

# **Member Value in Membership Associations**

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## Preface

This dissertation was written on behalf of the Institute for Research on Management of Associations, Foundations and Cooperatives (VMI) at the University of Fribourg/CH. The Institute is the competence center for nonprofit management in Switzerland, Germany and Austria. It carries out interdisciplinary research in the fields of management of associations and other nonprofit organizations and analyzes the development of the third sector between market and state on national and international levels. The Institute has paid great attention to marketing management and conceptual frameworks that help nonprofit organizations to better manage their member base regarding the acquisition, retention, and engagement of members in voluntary roles. A successful member management is vital for nonprofit organizations because the interests of members and member-controlled resources are the anchor point of their organizational structures and their collective goals. Managing to create a healthy member base and stimulating member engagement and volunteer activity are the critical factors in sustaining associations' legitimacy and collective performance. A large and active member base legitimizes associations as a representative body (Lichtsteiner et al., 2015; Schwarz, 2005).

Prof. Dr. Markus Gmür and Peter Suter developed the member value concept to help nonprofit organizations to align their activities with the interests of their members and to better manage their member-controlled resources. They presume that (re)focusing on members' interests and needs increases the value which members obtain from their affiliation. The member value is likely to explain favorable member behavior such as commitment and engagement. Therefore, nonprofit organizations must understand their member value potential and its driving forces to efficiently and effectively allocate their limited resources to successfully manage their member base.

The value which members obtain from their membership is multifaceted and often intangible in nature. It ranges from the value which members obtain from the member-based ownership structure, over shared values and norms, to the value from collective activity performance. Its multidimensionality and intangibility make it challenging to measure the member value and to identify its individual drivers. To develop an instrument that allows measuring member value and testing the theoretical concept as a practicable member management instrument, is the order that the Institute placed on this dissertation.

On behalf of the Institute, operationalization possibilities of the member value concept and its relation to member motivation and behavior should be explored. The overall objective is to propose and test ways to measure member value and identify member value drivers that explain supportive attitudes and behavior. A detailed understanding of member value drivers and their effects can help nonprofit organizations to plan effective member acquisition, activation and bonding activities which can increase the organizational efficiency and effectivity.

In pursuit of this objective, four explorative projects based on data from five nonprofit organizations from different sectors located in Switzerland, Germany and Italy were conducted. The implementation of different projects occurred simultaneously. Investigated research questions followed a phased progression to first develop and validate the member value concept and then to test its use to derive practical recommendations:

The focus of the first and second project lies on the validation of the member value concept. These papers deal with the operationalization of the concept, a reasonable identification of different member value drivers and their power to explain member attitudes and behavior. They explore to what extent the member value explains organizational identification, recommendation scores and the engagement of members in voluntary roles. The conceptual advancement is especially relevant to advance research regarding member motivation. Specific results regarding motivational forces are relevant to nonprofit organizations because it has become increasingly difficult to induce volunteer activity (Harp et al., 2016; Putnam, 2001; Snyder & Martin, 2004; Stukas et al., 2005; Stukas et al., 2009; Zimmer & Priller, 2004).

The third and fourth project deal with the application of the member value concept as practicable member management instrument. They explain how business associations can develop effective structures and provide value that motivate their members to actively engage and remain in their association. This is especially relevant for the management of business associations which compete against profit organizations for political influence and members and at the same time face lower numbers of potential entrepreneurial members because of market consolidation (Balassiano & Chandler, 2009; Helmig et al., 2004; Rupp et al., 2014; Schulz-Walz, 2006; Zimmer, 2010; Zimmer & Priller, 2004).

All projects were conducted under the umbrella of the member value concept. While all studies share the same background, they can be read independently from one another. The reason for this is the intended separate publication in relevant journals. The intended publication also explains the “we”-form in the four studies and the choice of language. Projects one, two and three were written in English – content relevant for publication in international journals – under the co-authorship of Prof. Dr. Markus Gmür. The fourth project was written in German – content especially relevant for publication in a practice-focused journal in the German-speaking area - under the co-authorship of Prof. Dr. Hans Lichtsteiner. On this note, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Markus Gmür and Prof. Dr. Hans Lichtsteiner for this tremendous learning experience as well as their great support and goodwill.



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## Member value in membership associations

This dissertation is on member acquisition, activation and retention in membership associations. For the latter, like for any other organization, it is important to attract sufficient “clients” and bind them to the organization. However, for membership associations, creating a healthy member base and stimulating member engagement and volunteer activity are the critical factors in sustaining the associations’ legitimacies and collective performance. Successful member management is vital for membership associations because the interests of members and member-controlled resources are the lynch pin of their member-based organization structures and their common goals (Knoke, 1990; Lichtsteiner et al., 2015; Schwarz, 2005). Member participation and engagement are constitutional elements of member-based ownership structures and prerequisite to running associations effectively and efficiently (Balassiano & Chandler, 2009; Bennett, 2000; Harris, 1998; Helmig et al., 2004; Knoke, 1988, 1990; Wang & Ashcraft, 2014; Zimmer, 2010). Members determine the overall goal of associations, they are the representative body, financial contributors, volunteer members, clients and co-producers of services, as well as the legitimizing force, behind the collective activity (Knoke, 1990; Schwarz, 2005; Smith, 2010).

It has become increasingly relevant to membership associations to efficiently and effectively allocate their limited resources in the pursuit of creating a healthy member base: They face increased competition with for-profit organizations regarding members and political influence. Financial contributions from the state and public are falling and in an individualized society traditional values such as the sense of solidarity have less meaning (Balassiano & Chandler, 2009; Helmig et al., 2004; Putnam, 2001; Rupp et al., 2014; Schulz-Walz, 2006; Zimmer, 2010; Zimmer & Priller, 2004). This raises the question of how membership associations can develop efficient and effective structures to provide value that motivates their members to remain and actively engage in their association in today’s context.

Four projects were conducted to investigate this research question. The four projects are based on the member value concept. This concept suggests that the value which members obtain from motive fulfillment through their affiliation in organizations induces favorable attitudes and behavior. The four projects attempt to develop and validate the member

value concept and to test its practical use. In this pursuit, the member value is divided into different drivers and their respective relations to favorable attitudes and behavior are explored. A detailed understanding of what kind of value drivers are relevant to favorable member attitudes and behavior in today's context will help membership associations to more efficiently and effectively manage their member base. These insights can help them to plan effective member acquisition, activation and bonding activities which can increase the organizational efficiency and effectivity.

An overview of the four projects is given hereafter:

1. "The matching of motive importance and fulfillment: a member value perspective to explain important volunteer outcomes"

This study examines the validity of the matching principle that underlies the member value concept by means of data from the White Cross South Tyrol.

2. "Organizational identification as mediator between member value and member engagement"

This study investigates the predictive capability of member value drivers by means of data from a large German social welfare organization.

3. "Member value optimization and organization design in multisite business associations"

This study addresses the question of how multisite business associations should spread the provision of incentives between central and de-central chapters to optimize the member value. This study is based on data generated by a Swiss contractors' association.

4. "Member retention and recruitment in Swiss business associations" (*written in German*)

This study investigates which activities and services are connected to important relationship outcomes such as member satisfaction and willingness to promote membership to colleagues. It is based on data from three different Swiss business associations.

The theoretical and conceptual basis of the four projects are discussed in the theoretical foundation and literature review. The theoretical foundation provides additional information on membership association specific characteristics and an in-depth explanation of the member value concept. It includes:

- an introduction to membership associations which highlights the strategic necessity to sustain democratic membership-based ownership structures and to pursue strategies that align with the interest of members. This chapter is relevant to all four projects.
- a discussion on the difficulty of finding an optimal design of an organization in the context of membership associations and their membership-based ownership structures. It presents political, economic, and non-economic issues that influence the optimal organizational design of multisite membership associations. The chapter is relevant to all projects and specifically relevant to the third project.
- an introduction to business associations and their specific characteristics. The specifics of business associations are relevant to the third and the fourth project.
- an in-depth explanation of the member value concept, which constitutes the theoretical/conceptual foundation of all four projects.

The literature review is comprised of:

- a literature review on motivation drivers of direct service volunteers and volunteer members.
- a literature review on the matching principle, which underlies the member value concept. This part presents a discussion on how the presented projects based on the member value concept can contribute to literature.

To complete this dissertation a summary of study results together with final considerations with regard to academic contribution and practical implications are presented.

## Theoretical foundation

### Membership associations and membership-based ownership structure

Associations are organized groups of people that operate in the public sphere between state, economy, and private life. They are formed by individual or collective “people” who use the associational form of organization to further their interests independently from the state (Smith, 2010; Zimmer, 2010). They constitute an important part of the infrastructure of civil society: They foster the self-interest of their members, work on behalf of a third party (e.g., children, the elderly) or the advancement of a public purpose (e.g., human rights or clean water) (Salamon & Anheier, 1997; Schwarz, 2005; Zimmer, 2010). To do so membership associations rely on member participation and engagement which are constitutive criteria. Membership-based ownership structures involve having (Schwarz, 2005; Smith, 2010):

- ultimate control by members (directly or indirectly through the representation of their interest by an elected policy-making subgroup)
- volunteer members (not paid to engage in governance posts and functions)
- elected leaders in formal roles
- one or more subgroups (committees) which are appointed to perform specified group tasks
- members who pay their annual fees (subscriptions)
- regular face-to-face meetings attended by members

In essence, the interests of members and member-controlled resources are the lynch pin of membership associations: Members determine the overall goal of associations, they are the representative body, financial contributors, volunteer members, clients and co-producers of services as well as the legitimizing force of the collective activity (Knoke, 1990; Schwarz, 2005; Smith, 2010). For the well-functioning of this reciprocity, membership associations need an active member base. To retain this, membership associations must maintain their member-orientation. Neglecting the principles of basis democracy and member-orientation has negative impact on the motivation of members to



spend time and effort or even to remain in the association (Harris, 1998; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Markova et al., 2013). Members may show reluctant attitudes and behavior because they feel that their interests are poorly represented and their governance as well as steering functions are not guaranteed (Harris, 1998; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Schwarz, 2005). A deviation from democratic processes may endanger the unique value provision from membership-based ownership structures in regard to the felt connectedness (Jussila & Tuominen, 2010), member satisfaction (Birchall & Simmons, 2004; Verba et al., 2000), positive social effects (Tschirhart, 2006), life satisfaction as well as trust (Dekker & van den Broek, 2013; Howard & Gilbert, 2008; Smith, 2010).

