Volunteer Recruitment: The Role of Organizational Support and Anticipated Respect in Non-Volunteers’ Attraction to Charitable Volunteer Organizations

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In 3 experiments the authors examined how specific characteristics of charitable volunteer organizations contribute to the recruitment of new volunteers. In line with predictions, Study 1 revealed that providing non-volunteers with information about organizational support induced anticipated feelings of respect, which subsequently enhanced their attraction to the volunteer organization. However, information about the current success of the volunteer organization did not affect anticipated pride (as among those who seek paid employment) and in fact caused potential volunteers to perceive the organization as being in less need for additional volunteers. Study 2 further showed that information about support from the volunteer organization is a more relevant source of anticipated respect and organizational attraction than support from co-volunteers. Study 3 finally showed that information about task and emotional support for volunteers contributes to anticipated respect and organizational attractiveness and that this increases the actual willingness of non-volunteers to participate in the volunteer organization. Interventions aimed at attracting volunteers and avenues for further research are discussed.

Keywords: volunteer work, volunteer organization, pride, respect, volunteer recruitment
to be included in groups and organizations that contribute positively to their social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Ellemers et al., 2004; Haslam & Ellemers, 2005; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

According to Tyler and Blader (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000), two assessments concerning organizations contribute to a positive social identity, namely, pride and respect. Tyler and Blader (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000) further argued that pride and respect have the potential to instigate psychological engagement that should subsequently lead to behavioral engagement with the organization. Among existing members of organizations, pride reflects the evaluation that one is part of an organization with high status, and respect reflects the evaluation that one is a valued member of the organization (e.g., Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000). Correlational studies among paid employees (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002) as well as experimental research (e.g., Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002; Sleebos, Ellemers, & De Gilder, 2006; Simon & Stürmer, 2003) offer data in support of the reasoning that evaluations of pride and respect induce engagement with organizations. Accordingly, we argue that both pride and respect are likely to be relevant to individual attraction to organizations. However, previous research on pride and respect has solely focused on the engagement of existing members of groups and organizations. The question remains whether anticipated feelings of pride and respect are relevant to non-members’ attraction to organizations and—if this is the case—whether anticipated pride and respect can be used for recruitment purposes.

The Anticipation of Pride and Respect

Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) argues that people tend to behave in ways that they expect to yield valued outcomes. On the basis of expectancy theory in combination with SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the work of Tyler et al. (e.g., Smith & Tyler, 1997), Barsness, Tenbrunsel, Michael, and Lawson (2002) have argued that people value the membership of an organization that has high status and in which they would be esteemed as individuals; therefore, people assess the pride and respect that they anticipate experiencing when evaluating their potential membership in organizations. Hence, according to Barsness et al. it is through anticipated feelings of pride and respect associated with organizational membership that an organization might become attractive to non-members of that organization. Initial findings to this effect showed that expected pride from the organizational membership of a profit organization was positively associated with applicants’ job pursuit intentions and negatively associated with the minimum salary that they were willing to accept (Cable & Turban, 2003). Thus, on the basis of relevant theory and previous research among people looking for paid work, we predicted that anticipated pride (Hypothesis 1) and anticipated respect (Hypothesis 2) would predict non-volunteers’ attraction to charitable volunteer organizations.

If anticipated feelings of pride and respect contribute positively to non-volunteers’ attraction to volunteer organizations, the next question is how volunteer organizations can benefit from this knowledge in their recruitment efforts. Researchers (e.g., Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005; Rynes, 1991; Turban, 2001; Turban & Cable, 2003) have argued in line with signaling theory (Spence, 1973) that non-members create an impression of what it will be like to be a member of an organization by considering the information they have about the organization as relevant signals of organizational characteristics. Thus, what kind of information about the volunteer organization is likely to represent the characteristics of the volunteer organization from which non-volunteers can infer anticipations of pride and respect? To advance theory development concerning non-volunteers’ attraction to volunteer organizations and to be able to address volunteer attraction in practice, it is important to examine antecedents of anticipated pride and respect.

Perceived Organizational Success and Anticipated Pride

In the theoretical framework developed by Tyler and Blader (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002) it is assumed that perceived indications of the status of the organization are linked to evaluations of pride, which in turn should lead to engagement with the organization (see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Fuller et al., 2006). This is relevant to the question of how anticipated feelings of pride and the resulting attraction to the volunteer organization can develop among non-volunteers.

The success of an organization in achieving its mission can be considered an indicator of the status of that organization, because it signals the relative standing of the organization in terms of its central defining feature. Research findings (Fuller et al., 2006) obtained among (paid) workers indeed indicated that the perceived success of an organization in achieving its goals positively affected the perceived status (i.e., prestige) of that organization, which subsequently contributed positively to workers’ psychological engagement with that organization. More specifically, Cable and Turban (2003) found job seekers’ corporate reputation perceptions, as based on a rating of corporate achievements, were positively linked to the pride they expected from organizational membership. These results led us to predict that when non-volunteers are informed that a charitable volunteer organization is successful in achieving its mission, they will anticipate experiencing pride as a volunteer at that organization (Hypothesis 3a), and as a result they will be attracted to that volunteer organization (Hypothesis 3b).

Perceived Organizational Support and Anticipated Respect

In the theoretical framework developed by Tyler and Blader (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002), it is assumed that indications of intra-organizational status are linked to evaluations of respect, which in turn should enhance engagement with the organization (see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Fuller et al., 2006). But how can anticipated feelings of respect and the resulting attraction to the volunteer organization develop among non-volunteers?

In general, social support refers to support that stems from one’s relationships with others (Goldsmith, 2004), such as from one’s relationship with one’s organization (e.g., Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoaedes & Eisenberger, 2002). The main purpose of a charitable volunteer organization is to help its clientele, and within the charitable volunteer organization the primary task of volunteers is to work toward achieving this mission, often with a minimum of organizational resources (Pearce, 1993; see also C. Handy, 1988). Thus, within charitable volunteer organizations, organizational policies and practices tend to focus
on the clientele instead of on the volunteer workers. In such a context, organizational support for individual volunteers is not self-evident. Thus, when such support is provided, this is likely to be perceived as a sign of effort from the volunteer organization on behalf of the individual volunteer, which conveys the extent to which the volunteer is appreciated and valued, thus communicating respect. In line with this reasoning, Boezemanz and Ellemers (2007) found that existing volunteers derived feelings of respect from their perceptions of being supported by their volunteer organization and as a result were psychologically engaged with their volunteer organization. Accordingly, we predicted that when non-volunteers are made aware that a charitable volunteer organization provides support to its volunteers they will anticipate experiencing respect as a volunteer at that volunteer organization (Hypothesis 4a) and that this will cause them to become attracted to that volunteer organization (Hypothesis 4b).

