

Philanthropic Behavior and Culture Difference

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Abstract. This paper explores the relationship between culture and philanthropic behavior, taking into account the unique differences between cultures. Philanthropy is a universal value that has guided human actions throughout history, but cultural differences can significantly impact how it manifests. Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for philanthropic organizations to effectively engage donors and make a significant impact on society. By adopting a more culturally sensitive approach and leveraging cross-cultural partnerships, philanthropic organizations can create positive change and address some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges facing our world today.

Keywords: Culture, Philanthropy, Cross-cultural partnerships.

1. Introduction

Philanthropy, the act of donating money, time, or resources to charitable causes, has a long and rich history (Bryant et al., 2003). The concept of philanthropy dates back to ancient civilizations, where wealthy individuals would donate land, money, and resources to support religious and cultural institutions. In medieval Europe, philanthropy was often associated with the Catholic Church, which encouraged its members to give to the poor and support charitable causes (Prato, 2022). In the United States, philanthropy played a significant role in the country's early development, with wealthy individuals such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller donating large sums of money to support education and public libraries (Grimm, 2002). Today, philanthropy continues to be a significant aspect of many cultures worldwide, with individuals, foundations, and corporations donating billions of dollars each year to support a wide range of causes.

Throughout history and as society has evolved and developed, social systems and ideologies have undergone significant changes. However, philanthropy has always been a universal value that guides and constrains human actions (Rashidovich, 2022). Among all of human practical activities, philanthropy is a behavior that individuals or social organizations consciously complete. Whether viewed from the longitudinal development of history or the horizontal development of reality, philanthropy always embodies the positive energy of society.

Philanthropy is a universal concept, but the way it manifests can vary significantly across cultures. Cultural factors, such as expectations of social responsibility and government roles, religious beliefs, and the concept of individualism versus collectivism, all influence philanthropic behavior (Katz et al., 2001; Kemmelmeier et al., 2006; Nguyen & Truong, 2016). Furthermore, cultural differences can affect the types of causes and organizations that people choose to support. For example, in some cultures, there may be a preference for supporting local charities or organizations that align with cultural values. In others, philanthropic donations may be directed towards religious institutions, environmental causes, or education (Sokolowski, 2013). Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for philanthropic organizations to effectively engage donors and make a greater impact on society. By adopting a more culturally sensitive approach and addressing issues of inclusivity and societal changes, philanthropic organizations can better engage donors and help to address some of the world's most pressing social and environmental challenges. Cross-cultural partnerships can also provide valuable opportunities for organizations to learn from and collaborate with others in different cultural contexts.

This paper aims to explore the nuanced relationship between culture and philanthropic behavior, taking into account the unique differences between cultures. By studying the ways in which different cultures approach and prioritize philanthropy, we can gain a deeper understanding of the role that philanthropic behavior plays in shaping societies. Furthermore, we can identify areas where

philanthropy can be harnessed to address some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges facing our world today.

2. Asian Culture and Philanthropic Behavior

2.1 The Differential Mode of Association in Chinese Philanthropic Culture

Asian cultures have a long history of philanthropy, deeply rooted in religious traditions such as Confucianism and Buddhism. In China, when the cultural pattern of "rejecting the hundred schools, and upholding Confucianism" formed, the benevolent thought of Confucianism became the core of charitable culture. In the eyes of Confucianism, benevolence has a hierarchy. The original meaning of benevolence is to coordinate the relationship between people, and blood relationship is the fundamental social relationship between people. From this perspective, the charitable pattern from "family comes first" to "universal love" and then to "benefiting the world" was formed (Xu et al., 2022). From the proposition of "respecting elders and cherishing children, and caring for the old and young," to the life ideals of "cultivating oneself, managing the family, governing the country, and bringing peace to the world" upheld by the traditional social elite in China, we can see that charity starts from oneself, from the family, from the clan, and the benevolent act is mainly embodied in the pattern of the familiar society, from oneself to others, from near to far, from close to distant, and from small to large (Xiao-Jin & Shi-Ping, 2017).

Small-scale peasant economy and patrilineal society are the basis for the formation of philanthropic culture in China. Philanthropic traditions represented by Confucianism are historical products that adapt to the small-scale peasant economy and patrilineal society. From the day of its inception, traditional China formed a community of "family-oriented" that is inextricably linked with the patrilineal clan system. The "country" is an extension and expansion of the "family," and the "family" is the cell and foundation of the "country." Under the feudal social form, the monarch became the "patriarch" in the society of "family and state," that is, the patriarch in the highly centralized and unified society. On the one hand, it strengthened people's emphasis on natural blood kinship and family affection, thus making Confucian traditions have a patriarchal and benevolent color, and "love of kinship" or "benevolence" from elders to juniors entered people's lives and thoughts (Ge, 2020). Since the family-style charity generated by love of blood kinship cannot benefit strangers who do not have moral responsibility, the beneficiaries of charity are limited to relatives or acquaintances within the "circle," namely, clans, neighborhoods, and relatives and friends. Therefore, Confucian philanthropic culture has the characteristics of introversion, and philanthropy is limited to ethical activities between blood kinship. On the other hand, feudal autocracy pushed the patriarchal "benevolence" towards the ethical and political "benevolent governance," and Confucian culture became the way of governance and a political tool for the ruling class to ease class contradictions and maintain political stability and governance needs (Hartig, 2015). Because the monarch has an absolute position and power of political and ideological control, the social system tends to be official-oriented, and it also greatly enhances the members' dependence on the state. The officialization of philanthropic subjects and the moral education of philanthropy were generated in this social environment, which had a direct impact on the development path of philanthropy in later society (Yang & Tamney, 2011).

