# The effects of group memberships of victims and perpetrators in humanly caused disasters on charitable donations to victims

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Abstract

The effects of group memberships of disaster victims and perpetrators on charitable donations were measured. In Study 1 (N = 92), victim group membership was experimentally varied to demonstrate an ingroup bias. In Study 2 (N = 84), a similar bias was demonstrated by varying perpetrator group membership. In Study 3 (N = 182), both victim and perpetrator group memberships were assessed. Perpetrator group membership interacted with victim group membership. Moreover, donations were highest when both victims and perpetrators shared a group membership. These effects were mediated by empathy with the victims, and perceived responsibility of the donor to intervene and aid the victim. Findings show that a salient perpetrator group can be harnessed to encourage helping of disaster victims.

*Keywords:* donations, charitable giving, perpetrator group membership, human caused disasters

From 2000–2009, there were an estimated 1.1 million deaths due to humanitarian disasters, while 2.5 billion were in need of immediate life-saving assistance (World Disasters Report, 2010). The victims of these tragedies depend upon donations for aid; therefore, understanding the psychological processes involved in giving behavior is vital. Previous studies have demonstrated that giving is not necessarily a rational process. For instance, donors give more when asked to focus on a single identifiable victim (Kogut & Ritov, 2005).

Much of the literature on charitable giving has emphasized interpersonal contexts (for a review, see Zagefka & James, 2015), but perhaps more importantly, there has been relatively little work that has considered the role of both perpetrators and victims. Researchers have instead focused on the influence of the victim on prosociality. The present contribution addresses this important gap by highlighting the role that a salient perpetrator can play; thus, a novel contribution is made by focusing on the effect of perpetrator group memberships in humanly caused problems (Gray & Wegner, 2012). It is especially important to address this in an applied context given the scale of humanitarian aid today, and one cannot assume that work in other domains, e.g. bystander intervention or volunteering, would apply to charitable donations. We also examine the underlying processes which might explain victim and perpetrator group membership effects on donations. Moreover, for the first time to our knowledge, we examine how both a salient perpetrator group and a salient victim group can interact to increase charitable giving.

**Social identity and the preference for ingroup helping**

This paper adopts a social identity approach as a starting position. Social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971) may serve to explain intergroup helping behavior. Fundamental to the SIT approach is the importance of group memberships to the individual. Social groups contribute to an individual’s sense of identity and self-worth, and often prescribe social norms (Abrams, Rutland, & Cameron, 2003; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002; Hogg & Reid, 2006). Dovidio et al. (1997) emphasize the concept of ‘we-ness’ as a sense of connectedness with one’s own group that encourages acts of ingroup favoritism and helping. Theoretical approaches based on SIT suggest that individuals may donate more to help the ingroup, thereby bolstering their own self-worth and sense of group belonging and following prescriptive norms. In sum, there is a strong theoretical argument that people will prefer to help ingroup over outgroup members. Some evidence of ingroup favouritism in an intergroup context exists (Levine, Cassidy, Brazier, & Reicher, 2002; Levine, Prosser, & Evans, 2004; Levine and Thompson, 2004), although not all studies have found a consistent bias (Saucier, Miller & Doucet, 2005). Moreover, outgroup victims can be derogated in an intergroup context following a natural disaster (Cuddy, Rock, & Norton, 2007). Group membership has also been shown to impact on people’s strategic considerations on whether to help. For example, the drive to maintain a sense of positive distinctiveness in one’s national group can facilitate outgroup helping (van Leeuwen, 2007); while re-categorization of the outgroup to a common ingroup can result in increased helping behavior in an interpersonal context (Dovidio et al., 1997).

In the present contribution we adopt the position that people are motivated to help the ingroup. We do not go so far as to say that participants will never feel empathy for outgroup members, or that the ingroup helping effect is always present. However, it seems that the helping of outgroup members can be more typically related to strategic motives, e.g. wanting one’s ingroup to appear egalitarian when the outgroup is a minority ethnic group (van Leeuwen & Täuber (2010). Outgroup helping can also result from a desire to maintain existing power relations and hierarchy between groups (Nadler, 2002). Therefore, although we acknowledge that there are alternative perspectives where one might genuinely feel empathic concern for an outgroup victim, we adopt the position that has the most empirical and theoretical support; specifically, that outgroup helping is more complex and requires additional motivations, at least compared to the more straightforward task of helping a fellow ingroup member (Stürmer, Snyder, Kropp et al. 2006; Stürmer, Snyder & Omoto, 2005; van Leeuwen & Täuber, 2010). Consideration of group memberships is especially important in charitable giving due to the large sums involved. For example, ingroup bias may explain why countries give relatively little to foreign aid. In the United States, a country that donated over $300 billion in 2012, only 6% went to international affairs, despite the pressing need for donations overseas (Giving USA, 2013).

**The role of empathic concern in donation behaviour**

An important underlying mechanism for understanding how group memberships can influence prosociality is empathy, which we define here as having feelings of empathic concern, sympathy, or distress for the victims. Evolutionary theories have postulated empathy as a proximate biological mechanism of helping (de Waal, 2008). Empathy may explain why some individuals are more likely to volunteer help (Davis et al., 1999), as well as why women donate higher median amounts (Wit & Bekkers, 2012). Although some researchers have offered alternative explanations, such as the level of perceived self-other overlap (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997), empathy has been positioned as a key mechanism for helping behavior in paradigms that have measured feelings of concern and distress towards victims, and it is this same operationalization of empathy that we utilize in our own work (Batson et al., 1989; Batson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley, & Birch, 1981; Toi & Batson, 1982). More recent work has clearly situated empathy as acutely relevant in driving help for ingroup members (Stürmer, Snyder, & Omoto, 2005); whereas outgroup members are frequently aided because of other strategic motives (cf. Leeuwen & Täuber, 2010). Empathy is considered central to understanding why we help ingroup members (Stürmer, Snyder, Kropp, & Siem, 2006), to the extent that researchers have posited a lack of empathy as an ‘intergroup failure’ (Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011); suggesting that lack of empathy is the reason we often fail to help outgroup members. Even when empathy has been criticised for being overly explanatory, perceived ‘one-ness’ with the victim, that is the degree of perceived self-other overlap between the participant and the helping target, has been posited as an important predictor of prosociality (Neuberg, Cialdini, Brown, et al. 1997). This would suggest that being psychologically ‘close’ to the person in need is important.

