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**MORAL IDENTITY AS THE BASIS FOR VOLUNTEERING
INVOLVEMENT IN ADOLESCENCE**

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Abstract

Russian teenagers develop in complicated, uncertain and contradicting social and economic conditions. The moral development as one of the central lines of psychological changes in adolescence becomes complicated in world of inconsistent and conflict social and moral norms in modern society. Volunteering activity can be regarded as one of the opportunities to stimulate adolescents' moral development in a positive way. Volunteering activity correlates with moral norms and care orientation. The goal of the study was to investigate the role of moral identity in volunteering involvement in adolescence. 329 adolescents took part in the investigation. 4 questionnaires were used. Several groups with different levels of moral development were defined; the differences of volunteering experience and understanding of volunteering motivation were found and discussed. The results showed that a higher level of moral development correlates with experience of volunteering activity and understanding of volunteering motivation. Regression models for volunteering motivation functions (belief function and social function) allowed one to define moral predictors of motivation.

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1. Introduction

Developmental tasks define the main directions of self-determination in adolescence. The self-determination as the process provides various opportunities to social experiments for self-understanding. The self-determination as the result gives teenagers stable and concrete choices in in basic life spheres. Socialization conditions for adolescents' self-determination in modern Russia are rather contradictory: high level of social uncertainty, wide variety of moral norms and life values, huge informational flow – wide life opportunities are supported by inconsistent and conflict social landmarks (Karabanova, 2007; Martsinkovskaya, 2012). Social structures not always set life and social guides for teenagers. That increases the risks for development of egoistic and material value orientation. Adolescence is the period of value and moral structure development. Moral development can be defined as one of the main directions of development in adolescence: principled moral judgments and prosocial commitments are emerging (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990), care orientation in interpersonal relations appears (Gilligan, 1993). Different social contexts influence the speed and content of moral development in adolescence (Molchanov, 2007). Contextual variability and heterogeneity in adolescents' moral thinking are defined (Smetana & Turiel, 2003). Adolescents are more sensitive than children to the expectations, attitudes, and needs of others (Carlo, 2006). The life experience of moral conflicts in interpersonal relations and cognitive and intellectual development in adolescence provides the necessary content for reflection, analyses and moral norms conclusion. The moral structure becomes more stable. Prosocial moral reasoning and empathy in adolescence become signs of pro-social disposition in adulthood (Eisenberg et al., 2002).

One of the important constructions of moral development in adolescence is moral identity. Moral identity can be defined as the mental representation of one's moral character held internally as a cognitive schema, and expressed to others externally through one's actions (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Blasi, 1984; Reed et al., 2007). Moral identity formation is associated with certain individual characteristics, developmental contexts, and opportunities for moral action (Hart, 2005). Moral identity can be an important source of moral motivation (Hardy & Carlo, 2011a). Many investigations show that moral identity can be regarded as a predictor of involvement in different forms of prosocial behaviour (Hart et al., 1998; Shao et al., 2008). Moral identity correlates with moral actions, e.g., donating money to charities and altruistic helping, moral emotions and concern for out-group members (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hardy & Carlo, 2011b). The becoming of moral identity can be regarded as the part of ego-identity development that influences moral actions (van Goethem et al., 2012). Moral identity can be regarded as the central construction of moral development. Strong feeling of moral identity will be more likely to do what they know is right, and more likely to show enduring moral commitments (Hardy & Carlo, 2011a). On the other hand of moral development, there are numerous situations of moral norms violation by adolescents. The process of self-determination in moral sphere often includes different experience where the situation of moral norms violations becomes the part of moral content for self-reflection. These situations need to defend own self-esteem in the case of immoral behaviour. Moral disengagement mechanisms can be used to justify own behaviour. A. Bandura proposed a model of mechanisms of moral disengagement, which ensure the adoption of one's own behaviour without actualizing experiences and reflections that can change self-esteem and self-image Bandura (2002). Mechanisms of moral disengagement are associated with three self-

regulation processes: perception of the situation of moral choice, assessment of the consequences of the act for the participants in the situation, assessment of the figure of the victim and attitudes towards it. The following mechanisms of moral disengagement are moral justification, speech euphemism, justifiable comparison, distribution of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, distortion of consequences, dehumanization of the victim, attribution of guilt. Further studies of the mechanisms of moral self-justification showed that they are actively used in conditions of deviant and delicacy behaviour (Bandura et al., 1996). Adolescence is the period of active use of moral disengagement mechanisms.

The role of prosocial activity commitment for moral development is very high. Society can present the desirable values and moral norm through specific forms of helping behavior. Involving youth in prosocial activities is regarded as one of the perspective forms of positive youth development including moral issues (Berkowitz, 2012). Community service and volunteering are considered to be activities that can stimulate moral development. Despite the differences for motivation the development of prosocial behavior is predicted for participants of community service and volunteering activity (Boss, 1994; Hart et al., 2006; Nucci, 2006). The production of opening volunteering opportunities for youth becomes the form of society influence on positive youth development.

