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## THE EFFECT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND PERSONAL VALUES ON ADOLESCENT PROSOCIAL ORIENTATION

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#### **Abstract**

This study investigates the relationship between youth prosocial orientation, and personality traits and personal values in a sample of Lithuanian adolescents, in order to assess differences in personality and personal values between those adolescents who are engaged in community and school life and those who are not. Mean age of participants was 18.20 (SD = 0.69), who were high school students (N = 490) from one administrative region. Participants completed a questionnaire assessing adolescent prosocial orientation, along with measures of personality traits (NEO-FFI) and personal values (PVQ). Cluster analysis based on adolescent participation in community and school life reported in the questionnaire identified 5 distinct groupings of adolescents: Very involved (who had high levels of involvement); Involved (who scored more than 0.5 SD above the average levels of organized activities); Average involvement (who scored on the average levels of all three forms of structured activities); adolescents with Some Involvement (who scored on the average levels on structured activities, but were very low on commitment to goals); and Uninvolved adolescents. Comparisons revealed several significant differences among the groups in terms of personality traits and values. Very involved and involved adolescents were characterized by more pronounced traits in extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness, while conscientiousness was significantly higher only in the Very involved cluster. In adolescents who are more engaged in community and school life, we found higher levels of basic personal values, with the exception of hedonism. Results are discussed with regard to the role that personality traits and personal values may play in fostering the prosocial orientation of adolescents.

**Key words:** prosocial orientation, personality traits, personal values, adolescence.

## Introduction

There is growing evidence that youth who become actively involved in the life of their school, community, and society show very little disaffection and instead experience significant benefits. Although the potential benefits of involvement in structured activity during adolescence have been well documented, little is known about what individual characteristics are associated with higher levels of participation. There is good evidence that participating in school- and community-based activities is associated with both short- and long-term indicators of positive development (e.g., Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997). Participation in organized activities is positively related to achievement, educational aspirations, self-esteem, ability to overcome adversity, active participation in volunteer activities, leadership qualities, and physical health (e.g., Barber et al., 2001; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997).

Research on the development and correlates of prosocial behaviors (i.e., behaviors intended to benefit others) has been an active field of study for the last three decades (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Recent surveys indicate that there are wide variations in youth involvement in prosocial orientation (Hall, McKeown, & Roberts, 2004). According to the literature, reasons why some people choose to engage in structured activities and others do not may relate to a variety of factors, including gender, social class and personality (Lockwood, 1996).

Social psychology and personality theorists have proposed that our understanding of prosocial behavior will be enhanced by examining the interplay of traits and motives. Thus, personality traits and values may be particularly relevant to different aspects of adolescent prosocial orientation and engagement in community life.

Some studies indicate that relationships between personality traits and social behaviors are often relatively modest in magnitude (Kenrick & Funder, 1988). Researchers have found significant positive relationships between agreeableness and volunteering (e.g., Smith & Nelson, 1975). However, up until now, relatively little research has focused on the role of personality characteristics in other forms of adolescent prosocial behavior.

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship of two aspects of personality to engagement in structured activities - traits and personal values. Traits are "dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thought, feelings, and actions" (McCrae, & Costa, 1990, p. 23). Values are cognitive representations of desirable, abstract, trans-situational goals that serve as guiding principles in people's life (Schwartz, 1992).

Personality refers to an enduring system of characteristics that individuals carry from one situation to another, which affects their behavior across these contexts. In the past decades, the five-factor model (FFM; McCrae and John, 1992) has become a generally accepted framework for the study of personality. Personality influences prosocial behavior in two ways. First, personality characteristics determine the preferences for specific outcomes in a given situation involving choice (Caplan, 2003). This psychological perspective suggests that people base their prosocial behavior on their personal preferences and values, giving them an individual responsibility for their actions. Second, personality characteristics determine which situations are attractive to people because people usually select situations that fit their personality (Buss, 1987). For example, Davis et al. (1999) found that persons with greater empathic concern for others choose to engage in volunteer jobs that enable them to express such concern, as in caring tasks, and avoid jobs that require suppression of empathy.

