations, the effect of promising the experience of love with animals is $\Delta_{animals}$ = 4.51 – 4.18 = .33, and the effect of promising the experience of love with nature in general equals Δ_{nature} = 4.48 – 4.41 = .07. If we compare the difference between Δ_{people} =.35 and Δ_{nature} =.07, we get Δ = .29 (z = 1.758, $p <$ .05, two-tailed test). For the comparison between the effect of love in the animal condition ($\Delta_{animals}$ = .33) and the nature condition (Δ_{nature} = .07), we get Δ = .26 (z = 1.569, $p <$ .05, two-tailed test). If we calculate the difference the love effect in the people condition (Δ_{people} = .35) and the love effect in the animal condition ($\Delta_{animals}$ = .33), we receive Δ = .02 (z = .135, $p >$ .10, two-tailed test).We conclude that the effect of promising the experience of love toward people and toward animals is higher than the effects of promising love toward nature while there is no difference in the effectivity of the promise to experience love when addressing either persons in need or animals in need. In *Tab. 8*, we summarize these findings about the statistical tests.

Discussion. This study shows that the effectivity of promises to experience love when buying prosocial products is limited to persons in need and animals in need. When such promises refer to the protection of the nature as a whole (e.g., jungle, landscape, meadows, fields), promises of love experiences are ineffective. This does not mean that showing nature in danger has no impact on product attitudes (we did not investigate this relationship). It only means that adding a promise to experience love to a nature in danger message is ineffective. We can explain this phenomenon using associative-network theory. We believe that the mental concept of love is stored in the human memory through associations with persons (*I love him or her*) and through associations with pets (e.g., *I love my cat*). It is easier to expand the network to further animals such as fish, birds, or butterflies than to forests, meadows, landscapes, etc. However, this ex-post explanation might result in an additional hypothesis that is examined in future research.

Objects	Promise to experience love present	Promise to experience love absent	Effect of the promise to experience love	Statistical test
People	$M_{present} = 4.39$	$M_{absent} = 4.03$	$\Delta_{people} = 4.39 - 4.03 = .35$	$t(646) = 3.295, p < .001$
Animals	$M_{present} = 4.51$	$M_{absent} = 4.18$	$\Delta_{animals} = 4.51 - 4.18 = .33$	$t(646) = 2.940, p < .01$
Nature	$M_{present} = 4.48$	$M_{absent} = 4.41$	$\Delta_{nature} = 4.48 - 4.41 = .07$	$t(640) = .569, n.s.$
People – animals			$\Delta_{people} - \Delta_{animals} = .02$	$z = .135, n.s.$
People – nature			$\Delta_{people} - \Delta_{nature} = .29$	$z = 1.758, p < .05^*$
Animals – nature			$\Delta_{animals} - \Delta_{nature} = .26$	$z = 1.569, p < .05^*$

* two-tailed test.

Tab. 8: Findings on the effect of the promise of love for different objects

4. Discussion

4.1. Limitations of the studies

Limitations on the validity of our findings result from our decisions to select certain test objects, test stimuli, methods, and samples.

Test objects. We selected only one type of prosocial consumer behavior that benefits other persons in need (fairtrade) and found positive effects of promises to experience love, pride, or hope on the attitudes toward fairtrade products. But would we get the same findings if we – for example – analyzed the willingness to donate to measures to integrate former criminals into society? Admittedly, we cannot transfer our findings to similar other conditions because we did not investigate different types of voluntary helping (e.g., donating to victims of wars, famine, or diseases; donating to measures to integrate former criminals). In addition, we selected only few topics related to animals and nature as a whole in need. Obviously, pandas, baby orangutans, koalas, and some bird species look appealing, and promises of experiencing love were effective. But would we get similar results if we, for example, promise the experience of love if the individuals help to protect ugly insects? In summary, we focused on positively valanced targets (farmers, particular animal species) and did not consider the case in which negatively valanced targets need help. It would be interesting to investigate in future research whether promises to experience love are also effective in supporting negatively valanced targets. We did not systematically differentiate between brands that are known for their prosocial positioning and brands that are not known for their commitment to helping persons, animals, or nature in need. It is likely that promising positive emotions is more effective for the first group of brands.

