**The Elite Global Citizen:
How Wealth Shapes Cosmopolitan Identity and Charitable Intentions**

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Abstract

In three studies, we provide the first empirical examination of how wealth shapes cosmopolitan identity, and its consequences for charitable intentions. Study 1 established that wealth positively predicted cosmopolitan identity in three different samples (total $n=861$), even when controlling for potential confounds: education, overseas travel, and political orientation. Self-esteem and self-efficacy accounted for this association. Study 2 demonstrated the mediating role of cosmopolitan identity in explaining the link between wealth and charitable intentions ($n=351$). Study 3 provided causal evidence for these relationships by experimentally manipulating wealth perceptions in two samples (total $n=537$). People who were made to feel wealthy (as opposed to poor) reported greater self-esteem and self-efficacy, which flowed through to heightened cosmopolitan identification, and finally to increased charitable intentions. Cosmopolitan identity is thus shaped and constrained by wealth whereby structural economic realities may impose psychological barriers to cultivating global citizenship, hence implicating prosocial downstream consequences.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism, global citizenship, charitable intentions, wealth

The Elite Global Citizen:

How Wealth Shapes Cosmopolitan Identity and Charitable Intentions

In the mid-20th Century, theorists postulated that the dispersion of intellectual and human capital across national boundaries would forge a new breed of people with a global sense of self, orientated beyond community or national boundaries (Gouldner, 1957; Merton, 1957). These people became known as “cosmopolites”, defined in the literature as people who have globalized attitudes (reflecting openness to diversity) and global identification (i.e., identification with all of humanity). Cosmopolites view themselves as citizens of the world (Yoon et al., 1996), demonstrate an affinity for cultural diversity through variety-seeking behaviors (Holt, 1997), and hold positive attitudes towards different cultures (Hannerz, 1990). In psychological science, researchers have since conceptualized and measured cosmopolitan identity tapping these two key facets: defining the self as a global citizen, as well as being aware of and invested in global causes (McFarland et al., 2013; Reese et al., 2015).

In the 21st Century, a growing tide of social commentators have turned to the notion of cosmopolitanism as an antidote to nationalism, parochialism, and insularity. In a world where nations are turning increasingly inward, global cooperation has become paramount to tackle the challenges that all of humanity faces (Fidler, 2020). This hope is reinforced by empirical data highlighting the positive downstream consequences of cosmopolitanism. Measures that tap into cosmopolitanism have been positively associated with people’s desire to engage in helping behaviors towards foreigners (McFarland et al., 2013); responsibility to act for the causes of the poor (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013); reduced prejudice towards cultural outgroups (Sparkman & Hamer, 2020); benevolence, empathy for human suffering, and global social responsibility (Reese & Kohlmann, 2015); likelihood of contributing towards global public goods (Buchan et al., 2011); forgiveness toward perpetrating outgroups

(Greenaway et al., 2011); willingness to volunteer for meaningful causes (Faulkner, 2018); and prosocial intentions during a pandemic (Wang et al., 2021). It thus appears that much of the quantitative literature on cosmopolitanism demonstrates the virtues associated with cosmopolitanism.

In the broader humanities and social sciences, however, the notion of cosmopolitanism has been problematized. Specifically, it has been argued that cosmopolitanism is an elite identity, an aspirational “brand” embraced by the wealthy (see the work on conspicuous consumption by Veblen, 1899/2005; and theorizing about cultural capital by Bourdieu, 1979/1986). Historical analyses posit that the earliest cosmopolites were businesspeople, academics, and politicians; essentially, groups of people who were wealthy and with privileged access to cultural capital (Erel, 2010; Jones, 2007). Sociologists argue that adopting a cosmopolitan identity is only possible for individuals who can afford the luxuries of travel and sojourning (Calhoun, 2002). Furthermore, geographers assert that a cosmopolite is someone who has made the active choice to travel, rather than being displaced due to push factors (Miller, 2002; Harvey, 2008). In most disciplines apart from psychology, the elite nature of global citizenship has been well theorized: the cosmopolite is conceived of as an aspirational figure; someone who is well-educated, well-travelled, and well-heeled (Skrbis et al., 2004).

When viewed in parallel, these two positions suggest a predicament. Identifying as a citizen of the world enables a range of socially beneficial downstream consequences. At the same time, to view the self as a cosmopolite, access to wealth seems to be an antecedent. If cosmopolitan identity is empirically found to be shaped and constrained by wealth, such evidence would suggest that there are limits to the extent to which global citizenship can be cultivated due to structural economic realities. This presents a conundrum for organizations that hope to spur prosocial tendencies by encouraging global citizenship, as some people

might feel that there are psychological barriers preventing them from embracing this elite identity.

As such, the current paper seeks to understand the relationships between wealth, cosmopolitan identity, and prosocial intentions. We aim to answer the following questions: Does wealth *shape* cosmopolitan identity? If so, why would this be the case? And relatedly, what are the potential tradeoffs for prosocial tendencies? By investigating the elite undertone of cosmopolitan identity, this work adds richness and nuance to a growing field that is of increasing importance, particularly at a time where global cooperation is paramount (see Fidler, 2020). In addition, we answer the call for a more systematic study of how identities in general are shaped by wealth (see Easterbrook et al., 2020; Jetten, 2019).

Why Might Wealth Promote Cosmopolitan Identity?

Although the link between wealth and cosmopolitanism has been often presumed, it has been rarely tested empirically. To our knowledge, only one study has empirically examined this relationship (Liu et al., 2020): a small positive association between social status and cosmopolitan orientation was found across 19 nations. To explain this finding the authors drew inspiration from humanistic psychology whereby people who achieve the highest level of needs (i.e., those who self-actualized) can be viewed as cosmopolites: “world citizens, members of the human species first and foremost” (Maslow, 1971, p. 177). According to this perspective, people will only attend to higher-level growth needs if they are in a position to transcend their basic needs for survival (e.g., food, water, security, safety). This implies that wealthy people – who are better equipped to satisfy those basic needs – will be more likely to attend to the higher-level growth needs such as self-actualization, which Maslow saw as synonymous with cosmopolitanism. This premise leads to a somewhat troubling and pessimistic implication: that cosmopolitanism is an exclusive state of mind that is not available to people who live in destitution or need to work hard to make ends meet.

One aim of the present research was to lend specificity to the link between wealth and cosmopolitanism: first testing the robustness of the association, and next examining the specific psychological constructs that might explain it.

