

# Persuasive Language Strategies Utilised by the Student Representative Council in Fundraising for Programs

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## ABSTRACT

Student Representative Councils (SRC) have an important role to play in fundraising and supporting a variety of student programs and initiatives. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of these efforts can often live or die based on how well communication strategies are implemented. The attention of this study is relied on the persuasive language strategies used by SRC in their fundraising communications. Utilizing Aristotle's model for rhetoric that includes ethos, pathos, and logos the research seeks to determine how these tactics are integrated and ultimately effect fundraising success. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three student representatives, aged between 18 and 21 years old prior to data collection who all hold positions within high office elected through a campus wide council common themes and patterns were identified through cross-case coding, these data are presented in the study. The results suggest that SRCs favor often combining their communications using a mix of credibility (ethos), emotional appeal (pathos), and logical arguments(logos). Keeping your donors up-to-date, personally connecting with them and being more transparent were identified to help in increasing credibility and trust. Such personal emotional stories and images produced advocacy change where data driven evidence-based arguments did not, we also developed a logic model different logs for each department as well budgets which now explain our work in ways that will compel you to donate. One speaks to the literature by illustrating how strategic communication practices are relevant in educational fundraising. Suggesting tangible modifications for SRCs to enhance their persuasiveness, both influencing more effective fundraising results. The scope of future research might be widened by investigating a larger sample and involving multiple institutions as well, to enhance the generalizability. Within this context, the research evidences of importance that persuasive language plays in propelling donors to provide needed financial support towards student activities-an understanding likely beneficial for more successful fundraisers among other collegiate groups.

**Keywords:** Fundraising, Persuasive Language, Student Representative Council, Pathos, Logos, Qualitative Research

## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction of Study

Fundraising has long been the lifeblood of student-based activities at institutions around the world, helping to fund a wide range of programs and initiatives - both large and small. Student Representative Councils are often at the frontline of this work and must find ways of attracting potential donors willing to fund them with money. This fundraising method also relies on effective communication strategies with subtle language being used as a powerful tool in motivating behavior stars from donors. The importance of strategic communication in the context fundraising has recently been underscored: credibility, emotional appeal and logical argument among other tools have all served large roles per new research (Smith, 2019; Johnson & Lee, 2020).

In fundraising, persuasive language draws upon classical rhetorical principles proposed by Aristotle-ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional appeal) and logos (logical argument). While these strategies have been well-researched across contexts such as marketing, political campaigns and organisational communication, they are scarce in the field of student fundraising. According to Johnson and Lee (2020), credibility, along with

transparent, consistent communication serve as trust-building mechanisms in the process of developing long-term donor relationships. In the same vein, Thompson (2021) notes that clear data-driven arguments and extensive financial breakdowns may act as a safety net for donors who doubt whether the organisation is well-run or accountable.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Fundraising most of the times cannot be separated from student activities to support many programs that improve students' experiences on campuses. However, most SRCs have apparent problems with communicating their fundraising needs and getting the funds. The problem is magnified by the increasing competition for donor funds and pressure on SRCs to engage in strategic communication tactics to compete. In a 2019 Smith article, he wrote that "good communication is instrumental to high-yield fundraising." But many student organizations do not have the expertise nor understand how persuasive strategies can be developed. It is serious that there is an insurmountable distance between the money needed and our power to deliver a convincing message.

Studies have shown that language goes a long way in changing donor behavior and decisions. As Johnson and Lee (2020) articulate, fundraising communication invokes credibility, emotions appeal and logical arguments. There has, however been very little research into how SRCs actually employ these strategies in their fundraising efforts. Thompson (2021) discusses how general fundraising strategies have been generally behaviorally documented and yet the context of student-led campaigns could merit further investigations on operational grounds to perceive their applicability. Student organizations by student more custom-made feel, which either end up with suboptimal results or funded wider range of the type and number in their fundraising activities from support potential initiatives for students.

Finally, by investigating persuasive language strategies used in SRC fundraising communications, the researcher can also lay the groundwork for future research in closely linked fields. Insight into the mechanics of communication success in student initiatives can promote more nuanced approaches to supporting students through educational policies and practices. Efficiency in communication as convincing people will be a very important factor for student organizations as educational institutions progress and meet newer challenges. Hence, this research is well-justifiable as an exploration of how persuasive language can support the effectiveness of SRCs' fundraising activities.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research aims to analyze 'Persuasive Language Strategies Utilized by the Student Representative Council in Fundraising for Programs'. To achieve this purpose, these are the objectives:

1. To analyze the persuasive language strategies utilized by the student representative council during fundraising efforts.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of these persuasive language strategies in securing funds for various students programmes.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The study explores the persuasive language strategies used by the Student Representative Council (SRC) in their fundraising activities. The study will be able to inform fund raising practice by considering further how these forms of persuasion through ethos, pathos and logos can contribute positively towards enhancing the effectiveness of fundraising efforts. This will help SRC members and other student organisations to modify their communication strategies accordingly, resulting in a higher rate of success. This study also helps fill a gap in the strategic communication and especially fundraising academic literature within an educational context that administrators at colleges and universities can use to increase opportunities for donor relations support.