Negative Side Effects of Organizational Success and Organizational Support

We have argued that the provision of information about organizational success and organizational support can contribute to the recruitment efforts of volunteer organizations because they might induce anticipations of pride and respect as a volunteer. However, in the specific case of volunteer organizations we suspect that it is also possible that non-volunteers interpret organizational success and organizational support in a way that undermines volunteer recruitment efforts. To gain a better understanding of processes relevant to volunteer recruitment, we address and examine possible negative side effects of organizational success and organizational support and explore how these effects impact upon non-volunteers’ attraction to charitable volunteer organizations.

The mission of charitable volunteer organizations is directed at helping and providing services to a certain clientele, for whom there otherwise would be no services (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). As a result, non-volunteers’ observations that a charitable volunteer organization is successful in helping its clientele might (unwittingly) lead them to conclude that this volunteer organization has achieved its mission and does not need additional volunteer help. Indeed, Fisher and Ackerman (1998) found that in a funding competition the perceived need of a fundraising group for additional volunteer help was lower when it was more successful. Therefore, we predicted that among non-volunteers the information that a charitable volunteer organization is successful in achieving its mission would reduce the perceived need of that volunteer organization for additional volunteers (Hypothesis 5).

C. Handy (1988) has indicated that it is normative in volunteer organizations, and in the field of volunteer work more generally, to consider “the cause” as most important. Given that volunteer organizations commonly lack human and material resources to engage in other activities besides the achievement of their mission (Pearce, 1993), the redirection of resources originally intended for helping the clientele—for instance to provide support for volunteers—can be interpreted as indicating a lack of organizational efficiency.1 This is why we predict that—among non-volunteers—the information that a charitable volunteer organization provides support to its volunteers will reduce the perceived efficiency of that volunteer organization in directly helping its clientele (Hypothesis 6).

We conducted three studies to examine these predictions. Study 1 examines organizational success and organizational support as precursors of the anticipated pride and respect that enhance attraction to a charitable volunteer organization. In addition, Study 1 also addresses whether organizational success and organizational support can impact negatively upon non-volunteers’ attraction to the charitable volunteer organization. Studies 2 and 3 then build on the results of Study 1 by further examining different sources and types of support. Study 2 compares the effects of organizational support versus co-volunteer support in inducing anticipated respect and attraction to the organization. Study 3 examines the separate effects of task support versus emotion support on anticipated respect and organizational attractiveness and furthermore assesses the actual willingness of non-volunteers to become involved in activities of the charitable volunteer organization.

Study 1

Method

Participants. Participants were 124 students (38 men, 85 women, 1 gender unidentified) at Leiden University with a mean age of 21 (SD = 2.54) years, 49.2% indicated they were familiar with volunteer work through (past) volunteer jobs, and all participants were non-volunteers at the volunteer organization of the present research.

Design and procedure. We used a 2 (organizational success: high vs. low) × 2 (organizational support: high vs. low) between-participants factorial design. At the beginning of each 20-min session of the experiment, participants were seated in separate cubicles. They were informed that the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs (which coordinates volunteer work in The Netherlands) planned to launch a campaign in order to inform Dutch citizens about volunteer work and to recruit them for volunteer organizations. Participants were informed that a series of leaflets, each of which focused on a single Dutch volunteer organization, had to be read and checked before being formally issued. The participants were led to believe that they were randomly given a sample leaflet to evaluate through a questionnaire. In fact, the leaflet was bogus and each issued leaflet described the same fictitious volunteer organization with varying information (depending on experimental condition) about the characteristics of this organization. The volunteer organization was fictionalized to ensure that the participants were all non-volunteers at this organization. The organization presented was allegedly a charity whose mission was to help homeless people through services such as providing shelter, meals, clothing, and medical care, which are considered characteristic volunteer acts across cultures (F. Handy et al., 2000). In the leaflet, a general introductory text was written allegedly by the Dutch government about volunteer work in The Netherlands; this was followed by the presentation of the alleged charitable volunteer

1 As C. Handy (1988) noted, although in theory the cause of a volunteer organization can be (more) effectively served through the improvement of the operation of the volunteer organization, in practice volunteers simply do not perceive resources spent on the improvement of organizational effectiveness to be really relevant to helping the clientele of the volunteer organization.
organization and its mission. Subsequently, the leaflet presented individual volunteers (2 men and 4 women, with ages specified between 40 and 67) and their reports about their experiences as volunteers at the organization, and in this section of the leaflet the independent variables were manipulated.

In the low organizational success condition, a volunteer for instance said that all Dutch homeless people are in need of warm clothes for the cold winter but that the activities of the volunteer organization can actually help only a few of them out. This was in contrast with the high organizational success condition, in which the same volunteer allegedly stated that all Dutch homeless people are in need of warm clothes for the cold winter and that most of them are actually helped out by the activities of the volunteer organization. Similar information about the success of the organization in achieving its mission (or lack of success, depending on experimental condition) was provided in the reports of other volunteers that referred to the different activities of the organization.

In the low organizational support condition, a volunteer for instance said that the mission of the volunteer organization is to help homeless people and that therefore in its activities its available time and monetary resources are directed toward helping the homeless and only incidentally spent on organizational support for volunteers. This was in contrast with the high organizational support condition, in which the same volunteer stated that although the mission of the volunteer organization is to help homeless people, in its activities its available time and monetary resources are not only directed toward helping the homeless but are also used to provide organizational support for volunteers. Again, depending on the experimental condition, further information conveying either high or low organizational support was provided with different reports of other volunteers.

After the participants had finished reading the leaflet, the questionnaire (starting with a few filler questions in support of the cover story) containing the dependent variables was administered. After completing the questionnaire, participants were fully debriefed, paid €2.50, and thanked for their research participation.

