Religion and Paternalism: International Relief and Development Organization Mission Statements

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14th International Conference of the ISTR (July 2021)

Abstract

International relief and development organizations spend billions of dollars annually with the goal of improving human welfare across the globe. Yet, as profound deprivation and inequality persist, critics of international humanitarianism point to paternalism as one of its root problems. At the same time, religion is deeply intertwined with relief and development, both historically and in the present. Therefore, this study probes for a link between religion and paternalism in international non-governmental organizations (INGO). Results suggest that religion, in the aggregate, is linked neither to higher nor to lower levels of paternalism in INGO mission statements. However, religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical mission statements are different. That is, statistical analysis supports a causal relationship between religious (non-evangelical) identity and increased paternalism in mission statement discourse compared with both secular and evangelical organizations.

Introduction

Preeminent development economist Jeffrey Sachs wrote an audaciously titled New York Times best-selling book: *The End of Poverty* (Sachs 2006). Its thesis is that strong international commitment to centrally designed and coordinated plans would make possible the end of poverty. Yet, critics of development point to the large populations that remain marginalized and deeply impoverished despite hundreds of billions of dollars of international aid in the post-WWII era. One of the foremost skeptics of large development programs, William Easterly, wrote a trenchant criticism of the aid industry entitled *The White Man's Burden* (Easterly 2007). Invoking Rudyard Kipling's infamous poem penned during the height of Western imperialism in the late 19th century, Easterly connects development failure to paternalistic ideologies.

This paper, following the intuition of Easterly and others, probes for paternalism in one of the most important articulations of an organization's identity: the mission statement. It does so by examining the relationship between paternalistic language in mission statements and religious organizational identity. Analysis of a subset of U.S.-based international relief and development organization mission statements suggests that religious organizations, as a unified category, are neither more nor less likely to use paternalistic or empowerment language than are their secular cousins. However, evangelical organization mission statements are significantly less likely to contain paternalistic language than are those of non-evangelical religious organizations (principally mainline Protestant INGOs). That is to say, religion matters for paternalistic development discourse, but it depends on the religious category.

Key Words: relief and development – paternalism – religion – mission statements – non-governmental organizations

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Literature Review

In response to the persistence of poverty and inequality, critical theories of development point to the ***paternalism*** that imbues much work in this sector (Peet & Hartwick 2015). The "tyranny of experts" often subjugates local knowledge and leadership (Easterly 2015). Barnett (2011) writes about the "paradox of emancipation and domination" within humanitarianism (p. 11). A more radical critique targets the ideology of development as inherently illogical (infinite growth in a finite world), environmentally destructive and as an agent of marginalization linked to ideologies of colonization (Rist 2008; W. Sachs 2000). Over time, these critical perspectives have gained greater currency and have spurred some to shift toward less hierarchical approaches, such as "participatory" development (Angeles and Gursten 2000; Green 2012; Simon et. al. 2003) and "development as freedom" (Nussbaum 1997; Sen 2000). However, paternalism remains prevalent in the relief and development sector. Its intractability may be due, at least in part, to accountability toward donors rather than toward beneficiaries (Tamzil 2016), organizational age or generation (Korten 1987), or models of international volunteer and service (IVS) that privilege wealthy volunteers (Sherraden et al. 2008). Tension remains between promoting civic equality and offering charitable assistance, or between "empowerment" and "paternalism," even in projects that utilize "participatory" methods (Eliasoph, 2009).

Paternalism may be endemic to, or at least a common characteristic of, the third sector itself. Salamon's (1987) influential analysis identified "philanthropic paternalism" as one of the four major categories of "voluntary failure." Similarly, Kallman et al. (2016) include paternalism as one of the five ***institutional logics*** of the third sector; Wolfgang Sachs (2000) identifies the development logic of creating clients out of victims; and Barnett (2012) describes paternalism as an "organizing principle" of international humanitarianism. Hammack's and Heydemann's insightful edited volume, *Globalization, Philanthropy, and Civil Society: Projecting Institutional Logics Abroad*, describes institutional logics as "organizational arrangements for putting ideas into action;" and observes that "ideas, organizational forms, and societal contexts are linked in ways that have both internal and external effects" (2009, 7). Paternalism is an element of INGO organizational culture and an institutional logic influencing an organization's discourse, structure and actions.