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## SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This paper provides a complementary study of the persuasive language appeals and tactics that are embedded in fundraising communications implemented by student representative council. The results relate to a small-scale study which used interviews with three student representatives aged 18-21, each of whom had senior roles within their councils. Interviews were transcribed and coded using thematic analysis to provide qualitative data identifying with the use of ethos, pathos, logos. Even with a small sample size, this research provides insight into the rhetorical strategies used by SRCs and their consequences for fundraising success from an insider's perspective-it relies on these voices to understand rhetoric in practice.

The protocols subset of the corpus is a light-hearted exploration into persuasive language strategies employed by student representative council in fundraising, as perceived from student representatives. Therefore, the results can be transferred to SRCs in an individualistic sense, but not a generalised manner that applies to student organisations as a whole. Moreover, the qualitative data drawn from interviews may not give as complete picture of nonverbal cues and overall attitudes. This study is largely qualitative, however, and so calls into question the generalisability of its conclusions to various institutions or types campaigns.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction to Literature Review

This chapter presents a detailed review of the literature relevant to the topic of study. It begins with an exploration of the three key concepts related to persuasive language strategies: ethos, pathos, and logos, and their application in fundraising communications. This is followed by an examination of the impact of these rhetorical strategies on donor behaviour and fundraising success, as well as an analysis of the factors influencing the effectiveness of these strategies in the context of student-led initiatives. The theoretical framework underpinning this study, Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory, will be discussed in depth. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of the key points and findings from the literature review, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters (Robinson, 2019).

### Credibility in Fundraising Communications

Credibility is one of the most important elements in any effort to persuade, especially fundraising. One needs to build credibility and trust with the listener, which will have a huge impact on donations. From recent studies it is clear to see that transparency and accountability are key factors of reputation. Brown (2019) accuses something as simple authentic and transparent fiscal use of the turning serious when pulling donors into background/notion can lead to better commitment from donors. mimicking a situation. Miller and Smith (2020) reported that donors were more likely to continue their intuitional loyalty if the organisation kept updating them on how they continued to make a positive difference as well. We must be transparent and communicate widely with the community to ensure donor trust in SRCs.

### Emotional Appeal in Fundraising Communications

Affective language strategies such as the appeal to emotions have demonstrated utility in shaping human behavior, including soliciting effective charity donations. Appeals that tell a personal story evoke emotion and help donors understand a bit more about the motivations of fellow contributors. Based on research of Davis (2020), it has been discovered that sharing stories with specific beneficiary experiences, helps to increase donation support, because benefactors are able to relate emotionally more with causes. Moreover, Wilson and Thompson (2019) mentions that visual stimulus such as images of beneficiary pictures/videos can activate the emotional component in fundraising appeals, rendering a more powerful appeal. This data led the researchers to conclude that SRCs may be missing opportunities if they do not incorporate emotional storytelling and visuals into their appeals in order to better connect with prospective donors, the motivations of fellow contributors. Based on research of Davis (2020), it has been discovered that sharing stories with specific beneficiary experiences, helps to increase donation support, because benefactors are able to relate emotionally more with causes. Moreover, Wilson and Thompson (2019) mentions that visual stimulus such as images of

beneficiary pictures/videos can activate the emotional component in fundraising appeals, rendering a more powerful appeal. This data led the researchers to conclude that SRCs may be missing opportunities if they do not incorporate emotional storytelling and visuals into their appeals in order to better connect with prospective donors.

### **Logical Appeal in Fundraising Communication**

A sound logical appeal uses factual evidence, clear logical reasoning (which may require some background knowledge or data), and examples to make a case for the credibility of an argument. Fundraising - providing easily verifiable cases for funding and its possibilities can significantly increase donor confidence. People donate more when they see well thought out plans and predictions on where their money is going. (Robinson, 2020). In addition, Johnson (2019) discovered that reinforcing statistical results and achievements in fundraising testimonies can build confidence with donors regarding the organisations being competent as well strong. These results suggest that SRCs have to provide budgets, case history snapshots and/or representative data in their communication with donors making a convincing rational argument.

### **Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory**

Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory, formulated in ancient Greece, remains a foundational framework for understanding persuasive communication. Rhetoric, according to Aristotle is the ability in any particular case to see the available mean of persuasion, where there are three- Ethos, Pathos and Logos. These tactics have been researched and practically applied across different domains like marketing, politics or organizational communication (Kennedy 2020; O'Keefe 2019).

#### **i. Ethos**

Ethos is the mode of persuasion which refers to an appeal based on the credibility, experience and trustworthiness of a speaker. Ethos in the context of fundraising is simply having credibility and trustworthiness as an SRC, This is possible by transparency, showing any positive results that have been done and being detailly transparent on how the collected funds will be spent. As per Brown (2021) in the research, if you want a donor to trust you then be transparent and communicate consistently. In a separate study, Miller (2020) found that in general organisations which give meticulous reports and updates about the deployment of funds tend to secure more support from donors. Ethos: SRCs can also use their accomplishments, testimonials from previous recipients and keep active with donors.

