

ABSTRACT

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Informal Giving in Turkish Philanthropy

Submitted by: David Campbell
 Organisation: Binghamton University, College of Community and Public Affairs, United States
 Author(s): Ali Çarkoğlu, David Campbell, Selim Erdem Aytaç
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Abstract:

Country-based studies of philanthropic practices emphasize formal giving, that is giving by citizens to civil society organizations or other non-governmental institutions. This approach reflects a focus in western and developed nations on the relationship between philanthropy and civil society institutions, as primary agents of social good provision. Yet this focus de-emphasizes informal philanthropy, giving to friends, neighbors and others in need and the role this kind of giving plays in civic life, particularly in countries with less well-developed civil society institutions. Researchers have begun to explore differences in the philanthropic practices in developed countries, compared to developing and poor countries, of which informal giving is one element (Einholf, 2016). Recent studies of philanthropy in developing countries, such as Mexico, Sri Lanka and South Africa, (Butcher Garcia-Colin & Santiago, 2016; Everatt, Habib & Maharaj, et al., 2005; Osella, Stirrat, & Widger, 2015; Osili, Ackerman, Bergdoll, et al., 2016) have noted the role of informal giving; however, researchers have devoted little systematic attention to informal giving as a phenomenon. To understand the development of philanthropic practices more fully, requires deeper investigation into informal giving, particularly its role as an expression of philanthropy outside of the developed world. This paper examines informal giving in one country, Turkey and considers the following questions:

To what extent do Turks engage in informal giving?

How do rates of informal giving compare to rates of formal giving?

What accounts for informal giving in Turkey? In particular, what role does religion

play?

To address these questions, we review the results of a survey of a representative sample of 2,495 Turkish citizens, taken in late 2015. The survey was conducted face to face at interviewees homes. Interviews covered a range of topics including civic engagement, attitudes towards civic institutions and giving, as well as giving practices.

The results show that informal giving is nearly three times as high as formal giving among survey respondents. The analysis will explore the motivations for informal giving, including the relationship between informal giving and several other key variables, including religiosity, individual and institutional trust and location (urban, suburban, rural). In this way, the paper contributes both to country-specific

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