It is worth noting that despite the large body of aforementioned research, more recent work by Erlandsson, Björklund and Bäckström (2015) found the ingroup helping effect to be mediated by responsibility rather than due to feelings of empathic concern. According to a social identity approach, one might expect increased feelings of empathy, concern, and sympathy when one thinks of a fellow ingroup member in need. This is a reasonable assumption if, according to SIT, the self is intertwined with the salient ingroup category; or to put another way, if an individual’s sense of self not only consists of a personal identity but also of (in)group identities. Our position is also in keeping with more recent work on extreme forms of prosociality linked with ‘identity fusion’ (Swann & Buhrmester, 2015). Swann and Burhmester illustrate how in some cases, an individual might sacrifice their own life for a fellow ingroup member; due to the individuals personal identity becoming fused with the ingroup. We reasoned that empathy would be an important driver of helping a victim who is like ‘me’ rather than like ‘them’ (e.g. ‘we-ness’ is a central mechanism in the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Dovidio, Gaertner, Validzic et al. 1997). However, Erlandsson and colleagues propose that responsibility mediates helping due to concerns over duty and obligation to help and not empathic concern. This is a sensible interpretation and one that is intuitively appealing in a group context. For example, if an individual feels that their sense of self is intertwined with the group, then they may also feel more obliged to help other members of that group. It’s worth noting however that the context used in these studies was helping a close family member and so the results may not generalise to all ingroups. If one was asked to consider helping a family member, then this could explain why a sense of duty and responsibility may be particularly strong – few societies would create a social norm where helping one’s family was not related to duty. Regardless, given this recent work by Erlandsson and colleagues, it is certainly worth investigating the mediating processes further. Moreover, their work was not conducted in an intergroup context. In line with a social identity approach, one might predict different processes to mediate helping if different group memberships (ingroup vs. outgroup) are made salient.

Taken together, the above research demonstrates the importance of group memberships in helping behaviors, but often in a context other than donations. This may be important, as one cannot assume that the processes involved in emergency helping or volunteering are necessarily the same as when making a charitable donation. Emergency helping is often spontaneous, involves a life-threatening situation, occurs in the presence of others, and may carry risk to the individual (Latane & Darley, 1976). Volunteering is often a planned activity that requires regular commitment and often benefits the individual with practical skills and work experience (Mannino, Snyder & Omoto, 2011). These helping situations are often interpersonal, rather than intergroup (although some exceptions have already been noted in this introduction). By contrast, charitable giving is often conducted in an intergroup context, as one donates to a charity in order to help a specific group. Even if the charity depicts an individual as the target of need, this is merely the face of the marketing campaign. The donor assumes that their money will not go to the specific person on the charity poster, but instead will be distributed by the charity to a particular social group that person represents. It is therefore surprising that there is relatively little research that has investigated the specific effect of group memberships on donations. It is also of value to investigate, for the first time, the role that a salient perpetrator group may play in charitable decisions. In line with the aforementioned theorising, the present studies predict a preference to donate to ingroup over outgroup victims (*Hypothesis 1*), and also that the ingroup helping preference is driven by greater empathy for ingroup victims (*Hypothesis 3*).

**Perpetrator group membership, prosociality, and perceived responsibility to intervene**

Crucially, the group membership of perpetrators in humanly caused events has remained largely unstudied. Previous work has shown that the presence of perpetrators (compared to naturally caused events) often has a negative effect on charitable aid (Zagefka, Noor, Brown, de Moura, & Hopthrow, 2011), and that the presence of a human intentional act has negative perceptual implications (Ames & Fiske, 2013; Lagnado & Channon, 2008). Although such findings suggest that the presence of a human perpetrator can affect helping behavior; the group membership of the perpetrators – i.e. who the perpetrators were – was not considered.

However, it is plausible that perpetrator group membership has an important function in how individuals donate, especially since research outside of the prosociality domain has demonstrated that the specific group membership of the perpetrator can be vital. Ingroup or outgroup membership of perpetrators affects the extent to which they are seen as morally questionable and prototypical (Doosje, Zebel, Scheermeijer, & Mathyi, 2007), as well as the extent to which they are forgiven (Wohl & Branscombe, 2005). Braun and Gollwitzer (2012) argue that, in general, ingroup perpetrators are likely to benefit from leniency – unless group reputation is a concern, which in turn may lead to a black sheep effect where the ingroup member faces increased punishment (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). Given these findings, it is expected that perpetrator group memberships are also likely to affect attitudes towards giving.

In sum, some studies have demonstrated that mere human involvement can influence giving behavior, while studies in a non-charitable context have demonstrated that the group membership of the perpetrator can play an important role in shaping outcomes other than prosociality. However, the role of perpetrator groups in a charitable context has yet to be demonstrated. The present studies offer a novel contribution by investigating how perpetrator group membership can affect prosocial attitudes towards a charitable cause.

One might expect that when the donor shares group membership with a perpetrator that he/she will be more likely to empathise with the perpetrator and take their perspective. This could therefore lead to the donor reacting defensively. However, it is also possible that the donor will feel more responsible for helping the victims and rectifying the situation (Erlandsson, Bjorklund & Backstrom, 2015), perhaps because of a heightened sense of being implicated in the negative deed (Zagefka, Nigbur, Gonzalez, & Tip, 2013). This latter option makes sense from an equity perspective (‘my group was at fault therefore I/we are responsible for helping’). Moreover, from a social identity perspective, a salient shared group identity will lead to the perceiver feeling existentially intertwined with other group members, and negative deeds by ingroup members are then, to a certain degree, negative deeds committed by the self. So, in which instances will an individual react defensively to a salient ingroup perpetrator and in which cases will they react more prosocially? Kogut (2011) found that when participants took the view of the perpetrator, they were more likely to show pity towards the victim and less blame towards the perpetrator. But, when participants took the perspective of the wronged party, they were more likely to punish the perpetrator more severely. In the current studies, participants are asked to think about the victims and make donations in an intergroup context. They are not asked to consider the perpetrator’s perspective (in fact it is made clear that the perpetrator is to blame in all scenarios); therefore we do not predict that participants in the current studies will react defensively.

There is an additional reason not to predict a defensive reaction from participants, one that is centred on the black sheep effect (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). Work on the black sheep effect and ingroup deviancy has shown that ingroup members will punish other ingroup members if they violate clear social norms. In the current studies, the culpability of the ingroup perpetrator is made clear. It is hard to argue that a plane crash due to human error (study 2), or reckless driving (study 3), was not the fault of the ingroup perpetrator, and both scenarios are therefore clearly a violation of what is socially acceptable. In line with the black sheep effect, one would predict that the ingroup perpetrator would be punished if they caused an accident that caused harm, and the corollary is that the wronged party will be shown more aid. Indeed, there is a clear threat to the reputation of the ingroup as being egalitarian and fair if ingroup members do not make themselves responsible for reparations. Therefore, we predict that shared group membership between donor and perpetrator will result in higher levels of donation proclivity (*Hypothesis 2*), via heightened perceived responsibility to help the victim (*Hypothesis 4*).