A factor that should be considered in any discussion of paternalism and international non-governmental organizations is the ***influence of religion***. Religion is a fundamental fact of international relief and development—funders, INGO leaders and staff, local partners and program beneficiaries are often religious. For example, 34% of the organizations engaged in some form of international relief and development pulled from the IRS Microdata file for this study are religious. Similarly, a recent study of Canadian international development NGOs found that 40% are faith-based (Davis, 2019). In addition, the post-World War II boom in humanitarianism began with a strong religious inflection. Organizations such as World Relief (1944), World Vision (1950) and Compassion International (1952) are among the prominent religious relief and development organizations founded in the aftermath of the war. Moreover, some non-sectarian relief and development efforts have noteworthy religious roots. Oxfam, a famously independent organization (even refusing government support to avoid conflicts of interests), illustrates this phenomenon with the influential role of Quakers in its founding (1942). In addition, Moyn (2015) identifies Christian personalism as the primary source for human rights discourse leading up to the creation and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. This document is a touchstone for international humanitarianism and development (e.g. it serves as a referent for the

Sustainable Development Goals). Taking all of this into consideration, Barnett & Stein's (2012) description of the prevalence of the "sacred" in contemporary relief and development is apt.

Given challenges related to paternalism in international humanitarianism and the prevalence of religion in the sector, the relative paucity of ***empirical research on religion and paternalism*** in international relief and development is surprising. That said, a variety of insightful pieces, some theoretical and others empirical, have been published on this subject. Haynes (2007) posits the potential for religion to promote both empowering and hierarchical leadership. Similarly, Appleby (1999) observes that religion can contribute to the growth of malevolent and benevolent forces in the same communities. Barnett (2012) concludes that both secular and religious humanitarian organizations are inherently paternalistic. Moyn (2015) asserts that faith-based human rights advocacy is inherently hierarchical. Also, Thaut (2009) notes the contemporary concern that faith-based humanitarianism continues as a thinly veiled version of the "religious imperialism" characteristic of missionary endeavors of prior generations. Olson (2011) finds "us" versus "them" discourse is an important element of religious sub-culture. Alternatively, some scholars highlight liberative theological elements of various religious traditions—Buddhist (Sivaraksa 1992), Catholic (Gutierrez 1988), and Jewish (Kliksberg 2003). Others speculate that partnership preference, potentially a sign of an empowering perspective, derives from Christian theology (Sugden 1997) or from the built-in networks of faith traditions (Barnett & Stein 2012, p. 21; Ferris 2011). In addition, Moyer et al. (2012) found that "empowerment," "partnership," "dignity," and "justice"—words that arguably connote a less paternalistic institutional logic—are among the five most frequently occurring terms (the other being "transformation") in a sample of Kenyan faith-based NGOs.

This paper explores one possible specific and empirically testable linkage between religion and paternalism in international relief and development organizations: ***mission statement*** language. Mission statements reflect the general vision of an organization (Kibuuka 2001), expressing the need being met, or "the why" of the institution (Grace 2003). Organizational leadership engages in an iterative process of aligning and re-aligning the mission statement with social facts as the organization's reality changes (Schiewer 2017). This connection between social facts and mission is consistent with the theory of institutional logics, described above, in which ideas are operationalized, consciously and sub-consciously, under the influence of context (social and otherwise). In addition, Hammack and Heydemann (2009) note a scholarly tradition highlighting the connection between, on the one hand, an organization's mission or purpose, and on the other hand, its structure and operations; while Swales and Rogers (1995) describe the mission statement as a "projection" of an organization's culture.

A stream of mission statement literature examines the link between mission statements and organizational success. Mission statements and firm performance are related (Bart and Baetz 1998). This relation may derive from the status of mission statements as an organizational genre designed to maximize employee buy-in (Swales and Rogers 1995), or the mission statement's impact on employee recruitment as seen in youth and recreation service organizations (Brown and Yoshioka 2003). Similarly, the strongest motivating factor for working at faith-based organizations is their mission (Bassous 2015). In the health sector, success of a hospital and its mission relates to alignment between the mission statement and the organization (Bart and Tabone 1998). By contrast, no significant relationship between financial performance and mission statements exists for a group of women's rights nonprofit organizations (Kirk and Nolan 2010). Lastly, as it relates to fundraising, an important element of success for third-sector organizations, nonprofit CEOs understand the importance of aligning funding streams with the mission statement (Kearns et. al.

2014). These papers underscore the importance of mission statements to philanthropic organizational success and endurance, and thus their utility as a subject of inquiry.

One of the central intersections of the present study, ***religion and mission statements***, is the subject of a number of scholarly articles. Two pioneering papers look to mission statements as a major element for constructing a definition of religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs) (Berger 2003), and for building a typology of faith-based organizations (Sider and Unruh 2004). Thaut (2009) concludes that the primary distinction between secular and faith-based humanitarian agencies is the mission. A pair of related, even if narrower, studies find that faith-based hospitals have more specific mission statements than do secular hospitals (Bart 2007); and that a set of Kenyan faith-based organizations clearly articulate their religious identity particularly in "self-descriptive texts such as mission statements" (Moyer et al. 2012, p. 10). However, this review of relevant literature did not encounter research on religion and paternalism in mission statements.

