

Towards a Characterization of a Motive whose Ultimate Goal is to Increase the Welfare of the World: Quixoteism

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We use the term Quixoteism to refer to a new social motive. The characterization of this motive deals with two aspects: the definition of the ultimate goal (i.e., to increase the welfare of the world) and the proposal of a process that activates it (i.e., a transcendental-change orientation). Three studies were conducted to test this characterization. In Study 1 we developed an empirical measure of the transcendental-change orientation. The participants in Studies 2 and 3 were presented with a need situation. Results showed that the centrality of such an orientation was directly related to an interpretation consistent with the ultimate goal of Quixoteism (Study 2), and that its salience increases the likelihood of performing a high-cost prosocial behavior (Study 3).

Keywords: social motive, Quixoteism, prosocial behavior.

Se propone la existencia de un motivo social que hemos denominado Quijotismo. La caracterización de este motivo comprende dos aspectos: la definición de un fin último diferenciado (i.e., mejorar el bienestar del mundo) y la propuesta de un proceso que facilita su activación (i.e., orientación al cambio trascendente). Se realizaron tres estudios para contrastar empíricamente dicha caracterización. En el Estudio 1 se desarrolló una medida operativa de la orientación al cambio trascendente. A los participantes de los Estudios 2 y 3 se les presentó una situación de necesidad. Los resultados mostraron que la centralidad de dicha orientación está relacionada con una interpretación consistente con el fin último de mejorar el bienestar del mundo (Estudio 2), y que su saliencia aumenta la probabilidad de realizar una conducta prosocial de alto coste (Estudio 3).

Palabras clave: Quijotismo, motivo social, conducta prosocial.

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Human beings are capable of actions with positive consequences for those around them. In Social Psychology these types of actions have been grouped under the generic term “prosocial behavior” (e.g., Batson, 1998; Batson & Powell, 2003), and have been explained from quite diverse perspectives (for a recent review, see Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). Focusing on the concept of motivation, Batson and colleagues postulated four types of motive that can lead to a prosocial action: egoism, principlism, altruism and collectivism (Batson, Ahmad, & Lishner, 2009; Batson, Ahmad, Powell, Stocks, & Gardner, 2008; Batson, Ahmad, & Tsang, 2002; Batson, 1994). The difference between these four motives resides in the *ultimate goal* that characterizes them, understood as the final state or objective that guides behaviour at a given moment (Batson, 1991; Heider, 1958; Lewin, 1951)¹. Thus, the ultimate goal of egoism is to increase one’s own welfare, that of altruism is to increase the welfare of an individual, that of collectivism is to increase the welfare of a group, and that of principlism is to uphold a moral principle. Since the same motive can give rise to very different behaviors, and a behavior can result from different motives, from a motivational perspective the explanation of a given behavior consists in identifying the ultimate goal that guided it.

Psychosocial characterization of a motive

Given that a motive is a construct that is not directly observable and that can be inaccessible even for the person who experiences it, its study involves identifying and analyzing those processes that bring about its activation (Burnstein, Crandall, & Kitayama, 1994; Preston & de Waal, 2002; Verplanken & Holland, 2002). For example, orientation toward the self leads to egoism, identification with a group leads to collectivism, feelings of empathy lead to altruism, and internalization of a norm or principle leads

to principlism (Batson, Ahmad, & Tsang, 2002; Batson, 1994). From this perspective, the study of a particular motive requires the operationalization of this process so that it can be both measured and manipulated. Bearing in mind that a motive can lead to different behaviors and a behavior can result from different motives, such operationalization allows us to see whether the presence of the activating process in a given situation has effects consistent with the characteristics of the motive.

The proposal of a new motive implies distinguishing it from other motives already proposed. Following this logic, the psychosocial characterization of a motive should involve at least four elements: (a) defining as clearly as possible the ultimate goal of that motive, (b) proposing a process which leads to its activation, (c) proposing hypotheses on the effects of such activation, and (d) testing these hypotheses empirically. The present work tackles these elements with the aim of characterizing a new social motive, hereafter referred to as “Quixoteism”².

First of all, with regard to its definition, we propose Quixoteism as a motive whose ultimate goal is to increase the welfare of the world. It is important to clarify that in this definition the term “world” refers not to a specific entity, such as the planet Earth or a particular human group, but to a transcendental and abstract idea that includes the sum total of all that exists around us (Kant, 1781/1978). Secondly, as regards the process that facilitates the activation of Quixoteism, this consists in an *orientation toward transcendental change* – that is, toward the transformation of a reality that transcends an individual, a group or other concrete entity. Thirdly, as regards its effects, we propose that the activation of Quixoteism (a) affects the interpretation of a situation of need, enhancing attention to more transcendental benefits and reducing the attention paid to the personal costs involved, and consequently (b) increases the probability of performing a prosocial behavior³.