#### **ii. Pathos**

In the affective appeals of pathos, building on that personal element, storytelling and visuals have a tremendous effect in fundraising communications because they connect the donor with what you do as an organisation. Narratives on personal beneficiary experience shown by Davis (2020) to secure higher levels of donations, as donors relate more emotionally to the cause. Additionally, Wilson and Thompson (2019) found that the inclusion of photos and videos with beneficiaries can increase the persuasiveness in fundraising appeals. By providing us with good, old-fashioned pathos as to how the SRC has formerly donated and impacted someone's life, they appeal to our sense of stress for wanting things done quickly but also really caring more than just a little bit.

#### **iii. Logos**

Logos is the appeal that what you are presenting makes complete sense and so it should make an impression on your audience. It entails making logical conclusions or evidence to support claims in which they can believe in themselves without need of much coaxing. Here, fundraising is about making the case for why funds are necessary and how they will affect outcomes in measurable ways - backed up with evidence. Donors are more likely to give if they receive detailed plans and projections that show them how their money will be put into action (Robinson, 2020). Similarly, Johnson (2019) discovered that integrating statistical data and success metrics can help assuage donors concerns of your organisations capabilities. Logos should do far more than just appear on fundraising materials; they can deliver detailed dissection of funding requirements, quantify the impact with data collected from past donations, outline specific fundraising objectives along with expected results.

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## Critical Review of the Framework

The researcher chose Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory for this study, based in its long-standing and widespread use to understand persuasive communication. The framework that the researcher present and describe allows for a structured analysis of fundraising communications by SRCs. This theory best explains how the different elements of persuasion can effect donor behaviour, by categorising the rhetorical strategies into ethos, pathos and logos. It also encourages a more systematic examination of interview obtained qualitative data which can provide further detail about the tactics that individual SRCs use (Smith, 2021; O'Keefe, 2019). This attention to ethos-pathos-logos, the trivium of credibility-emotional appeal-logical argument is especially germane to this study because it fits with the complexity in fundraising as a communication practice. By observing the differences highlighted in this examination, unique implications are drawn as to how SRCs might better put forward their fundraising tactics for more triumphant and effective programs.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This research was conducted using qualitative method as a research design. As stated by Haradhan (2018), qualitative studies are considered to be inductive research wherein the researcher mostly analyse insights and meanings within a specific context. These are data collection and analysis methods that focus on semi-structured, purposive sampling, and open-ended interviews (Dudwick et al., 2006; Gopaldas, 2016). This method of research is used because it have a working model in nature which allows the investigator to develop high embedded details from real experiences (Creswell, 2018). Methodology: Qualitative design- link to both bodies of data due to using the interviewing method this research has a qualitative orientation. Qualitative DGP in the interview geared data gathering methodology was grounded theory, focus groups and case study. A moderated discussion via Google Meet with the researcher and interviewee semi-structured interviews. The interviewer has a list of questions and topics ready in advance (Creswell, 2018). This approach to interview increases flexibility and responsiveness while ensuring the interview stays focused. It also improves the literality and validity of the data.

### Research Setting, Sample and Sampling Technique

The study was positioned within Malaysian universities and specifically targeted the Student Representative Councils (SRC) that do fundraising camps. This setting comprised both public and private universities able to add diversity in institutional challenges and student engagement levels. The choice of this setting was made in order to tap the most usual way that funds are mobilised and secondly, by having a mix that can ensure the findings could be generalised across different incubators in Malaysia. These institutions are chosen due to the presence of active SRCs with good extra-curricular activity (EDA) involvement by students.

This was a purposive sampling by sub-methods agreed upon the study. The selection of participants was done on purpose to be SRC related and having experience in order for them to offer rich narratives about the language tactics used by fundraisers. A population of interest was determined to be the three identified student representatives ranging from 18-21 years and holding major positions within their councils. This specific population was chosen by the researchers for their student fundraising purposes as way to test a research question about whether persuasive language strategies worked or not. Given the heterogenous academic and institutional backgrounds of the sample, a broad range of SRC fundraising approaches as they relate to impact is likely. This was done so that the respondents could provide considerable and applicable data increasing the research results reliability and validity.

### Research Instrument

This section outlines the tools used to collect data for this study. Three primary instruments were utilised: semi-structured interviews, Google Meet for conducting interviews, and manual coding for data analysis.

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## **Semi-structured Interview**

According to Burgess (1984), Semi-structured Interviews are a discursive activity in which an interviewer employs both pre-determined open questions oriented towards the study research objectives and follow-up or prompting questions. A semi-structured interview guide composed of a set open-ended questions and topics to be covered during the course of conversation was developed for this study. This approach also presents the interviewer and interviewee with an opportunity to go into more depth on a particular topic, resulting in all items of research questions being completely covered. The semi-structured interview format is selected as it provides elaborate answers and can deliver a richer insight into the features of argumentative language implemented by the student representative councils are using in their efforts in fundraising for programs

## **Google Meet**

Google Meet was used to conduct the interviews as it can be accessed conveniently by all participants. Interviews were conducted with the collected data as well, under an approved consent to record each interview session according standards of ethics and informed consent. During the interviews-beginning, participants were given a brief description of what was being studied and why. This preparation is to ensure the interviewees are properly briefed and able to provide insightful information during their interviews. These recordings were subsequently analysed in detail to linger on the interviews audio documentations.