To maintain democracy is not only vital to sustain the motivation of members to support their organization, but to prevent reduced performance of the membership association. The performance of the membership association may decline due to strategic and tactical inflexibilities resulting from declined basis democracy (Baucus et al., 1996; Selsky, 1998). In alternative organization designs, such as oligarchies or bureaucracies, members do not have the ultimate control. In oligarchies “a small group of administrators and experts guide the destinies of the organization” (Lichtsteiner et al., 2015, p. 90). In bureaucratic operations, the influence usually shifts from voluntary to paid management (Rego & Varanda, 2010; Schulz-Walz, 2006). Unrepresentative elites may withdraw for an information rich environment and thereby lower the effectiveness of action (Birchall & Simmons, 2004). Resources might be turned away from the general good of either the profession or the public toward the interest of small and unrepresentative member segments (Rego & Varanda, 2010; Schulz-Walz, 2006). Such non-inclusive board may increase the probability of homogeneity of opinions and reduce transaction-costs. Nevertheless, the overall advantages of the precepts of democracy often overrule. Therefore, it is important that membership associations sustain democratic membership-based ownership structures and pursue strategies that align with the interests of their members.

## **Multisite membership associations and the division of tasks and competences**

Multisite membership associations are member-serving organizations whose members are themselves nonprofit organizations (Melville, 2010; Selsky, 1998). They operate as a network of one central association with different de-central chapters having regional and local scope. They share a mission, a brand, and a program model but are legally independent of one another (Flanagan & Taliento, 2004). They have a membership-based ownership structure like any other membership association: Individual or collective “persons” are members of de-central chapters, which themselves are members of the central association. The interests of individual or collective “persons” are aggregated in de-central chapters, and through elected leaders represented in the central association (Bennett, 1999; Selsky, 1998).

They are “federated” in the sense of sharing authority and control between the units of their participants (de-central chapters) and a central association (Young & Faulk, 2010a, 2010b). Because chapters are legally independent of one another and of the central association, the degree of control is a permanent field of tension (Melville, 2010). In “participatory” federations the balance of power and control usually resides in de-central chapters. In “mandated” federations the balance of power and control usually resides in the central association (Selsky, 1998). Normally, de-central chapters strive for autonomy and the central association strives for a coordinated control of all activities within the organization (Flanagan & Taliento, 2004; Melville, 2010; Selsky, 1998; Young & Faulk, 2010b).

The degree of central control systematically influences the division of tasks and competencies (Young & Faulk, 2010b). Besides political issues there are a variety of economic and non-economic aspects that influence the division of tasks and competencies. Economic issues that influence the development of structural arrangements for an adequate division of task and competences are: economies of scale and scope, transaction costs, principal-agent considerations, and inter-organizational externalities (Young & Faulk, 2010b).

Generating economies of scale through federated resources may help associations to gain economic influence and to address their missions more efficiently. They can expand the

scale at which services and activities are carried out. Young & Faulk (2010b) state that savings from expanding scale are likely to occur when common or support functions are provided by the national/central association. Flanagan & Taliento (2004) relate savings from expanding scale with a central coordination of brand management, back-office services, fund-raising, and performance measurement. Taylor et al. (2002) state that scale economies in quality management as well as organizational learning are important advantages of central coordination and control.

Firm overall coordination and control are essential for the management of inter-organizational externalities and the brand of the associations. Inter-organizational externalities explain indirect economic impacts that one organization has on another, outside the realm of direct market transactions (Young & Faulk, 2010b). Taylor, Dees, and Emerson (2002) state that organizations with similar names or tasks affect each other by their actions. Stakeholders and the public may associate related “organizations with one another in their own minds”. Because associations rely on trust and their legitimacy, a uniform and strong brand is crucial. The development of a uniform and strong cooperative and corporate identity benefits from central coordination and control (Lichtsteiner et al., 2015; Young, 2001; Young & Faulk, 2010b). Roob & Bradach (2009) argue that only federations with lower dependency on replicating a particular culture or more standardized programs may employ looser, more de-centralized structures.

Principal-Agent considerations deal with problems associated with the delegation of tasks by decision makers (principals) to subordinates, managers or contractors (agents). The agent works on behalf of the principal in order to fulfill his/her interests. In extremely de-centralized arrangements, de-central chapters are autonomous and the central association is substantially confined to a support role. It is the agent of its members, because of their control and authority. In centralized federations, the parent association is the decision-making unit (principal). The central unit delegates tasks to its de-central chapters (agents). The delegation of tasks implies the loss of control which must be addressed by adequate incentives and supervision (Jensen & Meckling, 1979). In profit-organizations these problems are dealt with by monetary incentive systems and business metrics (operation costs and performance measures). In associations, exact quantitative measures and performance indicators are often not available.

Therefore, different means of supervision, control and alignment must be employed between principals and agents in associations (von Schnurbein, 2009; Young et al., 1996). The effectiveness of alternative reward systems and the ability to measure performance are among the factors that finally influence structural arrangements related to agency considerations (Young & Faulk, 2010b).

Transaction costs are those of exchange, gathering information, monitoring and evaluating performance. They may occur in any structural arrangement and increase with the expansion of an organization. A federation may grow until it becomes too costly to coordinate and control all activities through a central hierarchy. Depending on the costs of carrying out transactions under alternative arrangements, different decisions on structural development are made (Young & Faulk, 2010b).

In addition to the herewith presented economic issues, non-economic aspects also influence structural arrangements in membership associations. The provision of value related to unique aspects of membership structures is traditionally allocated to local and regional chapters (Baucus et al., 1996; Byrne et al., 2012; Lichtsteiner et al., 2015; Oster, 1992, 1996). The maintenance of unique aspects of membership structures are important because they foster trust and satisfaction and may help membership associations to secure their strategic positioning on the membership market (Bennett, 2000; Gruen et al., 2000; Markova et al., 2013; Noel & Lockett, 2014). However, de-central structures infer more costs than a centralized organization design.

Therefore, membership associations face the challenge to balance between the efficiency of centralized organization designs and the member value optimization in de-centralized structures. To better understand the complex influence and relevance of different factors that affect the optimal division of tasks and competences in multisite membership associations, the question of an optimal organization design is addressed in the third project. The optimal centralization of incentive provision is assessed from a member perspective. It will therefore maximize the value members obtain from their membership. Corresponding insights can help practitioners to strike the right balance between centralized efficiency and de-centralized member engagement.

## Business associations

As a subgroup of membership associations, business associations are characterized as formally organized groups of people with membership-based ownership structure and voluntary action (Harris, 1998; Schulz-Walz, 2006; von Schnurbein, 2009). They represent the interests of their members who are businesses or entrepreneurs in a particular sector, be it in relation to favorable economic conditions or sector-specific issues (Bennett, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010). The “Collective activity chiefly to achieve representational influence” is the principal goal of almost all business associations, and is a key part of their constitutional mission and democratic membership structure (Bennett, 2000, p. 38). For that reason business associations rely profoundly on high member density, as well as active member participation and engagement: Members are what mobilize the “collectivity” (Knoke, 1990) in ways that they maximize the legitimacy “ of business associations to speak on behalf of the whole sector” (Bennett, 2000, p. 18).

Types of member bodies in business associations are: associations of companies (trade associations), individuals (professional associations), owner-managers, mixed member types, and federations. The latter category is the most distinct one since federations, or “peak associations”, are associations of associations (Bennett, 1999; Selsky, 1998; Young & Faulk, 2010a).

To promote common interests of their members, business associations undertake the following tasks (Bennett, 1999, 2000; Bennett & Ramsden, 2007; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Knoke, 1988; Markova et al., 2013; Noel & Lockett, 2014; von Schnurbein, 2008):

- support of daily operations, such as the provision of template files and free consultation services
- education and training
- construction of cultural identity for the professional group
- promotion and lobbying of professional status and image
- establishment of a code of ethics, shared values, and norms
- collective bargaining and lobbying to improve trading, competition, as well as labor market conditions

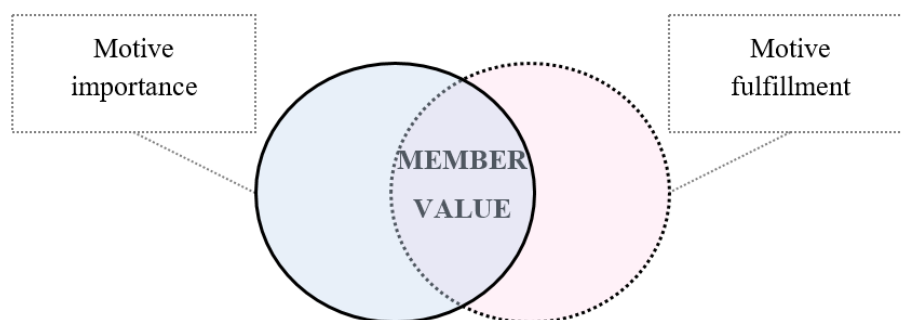
- provision of occupational services, such as helping with job searches, or business-professional networking
- provision of information in the form of publications, data services, and research
- development of social structure and job support network
- organization of social or recreational activities and other social functions to bring together those who are like-minded and similarly employed
- friendship opportunities

## The member value concept

Most concepts that explain the motivation of individuals to act in favor of an association are based on the matching principle (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Widmer, 1985). The matching principle suggests that individual's attitudes and behavior are best explained by their psychological motivation and their evaluation on how well their relevant motives are fulfilled through the affiliation with an association (Blau, 1964; Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Clary et al., 1996; Stukas et al., 2009; Suter, 2012). It assumes that individuals enter social relations because they expect to fulfill some needs through intrinsic or extrinsic rewards that underlie the association. Thus, the desire to attain valued ends through the fulfillment of relevant needs motivates individuals to voluntary social action: "Humans must be regarded as proactive agents seeking to shape their environments in ways that enable them to attain valued ends, whether physical well-being or spiritual bliss" (Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982, p. 212). Finally, the fulfillment of relevant needs and the attainment of valued ends results in satisfaction and reinforces the corresponding attitudes and behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Maslow, 1943).

To conceptualize and analyze member attitudes and behavior, Suter (2012) developed the member value concept. They define the value members obtain from the sensation of satisfaction and subjective goal attainment from their organizational involvement as member value. Accordingly, the concept provides an instrument to assess the importance individuals attribute to different needs and the degree to which they feel that their important needs are fulfilled through their organizational involvement. The overlap between motive importance and motive fulfillment, e.g. the motive-specific match, determines the member value individuals obtain from their affiliation (Figure 1). The matching principle determines the member value as the lower of the two scores [ $\min(\text{Importance}, \text{Fulfillment})$ ]. This is because members who are not motivated by a specific need will not obtain value, regardless of the ability of the organization to fulfill the respective need. And, members for whom a specific motive is important may not obtain value, unless organizational features and services fulfill the respective need.

