Volunteers Managing Volunteers: The Role of Volunteer Board Members' Motivating and Demotivating Style in Relation to Volunteers' Motives to Stay Volunteer

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Abstract Against the background of declining volunteering rates in nonprofit and voluntary organizations, this study examined the relationship between the volunteer board members' (de)motivating style and factors that influence volunteers' motives to stay volunteer, i.e., volunteers' motivation and group-task cohesion. To this end, we relied on Self-Determination Theory. Results indicated that the volunteers' perception of the board members' motivating style was positively related to volunteers' autonomous motivation and perceived group-task cohesion via experienced need satisfaction (i.e., a bright pathway), whereas the board members' perceived demotivating style was positively related to controlled motivation and amotivation via experienced need frustration (i.e., a dark pathway). Implications for volunteer management are illustrated with concrete examples.

Keywords Volunteer retention · Board members' (de)motivating style · Volunteers' quality of motivation · Volunteers' perceived group-task cohesion · Self-determination theory

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Introduction

Many nonprofit and voluntary organizations, including sports clubs (Wicker and Breuer 2013), human services agencies (Jamison 2003) and public charities (Hager and Brudney 2011), are confronted with a low retention of volunteers. This low retention is partially due to evolutions in society, such as an aging population and growing individualism (Wicker and Breuer 2013). Yet, also factors within the context of the organization may impact volunteers' intention to stay volunteer, such as volunteers' motivation (Ferreira et al. 2015) and perceived cohesion around their tasks and objectives (i.e., group-task cohesion) (Doherty and Carron 2003).

The question arises then as to how board members in nonprofit and voluntary organizations, who are volunteers responsible for managing the organization's activities, can take up the challenge to enhance (other) volunteers' motivation and group-task cohesion. Whereas early research in nonprofit and voluntary organizations has emphasized the role of effective and cognitive management processes such as strategic planning (Balduck et al. 2010), it is increasingly assumed that, in order to increase volunteers' motivation and group-task cohesion, board members also need to rely on human skills (i.e., a motivating style) (e.g., Balduck et al. 2010; Nencini et al. 2016). Yet, to our knowledge, little research has focused on the impact of a volunteer board members' (de)motivating style in nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

Therefore, the central aim of this study is to offer a comprehensive and integrative analysis of the relation between the motivating and demotivating style volunteer board members

rely on in nonprofit and voluntary organizations and volunteers' quality of motivation and group-task cohesion.

Roles of Volunteer Board Members

Since board members are ultimately responsible for the affairs and conduct of nonprofit and voluntary organizations, various studies have investigated their key roles and responsibilities, which include establishing a mission and vision, developing an overall strategy and long-term plans, setting financial policy, setting policy from which paid staff and volunteers can deliver services, and developing funds and collaborations (e.g., Inglis et al. 1999; Brown and Guo 2010; Renz and Herman 2016). Yet, as many nonprofit and voluntary organizations rely heavily on volunteers to carry out many of these roles through day-to-day work (Renz and Herman 2016), it is increasingly assumed that board members, even though they are (almost always) volunteers themselves, also have the important task of motivating other volunteers in the organization and stimulating them to achieve common goals (Balduck et al. 2010; Grabowski et al. 2015; Nencini et al. 2016; Renz and Herman 2016). To illustrate, Balduck et al. (2010) revealed that board members should not only posses the cognitive competencies to develop a mission and vision, but should also be responsive to others' needs and feelings and be able to manage effective relationships in the organization. Similarly, Nencini et al. (2016) suggested that, apart from management skills (i.e., the ability to meet organizational objectives and deliver on stated objectives), the support that board members offer to volunteers, the degree to which they allow involvement of volunteers in decision making, and the quality of board members' relationships with volunteers are equally important in terms of fostering volunteers' motivation. Whereas in some (larger) nonprofit and voluntary organizations, volunteer board members may share these motivating roles and responsibilities with paid executives (Oostlander et al. 2014; Renz and Herman 2016), it can be suggested that the motivating style of volunteer board members requires special attention as they often take on the (only) leading role in the organization without prior training or experience (Gazley and Dignam 2008). As such, we focused on the board members' (de)-motivating style in Flemish nonprofit and voluntary sports clubs that, like many (youth) sports organizations in (continental) Europe (Nagel 2017), UK (Nichols et al. 2005) and USA (Posner 2015), and other nonprofit and voluntary organizations such as charitable organizations (Farmer and Fedor 2001) and grassroots associations (Toepler 2003), work without paid executives (and thus rely on volunteer board members to lead the organization). Specifically, we offer a fine-grained insight into the motivating and demotivating styles board members of nonprofit

and voluntary organizations can adopt, and their relationship with volunteers' motivation and group-task cohesion.

Volunteers' Quality of Motivation and Group-Task Cohesion: A Self-Determination Theory Approach

In this study, we followed the suggestion of Allen and Bartle (2014) and Bidee et al. (2013) that Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2017) is a viable theory for examining human motivation in a volunteering context.

SDT distinguishes between intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation.

Intrinsic motivation represents the archetype of autonomous motivation and refers to the involvement in an activity out of interest and enjoyment (Ryan and Deci 2017). When *extrinsically motivated*, people engage in an activity for reasons that are external to the activity itself. Yet, they can still be autonomously motivated when the reasons for putting effort into an activity are still volitional, and they recognize the importance of their behavior and its congruence with their personal goals and identities (i.e., *identified regulation*) (Ryan and Deci 2017; Bidee et al. 2013). Furthermore, it is argued in SDT that *introjected* and *external regulation* are more controlled forms of extrinsic motivation because people experience pressure to engage in an activity, coming from themselves (e.g., avoiding feelings of guilt) or from others (e.g., avoiding a punishment), respectively. But people may also lack any intentionality to act, which is referred to as *amotivation* (Ryan and Deci 2017).