**Consideration of both victim and perpetrator group memberships simultaneously**

Having proposed that the donor sharing a group membership with both the victims and the perpetrators will result in higher levels of donation proclivity, it is worth noting that there is theoretical reason to predict that two will operate via different mechanisms. Researchers have proposed a model of donation behaviour which relies on distinct cognitive processes (Dickert, Sagara, & Slovic, 2011). One process is related to the donor’s decision whether to donate at all (i.e. felt responsibility to help), while the other process is related to the decision about how much to donate (which is related positively to the degree of empathy felt for the victim). Thus, the decision to donate is more likely to occur when group membership is shared with the perpetrator, and the resultant perceived responsibility to help is high. By contrast, we have already argued that sharing victim group membership tends to be linked with empathic responses, which in turn predict the degree of helping behaviour provided (Stürmer et al., 2006). Thus, there is reason to expect that victim group membership will be related to donation decisions via empathic responses, whereas perpetrator group membership will be related to donations via responsibility. When both a perpetrator and victim group membership are made salient, i.e. when the donor feels both a sense of responsibility to help and a high level of empathy for the victim, then the desire to help may be amplified and one can expect the highest contribution levels.Therefore, we predict that when the group memberships of both ingroup victim and ingroup perpetrator are made salient simultaneously, the level of donations reported will be higher *(Hypothesis 5).* It is only in this condition that both empathy and responsibility to help are aligned.

**Overview of the present studies and hypotheses**

The present research comprises three studies that investigate charitable giving in situations where group memberships are made salient. Study 1 investigates the ingroup victim effect. The aim was to demonstrate that a preference to act prosocially towards ingroup members over outgroup members will also generalize to the specific case of monetary donations. In line with previous work (Levine & Thompson, 2004), it was predicted that shared group membership between donors/participants and victims would result in higher levels of charitable donations (*Hypothesis 1*). Study 2 uses an experimental design and takes into consideration the group membership of perpetrators in humanly caused events. We tested the prediction that shared group membership between donors/participants and perpetrators also leads to higher donations. A 'perpetrator-giving' effect was predicted, i.e. that an ingroup (rather than outgroup) perpetrator will result in higher prosociality in a charitable context (*Hypothesis 2*).

Study 3 again uses an experimental design, this time manipulating both victim and perpetrator group memberships simultaneously. By doing this, it is possible to comment for the first time on how victim group and perpetrator group interact to affect donations. A further aim is to investigate the underlying explanatory mechanisms. It was predicted that the effect on donations of ingroup, rather than outgroup, status of the victims would be driven by empathy (*Hypothesis 3*). It was also predicted that the effect on donations of ingroup, rather than outgroup, status of perpetrators would be driven by higher levels of perceived responsibility of the donor to intervene (*Hypothesis 4*). Moreover, it was predicted that prosociality would be highest when the respondent shares group membership with both the perpetrator and the victims because in this condition empathy and responsibility are optimally aligned (*Hypothesis 5*). Although an outgroup membership is not salient in this latter condition it can still be considered an intergroup context, as two distinct ingroup memberships are made salient simultaneously.

**Study 1**

**Method**

*Participants*

Ninety-two undergraduate students completed the study for course credit (*Mage* = 19.16, *SD* = 3.38; 83 female, 9 male). Sixty-six percent of the sample identified as British, the remaining 33.9% of participants represented various European and other nationalities.

*Design*

Participants were randomly allocated using survey software (*Qualtrics*) to either an ingroup victim condition (*n* = 50) or an outgroup victim condition (*n* = 42) and then asked to answer a series of prosocial measures which included donation amount. Power analysis was conducted using GPower 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, & Buchner, et al. 2009). Effect size can be determined a priori by using predicted mean values, e.g. a difference of .5 between mean scores, with a standard deviation of 1, is determined by GPower 3.1 to be a large effect size. Thus, for study 1 (and subsequent studies) a large effect size was used to calculate sample size, along with a typical power parameter of .80 and alpha set to .05. The suggested total sample size for a univariate ANOVA using GPower 3.1 and the parameters noted above was 52 participants (note that participants took part in study 1 as part of a course requirement, hence the higher actual sample size).

*Procedure and Measures*

Participants were first asked to provide demographic data. They were then instructed to read a short vignette modeled on the manipulations used by Levine and Thompson (2004). The vignette described a fictitious natural disaster that was presented as a news report. Each vignette mentioned floods that had killed or left homeless several thousand victims. The vignettes were manipulated to state that the disaster took place in the participant’s own country or in an unbeknownst fictional country (Esturia). In order to prime a salient ingroup membership, a technique known as ‘piping’ was used. This involved recording the nationality entered by the respondent (supposedly before the start of the study) and subsequently inserting this data into the vignette. Thus, participants either read of a flood in their own country affecting ingroup victims (ingroup condition) or a flood in Esturia affecting Esturians (outgroup condition – Esturia was presented as a real country to participants). This technique was used in order to ensure that a relevant group membership was made salient for all participants in the ingroup condition, irrespective of their country of origin, while the use of a fictional country avoided pre-existing biases. Aside from manipulation described above, all other information was kept identical between conditions. None of the participants reported being suspicious about the veracity of the vignette (in particular, no comments were made questioning the veracity of Esturia); indeed, large-scale flooding has been a regular occurrence in recent years both in the UK and abroad (e.g., along the Thames, along the Danube).

After reading the report, participants were asked to make a *hypothetical donation*, from £0 to £12, measured in £2 increments (resulting in a 7-point scale); this was used as a monetary index of prosocial behavior. Previous research has demonstrated that *hypothetical donations* are correlated with actual donations (Alpizar, Carlsson, & Johansson-Stenman, 2008; Macmillan, Smart, & Andrew, 1999; Macmillan, 2004; Zagefka et al., 2011). Moreover, several studies in the domain of experimental economics have demonstrated that hypothetical financial estimates are reliable proxies for real monetary behaviors (Champ, Bishop, Brown, & McCollum, 1997; Johannesson et al., 1999; Loomis, Brown, Lucero, & Peterson, 1996). Importantly, the purpose of the study was not to assess real-world levels of giving, but to assess the effects of the perpetrator group membership manipulation in a charitable appeal.

Participants then went on to indicate whether they believed their donation would be effective using four items: ‘I believe that money donated to these victims will have a fair chance of making a real difference and of improving things’, ‘I believe that the money donated to these victims is likely to reach those most in need’, ‘I believe that money donated to these victims will most likely not reach the victims, but will just benefit corrupt politicians’ (reverse coded), ‘I believe that money donated to these victims will just be money down the drain, because it won’t reach those who really need it’ (reverse coded); α = .83. This scale (and all other scales henceforth) was measured on a 7-point scale (1 = not at all/disagree strongly, to 7 = very much/agree strongly). Donation effectiveness has previously been measured in charitable donation research (Sun, Zagefka, & Goodwin, 2013; Zagefka, Noor, Brown, Hopthrow, & de Moura, 2012) and was included for exploratory reasons. Although not central to our hypotheses, it is reasonable to predict that perceptions of donation effectiveness will be a factor in donation behaviour.