Dependent variables. All measures consisted of, or were adapted from, existing scales that were translated into Dutch. Where necessary, items were adjusted to be more appropriate to volunteer work and/or the context of this research. We used 7-point scales (1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) to assess the participants’ responses to the items.

The perceived success of the volunteer organization (four items, α = .84) was assessed with items adapted from the scale developed by Fuller et al. (2006), for example, “As a volunteer organization, [organization] is successful in helping the homeless.” The perceived organizational support (four items, α = .95) was measured with items adapted from the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (Galindo-Kuhn & Gutzley, 2001; see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007, 2008), for example, “[Organization] assists its volunteers sufficiently in their volunteer work.” Anticipated pride (five items, α = .86) was assessed with items adapted from the Autonomous Pride Scale (Tyler & Blader, 2002), for example, “If I were a volunteer at [organization], I would feel proud.” Anticipated respect (five items, α = .93) was measured with items adapted from the Autonomous Respect Scale (Tyler & Blader, 2002), for example, “I would feel respected by [organization] as a volunteer.” The perceived need for additional volunteers of the volunteer organization (four items, α = .82) was measured with items adapted from the Group Need Scale (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998), for example, “[Organization] has a need for additional volunteers in order to be more successful in helping the homeless.” The perceived efficiency of the volunteer organization (four items, α = .75) was measured with items adapted from the Collective Efficiency Beliefs Scale (Riggs & Knight, 1994), for example, “[Organization] is efficient in helping the homeless.” Attraction to the volunteer organization (five items, α = .89) was measured with items adapted from the scale developed by Turban and Keon (1993), for example, “I consider [organization] an attractive organization to volunteer for.”

A principal components analysis with varimax rotation confirmed that the items intended to measure the dependent variables (anticipated pride, anticipated respect, the perceived organizational need for additional volunteers, the perceived efficiency of the volunteer organization, and the attraction to the volunteer organization) all fell into separate clusters (see Table 1 for intercorrelations).

Table 1
Correlations Between Averaged Constructs in Study 1

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Note. N = 124.

* N = 123 due to a missing value.

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Results

Manipulation checks. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that participants in the low success condition \((M = 3.74, SD = 1.07)\) perceived the organization as not very successful in achieving its mission of helping its clientele in contrast to participants in the high success condition \((M = 5.16, SD = 0.83)\), \(F(1, 122) = 66.69, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35\). An ANOVA indicated that participants in the low organizational support condition \((M = 2.34, SD = 1.19)\) perceived the organization as providing not much support to its volunteers in contrast to participants in high organizational support condition \((M = 5.30, SD = 0.72)\), \(F(1, 122) = 286.74, p < .001, \eta^2 = .70\). There were no crossover or interaction effects.

In the analysis of the hypothesized effects that follows next, we use regression analysis to examine relations between different measured variables for testing Hypotheses 1 and 2, and we use ANOVAs to test the direct effects of our experimental manipulations on the intended outcome variables (Hypotheses 3a, 4a, 5, and 6). However, to be able to summarize the final results of all hypothesis testing in a single graphic representation (see Figure 1), in addition to the results from the ANOVAs we also report the results of regression analyses when examining Hypotheses 3a, 4a, 5, and 6.

Anticipated pride and respect and the attraction to the volunteer organization. A hierarchical regression analysis showed support for our predictions that among non-volunteers, anticipated feelings of pride (Hypothesis 1) and respect (Hypothesis 2) as a volunteer both contributed positively to the attraction to the volunteer organization. In Step 1 we entered participants’ previous experience as a volunteer \((\beta = .10, ns)\) and gender \((\beta = .26, p < .01)\) as control variables \((R^2 = .07)\). Step 2 showed that beyond participants’ previous experience as volunteers \((\beta = .06, ns)\) and gender \((\beta = .20, p < .05)\), anticipated pride \((\beta = .30, p = .001)\) and anticipated respect \((\beta = .16, p = .07)\) both contributed positively to the attraction to the volunteer organization \((\Delta R^2 = .14)\). This suggests that non-volunteers consider a volunteer organization more attractive as they anticipate experiencing more pride and respect as a volunteer at that organization (see Figure 1).

The effects of organizational success. We hypothesized (Hypothesis 3a) that information about organizational success would induce anticipated pride among non-volunteers. However, an ANOVA indicated that there was no difference between participants in the low success condition \((M = 4.41, SD = 1.28)\) versus the high success condition \((M = 4.40, SD = 1.04)\) in the amount of pride they anticipated experiencing as a volunteer, \(F(1, 122) = 0.004, ns, \eta^2 = .00\). Accordingly, regression analysis also showed that organizational success \((\beta = -.01, ns)\) did not predict anticipated pride as a volunteer \((R^2 = .00)\). However, in support of Hypothesis 5, an ANOVA indicated that participants in the high success condition \((M = 5.42, SD = 0.99)\) perceived the volunteer organization to be in lesser need for additional volunteers than did the participants in the low success condition \((M = 6.08, SD = 0.70)\), \(F(1, 122) = 18.62, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13\). A regression analysis corroborated this by showing that organizational success \((\beta = -.36, p < .001)\) impacted negatively on the perceived need of the charitable volunteer organization for additional volunteers.

Figure 1. In Study 1, the predicted relations between variables (with hypothesis numbers indicated by H) and direct effects observed. *\(p < .10\). **\(p < .001\).
emerged as a reliable predictor of anticipated respect ($R^2 = .13$). Thus, our data reveal that informing non-volunteers that a charitable volunteer organization is successful in achieving its mission does not lead them to anticipate greater pride in being a volunteer at that organization but induces the idea that the organization has a lesser need for additional volunteers than an organization that is less successful (see Figure 1).

The effects of organizational support. Confirming our prediction (Hypothesis 4a), an ANOVA showed that the participants in the high organizational support condition anticipated experiencing significantly more respect ($M = 5.56$, $SD = 0.89$) from the volunteer organization than did the participants in the low organizational support condition ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.21$), $F(1, 122) = 29.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .19$. Accordingly, organizational support emerged as a reliable predictor of anticipated respect ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$) in a regression analysis ($R^2 = .19$). An ANOVA also revealed a negative side effect of organizational support as predicted in Hypothesis 6, in that participants in the high organizational support condition perceived the volunteer organization to be less efficient in helping its clientele ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.95$) than did participants in the low organizational support condition ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 0.81$), $F(1, 122) = 13.29$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$. This relation also emerged in a regression analysis showing that organizational support ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .001$) impacted negatively on non-volunteers’ perceptions that a charitable volunteer organization is efficient ($R^2 = .10$).

