

# **Congruence Matters: Volunteer Motivation, Value Internalization, and Retention**

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*Volunteer research suggests that both altruistic and non-altruistic motivations may improve retention. We challenge the assumption that this is true for all volunteer work. Drawing on congruity theory of attitude change, we argue that volunteer motivation may lead to high (or low) retention when the volunteer experience is perceived as congruent (or incongruent) with their motivation. Specifically, altruistic motivation can lead to a low retention during a non-altruistic event, while non-altruistic motivation can increase the retention. Using data from a mega sports event, our findings demonstrate a negative effect of altruistic motivation on retention in a non-altruistic event. We discuss implications of the role of motivation-experience congruence in volunteer retention.*

*Keywords: Volunteer Motivation, Congruence, Internalization, Altruistic Motivation*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Retaining volunteers remains a critical issue for HR management practice in nonprofit management (Alfes et al. 2017; Newton et al. 2014). Since volunteering is a specific form of self-planned, non-obligatory helping behavior (Penner 2002; Rodell et al. 2016), identifying the dispositional and situational factors that increase volunteer retention has long been a concern of researchers (Newton et al. 2014; Penner 2002; Rubenstein et al. 2018). Among others, volunteer motivation is an important antecedent that influences volunteer retention (Clary et al. 1998; Harrison 1995; Newton et al. 2014; Pearce 1993; Stukas et al. 2016). Motivated volunteers are more likely to participate (Harrison 1995), be satisfied (Güntert et al. 2016), and exert work effort (Bidee et al. 2013).

In light of the importance of volunteer motivation in retention, scholars have invested considerable efforts to understanding both the nature of volunteer motivation (e.g., self-oriented vs. other-oriented) (Batson et al. 1981; Cialdini et al. 1987; Smith 1981; Unger 1991) and the functions that volunteering serves (Clary et al. 1998; Snyder et al. 2000). First, despite that early studies suggest a unidimensional

construct of volunteer motivation (e.g., Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen 1991), extensive research has identified the critical role different motivations of volunteering play in shaping individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward volunteer work (Cialdini et al. 1987; Mesch et al. 1998; Phillips and Phillips 2011; Smith 1981; Stukas et al. 2016). For instance, other-oriented, altruistic motives of volunteering are positively related to satisfaction and intentions to continue (Stukas et al. 2016), participation in corporate volunteering (Sekar and Dyaram 2017), and commitment (Veludo-de-Oliveira et al. 2015), while self-oriented motives are negatively related to such concepts. Second, another stream of research has taken a functionalist perspective in exploring the role of volunteer motivation, suggesting that different motives may appeal to different individuals through different functional mechanisms such as value, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement (Clary et al. 1998; Snyder et al. 2000). The core proposition of the functionalist approach is that the act of volunteering may reflect different underlying motivational processes, influencing the initiation and maintenance of voluntary activity (Clary et al. 1998). One especially compelling argument of the functionalist approach is that it suggests the importance of congruence between motivation and the actual experience of volunteering (Clary et al. 1998; Güntert et al. 2016; Stukas et al. 2009). For instance, Clary et al. (1998) found that messages of advertising are perceived as more persuasive by participants when the messages are aligned with their motivation. Another study also found a positive relationship of an index of match generated by multiplying scores of volunteer motivation and their experience (i.e., affordance) with both satisfaction and positive emotion (Stukas et al. 2009). As such, extant findings suggest the importance of volunteer experience in understanding the relationship between volunteer motivation and attitude (Stukas et al. 2009, 2016).

Combining and extending both streams of research, we examine the relationship between volunteer motivation and behavioral outcome, that is volunteer retention, in two ways. First, drawing on the congruity theory of attitude change (Osgood and Tannenbaum 1955), we investigate a relationship whereby altruistic and non-altruistic motivations of volunteering have different effects on retention in a non-altruistic volunteering context (i.e., a mega sports event). According to the congruity theory (Osgood and Tannenbaum 1955), when an existing attitude toward an object of judgment is incongruent with an assertion (or message) embedded in the object, individuals tend to change their attitude toward the object so as to obtain congruity in the perception between their attitude and the object. This suggests that when facing incongruence between the motivation for volunteering (e.g., altruistic motivation) and actual volunteer experience (e.g., non-altruistic, egoistic work), volunteers may react differently comparing to the congruence situation such as egoistically motivated individuals working in a non-altruistic and egoistic volunteer event. This suggests that volunteers facing incongruence between the motivation for volunteering and actual volunteer experience would react differently than they would if they were facing congruence. The importance of congruence for better performance has been recognized in various works. For instance, the lack of fit theory proposes that, to the extent that a workplace role is incongruent with the attributes ascribed to an individual, she or he would suffer from perceived lack of fit, which may lead to decreased performance (Heilman 1983). A combination of good understanding of volunteer motivation and satisfying experience may lead to sustained engagement in volunteering (Pierce et al. 2014). Charging fees to nonprofit volunteering abroad can undermine participation more among altruistic volunteers than among egoistic volunteers (Clerkin and Swiss 2014). Taken together, altruistically and non-altruistically motivated volunteers are likely to manifest differential behavioral responses (e.g., retention) when they experience a non-altruistic volunteer event. We test the congruence hypothesis using data from volunteers at a mega-sporting event. Second, drawing on self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan 1985), we suggest and test an important role of value internalization in facilitating volunteer retention, even when incongruence between motivation and experience exists. According to self-determination theory, the extent to which one fully accepts, endorses, or stands behind one's actions determines perceived autonomy and internalization (Chirkov et al. 2003), which specifies various motives to act along a continuum from external regulation to integrated regulation (i.e., internalization) to intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan 1985; Ryan and Deci 2000). Within the continuum, internalization refers to the extent to which one accepts an external regulatory process as one's own value (Deci and Ryan 1985). Individuals with a high level of internalization of external value may demonstrate a high level of engagement in the