¹ From the psychosocial perspective followed in this paper, on considering the concept of motive we should bear in mind the important difference between *ultimate goal* and the concepts of *instrumental goal* and *unintended consequences*. The *instrumental goal* is actually a mean of achieving an *ultimate goal*, and *unintended consequences* are those effects that derive from performing a behavior but which were not sought intentionally by the person performing the behavior.

² We intentionally named this process “Quixoteism” in order to differentiate it from the label “Quixotism” typically used in the analysis of the literary character of Don Quixote.

³ From other perspectives, two processes have recently been posited within Social Psychology which may promote prosocial behavior. On the one hand, Haidt (2003) proposes that observing behaviors characterized by goodness and courage can awaken a feeling of moral elevation. This feeling, described as a physically pleasant sensation of openness and warmth in the breast, would be associated with the desire to perform a good action (Silver & Haidt, 2008). On the other hand, Schultz and Tabanico (2007) propose as an important aspect of our identity the extent to which we are connected with nature. This process would be at the base of our attitudes toward the environment, and may influence our ecological behavior (Clayton, 2003). The constructs *Quixoteism*, *moral elevation* and *connection with nature* coincide in having been proposed as three psychological processes that can give rise to prosocial behaviors. But they also differ in important ways. Moral elevation is posited as an *emotion* that we feel on observing behaviors considered particularly virtuous, while connection with nature is posited as a *belief* associated with the self and the natural environment. In contrast, Quixoteism is proposed as a *motive* linked to our aspirations to improve the general reality around us (i.e., the world).

The present research

Providing empirical support for the Quixoteism motive empirically requires developing an operational measure of the process leading to it and checking the link between that process and certain effects. To satisfy these two requirements, three studies were carried out. The aim of Study 1 was to develop an operational measure of the facilitating process of Quixoteism: orientation toward transcendental change. In Study 2 we analyzed the relationship between the centrality of such orientation and an interpretation of the situation consistent with the activation of Quixoteism. In Study 3 we analyzed the relationship between the salience of this orientation and prosocial behavior.

Study 1

The aim of Study 1 was to construct a measure of the process that leads to Quixoteism: orientation toward transcendental change. To this end we focused on the field of values. The link between values and motives has been covered extensively in the literature, which has shown how values express linguistically goals (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004) that are not simply abstract conceptions of what is desired, but rather express human tendencies (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz 1992) which by definition motivate behavior (Feather, 1995; Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Schwartz, 1992, 1994).

In order to establish a configuration of values that adequately represents orientation toward transcendental change, we followed three steps. First of all, we assessed the profile of values of each participant using the structure proposed by Schwartz (1992, 1994), focusing our analysis on those values most closely related to the type of orientation proposed: those situated in the quadrant delimited by the dimension Openness to Change (i.e., value types Self-direction and Stimulation) and the value type Universalism. Secondly, we constructed a global index made up of a series of dimensions which, together, cover various aspects related to orientation toward transcendental change: (a) the attribution of one's own prosocial action to an interest in increasing the welfare of the world, (b) a tendency to include in the life space the entities "society" and "world", (c) a disposition to seek changes despite the risk involved, and (d) the capacity to adopt a perspective that transcends the personal point of view. Thirdly, we determined whether there was a significant relation between the Openness to Change/Universalism quadrant and this global index.

It is worth adding that previous research (Schwartz, 1994) consistently shows that the SVS values of the Openness to Change/Universalism quadrant receive relatively high scores in different cultures, and this may be due to the fact that there is broad consensus and social approval for these values. With a view to controlling the influence of these two aspects, we analyzed the internal variability of the scores on each value and included a measure of social desirability.

Method

Participants and Instruments

Participants in the study were 149 first-year Psychology students at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (14.1% men and 85.9% women; mean age was 19.66, $SD = 4.89$).

