Investigating Human Factors in Willingness to Donate to the Small-scale Non-profit Organizations in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

The success of small-scale non-profit organizations (NPOs) highly depends on receiving donations from people through connecting with them, where the online presence can play a significant role. However, willingness to make such donations circumvents multiple important human factors that are little studied in the literature. Therefore, in this study, we survey 42 people in a developing country (Bangladesh) to investigate their willingness to donate to small-scale NPOs. Our findings reveal that people show a willingness to donate to small-scale NPOs that have an online presence and their lack of trust gets significantly reduced if those organizations have an online presence. We also find out several influential factors that inspire people to donate. Further, based on the feedback we receive, we identify design features that should be present in the online presence of small-scale NPOs.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **Human-centered computing** → **Empirical studies in collaborative and social computing**.

KEYWORDS

Non-profit organizations, Donation, Trust, Survey

1 INTRODUCTION

NPOs utilize their online presence (page, website, app, etc.) to connect with people to achieve their organization-level goals [6, 14]. In this aspect, trust in the organization is critical when a donation decision is formed [10]. However, small-scale NPOs face coordination and communication challenges in getting public donations distinct from those of large organizations [6]. In this context, studying human factors in willingness to donate to the small-scale NPOs is little explored in the literature [6, 10, 14].

Therefore, in this paper, we specifically focus on the small-scale NPOs and study people's willingness to donate to those NPOs. To do so, we perform an online survey of 42 people in Bangladesh. We find out people's familiarity with small-scale NPOs and influential factors that impact their donation decisions to those NPOs. Besides, we uncover their perspectives of trust in those NPOs. Thus, we investigate two different research questions -

- **RQ1:** Are people willing to donate to small-scale NPOs? What inspires them to donate?
- **RQ2:** Do trust issues prevail with the willingness to donate? How does online presence play its role in such cases?.

We present an in-depth look into people's perspectives on small-scale NPOs with a focus on trust pertinent to their online presence. These findings will help the HCI community to better understand people's donation tendency to small-scale NPOs and the need to implement assistive technological solutions for small-scale NPOs to get adequate donations by elevating donors' trust.

2 RELATED WORK

The impact of communication has been revealed as an important factor to ensure donation [12]. Several studies [7, 12] have explored motivating factors of donation from the perspective of donors and existing mechanisms of influencing donations employed by NPOs. A study explores the influences of factors such as purpose, presence, proximity, and partnership on willingness to donate towards NPOs [7]. Additionally, trust in an organization has been identified as an influencing factor for donation decisions because the trustworthiness of the information shared is of particular importance for the people [4, 15]. Sociodemographic characteristics, accreditation, and mission of the NPOs work as determinants of the people's trust [2].

Moreover, a study [6] shows the need to increase connection and familiarity with the public is an issue that all small-scale NPOs face since they are constrained by limited financial resources, technical expertise, and human resources. However, hardly any studies investigate donation decisions and the trust of people pertinent to the use of online presence by small-scale NPOs. In the present work, we investigate people's willingness to donate to small-scale NPOs as a possible form of their intention to act after believing in the credibility of those NPOs.

