

# WHY DO PEOPLE DONATE?

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Recently donation has become a significant phenomenon of consumer culture. It is thus encouraged to form a communal consumer culture to be shared and respected. Previous research have identified five motives of donations and include altruism (a personal wish to increase another's welfare, instead of one's own external rewards), negative state relief (a personal need or desire to relieve personal distress elicited by the suffering of others, personal mood management), social exchange (the materials or psychological rewards donations may bring to the donors), tax incentives, and financial ability (Green & Webb, 1997).

This study aims to identify why people donate using a theory of competitive altruism proposed by evolutionary psychologists, who consider human's selfless behaviors as competitive altruism. Competitive altruism focuses on general altruism (Gintis, Smith & Bowles 2001) and accounts for altruistic behaviors that cannot be explained by altruistic motivations. According to this competitive altruism theory, the more advantages people expect from the altruistic behaviors, the more encouraged they are (Gintis, Smith and Bowles 2001). It indicates that altruistic motivations are not determined by individual personality. That is, when people are able to observe and compare the results of their altruistic behaviors, they are dedicated themselves to the behaviors as they care about others, which is a 'costly signal' to anticipate a sort of reward. The authors examined this possibility in 3 experiments.

Experiment 1 tests whether two messages (campaigns with and without social norms of donation) produce differential effect in producing higher intention to donation. Since the norms are considered awareness, attitude, and behavior that the member group expects its members to have (Paluck and Ball, 2010), the campaign with social norm is expected to be accepted by the member group and individuals exposed to this message may have higher levels of intention to donate. An ANOVA test involving 65 participants (31 males) shows a significant main of the manipulation ( $F=40.500$ ,  $p=.000$ ; partial et squared  $=.339$ ), such that people who were exposed to a manipulation condition (*Donation is the start of happy sharing. Your close friend already participated*) have higher levels of intention to donate ( $M=3.955$ ,  $S.D. =.894$ ) than those who were exposed to a control condition ( $M = 2.711$ ,  $S.D. = .666$ ; *Donation is the start of happy sharing, Please participate now*).

Study 2 and Study 3 seeks boundary conditions whether the results found in Study 1 could be confirmed under different contexts. In Study 2, we tested whether the ad campaign containing social norms of donation still produce enhanced levels of intention to donate when the donation is made publicly or privately. An ANOVA involving 146 participants (76 males) show a significant two-way interaction effect ( $F=8.389$ ,  $p=.004$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .056$ ). The results show that people who were exposed to a manipulation condition and the donation is made publicly have higher levels of intention to donate ( $M=4.684$ ,  $S.D. = .244$ ) than those who were exposed to the same manipulation condition and made the donation privately ( $M = 4.111$ ,  $S.D. = .287$ ) than those who were exposed to a control condition and made the donation publicly ( $M = 3.000$ ,  $S. D. = .478$ ) or privately ( $M = 2.787$ ,  $S.D. = .445$ ).

Study 3 explores whether the level of psychological power people possess have a moderating role. Social psychology shows that psychological power is an essential and basic influence in a social relation (Kemper, 1991). Psychological power is considered an individual's attitude towards surroundings and encourages him/her to see their power exercised on others. When an individual has high levels of psychological power, he/she tends to have a positive attitude and feelings, and pay attention to a social reward. However, when an individual has low levels of power, he/she becomes cautious to behave, have a negative attitude and feelings and their behaviors are affected by other's intention, attitude and behaviors (Keltner, Gruenfeld & Anderson, 2003; Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003). We expect that when people have high (low) levels of power and are exposed to a message with (without) social norms will have higher (lower) levels of intention to donate. However, the moderating effect of psychological power level was not significant.

Overall, it is worthy of approaching altruism by supporting competitive altruism with a different perspective from the fact that the pure altruism increases the intention to donate.

**Key word : Donation Advertising, Competitive Altruism, Social Norm, Psychological power**

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