focal behavior (Deci et al. 1994). Empirical evidence suggests that internalization may increase performance (Ritchie 2000) and commitment (O'Reilly and Chatman 1986). Since volunteering is a helping behavior guided by ethical norms (Penner 2002; Wilson and Musick 1997), internalization of the value of the focal volunteer event may play an important role if the value is in line with an individual's internal value system, even when an individual recognizes incongruence between his or her motivation for volunteering (e.g., altruistic motivation) and experience (e.g., non-altruistic event). Thus, we test our hypothesis of the additive effect of value internalization on volunteer retention.

The present study makes several contributions. First, we suggest a more complex portrait of the relationship between volunteer motivation and retention. Whereas previous theory and research suggest that a high level of volunteer motivation can improve outcomes such as satisfaction, intention to continue, and well-being (Güntert et al. 2016; Stukas et al. 2009, 2016), we demonstrate that individuals' behavioral responses are not the same across different combinations of motivation and experience. Because altruistically motivated volunteers may perceive incongruence with their experience during a non-altruistic event, the relationship between altruistic motivation and retention in a non-altruistic event may be negative. Second, while a majority of research focuses on individual volunteers' pre-dispositional attributes (e.g., self-oriented vs. other-oriented motivation) and their reactive responses toward the functional nature of volunteering (Clary et al. 1998; Güntert et al. 2016; Newton et al. 2014), we shift attention toward the role of individuals' proactive interpretation of the environment (Kim and Rousseau 2018), particularly the role of value internalization that buffers the negative impact of motivation-experience incongruence. Such a shift is conceptually and practically important, given the proactive nature of volunteering (do Nascimento et al. 2018) and the critical importance of value in volunteering to individuals who are willing to devote their time and efforts to the focal volunteer work (Wilson 2000).

## **RELEVANT LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES**

Although paid workers' retention is well researched and documented, the literature reiterates that retention of volunteers is less understood (Gidron 1985; Mesch et al. 1998). In this section, we review research on volunteerism where, along with characteristics pertaining to individuals, several key factors are purported to have an influence on volunteer retention.

### **Volunteer Motivation and Retention**

Research on volunteer motivation has identified two different motivational orientations that prompt volunteers to undertake prosocial actions: altruistic and non-altruistic motivation (Batson et al. 1981; Smith 1981; Unger 1991). Altruistic motivation is conceptualized as a sentiment based on a selfless concern for others and a willingness to sacrifice with no apparent personal gain (Hoffman 1981; Unger 1991). On the other hand, non-altruistic, egoistic motivation is understood based on the assumption that everything that people do is "ultimately directed toward the end-state goal of benefiting themselves" (Batson et al. 1981). As for a host of non-altruistic motives, although the term used varies across studies (e.g. self-oriented, egoistic, and instrumental), the common thread is non-altruism. It is well documented that volunteers can pursue the same prosocial actions to fulfill different motives (Clary et al. 1998; Cornelis et al. 2013). For instance, both altruistic and non-altruistic volunteer motivations predict volunteers' longevity of participation (Clary et al. 1992; Finkelstien 2009; Morrow-Howell and Mui 1989). Yet research on the effect of volunteer motivation on retention shows that the findings are mixed: Some scholars report that altruistic motives are more positively correlated with intent to remain on the job whereas non-altruistic motives show less positive, if not negative, associations (Omoto et al. 2010; Penner and Finkelstein 1998; Rubin and Thorelli 1984); a few scholars demonstrate the exact opposite, such that non-altruistic motives predict sustained volunteering whereas altruistic motives do not (Omoto and Snyder 1995).

In an effort to better understand the relationship between volunteer motivation and its behavioral consequences, researchers explored the functions volunteer activities serve. Drawing on earlier theories of functional dimensions of attitudes (Katz 1960), Clary et al. (1998) identified six broad functions (i.e.,

value, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement) that may potentially be served by volunteerism. A central tenet of this functionalist approach is that people may volunteer in pursuit of different goals (Dwyer et al. 2013). For instance, value motivation serves the expression of altruistic value by providing individuals the opportunities to “express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others” (Clary et al. 1998, p. 1517), while enhancement motivation serves the ego enhancement function by providing the opportunities to pursue “the ego's growth and development and positive strivings of the ego” (Clary et al. 1998, p. 1518). Empirical studies examined the relationship between functional motivations for volunteering and consequences. For instance, functional motivations predict time spent to volunteer and length of volunteering (Finkelstein 2008), participation in volunteerism (Greenslade and White 2005), organizational citizenship behavior (Finkelstein et al. 2005), and volunteer satisfaction (Dwyer et al. 2013).

