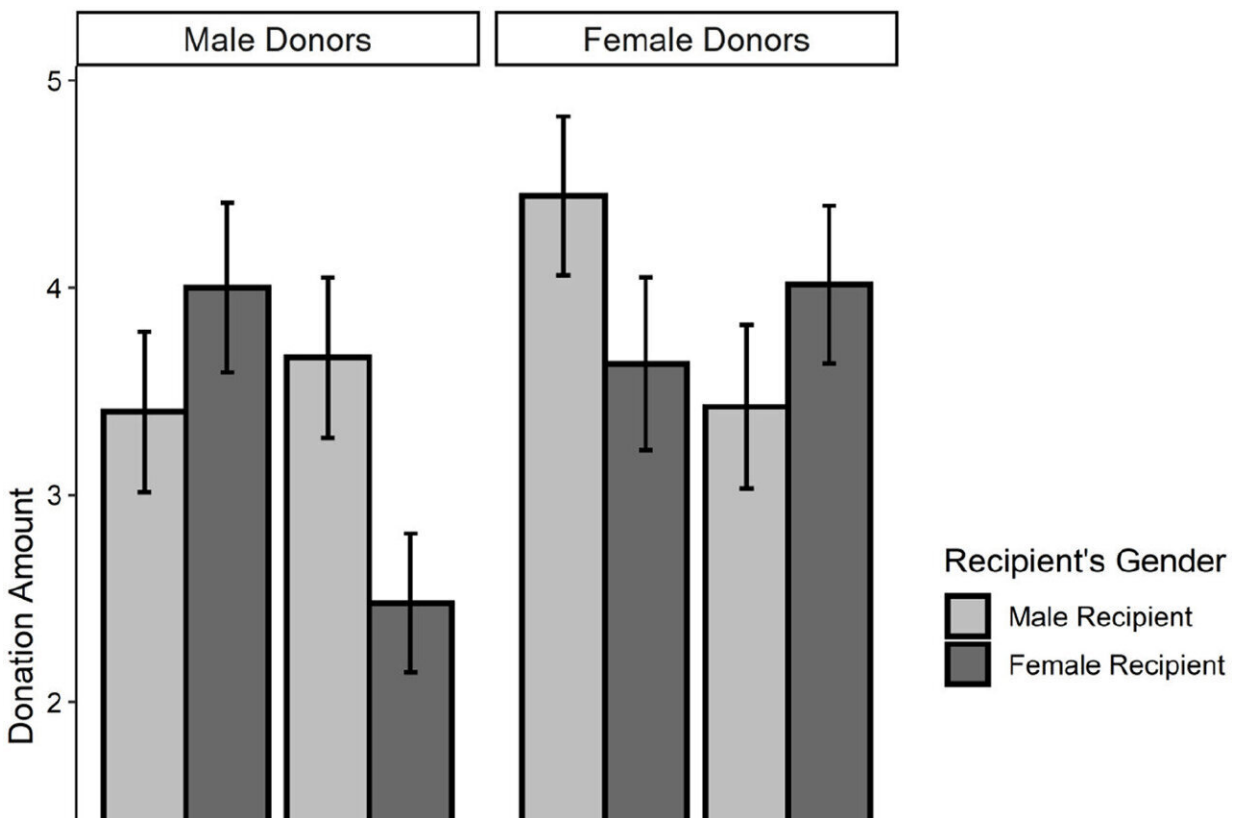


# Study finds men will donate to women in need, provided doing so is not a violation of male hegemony

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Mean donation amounts as a function of donation context, recipient's gender, and donor's gender: Study 1. *Note.*  $N_{\text{men}} = 284$ ,  $N_{\text{women}} = 282$ . Error bars represent standard errors. Credit: *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* (2022). DOI: 10.1177/13684302221108437

A new study by Tel Aviv and Ben-Gurion Universities reveals a phenomenon of "chivalrous sexism" towards women in need. According to the study, about 2 out of 3 men (62%) would be willing to help a woman in distress whose house burned down—but fewer men (45%) would donate money to a woman whose business burned down.

On the other hand, when the researchers examined the willingness of men to donate to other men, the trend that emerged was the opposite—according to which most men preferred to donate to men whose business was burned thus maintaining the male hegemony.

The researchers explain the differences by the fact that men tend to help women out of 'chivalrous sexism'. Helping a 'damsel in distress' is part of a men's gender role, which is why a man will open the door for a woman or pull over to help her change a flat tire. But this help depends on the context: men help women as long as it does not challenge the male hegemony, in other words, if help will empower women, then men will be less willing to help them.

The new study was conducted by Prof. Danit Ein-Gar from the Coller School of Management at Tel-Aviv University in collaboration with Dr. Orli Barkat, a post-doctoral student at Princeton University, and Prof. Tahila Kogot from Ben-Gurion University. The results of the study were published in *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*.

According to Prof. Ein-Gar, 566 men and women from the U.S. participated in an online experiment. A [cash prize](#) of 10 dollars was drawn among the participants in the experiment, and the participants were asked to answer whether they would like to donate this amount to a man whose house burned down, to a woman whose house burned down, to a man whose business burned down, or to a woman whose business burned down.

Beyond the disparity in willingness to help women whose business burned down, compared to those whose house burned down, the findings also show that men donated an average amount of \$4 (almost half of the winning amount) to a woman whose house burned down, compared to only \$2.48 to a woman whose business house burned down. The findings were replicated in another experiment conducted among management students at Tel Aviv University.

Prof. Ein-Gar says, "We presented the participants with two identical requests for help from two individuals in need, a man and a woman, whose home or business caught fire. We found that the biggest differences, both in the actual willingness to donate and the donation amount, were when male subjects had to choose between helping a woman's home and helping a woman's business."

"It should be noted that we did not present the fund request as a financial investment but rather as a donation: a fire raged in the area and consumed houses and shops, and now those in need are asking for help to rebuild their lives. When men were asked to donate, some of them found it easier to donate to a woman in her domestic, needy, and weak place than to a woman raising funds to rebuild her business".

Prof. Ein-Gar adds, "The new research reveals the boundaries of male 'chivalry'—and these boundaries are set by men's hegemony in the business world. That is, gentlemanliness reaches up to the point where it does not threaten their dominant status. A similar effect was not found when men were asked to donate to another man whose business burned down, compared to a man whose house burned down. This means that men do not donate less to businesses due to some [business](#) threat, but only donate less to women's businesses."

**More information:** Orly Bareket et al, I will help you survive but not thrive: Helping decisions in situations that empower women, *Group*

*Processes & Intergroup Relations* (2022). [DOI: 10.1177/13684302221108437](https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302221108437)

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