In sum, these results suggest that when non-volunteers are informed that a volunteer organization provides support to its volunteers, they anticipate being respected as volunteers at that organization, but this information also causes them to think that the volunteer organization is less efficient in directly helping its clientele (see Figure 1).

Anticipated pride and respect as mediators of attraction to the volunteer organization. We hypothesized that organizational success would foster attraction to the volunteer organization through anticipated feelings of pride as a volunteer (Hypothesis 3b) and that organizational support would foster attraction to the organization through anticipated feelings of respect as a volunteer (Hypothesis 4b). Additionally, we wanted to explore whether non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization would suffer from the negative side effects of providing information about organizational success (because this decreases the perceived need for additional volunteers) and/or organizational support (as this lowers perceived organizational efficiency).

In line with the procedure for testing mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986; see also Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004; Preacher & Leonardelli, 2001), Hypothesis 3b was not further examined because one of the preconditions for the analysis was not met. That is, even though the mediator (anticipated pride) was related to the outcome variable (organizational attraction), in this case the intended predictor (organizational success) was found to be unrelated to the mediator (anticipated pride; also see Table 1), excluding the possibility of an indirect effect. In fact, the intended predictor (organizational success) was also unrelated to the outcome variable (organizational attraction). This may imply either that organizational success is not relevant to the attraction of non-volunteers to a volunteer organization or that there is a curvilinear relation between these two variables, in that there is an optimal level at which intermediate organizational success fosters attraction to the volunteer organization.

After having established that the preconditions to test Hypothesis 4b were met, the relevant regression analyses (Baron & Kenny, 1986) showed support for the predicted mediation. The direct effect ($b = .62$, $\beta = .25$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .06$) of support provided by the organization (dummy-coded) on attraction to the volunteer organization became nonsignificant ($b = .40$, $\beta = .16$, ns) when anticipated respect ($b = .22$, $\beta = .21$, $p < .05$) was included as an additional predictor in the analysis ($R^2 = .10$), indicating full mediation, which was significant as indicated by a Sobel test ($z = 1.99$, $p < .05$). Further, we calculated a 95% confidence interval (0.0355, 0.4203) for testing indirect effects (see Preacher & Hayes, 2004), which corroborated that the mediation effect was significant because zero was not included in the confidence interval. In line with predictions, these results suggest that the provision of information about organizational support to non-volunteers leads them to anticipate more respect as a volunteer, which in turn causes them to perceive the volunteer organization as a more attractive place to work.

Finally, we explored whether the negative side effects of organizational success and organizational support affect non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization. Neither the perceived need for additional volunteers ($r = .14$, ns) nor the perceived (in)efficiency of the volunteer organization ($r = .13$, ns) were reliably correlated with the attraction to the volunteer organization (see Table 1). From this we concluded that even though information about organizational success and organizational support may have (unintended) negative side effects, this does not negatively affect non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization.

Study 2

Study 1 supports the notion that anticipated pride and respect are relevant to the recruitment of non-volunteers and provides clear cues to what volunteer organizations might do to attract non-volunteers to the volunteer organization. In Study 2 we build on these initial results to examine whether information about support from the organization and support from co-volunteers elicit different types of anticipated respect (anticipated organizational respect, anticipated co-volunteer respect), and we address how this impacts non-volunteers’ attraction to charitable volunteer organizations.

Social relationships with others are considered a relevant factor in the motivation of volunteer workers (e.g., Clary et al., 1998; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). Accordingly, previous research among existing volunteers suggests that social integration in the volunteer organization and interpersonal relations with co-volunteers contribute to the satisfaction of volunteer workers and enhance the intention to stay in the volunteer organization (e.g., Clary et al., 1998; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). Therefore, we think it is important to examine whether information about support from co-volunteers also contributes to non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization (through anticipated co-volunteer respect) or whether attraction to the organization mainly depends on the support and anticipated respect at the level of the volunteer organization (see also Ellemers & Boezeman, in press).

Even though social relationships with other volunteers are important to existing volunteers, for non-volunteers it is less clear which individuals they are likely to encounter when they join the volunteer organization or how they will relate to these individuals.
Hence, in determining the attraction of non-volunteers, it may be more important to consider the support and respect one can anticipate to receive from the volunteer organization, because this information may seem more stable and predictive of one’s own future experiences than co-volunteer support and respect. To examine this, we assess how anticipated organizational respect (induced by information about organizational support) versus anticipated co-volunteer respect (induced by information about co-volunteer support) affects the attraction to the volunteer organization.

In line with research findings obtained among existing members of organizations (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Fuller et al., 2006; Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002), we predicted that when non-volunteers are informed that a charitable volunteer organization provides support to its volunteers (organizational support), this will cause them to anticipate experiencing organizational respect (Hypothesis 7a), which in turn will enhance their attraction to that volunteer organization (Hypothesis 7b). We also predicted that when non-volunteers are informed that the volunteers of a charitable volunteer organization provide support to their co-volunteers (co-volunteer support), this will cause them to anticipate experiencing co-volunteer respect (Hypothesis 8a), which in turn will contribute to their attraction to that volunteer organization (Hypothesis 8b). In examining these hypotheses we focus on the provision of emotional support in the organization as a predictor of respect, because this form of support has been found to be relevant to the psychological engagement of existing volunteers (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007) and can be equally well provided by a volunteer organization as by individual volunteers.

Method

Participants. Participants were 58 students (17 men, 41 women) at Leiden University with a mean age of 20.5 (SD = 2.86) years, and 39.7% were familiar with volunteer work through (past) volunteer jobs.

Design and procedure. We used a 2 (organization emotional support: high vs. low) × 2 (co-volunteer emotional support: high vs. low) between-participants factorial design. With this design, we followed the same procedure as in Study 1.

In the low organizational support condition, a volunteer for instance said that the volunteer organization is not really concerned with how volunteers personally feel when they go home at the end of the day. This was in contrast with the high organizational support condition, in which the same volunteer stated that the organization really is concerned with how volunteers personally feel when they go home at the end of the day.