*Figure 1: Member value as an overlap match between motive importance and motive fulfillment*



*Source: Suter (2012).*

The foundation of the member value concept is the exploration of basic human needs together with latent preferences. The latent preferences of members subsume unconscious and intangible aspects of individual decision making processes. They reflect changes in the expectations of members over time and differences in their expectations according to the roles they undertake in the organization (Suter, 2012). With the holistic concept of basic human needs as foundation, the member value concept mostly addresses unconscious aspects of individual decision-making processes. This is important, because not all behavior is conscious and rational. Concepts that focus on rational choice to explain member behavior are criticized to make simplified assumptions of human behavior. These are presumed to be incomplete to explain why individuals contribute time and effort to associations (Franz, 2004; Knoke, 1988; Olson, 1965; Rose-Ackerman, 1996; Widmer, 1985). The member value construct by Suter (2012) mainly assesses unconscious aspects of the decision making processes of members. In order to embrace conscious aspects of decision making, the preference for economic goals is added to the concept of needs. A combination of conscious and unconscious aspects of decision making processes may compensate conceptual deficiencies and adequately assess motivation that underlies member behavior (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982).

The concept of needs by Suter (2012) is based on the combination of three widely used motivation theories: Maslow (1943), McClelland (2010) and Max-Neef (1991). These understand the concept of needs as a system in which all needs are interrelated and



interactive. Needs are fulfilled by satisfiers. Food and shelter, for instance, are satisfiers of the need for subsistence. Some satisfiers may only answer an underlying need in tandem, while others may satisfy more than one underlying need (Max-Neef, 1991). The relative importance of needs varies among individuals as well as over time, and so does the correspondence between satisfiers and needs (Maslow, 1954; Max-Neef, 1991; Suter, 2012). In combination with different concepts of needs, Suter (2012) present twelve universal human needs that are relevant in the context of membership associations and cooperatives. These are listed and explained in Table 1. To complete the concept of needs with the conscious aspect of decision making processes, they add the preference for economic goals (Suter, 2012).

*Table 1: The concept of needs*

<b>Need</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Achievement</b>	- recognition - self-actualization - individual development
<b>Affection</b>	- respect - friendships - sharing
<b>Creation</b>	- skills - design and construction - change and innovation
<b>Freedom</b>	- autonomy - flexibility and mobility - choice
<b>Identity</b>	- sense of belonging - reference groups - norms and values
<b>Leisure</b>	- fun - enjoyment - free time
<b>Participation</b>	- interaction - involvement
<b>Power</b>	- influence - rights - leadership role
<b>Safety</b>	- care - solidarity - trust
<b>Subsistence</b>	- physical and mental health
<b>Understanding</b>	- curiosity - investigation - study
<b>Aesthetics</b>	- structure - order - processes

*Source: Following Suter (2012).*

The concept of needs together with the economic preference reflects four analytically distinct motivational processes that underlie the motivation of members to support their organization. The four most established motives that are relevant to the decisions of individuals to enter an association and to participate actively are (Clark & Wilson, 1961; Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Puffer & Meindl, 1992; Searle, 1989; Widmer, 1985):

- Rational choice, which is subject to cost-benefit calculi that maximize the expected utility of members.
- Normative conformity, which reflects the motivation of members to adhere to principled behavior for the attainment of collective goals.
- Affective bonding, which reflects the desire of members for emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community.
- Self-actualization, which reflects the need of members for personal development, achievement, competence and autonomy within the sector-specific and associational realm.

Based on this segmentation of motivation, four member value drivers can be distinguished: Economic, normative, relational, and/or self-actualization value. It is important to divide member value based on its individual drivers because different motives and forms of motive fulfillment result in different behavioral outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gruen et al., 2000; Puffer & Meindl, 1992). The linkages between economic, normative, relational, and self-actualization motives and the resulting member value are displayed in Table 2 and hereinafter explained.

Members who are motivated by economic value seek economic prosperity through their membership in exchange for the payment of their member fee. They obtain value from individually consumed services, consulting services and discount systems (Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Suter, 2012).

Members that are motivated by normative value attribute importance to the attainment of collective goals. Members consume normative value from the attainment of collective goals and/or co-produce normative value from their adherence to standards of conduct and principled behaviors. The more members adhere to standards of conduct, the higher

the collective performance and resulting normative value (Knoke & Adams, 1987; Olson, 1965).

Members that are motivated by relational and self-actualization value seek emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community as well as personal development. The value they obtain is linked to their involvement in membership structures. Members must become an integral part of the association as a whole for the attainment of relational and self-actualization value. In the case of relational value, members attribute importance to and obtain value from their participation in the associational life: Joint social and recreational activities, information exchange among members, networking activities, as well as the sense of community and solidarity. The more members actively participate, the greater the co-production and reception of relational value (Bennett, 1999; Knoke, 1981; Suter, 2012; Zimmer, 2010). Self-actualization value relate to constitutional elements of membership structures such as membership engagement and member-based ownership. Membership-based ownership structure creates a context of trust in which individuals can learn, exert power, and experience personal achievement (Bennett, 2000; Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Widmer, 1985). Members obtain intrinsic value from working towards something they believe in, or from developing their skills through engaging in committees and other voluntary functions (Inglis, 1994; Searle, 1989; Seyd & Whiteley, 1992; Widmer, 1985). Members obtain value from the felt sense of personal development, achievement, competence and autonomy through their active participation and engagement within the community (Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Walston & Khaliq, 2012; Widmer, 1985).

Table 2: Motivation and member value drivers

Psychological motivation	Sample items	Member value drivers
<p><b>Rational choice</b></p> <p>Cost-benefit calculi that maximize individuals expected utility.</p>	<p>The membership improves my economic state.</p> <p>The association supports the acquisition of critical resources such as financial contributions, subsidies, volunteers, and professionals.</p>	<p><b>Economic value</b></p> <p>Value from positively perceived ratio between costs and individually consumed value by the member.</p> <p><i>Members consume.</i></p>
<p><b>Normative conformity</b></p> <p>Motivation to adhere to principled behavior for the attainment of collective goals.</p>	<p>The association contributes to the development of normative standards of professional conduct in the sector-specific realm.</p> <p>The association diffuses sector-specific initiatives and innovations.</p> <p>The association is strong in collective bargaining and lobbying activities.</p>	<p><b>Normative value</b></p> <p>Value from normative conformity and collective activity performance.</p> <p><i>Members consume and/or co-produce.</i></p>
<p><b>Affective bonding</b></p> <p>Desire for emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community.</p>	<p>The association helps me to exchange ideas and build productive relationships with other members</p> <p>The membership helps with the creation and strengthening of my network.</p>	<p><b>Relational value</b></p> <p>Value from affective bonding and productive relationships among members.</p> <p><i>Associations and members co-produce.</i></p>
<p><b>Self-actualization</b></p> <p>Need for personal-development, achievement, competence and autonomy within the sector-specific and associational realm.</p>	<p>The membership enhances my self-determination and autonomy.</p> <p>I can take on responsibilities and have opportunities for personal-development.</p>	<p><b>Self-actualization value</b></p> <p>Self-actualization and self-enhancement within the sector-specific and associational realm through active participation and engagement within the community.</p> <p><i>Members produce.</i></p>

Source: Following (Bennett, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Inglis, 1994; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Lichtsteiner et al., 2015; Noel & Luckett, 2014; Searle, 1989; Widmer, 1985).

## Literature review

### Literature review on volunteer and member motivation

To provide an extensive literature review on the motivation of volunteers and members, a systematic literature search was conducted. Attitudinal studies that investigate why individuals engage in governance posts and functions and direct service activities were collected and listed in an Excel sheet. The sheet comprises publication details, abstracts, key findings, remarks and rating indices. Each study was rated as relevant to explain either volunteer or member motivation. Volunteer and member motivation are explored as two distinct categories as defined by Smith (1994) and Inglis & Cleave (2006):

- Direct service volunteers accomplish delivery of activities, programs, and services
- Volunteer members engage in governance posts and functions

The two categories are qualitatively similar because both involve contributions of time without coercion or remuneration (Cnaan et al., 1996; Smith, 2010). The key difference is that direct service volunteers produce public benefits and volunteer members primarily produce member benefits. Direct service volunteers accomplish operational tasks and volunteer members accomplish strategic tasks. They assume ownership of the organization and have legal and fiduciary responsibilities for the governance of the organization (Inglis & Cleave, 2006). In addition to the categorization into volunteer and member motivation, studies were rated in relation to their overall relevance to the investigation of the research question (type of investigated research question and organization, methods/concepts, publication/journal, year of publication, etc.) as well as their conceptual similarity to the member value concept.

Attitudinal studies that explain volunteer and member motivation in nonprofit organizations that scored a medium to high overall relevance, are hereinafter summarized. They are presented in sequence of their publishing year. First, studies regarding the motivation of direct service volunteers and, second, studies regarding the motivation of volunteer members are summarized. A separate chapter contains more detailed information on studies that scored high on the conceptual similarity index. These studies share theoretical assumptions that underlie the member value concept. On this basis, the academic contribution of member value research to previous literature will be discussed.

## Motivation of direct service volunteers

Clary et al. (1992) used the functional approach to investigate why individuals volunteer and sustain their efforts over time. The authors identified six different motives that they used to constitute the “volunteer functions inventory” (VFI). Clary et al. (1996), Clary et al. (1998), Clary & Snyder (1999) conducted different studies to validate and advance the inventory. Their program of research confirmed the validity and reliability of the VFI. The six motives of the VFI are: values, understanding, positive self-enhancement, career, social, protective. Meanwhile, the VFI has been used by different authors and established as a frequently used instrument for measuring the motives of volunteers. Clary et al. (1996) found significant differences between volunteers and non-volunteers in four of the six motives. Volunteers reported greater levels of the motives “values”, “enhancement”, “social”, and “understanding” than non-volunteers.

Wymer (1997) segmented volunteer subgroups using personal values, self-esteem, empathy, and facilitation. He found that direct service volunteers did not show a special interest in interpersonal relationships, but in prosperity and patriotism. Compared to others, they reported high empathy and accomplishment scores. The author describes this segment as seeking to help others and to enhance self-esteem.

Chinman & Wandersman (1999) proved that gains and costs can be measured, are related to participation, and can be managed by voluntary organization leaders. They found a positive relationship between participation and the amount of perceived gains in several types of organizations. Normative and social gains were the most important ones experienced by volunteers.

Callow (2004) identified four motives that were relevant to volunteers: the feel-good factor, the need for socialization, the search for structure, and the search for purpose.

Mayer & McNary (2007) conclude that volunteers donate their time and services to contribute to a cause they believe is worthwhile and in prospect of a sense of satisfaction and friendship by giving back to the community.

Yanay & Yanay (2008) argue that dropping out is not a product of waning motivation, but rather the outcome of discrepancies between “ought” and “actual” experiences.

Stukas et al. (2009) found a positive relationship between important volunteer outcomes and the number of relevant and fulfilled motives. Their data confirmed the positive link between the total match of motive importance and fulfillment, defined as the total match index (TMI), and all of their important volunteer outcomes. Güntert et al. (2015), too, found evidence that the TMI accounted for additional variance in satisfaction and the intent to volunteer again.