We consider the possibility that wealth offers a sense of self-belief, which is then associated with an expansion of the self to incorporate global considerations. A large body of work has shown that wealth enhances individuals' social capital (Argyle, 1994), which bequeaths them a reservoir of social and psychological advantages that such individuals can readily tap into when navigating their social worlds (Jetten et al., 2013; Marmot, 2004). This is also consistent with reasoning that wealthier people have more bonding opportunities because they have greater ability to sustain an active social life (Jetten et al., 2008; Reay et al., 2005) further boosting their self-belief. Higher social standing in the hierarchy (provided higher status is secure) is also associated with greater confidence, reflected by an enhanced sense of predictability in life (Vaananen et al., 2008). Based on these findings, we expect wealth to be positively associated with a sense that one is valued, of worth, and capable of achieving. In the language of Maslow, this corresponds to the esteem needs that lie one step above the safety and security needs that form the base of the needs pyramid.

For our current research, we operationalize self-belief as self-esteem (Robins et al., 2001: positive sense of self) and self-efficacy (Schwarzer, 2014: belief in one's competence). Both psychological constructs are relatively stable individual differences accrued over the lifespan, are postulated to be domain general rather than specific, are internally oriented relating to the self rather than one's environment, and provide individuals with the necessary cognitive resources to navigate obstacles in life (Pyszczynski et al., 2004; Luszczynska et al., 2005). These definitions align with our theorizing around self-belief: as a broad sense of confidence in one's own capacities. The underlying mechanism we point to here is belief in the *self*, which is necessarily distinct from a sense of *control* over one's life (Lachman &

Weaver, 1998) or the *influence* one has over their social surroundings (Anderson et al., 2012).

There are several reasons why the accrual of self-belief should flow on to facilitate the adoption of the cosmopolitan identity. Most importantly, the greater arsenal of psychological resources that wealth affords is associated with fewer psychological constraints to goal pursuit. Consistent with classic work on the open and closed mind (Rokeach, 1960) — as well as classic social cognition research (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) — wealth affords individuals the capacity to expand their minds, whereby individuals feel an enhanced sense of being able to choose their preferred identity (including a cosmopolitan identity). In contrast, poverty enhances a scarcity mind-set and reduces mental “bandwidth” (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013), thereby psychologically limiting those at the poorer end of the spectrum from embracing and taking on the global identity that cosmopolitanism represents (Forbes & Lingard, 2015). Drawing on these literatures, we predict that material privilege should unlock psychological resources associated with one’s perceived capacities, which should in turn be predictive of adopting the cosmopolitan identity.

To test this notion, however, we need to control for other possible explanations, some of which are more pragmatic than psychological. For example, with wealth comes the ability to engage in overseas travel. It could be that this experience alone expands people’s geographic and cultural horizons, leading to a sense of being a “citizen of the world”. From this perspective, cosmopolitanism flows on from travel experiences that are more available to people with high levels of financial capital, an argument made by geographers (Harvey, 2008). Another possibility is that wealth links to cosmopolitanism via education. Education might promote cosmopolitanism for two reasons. First, the university campus experience often allows for high levels of exposure to people and cultures from around the world (Killick, 2012). This might simulate the mind-expanding effects of overseas travel. Second,

there is a well-established link between education and liberal political ideology (Dunn, 2011; Weakleim, 2002), a worldview that comprises globalism and openness to other cultures. This literature opens the possibility that the link between wealth and cosmopolitanism is an artifact of education and political ideology.

The Current Research

The current research was designed to test why wealth might be associated with cosmopolitan identity, and what this relationship may mean for charitable intentions. In Study 1, we sought to replicate the relationship between wealth and cosmopolitanism by (a) using multi-item indices of wealth, and (b) controlling for potential artifacts such as overseas travel, education, and political ideology. We also sought to test the self-belief explanation: that the relationship between wealth and cosmopolitan identity could be explained through the mediating roles of self-esteem and self-efficacy. In Study 2, we examined whether cosmopolitan identity could account for the relationship between wealth and charitable intentions, thereby emerging as a mediator. Finally, in Study 3, we used an experimental approach to test the causal relationship between wealth, self-belief, cosmopolitan identity, and charitable intentions.

Statement on Ethics and Data Transparency

For Studies 1 and 3, ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee at an Australian university: (NUMBER HIDDEN). Approval for Study 2 was obtained from a large European university: (NUMBER HIDDEN). We declare that no pre-registrations were conducted for Studies 1 and 3. Study 2 was pre-registered:

https://osf.io/cm7hw/?view_only=c3d18251f03e47b28dcf3904fecb016b. For materials and data: BLINDED.

Studies 1a – 1c: Wealth Predicts Cosmopolitan Identity

The first purpose of Study 1 was to demonstrate a positive association between wealth and cosmopolitan identity by using multi-item measures for both concepts. Importantly, we expected this relationship to remain significant even when controlling for several variables that might be expected to covary with both wealth and cosmopolitanism. We first controlled for *overseas travel*, which (as described above) may offer a non-psychological explanation of the relationship between wealth and cosmopolitan identity. We also controlled for *education*, and *liberal political orientation* which might promote a more cosmopolitan orientation.

The second purpose of Study 1 was to explore whether self-belief would potentially account for why wealth is predictive of cosmopolitan identity. Specifically, we operationalized self-belief with established concepts from psychological science, namely self-esteem (Studies 1a & 1b): a domain general positive sense of self (Robins et al., 2001), and self-efficacy (Study 1c): a broad and relatively stable belief in one's own competence (Schwarzer, 2014). For the sake of generalizability, we examined these questions in three national samples: the U.S. (Study 1a), India (Study 1b), and Australia (Study 1c).

Study 1a: U.S. Sample

Method

Participants. One-hundred and fifty-one respondents residing in the U.S. were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and paid US\$1 each. After applying inclusion criteria (valid MTurk ID, passed attention check, U.S. national born in the country), we obtained a final sample ($n=129$, 51.9% male, 79.8% white) where participants were aged between 20 and 74 ($M=39.16$, $SD=11.72$). Sensitivity analyses using G*Power Version 3.1.9 (Faul et al., 2009) indicated our sample size to be sufficiently powered at 80% for detecting small effects in multiple regression models (Cohen's $f^2=0.10$).

Measures: *Cosmopolitan identity*. In social psychology, cosmopolitan identity has been theorized to constitute two key facets (Reese et al., 2015; McFarland et al., 2013): an

identification component (e.g., defining the self as a citizen of the world), and an attitudinal component (e.g., awareness of and investment in global causes). To this end, we drew together existing scales in the literature, aiming to measure cosmopolitan identity holistically by tapping into both of its core components (see Supplement 1 for a full list of items).