Finally, a variety of studies, several of which are already discussed above, utilize ***similar methods or samples*** to those employed in the methodology of this paper. Berger (2003) conducts qualitative analysis of a variety of textual data from a sample of 263 UN-affiliated religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs). Bart (2007) employs word-frequency analysis to understand mission statement data from 85 secular and 45 faith-based hospitals (130 total). Firmin and Gilson (2009) study mission statements of 107 Christian colleges and universities by coding for frequency of both educational and religious terminology. Moyer et al. (2012) review, qualitatively, mission statements and other "self-descriptive" texts from a sample of 40 Kenyan faith-based organizations. Bassous (2015) uses key-word frequency to analyze open-ended interviews of 30 employees of faith-based international humanitarian organizations. Davis (2019) distinguished between Canadian secular and faith-based development NGOs by using government data as well as a variety of NGO website page-types, particularly (a) mission, vision, and values; (b) about us; and (c) history.

Hypotheses

This study tests two closely related hypotheses (see Table 1 below). The first hypothesis posits that mission statements of secular and religious organizations differ in their development perspective. H1 does not propose the direction of difference. That is, it does not posit what development perspective, paternalism or empowerment, exists in the mission statements of secular or religious organizations. The literature reviewed is ambivalent in that regard. The second hypothesis tests the same concept with a slightly more detailed analysis: splitting the religious organizations into the two sub-sets of evangelical and non-evangelical, while retaining the secular subset. Specifically, H2 states that religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical organizations differ in development perspective.

Table 1 The Two Hypotheses Tested in this Study

H1	Religious and secular organization mission statements differ in development perspective.
H2	Religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical organization mission statements differ in development perspective.

Methodology

To begin with, this study utilizes ***public mission statements*** of the organizations as opposed to IRS mission data.[1] The argument of this paper is that a public mission statement more accurately represents the voice and thought of an organization than does a 990 form. Moreover, public mission statements should be a more consistent data-point than 990 submissions. The latter could be any number of things including a public mission statement, a paraphrase of that statement, a statement of organizational activities or a perfunctory description of the organization by a hurried accountant. To verify this methodological choice, I compared the public mission statement to IRS form 990 mission data for 30 randomly sampled organizations of the 187 INGOs analyzed in this study. The results show that the data from the two sources are different in 21 cases, similar in five instances, and only identical for four of the 30 organizations sampled for this methodological check. I coded generously for similarity in an attempt to mitigate bias in the results toward a finding that would support the choice to use public mission statements. The results of this random-sample comparison strongly suggest that using IRS mission data is not equivalent to using public mission statements. Future research on mission statements should address this question as it may seriously undermines studies that use 990 mission data as if it were equivalent to a public mission statement.

The ***population of organizations*** of interest to this research are all nonprofit organizations registered in the United States that engage in international relief and development. Because no definitive list of that population exists, this study's sample selection begins with the population of *Giving USA's* international affairs organizations. That list is composed principally of the IRS National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) code Q organizations within the IRS Microdata File. NTEE code Q is labelled "International, Foreign Affairs & National Security."[2] The IRS Microdata File is a subset of all registered 501(c)3 organizations and is selected to be statistically representative of the financial scale of the nonprofit sector. That is, larger organizations (as measured by value of assets) are over-represented in the sample. The rationale for oversampling in this way is to better understand sector-wide influences with the assumption that larger asset-class organizations have greater influence, on average, than do smaller asset-class organizations.

The total population of 501(c)3s is 292,919 and the Microdata File includes 13,750 of these organizations.[3] From this subset, *Giving USA* researchers selected both NTEE code Q organizations and international affairs organizations classified under other NTEE codes.[4] The resulting subset is 261 international affairs organizations. I further narrowed this sample of 261 organizations to only those engaged in international relief and development. This step was accomplished in two ways. First, I split the *Giving USA* list into (a) NTEE sub-codes Q30-39 ("International Relief and Development") plus NTEE sub-codes Q70-71("International Human Rights"); and (b) all other organizations.[5] This division almost perfectly bifurcated the sample into

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[1] In this paper, "public" mission statement signifies the mission statement of an organization as published on their public website or in publications such as an annual report. Public mission statements are often found in "about us" sections of an INGO's website.