Oostlander et al. (2014) conclude that autonomy-supportive leadership is an important factor of the organizational context, increasing the autonomous motivation and satisfaction of the volunteers. They also conclude that the fulfillment of the need “relatedness” is positively allied to volunteer satisfaction and mediates the relationship between autonomy-supportive leadership and volunteer satisfaction.

Harp et al. (2016) found that volunteers who encountered greater organizational constraints and role ambiguity were less engaged. Volunteers with higher community service self-efficacy reported greater engagement than those with lower community service self-efficacy, when faced with organizational constraints. The authors conclude that organizations should assess and support the community service self-efficacy of volunteers to encourage their engagement.

Tönurist & Surva (2016) conclude in their article on the co-production of citizens that intrinsic motivation was relevant to highly involved volunteers and extrinsic motivation linked to lower level of engagement.

The research results presented here show that direct service volunteers have multiple relevant motives. Normative/purposive and social motives are the most relevant to explain the high level of volunteer activity across several studies. It seems more relevant to volunteers to contribute and help others than to improve their personal self-esteem. Nevertheless, self-esteem enhancement and personal development can be motivating too. Monetary motives did not receive attention in the presented research. The presented literature points at the influence of the organizational context such as the leadership style to explain volunteer activity. Studies conclude that organizations should make it as easy as possible for individuals to contribute. They can do so by empowering volunteers with clear roles (no ambiguity), by removing organizational constraints and by having an autonomy-supportive leadership. For the investigation of volunteer activity different



situational and demographic variables were controlled. Different researchers used different models and control variables to explain volunteer motivation. Therefore, the relevance which specific variables to include in research models can hardly be derived from previous literature. Research on direct service volunteer motivation would benefit from the establishment of comparable study designs and models. This would allow conducting comparable research and thereupon generalize important findings.

### Motivation of volunteer members

Knoke & Wright-Isak (1982) developed a "predisposition/opportunity" model which suggests that individuals are motivated to engage in response to incentives that help them to attain their valued ends. They distinguish material, normative, and social incentives. In a later study, Knoke (1988) found that members with higher interest in normative and social incentives are more likely to contribute time, money, and psychological commitment to their organization. Material incentives were unrelated to involvement.

Widmer (1985) analyzed the engagement of board members in response to material, normative, social, and developmental incentives. Widmer (1985) found that board members are motivated to volunteer in response to multiple incentives. However, social, developmental, and ideological incentives are the most relevant.

Friedmann et al. (1988) used discriminant function analysis to identify differences between non-engaged members and members who engage in some governance function. They report that the greatest benefit for engaged members is from contributing and helping others rather than in self-interest and personal gain.

Searle (1989) investigated the needs of board members to better understand effective working relations between the board and the recreation staff. The factor analysis supported the four factors of growth, responsibility, contribution, and recognition (Searle, 1989).

Taylor, Chait, and Holland (1991) investigated why individuals are motivated to serve on college boards. In their study, trustees that strongly identified with the values and goals of the institutions built more effective boards. All respondents cited ideological rewards

such as “loyalty to the college” and “respect for the college” as strong motives for joining the board.

Based on the work by Searle (1989), Inglis (1994) examined the perceptions of board members of the importance and fulfillment of motives associated with their board work. Inglis (1994) found that growth (need for learning, developing, and successfully completing tasks) and social relations (need for personal and professional social interaction of meeting and working with others) are the most important motives for women engaging in the board. Contribution (need to be involved and to make a difference) and recognition (need for personal gratification and attention) are the most important motives for men engaging in the board.

Wymer (1997) segmented volunteer subgroups using personal values, self-esteem, empathy, and facilitation. Board members reported a greater egocentric orientation than other volunteers: Empathy was a significant negative predictor, while facilitation together with social recognition were significant positive predictors for this group. The author also stated that board selection was strongly related to social ties.

Gruen et al. (2000) examined the connection between the relationship-building efforts, commitment, and favorable member behaviors such as member co-production. They found a positive effect from affective and normative commitment on co-production. Affective commitment fully mediated the relationship between recognition and co-production. Member interdependence positively affected co-production behaviors, too. The control variable “chapter size” had a significant negative effect on co-production.

Preston & Brown (2004) examined the relationships between board member commitment and individual performance. The strongest findings were between affective commitment and performance in board roles. Committed board members reported more involvement and were perceived by the executive to be more engaged and valuable.

Inglis & Cleave (2006) detected six relevant motives for board engagement: enhancement of self-worth, learning through community, helping the community, developing individual relationships, unique contributions to the board, and self-healing. As in other studies, the decision to serve on the board was explained by a variety of motives. The primary source of volunteer motivation comes from normative reasons.

Holmes & Slater (2011) examined patterns of participation based on a mixed-methods study of members of voluntary associations. Motivation factors that were key determinant of member participation and engagement are: building relationships, specific interest, supporting and protecting a specific goal. They also identified barriers to participation, including distance to the heritage site, aging, work and family commitments, and participation in other membership or voluntary associations.

Brown et al. (2012) explored antecedents of the self-reported confidence and participation of board members. They found that mission attachment is the most robust predictor of confidence and participation in board functions. The experience as a nonprofit board member and training possibilities were other strong predictors of both outcome variables. The sense of community did not affect confidence and participation.

Taysir et al. (2013) found that governance volunteers first look for opportunities to create value for a group or for a whole society, and, secondly, expect to receive some social, psychological and material gain.

Hager (2014) investigated public incentives such as lobbying on behalf of collective interests and private incentives such as member networking opportunity offered by professional associations in promoting monetary gifts, member co-production of organizational outcomes, and commitment to the association. He concludes that private incentives are not universal motivators, while public incentives motivate engagement.

Schloderer et al. (2014) found that the reputation of a nonprofit-organization affects donating and volunteering behaviors. The results show that successful reputation management is specifically important for affluent older highly educated male respondents. Communicational measures aimed at strengthening an organization's social responsibility are particularly promising regarding key outcomes such as willingness to donate and work as a voluntary member in specific subgroups.

The research results presented here show that members are motivated to volunteer in governance posts and functions in response to multiple incentives, mainly driven by ideological motives and personal commitment to the organization. Although explaining factors of the presented research base on different concepts and names, results point out some similarities. Across several organizations and sectors, the most important motives to engage in governance posts and functions are helping others and the identification with

organizational values and goals. Some research underpins the relationship between normative motives and personal commitment. Commitment is used as an explaining, mediating or dependent variable. Other relevant motives across different studies are contribution, recognition, personal development, responsibility and social gains. Overall, identification with the cause and contribution seem more relevant to engaged members than social gains or other self-interests. Monetary incentives were not of interest to engaged members in these studies. The use of different concepts and explaining variables show that research in this field could benefit from the establishment of a concept that can be used in different contexts. This would allow to conduct comparable research and thereupon generalize important findings. An open question remains the relationship between organization design, member motivation and behavior.

### **Contribution of member value research to previous literature**

The matching principle constitutes the theoretical foundation of different concepts that explain member and volunteer motivation (Blau, 1964; Clary & Snyder, 1999; Knobe & Adams, 1987; Knobe & Wright-Isak, 1982; Suter & Gmür, 2012). The matching principle assumes that the congruence between motive importance and motive fulfillment explains behavioral outcomes and individuals' attitudes such as volunteering and the engagement in governance posts and functions (Blau, 1964; Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Clary et al., 1996; Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Knobe & Wright-Isak, 1982; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Preston & Brown, 2004; Searle, 1989; Stukas et al., 2009; Tschirhart & Gazley, 2014; Tschirhart et al., 2001). Despite its academic acknowledgement, only some studies investigate and test the matching principle, thus how the fulfillment of relevant motives explains behavioral outcomes:

- In a large research program, Clary, Snyder, Stukas and colleagues developed and tested the validation of the functional approach. The functional approach proposes that individuals engage in volunteer work to satisfy important social and psychological goals. The key proposition of the functional approach is that matching motives with features of the volunteer job is a crucial factor in sustaining volunteer motivation (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1992; Clary et al., 1996). In regard to the matching principle, Clary et al. (1994) report that individuals show

stronger motivation to start volunteering if recruitment messages are tailored to meet their relevant motives. Clary et al. (1998), as well as Omoto & Snyder (1995) found that volunteers' satisfaction and intent to stay with the organization increase if their tasks offered opportunities to fulfill their most important personal motives. In another study, Stukas et al. (1999) provided evidence for the key assumption of the functional approach. In their study, volunteers' actual intentions to continue serving as volunteers are linked to the matching between experiences and relevant motives. The authors conclude that the match – high motive scores and high motive fulfillment scores intersecting – best predicts volunteer outcomes (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Stukas et al., 2005). Thereupon, Stukas et al. (2009) developed an index for calculating a volunteer's total number of matches. The TMI represents the multiplicative product of the importance of volunteers' motives as well as their subjective experience of motive fulfillment. In their study, the TMI predicted volunteer outcomes better than the relevance of motives or motive fulfillments alone. Güntert et al. (2015) used the TMI introduced by Stukas et al. (2009). Their results validate the idea behind the TMI. The TMI accounted for additional variance in volunteers' satisfaction and their intent to volunteer again, above and beyond the variance explained by motive relevance and fulfillment alone.

There are only few studies regarding operationalization possibilities and validation tests of the matching principle, apart from the large research program by Clary, Snyder, Stukas and colleagues (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1992; Clary et al., 1996; Stukas et al., 2009) and the subsequent study by Güntert et al. (2015).

- Tschirhart et al. (2001) investigated the relationship of initial goals to subsequent service outcomes, satisfaction, and intention to volunteer. In their study, the overall match of goal importance to goal fulfillment predicted both satisfaction and likelihood of future volunteering. Mayer & McNary (2007) investigated the relationship between important volunteer outcomes and organizational-based self-esteem. They report that individuals with high organizational-based self-esteem did volunteer for more days per year and had volunteered for a longer length of time than those with low organizational-based self-esteem.

The presented studies test the matching principle and apply it in the context of direct service volunteering. Even fewer in number are studies that applied the matching principle to explain member engagement in governance posts and functions (Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Puffer & Meindl, 1992; Taysir et al., 2013). Tschirhart & Gazley (2014) report that little academic attention has been paid to the special characteristics and dynamics of membership associations and the engagement in governance roles. Different authors point out the necessity to fill in this research gap (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Puffer & Meindl, 1992; Stukas et al., 2009; Taysir et al., 2013; Tschirhart & Gazley, 2014). Clary et al. (1998), Clary & Snyder (1999), Stukas et al. (2009), and Güntert et al. (2015) call for the development of valid instruments to assess both motive importance and fulfillment and to provide further evidence of the matching principle. Inglis & Cleave (2006) indicate that literature is still in need of research that analyzes how the fulfillment of relevant motives can explain why individuals engage in governance posts and functions. They highlight the significant role that boards of directors play in strengthening communities and the lack of research with individuals who volunteer at the governance level.