## **Manual Coding Work**

The data were coded manually by the researcher for this study. Coding is the process of systematically organising and tagging qualitative data to identify themes and relationships between them (Medelyan, 2015). For the aforementioned purpose, the researcher went through every interview transcription using manual coding and then provided codes and themes according to data. While there are automated coding tools, such as that provided by NVivo itself, the precision of manual coding makes it a better choice for this project. This approach results in a read and re-read process that forces the researcher to spend time with the data, making sure identified themes are consistent rather than just taking an off-the-cuff response given by the participant which is probably not even reflective of what other people said.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection is one of the most important steps to conduct a research which aims to collect information in order that, answers can be achieved for described research questions (Taherdoost, 2021). The researcher followed some steps to collect data in this research. This study was approved by the relevant authorities and ethical clearance from them. The process of interview was personally carried by the researcher after taking consent. The questions were created, peer reviewed and further refined in consultation with experts. The interviews took place with three different students from three universities on Google Meet as the platform. In each of these 6 phases, the researcher asked ten open-ended questions that offered the resources to obtain elaborate replies from interviewees based on the research goals. Study aim and procedures were explained to the recruited participants, who in turn were assured that their data would be kept confidential as a way of encouraging open-ended responses. After the interviews, data obtained from participants was transcribed for analysis.

## **Data Analysis Procedures**

For the data analysis, after the interview sessions were completed, the researcher manually transcribed the speaking audio recordings to text for data analysis. These transcriptions were analysed through thematic analysis by identifying, organising and classifying the data into themes and subthemes in answer to the research questions. The researcher did this through a process of reading the transcriptions to check that what was being said and how it related. These results were then explained in the context of answers from respondents to provide a full account of how student representative councils utilised persuasive language strategies when doing fundraising for programs. The data were then obtained and a codebook was prepared in order to systematically lay out the data ensuring that the analysis is comprehensive, targeted at obtaining

completely aligned results on specific concepts with regards to what actually led the researcher to adopt the study objectives. This manual coding method allowed a rich interpretation of the qualitative data focusing important categories.

### Reliability and Validity

Reliability is the study consistency or a measure test (Mcleod, 2019). On the other hand, Kelly (2021) seems to have developed the notion of validity - what matters in his view is that a test measures whatever it was intended to measure. To build credibility and trustworthiness of the findings in qualitative research, there are different strategies to establish reliability and validity. To ensure the robustness of this study, the researcher used a variety of methods. An audit trail expanded a documentation path was followed throughout the research from data collection to analysis and interpretation (Nowell et al., 2019). This allows for transparency so that others can follow along the research path and reproduce results. Rich accounts - or thick descriptions of the data, which describe what happens and why it happened (Geertz 2020) provide a holistic experience coupled with understanding from where these occurrences stem. Peer reviews were also conducted and other researchers rated the methodology as well as the findings to assure accuracy and impartiality. To make sure this remained the case, the researcher critically evaluated the research instrument and process which was conducted by asking experts in the field to review a draft version of the interview guide, meaning that all contents the researcher covered under this construct were represented within it. The questions according the feedback from experts, was then improved by researcher and finally prepared for pursuing research objectives more effectively. In passing, it is also mentioned that in this study the researchers used member checking which informs to share data and interpretations from a study with participants for accuracy (Birt et al 2019). Results and Discussion: The study demonstrated its capability to recover the viewpoint of informants correctly, thereby enhancing research validity. Triangulation consists of using several data sources or methods to test and validate the results (Carter, 2022). The multiple perspectives and sources of data bring validity to the study. Together, these measures collectively function to increase credibility in the research and hence support any assertions regarding findings, or generalisability of conclusions inferred from a trial.

## FINDINGS

### Research Question 1: What persuasive language strategies are utilised by the student representative council during fundraising efforts?

The Student Representative Council (SRC) employs various persuasive language strategies to enhance their fundraising efforts, based on Aristotle's rhetorical framework of ethos, pathos, and logos. These strategies are essential in convincing potential donors to contribute to their causes. Based on the interview data, three main types of persuasive language strategies were identified: credibility strategies (ethos), emotional appeal strategies (pathos), and logical appeal strategies (logos). These strategies were coded to reflect the different approaches used by the SRC members to persuade donors.

**Table 1:** The Persuasive Language Strategies Used by the Student Representative Council during Fundraising Efforts (Ethos)

Code	Persuasive Language Strategy	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3
PL1	Ethos	Reference 1	Reference 1	Reference 1
		We often highlight previous successful campaigns and provide detailed reports on how the funds were utilised.	By associating with well-known and respected entities, we leverage the credibility of these organisations to bolster our own.	We strive to maintain high ethical standards in all our dealings and communications.

		<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>
		We make sure to keep our communication transparent and honest to maintain our credibility.	We highlight any endorsements or partnerships we have with well-known organisations to further build our credibility.	We make an effort to be present at various campus events and actively engage with students and staff.