[2] http://nccs.urban.org/classification/NTEE.cfm

[3] The IRS Microdata file for this study is from 2014. That is, *Giving USA* identified the international affairs organizations based on data from that year. However, all mission statements analyzed in this paper are from 2019 and 2020.

[4] This methodology recognizes the well-known inadequacy of NTEE codes. Interestingly, Fyall, Moore and Gugerty (2018) look at mission statements as more accurate than NTEE codes.

[5] The research team obtained NTEE codes for the 261 organizations from Charity Navigator's publicly available data: https://www.charitynavigator.org/.

131 presumedly international relief and development organizations (Q30-39 plus Q70-71) and 130 organizations presumed not to conduct international relief and development (all other NTEE codes). Secondly, because of the unreliability of NTEE codes I reviewed the entire set of 261 organizations manually: reading mission statements, website home-pages and, as necessary, program activity pages and 990 forms to assess organization activity type. As a result, 17 organizations were removed from the group of those presumed to belong to the international relief and development category; and 80 of those presumed not to be international relief and development organizations were added back.[6] The resulting sample is 194 international relief and development organizations from the IRS Microdata file.

In addition, this study augmented the modified *Giving USA* sample described immediately above with the addition of members of the *Accord Network*, which is a network of 101 "Christ-centered relief and development organizations."[7] Among Accord Network organizations, 25 members are not directly engaged in international relief and development and the purpose of an additional two members is unknown. I removed these 27 organizations from the sample by reading organizational website home pages and, as necessary, program activity pages to discern the nature of their activities. Accord Network members dropped from the sample include Christian colleges that teach relief and development courses, organizations engaged principally in religious activities, and several other miscellaneous organizational types. After this filtering, the ACCORD Network sample included 74 religious relief and development agencies. Among these organizations are prominent INGOs such as World Vision (one of the largest private relief and development agencies in the world), Samaritan's Purse (lead by Franklin Graham, son of deceased renowned evangelist, Billy Graham), and Compassion International (a large child-sponsorship INGO). As such, the sample of relief and development organizations is composed of 194 INGOs from the IRS Microdata File and 74 INGOs from the Accord Network.

Dependent Variable: following scholarly literature discussed earlier this study probes for paternalistic and empowering organizational logics. An expectation voiced or implied in an INGO's mission statement that relief and development is accomplished or provided principally via external agency, frequently of the organization in question, is a sign of a paternalistic or provision development perspective. Alternatively, an empowering perspective is reflected by mission statement language that prioritizes local agency of the capability of beneficiaries. ***This difference in development perspective is the dependent variable*** of both hypotheses*.*

The process to derive coding lists of provision and empowerment language consisted of several steps. To begin with, I identified all words with a frequency of five or more occurrences in the entire corpus of public mission statements. After removing 13 conjunctions and prepositions, the list of terms occurring five or more times included 169 words. Secondly, I reviewed these 169 terms to select words that communicate (a) empowerment or agency in beneficiary communities; and (b) provision by/agency of the international relief and development organization. Eight of the eleven words used for coding are from this step in the process. Thirdly, I added three terms or roots that communicate one of the two concepts of interest and that occur five or more times only after summing their multiple forms (i.e. equip/equipping, meet/meeting [needs], save/saves). Thus, as

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[6] The most common NTEE sub-codes of organizations removed from the *Giving USA* sample are Q05, Q11, Q12, Q20, and Q22. The most common NTEE sub-codes of organizations added back in to our sample are P20, Q05, Q11, Q12, Q40, and T30. The presence of three of these sub-codes in both the lists of those organizations removed and added back-in suggests that NTEE codes are not highly reliable in identifying international relief and development organizations.

[7] https://www.accordnetwork.org/

shown in Table 2, the coding lists include six terms or roots that indicate an empowerment and five that indicate a provision development perspective.

Table 2 Terms and Roots Indicating Development Perspective

Empowerment	Empower* – Enabl* – Equip* Strengthen – Access – Opportun*
Provision	Provi* – Serv* – Bring Meet – Save

The following are noteworthy terms or roots not included in the two lists used for coding: relief, develop*, transform* and improv*. "Relief" and "development" are problematic terms for this analysis because they frequently connote an industry or subsector of humanitarianism. For example, one mission statement enumerates the organization's core activities as "project support, training local leaders, disaster relief and education;" or another INGO conducts "health and development." Furthermore, the verb form, "develop," is used in ambiguous ways (e.g. "develop…water solutions"); and the gerund form, "developing," is used per custom to describe the "developing world."