The empirical work presented in this dissertation may help to fill in some of these research gaps. Research based on the member value concept will contribute to previous research by investigating the relevance of different motives in the context of membership associations, and, to what extent the fulfillment of members' relevant motives explains behavioral outcomes. Especially, investigations on member engagement on the governance level will be a relevant contribution to previous research. The attempt to methodologically advance the member value concept so that it can be used for comparative analyses across different sectors will also contribute to previous literature. Another contribution will be the in-depth investigation of the relationship between member value, identification, commitment and supportive member behavior. Lastly, a particularly unique contribution will be the investigation of the member value optimal organization design of membership associations. Academic research that investigates the optimal organization design from member perspective is (almost) nonexistent (See also Schulz-Walz, 2006).

## 1<sup>st</sup> Project

### **The matching of motive importance and fulfillment: A member value perspective to explain important volunteer outcomes**

This paper examines what motivates individuals to volunteer in associations and to promote their volunteer activity to friends. It does so by seeking to validate the matching principle which proposes that favorable volunteer outcomes are more likely among volunteers who have their relevant motives fulfilled through their affiliation to an organization. The validation of the matching principle is conducted by means of the total member value (TMV). This new operationalization of the matching principle assumes member value to be limited by the lower of its two constituting variables: motive importance and motive fulfillment. The paper analyzes whether the matching principle or the stand-alone variables total importance and total fulfillment has the higher explanatory power of volunteer outcomes.

For the validation of the theoretical constructs, a large sample of over 600 long-term volunteers at the White Cross South Tyrol (Italy) was used. The data reveals that all three constructs - TMV, total importance, total fulfillment - are good predictors of important volunteer outcomes, with overall similar levels of explanatory power. Satisfaction and the promoter score are best explained by the total fulfillment of motives and volunteering hours is best explained by the total importance of motives. In conclusion, the TMV does not have the strongest explanatory power, but leads to reliable models over different outcome variables.

The present academic contribution is discussed regarding previous literature which points at the necessity to provide further empirical evidence of the matching principle. The paper concludes with recommendations for practitioners who seek to increase important volunteer outcomes. Practical implications are derived from the analysis of the relative value contribution of different motive-specific match indices to the TMV.

## Introduction

The term volunteer is used for individuals who provide non-salaried service (Cnaan et al., 1996). Volunteers provide value to recipients of services and to society as a whole (Snyder & Martin, 2004; Stukas et al., 2009). Their help to those who need assistance is an important contribution to society. However, different researchers and practitioners claim that they observe a decreasing motivation to volunteer among citizens (Putnam, 2001; Snyder & Martin, 2004; Stukas et al., 2005; Stukas et al., 2009; Zimmer & Priller, 2004). That is why understanding what motivates volunteers to provide services free of charge in today's context is so relevant. In the attempt to better understand individuals' motivation to volunteer, several theories have emerged. The social exchange theory, the functional approach or the goal setting theory propose that individuals' decisions to act in prosocial ways are goal-directed and purposive. A common denominator of these theories is the idea of the matching principle. According to this, individuals are motivated to volunteer when features of the volunteer job help them to fulfill their relevant motives and attain their valued ends (Blau, 1964; Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Emerson, 1976; Güntert et al., 2015; Stukas et al., 2009). As Knoke & Wright-Isak (1982, p. 212) state "Humans must be regarded as proactive agents seeking to shape their environments in ways that enable them to attain valued ends, whether physical well-being or spiritual bliss".

Despite the academic acknowledgement of these theories, there is little empirical evidence of the matching principle (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1992; Clary et al., 1998; Clary et al., 1994; Güntert et al., 2015; Snyder et al., 2000; Stukas et al., 2009; Tschirhart et al., 2001). To explain important volunteer outcomes most empirical research has analyzed stand-alone variables/single determinants but not the interplay between motive importance and fulfillment (Finkelstein, 2006; Garver et al., 2009; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Liao-Troth, 2005; Money et al., 2008; Rupp et al., 2014; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2008; Smith, 1994; Tönurist & Surva, 2016; Wymer, 1997, 2002). There is one research group that has systematically examined the explanatory power of the interplay between motive importance and fulfillment. Stukas et al. (2009) introduce the first index to operationalize the matching principle - the total match index (TMI) - and provide evidence of its' explanatory power. However, they point out the necessity to provide more empirical evidence, to foster the academic and practical establishment of



the matching principle and the TMI (Güntert et al., 2015; Stukas et al., 2009). To meet this need, we look at the TMI in more detail and recommend an alternative operationalization of the matching principle. We propose a way to assess and calculate matches between motive importance and fulfillment that reflects the matching principle more accurately. Our recommendation is inspired by the member value concept which has been applied in projects to investigate member engagement in cooperatives and associations (Suter, 2012). The concept may well be used to analyze volunteer outcomes too, because participation in associations and volunteer work for nonprofit organizations are qualitatively similar. Both concepts involve contributions of time without coercion or remuneration. The main difference is that volunteer work is generally public benefit activity and association participation can either be public benefit or member benefit activity (Smith, 1994).

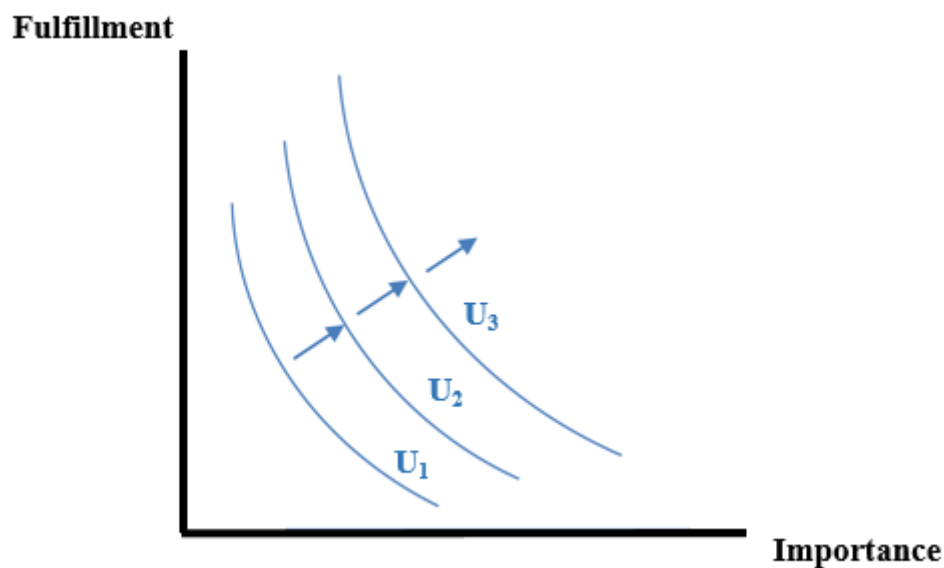
Based on the member value concept, we attempt to validate the matching principle by examining whether the total member value (TMV) - calculated as the total match between motive importance and fulfillment - explains important volunteer outcomes better than the total importance or total fulfillment of motives alone. We also investigate to what extent the relative value contribution from motive-specific match indices explain variance in volunteer outcomes beyond the TMV. On the one hand, insights from our analyses may help to better understand why individuals are motivated to volunteer. On the other hand, they may help to foster the academic and practical establishment of the matching principle.

### TMV and TMI

Many theories that explain the motivation of individuals to act in favor of an association are based on the matching principle. The matching principle suggests that the psychological motivation of individuals together with their evaluation on how well they can fulfill their relevant motives through the affiliation best explain attitudes and behavior (Blau, 1964; Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Emerson, 1976; Güntert et al., 2015; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Stukas et al., 2009). In the context of volunteering, there is one group of researchers that has systematically examined the explanatory power of the matching principle over several studies. They provide empirical evidence that

volunteers who find more motives to be important and who see that more of those motives can be fulfilled by features of the volunteer activity are more satisfied than volunteers who either have less motivation or see less opportunity to do so (Clary et al., 1998; Stukas et al., 2005; Stukas et al., 2009). Based on their research results, Stukas et al. (2009) introduced the TMI to calculate the total number of matches across motives. They multiply each motive importance score by its corresponding fulfillment score and sum across motives. The multiplicative function to calculate motive-specific match indices reflects the idea that “more is better”. Individuals for whom more motives are relevant and/or who feel that more of their relevant motives are fulfilled have a higher TMI. Either high importance or fulfillment scores are sufficient to raise the TMI. Figure 2 illustrates the corresponding indifference curve.

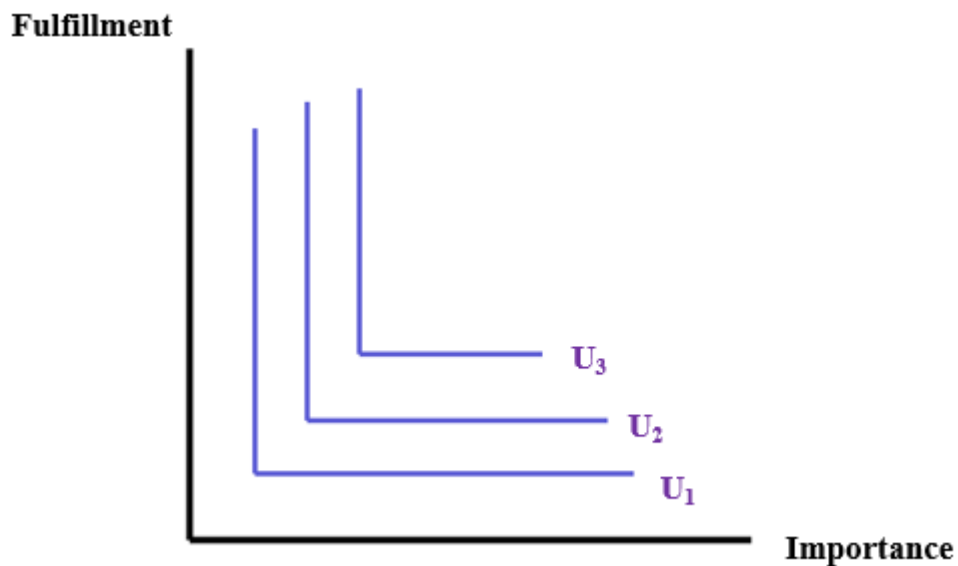
*Figure 2: Total match index as multiplicative function*



From our point of view, the multiplicative function does not accurately operationalize the matching principle and may lead to inflated total matches. We interpret the matching principle as complement relation between motive importance and fulfillment. A framework that builds on a complement relation between motive importance and fulfillment is the member value concept by Suter (2012).