**Results**

An ANOVA was conducted with victim group membership as the independent factor and *hypothetical donations* as the dependent variable (see Table 1). This yielded a significant effect, *F*(1,91) = 4.23, *p* = .042, η2 = .044. As expected, and in support of *Hypothesis 1,* participants allocated more money to ingroup than outgroup victims. There was no significant effect of the manipulation on *effectiveness*, *F*(1,90) = .082, *p* = .775, η2 = .001; such that donors believed their contribution would be equally beneficial irrespective of victim group.

**Discussion**

Study 1 demonstrated that victim group membership is important in intergroup giving. They were prepared to give on average £1.78 more to ingroup victims. These results confirmed *Hypothesis 1*. Moreover, exploratory analyses suggested that respondents did not believe that donations to the outgroup would be less effective (cf. Cryder, Loewenstein, & Scheines, 2013; Zagefka et al., 2012), making it unlikely that the reluctance to donate to the outgroup could be explained by a difference in perceived donation effectiveness. Limitations are discussed in the overall discussion.

## Study 2

Study 2 tested whether there is an ingroup perpetrator effect, similar to that of the victim ingroup effect. In line with previous research that has investigated perpetrator group membership effects in other domains, it is predicted that willingness to help disaster victims will be significantly higher when the perpetrator is part of the donor’s ingroup compared to the outgroup (*Hypothesis 2*).

**Method**

*Participants*

Eighty-four participants completed the study (61 female, 23 male). Participants consisted of an opportunity sample of undergraduate students who took part in the study online for course credit (*N =* 65) and participants recruited on campus who participated voluntarily (*N =* 19). Ages ranged from 18 to 54 (*Mage =* 23.16, *SD =* 8.75).

*Design*

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three group membership conditions: i) the perpetrator belonged to the participants’ own country; ii) the perpetrator belonged to the victims’ country; or iii) the perpetrator belonged to a third, non-specified country not shared with the participant or the victims. Sample size was conducted with GPower 3.1 using the same parameters as in study 1 but for a one-way MANOVA design with 3 conditions (1 predictor and 2 response variables). The suggested sample size from GPower 3.1 was 42 participants.

*Procedure and measures*

Participants answered standard demographic questions and then, via an online random number generator, were assigned to one of three experimental versions of a fictitious news report. The news report covered an accidental disaster that involved a plane crash in a foreign location. The crash resulted in an explosion that caused the deaths of hundreds, as well as substantial environmental damage. The language in the news reports was kept deliberately abstract and provided no other salient or relevant information other than the group membership of the perpetrator. To illustrate, the manipulation stated that the plane causing the accident was either from: ‘your country’, ‘the victim’s country’, or ‘a different country’. Thus, the perpetrator shared group membership with either the donor, the victim, or a non-specified third party. Aside from this small change, all other features of the three conditions were identical.

Participants in each condition subsequently answered a short questionnaire beginning with an item asking them to make *hypothetical donations* by writing down how much they would donate to aid the victims using an open response format to avoid potential anchor effects (Hysenbelli, Rubaltelli, & Rumiati, 2013).

*Willingness to donate* included four items to measure giving prosociality: ‘I would be willing to give donations to the victims of the disaster’, ‘I think it is important to give donations to the victims of the disaster’, ‘I think it is the right thing to do to give donations to the victims of the disaster’ and, ‘I would give the maximum amount I could afford according to my means to the victims of the disaster’; α = .89.

*Donation effectiveness* was included as in the previous study, α = .76.

**Results**

Study 2 used an open response format for *hypothetical donations*; however, the use of this format has been associated with data skew and inflated estimates (Kirby & Herrnstein, 1995). Therefore, *hypothetical donations* were log10 transformed. This technique has been used previously in research to transform skews in hypothetical donation measures (Dickert, Sagara, & Slovic, 2011). However, with regards to inflated estimates, it is worth noting that the aim of the present study was not to judge accurate donation levels, but rather to test the causal effect of the perpetrator group membership manipulation.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted with perpetrator group as the independent variable (donor group perpetrator vs. victim group perpetrator vs. third party perpetrator). *Hypothetical donations* and *willingness to donate* were entered as the dependent variables. The multivariate effect of the perpetrator group membership factor was marginally significant, *Pillai's Trace =* .111, *F*(2,70) = 3.32, *p* = .086. Univariate analyses yielded a significant effect of perpetrator group membership on *hypothetical donations, F*(2,71) = 3.64, *p* = .031, partial η2 = .093; and a marginal effect on *willingness to donate, F*(2,71) = 2.44, *p* = .094, partial η2 = .064. For hypothetical donations, a planned contrast comparing the ingroup condition with the other two conditions revealed a significant difference, *p* = .012. The above contrast was repeated for *willingness to donate*, with a marginal difference between ingroup and outgroup conditions, *p* = .084 (somewhat supporting *Hypothesis 2* given the marginal *p* values reported above).

In order to rule out the effect solely being due to the perpetrator being related to the victim, we also conducted a simple planned contrast between all three conditions. The difference between the ingroup perpetrator and victim perpetrator groups was marginally significant, *p* = .064; however, the difference between the ingroup perpetrator group and third party outgroup was significant, *p* = .011. The above contrast was repeated for willingness to donate. The difference between the ingroup perpetrator and victim perpetrator groups was not significant, *p* = .394; however, the difference between the ingroup perpetrator group and third party group was significant, *p* = .031 (see Table 2). Overall, the pattern of results was in the anticipated direction but it should be noted that *p* values were only marginal in some cases.

As in study 1, when conducting an exploratory univariate ANOVA for *donation effectiveness*, this variable was not significantly affected by perpetrator group membership, *F*(2,81) = .063, *p* = .939, η2 = .002.

**Discussion**

Study 2 demonstrates that perpetrator group membership can play an important role in intergroup giving. Both *willingness to donate* and *hypothetical donations* were highest when the perpetrator shared the respondent’s group, confirming *Hypothesis 2*;although, it should be noted that the results (for *willingness to donate* in particular) were only marginal. The main finding from study 2 is that a salient perpetrator group can affect giving behavior. Study 2 also included an additional condition where the victim was related to the perpetrator. The difference between the ingroup perpetrator condition and the victim perpetrator condition did not reach significance in this exploratory condition (although the pattern was evident). In general, the findings provide support that prosociality towards a humanitarian disaster was higher when ingroup status was shared with the perpetrator than when the perpetrator was an outgroup member (and particularly when the perpetrator belonged to a third party). Unlike studies that have investigated helping behavior towards minority groups (Saucier, Miller, & Doucet, 2005) or to specific causes (Cuddy, Rock, & Norton, 2007), the context used in the present study was kept deliberately abstract in order to avoid confounds. Therefore, the differences in giving behavior reported in the present study cannot be explained by stereotype activations, or by social hierarchies. The findings demonstrate that in order to elicit a difference in giving behavior, it is enough to merely categorize and make salient a distinctive perpetrator group. As in study 1, no significant effects of the manipulation on perceived effectiveness of a donation were found.

