

**Altruism, Reciprocity, Egalitarianism, and Charitable Giving:  
A Comparative Study of the US and Japan**

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**Abstract**

This study investigates how social preferences, including altruism, reciprocity, and egalitarianism, explain the variation in giving behaviors during 2010, by using the US and Japanese survey data. Firstly, we find different important determinants of overall charitable giving between the two countries. In the US, altruism accounts for a large portion in explaining the variation in donations, while reciprocity accounts for not a large but stable portion in explaining the variation in the Japanese donations. The second interesting country difference is that egalitarianism is a positive determinant of disaster-related giving in Japan, while it exhibit no significant impact on that kind of giving in the US. Egalitarianism rather decreases the likelihood that US citizens make religious or non-disaster-related donation. Our findings suggest that social preferences are associated with giving behaviors to different degrees between countries.

**Keywords:** *altruism, reciprocity, egalitarianism, charitable giving*

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