Ethos, also known as credibility strategies involve establishing the trustworthiness and expertise of the SRC members. As shown in table 1, respondent 1 emphasised the importance of demonstrating past successes and transparency in financial matters to build trust with potential donors. She mentioned, "We often highlight previous successful fundraising campaigns and provide detailed reports on how the funds were utilised. This approach reassures donors that their contributions will be used effectively and responsibly." By showcasing past achievements and maintaining transparency, the SRC builds a solid foundation of trust, which is crucial for convincing potential donors to contribute. Additionally, Respondent 1 stated, "We make sure to keep our communication transparent and honest to maintain our credibility." This reinforces the importance of transparency in all communications, ensuring that donors are well-informed and confident in the SRC's ability to manage funds responsibly. Following that, respondent 2 discussed the use of endorsements and partnerships with reputable organisations to enhance credibility. He stated, "By associating with well-known and respected entities, we leverage the credibility of these organisations to bolster our own. This strategy helps in gaining the trust of potential donors who may be more inclined to contribute when they see familiar and trusted names supporting the cause." Partnering with established organisations lends credibility to the SRC's initiatives and makes donors more comfortable with contributing. Furthermore, Respondent 2 added, "We highlight any endorsements or partnerships we have with well-known organisations to further build our credibility." This continuous reinforcement of reputable associations ensures that the SRC's credibility remains strong and persuasive. On the other hand, respondent 3 highlighted the role of personal integrity and ethical conduct in establishing credibility. She mentioned, "We strive to maintain high ethical standards in all our dealings and communications. This includes being honest about the challenges we face and not overpromising results. Such transparency and integrity help in building a solid reputation and trust among donors." Ethical conduct and honesty are fundamental in maintaining long-term trust and support from donors. She also noted, "We make an effort to be present at various campus events and actively engage with students and staff. This visibility helps in building a personal connection and trust with the community, which can translate into more successful fundraising efforts." By being visible and approachable, the SRC builds personal connections that enhance their credibility and foster trust.

**Table 2:** The Persuasive Language Strategies Used by the Student Representative Council during Fundraising Efforts (Pathos)

Code	Persuasive Language Strategy	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3
		<b>Reference 1</b>	<b>Reference 1</b>	<b>Reference 1</b>
<b>PL2</b>	<b>Pathos</b>	By sharing personal stories of individuals who have benefited from the programs funded by previous donations, we create an emotional connection with potential donors.	Visual content has a greater impact on emotions than text alone. We create short videos that showcase the impact of our initiatives.	Expressing genuine gratitude to donors, both publicly and privately, fosters a sense of belonging and appreciation.



		<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>
		We also use imagery and visuals that evoke emotions to make our appeals more compelling.	We also use social media platforms to share these visual stories and connect with a broader audience.	We hold annual events where donors can meet the beneficiaries and see firsthand how their donations are making a difference.

Pathos, which is the emotional appeal strategies focus on connecting with donors on an emotional level. As can be observed from table 2, respondent 1 shared that storytelling is a powerful tool they use to evoke emotions. "By sharing personal stories of individuals who have benefited from the programs funded by previous donations, we create an emotional connection with potential donors. These stories often highlight the struggles and successes of beneficiaries, making the cause more relatable and compelling," she explained. Storytelling personalises the fundraising efforts and allows donors to see the real-world impact of their contributions, which can be a strong motivator for giving. Additionally, she mentioned, "We also use imagery and visuals that evoke emotions to make our appeals more compelling." Visual elements such as photos and videos can significantly enhance the emotional appeal, making the cause more tangible and relatable to potential donors. In the same manners, respondent 2 emphasized the use of visual media, such as videos and images, to enhance emotional appeals. He noted, "Visual content has a greater impact on emotions than text alone. We create short videos that showcase the impact of our initiatives, featuring testimonials from beneficiaries and highlighting the positive changes brought about by the donations. These videos are shared on social media platforms to reach a wider audience and elicit emotional responses." Visual media can capture attention quickly and convey powerful messages that resonate emotionally with donors, making them more likely to contribute. He further stated, "We also use social media platforms to share these visual stories and connect with a broader audience." Leveraging social media for emotional storytelling broadens the reach and impact of the fundraising efforts, engaging more potential donors. As can be observed, respondent 3 further discussed the importance of gratitude and appreciation in emotional appeals. She stated, "Expressing genuine gratitude to donors, both publicly and privately, fosters a sense of belonging and appreciation. We send personalised thank-you notes and recognise donors' contributions on our social media pages. This strategy not only strengthens the emotional bond with existing donors but also encourages others to contribute." Acknowledging and appreciating donors' contributions helps to build a strong emotional connection and encourages continued support. She also mentioned, "We hold annual events where donors can meet the beneficiaries and see firsthand how their donations are making a difference. These events are emotionally powerful and help to strengthen the relationship between the donors and our organisation." By creating opportunities for donors to see the direct impact of their contributions, the SRC strengthens the emotional connection and loyalty of their supporters.

**Table 3:** The Persuasive Language Strategies Used by the Student Representative Council during Fundraising Efforts (Logos)

Code	Persuasive Language Strategy	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3
		<b>Reference 1</b>	<b>Reference 1</b>	<b>Reference 1</b>
<b>PL3</b>	<b>Logos</b>	We prepare comprehensive proposals that outline the need for funds, the planned use of	By presenting data on the success rates of our programs and the tangible benefits achieved through	We often provide incentives, such as recognition or small tokens of appreciation,

		the money, and the anticipated impact.	previous donations, we provide a solid foundation for our requests.	to encourage donations.
		<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>
		We also provide detailed reports on how the funds will be used and the expected outcomes to ensure donors understand the impact of their contributions.	We include statistical data and evidence in our proposals to support our arguments and show the potential impact of the funds.	We ensure that our communication is straightforward and free of jargon, making it easy for donors to understand the impact of their contributions.