Personality has been demonstrated to influence individual behavior and performance (Barrick, & Mount, 1991). The relationship of individual personality traits and specific criteria has been greatest when traits are linked to theoretically relevant variables described in the five-factor model (FFM) of personality consisting of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience (Digman, 1990; Judge, & Ilies, 2002). There is considerable debate concerning the nature of the relationship of personality with adolescent engagement in structured activities, though most of the studies focus on volunteering. Snyder (1993) suggests that global personality dispositions may help explain why some people get involved in volunteering, and why others remain inactive. Some researchers have suggested that personality has virtually no influence on volunteering (Wilson, 2000). For example, in a study of adults, Rohs (1986) found no relationship of the personality traits of flexibility and persistence to volunteering for a service organization. Other researchers have reported that personality has a substantial bearing upon the decision to volunteer and persistence in volunteering (e.g., Elshaug, & Metzger, 2001; Penner, 2002). Personality has also been used to explain who engages in volunteer behavior, how much they volunteer, and how long they participate (Davis et al., 1999; Penner, & Finkelstein, 1998). Volunteers tend to be more intelligent and imaginative (Spitz, & MacKinnon, 1993), are characterized by lower levels of anxiety than nonvolunteers, and have more

expressed extraverted characteristics (Herzog, & Morgan, 1993). Volunteers describe themselves as more agreeable persons than paid workers engaged in the same tasks (Elshaug, & Metzger, 2001).

Up until now, relatively little research has focused on the role of personality characteristics in other forms of adolescent prosocial orientation. Some studies address typical psychological characteristics of donors and volunteers, such as empathic concern, perspective taking, prosocial value orientations, agreeableness, extraversion, emotional stability, self-efficacy, and self-esteem (Cohen, Vigoda, & Samorly, 2001; Smith, 1994). Previous research has found that several examples of prosocial behavior are related to agreeableness. In personality literature, extraversion is described as 'positive emotionality', comprising a cluster of qualities like energetic, ambitious, socially intelligent and warm (Watson, & Clark, 1994). Persons who describe themselves as more agreeable are more likely to cooperate in social dilemmas than those who describe themselves as less agreeable (Ben-Ner et al., 2004). Thus, activity and sociability of extraverted people result in engagement in social participation because they 'like to do and organize things', no matter what kind of collective action it may be. Furthermore, previous research has shown that, for example, social participation is negatively related to neuroticism (Lin, 2001).

Values, as defined by Williams (1979, p. 20), refer to interests, desires, goals, needs and standards of preference. Values have cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects. Consequently values also serve as criteria for the choice of actions and they may become criteria for judgments and preferences. Human values have been defined as cognitive constructs that explain individual differences with regard to aims in life, and behavior principles and priorities (Renner, 2003). Empirical studies have identified 10 categories of values: power, achievement, hedonism, simulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security (Schwartz, 1992). These types are seen as specific attitudes related to behavior, people or events (Bilsky, & Schwartz, 1994). Thus, basic personal values refer to the broad goals to which people attribute importance as guiding principles in their lives (e.g., tradition, benevolence, hedonism).

Research on adolescent volunteerism typically identifies multiple motives for volunteer involvement (Clary et al., 1998; Eley, & Kirk, 2002) which reflect both altruistic and self-serving interests, and adolescents typically see volunteering service as an 'opportunity'. This opportunity, although largely used in a self-serving capacity, can nevertheless be reflective of an individual's personal and social values. If we consider 'values' to be a personality trait that is relatively stable and indicative of enduring beliefs and personal behaviors, then a person's values might be predictive of their tendency towards prosocial behavior and good citizenship (Serow, 1991).

Several mechanisms link personality traits and values. Roccas et al. (2002) postulate that traits and values are important for predicting different kinds of behavior. In a study of 'caring' adolescents of and community involvement, Hart and Fegley (1995) examine the differences in self-understandings and social judgments characterizing those who were intensively involved in community activities versus those who were not. The 'caring' adolescents were more likely to describe themselves using moral, caring traits and goals, than were those in the matched comparison sample.