2. Problem Statement

In Russia the popularity of volunteering activity increases. That activity becomes more organized, varied and available: numerous non-profit prosocial organizations appear and develop; the Federal Law about the volunteering activity was signed in 2018; youth auditorium becomes more involved in volunteering forms of helping behaviour. The volunteering activity is realized on free basis without material encouragement and the question of internal motivation becomes very important. Sometimes the volunteering activity can be important not only for people who need help but for volunteers themselves. The volunteering activity can be understood by the participant as realization of culture of dignity with deep means and internal feeling of virtue for the care. Motivation of volunteering can be very different and included various reasons. Obviously, the priority attitudes to activity influence on the quality and evaluation of helping behaviour as socially significant and individually importance. There are different models of motivation for volunteering activity. The functional motivation model in research of volunteering activity defines six motivational functions: belief function, source of competencies function, social function, resource for career possibility's function, defensive compensation function, source for development function (Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Snyder, 1999). The depicted motives allow one to define different versions of helping behaviour in volunteering: from egoistic and pragmatic meaning to social and caring senses. The volunteering motivation correlates with moral issues. The moral identity and level of moral development can be the predictors of volunteering involvement on the one hand. On the other hand, the volunteering activity can produce the importance of moral ideal and moral development.

3. Research Questions

The research questions are the following:

3.1. Do adolescents with different experience of participation in volunteering activity demonstrate different levels of moral development?

3.2. Do the different levels of moral development define different volunteering motivation in adolescence?

3.3. Do the parameters of moral development predict the importance of some types of volunteering motivation?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the role of moral identity in volunteering involvement in adolescence. The diversity in moral development can correlate with volunteering involvement and motivation for helping behaviour. The hypothesis of the study was that moral identity influences volunteering involvement and motivation.

5. Research Methods

Four questionnaires were used in our study. C. Moore's method of moral disengagement highlights the preferred mechanisms of moral disengagement in adopted Russian version (Moore, 2015). The scales include the following moral disengagement mechanisms: moral justification, speech euphemism, justifiable comparison, distribution of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, distortion of consequences, dehumanization of the victim, and attribution of guilt.

The MORS questionnaire (moral situation from real life) defines the readiness to take responsibility in the situation of moral dilemma. Subjects filled 8 situations where different moral norms were violated. Three parameters are analysed – behaviour esteem, responsibility, consequences (punishment and reward).

The moral identity questionnaire defines the stability of moral issues (Black & Reynolds, 2016). It contains two scales: moral integrity and moral self. The analysis of internal validity of Russian version showed satisfying results: the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient varies from 0.75 to 0.80 that is higher than the required threshold 0.75.

The questionnaire "The Volunteer Functions Inventory" proposed by Clary and colleagues based on functional motivation theory was used in Russian version for investigation. It is aimed to study the reasons for participation in volunteering activity. The questionnaire contains the following motivational functions: defensive compensation function, belief function, resource for career possibility's function, social function, source of competencies function, source for development function (Chacon et al., 2017). The previous analysis of internal validity of Russian version of VFI showed satisfying results: the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient varies from 0.78 to 0.88 that is higher than the required threshold 0.75 (Molchanov et al., 2020).

The data consists of 329 adolescents aged from 14 - 18 years old with 57.4% men and 42.6% women, 43.8% of subjects had the experience of volunteering activity and 56.2% did not. The data was collected in the Internet survey form.

6. Findings

All scales of all questionnaires have a normal distribution (Criteria Kolomogorov-Smirnov) that allows using parametric methods of analysis.

Firstly, we estimated the medium meanings for all moral parameters and motivation types for subjects with and without experience of volunteering activity. We also compared groups with and without volunteering experience (one-factor dispersion analysis ANOVA). The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Cluster centers: distribution of respondents by manifestation of moral development