The distinction between autonomous motivation, controlled motivation and amotivation is important because they relate differentially to volunteer outcomes. Specifically, autonomously motivated volunteers have been shown to be more willing to continue volunteering (Wu et al. 2016), more engaged (Haivas et al. 2013) and more dedicated to their volunteer work (Bidee et al. 2013). In contrast, controlled motivated and amotivated volunteers had heightened intentions to stop their volunteer work (Stukas et al. 1999). Although not examined in the specific context of volunteer work, studies involving sports teams have shown that the quality of motivation also matters in terms of experienced group-task cohesion (Halbrook et al. 2012), an important outcome in the current study as it has revealed to be an important motive to remain volunteer (Doherty and Carron 2003).

Basic Psychological Needs and The Role of (De)Motivating Styles of Volunteer Board Members

Given the multiple advantages of autonomous motivation for individuals' functioning in nonprofit and voluntary organizations, an important question is how volunteer

board members can foster autonomous motivation among volunteers in their organization. At the heart of SDT are the three basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. The need for autonomy refers to a sense of volition and the ability to behave in line with one's own values, beliefs and preferences. The need for competence refers to feeling effective in achieving desired outcomes. The need for relatedness refers to the experience of love and care from other social groups (Ryan and Deci 2017). Whereas the satisfaction of these three basic needs predicts adaptive outcomes such as autonomous motivation, it is increasingly suggested that an absence of need satisfaction does not necessarily entail the presence of need frustration and thus maladaptive outcomes (Vansteenkiste and Ryan 2013). Indeed, SDT argues that people's malfunctioning and ill-being, including controlled motivation and amotivation, are the result of distinctive experiences of pressure (i.e., autonomy need frustration), inferiority and failure (i.e., competence need frustration), and loneliness and alienation (i.e., relatedness need frustration) (Ryan and Deci 2017).

Results of research in nonprofit and voluntary organizations were in line with these SDT postulations, revealing that volunteers' need satisfaction was related to autonomous motivation (Haivas et al. 2014), whereas need frustration was associated with volunteers' ill-being and malfunctioning (Bidee et al. 2016).

Furthermore, apart from having different outcomes, SDT postulates that need satisfaction and frustration are being influenced by differential interpersonal styles, with need satisfaction being primarily predicted by motivating interpersonal styles (i.e., autonomy-supportive, structuring, involvement), and need frustration primarily by demotivating interpersonal styles (i.e., controlling, chaotic, relatedness-rejective). According to SDT, a board member who adopts an *autonomy-supportive* style tries to better understand and nurture volunteers' interests, values and preferences by adopting a curious, open and flexible attitude (Ryan and Deci 2017; Aelterman et al. 2018). Specifically, when being autonomy-supportive, board members rely on practices such as encouraging volunteers' initiatives, creating opportunities to provide input, acknowledging expressions of negative affect, providing choices and meaningful rationales, and using invitational language (e.g., Aelterman et al. 2018; Bidee et al. 2013). When being *controlling*, on the other hand, board members exert pressures on volunteers to act, feel, and think in a specific, prescribed way by relying on either externally controlling practices, such as threatening and yelling (Bartholomew et al. 2011), and the use of forceful and commanding language (Assor et al. 2005), or internally controlling strategies such as guilt-induction and shaming (Soenens and Vansteenkiste 2010).

When board members provide *structure* to volunteers, they adjust activities to their competencies and give support so that volunteers feel competent to master these activities (Ryan and Deci 2017; Aelterman et al. 2018). They can do so by communicating clear expectations and guidelines, providing step-by-step directions, offering challenging tasks, expressing confidence and providing positive and constructive feedback (e.g., Aelterman et al. 2018; Bidee et al. 2013). In contrast, when being *chaotic*, board members hinder volunteers' competence development by failing to adjust instructions to their developmental pace and growth potential (Ryan and Deci 2017; Aelterman et al. 2018). A chaotic style is associated with permissiveness and a laissez-faire approach (Aelterman et al. 2018).

Finally, when *being involved*, board members spend a considerable amount of time, energy and resources in volunteers and interact with them in a warm and friendly fashion (Ryan and Deci 2017). On the other hand, when being *relatedness-rejective*, board members interact with volunteers in an unfriendly and cold way (Ryan and Deci 2017).

An abundant amount of SDT research has tested the effects of motivating interpersonal styles in a volunteering context, relating an autonomy-supportive style with volunteers' need satisfaction (Gagné 2003; Haivas et al. 2012; Oostlander et al. 2014), autonomous motivation (Haivas et al. 2012; Oostlander et al. 2014), engagement (Allen and Bartle 2014), and job satisfaction (Oostlander et al. 2014).

Understanding the Effects of Volunteer Board Members' (De)motivating Styles on Volunteers' Behaviors and Attitudes: A Fine-Grained and Comprehensive Approach

Our literature review revealed that substantial progress has been made to understand the effects of motivating interpersonal styles on important volunteer outcomes. Yet, a fine-grained and comprehensive approach of the effects of (de)motivating interpersonal styles in nonprofit and voluntary organizations, which is crucial to understand which concrete styles volunteer board members, who often lack professional background or experience, can rely on or should refrain from, is currently lacking. Specifically, we identified four gaps and understudied issues in the extant literature.

First, the majority of studies on motivating interpersonal styles in a volunteering context focused exclusively on the effects of an autonomy-supportive style, thereby neglecting the role of a structuring style and involvement. In the current study, we take one step forward by not only concentrating on an autonomy-supportive style, but also on a structuring style. We chose to focus on a structuring style

rather than involvement, because SDT acknowledges that involvement displays some overlap with an autonomy-supportive style (see Ryan and Deci 2017, p. 448), making the necessity to examine a structuring style in addition to an autonomy-supportive style more pressing and urgent.