Previous research (Pancer et al., 2007) has found that involvement in community activities is associated with positive adjustment and developmental outcomes in young people. In Pancer et al. (2007) study, youth who were identified as Activists, Helpers, and Responders demonstrated significantly and substantially higher levels of optimism, self-esteem, and social support than youth identified as Uninvolved. However, it remains unclear as to what is the difference in personality traits and personal values between adolescents who are very involved and those who are uninvolved. Our goal was to examine how personality traits and personal values contribute to societal involvement in adolescence; e.g., we were interested in testing underlying relationships between personality traits, values and participation in community and school life in adolescence. Based on the findings of Snyder (1993), Costa, & McCrae (1992); Goldberg (1992), Barrick, & Mount (1991) it was hypothesized (H1) that extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness should be greater in adolescents very involved or involved in community activities compared to their peers and lower levels of conscientiousness and neuroticism. Based on the findings of Schwartz (1994) we expect (H2) to find higher levels of basic personal values in adolescents who are more engaged in community and school activities.

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

The data used is from an ongoing longitudinal Positive Youth Development study that examines the mechanisms and processes through which young people develop their competences. The study

started in 2008, with four age cohorts (ages 15-19). First assessment included 2648 students who completed an extensive questionnaire in their high school classrooms in the spring of 2008. Student participants were drawn from 8 high schools in the administrative region of Klaipeda, Lithuania. Families that reside in the neighborhoods in which these schools are located have a broad range of income levels and are relatively homogeneous in terms of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds. However, the ethnic and cultural diversity of this region is somewhat lesser than that in some other urban areas in the country. For this particular study, we used data from the oldest cohort (N = 490, 195 boys and 295 girls, age 18-19 years (M=18.20, SD=0.69).

All respondents were born in Lithuania (100%) and spoke Lithuanian in the home (98.8%). The majority of participants were Lithuanian (97.8%), but the sample also included Russians (0.8%) and other nationalities (0.4%), while 0.9% of the participants did not indicate their nationality.

### **Procedure**

The first data collection took place in the spring of 2008. Each school was visited before the assessment took place in order to inform school administration and prospective participants about the date and time of the assessment. During the introductory meeting, adolescents were informed that participation is voluntary and confidential. Parents were informed about the study by letter. Parental permission was obligatory for all children who expressed willingness to take part in the study. Parents were asked to contact the school or investigators if they did not want their children to participate. From all approached participants and their parents, only 0.84 % of the parents did not provide consent. Questionnaires were administered by the researchers and several trained research assistants at the schools, after obtaining the consent of school authorities and parents. Questionnaires were completed in class during regular school hours. The two parts of the questionnaire were administered in two classroom sessions and each part took from 35 to 45 minutes to complete. Teachers were not present in the classroom. Students who were absent on the day of data collection were contacted next week by research assistants. Youth were not paid for participation, but all students and their parents who completed the questionnaires were eligible for drawings provided by the project.

### **Measures**

Prosocial orientations were assessed by Commitments to civic goals, Volunteerism/community involvement, and Social participation.

**Commitments to civic goals.** Students' commitments to civic goals were assessed using Kasser and Ryan's (1993) method of indexing aspirations on the basis of personal importance (1 - not at all important, 5 - very important) individuals attach to a set of future goals. A set of five items, similar to those used to measure public interest goals in studies of American youth (e.g., Johnston, et al., 1977-1988, Flanagan et al., 2007) formed this measure. The adolescents' civic goals were measured by asking the question: "When you think about your life and your future, how important is each of the following (Helping my country; Working to stop prejudice, Helping those who are less fortunate; Helping people who are poor) for you personally to achieve?" Cronbach's alpha for these items was .83.

**Volunteerism/community involvement.** Volunteerism/community involvement in different areas of social activity was measured by 7 items (similar to ones used by Torney-Purta et al. 2001; Schulz and Sibberns, 2004). Students were presented with the following question: "Listed below are several types of activities adults can participate in. When you are an adult, what do you expect you will do?" Students were given 7 items that assessed how likely (1 = No chance to 5 = Definitely will) they will take an active part in different areas of social activity (e.g., Volunteer time to help poor or elderly in the community, Collect signatures for a petition, Volunteer for an organization working for a safer and healthier environment, etc). Cronbach's alpha for these items was .81.

**Social participation.** Students were given 6 items that assessed how likely (1 = No chance to 5 = Definitely will) they were to participate in standard social activities (e.g., Participating on the school student council; Helping police with solving community problems; Active membership in a group or organization on the basis of shared interests; Boycotting) in the future. Cronbach's alpha for these items was .84. Composite score for social activities was computed by counting the mean of 6 items.