Profile of values. To measure the profile of values we used the questionnaire developed by Schwartz (Social Values Survey, 1992, 1994) and adapted for the Spanish context by Ros and Schwartz (1995). This version presents a total of 60 values expressed by means of a concept followed by a brief explanatory phrase (e.g., Equality: Equality of opportunity for all). Respondents are required to rate each value according to "the importance it has for you as a guiding principle in your life", using a 9-point scale: -1 = contrary to my values, 1 = not at all important, 3 = important, 5 = very important, 7 = of supreme importance. To facilitate the response for the 60 values they are presented in two sets (33 and 27), and for each set participants are asked to first read the terms on the list and assign a score of 7 to those two or three terms they consider to be of supreme importance, scores of between -1 and 1 to the two or three terms that are contrary to their values or which have no importance, and then scores of between 2 and 6 to the remaining terms.

Improving the world. The next questionnaire began with the question "How much weight would each of the following reasons have in your decision if you had the opportunity to help a charity or aid organization?", which was followed by 30 reasons and a 7-point scale (1 = no importance at all, 7 = a great deal of importance). The scale included in our convergent index was made up of the three reasons related to the ultimate goal of increasing the welfare of the world: "Because it is a way of making the world a better place", "Because the benefits go way beyond the simple act of helping", "Because these sorts of thing can also change the world". Cronbach's alpha (α) revealed an adequate level of internal consistency; $\alpha = .70$.

World and society in the life space. The following scale evaluated the extent to which the individual perceives that the world and society form part of his or her life space. Hence, the question "To what extent do you think your life is lived in the following settings?", followed by a series of life contexts ("with your family", "with your partner", "with your friends", "at work", "in your city", "in society", "in the world") and a nine-point scale (1 = Not at all, 3-4 = To some extent, 6-7 = To a large extent, 10 = Totally).

Change and risk. To evaluate disposition to seek changes that may involve some degree of risk we used the version adapted to the Spanish context of the *Stimulating-Instrumental Risk Inventory* (Zaleskiewicz, 2001). This instrument presents 9 phrases (e.g., "To achieve something in life one must take risks"), followed by a 5-point scale (1 = not at all characteristic of me, 5 = highly characteristic of me); $\alpha = .84$.

Perspective-taking. To evaluate disposition to take a perspective that transcends one's personal point of view we used a subscale taken from the *Interpersonal Reactivity Index* (Davis, 1983), adapted for the Spanish context by Pérez-Albéniz, de Paúl, Etxeberria, Montes, and Torres (2003). This subscale contains 7 items (e.g., "In a discussion I try to bear in mind everyone's point of view before making a decision"), followed by a 5-point scale (1 = not at all characteristic of me, 5 = highly characteristic of me); $\alpha = .67$.

Social Desirability. We used the Spanish translation of the brief *Marlowe-Crowne* scale developed by Strahan and Gerbasi (1972). This measure identifies the tendency to respond in a socially acceptable way. The participant indicates "the extent to which they identify with each one of the following 10 phrases" (e.g., "I have never had a really strong dislike of anyone") in True/False response format.

Procedure

In four sessions, participants (approximately 40 in each session) were each given a set of instructions explaining the goals of the study and guaranteeing the confidentiality of the data. Once they had read these instructions and signed a consent form, each participant was given a booklet containing all the measures previously described. Time necessary for responding to all the items in the booklet was approximately one hour.

Results

First of all, a global index was obtained by multiplying the dimensions described in the previous section⁴. Next, we calculated the Pearson correlation pattern of this index with the 17 values of the quadrant on which our analysis

Table 1

Pearson correlations of the global index with the values of the SVS quadrant Openness to Experience/Universalism. Study 1

	Global index
Daring (seeking adventure, risk)	.327**
Social justice (correcting injustice, care for the weak)	.288**
Unity with nature (fitting into nature)	.281**
Curious (interested in everything, exploring)	.279**
Exciting life (stimulating experiences)	.275**
Protecting the environment (preserving nature)	.272**
World at peace (free of war and conflict)	.269**
Freedom (freedom of action and thought)	.260**
Spiritual life (emphasis on spiritual not material matters)	.238**
Varied life (filled with challenge, novelty and change)	.219**
World of Beauty (beauty of nature and the arts)	.216*
Creativity (uniqueness, imagination)	.203*
Wisdom (a mature understanding of life)	.159†
Equality (equal opportunity for all)	.105
Choosing own goals (selecting own purposes)	.097
Independent (self-reliant, self-sufficient)	.093
Broadminded (tolerant of different ideas and beliefs)	.085

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; † $p < .10$

⁴ The dimensions making up this index were measured using different scales: from 1 to 5, from 1 to 7, and from 1 to 10. Therefore, we used *min/max rescaling* to convert to a common scale each one of the dimensions making up the index. This technique consists in applying the following formula: $[X(i,j) - X(\min j)] / [X(\max j) - X(\min j)]$; where $X(i,j)$ is the original value, $X(\min j)$ is the minimum value of the sample for each measure, and $X(\max j)$ is the maximum value of the sample for each measure. This standardization technique permits combination of the values, thus reducing the possible effect of having used different scales.

is focused: Openness to Change/Universalism. As can be seen in Table 1, ten values showed a highly significant correlation, $p < .01$. Moreover, only 2 of the 43 values that do not form part of this quadrant showed significant correlations with the global index: *helpful* and *influential*; $r(137) = .28$ and $.22$; $p \leq .01$.