Scale/ Group	Volunteering experience			No volunteering experience			Differences	
	M	Me	SD	M	Me	SD	F	p
Moral disengagement mechanisms								
Moral justification	2.76	2.67	1.118	3.17	3.00	1.319	8.984	0.003
Speech Euphemism	2.10	2.00	0.899	2.29	2.33	0.971	2.964	0.086
Justifiable comparison	1.61	1.33	0.596	1.83	1.67	0.714	9.497	0.002
Distribution of responsibility	2.12	2.00	1.081	2.11	2.00	0.948	0.021	0.884
Diffusion of responsibility	2.08	2.00	0.974	2.38	2.33	1.083	6.399	0.012
Distortion of consequences	1.76	1.67	0.775	2.09	2.00	0.917	12.477	<0.001
Victim dehumanization	3.35	3.33	1.229	3.69	3.67	1.385	5.085	0.025
Guilt attribution	2.74	2.67	1.107	3.02	3.00	1.16	4.907	0.027
Moral identity								
Moral Self	4.51	4.63	0.411	4.36	4.50	0.488	9.229	0.003
Moral Integrity	1.71	1.58	0.491	1.95	1.92	0.558	17.648	<0.001
MORS								
Behavior	16.64	17.00	2.621	17.79	18.00	2.693	15.115	<0.001
Responsibility	19.47	19.50	2.767	18.44	18.00	2.941	10.550	0.001
Punishment/Reward	19.52	20.00	2.438	20.05	20.00	2.468	3.743	0.054
VFI								
Defensive compensative	4.20	4.00	1.409	3.47	3.40	1.354	22.621	<0.001
Belief function	6.08	6.20	0.840	5.33	5.60	1.211	40.090	<0.001
Resource for career possibility's	4.16	4.30	1.574	3.82	3.80	1.414	4.195	0.041
Social	4.96	5.00	1.317	3.94	4.00	1.480	42.495	<0.001
Source of competencies	5.88	6.00	0.978	5.13	5.20	1.242	36.166	<0.001
Source for development	4.81	4.80	1.355	4.28	4.40	1.330	12.240	0.001

Significant differences were shown for all scales of all questionnaires except for two moral disengagement mechanisms (speech euphemism and distribution of responsibility) and MORS scale punishment/reward. Moral identity components – self and integrity – are higher for adolescents with volunteering experience. The quality of behavior esteem and responsibility level is also higher for adolescents with volunteering experience. The intensity of use of most moral disengagement mechanisms is higher for adolescents with no volunteering experience. We can define that the adolescents with volunteering experience show a higher level of moral development according to different parameters.

We decided to define groups of adolescents with different levels of moral development. Using the cluster analysis (via the K-means method) and based on the results of questionnaires: moral disengagement

mechanisms, moral identity and MORS, all subjects were divided into 3 groups (clusters). The cluster centers are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Cluster centers: distribution of respondents by manifestation of moral development

Scale/ Level	Level of moral development		
	low	medium	high
Moral justification	3.7	2.9	2.2
Speech Euphemism	2.9	2.1	1.6
Justifiable comparison	2.2	1.6	1.3
Distribution of responsibility	2.5	2.2	1.6
Diffused responsibility	3.0	2.1	1.6
Distortion of consequences	2.7	1.8	1.3
Victim dehumanization	4.3	3.5	2.7
Guilt attribution	3.5	2.8	2.3
Moral Self	4.1	4.4	4.7
Moral Integrity	2.3	1.8	1.4
Behavior	20	17	14
Responsibility	16	19	22
Punishment/Reward	22	20	17
Number of respondents	88	168	73

According to the one-factor dispersion analysis ANOVA we found out that all esteems of moral development in different clusters are significantly different. That allows one to define clusters as different groups-levels. We defined groups with a low level of moral development (26,7% of subjects), a medium level (51,1% of respondents) and a high level (22.2% of subjects).

We studied the distribution of adolescents with and without experience in volunteering activity according to different levels of moral development. Using the χ^2 criterion, it was established that there is connection between the experience in volunteering and adolescents falling into a certain type ($\chi^2 = 9.372$ with $p = 0.009$, Cramer's $V=0.169$). Table 3 presents the distribution of subjects with and without the experience of volunteering according to different levels of moral development.

Table 3. Distribution of adolescents with and without the experience of volunteering according to different levels of moral development

Experience/ level	Level of moral development		
	low	middle	high
Experience of volunteering activity	27 (18,8%)	78 (54,2%)	39 (27,1%)
No experience of volunteering activity	61 (33,0%)	90 (48,6%)	34 (18,4%)

The results shows that a lower level of moral development is more typical of adolescents with no experience of volunteering activity (33% to 18.8%) and a high level of moral development is more spread for adolescents with volunteering experience (27.1% to 18,4%). The obtained results confirm the idea that the experience in volunteering activity correlates with the level of moral development.

We used the VFI questionnaire to analyse the correlation between motivation for volunteering activity and the level of moral development in adolescence. We were focused on differences of motivation

for volunteering activity for adolescents with different levels of moral development. According to the one-factor dispersion analysis ANOVA we estimated the significant differences in different scales of the VFI questionnaire for groups with different levels of moral development. Scheffe Test allowed us to define significant differences between the concrete groups. The results are present in Table 4.