Although it would be ideal for a volunteer to receive consistent signals from her or his volunteer work that the volunteering is in line with their motivation, a volunteer often recognizes that their experience in the volunteer event is not what she or he has expected. According to the congruity theory (Osgood and Tannenbaum 1955), incongruence between one's initial attitude toward an object and subsequent perception of the event may lead an individual to change her or his attitude toward the object so that the congruence can be achieved. For example, altruistically motivated volunteers may see volunteering for a sports event as too self-oriented (Wang 2004), which in turn may lead to a lower level of involvement in volunteer work. In the same manner, volunteers with more self-oriented motivation may see the same event as an opportunity for personal growth and career development (VanSickle et al. 2015), which enables them to actively engage in volunteer work. As such, a high level of altruistic motivation for volunteering may result in a negative behavioral consequence depending on the context of volunteering. Despite that a majority of studies has focused on identifying the antecedents (Newton et al. 2014; Penner 2002; Penner and Finkelstein 1998) and the consequences (Harrison 1995; Stukas et al. 2016) of volunteer motivation, only a few studies have examined the relationship of congruence on volunteer attitudes such as satisfaction and intention to continue (Clary et al. 1998; Güntert et al. 2016; Stukas et al. 2009). Moreover, none of the studies has tested the differential effect of congruence (or incongruence) in the context of non-altruistic volunteering such as sports events (Aisbett et al. 2015; Fairley et al. 2007; Giannoulakis et al. 2007; Reeser et al. 2005). In light of the dichotomy of motivational orientations (i.e., altruistic vs. non-altruistic) as well as the congruence principle, we posit the first set of hypotheses:

***Hypothesis 1a:*** *In the context of a non-altruistic volunteer event, altruistic motivation of volunteering will be negatively related to volunteer attendance.*

***Hypothesis 1b:*** *In the context of a non-altruistic volunteer event, non-altruistic (i.e., egoistic) motivation of volunteering will be positively related to volunteer attendance.*

### **Value Internalization**

According to self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan 1985), internalization is a process by which a person takes in an external regulation as his or her own value. At the core of self-determination theory lies a postulation that once a person internalizes (or ‘takes in’) a set of values, attitudes, or regulations, an external contingency is no longer necessary in regulating her or his behavior since the external regulation has been transformed into an internal regulation (Gagné and Deci 2005; Ryan and Deci 2000). Internalization has been studied as an important mechanism that links motivation and behavior (e.g., Kim and Rousseau 2018).

Internalization is likely to be of greater importance in terms of its role in executing value-laden tasks such as volunteering (Güntert et al. 2016). Internalization takes place to intensify action in response to values rather than external rewards. The apparent absence of external rewards for non-paid tasks, so great as to be taken for granted in the volunteer arena, has led scholars predominantly to limit the influence on volunteer behavior to intrinsic motivation. In the context of volunteering, self-determined motivation can be realized by the internalization of the value of volunteering. Empirical studies has suggested a potential

link of internalization to satisfaction and low intent to quit (Bidee et al. 2013; Millette and Gagné 2008). We extend this link between value internalization and volunteering by examining the additive effect of value internalization on volunteer retention as follows:

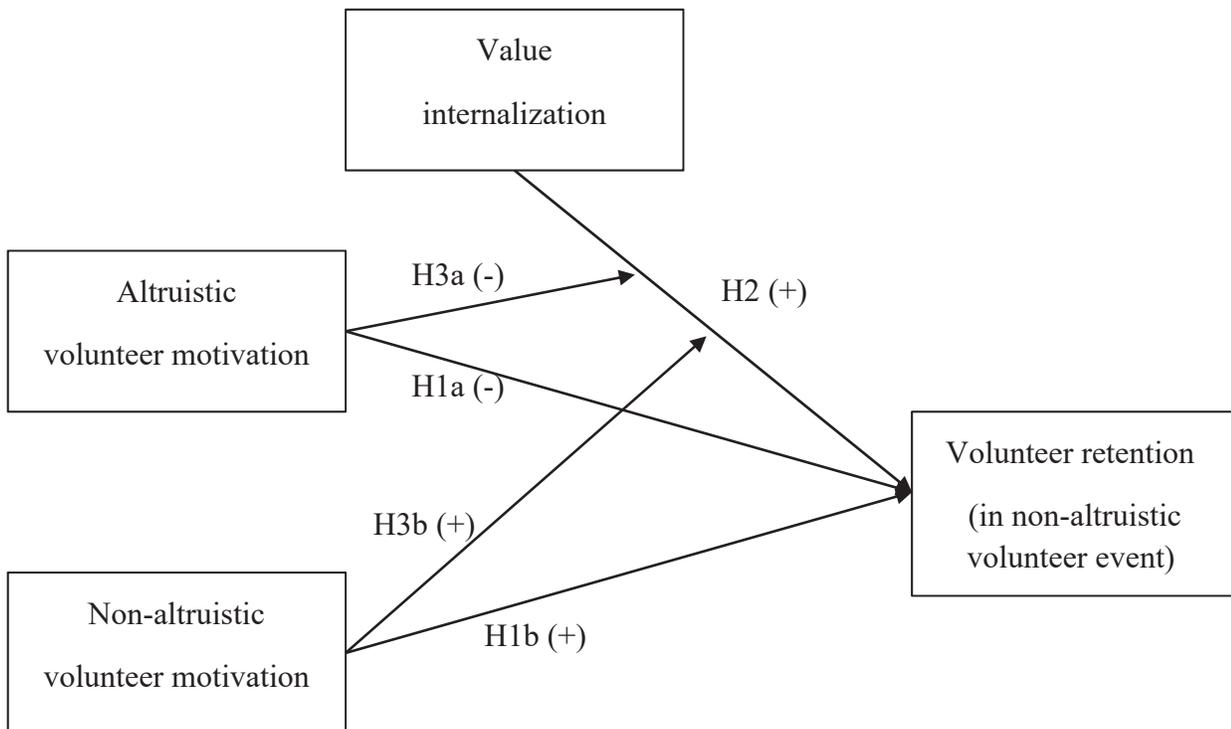
**Hypothesis 2:** *Value internalization will explain variance in volunteer attendance rates over and above functional volunteer motivations such as altruistic and egoistic motivations.*

Next, we argue that the link between value internalization and volunteer retention is affected by the nature of volunteer motivation. As discussed earlier, volunteers with a high level of value internalization may constructively engage in the volunteer work by adopting the value of volunteering as their own value. However, it is likely that the strength of this link might be weakened if those volunteers perceive incongruence between their motivation and experience (Stukas et al. 2009). Thus, the positive relationship between value internalization and volunteer retention may be weakened when the two are incongruent (i.e., altruistic motivation and non-altruistic experience) and strengthened when congruent (i.e., non-altruistic motivation and non-altruistic experience). Thus, we posit the third hypothesis as follows:

**Hypothesis 3:** *In the context of non-altruistic volunteer events, volunteer motivation will moderate the relationship between value internalization and retention such that (a) high altruistic volunteer motivation will negatively moderate the relationship between value internalization and retention and (b) high egoistic volunteer motivation will positively moderate the relationship between value internalization and retention.*

Figure 1 summarizes our hypotheses.

**FIGURE 1  
HYPOTHETICAL FRAMEWORK**



## METHODS

### Sample and Data Collection

To test our hypotheses, we surveyed volunteers for the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics, which falls under the non-altruistic volunteer event category. A total of 24,449 volunteers were assigned to a variety of tasks in a multitude of positions including guide services (e.g., guiding participants at venues and other facilities), operational assistance (e.g., assisting operations of games), mobility support (e.g., driving vehicles), personal support (e.g., welcoming overseas delegates; providing foreign-language interpretation services), operational support (e.g., issuing IDs to the Games participants), technological aids (e.g., entering competitors' data and game results at competition venues), and media relations assistance (e.g., assisting press conference operations). The Volunteer Division of the PyeongChang Organizing Committee for the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, a temporary organization founded by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the South Korean government, oversaw volunteer activities. At the beginning of the event, the Volunteer Division randomly selected a total of 450 volunteers and distributed questionnaires to them. The response rate was 78% ( $n = 355$ ). Of the total responses, we excluded 14 unusable responses (e.g. survey straight lining; missing answers to survey questions). Cleansing the data by deleting these responses yielded a final sample of 341 volunteers. 47% of the respondents are female. The average age is 31.3 years. 87% have a college-level education.

### Measures

#### *Altruistic / Non-altruistic Volunteer Motivation*

We assessed both altruistic and non-altruistic volunteer motivation using Clary et al.'s (1998) Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). Following previous research distinguishing a total of six functional motivations in VFI into a dichotomy of altruistic-egoistic motivations (Cornelis et al. 2013; Güntert et al. 2016; Mesch et al. 1998), we selected *value* motivation and *enhancement* motivation in order to assess altruistic and egoistic volunteer motivation, respectively. *Value* motivation functions for individuals to express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others (Clary et al., 1998). *Value* motivation was measured using five items, including "I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself" and "I feel compassion toward people in need." Alternatively, *enhancement* motivation involves a motivational process focusing on the ego's growth and development as well as positive strivings of the ego (Clary et al., 1998). Four items were used to measure the *enhancement* motivation. Sample items include "Volunteering makes me feel better about myself" and "Volunteering makes me feel important." Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement to the statements that are verbatim accounts of the above two motivations using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha was .94 for value motivation and .93 for enhancement motivation.