**Study 3**

In line with the previous studies (Levine, Cassidy, Brazier, & Reicher, 2002; Levine, Prosser, & Evans, 2004), it was predicted that ingroup victims will receive more donations than outgroup victims (*Hypothesis* 1) and that a salient ingroup perpetrator will also result in higher donations compared to a salient outgroup perpetrator (*Hypothesis* 2). Study 3 also improves upon Levine and Thompson (2004) by including victim group and perpetrator group together in one experimental paradigm. By doing so, Study 3 also aimed to further explain the mechanisms through which perpetrator group membership can affect charitable giving. In line with the previously discussed literature on helping, it was predicted that empathy will play a key role in the process of ingroup helping (*Hypothesis 3*). Moreover, it was predicted that shared group membership between donors and perpetrators will lead to higher levels of perceived responsibility to help (*Hypothesis 4*). It was further predicted that the interaction between ingroup victim and ingroup perpetrator will yield the most prosocial attitude (*Hypothesis* 5).

**Method**

*Participants*

One hundred and eighty-two participants (111 female, 71 male) were invited to take part in a study and be entered in a prize draw or receive course credit. Participants were recruited through online campus notice boards and websites that host psychology experiments (*Mage* = 28, *SD* = 11.8).

*Design*

Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (perpetrator ingroup/outgroup) x 2 (victim ingroup/outgroup) independent factorial design. As in the preceding study, prosocial behavior was measured through *hypothetical donations* and *willingness to donate*. The suggested sample size using GPower 3.1 for a 2x2 MANOVA design (with a small effect size) was 63 participants. However, the recommended sample size for detecting univariate ANOVA effects in a 2x2 design was 128.

*Procedure and measures*

Participants first answered standard demographic items before being randomly allocated by survey software (*Qualtrics*) to one of four group membership conditions. In each condition, participants read a short vignette that described a coach crash that killed or left injured 100 tourists. Group membership of the victims was manipulated so that the tourists were either from the participant’s own country, or from a fictional country, ‘Esturia’. As in Study 1, piping was used to ensure a salient victim group membership. Piping was also used to manipulate the group membership of the perpetrator (coach driver), who was described as being at fault for the crash due to speeding. Participants were also told that either the participant’s own country, or Esturia, had poor driving license regulations. Thus, both victim membership and perpetrator membership was manipulated. The location of the crash was not specified, and each vignette included an identical non-descript image of a coach wreckage and rubble. Again, participants did not report being suspicious about any aspect of the experimental materials.

*Hypothetical donations* were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, from £0 to £12, measured in £2 increments. The same scale as before was included to measure *willingness to donate*;α = .90.

Additionally, *empathy* was measured using a modified version of the scale used by Stürmer et al. (2006). These items are similar in wording to the items used by Batson and colleagues to measure empathic concern (Batson et al., 1989), but modified to measure situational rather than dispositional empathy: ‘I felt great sympathy for the victims and their suffering’, ‘I felt very compassionate for the victims of the disaster’, ‘I had a lot of empathy with the victims for the horrors they suffered’, ‘I felt very concerned for the victims of the disaster’ and ‘I felt very sorry for the victims of the disaster’; α = .92.

In order to better explain the mechanism of the perpetrator group membership effect, a measure of donor *responsibility* (Basil, Ridgeway & Basil, 2006) was included. The measure consists of three items, ‘I believe that I have a responsibility to do what I can to help’, ‘I believe that I have a responsibility to help because I am better off than the victims’ and, ‘I believe that helping is the right thing to do’; α = .81.

In addition, *donation effectiveness* was included as in the previous study, α = .84.

**Results**

*The effect of victim group and perpetrator group on donation decisions.* A MANOVA was conducted with perpetrator group membership (ingroup perpetrator vs. outgroup perpetrator) and victim group membership (ingroup victims vs. outgroup victims) as between subject factors. *Hypothetical donations* and *willingness to donate* were entered as the dependent variables. There was no significant multivariate effect of perpetrator group on the dependent measures, *Pillai's Trace =* .007, *F*(2,117) = .612, *p* = .543. There was, however, a significant effect of victim group membership, *Pillai's Trace =* .041, *F*(2,117) = 3.74, *p* = .026; and there was a significant interaction effect, *Pillai's Trace = .*043, *F*(2,117) = 3.98, *p* = .020.

Univariate tests indicated that victim group membership had a significant effect on *hypothetical donations, F*(1,178) = 7.40, *p* = .007, partial η2 = .040; as well as on *willingness to donate, F*(1,178) = 3.90, *p* = .050, partial η2 = .021, with mean levels in the expected direction. For *hypothetical donations*, means were £5.59 for ingroup vs. £3.86 for outgroup. For willingness to donate, means were 4.79 for ingroup and 4.32 for outgroup. There was no significant effect of perpetrator group membership on *hypothetical donations, F*(1,178) = 1.17, *p* = .281, partial η2 = .007; nor on *willingness to donate, F*(1,178) = .760,  *p* = .385, partial η2 = .004 (contrary to *Hypothesis 2*).

In support of *Hypothesis 5,* the interaction between perpetrator and victim group had a significant effect on *hypothetical donations, F*(1,178) = 7.79, *p* = .006, partial η2 = .042; and a significant effect on *willingness to donate, F*(1,178) = 4.47, *p* = .036, partial η2 = .025.

To provide further support for *Hypothesis 5* we conducted a simple 1:3 contrast comparing the ingroup perpetrator/ingroup victim condition with the other three conditions in the 2x2 design. The double ingroup condition was significantly different from the other three conditions with regards to *hypothetical donations*, *t =* 2.79, *p* = .005, CI 95% [1.04, 6.07]; and it was also significantly different with regards to *willingness to donate*, *t* = 2.11, *p* = .035, CI 95% [.068, 1.95]. As predicted by *Hypothesis 5,* donations were magnified when both perpetrators and victims were ingroup members (see Table 3).

*The effect of victim and perpetrator group on empathy and responsibility.* In order to test whether victim group membership affected empathy (*Hypothesis 3*), and whether perpetrator group membership affected responsibility (*Hypothesis 4*), a further set of multivariate analyses were conducted with empathy and responsibility as dependent variables.

The multivariate test indicated a marginal effect of perpetrator group on the dependent measures, *Pillai’s Trace =* .027, *F*(2,177) = 2.46, *p* = .088, partial η2 = .027; a significant effect of victim group on the dependent measures, *Pillai’s Trace =* .044, *F*(2,177) = 4.08, *p* = .018, partial η2 = .044; and a marginal effect of the interaction on the dependent measures, *Pillai’s Trace =* .030, *F*(2,177) = 2.69, *p* = .071, partial η2 = .030.