Secondly, we analyzed internal variability and correlation with the social desirability measure for the ten values most closely related to our global index. As regards the internal variability, the values *freedom* and *world at peace* showed the highest means ($M = 5.85$ and 5.21 , respectively) and the lowest standard deviations ($SD = 1.12$ and 1.35 , respectively). As for the correlation with the social desirability measure, the only significant values were those corresponding to *world at peace* and *social justice*; $r(147) = .21$ and $.18$; $p < .03$; for the rest of the correlations: $r < .13$; $p > .10$.

From the above analyses it was concluded that the constellation of values made up of *protecting the environment*, *exciting life*, *varied life*, *daring*, *social justice*, *curious*, *spiritual life* and *unity with nature* ($\alpha = .72$) adequately represents orientation toward transcendental change. With the aim of ascertaining whether this configuration covers the two essential aspects of this orientation (i.e., change and transcendence), we carried out a principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. This analysis revealed two factors with eigenvalues over 1 which together explained 56.34 % of the variance. In the first factor (34.15% of explained variance), the values most closely related to orientation to change – *exciting life*, *daring*, *varied life* and *curious* saturated with weights over .51. In the second factor (22.18% of explained variance), the values most closely related to transcendental orientation – *unity with nature*, *protecting the environment*, *spiritual life* and *social justice* – saturated with weights over .60.

Discussion

The results of Study 1 supported the possibility of establishing a particular set of values that represent orientation toward transcendental change (hereafter referred to as Quixoteism orientation). Specifically, the eight values making up this configuration: a) are situated in the Openness to Change/Universalism quadrant, b) cover the two fundamental aspects of that orientation (i.e., change and transcendence), and c) were not rated on the basis of considerations of approval or social consensus. Since orientation toward transcendental change is posited as the facilitating process of the Quixoteism motive, from now on we have recourse to a measure that permits us to check whether the presence of this process has effects coherent with the characteristics of that motive.

Study 2

Study 2 was designed to test the following hypothesis: faced with a situation of need, the centrality of the

Quixoteism orientation results in an interpretation coherent with the ultimate goal of increasing the welfare of the world. As we shall see subsequently, this interpretation was evaluated using two complementary measures, one implicit and the other explicit.

With regard to the context of the study, we consider that any type of need situation can generate goals related to the objective of increasing the welfare of the world, since the essential quality of such a situation is that it is interpreted as an opportunity to achieve this purpose. Therefore, it is not necessary for the situation to imply clearly and explicitly the presence of an entity of a transcendental nature; indeed, such a presence could activate the interpretation by itself and obscure the type of relation that we are actually trying to analyze: between the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation and an interpretation in more transcendental terms. Precisely so as to avoid this problem we used a situation of need which, at least in its most obvious conception, involved just one individual, rather than entities of a more transcendental nature, such as society or the world.

Method

Participants

Participants in this second study were 84 students from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (23.8% men and 76.2% women, mean age = 19.46 years, $SD = 4.24$). Due to problems with the computers in two of the sessions, the responses of 14 women to the empathy questionnaire and 3 women to the lexical decision exercise could not be recorded.

Procedure

In a first phase, participants replied to the Quixoteism orientation measure, and two months later they were required to participate in a second phase of the study, which indeed constituted the actual research situation. In both phases participants were asked to provide, in addition to sex and age data, a participant key that allowed us to match the data obtained in each phase. This interval between the two phases ensured that we were working with the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation, and not its salience, since it had been measured previously and at a place and time very different from those in which the research situation took place.

Participants took part in the situation individually. The researcher welcomed them and showed them to a research booth. These are sound-proof cubicles with a seat, a desk and a computer. The majority of this procedure was programmed and presented with the *E-Prime* software, which allows the sequencing of screens and texts in presentation format, as well as the measurement and recording of exposure

and reaction times for visual and semantic stimuli. First, participants were given an explanation of how they should follow the instructions on the computer, and practised responding to the measures. With the exception of one case, which was removed from the analyses, participants showed no difficulties to follow the procedure.