#### *Value Internalization*

Value internalization was measured using a five-item measure of internalization developed by O'Reilly and Chatman (1986). This variable captures the extent to which an individual perceives that the values of the individual coincide with those the organization represents (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). The five items were revised so they best suit our research context. Sample items include "If the values of this volunteer organization were different, I would not be as attached to this organization" and "My attachment to this organization is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by this volunteer organization." Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement to the items on a 7-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha was .92.

#### *Volunteer Retention*

We measured volunteer retention using the attendance rate, a percentage of the total number of days a person turned out for volunteering out of the total seventeen attendance days of the Olympic Games. The average attendance rate is 82.7% ( $SD = 13.6$ ).

### Control Variables

We controlled for demographic variables including gender, age, and educational attainment (Johnson et al. 2017; Pearce 1993). Since individuals with past volunteer experience are more likely to volunteer (Pearce 1993), past experience of both sport-related volunteering and non-sports-related volunteering was controlled (1 = having experience, 0 = having no experience). We also controlled for *love of sports* (Bang and Ross 2009) to take account of the strong relationship between *love of sports* and commitment to remain a volunteer (MacLean and Hamm 2007; VanSickle et al. 2015). Love of sports was measured using four items by Bang and Ross (2009). A sample item is “I enjoy being involved in sports activities.” Cronbach’s alpha was .95.

### Data Analysis

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses of eighteen items measuring value motivation, enhancement motivation, internalization, and love of sports with maximum likelihood procedures. The four-factor solution achieved good fit with the data,  $\chi^2(129)=385.9$ , CFI = .95, SRMR = .05. The four-factor solution was the superior solution over alternative nested models including three-factor solution combining both value motivation and enhancement motivation ( $\chi^2(132)=1270.4$ , CFI = .80, SRMR = .12), two-factor solution combining the two motivations and love of sports ( $\chi^2(134)=2600.4$ , CFI = .56, SRMR = .20), and one-factor solution ( $\chi^2(135)=3814.6$ , CFI = .34, SRMR = .25). All factor loadings were statistically significant, ranging from .78 to .92 for value motivation, .81 to .90 for enhancement motivation, .75 to .89 for internalization, and .88 to .93 for love of sports. Since we tested our hypotheses by performing ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, we ran a set of diagnostic tests to ensure that all assumptions underpinning OLS models were satisfied. Both graphical and formal analyses showed that the residuals are normally distributed (Shapiro–Wilk W test for normality,  $p < .01$ ). No influential observation was detected. The data do not show any sign of heteroskedasticity.

## RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for all variables are presented in Table 1. The attendance rate is positively associated with a non-altruistic motivation of volunteering (i.e., *enhance* motivation) and value internalization, but not with an altruistic motivation of volunteering (i.e., *value* motivation).

**TABLE 1**  
**MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND CORRELATIONS**

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Gender (1=female)	.47	.66										
2. Age	1.64	2.13	.13**									
3. Education	.36	1.97	-.11**	-.11**								
4. Volunteer (Olympics)	.27	.08	-.16***	.21***	.08							
5. Volunteer (Sports)	.39	.19	.21***	.11**	.08	.11**						
6. Volunteer (Others)	.50	.46	.22***	.24***	-.02	-.01	-.06					
7. Love of sports	1.50	5.12	-.02	.03	.02	.00	-.02	.12**				
8. Altruistic motivation	1.47	4.89	-.02	.15***	-.01	.16***	.02	.16***	.08			
9. Egoistic motivation	1.29	5.46	.00	.01	.04	.08	.00	.03	-.15***	.48***		
10. Internalization	1.40	4.66	.05	.14***	.03	.04	-.08	.03	.13**	.21***	.26***	
11. Attendance rate (%)	.14	.81	.11**	.19***	.04	.10*	-.03	.05	.14***	.07	.24***	.58***

Notes: \*  $p < .10$ , \*\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*\*  $p < .01$ . N = 341

Table 2 illustrates the results of a series of hierarchical regression analyses performed to test the three sets of hypotheses. Model 1 demonstrates the relationship of attendance rate with the control variables, indicating that gender, age, and individual preference for sports events are positively related to volunteer attendance rate. Model 2 tests the congruence hypothesis of altruistic and non-altruistic volunteer motivation and volunteer experience. Hypothesis 1a predicted that altruistic motivation of volunteering would be negatively associated with attendance to the non-altruistic volunteer event. Hypothesis 1b predicted that egoistic motivation of volunteering would be positively associated with attendance to the non-altruistic volunteer event. As shown in the Model 2 in Table 2, the coefficient of altruistic motivation is negative and significant ( $\beta = -.012$ ,  $p < .01$ ), supporting Hypothesis 1a. The coefficient of egoistic motivation is also positive and significant ( $\beta = .015$ ,  $p < .01$ ), supporting Hypothesis 1b. In summary, the first set of matching hypotheses are supported.