Identification as a global citizen was measured with seven items adapted from previous measures (Inglehart et al., 2014; Postmes et al., 2013; Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013). Representative items are: “I would describe myself as a global citizen” and “I see myself as a world citizen” (1=*strongly disagree*; 7=*strongly agree*, items randomized). Cosmopolitan attitudes reflecting global awareness and investment were measured using nine items adapted from established measures (Cleveland et al., 2014; Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013). These items capture a sense of being interested in other cultures (e.g., “I like to learn about other ways of life”) and having a high level of understanding about other cultures (e.g., “I understand how the various cultures of this world interact socially”; 1=*strongly disagree*; 7=*strongly agree*, items randomized). In addition, we included the identification with all of humanity (IWAH) scale, a 9-item measure developed by McFarland et al. (2012) that taps into both identification as a cosmopolite (also known as global self-definition: “How close do you feel to people all over the world?”) and attitudes towards global causes (also known as global self-investment: “How much do you believe in loyalty to people all over the world?”; 1=*not at all*, 5=*very much*).

We conducted exploratory factor analyses (EFAs) with all cosmopolitan identity items keyed into single model (Principal Axis Factoring with Varimax Rotation, see Supplement 2 for complete results). Across studies, four consistent factors emerged that were congruent with each of our selected scales: identification as a global citizen, cosmopolitan attitudes, global self-definition, and global self-investment. All four sub-scales were highly correlated among each other ($.50 < rs < .68$, $ps < .001$). We hence calculated a composite index

of cosmopolitan identity, first by standardizing each of the 25-items, and then by collapsing them together. This composite index of cosmopolitan identity was highly reliable ($\alpha=.96$). For raw correlations between wealth and each subscale of cosmopolitan identity, see Supplement 3.

Perceived wealth. For the present research, we adopt the most commonly accepted conceptual definition of wealth in the social sciences: as one's perceived and reported economic value (Kraus et al., 2011). In line with past work (Piff, 2014), we operationalize wealth using a variety of measures intended to capture the concept of economic value.¹

Socioeconomic status (Adler & Stewart, 2010) was measured on six discrete, 10-point ladder-type scales, anchored at 10=*the best off* and 1=*the worst off*. Participants first ranked their own position in society relative to others, in terms of education, income, and occupation status. Next, they ranked their family's position in society on the same three factors. Personal and family social class (Jetten et al., 2008) were measured with two items, both presented on 9-point sliding scales anchored at 1=*lower class*, 5=*middle class*, and 9=*upper class*. Personal annual income was measured on an 11-point rank scale, ranging from 1=*USD 20,000 or less* to 11=*USD 200,001 or more*. Household annual income was measured on a similar 11-point rank scale, with each range point double that of personal annual income.

The individual measures all had strong internal reliability (all α s > .80), and the measures were also highly correlated among each other ($.23 < r$ s < .89, p s < .01). In line with past research, a collapsed index of wealth was calculated by standardizing and averaging all items measured above. This wealth index was highly reliable ($\alpha=.92$). We obtained a range of responses from across the wealth spectrum ($range=4.02$, 25th percentile=-0.44, 75th percentile=0.54), and perceived wealth was normally distributed ($skewness\ ratio=-1.00$, $kurtosis\ ratio=-.30$). See Supplement 2b for plots describing the distribution of perceived wealth in all our samples.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem was measured with a single item: “I have high self-esteem.” This item has been established as a reliable and valid measure of self-esteem, with comparable psychometric qualities to multi-item scales (Robins et al., 2001).

Controls. Education, political orientation, and frequency of overseas travel were measured as control variables. Education was measured on an 8-point rank scale, ranging from 1=*no formal education* to 8=*doctoral degree*. Political orientation was measured using two items. Both items were measured on 7-point Likert-type scales, with the first anchored at 1=*very liberal* and 7=*very conservative*, and the second anchored at 1=*left* and 7=*right*. The items measuring political orientation were highly correlated ($r=.88, p<.001$), and hence collapsed. Frequency of overseas travel (“how often do you travel overseas”) was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale, anchored at 1=*not at all* and 7=*very often*.

Procedure. To help mask the true purpose of the study, participants began the survey with the ten-item personality inventory (Gosling et al., 2003). Of the constructs relevant to our analysis, the identification with all of humanity scale was presented first. Other subscales of cosmopolitan identity and self-esteem were then presented in a randomized order. Measures of wealth were presented next in a randomized order. The survey ended with control variables, presented together with demographic questions.²

Results

Table 1 describes the intercorrelations between all measured variables. Consistent with the findings of Liu et al. (2020), wealth was positively correlated with cosmopolitan identity, $r=.31, p<.001$, 95% CI=.15, .46. There was no possibility that the link was an artifact of political orientation, given that there was no significant association between cosmopolitan identity and political orientation. Additionally, we found robust positive correlations among wealth, cosmopolitan identity, overseas travel, and education. We also tested for possible curvilinear effects of perceived wealth on cosmopolitan identity by

conducting polynomial regressions, and none of these effects (quadratic, cubic, biquadratic) were statistically significant (see Supplement 3).

We next conducted a partial correlation, controlling for education, political orientation, and frequency of overseas travel. Even when accounting for potential confounds, wealth was positively predictive of cosmopolitan identity, $r=.22$, $p=.014$, 95% CI=.06, .39. In sum, the link between wealth and cosmopolitan identity is not reducible to variability in education, political orientation, or frequency of overseas travel.

Next, we tested the possibility that the link between wealth and cosmopolitan identification could be explained by self-belief, which in this case we operationalized as self-esteem. We hence conducted mediation analyses using Model 4 of Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro (all models computed with 10,000 bootstrapped samples and HC3 consistent inferences). We also controlled for education, political orientation, and frequency of overseas travel.³

A significant indirect effect of wealth on cosmopolitan identity emerged via its relationship with self-esteem ($b=.11$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI=.02, .23). As seen in Figure 1a, the influence of wealth on cosmopolitan identity became non-significant after including self-esteem in the model, thereby indicative of complete mediation.

Study 1b: Indian Sample

Method

Participants. Four-hundred and seventy respondents residing in India were recruited via MTurk and paid US\$1 each. After applying similar inclusion criteria to Study 1a, we obtained a final sample ($n=301$, 69.4% male, 99.7% south Asian) where participants were aged between 19 and 81 ($M=30.77$, $SD=8.74$). Sensitivity analyses indicated our sample size to be sufficiently powered at 80% for detecting small effects in regression models (Cohen's $f^2=0.04$).⁴

Measures: *Cosmopolitan identity.* Cosmopolitan identity was measured in an identical manner to Study 1a, and we conducted similar EFAs. All four sub-scales were highly correlated among each other ($.39 < r_s < .72$, $p_s < .001$), and a composite index was calculated ($\alpha > .94$).