In addition, I excluded the roots "transform*" and "improv*" because they are indeterminate with regard to agency—one can attempt to transform/improve another or empower another's efforts to transform or improve their own situation. Interestingly, when taken together, these two words occur almost equally across the various groups. That is, the underlying idea of the terms transform* and improv* are nearly as likely to occur in any of the subgroups tested in H1 and H2. However, in this study's sample, secular organizations use improv* much more frequently than religious organizations (either religious non-evangelical or evangelical organizations), whereas religious organizations are much more likely to use transform* than are secular organizations. I suspect the difference in usage of these two terms with similar connotations relates to the presence of "transform*" terminology in religious texts and discourse. The nature and significance of this apparent pattern would be an interesting question for future research on religion and development.

Independent Variable: to test hypothesis one, our research plan divided the organizations into *secular and religious* categories. Three researchers, including the author, coded the organizations derived from the *Giving USA* sample (described above) as secular or religious. Organizational website language, graphics or video (on home, programs or about us pages) that communicates either religious identity or religious activity classifies an INGO as religious (N=62). In the present study, for example, the name "Islamic Relief" or the motivation to serve "in Jesus' name" would count as religious identity. Religious activity includes any inherently religious endeavor conducted by the organization. Prayer meetings or study of sacred texts are prominent types of religious activity seen in many of the INGOs sampled. All other INGOs in the sample count as secular (N=132). The coding team, in collaboration with the research office at IUPUI, achieved an intercoder reliability score above 90%. In addition, all of the Accord Network relief and development organizations (N=74) are included in the religious organization subset for H1. Therefore, the sample for H1 is 132 secular and 130 (62+74 minus 6 that overlap between religious organizations from IRS Microdata File and the Accord Network) religious INGOs. To test the second hypothesis, I divided the same organizations used to test the first hypothesis into three categories: (a) the same 132 secular organizations mentioned above; (b) the 62 religious

organizations from the sample of IRS Microdata File minus the six that overlap with the Accord Network, which equals 56 total religious (non-evangelical) organizations; and (c) the 74 Accord Network/evangelical relief and development organizations.

Mission Statement Availability: mission statements for some organizations in each of our sub-sets are not available. For this reason, the final sample does not include 46 secular, 17 religious (non-evangelical), and 12 evangelical organizations from the sample described above. Therefore, the final sample size for H1, as shown in Table 3, is 86 secular and 101 religious INGO mission statements. In addition, the final sample size for H2, also shown in Table 3, is 86 secular, 39 religious (non-evangelical), and 62 evangelical INGO mission statements.

Table 3 Final Sample Size for Each Hypothesis Test

Organizations	Testing Hypothesis 1	Testing Hypothesis 2
Secular	86	86
Religious (Non-Ev.)	101	39
Evangelical		62

Control Variables: organization size and age are control variables for this study. The data for both controls come from IRS form 990. However, in some cases where IRS age data is not available, organizational websites supply the missing information. The aim in using these two control variables is to reduce the possibility of alternate explanations such as maturation of organizations over time (Korton, 1990). The first control, *age*, is important because one could speculate that older organizations are more likely to reflect the more paternalistic era in which they began and operated—even if, as is highly likely, their mission statement has changed in the interim. Development logics of a prior generation may persist to some degree even as INGOs evolve. The second control, *gross revenue*, is useful because larger and more bureaucratic organizations may behave differently than smaller INGOs. For example, they may be less agile in the speed with which they implement change (including in mission statements).

Statistical Analysis: this study employs chi-square tests for statistical significance with a significance level of 0.05. The chi-square test compares actual and expected distributions of data and returns a p-value indicating the likelihood that the null hypothesis, that there is no relationship between the variables, is correct. In the present research, the two variables employed in chi-square tests are religious categorization of the INGOs and development perspective evinced in their mission statements.

For more robust analysis of potential causality, I use binary logistical (logit) regression analysis with the same variables (religious categorization of the INGOs and development perspective in their mission statements). This step, performed with the statistical software R, utilizes the two control variables of age and size (gross revenue) of the organization; and employs a 0.05 significance level.

Results

Regarding the first hypothesis—that development perspective would differ between secular and religious organization mission statements—the findings are not supportive. Minimal difference exists between secular and religious organizations in their utilization of empowering language. Approximately one-third of mission statements for both groups contain empowering

language. By contrast, a statistically significant difference exists in the percentage of "provision" language in the two sets of mission statements: chi square testing yields a p value of 0.016. The percentage of mission statements evincing each type of development perspective are displayed in Table 5 below.

