

**Altruism or Exchange?**  
**An Experimental Evidence on the Motives behind Private Transfer in Sri Lanka<sup>\*</sup>**

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**Abstract**

This study develops a new approach to the classical question whether private transfer is motivated by altruism or exchange. By combining artefactual field experiment and standard household survey data, we can directly measure the degree of altruism and trust (i.e., exchange) and analyze their impact on the co-movement of consumption. We find that higher altruism toward lower income partners and their income difference reduce the difference in consumption, which supports the altruism hypothesis of a motive of private transfers.

**Keywords:** Private transfer, altruism, exchange, artefactual field experiment, dyadic data

**JEL Classification:** O15, D64, C93

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