3 METHODOLOGY

This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the corresponding author's institution. We surveyed 42 people in Bangladesh aged between 18 to 50. Among our 42 participants, 18 reported as males, and 24 reported as females. All participants were recruited through open online communication via publicly available email addresses and public social media groups. The questionnaire of the survey was distributed using Google form among the survey participants. The survey questionnaire had four sections. The first section covered demographic information. The second section focused on people's familiarity and experiences with small-scale NPOs. The second section covered influential factors pertinent to people's donation decisions in small-scale NPOs. Finally, the third section has investigated people's trust issues with small-scale NPOs with a focus on the online presence of those NPOs. Note that, small-scale NPOs have limited financial resources, technical expertise, and human resources [6, 16]. Therefore, we have mentioned in the survey questionnaire that the NPOs that have few members and limited resources are considered small-scale to our survey participants. There are 32 questions in the questionnaire. Some of the questions are: *Are you familiar with any small-scale non-profit organizations?, Are you willing to donate to any small-scale non-profit organizations?, Are you familiar with any small-scale non-profit organizations' online presence (pages/ organization websites/ organization apps?), Did you ever donate to them through their online presence (pages/ organization websites/ organization apps?), What inspired you to donate, i.e., what perspective(s) and/or motivation(s) were there behind making your donation(s)?, What factors do you look for in a small-scale non-profit organization while donating?, Do you have any trust issues with those organizations?, Rate your trust over the small-scale non-profit organizations that do not have any online presence (page/ organization website/ organization app?), Rate your trust in small-scale non-profit organizations that have an online presence (page/ organization website/ organization app?)*

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

We structure our findings aligned with our survey sections.

4.1 Familiarity with Small-scale NPOs

From Figure 1 (a), we observe that most people are willing to donate to small-scale NPOs, however, a lot of them are not familiar with any small-scale NPOs and their online presence (websites, apps, pages, etc.). A significant number of people have donated to small-scale NPOs through their online presence. However, we notice that most of them did not donate to such organizations that do not have

any online presence. These imply that people are more willing to donate to small-scale NPOs who have an online presence.

4.2 Donation Decisions

From Figure 1 (b), we notice that 'Social Welfare', 'Ethics', and 'Religious Perspective' are the top influential factors to donate to small-scale NPOs. We also observe from Figure 1 (c) that, while donating to such organizations most people look out for the purpose and credibility of that organization. This points out that the credibility of small-scale NPOs is an important factor for people to donate to such organizations.

4.3 Trust Issues with Small-scale NPOs

From Figure 2 (a), we notice that a lot of people have trust issues with small-scale NPOs. From Figure 2 (b), we observe that people have more trust in small-scale NPOs with an online presence. The mean value trust issues of people (n=42) with small-scale NPOs in case of having an online presence is 3.72 out of 5, and in case of not having an online presence is 2.83 out of 5. Moreover, we perform a Chi-squared test [5] to examine if there is a significant difference between trust issues of people (n=42) with small-scale NPOs in case of having and not having an online presence. The p-value we find is $0.000051(< 0.05)$, which confirms that there is indeed a significant difference in trust issues based on the online presence of small-scale NPOs. These indicate that having an online presence can significantly improve people's trust in small-scale NPOs. Additionally, Figure 2 (c) shows the features such as posts about ongoing ventures and working processes of the organization should be present in the online presence of a small-scale NPO to reduce people's trust issues.