### **Personal characteristics**

**Personality traits.** To study traits, we adopted the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality. The FFM provides a consensual, objective, quantifiable description of the main surface tendencies of personality (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience;

Costa & McCrae, 1992; Digman, 1990; McCrae, & John, 1992). The Lithuanian version of the NEO-FFI was used (Zukauskienė, & Barkauskienė, 2003). The scale had good internal consistency in the current study (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .61$ ).

**Basic values.** We measured values with the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz et al., 2001; Schwartz, 2005). PVQ was composed of 40 items that were designed to measure the ten value dimensions, namely: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism. The PVQ includes short verbal portraits of different people; the respondents' values are inferred from their self-reported similarity to people described. The logic of this prototype approach is that people understand the world by assessing diverse configurations of characteristics and by comparing this assessment with a prototype. Empirical evidence shows that judging the behavior of others activates information about one's own behavior (Dunning, & Hayes, 1996). Participants had to respond to each item on a six-point Likert type scale ranging from (1) "not like me at all" to (6) "very much like me". The questionnaire was administered in two versions, one for female and one for male students. The versions were identical except for the words that indicated the gender of the respondents. The scale had good internal consistency in the current study (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .84$ ).

## Analysis

*Clustering of respondents with regard to adolescents' social participation measures.* Cluster analysis identifies cases in a sample with similar scores on a set of variables, and then it groups these cases together to form clusters. The resulting cluster is characterized by the pattern of mean scores on each variable. The variables used in cluster analyses were the scores on Commitment to goals, Voluntary work and Social participation. The SLEIPNER program (Bergman, Magnusson, el-Khoury, 2003) was used. The clustering procedure was conducted in two stages. First, a few outliers characterized by unique profiles were removed to a residue using the computer program SLEIPNER (Bergman et al., 2003). This is important for both technical and theoretical reasons as discussed by the author (Bergman 2001, Bergman et al., 2003). The residue, which consisted of three children, was not analyzed in this study. Then, a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method was undertaken on standardized values. The measure of dissimilarity was the squared Euclidean distance, and a five-cluster solution was chosen based on the homogeneity of the clusters, which was estimated by computing the percentage explained error sum of squares (ESS) which was 64.16%, whereas 100% indicates a perfect homogeneity.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), with Cluster as the independent variable and personality traits, personal values as the dependent variables - was used to assess overall differences in personality traits and personal values among the groups.

## Results

### *Descriptive statistics*

In this study we aimed to examine how personality traits and personal values contribute to social involvement in adolescence; e.g., we were interested in testing underlying relationships between personality traits, values and prosocial orientation outcomes.

One of the key purposes of the study was to examine individual differences in commitment to goals, social participation and voluntary work of young people. To get some sense of how individuals differed in these kinds of commitments and involvements, we conducted a cluster analysis, case by case. The scores of each of the resulting clusters on the three subscales are shown in Figure 1, and in Table 1.

We labeled the five groups of children as Uninvolved ( $n = 71$ ; 41 boys, 30 girls), Some involvement ( $n = 90$ ; 38 boys; 52 girls), Average involvement ( $n = 162$ ; 62 boys, 100 girls), Involved ( $n = 157$ ; 50 boys, 107 girls); Very involved ( $n = 10$ ; 4 boys; 6 girls) on the basis of the cluster scores on the commitment to goals, voluntary work and social participation subscales. As the figure demonstrates, the Very involved were highest on all subscales of the commitment to goals, voluntary work and social participation.

Adolescents belonging to cluster "Very involved" were very high on commitment to goals, wanted to take an active part in different areas of community activity and participated in standard civic activities.