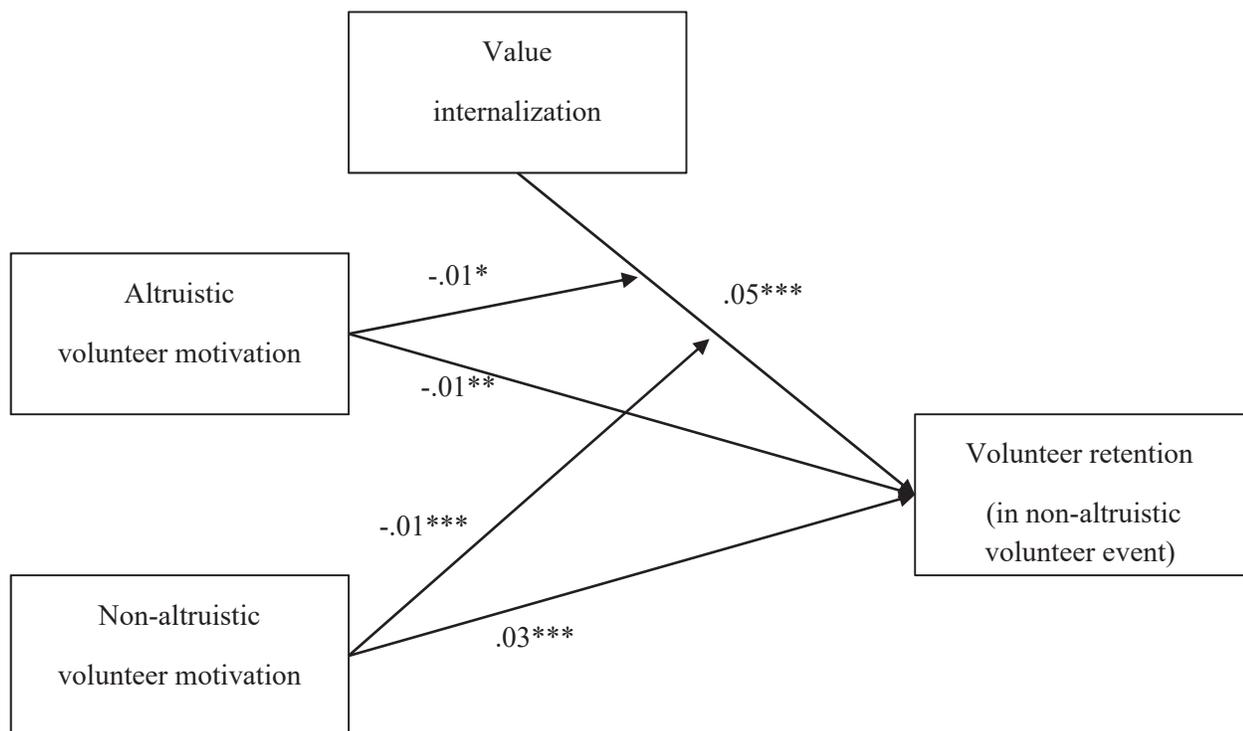
**TABLE 2**  
**REGRESSION RESULTS**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Constant	.641*** (.053)	.494*** (.060)	.419*** (.052)	.306*** (.065)	.194** (.070)	.196** (.070)
Gender	.040* (.017)	.039* (.016)	.026 (.014)	.027* (.014)	.028* (.014)	.028* (.014)
Age	.015*** (.004)	.016*** (.004)	.009** (.004)	.010** (.004)	.010** (.004)	.009** (.004)
Education	.027 (.020)	.022 (.019)	.013 (.017)	.014 (.017)	.010 (.016)	.010 (.017)
Volunteer (Olympics)	.042 (.029)	.036 (.028)	.035 (.024)	.033 (.024)	.034 (.024)	.035 (.025)
Volunteer (Sports)	-.030 (.019)	-.028 (.018)	-.006 (.016)	-.006 (.016)	-.003 (.016)	-.003 (.016)
Volunteer (Others)	-.012 (.015)	-.011 (.015)	-.001 (.013)	-.002 (.013)	.001 (.013)	.002 (.013)
Love of sports	.013* (.005)	.018*** (.005)	.010** (.004)	.011** (.004)	.008* (.004)	.007 (.004)
Altruistic motivation		-.012* (.005)	-.015*** (.004)	.009 (.010)	-.017*** (.004)	-.020 (.016)
Egoistic motivation		.034*** (.006)	.021*** (.005)	.019*** (.006)	.065*** (.011)	.068*** (.018)
Value internalization			.050*** (.004)	.075*** (.009)	.107*** (.012)	.107*** (.011)
Altruistic motivation × Value internalization				-.005** (.002)		.001 (.003)
Egoistic motivation × Value internalization					-.010*** (.002)	-.011** (.003)
R squared	.08	.16	.39	.40	.41	.41
Change in R squared	.08***	.08***	.23***	.01*	.02**	.00
F (df)	4.11 (7, 333)	6.85 (9,311)	21.38 (10,330)	20.01 (11,329)	21.02(11,32 9)	19.22(12,32 8)

Note: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .  $N = 341$ . Parenthesis is standard error.