In the low co-volunteer support condition, a volunteer for instance said that she would feel more motivated to keep going if her co-volunteers would cheer her up but that that does not happen very often during the volunteer work. This was in contrast with the high co-volunteer support condition, in which the same volunteer stated that co-volunteers often cheer her up, which keeps her going in the volunteer work. As in Study 1, both manipulations were further reinforced with other examples of support provided in the reports of different volunteers.

Dependent variables. We used 7-point scales (1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) to assess the participants’ responses to the items. The perception of organizational emotional support (four items, α = .96) was measured with items such as “[Organization] provides sufficient emotional support to its volunteers,” and perceived co-volunteer emotional support (four items, α = .97) was measured with such as “[Organization] volunteers provide each other with sufficient emotion-oriented support.”

These measures were adapted from the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001; see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007, 2008). We measured each form of anticipated respect with five items adapted from the Autonomous Respect Scale (Tyler & Blader, 2002) and specified the source of respect in the items. A sample item from the Anticipated Organizational Respect scale (α = .95) is “I would feel respected by [organization] as a volunteer.” A sample item from the Anticipated Co-Volunteer Respect scale (α = .95) is “I would feel respected by [organization] volunteers as a volunteer.” The attraction to the volunteer organization was measured with the same five items as in Study 1 (α = .88).

A principal components analysis with varimax rotation confirmed that the dependent variables (anticipated organizational respect, anticipated co-volunteer respect, and the attraction to the volunteer organization) all clustered as intended. The correlations between the constructs are shown in Table 2.

Results

Manipulation checks. An ANOVA showed that the participants in the low organizational support condition (M = 2.00, SD =

Table 2
Correlations Between Averaged Constructs in Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organizational emotional support (dummy)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perceived organizational emotional support</td>
<td>.89*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Co-volunteer emotional support (dummy)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.89*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perceived co-volunteer emotional support</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.89*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Anticipated organizational respect</td>
<td>.82*</td>
<td>.90*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Anticipated co-volunteer respect</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>.81*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Attraction to the volunteer organization</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gender</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Previous experience as a volunteer</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 58.

*p < .05. **p < .01.
perceived the volunteer organization to provide less support to its volunteers than did the participants in the high organizational support condition \((M = 5.66, SD = 0.79), F(1, 56) = 218.74, p < .001, \eta^2 = .80\). The manipulation of organizational support did not affect the level of perceived co-volunteer support. Further, an ANOVA indicated that the participants in the low co-volunteer support condition \((M = 2.42, SD = 1.16)\) perceived the volunteers to provide less support to their co-volunteers than did the participants in the high co-volunteer support condition \((M = 5.99, SD = 0.65), F(1, 56) = 213.07, p < .001, \eta^2 = .79\). The manipulation of co-volunteer support did not affect the level of perceived organizational support. Thus, both manipulations worked as intended, and there were no crossover effects.

**Support and anticipated respect.** Confirming our prediction (Hypothesis 7a), an ANOVA showed that participants in the low organizational support condition \((M = 3.06, SD = 1.14)\) anticipated experiencing less organizational respect than did the participants in the high organizational support condition \((M = 5.78, SD = 0.71), F(1, 56) = 117.72, p < .001, \eta^2 = .68\). The manipulation of organizational support did not affect non-volunteers’ amount of anticipated co-volunteer respect. Confirming our prediction (Hypothesis 8a), an ANOVA showed that the participants in the low co-volunteer support condition \((M = 3.86, SD = 1.30)\) anticipated to experience less co-volunteer respect than did participants in the high co-volunteer support condition \((M = 6.01, SD = 0.59), F(1, 56) = 67.08, p < .001, \eta^2 = .55\). The manipulation of co-volunteer support did not affect anticipated organizational respect. These results suggest that non-volunteers derive anticipations of organizational and co-volunteer respect from the reports about support received by the organization and current volunteers, respectively.

**Anticipated respect as a mediator of attraction to the organization.** We predicted that in the case of non-volunteers, information about the provision of organizational support would foster attraction to the volunteer organization through anticipated feelings of organizational respect (Hypothesis 7b) and that information about co-volunteer support would foster attraction to the organization through anticipated feelings of co-volunteer respect (Hypothesis 8b).

After having established that the mediator (anticipated organizational respect) correlated positively with the intended predictor (organizational support), the relevant regression analyses (Baron & Kenny, 1986) showed support for Hypothesis 7b. That is, the direct effect \((b = .67, \beta = .30, p < .05, R^2 = .09)\) of organizational support (dummy-coded) on attraction to the volunteer organization became nonsignificant \((b = -.17, \beta = -.08, ns)\) when anticipated organizational respect \((b = .31, \beta = .45, p < .05)\) was included as an additional predictor in the analysis \((R^2 = .16)\), indicating full mediation, which was significant as indicated by a Sobel test \((z = 2.04, p < .05)\). Further, we calculated a 95% confidence interval \((0.1196, 1.4155)\) for testing indirect effects (see Preacher & Hayes, 2004), which corroborated that the mediation effect was significant because zero was not included in the confidence interval. As for Hypothesis 8b, in line with the procedure for testing mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986), this hypothesis was not further examined because the preconditions for this analysis were not met. That is, we found (see also Table 2) that attraction to the volunteer organization was related neither to co-volunteer support \((r = -.05, ns)\) nor to anticipated co-volunteer respect \((r = -.04, ns)\), excluding the possibility of an indirect effect. Thus, despite the notion that interpersonal relations with co-volunteers enhance the satisfaction and engagement of existing volunteers, the provision of information about co-volunteer support did not enhance attraction to the volunteer organization among non-volunteers beyond inducing anticipated co-volunteer respect.

**Study 3**

The previous studies indicated that non-volunteers derive anticipations of respect from information that volunteers are supported within the volunteer organization during volunteer work, as well as that anticipated respect in turn enhances non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization. However, information about the type of support provided was not specified in Study 1, and Study 2 addressed only the effects of information about emotional support. Hence, we now distinguish between task and emotional support as two central dimensions of support that are likely to be relevant to the development of anticipated respect as a volunteer, and we assess non-volunteers’ actual willingness to participate in the charitable volunteer organization.