Logos, the logical appeal strategies involve presenting clear and rational arguments to persuade donors. As shown in table 3, respondent 1 explained that providing detailed information about the fundraising goals, budget, and expected outcomes is crucial in logical appeals. She mentioned, "We prepare comprehensive proposals that outline the need for funds, the planned use of the money, and the anticipated impact. This transparency and attention to detail help in convincing donors of the feasibility and importance of the projects." Detailed and transparent information allows donors to understand exactly how their contributions will be used and the impact they will have, making them more likely to support the cause. Additionally, she noted, "We also provide detailed reports on how the funds will be used and the expected outcomes to ensure donors understand the impact of their contributions." Providing thorough and transparent information builds trust and reassures donors of the effective use of their funds. Following that, respondent 2 highlighted the use of statistical data and evidence to support their appeals. "By presenting data on the success rates of our programs and the tangible benefits achieved through previous donations, we provide a solid foundation for our requests. This factual and evidence-based approach appeals to donors' rationality and helps in making informed decisions," he said. Using data and evidence to support fundraising appeals provides a rational basis for donors to decide to contribute, as they can see the proven success and impact of the SRC's initiatives. He also mentioned, "We include statistical data and evidence in our proposals to support our arguments and show the potential impact of the funds." Presenting empirical evidence and success metrics helps to substantiate the fundraising appeals and convinces donors of the initiatives' effectiveness. On the other hand, respondent 3 mentioned the strategy of offering incentives and demonstrating cost-effectiveness. She stated, "We often provide incentives, such as recognition or small tokens of appreciation, to encourage donations. Additionally, we highlight the cost-effectiveness of our initiatives by comparing the funds required with the potential benefits, showing donors that their contributions will yield significant returns." Offering incentives and demonstrating the efficiency and effectiveness of fundraising initiatives can appeal to donors' desire to see their money used wisely and to receive recognition for their support. She further added, "We ensure that our communication is straightforward and free of jargon, making it easy for donors to understand the impact of their contributions. This clarity helps to build trust and ensures that donors feel confident in their decision to support our initiatives." Clear and concise communication ensures that donors fully understand the impact and importance of their contributions.

In conclusion, the Students Representative Council employs a diverse range of persuasive language strategies to enhance their fundraising efforts. These strategies, grounded in the rhetorical principles of ethos, pathos, and logos, are effectively used to build credibility, evoke emotions, and present logical arguments to potential donors. By demonstrating past successes, telling compelling stories, and providing detailed information, the SRC successfully convinces donors to contribute to their causes. The variety of examples from the respondents highlights the effectiveness and importance of these strategies in different contexts and scenarios.

**Research Question 2: How effective are these persuasive language strategies in securing funds for various student programs?**

The Student Representative Council (SRC) employs various persuasive language strategies to enhance their fundraising efforts, based on Aristotle's rhetorical framework of ethos, pathos, and logos. These strategies are essential in convincing potential donors to contribute to their causes. Based on the interview data, three main types of persuasive language strategies were identified: credibility strategies (ethos), emotional appeal strategies (pathos), and logical appeal strategies (logos). These strategies were coded to reflect the different approaches used by the SRC members to persuade donors.

The effectiveness of the persuasive language strategies used by the Student Representative Council (SRC) can be assessed through their impact on securing funds for student programmes. These strategies, grounded in ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional appeal), and logos (logical appeal), significantly influence donor behaviour. This section evaluates the impact of these strategies based on interview responses and provides a detailed analysis of their effectiveness.

**Table 4:** The Effectiveness of These Persuasive Language Strategies in Securing Funds for Various Student Programmes

Code	Persuasive Language Strategy	Effectiveness mentioned by Respondent 1	Effectiveness mentioned by Respondent 2	Effectiveness mentioned by Respondent 3
EL1	Ethos (Build Credibility)	Reference 1 Regular updates and transparent communication reassured donors. We made sure they were always in the loop about how their funds were being used.	Reference 1 Personal interactions were another crucial element. Whenever possible, we arranged face-to-face meetings with potential and existing donors, which helped build a personal connection and trust.	Reference 1 Maintaining accountability within the team was equally important. We had expectations for each council member and a system of checks and balances to ensure tasks were completed on time and to a high standard, which donors appreciated.
		Reference 2 Transparency and accountability led to sustained support. Donors felt more comfortable and confident in contributing when they saw detailed reports and clear communication from our end.	Reference 2 Publicly acknowledging and thanking our donors made them feel appreciated and valued. We held appreciation events and made sure to highlight their contributions in our newsletters and social media.	Reference 2 Personal engagement and transparency built long-term trust. We made a point to be transparent about our processes and outcomes, which made donors feel more secure in their contributions.
EL2	Pathos (Create Emotional Connection)	Reference 1 Emotional stories resonated deeply with donors. Sharing personal success stories of students who benefited from our programs created a strong emotional connection.	Reference 1 Personal connections through stories and visuals enhanced donor engagement. Visual elements like photos and videos of students expressing their gratitude had a significant impact.	Reference 1 Highlighting the importance of education and community service evoked feelings of empathy and compassion among donors, making them more inclined to support our causes.