Implicit measure of interpretation. For this measure we used the lexical decision design called *affective priming*: first of all a stimulus was presented to generate an affective reaction; this reaction was then inhibited, and a lexical decision task was carried out. In accordance with Agis, Carmona, Fuentes and Catena (1996), this procedure affects the lexical decision, increasing reaction time for the words most closely related semantically to the affective reaction first activated and then inhibited. In line with this design, participants were first given *affective priming*: an article from the university magazine *Voluntarios* ("Volunteers"), which told the story of Isabel Toledo, a student who had lost her parents and a sister, and was currently looking after her two younger brothers at the same time as trying to complete her degree. This case was adapted from the one originally created by Batson and colleagues (Batson et al., 1988). Next to the text was a photograph of Isabel. Immediately after the reading, the lexical decision task began. Participants were asked to prepare themselves by positioning their fingers on the computer keyboard and focusing all their attention on this task (inhibition process), with the aim of responding as rapidly as possible to each word or non-word. The words employed were based on those from the procedure used by Batson et al. (1988, Study 5), adapted for the Spanish context: six words whose meaning was related to three different types of benefit: Transcendent ("equilibrium", "change"), Symbolic ("honour", "pride") and Material ("profit", "prize"); six words whose meaning was related to three different types of cost: Need ("needy", "poor"), Symbolic ("blame", "shame") and Material ("cost", "lose"); five neutral words ("extra", "clean", "partner", "newspaper" and "soft"); and 25 non-words. Order of presentation of words and non-words was controlled by a random process, so that each participant rated them in a different order. Time elapsed from target presentation until a key was pressed ("P" for words, "Q" for non-words) was reaction time.

Empathy and personal distress. Continuing with the procedure, participants were given a questionnaire developed by Ocejja and Jiménez (2007) that includes a measure of empathy made up of 8 terms (e.g., "Tenderness", "Compassion", and "I'm really sorry about what she is going through") and a measure of personal distress comprising 6 terms (e.g., "Distressed", "Upset", and "Irritated"). Empathy is related to altruistic motivation, and corresponds to an other-focused emotion that can lead us to perform actions for the benefit of an individual in need. The personal distress measure, on the other hand, is related to an egoistic type of motivation whose ultimate

goal is to reduce the personal distress generated by the situation of need (Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade, 1987). To respond to the questionnaire, the participant reads the term and presses the corresponding key on 7-point scale (1 = Not at all, 7 = Totally).

Intention to help. In the next step participants were handed a letter, signed by the director of the study, in which they were given the opportunity of helping Isabel Toledo. It was made clear that the fact of participating in the study in no way obliged the person to help, and that it was not a case of giving money, but of helping to send letters, for which the university magazine *Volunteers* would provide all the necessary materials. After they had seen the letter, participants were asked whether they would be prepared to help the person in the article, and to respond by pressing the "S" key (*Sí*, Yes) or the "N" key (No).

Prosocial behavior. Subsequently, in order to actually commit themselves to helping Isabel, participants had to sign a form, providing their contact data (name, telephone and e-mail). The form bore a reminder that participation in the study in no way implied any obligation to help Isabel.

Explicit measure of interpretation. Next, the researcher gave the participant a questionnaire which began with two open questions: "What types of costs would be involved in helping a person such as the one in the article?", and "What types of benefits would be involved in helping a person such as the one in the article?" The order of the questions was counterbalanced, and below each question there were five unnumbered lines for writing the response.

Measure of identification. The questionnaire included, at the end, two questions related to a possible process of identification: "How much like you is the person in the article?" and "Does she belong to the same social group as you?" (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely/absolutely). This identification process may be related to greater probability of activation of an ultimate goal of the type "improving the welfare of the group".

With the application of this questionnaire the study was concluded. When the participant indicated that he/she had finished, the researcher returned to the booth, sealed the envelopes and carried out a post-experimental debriefing interview covering any doubts or suspicions that may have arisen, the credibility of the case of Isabel Toledo, and the relationship between this procedure and previous research.