Second, research in the volunteering context has largely ignored the role of demotivating interpersonal styles in predicting volunteer outcomes, even though previous studies have shown that the simultaneous assessment of motivating and demotivating interpersonal styles is critical to better understand their relationship with volunteers' behavior and attitudes. (e.g., Haerens et al. 2015; Gillet et al. 2012; Bartholomew et al. 2011). Specifically, these prior studies in the context of physical education (Haerens et al. 2015), paid work (Gillet et al. 2012), and sports (Bartholomew et al. 2011) revealed the existence of a dual-process model, with a path from a motivating interpersonal style to optimal outcomes via need satisfaction (i.e., the bright pathway), and a pathway from a demotivating interpersonal style to maladaptive outcomes via need frustration (i.e., the dark pathway). The existence of such a dual-pathway in nonprofit and voluntary organizations has not been examined yet.

Third, although previous research has pointed to the importance of group-task cohesion for volunteer teams (Doherty and Carron 2003), most prior studies on group-task cohesion were situated in sports teams (Pescosolido and Saavedra 2012), indicating that a motivating (coaching) style and experienced need satisfaction were important contributing factors to the perceived sports teams' group-task cohesiveness (e.g., Jowett and Chaundy 2004).
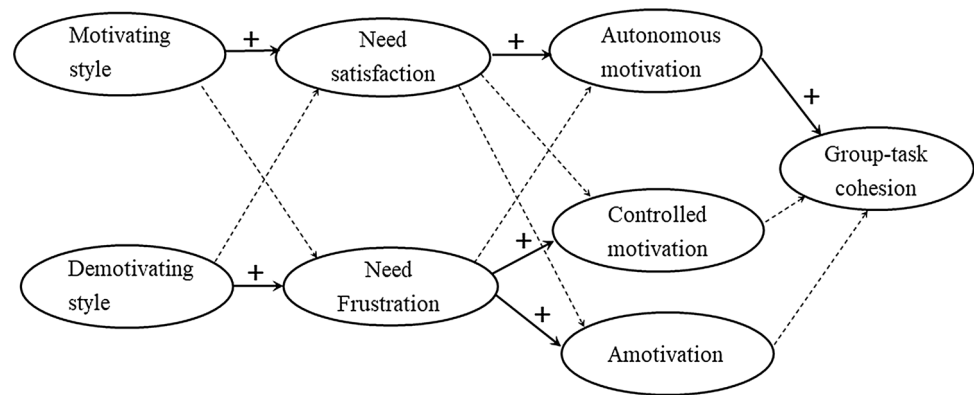
Fourth, previous studies in nonprofit and voluntary organizations used generic scales such as the Work-Climate Scale to measure motivating interpersonal styles (see Oostlander et al. 2014; Haivas et al. 2012; Gagné 2003; Allen and Bartle 2014), which include items that are formulated in such a generic way that it remains challenging to translate the findings into concrete practical recommendations. In this study, we filled this void by using a situation-specific questionnaire (also see Aelterman et al. 2018), which allowed for a more detailed insight into a board members' (de)motivating style in a broad variety of concrete management situations. In order to select relevant management situations, we relied on the Competing Values Framework (CVF; Quinn and Rohrbaugh 1981), a comprehensive, theoretical model that has been often used in the nonprofit sector (Herman and Renz 2008). This model proposes that the most effective board members successfully deal with a) the tension between a focus on the development of the people within the organization (i.e., internal focus) and a focus on the development of the organization itself (i.e., external focus), and

b) the tension between the implementation of stable processes and a flexible attitude toward opportunities (Quinn and Rohrbaugh 1981). As such, the CVF model is built around two competing axes, that is, a horizontal axis, which represents the internal focus versus external focus dimension, and a vertical axis, which relates to the stability versus flexibility dimension. The intersection of these two axes corresponds to four main management approaches: internal process model (internal, stable), human relations model (internal, flexible), open system model (external, flexible) and rational goal model (external, stable) (Quinn and Rohrbaugh 1981). For this study, we created minimum one situation related to each of these models, in relation to which board members' (de)motivating styles were measured (see Measures).

Present Study

In the present study, we aimed to tackle these gaps and understudied issues by (simultaneously) assessing the relationship between volunteers' perceptions of volunteer board members' motivating styles (i.e., an autonomy-supportive and a structuring style) and demotivating styles (i.e., a controlling and chaotic style), volunteers' need satisfaction and frustration, motivation and group-task cohesion. In this study, we focused specifically on nonprofit and voluntary sports clubs. Congruent with previous research suggesting the existence of a dual-process model (Bartholomew et al. 2011; Haerens et al. 2015; Gillet et al. 2012), it was expected that a perceived board members' motivating style would be primarily related to volunteers' autonomous motivation via volunteers' experiences of need satisfaction, with autonomous motivation in turn relating to group-task cohesion (i.e., the bright pathway), while perceptions of a board members' demotivating style would primarily relate to volunteers' controlled motivation and amotivation via volunteers' experienced need frustration (i.e., the dark pathway) (see Fig. 1). Furthermore, in line with previous research (Gillet et al. 2012; Haerens et al. 2015), we also considered asymmetrical relationships. However, we expected these cross-paths, if present, to be less pronounced than the symmetrical paths (see Fig. 1).

Finally, though not our primary focus, we examined the independent effects of volunteers' quality of motivation and group-task cohesion on volunteers' intention to continue as a volunteer.

Fig. 1 Hypothesized model

Method

Sample and Procedure

Data for our research were collected in Flemish nonprofit and voluntary sports clubs. Like in most Western European countries, sports clubs in Flanders (Belgium) are fully driven by volunteer work, having no paid staff or professional management, with board members managing the sports club on a voluntary basis. Key characteristics of volunteerism in Flanders reveal that approximately 336,000 volunteers are active in Flemish sports clubs, indicating that the sport sector is the sector in which most volunteers (27.6%) are involved (Thibaut and Scheerder 2018).