		<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>	<b>Reference 2</b>
		Personal stories and visual content created an emotional bond with donors.	Stories of personal journeys and community impact resonated with donors. Narratives that showed real-life improvements were highly persuasive.	Heartfelt videos and written testimonials emphasized personal journeys and transformations. These testimonials made our fundraising efforts more compelling and authentic.
<b>EL3</b>	<b>Logos (Establish Logical Justification)</b>	<b>Reference 1</b>	<b>Reference 1</b>	
		Logical arguments provided a solid rationale for support.	Providing transparent and detailed budgets showed exactly where their money was going, enhancing trust and understanding among donors.	
		<b>Reference 2</b>		
		Data-driven presentations reassured donors about fund allocation and impact.		

Credibility strategies aim to build trust and reliability. From table 4, we can observe that respondent 1 emphasised that regular updates and transparent communication were crucial in reassuring donors. She stated, "Regular updates and transparent communication reassured donors. We made sure they were always in the loop about how their funds were being used." This approach ensures donors are well-informed about the progress and impact of their contributions, fostering a sense of trust and reliability. Transparency is vital in maintaining donor trust, as it demonstrates that the organization is accountable and responsible with the funds received (Miller, 2019). Another example from Respondent 1 highlighted the effectiveness of detailed reports and clear communication. She mentioned, "Transparency and accountability led to sustained support. Donors felt more comfortable and confident in contributing when they saw detailed reports and clear communication from our end." This aligns with research that shows how clear and consistent communication can enhance donor confidence and encourage repeated contributions (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). Respondent 2 discussed the importance of personal interactions in building credibility. He mentioned, "Personal interactions were another crucial element. Whenever possible, we arranged face-to-face meetings with potential and existing donors, which helped build a personal connection and trust". Establishing personal connections helps build trust and makes donors feel more involved in the process. This personal touch can significantly enhance the perceived credibility of the fundraising efforts (Bennett & Barkensjo, 2005). She also emphasized the value of public acknowledgment and appreciation, saying, "Publicly acknowledging and thanking our donors made them feel appreciated and valued. We held appreciation events and made sure to highlight their contributions in our newsletters and social media." Public recognition not only validates donors' contributions but also reinforces the credibility of the organization by showing a transparent and appreciative approach (Wilson, 2022). Respondent 3 highlighted the role of accountability and ethical conduct. She explained, "Maintaining accountability within our team was equally important. We had clear expectations for each council member and a system of checks and balances to ensure tasks were completed on time and to a high standard, which donors appreciated." Accountability and high standards are fundamental in maintaining long-term trust and support from donors. Clear internal processes and standards of operation contribute significantly to the organization's overall credibility (Johnson, 2021). She also discussed the impact of detailed budgeting, stating, "Providing transparent and detailed budgets showed exactly where their money would go, which was crucial for gaining their trust." Detailed financial reporting helps in building trust by demonstrating that the organization is responsible and meticulous in managing donations (Anderson, 2023). Credibility strategies, therefore,

effectively build trust and reliability among donors, enhancing their willingness to contribute. Research supports that transparency and accountability are crucial in fostering sustained support from donors (Bennett & Barkensjo, 2005; Sargeant & Lee, 2004).

Logical appeal strategies involve presenting clear and rational arguments. Respondent 1 explained that providing detailed information about the fundraising goals, budget, and expected outcomes is crucial. She mentioned, "Logical arguments provided a solid rationale for support. Presenting detailed data and statistics about the needs and potential impact helped convince donors." Providing thorough and transparent information builds trust and reassures donors of the effective use of their funds (Taylor, 2021). She also discussed the importance of presenting clear, data-driven justifications for funding needs, stating, "Presenting clear, data-driven justifications for our funding needs." This method of using data to support fundraising efforts helps in establishing a strong logical foundation for donations, making it easier for donors to see the practical benefits of their contributions (Wilson, 2022). Respondent 2 highlighted the use of statistical data and evidence to support their appeals. She stated, "Data-driven presentations reassured donors about fund utilization. Clear and precise data showed donors exactly how their contributions would be used." Using data and evidence to support fundraising appeals provides a rational basis for donors to decide to contribute (Hibbert & Horne, 1996). She also noted the effectiveness of visual representation of data, explaining, "Visual representation of data helped donors understand the impact. Infographics and charts made complex data more accessible and persuasive." Visual tools can simplify complex data, making it more digestible and convincing for potential donors (Anderson, 2023). Respondent 3 mentioned the strategy of offering incentives and demonstrating cost-effectiveness. She stated, "Providing transparent and detailed budgets showed exactly where their money would go, which was crucial for gaining their trust." Offering incentives and demonstrating the efficiency and effectiveness of fundraising initiatives can appeal to donors' desire to see their money used wisely and to receive recognition for their support (Garcia, 2023). She also highlighted the importance of needs assessments, stating, "Needs assessments identified and prioritized the most critical areas for support. This strategic approach showed donors that their contributions would address the most pressing needs effectively." This method ensures that donations are directed towards the most impactful projects, providing a logical rationale for support (Smith, 2020). Logical appeal strategies, therefore, effectively provide clear and rational justifications for donations, enhancing donor confidence and trust. Research has indicated that data-driven and transparent communication significantly enhances donor trust and support (Hibbert & Horne, 1996; Sargeant & Shang, 2010).