Perceived wealth. Socioeconomic status was measured on two discrete, 10-point ladder-type scales, anchored at 10=*the best off* and 1=*the worst off*. Participants first ranked their own position, then their family's position, in society relative to others in terms of education, income, and occupation status. Personal and family social class were measured with two items as in Study 1a, as were personal and household annual income. We calculated a collapsed index of wealth as in Study 1a, which was found to be highly reliable ($\alpha = .78$), included respondents from across the wealth spectrum ($range = 4.26$, 25th percentile = -0.49, 75th percentile = 0.46), and was again normally distributed ($skewness\ ratio = 2.11$, $kurtosis\ ratio = 1.36$).

Self-esteem and controls. Self-esteem was measured in an identical manner to Study 1a, as were education and frequency of overseas travel. Political orientation was measured with a single item, anchored at 1=*very liberal* and 7=*very conservative*.

Procedure. A similar procedure to Study 1a was employed, where cosmopolitan identity measures were presented before wealth items, and the study ended with control variables and demographic questions.

Results

As in Study 1a, wealth was positively predictive of cosmopolitan identity, $r = .21$, $p < .001$, 95% CI = .10, .32. Wealth was also positively associated with education, which was in turn predictive of cosmopolitan identity (see Table 1 for all intercorrelations). Given these confounding relationships, we conducted a partial correlation while controlling for education,

political orientation, and frequency of overseas travel. Wealth was again positively predictive of cosmopolitan identity, $r=.19$, $p<.001$, 95% CI=.08, .30.

We next examined whether the link between wealth and cosmopolitan identity could be explained by self-belief (self-esteem), and we conducted identical mediation analyses to Study 1a. A significant indirect effect of wealth on cosmopolitan identity emerged via its relationship with self-esteem ($b=.09$, $SE=.03$, 95% CI=.04, .16). As seen in Figure 1b, the relationship between wealth and cosmopolitan identity weakened after including self-esteem in the model, indicative of partial mediation.

Table 1

Pearson correlations between all measured variables in the U.S. (Study 1a: lower diagonal) and India (Study 1b: upper diagonal)

		Wealth	Cosmopolitan Identity	Education	Political Orientation	Overseas Travel	Self-Esteem
Wealth	Pearson's r	—	0.21 ***	0.19 ***	-0.26 ***	0.46 ***	0.13 *
	95% CI Upper	—	0.32	0.30	-0.15	0.54	0.24
	95% CI Lower	—	0.10	0.08	-0.36	0.36	0.02
Cosmopolitan Identity	Pearson's r	0.31 ***	—	0.17 **	-0.01	0.06	0.47 ***
	95% CI Upper	0.46	—	0.27	0.10	0.17	0.56
	95% CI Lower	0.15	—	0.05	-0.12	-0.05	0.38
Education	Pearson's r	0.41 ***	0.19 *	—	-0.03	0.12 *	0.03
	95% CI Upper	0.55	0.35	—	0.08	0.23	0.14
	95% CI Lower	0.26	0.01	—	-0.15	0.01	-0.09
Political Orientation	Pearson's r	-0.13	0.17	0.09	—	-0.34 ***	0.02
	95% CI Upper	0.04	0.33	0.26	—	-0.24	0.13
	95% CI Lower	-0.30	-0.01	-0.09	—	-0.44	-0.09
Overseas Travel	Pearson's r	0.45 ***	0.32 ***	0.28 **	0.06	—	-0.10
	95% CI Upper	0.58	0.46	0.43	0.23	—	0.02
	95% CI Lower	0.30	0.15	0.11	-0.12	—	-0.21
Self-Esteem	Pearson's r	0.48 ***	0.30 ***	0.21 *	-0.13	0.13	—
	95% CI Upper	0.60	0.45	0.37	0.04	0.30	—
	95% CI Lower	0.33	0.14	0.04	-0.30	-0.04	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Study 1c: Australian Sample

Method

Participants. Five hundred and fifteen Australians respondents were recruited via Qualtrics Panels LLC, as part of a larger unrelated survey on religion.⁵ All respondents were paid AU\$11.50 each. After applying similar inclusion criteria to Study 1a, we obtained a final sample ($n=431$, 49.4% male, 100% white) where participants were aged between 19 and 80 ($M=42.05$, $SD=16.26$). Sensitivity analyses indicated our study to be sufficiently powered, at 80%, for detecting small effects in regression models (Cohen's $f^2=0.03$).

Measures. Cosmopolitan identity was captured using the same measures of identification as a global citizen and cosmopolitan attitudes used in Study 1a (given the high intercorrelations between sub-scales and, in an effort to keep the questionnaire short, we did not include the 9-item IWAH measure in this study). EFAs revealed two subscales as expected, that were also strongly correlated with each other ($r=.70$, $p<.001$). A collapsed index was hence calculated ($\alpha=.96$).

As the primary indicator of wealth, social status was measured with a single-item 10-point ladder-type scale, anchored at 10=*the best off* and 1=*the worst off*. Participants ranked their own position in society relative to others, in terms of “education, income and occupation status” (Adler & Stewart, 2010). Our sample included respondents from across the wealth spectrum ($range=4.93$, 25th percentile=-0.42, 75th percentile=0.68), and responses were normally distributed ($skewness\ ratio=-2.38$, $kurtosis\ ratio=-0.57$).

To test for mediation, self-esteem was measured with the identical item as used in Study 1a. To broaden our operationalization of self-belief, for all subsequent studies we also measured self-efficacy (Schwarzer, 2014), with an established 10-item scale ($\alpha=.95$). Representative items are: “I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort” and “I can usually handle whatever comes my way” (1=*strongly disagree*; 7=*strongly agree*, items

randomized). Education, political orientation ($r=.57, p<.001$) and frequency of overseas travel were all measured with identical scales to Study 1a.

Procedure. The variables in this study were measured in the following order: cosmopolitan identity, wealth, potential mediators reflecting self-belief, and finally control variables and demographic questions.

Results

Table 2 summarizes the inter-correlations among all variables. Wealth was positively associated with cosmopolitan identity. As in Study 1a, there was no relationship between cosmopolitan identity and political orientation. However, wealth was associated with being highly educated and well-travelled, which in turn was positively correlated with cosmopolitan identity.

Given this, it was important to conduct a partial correlation between wealth and cosmopolitan identity, partialling out all our control variables: education, political orientation, and frequency of overseas travel. The partial correlation was significant ($r=.21, p<.001, 95\% \text{ CI}=.11, .31$), showing that the association between wealth and cosmopolitan identity was not just an artefact of other variables that are associated with wealth. We hence replicated our initial findings from Studies 1a and 1b.