Summing up, with regard to the implicit measure of interpretation, we expected the Quixoteism orientation to be significantly related to reaction time for the terms in the transcendental benefits category. Secondly, as regards the explicit measure of interpretation, we expected the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation to be significantly related to greater mention of the benefits accruing to entities that transcend oneself, the person in need and the group. Moreover, we expected these two relationships to be independent of other processes linked to other types of motive: distress-egoism, empathy-altruism, and

Table 2

Pearson correlations: Implicit measures (above) and explicit measures (below). Study 2

	Quixoteism Orientation	Empathy	Personal distress	Identification
Benefits				
Transcendental	.23*	.12	.17	-.06
Symbolic	.17	.07	-.07	-.15
Material	.00	.15	.06	-.07
Costs				
Symbolic	.01	.20	.17	.09
Victim	.02	.20	.20	.02
Need	.04	.10	.05	-.23*
Benefits				
Transcendental	.22*	.19	-.18	.05
For others	.13	.07	-.03	.21†
For me	-.17	.14	.13	.20†
Costs				
	-.15	.13	.13	.03

* $p \leq .05$; † $p < .10$

identification-collectivism. We also analyzed whether the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation measured two months previously was significantly associated with intention and commitment to help Isabel.

Results

Implicit measure of interpretation. Using the SVS scores applied two months prior to the research situation, we calculated the aggregate measure of the Quixoteism orientation defined in Study 1 ($\alpha = .66$)⁵ and obtained the Pearson correlations of this orientation with the reaction times corresponding to the implicit measure of interpretation. With regard to the data for this measure, level of correctness for both words and non-words was highly satisfactory: 96% and 94%, respectively. This result shows that the participants applied themselves properly to the task. Moreover, we removed the times associated with a mistaken decision (34 of 1360 responses; 2.5%) and the extreme times: below 300 milliseconds (0 cases) and above 1000 milliseconds (27 of 1360 responses; 2%). The variations in the number of participants for the different analyses are due to the elimination of these values.

For each category of benefits (transcendental, symbolic and material) and costs (needs, symbolic and material) we created a variable consisting in the aggregate measure of the reaction times obtained for the associated words. As can be

seen in Table 2, in line with our first hypothesis, the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation correlated significantly with the transcendental benefits category; $r(69) = .23$; $p = .05$. On the other hand, the variables empathy ($\alpha = .88$), personal distress ($\alpha = .85$) and identification ($\alpha = .77$) did not correlate significantly with this category: $r < .19$; $p > .15$.

Intention and commitment to help Isabel. As regards the relationship with initial intention to help prior to knowing the cost and final commitment once it is known, only the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation correlated significantly with final commitment to help Isabel, $r(82) = .20$; $p = .03$ (unilateral). As far as the other measures are concerned, identification showed a significant correlation with initial intention to help Isabel: $r(78) = .20$; $p = .04$ (unilateral), but neither identification nor empathy nor personal distress correlated significantly with final commitment to perform the behavior: $r < .06$; $p > .34$.

Explicit measure of interpretation. With an open response format, participants indicated the costs and benefits deriving from helping a person in need. Independently, two people blind to the hypotheses coded the responses in four categories: Benefits to me ("Personal benefits of any kind: psychological, symbolic, material, etc."), Benefits to others ("Benefits of any kind whose beneficiary is the person in need or his/her group"), Transcendental benefits ("Transcendental, wide-ranging benefits that go beyond the person in need and his/her group") and Costs ("Mention

⁵ In accordance with the numerous studies that have used and validated the SVS, this level of internal reliability corresponding to a specific set of values is adequate (see Schmitt, Schwartz, Steyer & Schmitt, 1993; Schwartz, Verkasalo, Antonovsky & Sagiv, 1997).

of anything involving any type of cost to the participant²). As it can be seen in Table 2, in line with our hypothesis, the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation correlated significantly with number of transcendental benefits that participants write down spontaneously, $r(80) = .22$; $p = .04$.

Discussion

After participants had been presented with a situation of need, the results supported the hypothesis that the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation is related to a particular interpretation. Specifically, although the situation referred to the particular case of a person with a need, the implicit and explicit measures coincided in showing that the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation was associated with an interpretation not centred on increasing one's own welfare, nor on increasing the welfare of the person in need, nor on increasing the welfare of the group, but on a more transcendental positive change consistent with the ultimate goal of increasing the welfare of the world. Moreover, the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation emerged as being related not merely to initial intention to help, but also to final commitment to perform the prosocial behavior in question.

In Study 2 we also assessed some processes that have typically been linked to egoism (i.e., personal distress), altruism (i.e., empathy) and collectivism (i.e., identification). The results showed that the relation of the Quixoteism orientation with an interpretation of a more transcendental nature and with final commitment to perform a prosocial behavior was independent of these processes. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation was assessed two months prior to the presentation of the research situation, so that neither the interpretation nor the behavior could have been responsible for such centrality.