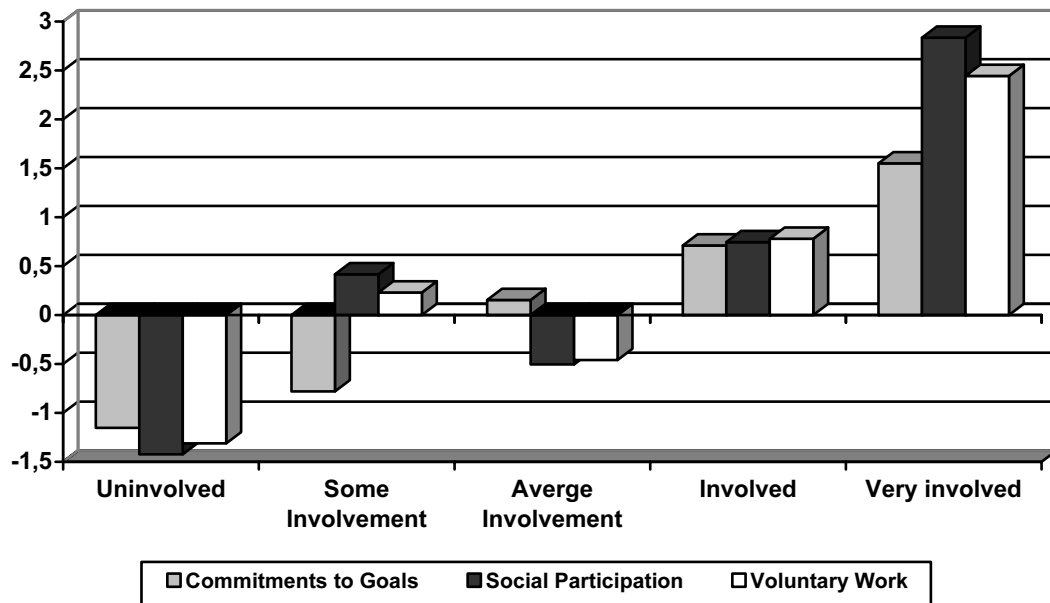


Figure 1. Mean scores (z-values) of clusters on students' Prosocial orientations

Adolescents belonging to cluster "Involved" were close to the activists ("Very involved") in terms of their commitment to goals, voluntary work and social participation. The "Average" group scored around the mean on all three scales. The group labeled as "Some involvement" was relatively high in terms of their participation in social activities, but were low in other kinds of activity (in standard civic activities and on commitments to civic goals). Finally, the "Uninvolved", as the label implies, showed the lowest involvement of all clusters in each of the activities.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviation for Clusters on Measures of Involvement

Measure	Uninvolved (n=71)	Some involvement (n=90)	Average involvement (n=162)	Involved (n=157)	Very involved (n=10)
Commitment to goals	2.62 (0.68)	2.89 (0.38)	3.56 (0.49)	3.97 (0.48)	4.57 (0.37)
Social participation	1.59 (0.41)	0.41 (0.41)	2.23 (0.48)	3.18 (0.46)	4.44 (0.47)
Voluntary work	1.24 (0.27)	2.66 (0.39)	1.95 (0.36)	2.92 (0.45)	4.53 (0.28)

Table 1 presents the number of participants that were grouped into each of the clusters we obtained. As the n's show, there were sizable proportions of respondents in the Average involvement and Involved (33.1%, and 32%, respectively), smaller proportions of respondents in the Uninvolved and Some involvement clusters (14.5%, and 18.4%, respectively) and yet fewer youth (approximately 2%) in the Very involved cluster.

### Personality traits

Table 2 presents the mean scores for each of the clusters on all measures of personality traits and personal values. A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), with Cluster as the independent variable and personality traits, personal values as the dependent variables - was used to assess overall differences in personality traits and personal values among the groups. This analysis indicated a significant Cluster effect, Wilks Lambda - 0.92,  $p < .0001$ .

The MANOVA was followed by individual one-way analyses of variance to test differences among clusters for each personality traits and values variable, followed by the LSD procedure to identify specific differences among clusters if the main effect was significant. These analyses reveal a consistent pattern with respect to differences in personality traits and personal values.

Table 2. Means for Clusters on Measures of Personality traits and Personal Values