Test stimuli. A simple technique for researchers is to ask test participants to think of any event in the past that elicited a specific emotion (when asked for an event that elicits pride, a student might think about an difficult examination that she or he successfully passed) or an everyday event that did not evoke emotion, and then asking these groups of participants to indicate how much they would, for example, donate to the Red Cross organization. Previous research found a positive effect of

thoughts about past events that elicited positive emotions on the willingness to engage in prosocial behavior and recalling experienced emotion-loaded events happening few days ago might repeatedly evoke weak real emotions. However, it is a difficult task to transfer these settings to an advertising context because marketers cannot systematically apply such priming techniques. We included promises to experience positive emotions in the advertisements which were predominantly textual appeals. Admittedly, our attempts were not very successful. The agreement to statements "The ad promises a strong feeling of love," "The ad promises a strong feeling of pride," "The ad promises a strong feeling of hope," and "The ad induces a strong feeling of compassion" was low (see the manipulation-check results in the tables) throughout all versions of messages (imperatives or rhetorical questions, use of metaphors such as "... will warm your heart," added symbols, large letters, etc.). Future research may identify formulations and graphical elements that are better suited to demonstrate the benefit of experiencing positive emotions through prosocial behavior. We make some suggestion in Section 4.3.

Method. Online surveys aimed at student samples cause the problem that test participants are not very motivated to fill out the questionnaires very carefully. The standard deviations of the product attitudes are often quite high, which does not only indicate sample heterogeneity, but also carelessness when completing the questionnaire. Future research could use smaller samples but employ techniques such as simulated markets, meaning each participant is given EUR 25 and asked to purchase a product (e.g., choose between an expensive fair-trade coffee and a less expensive regular coffee) while the money left is the property of the participants. In such conditions, participants would be motivated to make more careful decisions.

Samples. On the one hand, surveys among students offer the opportunity to test advertisements in large samples, on the other hand, students can differ from the overall population in terms of general attitudes toward care with other persons, animals, and nature. Students might assume that they are expected to respond favorably to prosocial consumer campaigns, reducing effect sizes. In different samples, effect sizes could be larger (which could be analyzed in future research). As a side note, we want to point

to the fact that the proportion of female participants was remarkably higher than the proportion of male participants; many of the latter apparently stopped completing the questionnaire before its regular end, although the social platform Studydrive does not specifically focus on female members. Apparently, the products, the motifs used in the ads, or the textual promises to experience positive emotions when buying the products triggered mental resistance in male persons. The findings that female persons are more prone to deal with care-related issues than male persons are consistent with literature on the stereotype of "good women" who take care of other persons (Jaffee and Hyde 2000). However, future research should therefore identify products, motifs, and messages that better appeal to both female and male persons.

4.2. Implications for theory

Broaden-and-built theory. Fredrickson's (1998) theory posits that frequently experiencing different types of positive emotions leads to a happy life. We interpreted this presumption in the sense that people appreciate positive emotions and thus respond favorably to promises to experience positive emotions in advertisements promoting prosocial consumer behaviors. We found such promises to have a positive effect on product attitudes when the advertisements depicted persons in need or animals in need. In contrast, when the advertisements addressed nature in need, there was no effect. We add to this theory that promising positive emotions is not always effective, i.e., is ineffective when the topic is a rather abstract topic like nature.

Emotional-appraisal theory. Next, we draw on previous findings from applications of the emotional-appraisal theory that – transferred to considerations about fit or misfit of associations – predict, that promises to experience love is more effective in positively influencing attitudes toward prosocial products than promises to experience pride or hope. This presumption is supported by our studies. We provided an example that illustrates the usefulness of this theory.

Higher message credibility and/or processing fluency when marketers promise the experience of love. We found that the message to experience love when deciding in favor of prosocial behavior causes a higher level of processing fluency than the message to experience pride or hope. Different promises (love, pride, hope) had no effect on message credibility. Therefore, our examinations contribute to the theory of processing fluency. Fit conditions, including those between promises of discrete emotions and typical events in which these emotions are experienced, increase processing fluency. Thus, we added another example for the applicability of fluency theory.

4.3. Implications for practice

Should marketers encourage prosocial consumer behavior with the promise to experience positive emotions? Our research started with findings from previous research that priming tasks such as *Think about an event that caused pride in you* compared to *Think about an everyday event that did not cause any emotions in you* effectively affect intentions to behave in a prosocial way. We therefore reasoned that the idea to promise positive emotions through advertisements could be a way to influence consumers. Overall, we found support for this idea. We recommend promising the experience of love with people or animals in need in social marketing campaigns when making compassion appeals is difficult or many other companies and NGOs use compassion appeals.