Mediation via self-belief. We conducted separate mediation analyses for self-esteem and self-efficacy, with identical models to Study 1a. The association between wealth and cosmopolitan identity became non-significant in both models (for self-esteem: Figure 1c; for self-efficacy: Figure 1d). Furthermore, significant indirect effects of wealth on cosmopolitan identity emerged via its relationships with self-esteem ($b=.09, SE=.02, 95\% \text{ CI}=.04, .13$), and self-efficacy ($b=.12, SE=.02, 95\% \text{ CI}=.08, .17$), thereby indicative of complete mediation.⁶

Table 2

Pearson correlations and 95% confidence intervals among measured variables in Australia (Study 1c)

		Wealth	Cosmopolitan Identity	Political Orientation	Education	Overseas Travel	Self-Esteem
Cosmopolitan Identity	Pearson's r	0.31 ***	—				
	95% CI Upper	0.39	—				
	95% CI Lower	0.22	—				
Political Orientation	Pearson's r	-0.16 **	-0.01	—			
	95% CI Upper	-0.06	0.09	—			
	95% CI Lower	-0.25	-0.10	—			
Education	Pearson's r	0.37 ***	0.15 **	-0.05	—		
	95% CI Upper	0.45	0.24	0.04	—		
	95% CI Lower	0.29	0.06	-0.15	—		
Overseas Travel	Pearson's r	0.39 ***	0.35 ***	-0.11 *	0.38 ***	—	
	95% CI Upper	0.47	0.43	-0.02	0.46	—	
	95% CI Lower	0.31	0.26	-0.20	0.29	—	
Self-Esteem	Pearson's r	0.53 ***	0.34 ***	-0.16 **	0.24 ***	0.26 ***	—
	95% CI Upper	0.60	0.42	-0.06	0.33	0.35	—
	95% CI Lower	0.46	0.25	-0.25	0.15	0.17	—
Self-Efficacy	Pearson's r	0.47 ***	0.44 ***	-0.14 **	0.25 ***	0.24 ***	0.65 ***
	95% CI Upper	0.54	0.51	-0.05	0.34	0.32	0.70
	95% CI Lower	0.40	0.36	-0.23	0.16	0.14	0.59

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1

Influence of wealth on cosmopolitan identity independently mediated by self-esteem in Study 1a (A), Study 1b (B), and Study 1c (C), as well as self-efficacy in Study 1c (D) Note: Dotted line denotes the direct effect of wealth. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

People who perceive themselves to be wealthier also self-identify as more cosmopolitan, a relationship that was found in the U.S., India, and Australia. This positive association was not reducible to variation in education, political orientation, or frequency of overseas travel. We thus empirically demonstrate a possible boundary condition for the adoption of cosmopolitan identity: although in literal terms everyone is a citizen of the world, it is the relatively wealthy who are more likely to fashion themselves as global citizens. We hence replicate the findings of Liu et al. (2020), but also note that our obtained effects are larger than what was initially demonstrated. This difference could be attributed to a variety of reasons, most significant of which is measurement. We operationalised cosmopolitan identity with items relating to both identification as a global citizen *and* cosmopolitan attitudes

reflecting an awareness of and investment in global causes; however, their focus was predominantly the latter. Psychometric analyses of our data further suggest that people distinguish between these two facets of cosmopolitan identity in a consistent manner, boosting our confidence in the framework that we used to guide us (McFarland et al., 2013; Reese et al., 2015).

In line with our theorizing, we found evidence for the mediating role of self-belief: wealth is associated with higher self-esteem (Studies 1a & 1b) and self-efficacy (Study 1c), which in turn is associated with a stronger cosmopolitan identity. Wealthier people report a higher sense of confidence in their own capacities, which then allows them to adopt an identity that is aligned with their social standing. Our results further reinforce the notion that cosmopolitan identity has elite undertones, by providing evidence relating to the psychological mechanism that bridges wealth with global citizenship.

Study 2: Consequences for Charitable Intentions

A growing body of empirical work has demonstrated the prosocial downstream consequences of cosmopolitan identity. In particular, cosmopolites have indicated greater helping intentions towards various groups and causes (Buchan et al., 2011; Reese et al., 2014). Yet our findings also suggest that the cosmopolitan identity is more readily available to the wealthy, and financial constraints underlie the adoption of global citizenship. When viewed together, these lines of work point to a conundrum: if some people feel less able to embrace the cosmopolitan identity, then there may be implications for encouraging prosocial behaviors through this route. To unpack this, in the present study we examine the relationships between wealth, cosmopolitan identity, and charitable intentions. In so doing, we tested if cosmopolitan identity would mediate the link between wealth and charitable intentions, thereby pointing to one reason for why wealthy people choose to help.

We first measured participants' wealth and identification as a cosmopolite. We then presented a selection of local and foreign targets, all described to be in need. Participants rated the extent to which they were inclined to donate time and money to the various targets. In line with past research, cosmopolitan identity was expected to strongly correlate with charitable intentions. More importantly, we postulated that any influence of wealth on charitable intentions would be accounted for by cosmopolitan identity. Study 2 was pre-registered at: https://osf.io/cm7hw/?view_only=c3d18251f03e47b28dcf3904fecb016b.

Method

Participants

Based on a-priori power analyses for mediation models (Schoemann et al., 2017), a sample size of 330 respondents was deemed necessary (powered at 80%) to find small correlations ($r=.20$) between measured variables (see pre-reg for further details). U.S. respondents were recruited via Prolific, and to obtain an even spread across the wealth spectrum, we stratified our sample by self-reported socioeconomic status (*lower, middle, upper*). After applying inclusion criteria (valid Prolific ID, passed attention check, U.S. national born in the country) we obtained a final sample ($n=351$, 47.6% male, 85.8% white) where participants were aged between 18 and 71 ($M=28.69$, $SD=10.74$).

Stimuli

Participants were presented with eight groups of people, all of whom were described to be in need of aid (see Table 3). Stimuli were designed to keep the nature of the crises consistent between local and foreign groups.

Table 3

List of local groups and foreign groups presented to participants

Local Groups	Foreign Groups
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American children depending on food stamps	Children in Cambodia struggling with nutrition
High school dropouts in the U.S.	Increasing education rates for students in Africa
Homeless Americans	Homeless Brazilians
Earthquake victims in the U.S.	Landslide victims in Nepal

All eight groups were presented in alphabetical order, and participants viewed the full list of groups before responding to the outcome measures. For each outcome measure, scores for local and foreign groups were calculated separately, as collapsed indices for each.