Measure	Cluster					ANOVA results		
	Uninvolved	Some Inv.	Average Inv.	Involved	Very invol-ved	df	F	p
<b>Personality traits</b>								
Extraversion	3.50 <sup>a</sup>	3.68 <sup>b</sup>	3.53 <sup>a</sup>	3.70 <sup>b</sup>	4.10	4,483	7.03	.000
Agreeableness	3.40 <sup>ab</sup>	3.36 <sup>b</sup>	3.49 <sup>a</sup>	3.53 <sup>a</sup>	3.61 <sup>ab</sup>	4,483	2.34	.010
Neuroticism	2.68 <sup>a</sup>	2.85 <sup>a c</sup>	2.91 <sup>c</sup>	2.94 <sup>c</sup>	2.52 <sup>a</sup>	4,483	4.45	.002
Openness to experience	3.01 <sup>a</sup>	3.14 <sup>a</sup>	3.05 <sup>a</sup>	3.33 <sup>c</sup>	3.47 <sup>c</sup>	4,483	14.44	.000
Conscientiousness	3.48 <sup>a</sup>	3.40 <sup>a</sup>	3.43 <sup>a</sup>	3.47 <sup>a</sup>	3.92	4,483	2.50	.042
<b>Values</b>								
Power	3.11 <sup>a</sup>	3.60 <sup>b</sup>	3.33 <sup>a</sup>	3.40 <sup>a b</sup>	4.33	4,484	4.03	.003
Achievement	3.51 <sup>a</sup>	3.95 <sup>bc</sup>	3.79 <sup>a b</sup>	4.19 <sup>c</sup>	5.00	4,485	7.03	.000
Hedonism	4.48 <sup>a</sup>	4.53 <sup>a</sup>	4.37 <sup>a</sup>	4.44 <sup>a</sup>	4.77 <sup>a</sup>	4,484	0.75	.555
Stimulation	4.06 <sup>a</sup>	4.24 <sup>a</sup>	4.06 <sup>a</sup>	4.59	5.37	4,485	11.21	.000
Self-direction	4.20 <sup>a</sup>	4.42 <sup>a</sup>	4.40 <sup>a</sup>	4.91	5.78	4,485	15.29	.001
Universalism	3.56 <sup>a</sup>	3.79 <sup>a</sup>	4.07	4.67	5.23	4,483	34.39	.000
Benevolence	3.71 <sup>a</sup>	3.84 <sup>a</sup>	4.08	4.32 <sup>b</sup>	4.75 <sup>b</sup>	4,485	10.63	.000
Tradition	2.78 <sup>d</sup>	2.90 <sup>ad</sup>	3.09 <sup>a b</sup>	3.34 <sup>c</sup>	3.58 <sup>bc</sup>	4,483	7.68	.000
Conformity	3.01 <sup>a</sup>	3.18 <sup>a c</sup>	3.47 <sup>b</sup>	3.65 <sup>b</sup>	3.78 <sup>b c</sup>	4,485	6.27	.000
Security	3.48 <sup>a</sup>	3.36 <sup>a</sup>	3.81 <sup>b</sup>	4.01 <sup>b</sup>	4.26 <sup>b</sup>	4,485	8.77	.000

Note. Means with the same superscript do not differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from one another

Significant differences among the clusters were found for personality traits, as measured by the NEO FFI. This analysis yielded a significant Cluster effect, Wilks Lambda = 0.92,  $p < .0001$ . The Very involved had a significantly higher mean score than those belonging to the other remaining clusters on measures of extraversion. Furthermore, students from the clusters labeled as Some involvement and Involved scored significantly higher on extraversion than the Uninvolved or Average involved, but lower than the Very involved. Similarly with conscientiousness: the Very involved had a significantly higher mean score than the others (which do not differ significantly from one another). The Average involved, Involved and Very involved demonstrated higher levels of agreeableness than students from the cluster "Some involvement", but students belonging to the cluster "Some involvement" did not differ significantly from the Uninvolved. Average involved and Involved had significantly higher mean scores than the Uninvolved and Very involved on measures of neuroticism. But mean scores of neuroticism for students belonging to the cluster "Some involvement" were not significantly different from mean scores on neuroticism of the remaining four clusters. Involved and Very involved students demonstrated higher levels of openness to experience than Uninvolved, Some involved and Average involved.

To summarize, the Very involved had significantly higher mean scores than the Uninvolved, Some involvement, Average involved or Involved on all measures of Personality traits, except neuroticism. Moreover, the Very involved had a significantly higher mean score than the other clusters for extraversion and conscientiousness.