Table 5 H1 Test Results - % of MS with Empowerment/Provision Language

% of MS	Empowerment	Provision
Secular	30%	30%
Religious	35%	48%

However, binary logistical regression analysis does not support a causal relationship between religious organizational categorization and increased provision language. Therefore, ***H1 is false***, at least when religion is taken as a monolithic category.

This leads to H2, or the prediction that religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical organization mission statements will differ in development perspective. Again, following the ambivalence of the literature cited above, H2 makes no prediction of the direction of difference. To test this hypothesis, I split the religious INGOs in the sample into Accord Network members (N=62) and all other religious organizations (N=39). Until 2010, the Accord Network was named the Association of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations (AERDO) and its membership continues to be evangelical. Grouped in this fashion, little difference exists in the frequency of "empowerment" language. However, a major difference exists in the percentage of mission statements containing "provision" language across the (now) three sub-groups of mission statements. Religious (non-evangelical) organization mission statements (64%), as Table 6 shows, are much more likely to employ provision terminology than are those of evangelical (37%) or secular (30%) organizations.

Table 6 H2 Test Results - % of MS with Empowerment/Provision Language

% of MS	Empowerment	Provision
Secular	30%	30%
Religious (Non-Ev.)	36%	64%
Evangelical	34%	37%

Chi-square test results with a p-value of 0.00142 indicate that the difference in "provision" language between religious (non-evangelical) organizations and the other two organizational types is statistically significant. Furthermore, binary logistical regression analysis (see Table 6), controlling for age and size (gross revenue) of the organizations, supports a positive causal relationship between religious (non-evangelical) categorization and the use of "provision" language in mission statements.

Table 6 Logit Regression for "Provision" Language in Mission Statements

"Provision" Language	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
(Intercept)	-9.92E-01	4.14E-01	-2.396	0.0166
Age	8.51E-03	8.19E-03	1.039	0.2987
Revenue	-3.83E-10	1.07E-09	-0.359	0.7196
factor(Evangelical)	1.51E-02	4.31E-01	0.035	0.972
factor(Religious.Non.Ev)	1.22E+00	5.10E-01	2.4	0.0164*

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

The results suggest that ***the second hypothesis is true***. Development perspective is different between religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical INGO mission statements. The difference is only in relation to provision language (not empowerment language). Furthermore, the verification of H2 necessitates a revision of the findings with regard to H1. Taken as a singular category, religious INGO mission statements resemble secular mission statements in terms of development perspective. However, the H2 test results support a difference in development perspective between mission statements of secular and certain categories of religious organizations (in this case, non-evangelical). Therefore, a revised assessment of H1 would conclude that, depending on the religious organization type, it can be false or true. Table 7 summarizes the tests of the two hypotheses.

Table 7 Hypothesis Test Results

H1	Religious and secular organization mission statements differ in development perspective.	**False and True**
H2	Religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical organization mission statements differ in development perspective.	**True**

A final noteworthy data point on provision and empowerment discourse in INGO mission statements is the presence of both development perspectives in 16% of the mission statements analyzed in this study. Parsed more finely, 10% (9 of 86) of secular, 28% (11 of 39) of religious (non-evangelical), and 16% (10 of 62) of evangelical organization mission statements utilize both provision and empowerment discourse.

Additional Findings: Related Discourse

Several additional insightful data-points provide a fuller understanding of differences in development perspective. Firstly, significant difference exists in the utilization of ***us*** (our, us, we) versus ***them*** (their, them, they, those, other) language—a religiously valent distinction noted by Olson (2011). Table 8 shows a consistent greater occurrence of "us" language among religious organization mission statements (chi-square test p-value is 0.04). When considered in the aggregate—if at least one of the three code-words (our, us, we) occurs—a full 82% of religious (non-evangelical) and 77% of evangelical organization mission statements include "us" language compared to only 63% of secular organization mission statements. This pattern may be a sign of an internally cohesive orientation akin to bonding capital among religious adherents.

Table 8 "Us" Language in Mission Statements

% of MS	Our	Us	We	Aggregated
Evangelical	21%	52%	42%	77%
Religious	31%	59%	41%	82%
Secular	24%	37%	30%	63%

Yet, such a focus raises the possibility of a shortage of bridging capital or of a firmer delineation between in-group and out-group constituencies. In fact, coding for "them" language points in this direction in that a much higher frequency of "them" discourse occurs among religious (non-evangelical) organization mission statements (51%) than among secular organization mission statements (28%). In confirmation of the statistical significance of this difference, a chi-square test of the "them" terminology data shown in Table 9 results in a p-value of 0.007.