To test Hypothesis 2, which predicted an effect for value internalization on volunteer attendance rate over and above the effect of both altruistic and egoistic motivations of volunteering, a hierarchical regression procedure was employed (Cohen et al. 1983). Model comparison statistics in Table 2 presents the results of the hierarchical regression in which value internalization was the last variable entered across Model 1, 2, and 3. This analysis provides support for Hypothesis 2. Value internalization explained an additional 23.6 percent ( $p < .01$ ) of the variance in attendance rate. Such an additive effect is revealed to travel in the direction as anticipated: volunteers reporting higher levels of value internalization have higher attendance rates than those scoring low on this dimension. The completed model (Model 3) accounts for 39.3 percent of the variance in attendance rate.

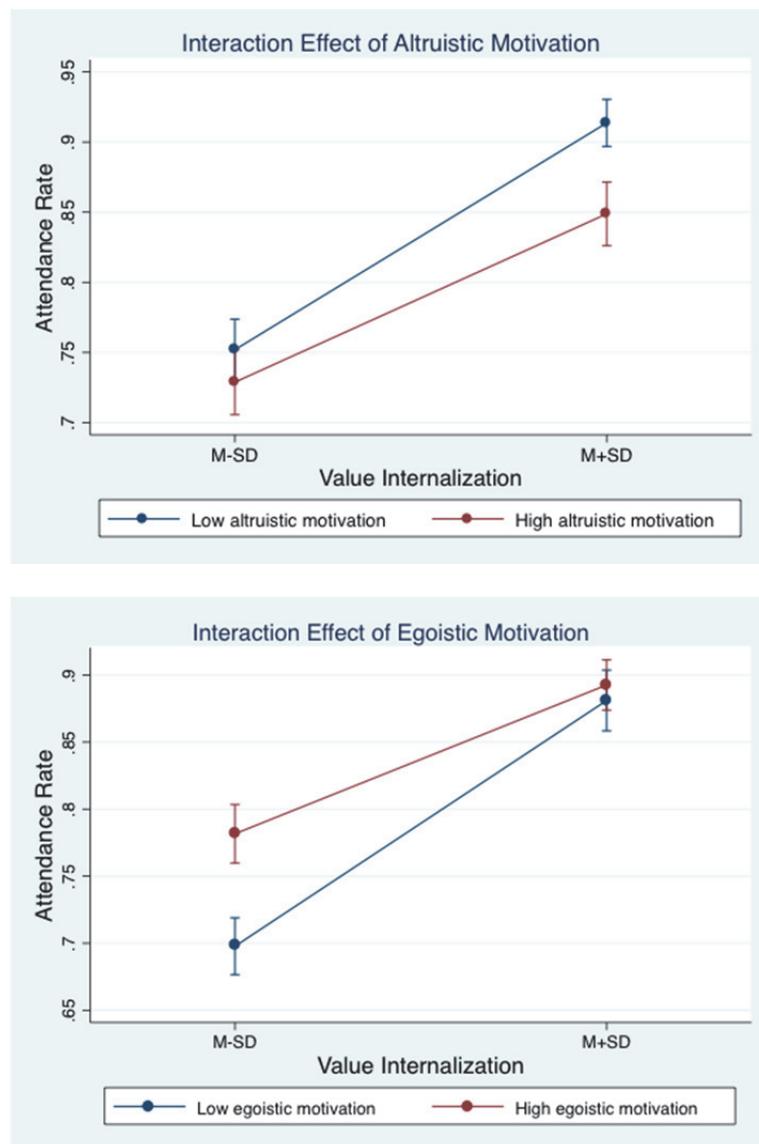
**FIGURE 2  
HYPOTHESIS TESTING**



The next three models tested Hypothesis 3, presuming an interaction effect of both altruistic and egoistic volunteer motivations in the relationship of value internalization and attendance rate. Model 4 includes an interaction term between altruistic motivation and value internalization; model 5 includes an interaction term between egoistic motivation and value internalization; model 6 includes both of the two interaction terms. Hypothesis 3a predicted a negative interaction effect from altruistic motivation that weakens the relationship between value internalization and attendance rate in a non-altruistic volunteer event. As predicted, the coefficient of the interaction term is negative and significant ( $\beta = -.005, p < .01$ ) in Model 4. But the effect is diminished in Model 6 ( $\beta = -.001, p < .01$ ). Hypothesis 3b predicted a positive interaction effect of egoistic motivation that strengthens the effect of value internalization on attendance rate. The analysis demonstrates that the effect is statistically significant ( $\beta = -.010, p < .01$  in Model 4;  $\beta = -.011, p < .01$  in Model 5), but the direction is opposite to what was predicted. Figure 2 displays our findings and Figure 3 the moderating effect between volunteer motivation and value internalization. As shown in the first panel of Figure 3, the relationship between value internalization and attendance rate is positive in both volunteers with high and low levels of altruistic motivation. However, when altruistic motivation increases, the effect size (i.e., slope) decreases and the attendance rates among

volunteers with high altruistic motivation are revealed to be significantly higher than those with low altruistic motivation. The second panel of Figure 3 demonstrates that, as egoistic motivation increases, the effect size (i.e., slope) of the relationship between value internalization and attendance rate decreases. However, the overall level of attendance rate among volunteers with high egoistic motivation tends to be significantly higher than those with low egoistic motivation when value internalization level is low. Such a trend indicates that although egoistic motivation may not affect attendance rate when value internalization is salient, egoistic motivation contributes to attendance rate when volunteers did not internalize the values the volunteer event represents, in particular when the characteristics of the volunteer event is non-altruistic. Thus, our data analysis shows that the interaction hypothesis of volunteer motivation is partially supported.