Measures

Charitable intention was operationalized with two items: willingness to volunteer time, and willingness to donate money. Participants rated all eight groups on each of the two items separately (anchored at 0=*extremely unwilling* and 10=*extremely willing*).⁷

Cosmopolitan identity was measured using identical items from Study 1a. EFAs revealed four factors again that were highly correlated ($.49 < rs < .63$, $ps < .001$), and so a composite index of cosmopolitan identity was calculated ($\alpha = .94$).

Wealth was measured with the same 6-items as Study 1b, reflecting social class, socioeconomic status, and income. The items were highly correlated ($.40 < rs < .82$, $ps < .001$), and we calculated a collapsed wealth index ($\alpha = .90$). We obtained a range of responses from across the wealth spectrum ($range = 3.61$, 25th percentile = -0.65, 75th percentile = 0.57), and perceived wealth was again found to be normally distributed ($skewness\ ratio = 1.38$, $kurtosis\ ratio = -2.95$).

Procedure

We first presented the wealth measures and cosmopolitan identity items. Participants were then introduced to the eight groups in need. Measures of charitable intention were next, and the study ended with demographic questions.

Results

We first conducted separate EFAs on items relating to the groups in need (one for time, one for money). In contrast to expectations, participants did not discriminate between local and foreign groups when registering their charitable intentions (factor loadings and internal reliability indices reported in Supplement 6). In the interest of transparency, we first report raw correlations differentiating between local and foreign groups, but for all subsequent analyses collapse across these groups.

Correlations between wealth, cosmopolitan identity, and charitable intentions

Perceived wealth was again positively correlated with cosmopolitan identity, $r=.15$, $p=.006$, 95% CI=.04, .25. As described in Table 4, cosmopolitan identity was positively predictive of charitable intentions (both time and money), and this moderate association was found for both local and foreign groups. In contrast, only a small association between wealth and charitable intentions were found, mostly confined to local causes.⁸

Table 4

Pearson correlations [and 95% Confidence Intervals] between cosmopolitan identity and wealth on willingness to volunteer time (left) and make a cash donation (right)

	Volunteer Time			Cash Donation		
	Local	Foreign	Total	Local	Foreign	Total
Cosmopolitan Identity	$r = .52^{***}$ [.59, .44]	$r = .60^{***}$ [.66, .53]	$r = .61^{***}$ [.67, .53]	$r = .45^{***}$ [.53, .36]	$r = .54^{***}$ [.61, .46]	$r = .52^{***}$ [.60, .44]
Perceived Wealth	$r = .17^{**}$ [.27, .07]	$r = .03$ [.13, -.08]	$r = .10^{+}$ [.21, -.01]	$r = .20^{***}$ [.30, .10]	$r = .05$ [.16, -.05]	$r = .13^{*}$ [.23, .03]

Note. ⁺ $p < .06$, $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$

Relating wealth to charitable intentions via cosmopolitan identity

We then examined whether the link between wealth and charitable intentions could be accounted for by cosmopolitan identity. Two mediation models were computed: one with total time as outcome, another with total money as outcome. A significant indirect effect of

wealth on willingness to contribute time emerged via its relationship with cosmopolitan identity ($b=.09$, $SE=.03$, 95% $CI=.03$, $.15$). Similarly, a significant indirect effect emerged on willingness to donate money ($b=.08$, $SE=.03$, 95% $CI=.02$, $.14$). As seen in Figures 3a and 3b, the influence of wealth on charitable intentions became non-significant after accounting for cosmopolitan identity, indicative of complete mediation.

Discussion

We demonstrate the relationships between wealth, cosmopolitan identity, and charitable intentions, and in so doing point to a predicament. Cosmopolites were indeed more likely to contribute both time and money to various groups in need, replicating evidence from previous research (McFarland et al., 2013; Reese & Kohlmann, 2015). In the same vein, wealth was also predictive of cosmopolitan identity, which in turn explained why wealthier individuals reported greater charitable intentions. Our findings highlight the place of privilege from which this elite identity emerges, which holds implications for prosocial tendencies.

Studies 3a (U.S.) & 3b (India): Establishing Causation

A limitation of Studies 1 and 2 is that they are correlational, so we were unable to make any causal claims about the link between wealth, cosmopolitan identity, and charitable intentions. In Study 3, we experimentally tested whether a self-perception as relatively wealthy *causes* greater cosmopolitan identity, heightened self-belief, and increased charitable intentions. Perceptions of wealth were manipulated using an established paradigm (Jetten et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2020), where participants were asked to imagine being part of either a high wealth social group or a low wealth social group. While at first glance the Bimboola paradigm may seem low on ecological validity, a growing body of work has demonstrated that effects obtained with this method are generally consistent with relationships observed in the real world (Peters et al., 2021; Sprong et al., 2019).

We hypothesized that participants assigned to the high wealth condition (as compared to those in the low wealth condition) would be more likely to see themselves as cosmopolites and report greater self-esteem and self-efficacy. Replicating our previous findings, we expected the effect of manipulated wealth on cosmopolitan identity to be mediated by self-esteem and self-efficacy. In addition, we explored if being made to feel wealthy (as opposed to poor) would lead to an increased willingness to volunteer time and donate money to a group in need. We also exploratorily tested if cosmopolitan identity would account for this relationship.

Method

For the sake of generalizability and replication, we conducted the same study twice in two countries: the U.S. and India. We used identical methods in both samples, but break down our reporting by each country due to cross-cultural differences in our datasets (e.g., demographics, scale response patterns: see Fischer, 2004).

Participants and Design

Study 3a: U.S. Sample. Three hundred and eighteen participants residing in the U.S. were recruited via MTurk and paid US\$1 each. After applying identical inclusion criteria as our previous studies, we obtained a final sample ($n=278$, 52.5% male, 78.8% white) where participants were aged between 18 and 73 ($M=37.86$, $SD=11.27$).

Study 3b: Indian Sample. Three hundred and twelve participants residing in India were recruited, and after applying inclusion criteria, we obtained a final sample ($n=259$, 72.6% male, 99.6% south Asian) where participants were aged between 18 and 68 ($M=31.82$, $SD=7.96$).

Participants were randomly assigned to either a high wealth or low wealth condition. Similar to our previous studies, sensitivity analyses revealed both our samples to be sufficiently powered at 80% for detecting small effects in t -tests (Cohen's $d=0.35$).

Manipulation

Participants were first asked to imagine a scenario where they moved to a fictitious country named Bimboola. The wealth hierarchy of Bimboola was presented to participants, who were told of seven groups within the nation who had varying levels of wealth. Participants were informed that they would be randomly assigned to one of these seven groups, thereby determining their relative wealth in this fictional society.