A convenience sample of 31 sports clubs responded to a call to participate in the current study, which was launched in the monthly newsletter of the Flemish Sports Federation, the umbrella federation of all Flemish sports federations. In all 31 sports clubs, at least two (volunteer) coaches and two volunteers were involved in the research. In total, 113 coaches (61% men; M_{age} = 37.80 SD = 15.09) and 118 volunteers (52% men; M_{age} = 45.57 SD = 9.93) participated in our study. Most coaches and volunteers had been active in the sports club for many years (M = 11.18 years SD = 9.58 and M = 7.42 years SD = 7.94, respectively).

Measures

Perceived Volunteer Board Members' (De)Motivating Style

In order to measure the perceived volunteer board members' (de)motivating style, we used a vignette-based questionnaire (for a similar format see the Situations-in-School Questionnaire; Aelterman et al. 2018). More precisely, volunteers were presented with seven specific management situations they may be confronted with. For the selection of relevant management situations, we relied on the Competing Values Framework (CVF), thereby covering the four models that are distinguished within this framework. Examples of situations were 'Volunteers have expectations regarding the sports club's management' (i.e., open system model), 'Volunteers have a proposal to improve the sports club's management' (i.e., rational goal model), 'A meeting with volunteers is organized to evaluate the sports club's activities' (i.e., internal process model) and 'Volunteers are not satisfied with the sports club's management' (i.e., human relations model). Each situation was followed by different possible responses, and volunteers were asked to indicate for each response to what extent the behavior described what the board would do in that specific situation by rating a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*does not describe my board at all*) to 7 (*does describe my board extremely well*). These responses, representing board members' autonomy-supportive, structuring, controlling and chaotic styles, were drawn from Self-Determination Theory (SDT). As an illustration, different responses to the situation 'A meeting with volunteers is organized to evaluate the sports club's activities' (internal process model) were 'The board creates opportunities for volunteers to provide input for the meeting' (i.e., an autonomy-supportive style), 'The board clarifies what the purpose of the meeting is, so that you know what to expect' (i.e., a structuring style), 'The board decides for itself which points will be discussed during the meeting' (i.e., a controlling style) and 'The board does not spend a lot of time on the preparation of the meeting. After all, a lot of energy is lost.' (i.e., a chaotic style). In total, the questionnaire consisted of 51 items, ranging between 5 and 10 items per situation. To create an internally valid scale, series of Multi-Dimensional Scaling analyses were conducted (see Aelterman et al. 2018). Items that didn't load on the theoretically corresponding style were deleted, thereby striving for a minimum of one item of each style tapping into a specific CVF model. Based on these analyses, 29 items were retained, with the number of items ranging from 5 items (a structuring style) to 8 items (an

autonomy-supportive style, a controlling style, a chaotic style). Internal consistencies of the four scales assessed by Cronbach's Alpha were all good to excellent, ranging from .78 (a controlling style) to .86 (an autonomy-supportive style).

Volunteers' Experiences of Need Satisfaction and Need Frustration

Volunteers' need-based experiences were measured with the validated Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Need Frustration Scale (BPNSNF, Chen et al. 2015), which has been used in previous studies (e.g., Haerens et al. 2015). In this study, we used the stem 'In my sports club', followed by 12 items tapping into need satisfaction ($\alpha = .89$) and 12 items into need frustration ($\alpha = .87$). Need satisfaction items included 'I feel sense of choice and freedom in the things I undertake' (autonomy satisfaction—4 items), 'I feel I can successfully complete difficult tasks' (competence satisfaction—4 items) and 'I feel that the people I care about also care about me' (relatedness satisfaction—4 items), while need frustration items were 'I feel forced to do many things I wouldn't choose to do' (autonomy frustration—4 items), 'I have serious doubts about whether I can do things well' (competence frustration—4 items) and 'I feel that people who are important to me are cold and distant toward me' (relatedness frustration—4 items). For each of the items, volunteers were asked to indicate to what extent these items described their feelings in the sports club by rating a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*does not describe me at all*) to 7 (*does describe me extremely well*).

Volunteers' Quality of Motivation

Autonomous and controlled motivation to volunteer were assessed with an adapted version of the Academic Self-Regulation Scale (Ryan and Connell 1989), which has been used in previous work (e.g., Vansteenkiste et al. 2005, 2009). Like in these studies, we created composite scores for autonomous and controlled motivation by averaging the subscales of intrinsic motivation and identified regulation, and introjected and external regulation, respectively. We used the stem 'I am a volunteer because', followed by 8 items referring to autonomous motivation (e.g., 'it is personally important to me'; $\alpha = .88$), and 8 items relating to controlled motivation (e.g., 'I would feel guilty if I wouldn't do so'; $\alpha = .76$). Amotivation was measured relying on the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al. 1992). We used the question 'Why are you volunteer' followed by 4 items of the AMS scale ($\alpha = .76$).

The items were slightly reworded to better reflect the context of a nonprofit and voluntary sports club. To illustrate, the item 'Honestly, I don't know; I really feel that I am wasting my time in school' was altered into 'Honestly, I don't know why I am a volunteer; I really feel that I am wasting my time at the sports club'. For all the items assessing volunteers' autonomous motivation, controlled motivation and amotivation, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent these items described their motives by rating a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*does not describe me at all*) to 7 (*does describe me extremely well*).

