

INTRODUCTION

We use the term Quixoteism to label a social motive that has three aspects (Oceja & Salgado, 2008; Salgado, Oceja & Stocks, 2009; Salgado & Oceja, 2010).

1. Quixoteism is a social motive whose ultimate goal is to increase the welfare of the world.
2. Quixoteism is activated by the *transcendental-change orientation*: a disposition toward provoking changes that go beyond a specific individual or group.
3. Quixoteism may lead people to perform a “heroic” behaviors, i.e., a prosocial behavior that involves a high cost. Three studies were conducted to test this proposal.

Study 1

We propose that the *transcendental-change orientation* (TCO) is linked to a specific value-constellation related to the dyad “Change & World”.

We first created a 4-dimension index that covers the main aspects contained in the definition of TCO: (a) accounting welfare of the world as a reason to perform prosocial action, (b) including the entities "society" and "world" into the self, (c) seeking changes despite the risk involved, and (d) adopting a perspective that transcends the personal point of view.

One-hundred-forty-nine participants (128 female, 21 male) were asked to complete this 4-dimension index along with the Social Values Survey (Schwartz, 1992).

We hypothesized a significant relationship between the 4-dimension index and the values that formed the quadrant Openness to Change/ Universalism.

The results showed that TCO was significantly related to a specific constellation of values formed by “protecting the environment”, “exciting life”, “varied life”, “daring”, “social justice”, “curious”, “spiritual life” and “union with nature” ($\alpha = .72$).

Study 2

We tested whether the centrality of the constellation of values linked to TCO is related with an interpretation consistent with the ultimate goal of improving the welfare of the world.

Eighty-four participants (64 female, 20 male) completed the SVS and two months after were presented with the case of person in need and with the unexpected opportunity to help her.

The interpretation of the situation was measured through implicit and explicit measures.

Pearson's correlation of TCO with **implicit measure** of interpretation (lexical decision).
Before helping decision.

	TCO
Benefit	
Transcendente (change, equilibrium)	,23*
Symbolic (honor, pride)	,17
Material (benefit, prize)	,00
Cost	
Symbolic (fault, shame)	,01
Material (cost, lose)	,02
Need (needy, poor)	,04

* $p \leq ,05$

Pearson's correlation of TCO with **explicit measure** of interpretation.
After helping decision.

	TCO
Benefit	
Transcendent	,22*
For other	,13
For me	-,17
Cost	-,15

* $p \leq ,05$

Study 3

We reasoned that: if TCO promotes higher attention to transcendent benefits, then its salience would lead people to make a prosocial behavior despite the high cost involved.

Thirty-five women participated in a study that proceeded as follows:

1. Presenting the case of a person in need (victim).
2. Taking measures: identification with victim and salience of the constellation of values linked to TCO.
3. Presenting the unexpected opportunity of performing a costly prosocial behavior (it involved a minimum of 3 hours).
4. Measuring the actual commitment to perform such behavior.

Spearman's (*rho*) correlation

	TCO	Identification with the victim
Helping	,33*	,06
Hours of helping	,39*	,07

* $p \leq ,05$

Conclusions

- In Study 1, we obtained an operational measure of the proposed antecedent of Quixoteism: a constellation of values linked to the orientation toward the transcendent change (TCO).
- In Study 2, we found that the centrality of TCO is related to an interpretation consistent with the ultimate goal of Quixoteism: increasing the welfare of the world.
- In Study 3, we found that the salience of TCO is related to committing a prosocial behavior that involves a relatively high cost.

Questions to be addressed in the future:

- Is “increasing the welfare of the world” the actual Quixoteism's ultimate goal?
- Is Quixoteism different from other prosocial motives such as Altruism, Collectivism, and Principlism (Batson, 1994)?

REFERENCES

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