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of two possible conditions. In the high wealth condition, participants were told they belonged to Group 6, which was almost at the top of the wealth hierarchy in Bimboola. In the low wealth condition, participants were told they belonged to Group 2, which was near the bottom of the wealth hierarchy.

To reinforce the prime, participants were next asked to make purchases to start their new life in Bimboola: a car, a house, and clothes. The group to which participants belonged determined the quality of products and choice range to which they had access. Participants in the high wealth condition could afford mansions, luxury cars, and branded clothing, while participants in the low wealth condition could only purchase wooden homes, second-hand cars, and mass-market clothing (see OSF for examples).

Measures and procedure

Manipulation check. Participants then rated the extent to which their group was privileged via a 4-item scale (e.g., “My group is privileged”; 1=*strongly disagree* and 7=*strongly agree*). The scale was found to be highly reliable (U.S. $\alpha=.99$, India $\alpha=.98$).

Mediators. Self-efficacy (U.S. $\alpha=.97$, India $\alpha=.93$) and self-esteem were both measured with identical items to Study 1c.

Cosmopolitan identity was next measured using identical measures from Study 1a. Again, EFAs revealed four factors, that were highly correlated in both the U.S. ($.59 < r_s <$

.74, $ps < .001$) and Indian ($.40 < rs < .72$, $ps < .001$) samples. A composite index of cosmopolitan identity was hence calculated (U.S. $\alpha=.97$, India $\alpha=.95$).

Charitable intentions. Similar to Study 2, we finally measured intentions to contribute to a charitable cause. Participants were shown a vignette of a fictitious foreign nation that was affected by natural disaster, and asked how willing they were to volunteer their time, as well as make a cash donation, to help the victims in need (both items anchored at 0=*extremely unwilling* and 10=*extremely willing*).⁹

Results

Separate t-tests were conducted for each sample. We examined the effect of Wealth (Low vs. High) on our manipulation check, cosmopolitan identity scale, mediators, and charitable intention measures (see Table 5 for an overview of results).

Effect of wealth on cosmopolitan identity

Consistent with the manipulation, participants in the high wealth condition rated their groups to be wealthier than participants in the low wealth condition (see Table 5). More importantly, and as hypothesized, participants in the high wealth condition rated themselves to be higher on cosmopolitan identity than participants in the low wealth condition. Participants in the high wealth condition also rated themselves as having greater self-esteem, and greater self-efficacy, than those assigned to the low wealth condition. These findings were obtained in both the U.S. and Indian samples.

Table 5

Means and standard deviations per condition for all measured variables in Study 3a (left) and Study 3b (right), together with t-statistics comparing conditions

	Study 3a: U.S. Sample							Study 3b: Indian Sample						
	<i>Low Wealth</i>		High Wealth		Difference			<i>Low Wealth</i>		High Wealth		Difference		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> (276)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> (257)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Manipulation Check	1.71	0.87	6.12	0.77	45.23	0.001	5.43	3.02	1.80	5.89	0.79	16.39	0.001	2.04
Cosmopolitan Identity	0.86	0.80	1.08	0.82	2.23	0.027	0.27	0.97	0.78	1.18	0.61	2.39	0.018	0.30
Self-esteem	4.02	1.77	5.50	1.52	7.52	0.001	0.90	4.60	1.64	5.90	1.07	7.46	0.001	0.93
Self-efficacy	4.49	1.42	5.59	1.04	7.34	0.001	0.88	5.04	1.13	5.65	0.83	4.92	0.001	0.61
Time volunteering	6.12	3.24	6.96	3.34	2.13	0.034	0.26	8.69	2.17	9.24	2.26	2.01	0.045	0.25
Cash donation	5.64	3.36	8.59	2.95	7.78	0.001	0.93	8.12	2.32	9.81	1.49	6.91	0.001	0.86

Mediation via self-esteem and self-efficacy

Analyses were conducted separately for each sample. We first examined whether the effect of manipulated wealth on cosmopolitan identity would be independently accounted for by self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Study 3a: U.S. Sample. Significant indirect effects of wealth on cosmopolitan identity emerged via its relationships with self-esteem ($b=.17$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI=.07, .28), and self-efficacy ($b=.18$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI=.09, .28). In both models, the effect of wealth and cosmopolitan identity became non-significant (for self-esteem: Figure 2a; for self-efficacy: Figure 2b), indicating complete mediation.

Study 3b: Indian Sample. Similar findings emerged for the Indian sample in support of complete mediation (for self-esteem: Figure 2c; for self-efficacy: Figure 2d). Significant indirect effects of wealth on cosmopolitan identity emerged via its relationships with self-esteem ($b=.17$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI=.07, .29), and self-efficacy ($b=.21$, $SE=.06$, 95% CI=.10, .33).

Figure 2

Effect of manipulated wealth on cosmopolitan identity independently mediated by self-esteem (A) and self-efficacy (B), in both samples. Note: Dotted line denotes the direct effect of manipulated wealth. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Linking wealth with charitable intentions

As described in Table 5, participants in the high wealth (as compared to low wealth) condition were more willing to contribute time and money to a group that was in need. This effect emerged in both samples. We next explored if cosmopolitan identity could account for this effect in each sample.

Study 3a: U.S. Sample. A significant indirect effect of wealth on time donations emerged via its relationship with cosmopolitan identity ($b=.49$, $SE=.22$, 95% CI=.06, .93), and evidence was found in support of complete mediation (see Figure 3c). Similar indirect effects were surfaced on cash donations ($b=.41$, $SE=.19$, 95% CI=.04, .80), although the effect of wealth remained significant even after accounting for cosmopolitan identity, thereby indicative of partial mediation (see Figure 3d).

Study 3b: Indian Sample. Comparable findings to the U.S. emerged in our Indian sample. Complete mediation via cosmopolitan identity was found for time donations (Figure 3e: $b=.25$, $SE=.11$, 95% CI=.05, .48), while partial mediation surfaced for cash donations (Figure 3f: $b=.26$, $SE=.11$, 95% CI=.05, .50).¹⁰

Figure 3

Effect of wealth on charitable intentions mediated by cosmopolitan identity in Study 2 (left), Study 3a (middle) and Study 3b (right). Note:

Dotted line denotes the direct effect of wealth. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

General Discussion

In this paper, we subjected to empirical rigor the often-theorized (Veblen, 1899/2005; Bourdieu, 1979/1986), but rarely tested assumption that the cosmopolitan identity is an elite identity associated with wealth. This relationship was robust and was not reducible to the fact that wealthier people are more educated, more liberal, or better-traveled. Experimental evidence for this relationship further supports the case that wealth plays a causal role in the emergence of a cosmopolitan identity. In addition, we highlight a psychological mechanism that underpins how wealth translates into the adoption of this identity: self-belief. In line with the accrual of psychological capital stemming from being rich (Calhoun, 2002; Harvey, 2008) we show that wealthy individuals can unlock greater belief in their own capacities, thereby facilitating the adoption and expression of a cosmopolitan identity.