### Values

Mean scores on measures of personal values are presented in Table 2. A one-way MANOVA was used to assess overall differences in personal values among Clusters, with the ten value subscales of the PVQ as the dependent variables. This analysis yielded a significant Cluster effect, Wilks Lambda = 0.92,  $p < .0001$ . The MANOVA was followed by individual analyses of variance of the ten personal value subscales. According to these analyses, nine of the ten values measures (except hedonism) showed significant differences among the five clusters. The Very involved had the highest levels of power, achievement, stimulation, self-direction and universalism values compared to students belonging to the other four clusters. The Involved also had a significantly higher mean score on stimulation, self-direction and universalism values than the Uninvolved, Some involvement and Average involved, but significantly lower than the Very involved. Whereas the Average involved obtained significantly lower scores on universalism than the Involved and Very involved, they had significantly higher scores than the Uninvolved and Some involvement. The Average involved had lower mean scores than the Uninvolved and Some involvement, but higher scores than the Involved and Very involved on

measures of benevolence. Analysis of Tradition as a personal value for five clusters revealed a fairly complicated picture. The Uninvolved obtained a significantly lower score than the Average involved, Involved and Very involved, but did not differ significantly from those in the Some involvement cluster. Adolescents belonging to the cluster "Some involvement" did not differ significantly from the Average involved and Very involved, but differed significantly from the Involved. In turn, the Involved did not differ significantly from the Very involved. Very involved, Involved, Average involved and Some involved students demonstrated significantly higher levels of conformity than the Uninvolved. However, adolescents belonging to the cluster "Some involvement" did not differ significantly from the Uninvolved. There were almost identical findings for security: Very involved, Involved, Average involved had a significantly higher mean score of security compared to adolescents with Some involvement and Uninvolved.

To summarize, nine of the ten personal values showed significant differences among the five clusters, with the exception of one. No significant differences among the five clusters were found for hedonism, as measured by the PVQ.

## Discussion

The aim of the present study was to explore the differences in personality traits and personal values of adolescents on the basis of their prosocial orientation.

The cluster analysis results point to the importance of considering individual differences in youth involvement. The five clusters had very different profiles on the variables we examined, moreover, the analysis yielded significant cluster effects for personality traits and personal values. The analysis of variance among clusters identified specific differences in personality traits and personal values.

In descriptions of the "Big Five," conscientiousness is often related to proactive behavior, a stronger will to achieve, high self-esteem, and impulse control (McCrae, & John, 1992). Although these qualities seem to be valuable for citizens who want to participate in voluntary associations, researchers (Adorno et al, 1950) argue that conscientiousness could actually decrease prosocial orientation. Adorno et al. (1950) suggested conscientiousness as the source of "authoritarian personality" because conscientiousness indicates dogmatism and inflexibility. Our findings partly confirm findings by Barrick et al. (1993), indicating that only a small group of adolescents, who were identified as very involved in social participation and community activities demonstrated significantly and substantially higher levels of conscientiousness, whereas there were no significant differences in conscientiousness in the remaining four clusters with lower levels of involvement.

The other personality characteristics had different effects for different levels among the clusters based on levels of prosocial orientation. Extraversion was higher for the Very involved and Involved, with the Very involved having a significantly higher mean score than those belonging to the remaining clusters. Furthermore, students from clusters "Some involvement" and "Involved" scored significantly higher on extraversion than the Uninvolved or Average involved. This result is in line with previous research (Watson, & Clark, 1994), which shows that activity and sociability of extraverted people often results in engagement in civil associations, and their involvement leads to success. This is in line with findings from other studies showing that extraverts are social, energetic, bold, and assertive (Costa, & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1992), and likely to excel in different situations (Barrick, & Mount, 1991, Barrick et al., 1993).

Previous research (Elshaug, & Metzger, 2001, Ben-Ner et al., 2004) has found that agreeableness was typical of specific groups of volunteers. The present investigation also indicates that agreeableness is more prevalent in students who are more involved in social participation. Bekkers & De Graaf (2002) suggests that openness to experience is typical of citizens participating in nonpolitical associations. The present results support these notions. Involved and Very involved students demonstrated higher levels of openness to experience than the Uninvolved, Some involved and Average involved. Finally, Average involved and Involved students had significantly higher mean scores than the Uninvolved and Very involved on measures of neuroticism. This result is in line with research that documented a negative relationship between depression and social participation (Lin, 2001; Musick, & Wilson, 2003). Previous research has shown that social participation is negatively related to a depression scale used in epidemiologic studies (Lin, 2001), because neuroticism indicates emotional instability and a greater incidence of negative emotions.