Table 9 "Them" Language in Mission Statements

% of MS	Their	Them	They	Those	Other	Aggregated
Evangelical	6%	6%	5%	8%	3%	23%
Religious (Non-Ev.)	28%	18%	5%	10%	8%	51%
Secular	15%	2%	6%	3%	8%	28%

Moreover, binary logistical (logit) regression analysis, incorporating the previously discussed control variables of organizational size (gross revenue) and age, supports a causal relationship between religious (non-evangelical) organizational type and increased utilization of "them" language in mission statements. Table 10 displays the regression analysis results.

Table 10 Logit Regression for "Them" language in Mission Statements

"Them" Language	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
(Intercept)	1.47E+00	4.46E-01	-3.291	0.000998
Age	6.56E-03	8.42E-03	0.779	0.436021
Revenue	7.13E-10	1.07E-09	0.669	0.50332
factor(Evangelical)	-1.37E-01	4.83E-01	-0.282	0.777693
factor(Religious Non-Ev.)	1.18E+00	5.14E-01	2.298	0.021534*

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Interestingly, this linguistic contrast between religious (non-evangelical) organizations and both secular and evangelical organizations is consistent with the comparative pattern seen in "provision" language above. That is, religious (non-evangelical) organization mission statements utilize both "provision" and "them" language significantly more frequently than do secular or evangelical organization mission statements.

A second set of related findings are the minimal differences between mission statements in their usage of ***partnership*** (assist, collaborat*, cooperat*, partner*, stand with, walk alongside) ***justice*** (dignity, just*, oppress*, rights) and ***poverty*** (impoverish*, marginaliz*, poor, poverty, suffer*, vulnerable) terminology. The first two of these categories could signal an empowering

perspective in that, respectively, the sets of terms connote (a) collaboration with others; and (b) access to what is justly merited, not mere charity. In both cases, valuing the agency of others, including in the beneficiary community, is a potential connotation. By contrast, the third set of terms, those related to poverty, could signal an objectification or othering of beneficiaries by focusing on their economic insufficiency. Potentially, such "poverty" language could indicate a paternalistic development perspective. However, the lack of difference in frequency of these three sets of language in the various mission statement groupings suggests that further research in this area may have limited utility.

Thirdly, a modest difference exists in terminology related to *society* (communit*, social, societ*). Mission statements of religious organizations, particularly evangelical ones, exhibit a slightly higher frequency of this language (39% evangelical, 33% religious non-evangelical and 28% secular). This discourse could be a signal of an empowerment perspective in that it recognizes the social location of individuals and possibly the agency of communities in solving problems. Yet, as with the second set of related results (partnership, justice, poverty), the difference in frequency of "society" language is not statistically significant.

Additional Findings: Religious Language

A significant difference in percentage of mission statements with religious terminology between religious (non-evangelical) and evangelical organizations could relate in some way to the observed difference in development perspective. As such, in the final step of this research, I tested for a variety of religious keywords. Table 4 reports on the frequency in the various mission statement groupings of the following twelve terms and roots: Bibl*, Catholic, Christ*, church, faith, god, Gospel, Jesus, Jew*, relig*, scripture, and spirit*. Other important religious words such as "Buddhism," "Islam," "Muslim," and "Hindu" are not included in this analysis because they do not occur in the sample of mission statements.

Table 4 Coding Results - % of MS with Religious Language

% of MS	Bibl*	Catholic	Christ*	Church	Faith	God
Evangelical	3%	0%	34%	10%	6%	16%
Religious (Non-Ev.)	3%	8%	31%	5%	18%	23%
Secular	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

% of MS	Gospel	Jesus	Jew	Relig*	Scripture	Spirit*
Evangelical	10%	18%	0%	2%	0%	16%
Religious (Non-Ev.)	10%	21%	5%	8%	3%	18%
Secular	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%

The data show a pattern of similarity between evangelical and religious (non-evangelical) categories almost across the board. The strongest difference is with the word "faith," which was 12 percentage points more frequent among religious (non-evangelical) INGO mission statements than it was among evangelical INGO mission statements. In addition, the results are quite similar between the two religious categories when one measure the percentage of mission statements that employ any one or more of these religious terms: 65% for evangelical, and 72% for religious (non-evangelical) organizations.

Not to be lost in this noteworthy similarity is the fact that one-third of all mission statements of religious relief and development organizations in this study include no religious language. Manual review of these religious organization mission statements without religious code-terms confirmed that they do indeed, with one probable exception, lack religious discourse. The lone exception is a mission statement that appears to echo the famous passage of Matthew 25:35-36 in which Jesus enjoins his followers to care for those experiencing poverty.

Lastly, Table 4 also shows an expected absence of religious language within mission statements of secular organizations. The only religious words in the secular organization mission statements, "faith" and "relig*," occurred in the context of declaring non-discrimination in service provision.