5 DISCUSSION

People show enthusiasm to donate to small-scale NPOs, however, they tend to have a lack of familiarity with such NPOs. This indicates that small-scale NPOs face connection and communication constraints which contributes to prior work [6]. Furthermore, most of our participants donated to small-scale NPOs that have an online presence which confirms that online presence is an important factor for people in making donation decisions. Though people showed their intention to donate to small-scale organizations, they have trust issues with such NPOs. In this context, these trust issues are significantly reduced if small-scale NPOs have an online presence according to people. These extend prior studies [10, 14], which confirmed that trust is an important factor in donation decisions. It is apparent that 'trust is selective' drawn from the lens of the rational approach of trust [11]. Consequently, we consider the emerged trust issues of people donating to small-scale NPOs are granted by default which is built on a system that presumes familiarity and self-advocacy increases trust [8, 9]. Here, the online presence of small-scale NPOs increases the familiarity of such organizations to people. In this context, we also discover some features such as showcasing ongoing ventures and being transparent about the working process of small-scale NPOs are important in the online presence to increase familiarity and connectivity. Thus, our findings extend previous work [10] which shows the perception of specific design factors as well as trust in the organization are critical when
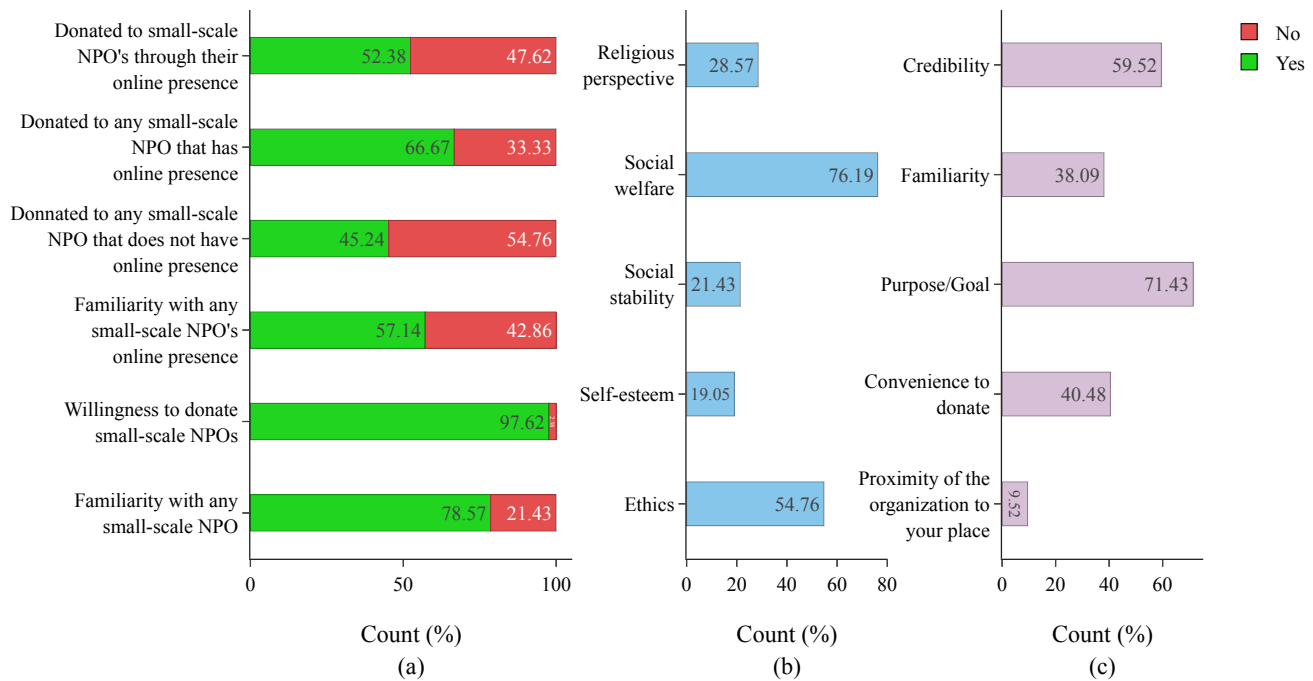
Figure 1: (a) shows people's (n=42) familiarity with small-scale NPOs (b) shows motivational factors of people (n=42) while donating, and (c) shows factors that people (n=42) consider while donating to a small-scale NPO
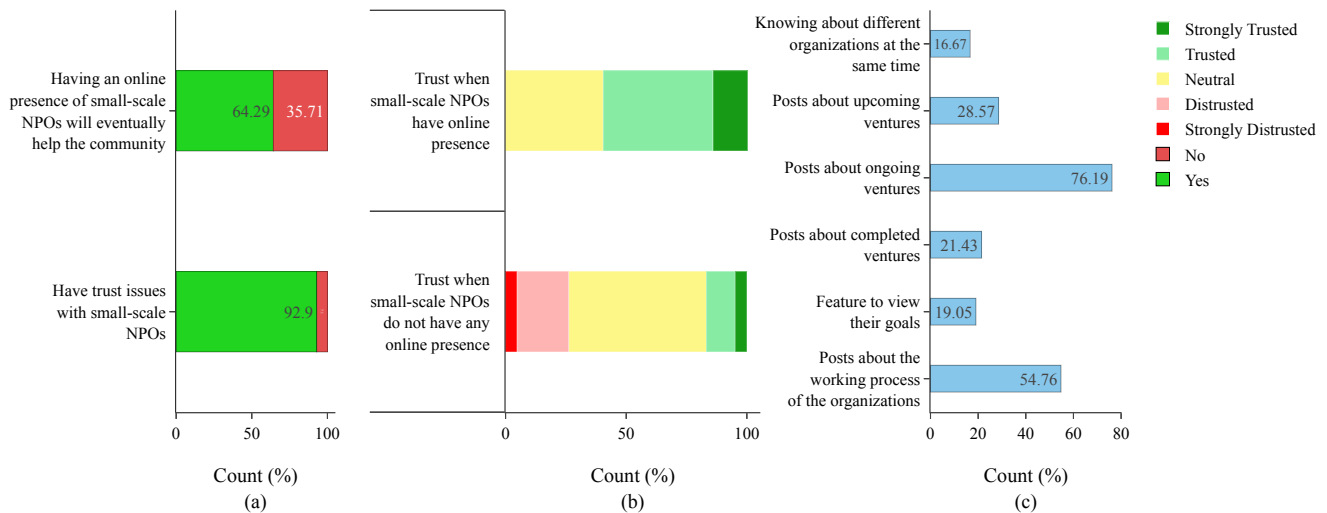