The current study also focuses on the differences of personal values in groups of adolescents, where clusters are based on different involvement levels in prosocial orientation. Again, the cluster analysis results point to the importance of considering individual differences in youth involvement.



Nine of the ten personal values showed significant differences among the five clusters; no significant differences among the five clusters were found for hedonism, as measured solely by the PVQ.

To summarize, our hypothesis on the main effects of individual differences were mainly based on theory, because research on this topic was lacking. Of the individual differences, extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness most often related to prosocial orientation in the expected manner: Very involved and Involved adolescents were characterized by more pronounced traits in these three dimensions, while conscientiousness was significantly higher only in the Very involved cluster. Next, we found higher levels of basic personal values in adolescents who were higher on Commitment to goals and who were characterized by higher levels of social participation. In sum, our study demonstrates that adolescents, who reported being more engaged in community activities and commitments, were higher on Extraversion, Openness to experience and Agreeableness, and higher on all personal values measured in this study. The results of this study support the potential utility of studying personality traits and personal values, including their interrelations in shaping prosocial orientation in adolescence.

Future work should develop and test alternative hypotheses, paying more attention to how different social contexts (e.g. parents and peers) may activate different personality characteristics, and how individual differences in personality lead to the selection of activities matching these personality characteristics. For example, Snyder (1993) argues that over time, individuals tend to select situations that allow the expression of their characteristic personality traits and values, and thus systematically create social environments consonant with their dispositions. Thus, we are only at the start of understanding this complex pattern of interrelations between personality, values and prosocial orientation.

## Conclusions

1. Comparisons revealed several significant differences among the groups in terms of personality traits and values, where very involved and involved adolescents were characterized by more pronounced traits in extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness, while conscientiousness was significantly higher only in the Very involved cluster.

2. Higher levels of basic personal values were found in adolescents who are more engaged in prosocial orientation, except the hedonism.

3. The results of this study support the potential utility of studying personality traits and personal values, including their interrelations in shaping prosocial orientation in adolescence.

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## ASMENYBĖS BRUOŽŲ IR VERTYBIŲ POVEIKIS PAAUGLIŲ PROSOCIALIAI ORIENTACIJAI

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### Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjami vyresnio amžiaus paauglių asmenybės bruožų, vertybių ir prosocialios orientacijos ryšiai. Tyrime naudojami longitudinalinio tyrimo, kuriame analizuojama pozityvi jaunuolio raida, duomenys. Tiriamųjų imtį sudarė 18–19 metų paaugliai ( $N = 490$ ). Prosocialiai paauglių orientacijai nustatyti buvo naudojami klausimynai, įsitraukimui į bendruomenės veiklą matuoti, klausimynai asmenybės bruožams – NEO - FFI (Costa and McCrae, 1992), asmenybės vertybėms – PVQ (Schwartz, 1992). Taisant klasterinę analizę, atsižvelgiant į prosocialią orientaciją, nustatytos 5 tiriamųjų grupės: labai aktyvūs, aktyvūs, vidutiniškai aktyvūs, šiek tiek aktyvūs bei neaktyvūs. Atlikus palyginimus buvo atskleista keletas reikšmingų skirtumų tarp grupių. Kalbant apie asmenybės bruožus ir vertybes labai aktyviems ir aktyviems paaugliams būdingi labiau išreikšti tokie asmenybės bruožai, kaip ekstraversija, patyrimo atvirumas ir sutariamumas. Reikšmingai aukštesnis sąmoningumo lygmuo buvo tik labai aktyvių paauglių. Atlikus tyrimą taip pat buvo atskleista, kad labiau prosocialiai orientuotų paauglių aukštesni asmenybės vertybių, išskyrus hedonizmą, įverčiai negu mažiau prosocialiai orientuotų paauglių. Rezultatai yra aptariami atsižvelgiant į asmenybės bruožų bei vertybių vaidmenį skatinant paauglių prosocialią orientaciją. Tyrimo rezultatai padeda suprasti, kaip asmenybės bruožai ir vertybės susiję su paauglių prosocialia orientacija.

**Pagrindinės sąvokos:** prosociali orientacija, asmenybės bruožai, vertybės, paauglystė.