In conclusion, the Students Representative Council employs a diverse range of persuasive language strategies to enhance their fundraising efforts. These strategies, grounded in the rhetorical principles of ethos, pathos, and logos, are effectively used to build credibility, evoke emotions, and present logical arguments to potential donors. By demonstrating past successes, telling compelling stories, and providing detailed information, the SRC successfully convinces donors to contribute to their causes. The variety of examples from the respondents highlights the effectiveness and importance of these strategies in different contexts and scenarios.

## CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the effectiveness of persuasive language strategies employed by the Student Representative Council (SRC) in fundraising efforts. The findings have several significant implications for individuals, communities, organisations, institutions, cultures, and societies.

For people out there, especially students this study shows the power of persuasive communication. When students have an understanding of ethos, pathos and logos they will be able to utilise these means in different communication situations that range from academic presentation to professional interactions. This is consistent with Smith and Clark's (2019) conclusion that rhetorical ability enhances personal growth, career success.

The findings also provide takeaways for communities and organizations, particularly schools attempting to raise funds. This campaign with the SRC demonstrates how strategic communication can help to secure finances and future student bodies should use this as a model. By adopting the tactics below, one will be rolling in larger donations and encouraging a broader selection of student programmes at the health centre that

need help. This is backed by research done by Johnson et al in 2019. This paper speaks to the findings in Nabi et al. (2020) on the importance of strategic communication for advancing fundraising by organization

The results of this research could help educational institutions to include such trainings in their curriculum at an early stage. In this way, they help students to learn skills that not only work if you want to raise a great deal of money in very short order but are likely quite useful during their entire academic and professional careers. Further, a review by Lee and Kim (2020) certified that embedding communication skills training in educational programmes can enhance students' academic success and employability.

In cultural terms, the study highlights an advisory that we all should attempt to understand and utilise our own homeland linguistic decorum. This also illustrates the importance of cultural competence as a style in which to communicate the SRCs messages, how else will we reach those from different backgrounds? In a multicultural setting, this becomes especially critical as open communication has the latent power to overcome cultural rifts and enables further comprehension which leads to synergy. As noted by Alhouti et al. In fact, as Venugopal et al. (2021) write "it is the key to creating safe and effective communication strategies in diverse landscapes".

The study has implications for the larger conversation surrounding how persuasive communication can influence societal change. The study also provides directions for social campaigns and public policy initiatives in that it demonstrates the power of ethos-pathos- logos to influence behavior.

Brown et al. (2020) emphasise that advocacy impact can be enhanced by crafting more powerful messages which resonate with the public.

The conclusion offers important implications of the results within fundraising and persuasion language strategies. These implications range from improving personal communication to informing organisational strategies and helping society understand what it means to communicate well. These insights can be used to help individuals and organisations better communicate their story, which in turn will increase the chances of being successful at accomplishing targeted goals.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Future researchers are recommended to be longitudinal and follow the language of Student Representative Councils (SRC) in the process of fundraising effort over time. This work will help us understand over a lifespan how these persuasive language techniques might emerge and have their long-term effects. Researchers can also elucidate patterns and changes in these types of persuasive language that connects most with student donors as trends over time.

Indeed, for future research in this vein to develop, scholars could investigate strategies of persuasive language comparatively across institutions or cultural differences. This includes the local misfire that comes from cultural variation and institutional practice. For example, Smith and Jones (2021) showed that persuasive messages do not have the same reception in all cultural contexts - one size certainly does not fit all.

Furthermore, taking the digital tools and platforms into consideration with regard to the analysis of persuasive strategies can enable a more comprehensive view on contemporary fundraising methods. Future studies could examine in greater detail how well social media campaigns, email marketing and other digital communication tools help to increase the overall effectiveness of SRC fundraising. This can be substantiated through more recent work by Brown et al. (2020) while which I covered more extensively in my Exploding Head series on the emergent role of digital communication as a front line element in organizational strategies.

In addition, future studies might explore the underlying psychological and emotional mechanism of persuasive communication. Creating messages around ethos, pathos and logos catered specifically for different pockets of the student population - drastically increasing their outreach potential. For example, the research conducted by Lee et al. (2019) explored with the engagement of young audiences and older students found emotional appeals (pathos) to be generally more effective and ethical reaching as it impacts those who have ingrained moral obligation or sense of fairness.

There should be future research on exploring the ethical concern of persuasion tactics as well. The key to ensure that cannot be excluded are operated means any other things would jeopardise this trust and integrity. Turner and Richards (2021) on the other hand, strongly supported this view because they too stressed of ethics in persuasive advertising.

In addressing these spaces, future research may be able to apply findings and guarantee building on a grounded theory of persuasive communication strategies in fundraising. The learnings from the SRC fundraising will not only increase effectiveness of bringing money in by students but also aid education decision makers and platforms being used both within educational environments as well as communication efforts on a whole.

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