Volunteers' Perceived Group-Task Cohesion

Volunteers' perceived group-task cohesion was measured relying on the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ; Carron et al. 1985), adapted to the context of volunteer executive committees (Doherty and Carron 2003). We used the stem 'In my sports club' followed by 5 items of the GEQ scale relating to group-task cohesion ($\alpha = .91$). Depending on the respondent, the word 'committee' was substituted by 'coaches' or 'volunteers' and slightly reworded, if necessary. As an illustration, the item 'The committee is united in trying to reach goals' was adapted to 'Coaches are united in trying to reach goals' and 'Volunteers are united in trying to reach goals', respectively. For all the items assessing group-task cohesion, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent these items described their sports club by rating a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*does not describe my sports club at all*) to 7 (*does describe my sports club extremely well*).

Volunteers' Intention to Continue as Volunteer

A single item tapping into volunteers' intention to continue as volunteer was included in our questionnaire. It included the stem 'I want to continue volunteering for my sports club' followed by three possible answers: 'yes', 'maybe' or 'no'.

Plan of Analysis

Preliminary statistics provided an overview of the means and standard deviations of all variables, and correlations coefficients among these variables. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to analyze whether the variables differed between coaches and volunteers. Furthermore, a MANOVA was employed to determine whether significant differences in motivation and group-task cohesion were present between volunteers who plan-

ned to continue their volunteer work, those who doubted whether they would continue, and those who planned to stop volunteering.

As for our primary analysis, a series of models was tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with latent variables in Mplus. Prior to these SEM analyses, the latent variables were checked for multicollinearity using bivariate correlations (see Table 1). The correlation matrix indicated that an autonomy-supportive and a structuring style ($r = .74$), and a controlling and chaotic style ($r = .61$), were highly intercorrelated. As high intercorrelations may result in interpretation and estimation problems (Hair et al. 2014), we decided to create two new variables, labeled as a motivating style ($\alpha = .91$) and a demotivating style ($\alpha = .87$), by including items of an autonomy-supportive style and a structuring style, and a controlling and chaotic style, respectively.

The final measurement model consisted of 8 latent variables (i.e., motivating style, demotivating style, need satisfaction, need frustration, autonomous motivation, group-task cohesion, controlled motivation and amotivation) created through parceling techniques. Parcels were created by combining stronger loading items with weaker loadings items from the same scale. Only items with factor loadings higher than .40 were included. All variables were represented by four parcels, except for controlled motivation and group-task cohesion. Controlled motivation consisted, after removal of a weak loading item, of two 2-items parcels and one three-item parcel. Group-task cohesion was composed of the five original items. Internal consistencies of the parcels representing the same latent variable, assessed by Cronbach's alpha were good to excellent and ranged from .77 (controlled motivation) to .91 (need satisfaction).

Next, the theory-based models were tested. First, in the direct effects model, direct relationships, both symmetrical and asymmetrical, between a motivating style and demotivating style and the quality of motivation and group-task cohesion were investigated. Next, in the mediation model, need satisfaction and need frustration were included as potential mediators, thereby investigating indirect effects. Furthermore, we also investigated whether the quality of motivation was in turn related to group-task cohesion. In the final model, only statistically significant direct and indirect relationships were retained, resulting in the most parsimonious and interpretable model.

To evaluate the fit of the models being tested, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI); the Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standardized Root Means Square Residual (SRMR) were selected, with values between .90 and .95 for CFI, close to .06 for RMSEA and .09 for SRMR indicating an acceptable fit (e.g., Kline 2005).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Means, standard deviations and correlations among variables are presented in Table 1.

Bivariate correlations between age, sex and the study variables were low and mostly not significant. As for differences between coaches and volunteers, results of MANOVA revealed that the multivariate effect of type of volunteer was significant, Wilks' Lambda = .77, $F(8,222) = 8.79$, $p < 0.001$. Univariate tests showed that coaches were more autonomously motivated ($F(1,229) = 15.31$, $p < 0.001$), yet also experienced more need frustration than volunteers ($F(1,229) = 17.66$, $p < 0.001$), while volunteers were more controlled motivated ($F(1,229) = 7.81$, $p < 0.01$), yet also experienced more group-task cohesiveness ($F(1,229) = 4.96$, $p < 0.05$) than coaches. Based on these differences, we controlled for type of volunteer in our SEM analyses. Furthermore, a MANOVA was employed to determine whether significant differences in volunteers' motivation and group-task cohesion were present between volunteers' intention to stay volunteer. The multivariate effect was significant, Wilks' Lambda = .85, $F(10,446) = 4.48$, $p < .001$. Univariate tests revealed significant differences for group-task cohesion ($F(2,228) = 3.91$, $p < 0.05$) between volunteers who planned to continue their volunteer work ($M = 5.22$ (1.19)), volunteers who doubted whether they would continue ($M = 4.53$ (1.50)), and those who planned to stop volunteering ($M = 4.27$ (1.09)). However, Tukey's post hoc tests did not provide significant results. Furthermore, significant differences were found for amotivation ($F(2,228) = 8.50$, $p < 0.001$), with volunteers who planned to continue their volunteer work reporting significantly less amotivation ($M = 1.38$ (0.64)) compared to volunteers who doubted whether they would continue ($M = 2.37$ (1.51)).

Primary Analyses

Given the hierarchical structure of the data with 231 volunteers being nested in 31 clubs, multilevel SEM analyses were considered. However, a multilevel SEM model did not provide an adequate fit to the data. Therefore, we proceeded with single level SEM analyses in the primary analyses.

Estimation of the measurement model including 8 latent variables and 32 indicators provided an adequate fit to the data [$\chi^2(436) = 800.56$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .93; SRMR = .05].