What is more effective – promising the experience of positive emotions (e.g., love) or using a compassion appeal? Because the promise to experience love is more effective than the pride appeal and hope appeal, we compare the love appeal to the compassion appeal. When addressing persons in need, the love appeal was statistically more effective in influencing the attitude toward the promoted prosocial product than the compassion appeal (Study 1: $M_{love} = 4.61$, $M_{compassion} = 4.10$, $t(756) = 4.867$, $p < .001$; Study 2: $M_{love} = 4.52$, $M_{compassion} = 3.97$, $t(349) = 4.126$, $p < .001$). When animals in need were addressed, there was no difference in the effectiveness of the love appeal and the compassion appeal (Study 3: $M_{love} = 4.89$, $M_{compassion} = 4.68$, $t(261) = 1.088$, *n.s.*). However, the statistical findings are only one aspect when deciding between types of appeals. Marketers and NGOs can differentiate their campaigns from other campaigns promoting prosocial behavior because compassion appeals are widely used and love appeals are rare. Moreover, as appeals containing the promise to experience the emotion of love are appeals with experience quality from the viewpoint of economics of information, marketers and NGOs can add pieces of information to experience claims that are likely to make them more effective. *First*, if a celebrity or well-known influencer is depicted in the ad who states that she or he really had experienced the feeling of love, consumers' propensity to purchase prosocial products may increase. *Second*, the promise to experience the emotion of love when addressing animals or nature could be increased if the images or texts enable anthropomorphic thinking or similar processes such as pareidolia. This means that the stimuli could look human-like (Epley et al. 2007) or like other things the perceiver is highly familiar with. For instance. the ads could refer to mother nature or show animals like Maja the Bee (if a license was purchased). Then, the similarity to humans is increased and the love concept might be transferred more easily. For compassion appeals, Peta already uses anthropomorphism when it replaces the images of animals with persons, e.g., when in the slaughterhouse a female person is shown on the hook instead of a bull.

How should promises to experience positive emotions be formulated? We did not systematically manipulate the formulations in our experiments and simply used many variations (imperative or rhetorical question, with or without additional symbols, etc.). We did not find an op-

tion that is most effective. We encourage organizations or companies wishing to use this technique to conduct pilot studies, as we have done, to identify suitable versions. In addition, we suggest considering the use of additional instruments besides print advertisements to increase the effectivity of promises to experience positive emotions. Using the example of pride, findings from emotional-appraisal theory suggest that people should be empowered to demonstrate prosocial behavior in public. For example, announcing that the donor's name and the amount of money donated will be posted on the organization's website (if a non-profit organization asks for donations) is likely to increase the effectivity of the promise to experience a sense of pride (Han et al. 2017). Since 1978, public television (formerly ARD, since 2001 ZDF) in Germany, in cooperation with the BILD newspaper, has been inviting people to donate at a charity gala entitled *A Heart for Children* every year. A selection of the names of the donors and the amount donated is displayed at the bottom of the screen during the broadcast. Participation in such activities could inspire pride in consumers (when she or he sees the name on television) or hope (because she or he is unsure whether her or his name will be mentioned). Since 1984, new cars in Germany must have an exhaust catalyst by law to protect nature. Some motorists voluntarily installed a catalytic converter before this date and were able to communicate this type of prosocial consumer behavior through a sticker attached to the car that stated, *Already with KAT.*

Does the discussion about promises to experience positive emotions make sense for marketers at all? We have argued that some ways to trigger prosocial consumer behaviors are not always appropriate. *First*, evoking emotions of compassion may be limited by the object. One might depict a sad-looking octopus to encourage people not to use products that cause microplastics. However, such an ad would contradict consumer expectations about what advertisements look like. *Second*, the influencing of consumers' thoughts through advertisements that contain a lot of arguments to induce numerous cognitive processes, as suggested by Latané and Darley (1968, 1969) or Schwartz (1968, 1973), might not receive enough attention to be read. Therefore, a *third* way, which is to promise positive emotions, could be sometimes an alternative approach of influencing prosocial behavior. For descriptive purposes only, Studies 1, 2, and 3 also included the condition in which a compassion appeal was provided; we have not found that appeals for compassion have systematically outperformed promises to experience love. Admittedly, when creating advertisements, it is quite easy to come up with ad versions that are associated with a high level of compassion because such appeals are image-based, meaning that it is easy to show sad faces of children, signs of torture, large amounts of plastic waste in the ocean, or animals in need (as they are used by the Peta organization).

Is this research relevant for societal welfare? Currently, the value of research is often measured by its relevance for society. We argue that the multitude of crises (e.g., refugees, wars, climate crisis, poverty in developing countries, plastic waste, and Covid-19) calls for more individual participation in addition to the measures taken by the state authorities to deal with these crises. Therefore, organizations and marketers need a larger repertoire of tools to create social marketing campaigns. We added knowledge on how advertisements can be created that lead to higher prosocial behavioral intentions in consumers by promising the experience of positive emotions. As far as we know, this technique has hardly been used in practice up to now.

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