Table 4. The differences in motivation for volunteering activity in groups with different levels of moral development

Scale/ Statistic criteria	ANOVA		Scheffe Test					
	F	p	Between low and medium		Between low and high		Between medium and high	
			MD	p	MD	p	MD	p
Defensive compensative	13.781	<0.001	-0.460*	0.040	1.136**	<0.001	0.677**	0.002
Belief function	23.348	<0.001	-0.533**	0.001	1.143**	<0.001	0.610**	<0.001
Resource for career possibility	0.645	0.526	0.081	0.919	-0.157	0.803	-0.238	0.526
Social	20.924	<0.001	-0.781**	<0.001	1.437**	<0.001	0.656**	0.005
Source of competencies	14.582	<0.001	-0.447*	0.013	0.980**	<0.001	0.534**	0.004
Source for development	3.642	0.027	-0.258	0.350	-0.578*	0.027	-0.319	0.243

Significant differences in motivation for volunteering activity in groups with different levels of moral development were found for all scales, except “Resource for career possibility”. For all scales there are significant differences for different volunteering motivations in comparison of all levels of moral development: low and medium, low and high, medium and high except motivation as a source for development. For all motivation types the higher level of moral development correlates with higher sense of motivation.

One of the goals of the study was to define predictors of concrete motivation to volunteering activity. We realized regression analysis to all scales of VFI where the predictor candidates were components of moral development. Two models satisfying statistical criteria ($R > 0,5$) were defined: for the scale «Belief function» and “Social function”. The results for the regression model with Dependent Variable «Belief» are presented in Table 5 ($R = 0,646$ ($> 0,5$), $F = 17,679$, $p < 0,001$).

Table 5. Coefficients of the regression model to esteem the scale “Belief” from VFI

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	0.747	1.059	Beta	0.705	0.481
Behavior	-0.014	0.026	-0.034	-0.537	0.592
Responsibility	0.038	0.020	0.097	1.866	0.063
Consequences	0.015	0.028	0.032	0.518	0.605
Moral justification	-0.122	0.051	-0.135	-2.386	0.018
Speech Euphemism	0.168	0.075	0.141	2.230	0.026
Justifiable comparison	0.059	0.101	0.035	0.581	0.562
Distribution of responsibility	0.126	0.055	0.112	2.263	0.024

Diffused responsibility	-0.033	0.082	-0.030	-0.401	0.689
Distortion of consequences	-0.050	0.092	-0.039	-0.547	0.585
Victim dehumanization	0.009	0.047	0.010	0.188	0.851
Guilt attribution	-0.083	0.055	-0.084	-1.518	0.130
Moral Self	1.077	0.138	0.441	7.828	<0.001
Moral Integrity	-0.325	0.154	-0.157	-2.117	0.035

The results show that predictors for the higher mean of Belief function in volunteering are «Moral justification », «Speech Euphemism», «Distribution of responsibility» and both scales of moral identity - «Moral Self» and «Moral Integrity».

The results for the regression model with Dependent Variable «Social function» are presented in Table 6 (R=0.521 (>0.5), F=9,021, p<0.001)

Table 6. Coefficients of the regression model to esteem the scale “Belief” from VFI

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.832	1.575		1.163	0.246
Behavior	-0.049	0.039	-0.089	-1.251	0.212
Responsibility	0.050	0.030	0.098	1.678	0.094
Consequences	0.017	0.042	0.028	0.400	0.690
Moral justification	-0.045	0.076	-0.037	-0.588	0.557
Speech Euphemism	0.087	0.112	0.055	0.781	0.435
Justifiable comparison	0.063	0.150	0.028	0.420	0.675
Distribution of responsibility	0.183	0.083	0.123	2.219	0.027
Diffused responsibility	0.150	0.121	0.104	1.232	0.219
Distortion of consequences	-0.192	0.137	-0.112	-1.402	0.162
Victim dehumanization	-0.105	0.069	-0.093	-1.520	0.129
Guilt attribution	-0.128	0.081	-0.097	-1.573	0.117
Moral Self	0.720	0.205	0.222	3.515	0.001
Moral Integrity	-0.454	0.229	-0.164	-1.984	0.048

The results shows that predictors for the higher mean of Social function in volunteering are “Distribution of responsibility” and both scales of moral identity - «Moral Self» and «Moral Integrity».

7. Conclusion

The goal of the study was to investigate the role of moral identity in volunteering involvement in adolescence. We defined the peculiarities of moral development from different sides: moral identity as the moral stability and fidelity, moral situations as the practical form and mechanisms of moral disengagement as the situations of moral norm violation. That helped us to define different levels of moral development in adolescence. According to previous study in other countries we confirmed that the higher level of moral development correlates with volunteering experience. The moral development also influences understanding and preference of volunteering motivation in adolescence. The development of moral identity defines the importance of such volunteering motivation as belief and social function. Both these forms of motivation are focused on external reasons for helping behavior. The realized study showed the

high importance of moral development and moral identity for volunteering involvement of modern Russian adolescents.

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