Univariate tests were next inspected. Ingroup victim group membership (compared to outgroup victims) did not have a significant effect on *donor responsibility, F*(1,178) = 2.51, *p* = .114, partial η2 = .014; but had a significant effect on *empathy, F*(1,178) = 8.15, *p* = .005, partial η2 = .044. In support of *Hypothesis 3,* empathy was higher when victims were ingroup members (5.22) compared to when they were outgroup members (4.88). By contrast, ingroup perpetrator group membership had a significant effect on *donor responsibility, F*(1,178) = 3.99, *p* = .047, partial η2 = .022; but a marginal effect on *empathy, F*(1,178) = 3.30, *p* = .071, partial η2 = .018. In partial support of *Hypothesis 4,* responsibility was higher when the perpetrator was ingroup to the donor (4.88) compared to when the perpetrator was outgroup to the donor (4.48) (see Table 4).

Together, these results support *Hypotheses* *3* in that victim group membership affected empathic concern. The results partially support *Hypothesis 4*, in that perpetrator group membership affected perceived responsibility to help.

*Empathy and responsibility mediate intergroup giving.* In order to examine the mediating role of empathy and responsibility on intergroup giving, Hayes PROCESS macro (model 6) was used with 5,000 bootstrap resamples (Hayes, 2008). The first model tested the paths between victim group membership, empathy, responsibility, and *hypothetical donations*. The overall model was significant, *F*(3,178) = 27.56, *p* < .001, adjusted R2 = .30. With all three predictors regressed simultaneously on *hypothetical donations*, empathy was marginally significant, *β =* .445, *t* = 1.73, *p* = .085; responsibility was significant, *β =* 1.42, *t* = 5.95, *p* < .001; and victim group was significant, *β =* -1.14, *t* = -2.04, *p* = .042. The indirect path between victim group, empathy, and *hypothetical donations* was significant, *β =* -.226, CI 95% [-.612, -.001]. The indirect path between victim group, responsibility, and *hypothetical donations* was not significant, *β =* -.022 CI 95% [-.534, .455]. The total indirect path via both mediators was significant, *β =* -.391 CI 95% [-.764, -.128].

The above analyses were repeated but with *willingness to donate* as the outcome variable. The overall model was significant, *F*(3,178) = 48.18, *p* < .001, adjusted R2 = .44. With all three predictors regressed simultaneously on *willingness to donate*, empathy was significant, *β =* .227, *t* = 2.71, *p* = .007; responsibility was significant, *β =* .661, *t* = 8.48, *p* < .001; victim group was not significant, *β =* -1.78, *t* = .974, *p* = .331. The indirect path between victim group, empathy, and *willingness to donate* was significant, *β =* -.307, CI 95% [-.295, -.016]. The indirect path between victim group, responsibility, and *willingness to donate* was not significant, *β =* -.010 CI 95% [-.247, .210]. The total indirect path via both mediators was significant, *β =* -.181 CI 95% [-.349, -.052].

Taken together, these results offer some support for *Hypothesis 3* in that the indirect paths between victim group, empathy and helping were significant (albeit with the upper bootstrap estimates being close to zero).

In order to test *Hypothesis 4*, the above analyses were repeated but with perpetrator group as the predictor variable. The first model tested the paths between perpetrator group membership, empathy, responsibility, and *hypothetical donations*. The overall model was significant, *F*(3,178) = 23.43, *p* < .001, adjusted R2 = .28. With all three predictors regressed simultaneously on *hypothetical donations*, empathy was significant, *β =* .538, *t* = 2.10, *p* = .037; responsibility was significant, *β =* 1.43, *t* = 5.90, *p* < .001; perpetrator group was not significant, *β =* .191, *t* = .339, *p* = .735. The indirect path between perpetrator group, empathy, and *hypothetical donations* was not significant, *β =* -.141, CI 95% [-.507, .019]. The indirect path between perpetrator group, responsibility, and *hypothetical donations* was not significant, *β =* -.312 CI 95% [-.889, .189]. The total indirect path via both mediators was significant, *β =* -.046 CI 95% [-.128, .010].

The above analyses were repeated but with *willingness to donate* as the outcome variable. The overall model was significant, *F*(3,178) = 48.05, *p* < .001, adjusted R2 = .45. With all three predictors regressed simultaneously on *willingness to donate*, empathy was significant, *β =* .244, *t* = 2.95, *p* = .004; responsibility was significant, *β =* .668, *t* = 8.52, *p* < .001; perpetrator group was not significant, *β =* 1.55, *t* = .856, *p* = .393. The indirect path between perpetrator group, empathy, and *willingness to donate* was marginally significant, *β =* -.064, CI 95% [-.219, .008]. The indirect path between victim group, responsibility, and *willingness to donate* was marginally significant, *β =* -.145 CI 95% [-.382, .081]. The total indirect path via both mediators was marginally significant, *β =* -.093 CI 95% [-.249, .022].

Taken together, these results offer only partial support for *Hypothesis 4* in that the indirect paths between perpetrator group, responsibility and helping were marginally significant (upper bootstrap estimates were close to zero).

*Exploratory analyses of victim group and perpetrator group on donation effectiveness.* Finally, when testing the effects of the manipulations on *donation effectiveness* in an exploratory manner, there were no significant effects of either perpetrator group membership, *F*(1,178) = .033, *p* = .855, η2 = .000; or victim group membership, *F*(1,178) = .155, *p* = .694, η2 = .001. The interaction was marginally significant, *F*(1,178) = 3.04, *p* = .083, η2 = .017.

**Discussion**

Study 3 extended the findings of Studies 1 and 2 by including victim group membership and perpetrator group membership in the same design. The findings confirmed again the importance of the victim group membership in prosocial behavior (*Hypothesis 1*). However, for the first time, perpetrator group membership was investigated alongside a victim group manipulation. The results offered partial support that the perpetrator group can have an effect on attitudes towards intergroup helping. Although in study 3 no main effect on donations emerged for the perpetrator group membership manipulation, in line with *Hypothesis 5,* the significant interaction showed that donations were highest when both victims and perpetrators shared the donor’s group membership. Study 3 also provided evidence that victim and perpetrator group memberships affect donations through different mechanisms. Whereas donations to the victim ingroup were mediated by empathy (*Hypothesis 3*), there was some evidence that the effect of perpetrator group membership on donations was mediated by a sense of individual responsibility (*Hypothesis 4*), although the mediation analyses here were only close to acceptable significance levels and therefore notably weaker than the results for empathy.