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Autonomy-support	4.66	1.08												
2. Structure	4.84	1.22	.74**											
3. Control	2.78	.94	− .36**	− .18**										
4. Chaos	2.82	1.03	− .45**	− .49**	.61**									
5. Motivating styles	4.78	1.04	.95**	.91**	− .31**	− .51**								
6. Demotivating styles	2.67	.99	− .53**	− .47**	.86**	.90**	− .55**							
7. Need satisfaction	5.47	.84	.59**	.52**	− .28**	− .29**	.61**	− .37**						
8. Need frustration	2.08	.83	− .29**	− .25**	.51**	.49**	− .31**	.57**	− .51**					
9. Autonomous motivation	5.65	.96	.30**	.25**	− .14*	− .11	.30**	− .16*	.53**	− .21**				
10. Group − task cohesion	5.16	1.21	.52**	.52**	− .23**	− .40**	.57**	− .40**	.61**	− .42**	.20**			
11. Controlled motivation	1.89	.97	− .13	− .11	.38**	.30**	− .13*	.37**	− .26**	.53**	− .24**	− .13		
12. Amotivation	1.43	.71	− .20**	− .20**	.38**	.35**	− .21**	.40**	− .31**	.48**	− .37**	− .18**	.58**	

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

Direct Effects Model

The direct effects model (see Fig. 2) had an adequate fit [$\chi^2(257) = 495.45$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .93; SRMR = .05]. Results revealed significant symmetrical relationships between a motivating style and autonomous motivation ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$) and group-task cohesion ($\beta = .57$, $p < .001$), and between a demotivating style and controlled motivation ($\beta = .55$, $p < .001$) and amotivation ($\beta = .54$, $p < .001$). None of the asymmetrical direct relationships were significant.

Mediation Model

The mediation model provided an adequate fit [$\chi^2(465) = 939.47$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .07; CFI = .91; SRMR = .06]. Results revealed that a motivating style was positively related to need satisfaction ($\beta = .70$, $p < .001$), which in turn related positively to autonomous motivation ($\beta = .70$, $p < .001$) and group-task cohesion ($\beta = .56$, $p < .001$), whereas a demotivating style was positively related to need frustration ($\beta = .69$, $p < .001$), which in turn related positively to controlled motivation ($\beta = .72$, $p < .001$) and amotivation ($\beta = .57$, $p < .001$). Follow-up tests pointed to full mediation between a motivating style and autonomous motivation via need satisfaction ($\beta = .49$, $p < .001$), and between a demotivating style and controlled motivation and amotivation via need frustration ($\beta = .50$, $p < .001$ and $\beta = .39$, $p < .001$, respectively). The hypothesized pathway between a motivating style and group-task cohesion via the mediators need satisfaction and autonomous motivation was not significant ($\beta = - .08$, $p > .05$), although an indirect pathway between a motivating style and group-task cohesion via the mediator need satisfaction was found ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$). The asymmetrical pathways were statistically insignificant.

Final Model

In the final model (see Fig. 3), only the significant effects of the direct effects model and the mediation model were retained. This model had an adequate fit [$\chi^2(472) = 894.36$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .92; SRMR = .06]. In this model (see Fig. 3), only the direct relationship between a motivating style and group-task cohesion was significant ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$). All indirect effects remained significant, as in the previous mediation model.

Discussion

Against the backdrop of declining volunteering rates, this study contributed to nonprofit management literature by offering a fine-grained insight in how volunteer board

members can foster factors that are related to volunteers' motives to stay volunteer, i.e., volunteers' quality of motivation and perceived group-task cohesion. In this study, we focused specifically on the (de)motivating style of board members within concrete management situations (as identified by the CVF). Findings in our study suggested, consistent with our hypothesis, the existence of a dual-process model in a volunteering context.

A Bright Pathway Toward Volunteers' Autonomous Motivation and Perceived Group-Task Cohesion: The Role of Volunteers' Need Satisfaction and the Volunteer Board Members' Motivating Style

Specifically, in line with previous SDT research on the dual-process model in education (Haerens et al. 2015), paid work (Gillet et al. 2012) and sports teams (Bartholomew et al. 2011), we identified a bright pathway displaying unique relationships between the volunteer board members' perceived motivating style and beneficial volunteer outcomes, i.e., autonomous motivation and perceived group-task cohesion through volunteers' need satisfaction. This finding was consistent with studies in nonprofit organizations focusing on the bright side of a motivating style (e.g., Gagné 2003; Haivas et al. 2012; Oostlander et al. 2014), which showed that an autonomy-supportive interpersonal style was related to positive volunteer outcomes. Results further indicated that, although autonomous motivation was positively related to group-task cohesion in sports teams (Halbrook et al. 2012), it was volunteers' need satisfaction and not autonomous motivation that mediated the relationship between a board members' perceived motivating style and perceived group-task cohesion in volunteer teams. Overall, these findings suggested that when board members hold an autonomy-supportive and a

structuring style when dealing with volunteers' expectations (i.e., open system model), developing business ideas (i.e., rational goal model), enhancing internal relations in the organization (i.e., human relations model) and evaluating the organization's activities (i.e., internal process model), volunteers were more likely to experience volition (i.e., autonomy satisfaction), effectiveness (i.e., competence satisfaction) and love and care from other social groups (i.e., relatedness satisfaction). As a result, volunteers were more likely to be involved in their volunteering activities out of enjoyment or because it concurs with their personal goals and identities (i.e., autonomous motivation), and experience similarity around their tasks and objectives (i.e., group-task cohesion).

In addition, we also found an interesting direct association of a board members' perceived motivating style to perceived group-task cohesion in volunteer teams, which was consistent with prior studies showing that an autonomy-supportive coaching style is positively related to group-task cohesiveness in sports teams (e.g., Jowett and Chaundy 2004). In a set of ancillary analyses, the importance of these findings for volunteers' intention to keep on volunteering were confirmed as group-task cohesion appeared the highest among volunteers who intend to keep on volunteering.