It has been established that both emotional support (support aimed at enhancing the emotional well-being of the recipient) and task support (support aimed at helping the recipient overcome practical problems through the provision of material goods and services) are relevant forms of support for those working in volunteer organizations (Clary, 1987; see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001; Gidron, 1983). On the basis of relevant theory and previous research (e.g., Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007, 2008), we consider it likely that information about both dimensions of support can induce the anticipation of respect as a volunteer and hence contribute to non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization. We therefore predict that when non-volunteers are informed that volunteers receive task support in the volunteer organization, they will anticipate experiencing respect as a volunteer at that organization (Hypothesis 9a) and that this will cause them to become attracted to that volunteer organization (Hypothesis 9b). We also predict that when non-volunteers are informed that volunteers receive emotional support at the volunteer organization, they will anticipate experiencing respect as a volunteer at that organization (Hypothesis 10a) and that this will cause them to become attracted to that organization (Hypothesis 10b).

The target outcome variable in the previous studies consisted of non-volunteers’ attraction to the volunteer organization. In this third study we addressed the participants’ actual willingness to participate in activities of the volunteer organization as the final outcome variable, because this can be regarded as a central goal of the recruitment efforts of volunteer organizations. This not only extends our theoretical analysis but also enhances the practical applicability of our findings. Among existing volunteers, the willingness to keep participating in the volunteer organization is commonly assessed by measuring their intention to remain a volunteer with the organization (e.g., Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001; Miller, Powell, & Seltzer, 1990). A parallel measure in the case of non-volunteers thus is to measure their intentions of becoming volunteers with the organization. We aimed to assess this intention as concretely as possible, namely, through the acceptance of an internship as a volunteer at the
volunteer organization. Previous analyses using the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991; see also Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) to understand the recruitment of paid employees have argued that attraction to the organization enhances applicants’ intentions of accepting a job offer (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005). On the basis of our reasoning and in line with this previous work, we predicted (Hypothesis 11) that the willingness to actually participate in the volunteer organization would result from the attraction to the volunteer organization that is induced by the respect non-volunteers anticipate because of the information they receive about task support (Hypothesis 11a) and emotional support (Hypothesis 11b) available to volunteers within the volunteer organization.

Method

Participants. Participants were 93 students (22 men, 71 women) at Leiden University with a mean age of 21 (SD = 2.11) years, and 48.4% were familiar with volunteer work through (past) volunteer jobs.

Design and procedure. We used a 2 (task-oriented support: high vs. low) × 2 (emotion-oriented support: high vs. low) between-participants factorial design. With these independent variables, we followed the same procedure as in the previous studies.

In the low task support condition, a volunteer for instance said that within the volunteer organization individual volunteers are supposed to try and solve task-related problems on their own as much as possible, without using the help of the human and organizational resources available within the organization. In contrast, in the high task support condition, the same volunteer stated that within the volunteer organization individual volunteers are freely allowed to rely on the help of the human and organizational resources available within the organization to solve task-related problems.

In the low emotional support condition, a volunteer for instance said that it is not really possible to share disappointments during volunteer work with others in the organization as a volunteer and that the staff of the organization often take time to cheer her up. As in the previous studies, additional examples of high versus low support (depending on experimental condition) were provided in the reports of other volunteers.

Dependent variables. We used 7-point scales (1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) to measure the responses to the items. We checked the perceived provision of task-oriented support (three items, α = .94) with items adapted from the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001; see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007, 2008), such as “Within [organization], volunteers receive practical support during volunteer work.” We checked the perceived provision of emotion-oriented support (three items, α = .93) with items adapted from the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley; see also Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007, 2008), such as “Within [organization], sufficient emotional support is provided to volunteers when necessary.” Anticipated respect (five items, α = .92) and attraction to the volunteer organization (five items, α = .86) were measured with items identical to those in Studies 1 and 2. The actual willingness to participate in the volunteer organization (two items, α = .75) was measured by asking participants about their willingness to do an internship at the volunteer organization, namely, “At my own convenience and for one part of 1 day, I am willing to do an internship at [organization] to see what the volunteer work is like.” The second item asked about this same intention but was reverse scored. Participants were informed that if they expressed their interest in an internship, the researchers would provide the information needed to contact them to the volunteer organization. Thus, the participants could actually expect that the alleged volunteer organization would contact them for an internship on the basis of how they had answered these questions. Therefore their expressed intention to participate in the volunteer organization was not just hypothetical.

A confirmatory factor analysis executed in EQS 6.1 (Bentler & Wu, 2004) confirmed that the items we used to measure the constructs clustered as intended and that relevant alternative measurement models did not account more satisfactorily for the data (see Table 3). The correlations between constructs are shown in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>Δχ²</th>
<th>NNFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>AIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-factor measurement model</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>202***</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>−49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A-factor measurement model</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>465***</td>
<td>263***</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B-factor measurement model</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>317***</td>
<td>115***</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>4C-factor measurement model</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>406***</td>
<td>204***</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D-factor measurement model</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>218***</td>
<td>16**</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>−40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-factor measurement model</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>760***</td>
<td>558***</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 93. Δχ² indicates the deviation of each alternative model compared to the hypothesized five-factor measurement model. Alternative models combine into single-factor variables that show high intercorrelations. NNFI = non-normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-squared error of approximation; AIC = Akaike’s information criterion.

* Combining perceived task and emotional support. ** Combining perceived emotional support and anticipated respect. *** Combining perceived task support and anticipated respect. **** Combining the perceived attractiveness of the organization and the willingness to participate.

*p < .01. ***p < .001.
### Results

**Manipulation checks.** An ANOVA showed that the participants in the low emotion-oriented support condition ($M = 2.47, SD = 0.89$) perceived that volunteers received less emotional support within the volunteer organization than did the participants in the high emotion-oriented support condition ($M = 5.34, SD = 1.09$), $F(1, 91) = 192.08, p < .001, \eta^2 = .68$. The manipulation of emotional support did not affect the level of perceived task support at the organization. Further, an ANOVA indicated that participants in the low task-oriented support condition ($M = 2.08, SD = 0.68$) perceived that volunteers received less task support at the volunteer organization than did participants in the high task-oriented support condition ($M = 5.32, SD = 0.80$), $F(1, 91) = 441.76, p < .001, \eta^2 = .83$. An ANOVA showed that the manipulation of task support also affected the level of perceived emotional support, $F(1, 91) = 4.57, p = .04, \eta^2 = .05$, which we did not anticipate. Nevertheless, comparison of effect sizes revealed that the effect of information about task support on perceived emotional support was negligible when compared to its effect on perceived task support. Importantly too, the intended difference in perceived emotional support due to the manipulation of high versus low emotional support was retained at both levels of task support, and there was no interaction effect. From this we concluded that the manipulations worked as intended.