**General Discussion**

Understanding the mechanisms through which individuals help other groups is vitally important given the vast sums involved, and given the number of lives that depend on such aid. Although individuals can show amazing generosity towards local and national causes, much less generosity is shown to other groups and other countries. The present studies investigated the role of shared group memberships in attitudes towards charitable giving.

As a package, the studies demonstrate that donors prefer to give to ingroup rather than outgroup victims (*Hypothesis 1*, shown in studies 1 & 3); and that donors are more generous when they share a group membership with the perpetrator (*Hypothesis 2*, shown in studies 2 & 3). Results also suggest that, as predicted, the effects of victim ingroup (rather than outgroup) membership with the donor on donations were mediated by empathy (*Hypothesis 3,* shown in study 3), and that the effects of perpetrator ingroup (rather than outgroup) membership with the donor on donations were mediated by perceived responsibility (*Hypothesis 4,* only partially supported in study 3). Moreover, the effects of victim and perpetrator group memberships were mutually reinforcing (*Hypothesis 5,* shown in study 3).

Having said this, there are specific limitations worth noting. In addition to the marginal effects that offered only partial support, the effect sizes were also not as wide as anticipated. In study 1, participants still donated £6.10 to outgroup members (a difference of £1.78). In study 2, the difference between ingroup and outgroup donations was 53 pence, although the donation amount was around £1 for both groups. Study 3 had a more substantial difference (around £3). Similarly, the effect size in study 3 between empathy and responsibility was not as large as expected, with empathic concern explaining more variance in helping outgroup members than anticipated. It may be the case that the empathy measure also tapped into an element of social responsibility.

Another concern is that in study 1 the results could be affected by participants in the ingroup condition having a self-interest to help, e.g. in case they might one day face a similar concern themselves. However, study 3 does partly alleviate this concern since the participants could not be directly affected in this scenario. One could also make the case that ingroup favouritism carries an element of self-serving bias. This is because the ingroup is an important part of one’s identity, and therefore, helping an ingroup member is much like helping the self from a social identity perspective. Although, one cannot rule out the role of social norms in ingroup prosociality.

With regards to study 2, the perpetrator group effect was particularly pronounced when the outgroup perpetrator was from a third party, but less so when the perpetrator was from the victim group itself. In a situation where the victims bring disaster upon themselves, it is not too surprising that some participants chose to respond to a request for aid. This is not uncommon in request for charitable aid as donors are frequently asked to help overseas and rarely are other countries implicated in this process. It is also noteworthy that perpetrator group membership was not impactful in itself in study 3, but the effect emerged in the form of the interaction when considered in conjunction with the victim group membership manipulation.

The above findings raise some interesting questions. The findings point to the possibility that studying whether perpetrators belong to the donor’s ingroup or outgroup is possibly too simplistic. It appears that under conditions where perpetrators do not share a group membership with donors, it might matter *which* other group they belong to. For example, they might or might not share a group membership with the victims. If perpetrators belong to a third party, then donors may be concerned with the precise relations between the third party and victim group. Researching triadic relationships between perpetrators and victims is problematic however, as manipulation of the perpetrator group becomes confounded with the victim group, e.g. in study 2, the perpetrator was related to the victim in one of the conditions. This is somewhat unavoidable if one wishes to test these effects in a real world context, e.g. the same confound is present in work by Wohl & Branscombe (2005), i.e. the victims become related to the perpetrator in the superordinate ‘human’ category. We would argue that this confound is of less relevance in study 2, since *Hypothesis 2* predicted an ingroup/outgroup perpetrator effect on prosociality, and this was demonstrated regardless of the victim-perpetrator condition. Moreover, the victim-perpetrator condition was not significantly different from the other two conditions. Nonetheless, we would argue that consideration of triadic group memberships, in effect moving beyond a simple ingroup vs. outgroup comparison, is interesting to consider.

One area that would benefit from discussion is the proposed relationship between responsibility and helping ingroup members presented by Erlandsson, Bjorklund and Backstrom (2015). The present findings are somewhat misaligned from their work, which showed that responsibility mediated ingroup helping. In contrast, the present work predicted that ingroup helping would be linked with empathic processes (e.g. concern and distress) while outgroup helping would be linked with perceptions over who is responsible to help. This approach is also in line with equity models, e.g. donors may ask who is responsible for helping an outgroup victim and make a utilitarian decision based on this judgement. However, the work by Erlandsson and colleagues suggests that further nuance can be added. In situations where there is a strong moral duty to help, e.g. with regards to a family member, responsibility may be a stronger predictor than empathic concern for ingroups. Since group identities are fluid and require salience, it is likely that the specific context will play a role in which processes come out on top. However, we would argue that in most cases it is still likely that outgroup helping will be driven by a range of other factors than empathy, e.g. perceived responsibility or other strategic motives (cf. van Leeuwen, Nadler). Therefore, it is hoped that although the present contribution cannot possibly answer all questions raised by group membership effects in the context of donations to humanly caused events, an important contribution might be to raise awareness for these issues, particularly as these considerations may have applied value.

An interesting question for future exploration is therefore to comparatively study in more depth the effect of group membership of the perpetrator in different groups. Moreover, although the present focus on empathy and responsibility as explanatory mechanisms is interesting, it is unlikely that we have exhausted the array of possible mediators. Other previously studied mediators of prosociality such as interpersonal attraction (Stürmer, Snyder & Kropp (2005), similarity (Bal & van den Bos, 2010; Chandler, Griffin, & Sorensen, 2008) or ‘oneness’ (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997) could be investigated, to see if they have explanatory power for the effects of victim and perpetrator group memberships on donation behaviour.

Finally, a potential criticism we would like to discuss is the use of a fictional country for the outgroup. The use of a real country name vs. a fictitious name is one of pros and cons. Using real country names makes it difficult to separate pre-existing biases from the effect of group categorisation. At the same time, using fictitious names means that we have to acknowledge that the two levels of this manipulation (national ingroup vs. national outgroup) differ potentially on a range of different dimensions. We decided to focus on the effect of group memberships at a more abstract category level, which is the approach taken throughout these series of studies, and the manipulation we chose ensured that the country was either the national ingroup, or a national outgroup. Due to the concerns over the use of a fictitious country for the outgroup, we paid extra attention to any suspicions that participants might of held. We asked participants to guess the nature of the experiment in a written comment and none of the participants suspected that the outgroup country was fictitious, as far as they were concerned, this was simply a country they were not familiar with.

It is also worth noting that prior research has found perceptions of donor effectiveness to be especially important in understanding donor behavior, e.g. perceived impact has mediated donation amounts in experimental work investigating the identifiable victim effect and the tangibility of charity requests (Cryder, Loewenstein & Scheines, 2013). Donation impact has also been a significant predictor of donations towards victims of natural disasters across a range of contexts (Zagefka, Noor, Brown et al. 2012). The present research did not find perceptions of donation effectiveness to affected by group manipulations; although, it is worth noting that past research has focused on ‘impact’ rather than ‘effectiveness’. The former is more related to the meaningful difference that any one individual donation will make (e.g. the number of vaccines a single donation will purchase); while the latter is more focused on whether charitable donations in general are effective, i.e. whether the organization will use the donations effectively and not spend it all on overheads. Researchers may wish to continue focusing on individual impact, as this may be easier to manipulate than more general views related to the effectiveness of charities and has been shown to be a strong predictor in past research.