The Dark Pathway Toward Volunteers' Controlled Motivation and Amotivation: The Role of Volunteers' Need Frustration and The Volunteer Board Members' Demotivating Style

This study further contributed to nonprofit management literature by identifying, in line with previous SDT research (e.g., Haerens et al. 2015; Gillet et al. 2012; Bartholomew et al. 2011), a dark pathway in a volunteering context. This dark pathway represented a connection

Fig. 2 Results direct effects model. For reasons of parsimony, only significant relationships are represented. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$
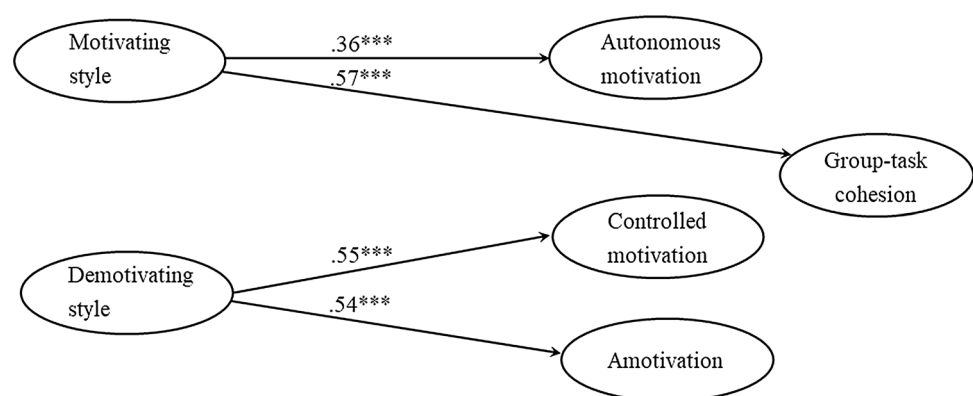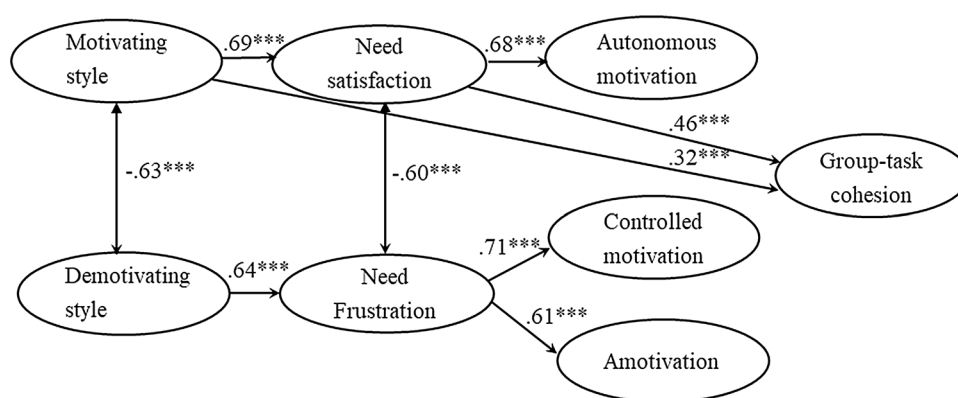
Fig. 3 Results final (mediation) model. For reasons of parsimony, only significant relationships are represented. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

between a volunteer board members' perceived demotivating style and maladaptive volunteer outcomes, i.e., controlled motivation and amotivation through volunteers' need frustration. Thus, when confronted with specific management situations as described by the CVF, volunteers were more likely to experience pressure (i.e., autonomy need frustration), inferiority and failure (i.e., competence need frustration) and loneliness and alienation (i.e., relatedness need frustration), when they felt that board members relied on a controlling and chaotic style. In turn, they were more likely to engage in volunteer work to meet externally and internally pressuring demands (i.e., controlled motivation) or see volunteer work as a waste of time (i.e., amotivation). In a set of ancillary analyses, the downside of volunteers' amotivation was confirmed as volunteers who doubted whether they would continue their volunteer work reported significantly higher amotivation than those who planned to continue their volunteer work.

The Identification of a Distinct Bright and Dark Pathway: On the Absence of Cross-Paths

Further support for the existence of the dual-process model in a volunteering context was provided by the absence of cross-paths in our mediation model, indicating that motivating styles and demotivating styles, and need satisfaction and need frustration, although relatively highly correlated (see also similar studies of Gillet et al. 2012; Bidee et al. 2016), were distinct constructs with unique outcomes. Interestingly, this finding was inconsistent with theorizing (Vansteenkiste and Ryan 2013) and studies in other domains (e.g., Haerens et al. 2015; Jang et al. 2016), which advocated for a dual-process model that features strong bright and dark pathways with some milder cross-over effects. Our finding suggests that the presence of cross-effects may be context-dependent. Indeed, it appears that in a volunteering context, which involves people who devote

freely substantial amounts of their time and energy to helping others, board members have to actively foster volunteers' psychological needs by engaging in motivating strategies in order to stimulate autonomous motivation and group-task cohesion. Similarly, volunteers will only experience controlled motivation or amotivation when board members actively thwart their needs by adopting a demotivating style.

How SDT's (De)motivating Styles Relate Back to Leadership Theories

Findings regarding the dual-process model were in line with conclusions from studies relying on leadership theories such as the transformational leadership theory (Bass 1997). In this theory, a distinction is made between transformational leadership and transactional leadership. Leaders adopt a transformational leadership style when they inspire and motivate their followers through creating and representing an inspiring vision of the future (Bass 1997; Avolio and Bass 1995). Such inspiring visions often include performing on a high level and emphasizing values such as fairness or motives such as self-actualization (Bass 1997; Rowold and Rohmann 2009). This style, which aligns with a need-supportive style, is also positively related with volunteers' satisfaction (Rowold and Rohmann 2009; Dwyer et al. 2013), effort and effectiveness (Rowold and Rohmann 2009). In contrast to transformational leadership, transactional leaders rely on a more passive-avoidant style, which relates back to a chaotic style and is, in line with SDT, negatively related to these volunteer outcomes (Rowold and Rohmann 2009). Furthermore, transactional leadership also includes the establishment of rules and taking corrective actions if necessary (i.e., active management by exception), which incorporates elements of a controlling style, but also of an autonomy-supportive and a structuring style such as the provision of a sense of

volition and the setting of clear expectations and guidelines, respectively. As such, its positive relationship with volunteers' effort and effectiveness (Rowold and Rohmann 2009) is to a certain extent in line with SDT.