In sum, the results of Study 2 supported our principal hypothesis on the relation between the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation and a particular type of interpretation of the need situation. However, additional analyses showed that the correlation between this centrality and commitment to perform prosocial behavior was only significant in the context of a unilateral test. In this regard, it should be remembered that the activation of a motive can be facilitated both by the centrality and by the salience of a given orientation, and indeed, previous research shows that a psychological process has a greater effect on behavior when that process is made salient at the time and in the place where the behavior is performed (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Oceja & Berenguer, 2009; Verplanken & Holland, 2002). In Study 3 we analyze the relationship between the salience of the Quixoteism orientation and the performance of a certain type of prosocial behavior.

Study 3

A given psychological process can be activated either because of its centrality or because of its salience, and this activation can in turn influence behavior, but the difference is that salience is more directly linked to aspects of the precise moment at which the behavior occurs, whilst centrality is linked to traits or dispositions of the person who does the behavior. The aim of Study 3 was to analyze in more depth the relationship between Quixoteism and prosocial behavior, focusing on the salience of the Quixoteism orientation, in contrast to Study 2, in which its centrality was studied.

Specifically, our hypothesis is that if the presence of the Quixoteism orientation boosts attention to more transcendental benefits, then its salience will increase the probability of people performing prosocial behavior, even at a relatively high cost.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were students who happened to be in the Psychology faculty at the time and were invited to take part in research "about perception". Once they had accepted, they were accompanied to a laboratory in the same building which is divided into several research booths. In this way we obtained a sample of 35 female students (the 70% of those 50 who were invited to participate).

Procedure

On arriving at the laboratory, each participant was shown to a booth and left alone to begin her task. First of all they read an introduction explaining that the study was being carried out in association with the magazine *Universitarios* ("University Students"), which had provided two articles for two potential new sections of the publication: *Estudiantes exitosos* ("Successful students") and *Noticias desde el lado personal* ("News from the personal angle"), one of which would be assigned to them at random to read and make their comments.

After having read the introduction and signed a consent form, participants filled out the SVS. With the aim of speeding up the process we used a reduced version containing 24 of the 60 values, and of these, 6 of the 8 linked to the Quixoteism orientation. In this reduced version we decided not to include those two values which in Studies 1 and 2 showed the lowest correlations with the global index: *varied life* and *spiritual life*.

Each participant was then presented with the article that told the story of Isabel Toledo described in Study 2, and after reading it filled out a questionnaire containing the measures

of empathy, personal distress and identification. Finally, they were given a letter offering them the opportunity of helping Isabel Toledo. The participants made their decision, and when they indicated that had finished, the researcher returned to the booth, collected the material and carried out the post-experimental debriefing interview.

Evaluation of salience of the Quixoteism orientation. Just before they were presented with the situation of need, participants assigned a score of between -1 (contrary to my values) and 7 (of supreme importance) to each of the 24 values in the SVS. Salience of the Quixoteism orientation was obtained by means of the score on the measure which grouped the 6 values representing this orientation: the higher the score on this measure, the higher the salience.

Consideration of the cost of the prosocial behavior. One of the objectives of this study was for the prosocial behavior to involve a relatively high cost. The definition of the minimum level of cost for this behavior was based on two studies by Bierhoff (1983, 1996; cited in Bierhoff, 2002). This author studied how many hours of help in research tasks students would be prepared to offer when no type of reward was involved. The results showed that the mean amount of help offered were 2 hours, and that only 22% of students offered to help for three hours or more. In accordance with these data we decided that a relatively high cost in a situation with similar characteristics could be a minimum of 3 hours.

Thus, the letter raising the possibility of helping made reference to an envelope containing the helping form. If after reading the form the participants decided to help, then they used this form to provide their personal and contact data and indicate the number of hours they committed themselves to on the following scale: from 3 to 5 hours, from 6 to 8 hours, and from 9 to 10 hours. With this procedure we ensured that all those who decided to help did so in the context of a behavior involving a relatively high cost (3 hours). On the form it was explicitly stated that participation in the study in no way implied an obligation to help, so that those who decided not to commit themselves should simply leave it blank.

Given that we were talking about a high-cost prosocial behavior, our hypothesis was that the salience of this orientation, linked to a motive whose ultimate goal transcends the personal benefits and costs, would be related

to the decision to help Isabel more consistently than the rest of the measures linked to other motives: empathy, personal distress, and identification.