**FIGURE 3**  
**INTERACTION EFFECTS**



## DISCUSSION

The notion that the congruence between volunteer motivation and experience (i.e., altruistic motivation and altruistic experience) affects individuals' commitment to volunteering and their attendance is well documented (e.g., Clary et al. 1998). However, research on volunteer motivation has thus far not systematically accounted for the fact that, not just volunteer motivation, but also volunteer experience can be categorized into altruistic and non-altruistic ones. As a result, less is known whether the effects of congruence (or incongruence) between volunteer motivation and experience might vary with the characteristics of volunteer events (altruistic vs. non-altruistic). The present study provides clear support for the differential role of congruence between motivation and experience on volunteer attendance by examining the relationship between volunteer motivation and attendance rate in the context of a non-altruistic volunteer event.

Our findings advance the current research on volunteer motivation in two ways. First, we contribute to the volunteer motivation literature by showing that the degree to which volunteer experience matches with a volunteer's motivation may have important implications for an individual's commitment to volunteerism. The literature on volunteer motivation has not systematically accounted for the cases of non-altruistic volunteer events in which volunteers may perceive either matching or mismatching experiences depending on the nature of their volunteer motivation (Batson et al. 1981; Mesch et al. 1998; Unger 1991). By demonstrating that the effect of altruistic and non-altruistic volunteer motivation on attendance rate is contingent on the nature of experience a volunteer undergoes (i.e., altruistic or non-altruistic event), this study paves the way for a new direction in research on volunteer motivation that accounts for the match between volunteer motivation and the nature of volunteer experience.

Second, our results extend volunteer and nonprofit management literature by adding a value internalization variable to the array of variables associated with volunteer retention. How individual volunteers perceive the value of volunteering is important because volunteering involves value-laden tasks and can represent one's own value and belief system (Wilson 2000). Previous work within the volunteer management literature has largely neglected the influence of self-determined attitudes driven by values and beliefs (e.g., value internalization) on volunteer outcomes. Our findings suggest that value internalization has the potential to explain variance in volunteer retention in addition to the variance accounted for by volunteer motivation.

The interaction effect between value internalization and volunteer motivation, although not the primary focus of our study, represents complex relationships among dispositional (e.g., motivation), situational (e.g., value internalization), and contextual (e.g., the characteristics of volunteer work) aspects of volunteering. Consistent with our hypotheses, different combinations of altruistic (or non-altruistic) motivation and value internalization lead to different consequences. This interactionist perspective toward the effect of volunteer motivation on retention is consistent with previous research emphasizing the interaction of motivation with dispositional and organizational factors (Penner 2002).

### Limitations

Our study is not without limitations. First, as this research analyzes cross-sectional data, it is not yet clear whether the relationships among the variables discussed are causal. Future research can confirm such relationships in an experimental setting. Nonetheless, to a great extent, this research elucidates a relationship between motivations (broadly dichotomized into altruistic and egoistic) and retention as well as a relationship whereby value internalization increases the likelihood of success in retention practices. By using attendance records as an indicator of retention, we were able to avoid a concern of common method bias regarding results obtained from self-report data such as volunteer satisfaction (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Second, as our data is extracted from a population exposed to an episodic event that is more conducive to egoism. Future research that takes account of the opposite case of incongruence (i.e., non-altruistic motivation in an altruistic experience) would further clarify the discussed relationships.

## Practical Implications

The present study suggests several practical implications. First, when planning a volunteer event that can be as idiosyncratic, additional stress should fall on recruiting volunteers whose motivations are highly compatible with the nature and orientation of the event. It should be noted that there is a need to align such a cherry-picking strategy with the recent trend of volunteer market segmentation. Given that attributes of workforce supply in volunteer markets are strongly tied to volunteers' motivations, tailoring recruiting strategies that accommodates volunteers' motivational needs (i.e. the match between volunteer motivation and the nature of volunteer experience) is likely to yield more successful outcomes in terms of participation and retention. Second, newcomer training and socialization focusing on the enhancement of volunteer value internalization can also improve volunteers' commitment and participation. For instance, by providing appropriate information and sharing broad goals of the focal volunteer event, a volunteer organization can encourage volunteers experiencing less congruence to adopt and take in the volunteer values as their own, which in turn would positively influence their participation.

## CONCLUSION

The present study examined the differential relationship of altruistic and non-altruistic motivation for volunteering with volunteer retention in the context of non-altruistic volunteer event as well as the additive influence of value internalization above and beyond volunteer motivation on retention. The findings suggest that the motivation-experience congruence can play an important role in retaining volunteers. Also, a critical role of value internalization in volunteer retention is found. The implication suggests HR practice in nonprofit management should pay more attention to what volunteers want from their experience and how to encourage their participation through the enhancement of value internalization.

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