Practical Implications

Clearly, our findings revealed that volunteers' perceptions of the (de)motivating style of volunteer board members is of great importance. Yet, whereas the perceived volunteer board members' motivating behavior was scored relatively in line with other studies (see Gillet et al. 2012; Jang et al. 2016; Haerens et al. 2015), their demotivating behavior was scored relatively higher ($M = 2.67$ on a 7-point scale) when compared to studies in the for-profit sector ($M = 2.52$ (7-point scale); Gillet et al. 2012) and education ($M = 2.50$ (7-point scale); Jang et al. 2016; $M = 1.80$ (5-point scale); Haerens et al. 2015). This difference might be due to the volunteering context, which probably puts less emphasis on essential (management) trainings than more professional environments in which most of previous studies were conducted. Still, based on our results, it appears important for nonprofit and voluntary organizations to set up initiatives that may help volunteer board members to increase their reliance on motivating styles, and to decrease their reliance on demotivating styles. Specifically, within the context of different management situations (as identified by the CVF), board members can try to provide choices, and create opportunities for input, while acknowledging negative affect (i.e., an autonomy-supportive style), and simultaneously endorsing a process-oriented and competence-enhancing attitude (i.e., a structuring style). We will explain this with three examples. A first example involves a situation where board members receive business ideas from volunteers (i.e., rational goal model). In such a situation, it is crucial that board members appreciate these business proposals, ask specific questions, and show interest by listening to the volunteers' view on things. This autonomy-supportive behavior can be accompanied by a structuring approach such as the clarification of the business plan that the board is developing. A second example involves a situation where there are tensions between volunteers (i.e., human relations model). In such a situation, it is important that board members listen to their story and show an understanding of the situation (i.e., an autonomy-supportive style), while at the same time communicating clear rules and expectations (i.e., a structuring style). A third example is a situation where volunteers have expectations regarding the organization's management (i.e., open system model). Then, it would be pivotal that board members take their time to clarify the efforts that the organization makes to meet the volunteers' expectations

and listen to their concerns (i.e., an autonomy-supportive style), while simultaneously answering specific questions regarding the current organization's management (i.e., a structuring style).

A demotivating style including guilt-induction and the use of forceful and commanding language (i.e., a controlling style), or a laissez-faire approach (i.e., a chaotic style), was identified as a potential pitfall damaging volunteers' motivation. As an illustration, when volunteers are not satisfied with the organization's management (i.e., human relations model), board members relying on a controlling style will tell volunteers that complaining leads nowhere, while board members relying on a chaotic style will adopt a passive attitude and hope that the volunteers remain satisfied.

It is acknowledged within the SDT-based literature that it might be quite challenging to find the balance between offering choices (i.e., an autonomy-supportive style) and becoming permissive such that volunteers feel left to their own devices (i.e., a chaotic style), or between setting clear expectations and guidelines (i.e., a structuring style) and coming across as pressuring and rigid (i.e., a controlling style). As such, it is pivotal that the provision of choice is combined with sufficient guidance, and that the communication of expectations goes hand in hand with autonomy-supportive behavior such as the provision of meaningful rationales.

Limitations and Future Directions

The present study has some limitations to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. First, the present study is correlational in nature. Therefore, results about causality should be interpreted with caution as reciprocal relationships between the variables examined in this study may exist. Future longitudinal studies on the bright and dark pathway would complement the current study.

Second, all variables in our study were perception-based measures that were derived from the same respondents, i.e., coaches and volunteers. In order to reduce possible common method bias (see Podsakoff et al. 2003), we pointed out to coaches and volunteers that there were no right or wrong answers and that they should answer questions as honestly as possible. They were also assured that the survey was anonymous and that the data were treated confidentially. Furthermore, the order of the questions in each questionnaire was randomized so the respondents were not able to relate the items to each other and thus give the answers that produced the desired correlation. For future research, it might be interesting to include reports of other important stakeholders such as board members

(themselves), members, parents and sponsors in order to identify potential discrepancies between these stakeholder groups.

Third, in future research, it might be interesting to extend the investigation of the bright and dark pathway by examining the mediating effect of the separate needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) or including other volunteer outcomes such as turnover intentions, satisfaction or engagement (using a Likert scale).

Fourth, our sample consisted of Flemish nonprofit and voluntary sport organizations, with volunteer board members holding the (only) leadership position (working without paid executives). Future research might conduct our study in a more professional environment with volunteer board members and paid executives sharing roles and responsibilities associated with the management of the organization. Specifically, it might be interesting to investigate how the influence of the board members' (de)motivating behavior trickles down to volunteers via executives' (de)motivating behavior (i.e., trickle-down effect). Furthermore, it might be opportune to replicate our study in other geographical locations.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the nonprofit management literature by identifying the existence of a bright and dark pathway, suggesting that the volunteers' perception of the volunteer board members' motivating style is positively related to autonomous motivation and perceived group-task cohesion via experienced need satisfaction, whereas the volunteers' perception of their board members' demotivating style is related to controlled motivation and amotivation via experienced need frustration. These results are relevant for a range of nonprofit and voluntary organizations with volunteer board members holding a leadership position. Throughout the manuscript concrete examples are given regarding the implications for the specific management situations volunteer board members are confronted with. Implementing these concrete strategies in nonprofit and voluntary organizations may have a positive impact on the retention of volunteers.

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