3. European Culture and Philanthropic Behavior

The ideological source of Western philanthropic culture mainly comes from the "love for all" values of Christianity. Christianity starts with the proposition that humans have original sin and evil nature, and promotes "love for all." "Love for all" includes two aspects: "love for God" and "love for others as oneself." Loving God is the basis of ethics, because God gives life to people, gives people a home, and is the cornerstone of all existence (Edward Collins Vacek, 1994; Murphy et al., 2003). Therefore, believing in God and loving God are the most basic beliefs in life. Loving people is the embodiment of ethics. Christianity transforms the absolute "love" of God into the love between

people, believing that people should love and care for each other regardless of their relationship, including loving enemies and loving the weak. They abide by the basic commandment of "love others as oneself" and regard this highest realm of love as the most basic code of conduct in life. "Love for all" has two notable features: first, it surpasses the natural emotions of sympathy, blood relationship, and other natural feelings that humans are born with, and establishes "love for all" on the universal human care and humanitarian basis. Second, it excludes expectations of moral return, making the moral belief of "love for all" a kind of instinctive significance inherent in life. In this way, Christian culture is always filled with a spirit of "loving for love," "being moral for morality," and valuing love for its own sake. It is a kind of love with strong universalism that transcends national, skin color, class, gender, culture, and national boundaries. The moral emotional thoughts of guilt, humility, and repentance are associated with the "love for all" culture. "Guilt" comes from humans' "original sin" (Copan, 2003; McFarland, 2011).

The formation and development history of Western nations and states are the basis for the generation of Western philanthropic culture. The philanthropic culture based on Christian ethics is related to the formation and development history of Western nations. Christianity originated in the Palestine region of the Middle East (Okkenhaug & Sanchez-Summerer, 2020), where the geographical environment of the Five Seas and Three Continents made ancient Egyptian civilization, ancient Babylonian civilization, ancient Jewish civilization, ancient Greek civilization, and ancient Roman civilization collide and merge. The competition and wars among many tribes also created conditions for continuous learning and integration between each other, which makes Christianity culture inherently inclusive. Christian culture is more influenced by the Jewish people and their Judaism. The Jewish people are a nation that has suffered and been tortured. They have been conquered and ruled by strong countries such as Babylon, Persia, and Rome. It is precisely this difficult environment that has made them a nation with independence, enterprising learning, and their own culture and ideological values different from surrounding nations (Kautsky, 2014). They have a distinctive spirit of patience, equality, and love in the Christian culture that is derived from Judaism, and charity is the best expression of love. It is the spiritual pillar that builds the soul of Westerners. The deep-rooted philanthropic culture based on Christian ethics is also related to the formation and development history of Western nations (Speer, 1910). Taking the United States as an example, on the one hand, the relationship between various immigrant groups shown in the immigration process itself has exceeded the category of family ties based on kinship and expanded to the range of social strangers. This reality makes the universal love and kindness advocated by Christianity become the spiritual motivation for immigrants from different countries to settle down in a foreign land, and the recognition and recognition of the people also promote the widespread dissemination and deepening of Christian charity ideas in the folk. As a result, Western philanthropic culture has unique openness. On the other hand, the difficult immigration process is also the process of the Christian tradition from Europe to America. It not only allows people to be influenced by the tradition of charity, but also benefits from the generous donations of groups and individuals for charity activities, thus gaining a deeper understanding of the importance of establishing a mutual assistance and mutual survival environment. This not only generates the "mutual aid culture" in the United States, but also creates the behavior of Westerners; it not only makes mutual aid activities at the community level common, but also lays the foundation for the philanthropy industry in the United States (Harris & Bridgen, 2012). In Western society, charity has become a common personal awareness and voluntary action, a highly popular mass culture.

4. Philanthropic Behavior and Culture Difference

Philanthropy is a concept that has existed for centuries and has played a significant role in shaping societies and cultures around the world. It refers to the act of donating money, time, or resources to charitable causes, and it is a behavior that individuals or social organizations consciously complete.

However, while philanthropy is a universal value that guides and constrains human actions, cultural differences can significantly impact how it manifests.

