



# Implicit and explicit prosocial motivation as antecedents of volunteering: The moderating role of parenthood <sup>☆</sup>



Arzu Aydinli <sup>a,b,\*</sup>, Michael Bender <sup>a</sup>, Athanasios Chasiotis <sup>a</sup>, Fons J.R. van de Vijver <sup>a,c,d</sup>, Zeynep Cemalcilar <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Tilburg University, The Netherlands

<sup>b</sup> Koç University, Turkey

<sup>c</sup> North-West University, South Africa

<sup>d</sup> University of Queensland, Australia

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 4 June 2014

Received in revised form 28 September 2014

Accepted 9 October 2014

### Keywords:

Volunteering

Parenthood

Implicit motivation

Explicit motivation

Prosocial

## ABSTRACT

We test a model proposing that having children influences motivational pathways of volunteering in the same way across two different cultures. The model posits that parents' engagement in volunteering is driven by implicit, whereas non-parents' engagement in volunteering is related to explicit prosocial motivation. Participants were 570 parents and non-parents from Turkey and the US ( $M_{age} = 33.7$  years; 58.2% female). Results across the two cultural contexts confirmed our model. Our findings highlight the need for considering implicit prosocial motivation as an antecedent of volunteering, and underline the importance of examining parenthood as a moderator for motivations to volunteer. Avenues for further research and implications for voluntary organizations are discussed.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

Volunteering is a non-obligatory, planned, and long-term prosocial activity occurring within an organizational setting (Penner, 2002). Recent statistics suggest that volunteering is in a state of decline (see Salamon, Sokolowski, & Geller, 2012), indicating that it becomes increasingly difficult for organizations to attract and keep long-term volunteers. Our insight in motives to volunteer is lacking in three important aspects: First, motivations to volunteer were scarcely examined in light of a lifespan perspective. Second, research on motivational antecedents of volunteering is so far mostly based on self-reported motives (e.g., Clary et al., 1998; Omoto & Snyder, 1995), thereby neglecting effects of implicit motivation (Aydinli, Bender, Chasiotis, Cemalcilar, & Van de Vijver, 2014). Third, few cross-cultural studies have addressed volunteering, despite the large country differences in volunteering. The present study addresses these shortcomings and examines motivational antecedents as a function of parenthood, utilizes implicit

prosocial power motivation as an antecedent, and comprises samples from Turkey and the US.

### 1.1. Volunteering across the lifespan

Building on Omoto and Snyder's (1995) motivational approach to volunteering, Clary et al. (1998) identified a set of different motivations for volunteering. Even though this approach gained huge popularity in research on antecedents of volunteering, the examination of motives to volunteer across the lifespan remained rather scarce.

### 1.2. Socio-emotional selectivity theory and moving beyond age-based goals

One of the few studies examining life span effects on motives to volunteer is by Okun and Schultz (2003) who find age-graded changes in motives: Social goals gain importance with increasing age, but the importance of career-related motives as reasons for volunteering decreases (see also Okun, Pugliese, & Rook, 2007). Okun and Schultz interpreted their findings in light of the Socio-emotional Selectivity Theory (SST; Carstensen, Isaacowitz, & Charles, 1999), which posits that individuals' primary purposes for engaging in social interactions are determined by their perception of time. When time is perceived to be limitless

<sup>☆</sup> This research was supported in part by a grant from the Jacobs Foundation (grant reference number 2010-861) to the second, fourth, and fifth author.

\* Corresponding author at: School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Tilburg University, P.O. Box 90153, Tilburg 5000 LE, The Netherlands. Tel.: +31 (0) 13 466 2526.

E-mail address: [A.Aydinli@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:A.Aydinli@tilburguniversity.edu) (A. Aydinli).

(typically in younger age), social interactions are sought for *knowledge-related goals*. However, when time is perceived as a limited resource (typically in older age), *emotional goals* gain priority (see also Fung, Carstensen, & Lang, 2001).

So far, life span research conceptualized and measured life span effects by using age. However, life span models of motivation posit that motivational changes across the lifespan do not necessarily relate to age-based developments, but rather emerge through age-graded *transitions* that are accompanied by specific developmental tasks and demands (Baltes & Baltes, 1990). This approach to life span effects and an examination of associated motivational changes has been absent in volunteering research so far.

### 1.3. A dual process approach to motivation

In line with the reasoning that behavior is driven by conscious and unconscious forces (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981; Woike, 2008), motivational literature distinguishes two *independent* motivational systems: implicit motivation and explicit (or self-reported) motivation (McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989; Schultheiss, 2008). Whereas implicit motives develop during the pre-linguistic stage, the development of explicit motives is a cognition-driven process that takes place after language, self, and conceptual representations have been formed (Hofer & Chasiotis, 2011). Furthermore, the systems differ in *how* they develop and the type of behaviors they relate to. Implicit motives are acquired unconsciously through affective experiences in early childhood, operate outside individuals' control, and guide behaviors towards *affectively rewarding end-states*. Explicit motives, on the other hand, are products of conscious socialization, operate alongside individuals' awareness and control, and guide behavior towards *consciously chosen goals* (Schultheiss & Brunstein, 2010; Woike, 2008).