Results

As can be seen in Table 3, in line with our hypothesis, the salience of the Quixoteism orientation showed a significant correlation with acceptance to perform the high-cost prosocial behavior; $\rho(33) = .33$; $p = .05$. Moreover, when cost was taken into account, obtaining the correlation between such salience and the number of help hours offered, we found that this number of hours was directly proportional to the salience of the Quixoteism orientation; $\rho(33) = .38$, $p < .03$. On the other hand, none of the other measures related to other motives (i.e., empathy, personal distress, and identification) showed a significant correlation with either the decision to perform the behavior or the number of hours offered (cost); $-.16 < \rho < .08$, $p > .37$. Furthermore, salience of the Quixoteism orientation did not correlate significantly with any of these three measures; $-.10 < r < .01$, $p > .57$.

Another way of analyzing the data involved dividing the sample into those who had obtained scores below percentile 40 and above percentile 60 ($P = 3.90$ and 4.16 ; 14 and 15 participants, respectively) and comparing the percentage of acceptance to help and the mean number of hours offered. This analysis showed that the percentage of help was greater among the high-salience participants than among the low-salience participants: 67% vs. 29%, $\chi^2(1, N = 29) = 4.21$; $p = .04$; moreover, the former group offered a significantly greater number of hours: $M = 3.67$ vs. 1.14 ; $t(27) = 2.46$; $p = .02$.

Discussion

The results of Study 3 supported the hypothesis that the salience of the Quixoteism orientation is directly related to the performance of a high-cost prosocial behavior, as well as to a tendency for more intense involvement in such behavior. Furthermore, and in line with the results of Study 2, this relationship was obtained independently of the empathy, personal distress or feelings of identification that may have been provoked by the person in need.

Table 3
Spearman's rho correlations. Study 3

	Quixoteism Orientation	Empathy	Personal distress	Identification
Help (yes, no)	.330*	-.009	-.153	.060
Hours of help	.385*	-.002	-.077	.073

* $p \leq .05$

Given that these results were obtained with a sample of women students, future research should check whether the relationships found are maintained in broader samples⁶.

Final Discussion

In the present work we have postulated the Quixoteism motive and taken a first step toward establishing its antecedents and consequents. This type of motive corresponds to a process with the ultimate goal of seeking positive change of a transcendental nature, which we have called “increasing the welfare of the world”. In Study 1 we constructed an operational measure of this motive’s facilitating process: orientation toward transcendental change. In Study 2 we presented a situation of need which in its most obvious conception involved just one specific person with a particular need, and found the centrality of this orientation to be related to an interpretation consistent with seeking change of a transcendental nature. We measured this interpretation both implicitly and explicitly. In Study 3 we found that the salience of this orientation was related to the performance of a prosocial behavior involving a relatively high cost. Comparison of the results of Studies 2 and 3 reveals that, in line with previous research (e.g., Verplanken & Holland, 2002), both centrality and salience constitute routes for facilitating the activation of a certain type of motive, but that salience appears to strengthen the link with the effective decision to perform the behavior.

Taken as a whole, the results of the three studies support our proposal. Even so, on the road to providing a theoretical and empirical characterization of this new type of motive we have called Quixoteism, the present work cannot be considered as anything more than a first step. Various issues remain to be cleared up in future research. First of all, it is necessary to continue analyzing the nature of the ultimate goal of Quixoteism, clarifying whether “improving the world” is not merely a refined version of another type of goal linked to another type of motive (i.e., egoism, altruism, collectivism or principlism). Secondly, research should consider the operationalization of orientation toward transcendental change from different perspectives, both in the applied context, which will allow the proposal of different strategies for increasing its salience in concrete situations, and the theoretical context, permitting analysis of the differences between this orientation and other types of process. And thirdly, as regards research on the effects of Quixoteism, there is

a need to extend the repertoire of behaviors studied and to use other methods for analyzing in more depth the relationship between this motive and behavior.

Clearly, these questions can only be dealt within the context of an ongoing research programme. The three studies in the present work constitute the first steps in this programme, which offers the possibility of incorporating a new social motive which, together with those already proposed, can provide us with a fuller explanation of when and why human beings decide to perform actions aimed at improving the world in which we live.

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⁶ As regards the centrality of the Quixoteism orientation measured by means of our index, no significant differences were found between men and women, in either Study 1, $M = 3.81$ vs. 3.66 , $t(145) = .67$; or Study 2; $M = 3.71$ vs. 3.69 , $t(82) = .06$; $p > .49$.

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