Suter (2012) measures the importance individuals attribute to different motives and the degree to which they feel that their important motives get fulfilled to calculate the value they obtain from their affiliation/membership. According to the member value concept only the overlap between importance and fulfillment creates value. Therefore, motive-specific match indices are determined as the lower of the two scores: motive importance and motive fulfillment. Figure 3 presents the corresponding indifference curve.

*Figure 3: Member value as function of the overlap match between motive importance and fulfillment*



In comparison to the multiplicative interpretation of the matching principle, volunteers only obtain value when both motive importance and fulfillment are given. Volunteers who are not motivated by a specific motive will not obtain value, regardless of the organizations' ability to fulfill the respective motive. And, volunteers for whom a specific motive is important may not obtain value, unless organizational features and services fulfill the respective motive. Volunteers who obtain high TMV have several relevant motives that they perceive as fulfilled through their organizational involvement. This is what the TMV and the TMI have in common: volunteers who report high importance and fulfillment scores over different motives obtain a high TMI/TMV. High TMV in turn is linked to favorable relationship outcomes such as more volunteering hours or willingness

to promote the volunteer activity to friends. Like in other studies, we expect that the TMV explains more of the variance in volunteer outcomes than the total importance or the total fulfillment of motives alone. To test the matching principle, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The TMV explains more of the variance in volunteer outcomes (Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours) than the total importance of motives.

Hypothesis 2: The TMV explains more of the variance in volunteer outcomes (Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours) than then total fulfillment of motives.

In addition to the question of the explanatory power of the TMV, we wonder whether different motive-specific match indices have additional explanatory power. According to the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI), the six primary motives to act in prosocial ways are values, understanding, self-enhancement, social, career and protective (Clary et al., 1998; Clary et al., 1996). Values and understanding were the strongest and most consistent predictors of volunteer outcomes in several studies (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Clary et al., 1996; Mayer et al., 2007; Wymer, 1997). Self-enhancement, career and protective were less central to the explanation of important volunteer outcomes (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1996; Erasmus & Morey, 2016). To explain the relative low importance of career to predict volunteer outcomes, previous studies argue that motives for volunteering are personal rather than career-oriented (Christensen et al., 1999; Clary et al., 1996; Mayer & McNary, 2007). Protective did not explain volunteer outcomes or it reported an unreliable scale<sup>1</sup> (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1996; Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Mayer & McNary, 2007). In some studies, the motive to gain friendship and socialize with others (social) had explanatory power and in others social was not related to volunteer outcomes (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Mayer & McNary, 2007; Oostlander et al., 2014; Tschirhart et al., 2001; Wardell et al., 2000; Wymer, 1997). We, therefore, expect that volunteers are satisfied, donate their time and promote their

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<sup>1</sup> Protective is not included in this analysis.

volunteer activity to friends, mainly because they expect to and obtain value from identifying with the cause and values of the organization (value) and from learning and making valuable experiences (understanding). For some, gaining friendships (social) may also be a key motive and value driver. Because we look at the relative value contribution of different motive-specific matches to explain volunteer outcomes, we presume that values and understanding are the main value drivers and predictors. We expect that the more relative importance and fulfillment volunteers assign to values and understanding, the more likely they also report high Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours. We propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: The more the TMV of volunteers is driven by values, the higher the reported satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours.

Hypothesis 4: The more the TMV of volunteers is driven by understanding, the higher the reported satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours.

Hypothesis 5: The relative value contribution of social is ambiguous, neither related to very high or low satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours.

We further expect that the rather extrinsic motive for positive self-enhancement and the career-oriented motive for career are not among the key value drivers of committed volunteers. We therefore expect that their relative value contribution negatively influences important volunteer outcomes. Thus:

Hypothesis 6: The more the TMV of volunteers is driven by self-enhancement, the lower the reported satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours.

Hypothesis 7: The more the TMV of volunteers is driven by career, the lower the reported satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours.

## Method

### *Data collection and sample*

We conducted a study with volunteers from the White Cross South Tyrol in Italy. The White Cross South Tyrol is a nonprofit-organization that provides rescue services, patient transports and pastoral care. It was founded in 1965 to cover the shortage of resources and manpower needed to provide a sufficient rescue service in South Tyrol. As a nonprofit-organization, the White Cross South Tyrol heavily relies on volunteers and financial donations. In 32 chapters, volunteers and employees work together to offer services that help citizens who need help. The federal structure fosters the provision of comparable services across the country. The organization attaches great importance to the management of its' volunteers and the development of a strong sense of community among its' volunteers. It tries to commit potential volunteers at an early age by doing youth work and offering a wide range of education possibilities. To date, there are 3'001 people who volunteer for the White Cross South Tyrol.

A first beta version of the survey was discussed with the president of the White Cross South Tyrol and an expert committee. They helped to (re)phrase survey items – based on the concept of needs (Suter, 2012) to measure the multifaceted member value – that are specific to the context of the organization. The final version of the survey was distributed to volunteers by a member of the White Cross in a paper-and-pencil format in November 2015. The exact number of distributed surveys is unknown. From a total of 3'001 volunteers, 645 answered the survey (21,5% response rate). Among participants, there are 64.2% men (population = 62.6%) and 35.8% women (population = 37.4%). Table 3 and Table 4 report the comparison between the population and the sample regarding age and years of service. The sample is representative regarding volunteers' gender, age and their years of service.

*Table 3: Sample comparison in regard to volunteers' age*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Population</b>		<b>Sample</b>	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>18 - 25</b>	880	29.3%	108	18.6%
<b>25 - 32</b>	641	21.4%	127	21.8%
<b>32 - 39</b>	471	15.7%	97	16.7%
<b>39 - 46</b>	362	12.1%	67	11.5%
<b>46 - 53</b>	298	9.9%	68	11.7%
<b>53 - 60</b>	180	6.0%	34	5.8%
<b>60 and older</b>	169	5.6%	38	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	3'001	100%	539	100%

*Table 4: Sample comparison in regard to volunteers' years of service*

<b>Years of service</b>	<b>Population</b>		<b>Sample</b>	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>3 years and less</b>	880	29.3%	124	21.3%
<b>3 to 10 years</b>	1'047	34.9%	221	38.0%
<b>10 to 20 years</b>	672	22.4%	155	26.6%
<b>20 to 30 years</b>	303	10.1%	61	10.5%
<b>30 years and more</b>	99	3.3%	21	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	3'001	100%	582	100%

## *Measurements*

All constructs that are used for analyses are hereinafter explained. An overview is provided in the Appendix (Table 16, Table 17, Table 18, Table 19). We start by outlining important volunteer outcomes. We then explain the constructs of (adjusted) MV indices and the TMV. Lastly, we introduce control variables.

### Important volunteer outcomes

In alignment with Stukas et al. (2009), Güntert et al. (2015) and Tschirhart et al. (2001) we assessed different volunteer outcomes. We included the constructs of satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours. We used single-item measures and 10-point scales to measure important volunteer outcomes, in alignment with the measurement of the constructs of satisfaction, promoter score and social support as done by other researchers (Cripps et al., 2004; Gregory et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2006; Reichheld, 2003; Stukas et al., 2009; Swanson et al., 2007; Tschirhart et al., 2001).

We asked how satisfied volunteers were with their volunteer activities at the White Cross (1 = not at all satisfied; 10 = very satisfied), how willing they are to recommend their volunteer activity at the White Cross to a friend (1 = not at all to recommend; 10 = highly recommendable) and to report their yearly volunteering hours (open format).

Because the education of volunteers implies high costs to the White Cross, volunteers are obliged to serve minimal duty-hours per year. Minimal duty-hours per year depend on the main activity and the district. Duty-hours for the rescue service and the patient transport are 200 hours per year and are consistent over all regions. Duty-hours for pastoral care are 400 hours per year in 10 out of 35 regions. We deducted the duty hours from reported volunteering hours, where appropriate.

### TMV and (adjusted) MV indices

We used 5-point scales to assess either importance or fulfillment of motive statements, similar to previous motivational research (Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Tschirhart et al., 2001). We considered the 5-point scale as an alternative odd number in comparison to 2-point or 7-point scales used in other studies (Clary et al., 1998; Güntert et al., 2015; Knoke, 1988; Stukas et al., 2009). We measured the importance and fulfillment of motives by means of 21 items on 5-point scales: importance (1 = not at all important; 5 = very important) and fulfillment (1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very much fulfilled). The survey



items were formulated based on the concept of needs (Suter, 2012) in order to assess the multifaceted aspects of different MV indices. We presumed that different need items would fit to the structure of the five motives as proposed by Stukas et al. (2009). We conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to evaluate how well the data fit to the constructs of the five MV indices. The analysis with factor loadings (standardized estimates) and correlations between the MV indices is provided in the Appendix (Table 19). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.85 and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of 0.07 are indicative of a rather poor fit of the model to the data. In the case of discriminant validity, the shared variances between MV indices and their items should be larger than the variance shared with other MV indices. In the case of convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be above 0.5 (Byrne, 2016). For our data, convergent and discriminant validity are not obtained. The AVEs are low for items (Values = 0.45, Understanding = 0.38, Self-enhancement = 0.42, Social = 0.43, Career = 0.41) and moderate for MV indices (Values = 0.56, Understanding = 0.41, Self-enhancement = 0.57, Social = 0.60, Career = 0.43). The reason for this may be the multifaceted and interrelated characteristic of different motives as described by Suter (2012) and discussed under Limitations. Internal consistencies of scale are moderate too, however, acceptable. Cronbach's Alpha (reported in Table 17) are: values (0.70; 3 items), understanding (0.76; 4 items), self-enhancement (0.81; 6 items), social (0.72; 3 items) and career (0.76; 4 items). Despite the problematic goodness-of-fit of the model, we continued our analyses with the five MV indices and the subsequent calculation of the TMV. We used importance and fulfillment scores to calculate MV indices. We calculated MV indices of each match between a motive importance and fulfillment score by using the lower of the two scale responses [ $\min(\text{Importance}, \text{Fulfillment})$ ].

In a next step we summed MV indices to an overall MV index (TMV), as done by other researchers such as Stukas et al. (2009) or Güntert et al. (2015). We took the mean of all five MV indices (values, understanding, self-enhancement, social and career) to compute the TMV. The TMV represents the average value volunteers obtain from their volunteer activity. To evaluate the relative value contribution from different MV indices to the TMV, we introduced the construct of adjusted MV indices. Adjusted MV indices show whether the value from a specific motive importance and fulfillment match positively or negatively contributes to the TMV. We calculated adjusted MV indices as the differences

between each MV index and the TMV (MV index  $_i$  – TMV). A positive delta score indicates that the value from the corresponding motive importance and fulfillment match raises the TMV. This is the case when volunteers report a relative, in comparison to other motives, high importance and fulfillment for the specific motive. A negative delta score indicates that the value from the corresponding motive importance and fulfillment match reduces the TMV. This is because the motive has a relative low importance or fulfillment. The term adjusted refers to the fact that values are cleaned by any other influence such as the overall level of MV. Therefore, we will control the TMV to calculate regressions between adjusted MV indices and outcome variables.

