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Exploring Impact Philanthropy, Altruistic, Hedonic, and Egoistic Motivations to Support Animal Causes

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ABSTRACT

Due to unpredictable economic turbulence, it is imperative that nonprofit organizations understand and implement segmentation practices to better target donors to maintain continual growth in donations. While such strategies are well implemented in for-profit arenas, non-profit organizations still lag behind in the implementation of segmentation and targeting practices. The targeting of donors by nonprofit organizations tends to be unfocused and sporadic at best. Early research on the practice of segmenting potential donors suggest that nonprofit firms should resist profiling their existing donors based upon demographic characteristics alone and should rely on examining demographic variables in relation to meaningful motivational forces. This study addresses a gap in the literature by examining altruistic, hedonic, impact philanthropy, and egoistic motives in an exploratory fashion to investigate which motivational are the strongest among animal sanctuary supporters. These motivational dimensions are also examined relative to past visitation behavior and membership. In addition, gender and age are examined in the study.

A cross-sectional sample of 109 animal sanctuary supporters is obtained from an avian sanctuary in the Southeastern United States and paired sample t-tests were used to examine the relative effects of the motivational dimensions. Results indicate that impact philanthropy was a stronger motivational force than hedonic, altruistic, and egoistic motives. No substantial difference was found between hedonic and altruistic motives while both hedonic and altruistic motives were substantially greater than egoistic motives. In addition, hedonic motives were found to have a substantial relationship with sanctuary membership while past visitation was strongly associated with both impact philanthropy and hedonic motives. As shown in past research women rated higher on altruistic motives while no difference in motives was found based upon age.

The results of this study indicate that impact philanthropy may be a major motivational force for donating to animal causes. This finding suggests that animal causes should focus on appeals attractive to impact philanthropists, individuals motivated by the desire to make a difference.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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