**The effects of task support and emotional support on anticipated respect.** Confirming our prediction (Hypothesis 9a), an ANOVA showed that participants in the low task-oriented support condition ($M = 3.80, SD = 1.32$) anticipated experiencing less respect as a volunteer than did the participants in the high task-oriented support condition ($M = 5.06, SD = 1.09$), $F(1, 91) = 25.55, p < .001, \eta^2 = .22$. Also confirming our prediction (Hypothesis 10a), an ANOVA showed that participants in the low emotion-oriented support condition ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.21$) anticipated experiencing less respect as volunteers than did the participants in the high emotion-oriented support condition ($M = 5.25, SD = 0.96$), $F(1, 91) = 52.48, p < .001, \eta^2 = .37$. These results indicate that information about available (task and emotional) support for volunteers leads non-volunteers to anticipate respect as volunteers at the organization.

**Attraction to the volunteer organization and the willingness to participate as a volunteer.** We hypothesized (Hypotheses 9b and 10b) that the provision of information about task and emotional support would enhance the attraction to the volunteer organization through anticipated respect. Furthermore, we predicted (Hypothesis 11) that the attraction to the volunteer organization thus enhanced should increase the actual willingness of non-volunteers to participate in the volunteer organization. As addressing these predictions required the examination of a four-stage mediation model, at this point we constructed a path model (see Figure 2) and used path analysis executed in EQS 6.1 (Bentler & Wu, 2004) to test whether the hypothesized path model involving the specified indirect effects was supported by the data. Previously, we examined the direct effects of our manipulations (Hypotheses 9a and 10a) with ANOVAs using the manipulated independent variables. However, in the path analysis that follows, we also examined the possibility of reversed directionality of the relationships among the variables, which requires the use of the measured independent variables as substitutes for the manipulated independent variables. Thus, to be able to compare the fit of different models, in our further analysis we used perceived task and emotional social support as independent variables. We note that the results of testing the hypothesized path model (see Figure 2) based on the measured independent variables that we now report are similar to the results of testing this model when we used the dummy variables.

The statistics we obtained when testing the fit of the overall model were $\chi^2(5, N = 93) = 4$, $ns$, non-normed fit index (NNFI) = 1.01, comparative fit index (CFI) = 1.00, root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .00, and Akaike’s information criterion (AIC) = −5.9. These statistics indicate that overall the hypothesized path model (see Figure 2) fit the data well (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2000; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). To further examine the validity of our hypothesized path model, we tested it against two alternative path models.

We tested the hypothesized fully mediated model against an alternative partially mediated path model in order to examine whether the types of perceived support were directly associated with the attractiveness of the volunteer organization in addition to the paths shown in Figure 2, because previous research suggests there may be a direct link between anticipated support within the organization and the job pursuit intentions of individuals seeking (paid) employment (see Casper & Buffardi, 2004). The hypothesized path model was nested within the partially mediated path model, and thus the models could be compared on the basis of the...
Figure 2. Path model in Study 3. Direct effects (Hypotheses [H] 9a and 10a) and indirect effects (Hypotheses 9b, 10b, and 11) are depicted. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

chi-square difference test. The statistics we obtained when testing the overall fit of the partially mediated path model were $\chi^2(3, N = 93) = 2, ns$, NNFI = 1.02, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, and AIC = -4. A chi-square difference test showed that the fit of the partially mediated model was not significantly different, $\Delta \chi^2(2) = 2, ns$, from the more parsimonious and well-fitting hypothesized path model. Furthermore, perceived task-oriented support ($\beta = .15, ns$) and emotion-oriented support ($\beta = -.06, ns$) did not affect the attraction to the organization directly in the alternative path model. Also, a Wald Test (for a discussion see Byrne, 1994) indicated that the additional direct paths under examination were redundant. Thus, the hypothesized fully mediated path model showed better fit to the data than the partially mediated alternative path model. Additionally, we examined an alternative non-nested path model to address the possibility that the causal order of the variables in our model might be reversed. The omnibus fit indexes for the alternative reversed path model were $\chi^2(6, N = 93) = 8, ns$, NNFI = .98, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05, and AIC = -4. In the case of non-nested model comparison one should (see Bentler, 2004) specifically favor the model with the lowest value of AIC, and therefore we concluded that the alternative reversed path model fit the data less well (AIC = -4) than the hypothesized path model did (AIC = -5.9). We accepted the hypothesized path model (see Figure 2) as the final model and continued our analysis.

First, when using the perceptual measures (instead of the dummy-coded experimental manipulations) as independent variables we again found that (perceived) task support ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) and emotional support ($\beta = .64, p < .001$) enhanced anticipated respect as a volunteer, as predicted in Hypotheses 9a and 10a. The types of support jointly accounted for 66.8% of the variance in anticipated respect as a volunteer. Our prediction (Hypotheses 9b and 10b) that the types of support would enhance the attraction to the organization through anticipated respect was also supported by the path analysis. The results showed an indirect and positive relation of perceived task support ($\beta = .14, p < .001$) and perceived emotional support ($\beta = .26, p < .001$) with the attraction to the volunteer organization through anticipated respect. Finally, our prediction (Hypothesis 11) that perceived task support (Hypothesis 11a) and perceived emotional support (Hypothesis 11b) would contribute positively to the willingness to participate in the volunteer organization, through anticipated respect and the resulting attraction to the volunteer organization, was supported by the path analysis. The results showed an indirect and positive relation of perceived task support ($\beta = .09, p < .01$) and perceived emotional support ($\beta = .16, p < .001$) with the willingness to participate in the volunteer organization through anticipated respect and the subsequent attraction to the volunteer organization (anticipated respect was indirectly associated with the willingness to participate in the volunteer organization through attraction to the volunteer organization; $\beta = .25, p < .001$). These results support the model we hypothesized (see Figure 2).