### Control Variables

Among possible influences, research points at two kinds of control variables that may influence the investigation of direct service volunteer activity in social organizations: Information on the organizational involvement and the demographic characteristic of volunteers. Information on the organizational involvement is used to assess influencing aspects of the organizational context (Güntert et al., 2015; Harp et al., 2016; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Neufeind et al., 2013; Oostlander et al., 2014; Snyder & Ickes, 1985; Stukas et al., 2009). In expert interviews with the chief executive officer of the White Cross, we considered the following organizational and demographic variables to be relevant to be controlled for in our analyses:

We captured a) trust in the organization by asking volunteers to what extent they felt that the White Cross was a reliable organization with clearly comprehensible norms and structures (5 items, Cronbach's Alpha 0.822). We also assessed the b) years of service of volunteers in an open question format. We expect that with increasing years of service differences in volunteers' experiences and attitudes diminish. To account for the diminishing impact we took the natural logarithm of reported years of services. Another variable that we used to assess the organizational involvement is the c) main activity field. We asked volunteers to report whether their main activity is rescue service, pastoral care, or patient transport. Two dummy variables are included in the analyses: rescue service = 1, others = 0; pastoral care = 1, others = 0.

Lastly, we controlled the d) district. We controlled whether volunteers belong to a western, eastern, or central chapter. Two dummy variables are included in the analyses: west = 1, others = 0; center = 1, others = 0. The White Cross states that the 32 chapters operate in an equal manner and that similar kind of volunteers work across the country. We included three demographic variables in our analyses. Volunteers reported their: a) gender (female = 1; male = 0), b) age (open question format) and c) professional status. For the latter, we asked volunteers whether they have no job (= 0), a part-time job (= 1) or a full-time job (= 2). The professional status might be an important influence because in comparison with the past, individuals today must spend more time in their professional occupations. This reduces the time available for volunteer activity (Holmes & Slater, 2011; Taysir et al., 2013).

## Analyses

### *Descriptive statistics*

We examined the distribution of important volunteer outcome variables. The important volunteer outcome variables satisfaction (Skewness -0.97; Kurtosis 0.88), Promoter score (Skewness -1.37; Kurtosis 1.18) and volunteering hours (Skewness 1.18; Kurtosis 1.23) are almost normally distributed. Volunteers report an average Satisfaction of 7.6 (SD 1.8), an average promoter score of 8.3 (SD 1.8) and an average of 511 (SD 299) volunteering hours. In Table 5 we present the mean values of the motive importance and fulfillment scores as well as the MV and adjusted MV indices. In alignment with the logic of the TMV, the TMV (Mean 3.7; SD 0.6) is lower than the total fulfillment (Mean 3.9; SD 0.5) and total importance (Mean 3.9; SD 0.5). The mean over the five adjusted MV indices is zero because they reflect the relative value contribution to the TMV (MV index  $i$  – TMV).

*Table 5: Mean values of the importance and fulfillment scores and the MV (delta) indices*

	<b>Importance score</b>	<b>Fulfillment score</b>	<b>Member value indices</b>	<b>Adjusted member value indices</b>
<b>Values</b>	4	4.1	3.9	0.1
<b>Understanding</b>	4.4	4.4	4.3	0.5
<b>Self-enhancement</b>	3.9	3.8	3.6	-0.1
<b>Social</b>	3.8	3.7	3.5	-0.2
<b>Career</b>	3.6	3.7	3.4	-0.4
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>0</b>

As was already found in other studies, understanding and values are the most important and the best fulfilled motives (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1996; Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Stukas et al., 2009), followed by self-enhancement, social, and career (Stukas et al., 2009). Correspondingly, the adjusted MV indices understanding and values are positive. On average, the importance and fulfillment of the motives understanding and values drive the TMV of volunteers. Self-enhancement, social and career are less important to volunteers and less fulfilled. On average, the value from self-enhancement, social and career lower the TMV of volunteers. Most volunteers obtain relative high value from the identification with the cause and values of the organization (value) and from learning and making valuable experiences (understanding).

We compared the distribution of the TMV, the total importance and the total fulfillment (Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6). They show normal distribution with only a slight left skew. For the TMV Skewness (-0.37) and Kurtosis (-0.06) scores are better than for the total importance (Skewness -0.53; Kurtosis 0.12) or the total fulfillment (Skewness -0.52; Kurtosis 0.17).

We looked at the scatterplots to evaluate the feasibility of our linear models. We demonstrate the scatterplots of the three variables in combination with the promoter score as examples in Figure 7, Figure 8 and Figure 9. Scatterplots are comparable and show the positive relation between dependent and independent variables. Here again, we observe a balancing effect of the function  $\min(\text{Importance}, \text{Fulfillment})$ . The TMV scatterplot has the smallest data spread.

Figure 4: Normal distribution of the TMV

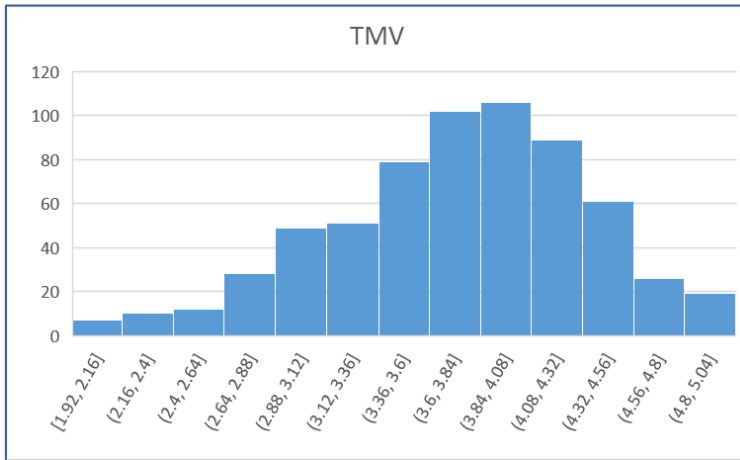


Figure 5: Normal distribution of the total importance

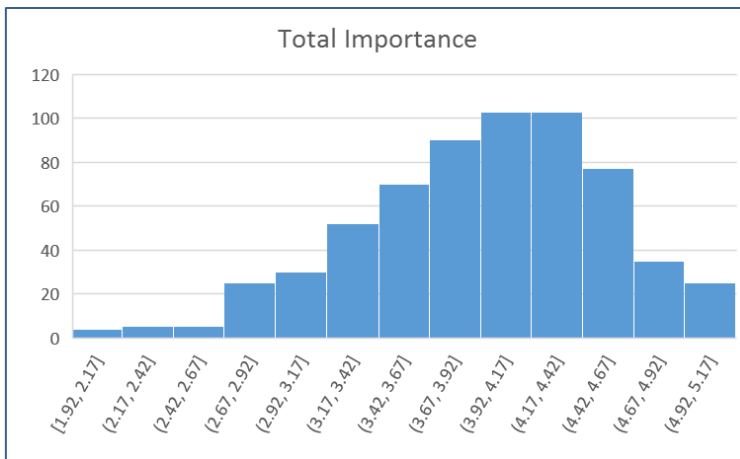


Figure 6: Normal distribution of the total fulfillment

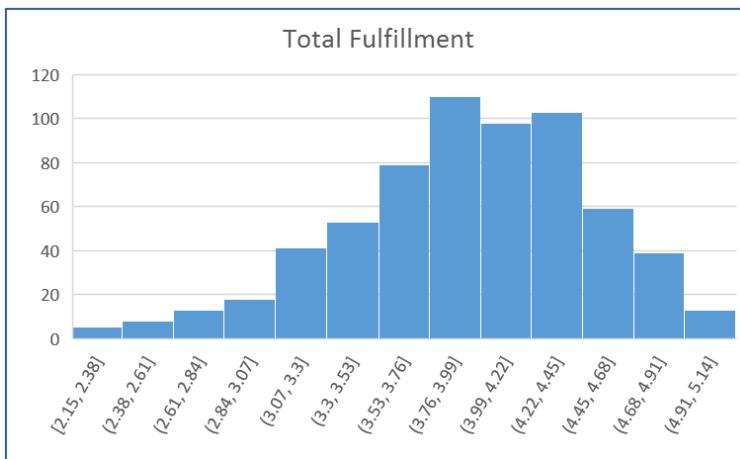


Figure 7: Scatterplot of the TMV and the promoter score

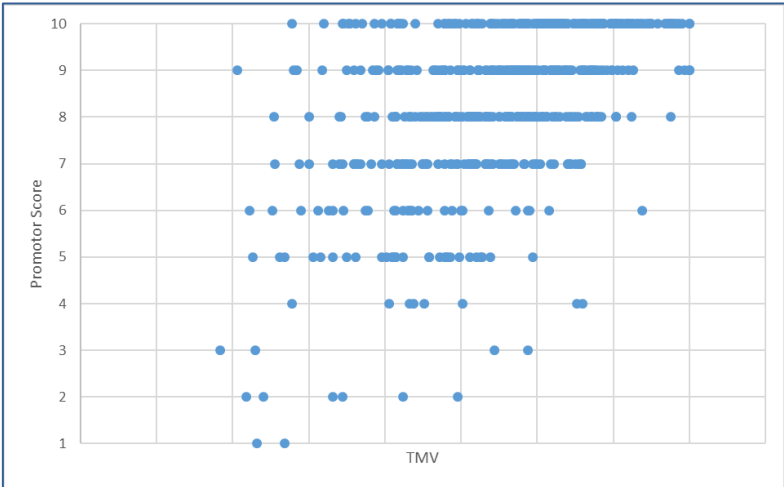


Figure 8: Scatterplot of the total importance and the promoter score

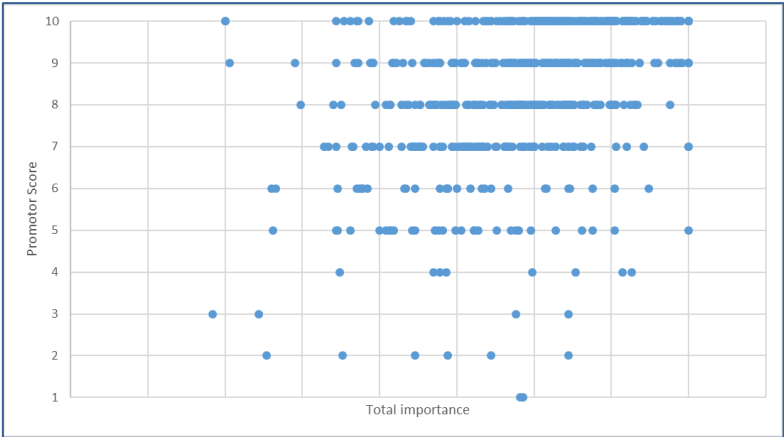
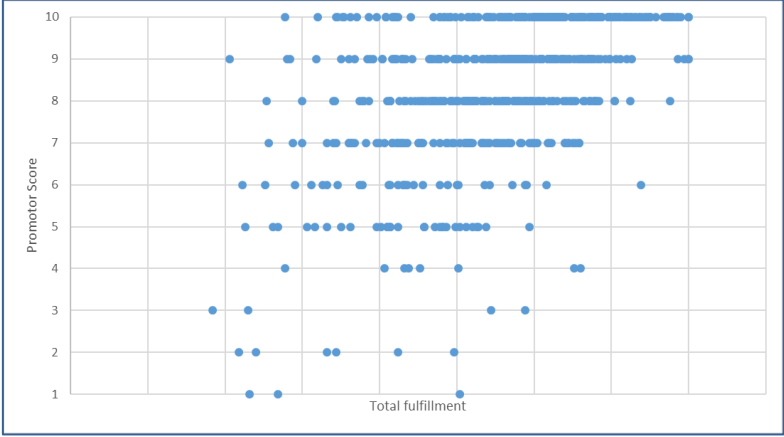


Figure 9: Scatterplot of the total fulfillment and the promoter score



We report means, standard deviations and correlations in Table 6 and Table 7. Correlations indicate that there are relevant relations between dependent and independent variables. Only volunteering hours is not significantly related to any of the independent variables. Correlation coefficients between the total fulfillment and outcome variables satisfaction and promoter score are higher than for the TMV and the total importance. Satisfaction and promoter score correlate significantly while volunteering hours is only significantly related to satisfaction.