Cultural factors such as expectations of social responsibility and government roles, religious beliefs, and the concept of individualism versus collectivism can influence philanthropic behavior. For example, in Asian cultures, philanthropy is deeply rooted in religious traditions such as Confucianism and Buddhism, which emphasize ethics and harmony. Philanthropy is often limited to ethical activities between blood kinship, such as helping family members or members of the same clan. In contrast, Western philanthropic culture is based on Christian ethics, which emphasize universal love and kindness. This culture of philanthropy often extends beyond family and is more inclusive of strangers and those in need.

4.1 Duty-based philanthropy

Duty-based philanthropy is a noble concept that emphasizes the moral obligations of individuals to give back to society. It is a selfless act that is rooted in the belief that every person has a moral obligation to contribute towards the betterment of society.

Duty-based philanthropy, is deeply intertwined with the teachings of Confucianism and has been an important aspect of Chinese culture for centuries. The idea of giving back to society is deeply ingrained in Chinese culture, and philanthropy has played a crucial role in promoting the welfare of society. Confucianism views benevolence as a hierarchy, with blood relationship being the fundamental social relationship and the original meaning of benevolence being to coordinate the relationship between people. From this perspective, the charitable pattern from "family comes first" to "universal love" and then to "benefiting the world" was formed. Philanthropic traditions represented by Confucianism are historical products that adapt to the small-scale peasant economy and patrilineal society in China. Since the family-style charity generated by love of blood kinship cannot benefit strangers who do not have moral responsibility, Confucian philanthropic culture has the characteristics of introversion, and philanthropy is limited to ethical activities between blood kinship.

One example of duty-based philanthropy in China is the concept of "filial piety," which is deeply rooted in Confucianism and emphasizes the importance of respecting and taking care of one's parents and elders. This concept extends to the idea of taking care of one's family and community, and is seen as a moral obligation that every individual owes to society. Another example is the tradition of donating to religious institutions, which has a long history in China. Donations to temples and monasteries are seen as a way of promoting cultural and spiritual enrichment, and are considered a form of duty-based philanthropy.

In contemporary China, duty-based philanthropy continues to play an important role in promoting the welfare of society. Many wealthy individuals and corporations have established charitable foundations and donated large sums of money to support a wide range of causes, including education, healthcare, and disaster relief. In recent years, there has been a growing trend towards "venture philanthropy," which focuses on using business principles to achieve social goals and address social problems.

Christianity is a religion that emphasizes the importance of a universal concept of love that transcends geographical, skin color, class, gender, cultural, and national boundaries. The concept of love for all is a kind of love that has strong universalism at its core, which places great importance on loving and caring for others regardless of their relationship with you. Charity is regarded as the best expression of love, and it is the spiritual pillar that builds the soul of Westerners. The deep-rooted philanthropic culture based on Christian ethics has played a significant role in the formation and development of Western nations. The difficult immigration process is also a reflection of the Christian tradition that spread from Europe to America. Through this process, people were exposed to the tradition of charity and were able to benefit from the generous donations of groups and individuals who supported charity activities. This exposure led to a deeper understanding of the importance of establishing a mutually supportive and cooperative environment.

This emphasis on mutual support and cooperation has not only generated a "mutual aid culture" in the United States but also shaped the behavior of Westerners. It has made mutual aid activities at the community level more common and has laid the foundation for the philanthropy industry in the United States. In Western society, charity has become a common personal awareness and voluntary action, and it is now a highly popular mass culture. As a result, charity has become an expression of love and compassion that reflects the universal values of Christianity, which emphasize the importance of loving and caring for others. This love and compassion are expressed not only through charity but also through acts of kindness and support for those in need. Thus, the concept of love for all has become an essential part of Western culture and has played a significant role in the formation and development of Western societies.

Understanding cultural differences is crucial for philanthropic organizations to effectively engage donors and address social and environmental challenges. By adopting a culturally sensitive approach, organizations can tailor their strategies to effectively engage donors across different cultures. For example, in some cultures, there may be a preference for supporting local charities or organizations that align with cultural values. In others, philanthropic donations may be directed towards religious institutions, environmental causes, or education. By understanding these preferences and tailoring their strategies accordingly, philanthropic organizations can better engage donors and help to address some of the world's most pressing social and environmental challenges.

Cross-cultural partnerships can also provide valuable opportunities for organizations to learn from and collaborate with others in different cultural contexts. By partnering with organizations in different cultures, philanthropic organizations can gain insights into cultural differences and develop more effective strategies for engaging donors and addressing social and environmental challenges. Additionally, cross-cultural partnerships can help organizations to build trust and establish long-lasting relationships with donors and stakeholders across different cultures.

In conclusion, philanthropy is a universal value that has guided human actions throughout history, but cultural differences can significantly impact how it manifests. Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for philanthropic organizations to effectively engage donors and make a significant impact on society. By adopting a more culturally sensitive approach and leveraging cross-cultural partnerships, philanthropic organizations can create positive change and address some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges facing our world today.

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