Limitations and Future Research

A number of research limitations are worth noting. To begin with, an organization's development perspective and institutional logics could be measured in different ways. For example, analysis of website text would provide a greater amount of data than mission statements. Similarly, future research could analyze not just text (be it missions statement, website, annual reports, etc.), but also the structure of organizations and the nature of their operations. For example, direct food-aid reflects a different development perspective than promoting sustainable agriculture—though some dire situations clearly require direct provision of resources such as food. Another example would be to track hiring and promotional practices of these U.S.-based INGOs to see if executive leadership and board membership are the exclusive domain of persons from the U.S.

Two limitations of the INGO sample are the over-representation of larger organizations and the relatively small sample size of the study (though it is larger than the samples in several studies on mission statements in the literature review above). Regarding the latter point, a larger sample of INGOs could allow for testing of a greater variety of religious traditions. Also, additional control variables, such as geographic region of an INGO's head office or the particular sub-sector in which an INGO operates could provide more nuanced understanding of the dynamics that impact development perspective. Another important geographical step forward for future inquiry would be to conduct similar research with INGOs based in other regions of the world. Not only would the results be of interest in and of themselves in their own contexts, but cross-national and cross-regional comparisons could shed further light on the effect of religion and culture on development perspective.

Several additional research possibilities emerge from findings in this study whose lack of statistical significance may be the product of sample size. For example, among the 11 religious (non-evangelical) mission statements that mention children, nearly two-thirds (7) also utilize provision discourse. Likewise, evangelical organizations that reference children in their mission statement have a relatively high frequency of provision discourse (55% or 12 of 22). On the other hand, only 33% (3 of 9) of secular organization mission statements that discuss children also include provision language. On a potentially related note, those mission statements that refer to family are more likely to include provision language than those that do not. In the entire sample of mission statements, 72% (13 of 18) of those including "famil*" also employ provision language. A larger sample of organizations may lead to statistically significant differences in these areas.

Suffice it to say, various findings and limitations of this study point toward a variety of specific possibilities for future productive research on religion and paternalism in international relief and development. In addition, and in order not to lose sight of the larger picture, this paper

suggests the need for ***more empirical research*** on religion in development, and its potential contribution to paternalistic or empowering development perspectives.

Conclusion

Paternalism is a longstanding weakness of philanthropy in general, and of the international relief and development sector specifically. Both theorists and practitioners offer incisive critiques and creative alternative approaches to the administration of international humanitarian programs. In addition, religion is a major element of the history and identity of many INGOs, including many of their donors, beneficiaries, partners, organizational leaders, community leaders, and staff. Yet, relatively little research exists to probe the ways in which religion and paternalism relate. Moreover, empirical research on specific pathways for the instantiation of paternalism in INGOs is rare. The present study takes a step toward filling these lacunae. The results suggest that paternalistic and empowering development perspectives are influenced by religion. Though little distinction is evident in the use of empowering terminology in INGO mission statements of secular and religious organizations, a significant difference in the utilization of paternalistic language exists between, on the one hand, religious (non-evangelical) organizations, and on the other hand, both secular and evangelical organizations. That is, the mission statements of religious (non-evangelical) organizations are much more likely to employ paternalistic language then are those of secular or evangelical organizations. This difference persists even after taking organizational age and size (gross revenue) into account. Additionally, the same pattern holds with "us" and "them" terminology: while a small and not statistically significant difference exists in utilization of "us" language, religious (non-evangelical) organizations are significantly more likely to use othering vocabulary (their, them, they, those, other) in their mission statements than are secular or evangelical INGOs. Taken together, these results support a causal connection between religion and development perspective in U.S.-based INGOs. This connection is not between religious INGOs, as a singular subset, and secular organizations. Rather, religious (non-evangelical) organizations appear to behave differently, they exhibit a much greater frequency of paternalistic language in mission statements, than do secular and evangelical organizations.

Therefore, this research contributes to numerous scholarly conversations. To begin with, it deepens our understanding of where paternalistic or empowering logics may manifest in INGOs—mission statements are one such location. Secondly, this study supports the scholarly literature that is ambivalent on the question of religion as a causal factor for paternalism in relief and development. The answer is apparently yes and no. This ambiguity points to another contribution of our research: further bolstering the case for treating religion as a multifaceted, not a monolithic, category. Scholarship on religion and humanitarianism is more realistically scholarship on religions and humanitarianisms. Finally, I hope this scholarship may contribute, in some small way, to the refinement of INGO discourse and logics away from paternalism and toward empowerment.

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