Across studies, only a subtle abstract manipulation that involved changing three or four keywords was needed to achieve a salient group membership effect. The fact that such a minimal manipulation triggers experimental effects speaks to the importance of group membership cues. Moreover, these studies show applied value, as subtle cues can be used to ensure that charitable appeals are persuasive. The importance of group memberships are consistent with Levine and Thompson (2004), who found location to be irrelevant in charitable helping, but found that a salient group categorization was enough to affect giving behavior. However, the present results extend these findings by demonstrating that the technique can also apply to manipulation of perpetrator groups.

Practical considerations have already been touched upon, but it is worth considering how these findings may benefit organizations in more detail. While some charity appeals highlight shared group memberships between donors and recipients, suggesting that practitioners are to at least some extent aware of the importance of victim group memberships, few appeals seem to utilize the importance of perpetrator group memberships. Charitable organizations may be adept at portraying victims, and yet, when confronted with humanly caused events, laypersons may well ask themselves who they believe is responsible for cleaning up the problem. Moreover, if the perpetrator is perceived to belong to a third party, then donors may well become indifferent and believe that the issue is not theirs to deal with. As such, careful consideration of the perpetrator group involved is not only of theoretical importance, but will also have potential applied benefits.

In terms of practical application, practitioners may wish to consider making the ingroup perpetrator relationship salient when relevant, if only as a method of combatting donor indifference. It is understandable that some practitioners may be reluctant to flag perpetrator group memberships when soliciting for donations; yet, casual attributions are an important consideration in donor reasoning. Donors will often make assumptions about who/what is responsible for making reparations, assuming that conflict overseas is not in any way connected with them, even if that is untrue. To put another way, if donor’s do not feel that their ingroup was involved, then equity concerns pertaining to justice may provide a rationalization as to why one shouldn’t help a victim in need. In situations where the perpetrator belongs to another group, directing the donor’s attention away from the causal attribution is important. This is not the same as ignoring perceived culpability, as a donor will make up their own mind as to who is responsible to help if left unguided. Rather, deliberately diluting/redirecting the donor’s attention from group memberships may be beneficial in such scenarios. These practical suggestions are made tentatively as more evidence is needed before strong claims can be made. Nonetheless, the take home message for practitioners is not to ignore group memberships in their marketing strategies. Given that charitable giving is a billion dollar industry, even a small increase in donations at an individual level can save thousands of lives, as well as reduce poverty and suffering worldwide. This work addresses an important gap in the literature not only because group memberships in donations contexts have not sufficiently been theorized, but also because of the frequency and multitude of humanitarian crises that mar our recent history – and because of the number of lives that depend on donations for survival.

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Table 1. Effects of victim group on prosocial behavior in a flood context (Study 1)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Ingroup victims** | **95% CI** | **Outgroup victims** | **95% CI** |
| Hypothetical donations | £7.88 (4.3) | 6.7:9.0 | £6.10 (3.9) | 4.8:7.3 |
| Donation effectiveness | 4.1 (1.1) | 3.8:4.5 | 4.1 (1.3) | 3.7:4.4 |

*Note. Standard deviations in parenthesis. All measures on 7-point scales.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2. The effect of perpetrator group membership on giving prosociality (Study 2)** | | | | | | |
|  | **Donor Group Perpetrator** | **95 % CI** | **Victim Group Perpetrator** | **95% CI** | **Third country perpetrator** | **95% CI** |
| Hypothetical donations (log10) | £1.60a (.79) | 1.3:1.8 | £1.21a,b (.75) | .91:1.5 | £1.07b (.58) | .79:1.3 |
| Willingness to donate | 5.34a (1.42) | 4.7:5.9 | 4.97a,b (1.44) | 4.3:5.5 | 4.44b (1.76) | 3.8:5.0 |
| Donation effectiveness | 4.16a (1.22) | 3.7:4.6 | 4.09a (1.09) | 3.6:4.5 | 4.05a (1.17) | 3.6:4.5 |

*Note. Standard deviations in parentheses.*

*Across rows: items that do not share a subscript are significantly different at p < .05.*

**Table 3. Giving prosociality is affected by both perpetrator and victim group (Study 3)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Ingroup victim** | **95% CI** | **Outgroup victim** | **95% CI** | **Marginals** |
| **Hypothetical donations** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Donor group perpetrator | £6.84a (4.5) | 5.5:8.1 | £3.32b (3.8) | 2.2:4.4 | £5.08 (4.2) |
| Outgroup perpetrator | £4.37b (4.5) | 3.1:5.5 | £4.41b (4.1) | 2.9:5.8 | £4.39 (4.3) |
| Marginals | £5.61 (4.5) |  | £3.87 (4.0) |  |  |
| **Willingness to donate** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Donor group perpetrator | 5.16a (1.7) | 4.6:5.6 | 4.18b (1.6) | 3.7:4.5 | 4.67 (1.7) |
| Outgroup perpetrator | 4.44b (1.5) | 3.9:4.8 | 4.48b (1.5) | 3.9:5.0 | 4.46 (1.5) |
| **Marginals** | 4.80 (1.6) |  | 4.33 (1.6) |  |  |

*Note. Standard deviations in parentheses.*

*Across rows and columns: items that do not share a subscript are significantly different at p < .05*

**Table 4. Effect of victim group on empathy and responsibility (Study 3)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Ingroup victim** | **95% CI** | **Outgroup victim** | **95% CI** | Marginals |
| **Empathy** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ingroup perpetrator | 5.67a (1.0) | 5.3:6.0 | 4.78b (1.1) | 4.4:5.1 | 5.23 (1.1) |
| Outgroup perpetrator | 4.97b (1.2) | 4.6:5.3 | 4.80b (1.4) | 4.3:5.2 | 4.59 (1.3) |
| Marginals | 5.32 (1.1) |  | 4.79 (1.3) |  |  |
| **Donor Responsibility** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ingroup perpetrator | 5.24a (1.1) | 4.8:5.6 | 4.52b (1.4) | 4.1:4.8 | 4.88 (1.3) |
| Outgroup perpetrator | 4.44b (1.3) | 4.0:4.9 | 4.53b (1.2) | 4.0:4.9 | 4.49 (1.3) |
| Marginals | 4.84 (1.2) |  | 4.53 (1.3) |  |  |

Note. Standard deviation in parentheses

Across rows and columns: items that do not share a subscript are significantly different at p < .05