



Exploring the role of charitable ethnocentrism and donation motives in international giving: Empirical evidence from Germany

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Previous research shows that people tend to donate less to international causes compared to domestic ones. However, this bias in donation behavior is unfavorable, as international donations may have a more positive effect since the beneficiaries can be part of a more vulnerable group compared to domestic beneficiaries.

This bias can partly be explained by the notion of ethnocentrism, which means that individuals, to varying extents, evaluate other cultures based on their own culture and perceive that one's own culture is superior. The authors of the study posit that a better understanding of this phenomenon in relation to donation motives could mitigate the public's tendency to donate less to international causes.

Using the definition of charitable ethnocentrism, the study shows that ethnocentric donors are in general less willing to donate to international causes. Other-focused donation motives such as trust, altruism, and social motives have positive effects on international giving intention. However, international giving could also stem from egoistic motives when the ethnocentric donor considers the donation as strengthening the ingroup's (the donors') social status as a superior group compared to the outgroup (the beneficiaries).

[#Ethnocentrism](#) [#DonationMotives](#) [#InternationalGiving](#) [#Mitigation](#)

Background & Context



- Even though it might not be the case every time and everywhere, **in general, the public tends to donate more extensively to domestic causes than to international ones.** This contradicts some arguments regarding the effectiveness of donations, since an international donation directed to a place where the standard of living is lower often has a greater effect than a domestic donation.
- **Donation motives can broadly be divided into self-oriented and other-oriented motives.** Other-oriented motives such as trust, altruism, and social motives have been shown to have a stronger correlation with giving internationally than self-focused motives.
- Charitable ethnocentrism is an individual's preference to support charitable causes that serve beneficiaries within their own nation or national group. **Ethnocentrism leads some individuals to see international beneficiaries as part of an “out-group.”**
- The authors want a better understanding of how charitable ethnocentrism and donation motives interact with each other, and how charitable ethnocentrism functions as a mitigator of the strength of donation motives when looking at the intention to give to international causes.

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Take aways & Learnings



- To test different hypotheses regarding the effect of charitable ethnocentrism on donation motives, **the authors conducted a survey study in Germany with 323 participants**. The survey questions considered hunger in developing countries and the intention to donate in connection with different donation motives and charitable ethnocentrism.
- **The study found that ethnocentric donors are less likely to give to international causes.** Self- and other-oriented motives are also important when explaining international giving intention.
- **Charitable ethnocentrism has an enhancing effect on egoism as a motive for international giving.** This could stem from the self-centered donor using helping behaviour to communicate positive information about themselves, with charitable ethnocentrism reinforcing this behaviour because donations to an outer group give a feeling of strengthening the superiority of the donor's ingroup in comparison to the outer group.
- **Charitable ethnocentrism also has a moderating effect on tax-saving as a motive for international donation.** For donors with low ethnocentrism, the fiscal benefits of a tax deduction might outweigh the tendency to reject the outgroup beneficiaries. For highly ethnocentric donors, the psychological costs of donating to the inferior outgroup increase disproportionately, so a possible tax deduction won't have as strong effect among them.

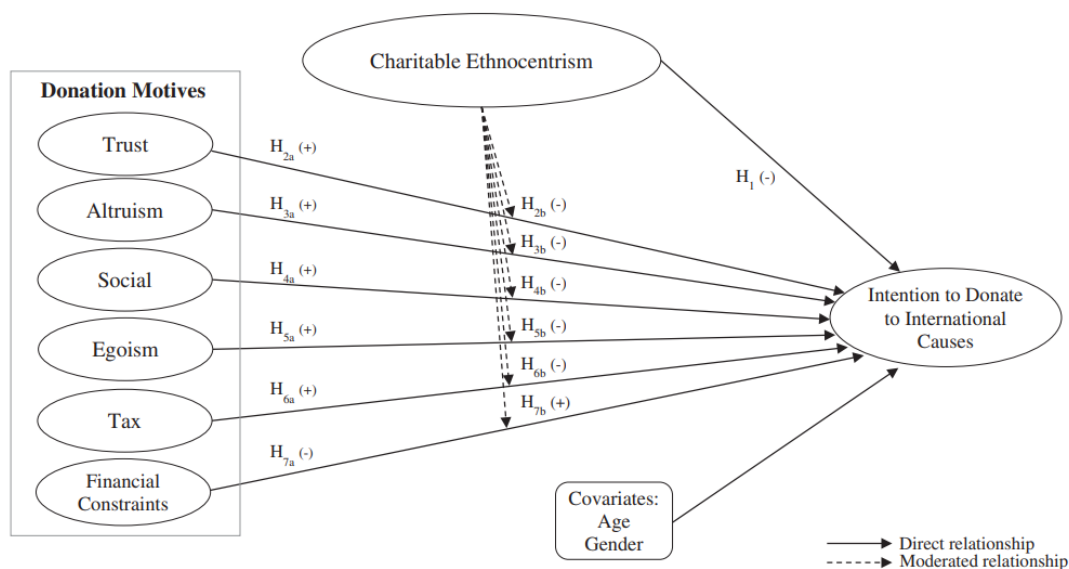


FIGURE 1 Proposed model

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