Our research is the first to empirically unpack how and why wealth drives the cosmopolitan identity. Even for an identity that technically does not have boundary conditions, there seems to be inclusion criteria: it is the relatively wealthy who are more likely to be able to fashion themselves as citizens of the world. These findings highlight a less explored undertone of cosmopolitan identity: as an aspirational sense of self more readily available to those who feel wealthy and confident in their capacities. By pointing to its elite underpinnings, the present research enables a more balanced and holistic understanding of cosmopolitan identity as a construct than is currently available. To achieve this end, we drew together ideas from disciplines beyond psychology. We gathered inspiration from cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, 1979/1986), but empirically tested predictions using constructs and methods established in psychology relating to wealth (Kraus et al., 2011), cosmopolitan identity (McFarland et al., 2012), and psychological resources (Schwarzer, 2014). Our approach is hence aligned with – and contributes to – an emerging body of work that applies classic sociological theories to evaluate modern perspectives in human behavior (see Hayes,

2020). In so doing, we answer a call to action for a more systematic empirical understanding of how and why wealth shapes identity (see Easterbrook et al., 2020; Jetten, 2019), thereby adding value to robust bodies of work pertaining to social identity, social class, and global citizenship.

Together with highlighting the elite nature of cosmopolitan identity, we point to a potential predicament in relation to prosocial tendencies. Cosmopolites were indeed more likely to engage in charitable tendencies, and at the same time fashioning the self as a citizen of the world accounted for why wealthy individuals were more likely to donate. Our results illustrate a conundrum for anyone looking to encourage prosocial tendencies by appealing to the idea of global citizenship. Cosmopolitan identity is shaped by, and constrained due to the lack of, wealth. There is hence a limit to which global citizenship can be cultivated due to structural economic realities, and some may feel less inclined to embrace this elite identity. We highlight an issue for campaigners and policy makers to contend with, when deciding on the most efficient means through which prosocial tendencies can be encouraged.

Limitations, Future Directions

We first acknowledge that wealth is but one antecedent of cosmopolitan identity, and recent empirical work has surfaced other important predictors. For example, vicarious contact through internet use has been suggested to influence global citizenship and cosmopolitan attitudes (Verboord, 2017), and multicultural settings that promote direct contact between groups have also been deemed important (for a review, see McFarland et al., 2019). To gain a more holistic understanding of how various antecedents interact with one another in shaping global citizenship, future research could examine multiple predictors in tandem. Doing so would contribute to our mosaic of understanding for a construct that is particularly important given its ability to predict socially beneficial downstream consequences, and at the same time

contribute to an area of research that has a considerable lacuna: how wealth shapes identities in general (see Easterbrook et al., 2020; Jetten, 2019).

In building a case for the elite nature of cosmopolitan identity, we focused on unpacking *why* the wealthy are more likely to identify as citizens of the world. In so doing we examined the role of one possible mediator: self-belief. However, our findings do not preclude the possibility of other potential psychological mechanisms that bridge the relationship between wealth and global citizenship. One such candidate is domain-specific self-efficacy in relation to cross-cultural interactions (Paolini et al., 2018; Ron et al., 2017), and another associated concept is cross-cultural competence (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013; Leung et al., 2014). Whereas we focused on the role of domain general processes (self-esteem, self-efficacy) as a first step, more refined predictions should be made in future research. For example, it would be instructive to contrast multiple mechanisms that differ in specificity (domain general vs. specific) and focus (self-related processes vs. environment centric variables). We hope our findings provide a springboard for such work.

Conclusion

At a time when nations are aggressively policing their borders, it is especially important to understand the psychology of cosmopolitanism, with everything that it implies in terms of the potential for global cooperation. There is a convergence of evidence that people high in cosmopolitan identity are more prosocial; results that we replicate in our program of studies as well. These are highly beneficial social outcomes, particularly in a world that requires great levels of cooperation to meet global challenges.

Yet it remains incumbent on social scientists to have a realistic and nuanced picture of what global citizenship represents, which requires us to critically examine questions about the elite undertones of the cosmopolitan identity. In that spirit, we also empirically demonstrate that wealth is a driver of cosmopolitan identity, which in turn accounts for why the wealthier

are more likely to donate. Taken together our findings highlight a conundrum: the cosmopolitan identity is predictive of beneficial outcomes, and in the same breath more readily available to the wealthy.

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Footnotes

1. We conducted exploratory factor analyses to examine the dimensionality of our wealth measures (see Supplement 2b). Two factors were extracted in Studies 1a and 1b (income, social status), and a single factor was found in Study 2. In Study 1a, we also measured perceived social privilege (Belmi & Laurin, 2016).
2. National identification (Reese et al., 2015) was part of our questionnaires. Raw intercorrelations in Supplement 5.
3. For exploratory purposes, we also examined whether externally oriented psychological variables would mediate the link between wealth and cosmopolitan identity: sense of control, and social power. Neither of these variables emerged as significant mediators, and even when accounting for these measures, self-esteem emerged as a significant mediator (see Supplement 4).
4. We collapsed three datasets as we expected a high attrition rate that is common with data collection in India via MTurk (only 63% of our combined dataset was usable). We reconducted all reported analyses by building in dataset differences, and our main findings remained unaltered.
5. We collected data in conjunction with a larger project that has since been published, although our items were discrete: see (LINK HIDDEN). The primary measures in that dataset included scales on religiosity and conspiracy beliefs.
6. At the conceptual level, we made no predictions about the distinction between self-esteem and self-efficacy as constructs intended to reflect self-belief (for a discussion, see Chen et al., 2004). Nonetheless, we conducted EFAs (see Supplement 2c) to examine whether these measures load onto the same factor (which was the case) and tested them against each other in parallel mediation models (where self-efficacy

emerged as the more potent mediator, but possibly due to the multi-item nature of the scale).

7. To examine how each of these groups were perceived, participants rated all eight groups on each of three items separately: neediness, pity, and exoticism. See Supplement 6 for additional analyses.
8. In line with our pre-registration, we examined and demonstrated that cosmopolitan identity was more strongly associated with charitable intentions towards foreign causes as compared to local groups.
9. For exploratory purposes we also measured forced-choice tasks relating to prosocial tendencies (materials on OSF).
10. The effect of wealth on charitable intentions was also sequentially mediated by self-belief, followed by cosmopolitan identity (see Supplement 6 for serial mediation models).