General Discussion

In a programmatic series of experiments, we developed and tested theoretical insights to understand and predict non-volunteers’ attraction to charitable volunteer organizations. Across three studies we found that anticipated respect as a volunteer is the link between what volunteer organizations can do in recruitment efforts and non-volunteers’ engagement with charitable volunteer organizations. Our analysis based upon SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the concepts of pride and respect (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002), as well as the empirical data we obtained to test the validity of this analysis, contribute to the literature in several ways.

Mainstream research in line with SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) has focused on how members of groups and organizations respond to the standing of their group or organization. Tyler and colleagues (Smith & Tyler, 1997; Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000) have argued and empirically demonstrated that the standing of the individual within the group or organization is also relevant for the development of a positive social identity. However, both these
strands of theory development and research have focused on existing group or organizational members. Although there are a few studies that have compared social identity processes among marginal versus core group members (e.g., Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995), this research is the first to address the causes and effects of anticipated pride and respect among non-members of the group or organization in question. Thus, these studies are unique in that they examine social identity processes among those for whom (potential) membership in the group is not (yet) part of their self-relevant identity. We think this expands existing insights in this area of research.

Second, there is a lack of theory and models that explain why people volunteer (Penner & Finkelstein, 1998), and there still is much to learn about what volunteer organizations can do to enhance the effectiveness of their recruitment efforts (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). The current findings help fill this gap, as they indicate some of the ways in which volunteer organizations can induce anticipated respect in order to enhance non-volunteers’ attraction to, and willingness to participate in, the volunteer organization.

A third contribution of this research is that it reminds us that it is not self-evident that psychological processes that have been found relevant for profit organizations apply in the same way to non-profit volunteer organizations. Indeed, although research (e.g., Cable & Turban, 2003; Fuller et al., 2006) has indicated that the perceived success of a for-profit organization makes the profit organization attractive as a place to work, we found no evidence that emphasizing the success of a volunteer organization benefits recruitment efforts (see also Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). This illustrates that separate theory development and research are necessary to acquire specific knowledge about the recruitment, motivation, and retention of volunteer workers.

Implications for Volunteer Organizations

Our results suggest that volunteer organizations can induce anticipated respect among non-volunteers—as a way to attract them to the organization—by conveying to them that the organization invests in and cares for its volunteers. For instance, through relevant marketing procedures (i.e., flyers, commercials, a leaflet as in this research, etc.), or through the social network of current volunteers, volunteer organizations can communicate about the task and emotional support individual volunteers receive. Research (see Pearce, 1993) indicates that people are often recruited through their social network to volunteer, meaning that they are asked to volunteer by, for instance, a relative, a friend, or a colleague who is already a volunteer. Thus, in social network recruitment the organization should make sure that their volunteers are aware of, and mention, the forms of support they receive from the organization in doing their volunteer work. In fact, our research suggests that this is likely to be more effective than focusing on the success of the organization in achieving its mission or promoting the possibility of establishing interpersonal relations with other volunteers. A potential drawback of this approach may be that information about support provided can make the organization seem less efficient. However, this was not found to undermine attraction to the organization, although realistic information about what can be expected may protect against negative effects at a later stage (Premack & Wans, 1985).

Limitations of the Present Research

The primary dependent variable in the first two studies reported here was attraction to the volunteer organization. This might be considered a limitation in that this measure can be seen to indicate a rather broad evaluation of the organization, which does not necessarily predict concrete behavior relevant to volunteer recruitment. However, we addressed this in Study 3, where we included non-volunteers’ actual willingness to participate in the volunteer organization as a more specific and concrete outcome of the psychological process under examination. The results of Study 3 were in line with predictions and corroborated the relevance of attraction to the volunteer organization as a dependent measure in the first two studies, in that we were able to establish that attraction to the organization does predict the actual willingness of non-volunteers to participate in the volunteer organization. Thus, although we did not address actual volunteer application decisions with an existing volunteer organization, we think our research provides an important first step in examining volunteer attraction and recruitment (see also Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). In fact, in this sense our work does not deviate from previous recruitment research, which commonly focuses on attraction to the organization before examining actual recruitment outcomes (Turban & Cable, 2003).

Another limitation of the current research is that we examined a specific group of potential volunteers, namely, university students. On the one hand, the observation that in each study about half of our participants were familiar with volunteer work through (past) volunteer jobs indicates the appropriateness of examining this sample as potential volunteers that might be targeted in recruitment efforts. Additionally, with the different experimental manipulations, the written information about the volunteer organization presented in the research was relatively complex, and we needed a sample of potential volunteers who would be able to easily read and process this complex information.

Nevertheless, we are aware that examining a homogeneous group of research participants may limit the generalizability of results, in our case with the implication that the insights on how to inform non-volunteers about the volunteer organization to increase their attraction to the organization may specifically apply to highly educated non-volunteers. Even with this limitation, however, we think these results remain useful, as charitable volunteer organizations can often use all the volunteer help they can get (Farmer & Fedor, 2001; Pearce, 1993), including the volunteer help of students. Thus, the fact that we demonstrated a way to attract students to the charitable volunteer organization is certainly of interest to the recruitment efforts of volunteer organizations.

Suggestions for Further Research

An issue that remained unresolved in this research is how to induce anticipated pride as a volunteer, as the information we provided about organizational success did not have this effect. Nevertheless, we found that anticipated pride is a valid predictor of attraction to the volunteer organization among non-volunteers, and this is why it is important to further explore the antecedents of anticipated pride. Charitable volunteer organizations contribute positively to society and are generally valued. Hence, likely antecedents of anticipated pride among non-volunteers involve appre-
cation for the mission of the volunteer organization or the subjective importance of the volunteer work as considered by the clientele of the volunteer organization. Further, although there is a clear societal need for additional (practical) knowledge of volunteer attraction and recruitment, research to date has mainly addressed the attraction of paid workers. As a result, in the literature on organizational behavior little is known about ways to attract volunteers. Thus, besides a need for additional research on organizational characteristics that can induce anticipations of pride and respect, more research is needed to examine the recruitment of volunteers.

We conclude that anticipated feelings of pride and respect are relevant and valuable in the field of volunteer work and hold a clear promise with regard to further theory development and research on the attraction and recruitment of (volunteer) workers.

References