Figure 2: (a) shows people's (n=42) trust issues with small-scale NPOs (b) shows the rating of trust (n=42) when small-scale NPOs do not have and have an online presence (Response scale: 1=Strongly Distrusted, 5=Strongly Trusted), (c) people's (n=42) perspectives on the features that should be present in an online presence (websites, app, pages, etc.) for small-scale NPOs

an online donation decision is formed. These findings also provide pointers for small-scale NPOs on how they can better motivate donations online.

The role of communication between the NPOs and people has drawn the attention of the HCI community [7, 10, 14]. However, prior studies [7, 14] do not investigate whether people's behaviors change with the scale of the NPOs and if it changes, how people perceive the existences and activities of small-scale NPOs. Therefore, we investigate what *inspires* people to donate and the potential *factors* people look for to donate in small-scale NPOs. We find that five reasons- 1) ethics, 2) self-esteem, 3) social stability, 4) social welfare, and 5) religious perspective *inspire* them to donate. Thus, our findings contribute to prior work [3] where charitable giving was reported to be driven by eight factors. Furthermore, among existing work, few studies [1, 13] explore religious affiliations with nonprofit work in developing countries, where such sentiments carry great significance in people's lives. A study [13] conducted on mosques in Bangladesh showed that integrating religious sentiments in technological interventions increased donations. The findings of our study correlate to this study, where religious perspective is one of the top inspiring factors among influential factors for donating to small-scale NPOs. We also find that purpose, credibility, familiarity, proximity, and convenience to donate as factors that influence their selection of small-scale NPOs for donation. Thus, our study extends prior research [7] which shows that factors such as purpose, presence, proximity, partnership, and willingness are related to how donors choose an NPO to donate.

6 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

The possibilities to contact donors often seem not to be fully utilized [4] in online fundraising, which raises the question for small-scale NPOs on how they can better motivate donations online. In this context, our study explores people's willingness to donate to small-scale NPOs with a special focus on trust pertinent to those organizations' online presence. We find that people are willing to donate to small-scale NPOs being motivated by ethics and religious perspective. However, they face trust issues, which can be lessened through the online presence of those organizations. Thus, implementing technological solutions for small-scale NPOs focusing on elevating people's trust in those organizations is a critical need. In this context, we also uncover some features that seem to be required in the online presence of small-scale NPOs. In the future, our plan is to realize all these findings on the road to developing a comprehensive solution for effectively bridging the small-scale NPOs with people to facilitate efficient and trustworthy donation collection.

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