### 1.4. Motives to volunteer across cultures

Recent findings on motivational antecedents of volunteering indicate that both structure and strength of motivational effects do not differ across cultures (Aydinli, Bender, Chasiotis, Van de Vijver, Chong, et al., 2014). This provides evidence for the notion of *moderate universalism* (Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, & Sam, 2011) in which "basic psychological processes are likely to be common features of human life everywhere" (p. 290), while their manifestations or the extent to which they are expressed might vary. This means that the basic motivational mechanisms of volunteering (or other types of long-term ad planned helping) are likely to be invariant, even though the form and the extent to which volunteering is expressed can differ across cultures.

## 2. Present study

We set out to examine implicit and explicit prosocial power motivation and their relation to volunteering among parents and non-parents from two countries to address the limitations presented above.

Parenthood was selected as *the* critical life course factor as it is accompanied by substantial biological, social, and psychological changes including motivation (Salmela-Aro, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2007). Moreover, volunteering and parenthood are conceptually linked, as both relate to the concept of generativity, a "concern in establishing and guiding the next generation" (Erikson, 1963, p. 276). It has been argued that both parenthood and volunteering can be considered as realizations of generativity, with the former representing *parental generativity* (i.e., through having children),

and the latter representing *societal generativity* (i.e., by being engaged in volunteering; Shin An & Cooney, 2006).

Prosocial power motivation<sup>1</sup> is defined as one's concern to exert a positive impact on other people's lives, and represents one specific mode of realizing the need for power (Kuhl & Scheffer, 2001). Growing up with *younger siblings* promotes the development of implicit prosocial motivation across different cultural groups (Chasiotis, Bender, & Hofer, 2014; Chasiotis, Hofer, & Campos, 2006). Moreover, implicit prosocial motivation is related to generativity (Hofer, Busch, Chasiotis, Kaertner, & Campos, 2008), parenthood (Chasiotis et al., 2006) and prosocial behavior (Aydinli, Bender, Chasiotis, Cemalcilar, & Van de Vijver, 2014). We therefore propose it as an antecedent of volunteering.

### 2.1. Developmental pathways of implicit and explicit prosocial motivation

In line with previous research, we expect implicit prosocial motivation to be positively related to the number of younger siblings (see Chasiotis et al., 2006, 2014) (H1). We further hypothesize a relationship between explicit prosocial motivation and prosocial norms of close others (H2). Norms of close others represent socialization goals and normative teaching, and thus refer to mechanisms on which the development of explicit motives is based (McClelland et al., 1989). Extending this line of thought, we also expect social desirability, the need to 'fit in' a society (Paulhus, 1991), to be related to explicit prosocial motivation (H3).

### 2.2. Motivational antecedents of volunteering: The role of parenthood

Previous research on motives to volunteer proposed perceptions of time, and hence selectivity in goals, to change with individuals' age. We go beyond this research by proposing that changes in perception of time emerge through age-graded transitions (in our case becoming a parent) that are accompanied by changes in social roles, responsibilities, and motivation (Salmela-Aro et al., 2007). Due to their parental involvement, parents likely perceive their time to be more limited than non-parents. Consequently, in accordance with SST (Carstensen et al., 1999), parents should be more selective in their social interactions, and these interactions should predominantly serve *affective* goals. Hence, parents seek *affectively rewarding experiences* when volunteering, which, in motivational terms, refers to the *implicit system* (Schultheiss, 2008). Combining these propositions, it can be hypothesized that (beyond an effect of age) parents' engagement in volunteering should be mainly driven by implicit prosocial motivation (H4).

On the other hand, non-parents should be less time limited, therefore less selective, and their social interactions should serve knowledge-related goals (Fung et al., 2001). The purpose of non-parents' volunteering should rather serve the goal of making *new and valuable experiences*, which, in motivational terms, refers to the *explicit system*. We therefore hypothesize that non-parents' volunteering should be mainly driven by explicit prosocial motivation (H5).

### 2.3. Culturally invariant pathways of motivation and volunteering

Since there is no indication that developmental pathways of implicit and explicit motives would differ across lifespan or culture, we expect the proposed relationships to be invariant across cultures and parents and non-parents. Moreover, building on previous findings in the field (Aydinli, Bender, Chasiotis, Van de Vijver,

<sup>1</sup> To facilitate readability, we refer to implicit prosocial power motivation as implicit prosocial motivation and to explicit prosocial power motivation as explicit prosocial motivation.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7251935>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7251935>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)