Table 7 reports means, standard deviations and correlations for (adjusted) MV indices. Correlation coefficients report significant positive correlations between the outcome variables satisfaction, promoter score and the TMV and some of the adjusted MV indices. Volunteering hours is not significantly linked to any of the dependent variables. For satisfaction, the analysis shows that there is a strong link with the TMV. Satisfaction is also positively related to the adjusted MV index values. Thus, the more relative importance and fulfillment volunteers attribute to values, the higher the relative value contribution to the TMV respectively, the higher the reported satisfaction. Vice versa, a relative low MV contribution of values to the TMV is linked to lower satisfaction. The adjusted MV index understanding correlates negatively with satisfaction. In this case, a relative high MV contribution of understanding to the TMV is linked to lower satisfaction. A relative low MV contribution of understanding to the TMV is linked to higher satisfaction. The negative relation between understanding and satisfaction was not expected. The negative relation surprises because the relative value contribution of understanding is high/positive for the average volunteer. One would expect that the fulfillment of this important motive is linked to higher degrees of satisfaction. It is negatively related to the promoter score, too. In regard to the promoter score we observe that relative high MV contributions of understanding and self-enhancement to the TMV are related to lower promoter scores and vice versa. Only the TMV is positively linked to the promoter score.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics and correlations by comparison

	Variables	Range	Mean	SD	Correlations			
					1	2	3	4
1	Satisfaction	1 - 10	7.6	1.8				
2	Promoter score	1 - 10	8.3	1.8	0.5**			
3	Volunteering hours	0 - 1400	511	299	0.1*	0.03		
4	Total member value	1.9 - 5	3.7	0.6	0.42**	0.51**	0.03	
5	Total importance	1.9 - 5	3.9	0.5	0.31**	0.39**	0.05	0.07*
6	Total fulfillment	2.2 - 5	3.9	0.5	0.49**	0.57**	0.02	0.07*

SD = Standard deviation, Significant correlation: \*\* =  $p(t) < .01$  / \* =  $p(t) < .05$



Table 7: Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for (adjusted) MV indices

	Variables	Range	Mean	SD	Correlations								
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Satisfaction	1 - 10	7.6	1.8									
2	Promoter score	1 - 10	8.3	1.8	0.5**								
3	Volunteering hours	0 - 1400	511	299	0.1*	0.03							
4	Total member value	1.9 - 5	3.7	0.6	0.42**	0.51**	0.03						
5	Values	-2.5 - 2.1	0.1	0.5	0.08*	0.06	0.03	0.07*					
6	Understanding	-1.3 - 2.1	0.5	0.4	-0.16**	-0.11**	-0.03	-0.32**	-0.22**				
7	Self-enhancement	-1.9 - 1.5	-0.1	0.4	-0.02	-0.1*	0	0.13**	-0.11*	-0.3**			
8	Social	-2.3 - 1.3	-0.2	0.5	0	0.02	0.05	0.26**	-0.1*	-0.29**	0.1*		
9	Career	-2.4 - 1.3	-0.4	0.5	-0.02	-0.02	0.03	0.1**	-0.42**	-0.1*	-0.23**	-0.19**	

SD = Standard deviation, Significant correlation: \*\* =  $p(t) < .01$  / \* =  $p(t) < .05$

### Regression analyses

We used multiple hierarchical regression analyses to test whether the TMV, the total importance and the total fulfillment successfully predict important volunteer outcomes. In a first step, we regressed volunteer outcome variables on control variables (Table 8). Control variables explain 17% of the variance in the dependent variable satisfaction, 24% in the dependent variable promoter score and 17% in the dependent variable volunteering hours.

Table 8: *Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours regressed on control variables (Step 1)*

	Satisfaction		Promoter score		Volunteering hours	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1:</b>						
<b>Control variables</b>						
Trust in the organization	0.40	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	-0.06	0.275
Years of service	-0.45	0.417	0.02	0.724	-0.21	< 0.001
Rescue service	0.10	0.064	0.05	0.326	0.03	0.736
Pastoral care	0.04	0.408	-0.05	0.349	0.29	< 0.001
West	-0.02	0.739	-0.02	0.691	0	0.986
Central	0.01	0.924	0.03	0.548	-0.16	0.017
Gender	-0.06	0.210	0.07	0.131	-0.20	< 0.001
Age	-0.04	0.433	0	0.940	0.12	0.097
Professional status	-0.08	0.074	-0.12	0.011	-0.09	0.115
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.17	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.17	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.15	< 0.001	0.23	< 0.001	0.14	< 0.001
<b>N</b>	495		489		359	

For the prediction of different outcome variables, different control variables are relevant. Like in other studies, we found that a positive perception of the organizational context fosters satisfaction and high promoter scores. It seems elusive that volunteers who

perceive the White Cross as a reliable organization with clearly comprehensible norms and structures are more likely to be satisfied and to promote their volunteer activity to others (Güntert et al., 2015; Harp et al., 2016; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Neufeind et al., 2013; Oostlander et al., 2014; Snyder & Ickes, 1985; Stukas et al., 2009). Therefore, we did also expect a positive relation between trust in the organization and volunteering hours. However, the data do not support this relationship. Volunteering hours is influenced by other control variables: years of service, activity, district and gender. Volunteers with shorter volunteering history at the White Cross, volunteers who serve for the pastoral care, volunteers who do not belong to a central chapter and volunteers who are men are more likely to volunteer more hours. According to Holmes & Slater (2011), it is normal that volunteers display varying levels of participation over time within the same organization. In comparison to previous study results we cannot confirm that the professional involvement of volunteers or aging are barriers to volunteer activity (Holmes & Slater, 2011; Taysir et al., 2013). The influence of the activity variable may be explained by the duty-hours, despite its appropriate deduction from reported volunteering hours. That men reported more volunteering hours may be explained by the positive link between rescue service and gender. In an open question format, some men note that among other motives to drive with blue lights and sirens in case of emergencies was important to them.

In a second step, we added the TMV, the total importance and the total fulfillment separately to the model (Step 1). Table 9 shows the regression analysis of the TMV model. We found significant relations between the TMV and satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.25$ ), the promoter score ( $\beta = 0.36$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.34$ ) and volunteering hours ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.18$ ). The TMV contributes with a change in  $R^2$  of 9% to the explanation of satisfaction, 9% to the explanation of the promoter score and 2% to the explanation of volunteering hours. The TMV is a good predictor of important volunteer outcomes. The higher the average value volunteers obtain from their volunteer activity, the higher the likelihood that they are satisfied, recommend the volunteer activity at the White Cross to a friend and volunteer more hours. The positive interplay of motive importance and fulfillment with the organizational involvement, volunteer activity and satisfaction was already anticipated from previous study results (Clary et al., 1998; Stukas et al., 1999; Stukas et al., 2009). Because the TMV builds on motive importance and

fulfillment, the total importance and the total fulfillment explain variance in outcome variables too (Table 10 and 11).

*Table 9: Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours regressed on TMV (Step 2)*

	Satisfaction		Promoter score		Volunteering hours	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1:</b>						
<b>Control variables</b>						
Trust in the organization	0.40	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	-0.06	0.275
Years of service	-0.05	0.417	0.02	0.724	-0.21	0.004
Pastoral care	0.10	0.064	0.05	0.326	0.03	0.736
Rescue service	0.04	0.408	-0.05	0.349	0.29	< 0.001
West	-0.02	0.739	-0.02	0.691	0	0.986
Central	0.01	0.924	0.03	0.548	-0.16	0.017
Female	-0.06	0.210	0.07	0.131	-0.20	< 0.001
Age	-0.04	0.433	0	0.940	0.12	0.097
Professional status	-0.08	0.074	-0.12	0.011	-0.09	0.115
<b>Step 2:</b>						
<b>TMV</b>						
<b>Total member value</b>	0.34	< 0.001	0.36	< 0.001	0.17	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.25	< 0.001	0.34	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.24	< 0.001	0.32	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Step 1</b>	0.09		0.09		0.02	
<b>N</b>		495		489		359

Table 10: Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours regressed on total importance (Step 2)

	Satisfaction		Promoter score		Volunteering hours	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1:</b>						
<b>Control variables</b>						
Trust in the organization	0.40	< 0.001	0.47	< 0.001	-0.05	0.318
Years of service	-0.05	0.372	0.03	0.625	-0.21	0.004
Pastoral care	0.10	0.072	0.02	0.741	0.03	0.722
Rescue service	0.04	0.428	-0.06	0.249	0.28	< 0.001
West	-0.01	0.870	-0.01	0.912	0	0.963
Central	0.02	0.687	0.03	0.510	-0.15	0.020
Female	-0.06	0.242	0.06	0.180	-0.20	< 0.001
Age	-0.03	0.538	-0.02	0.704	0.13	0.099
Professional status	-0.07	0.130	-0.11	0.018	-0.09	0.122
<b>Step 2:</b>						
<b>Total importance</b>						
<b>Total importance</b>	0.24	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.21	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.22	< 0.001	0.30	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.20	< 0.001	0.29	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Step 1</b>	0.05		0.05		0.03	
<b>N</b>		485		480		354

Table 11: Satisfaction, promoter score and volunteering hours regressed on total fulfillment (Step 2)

	Satisfaction		Promoter score		Volunteering hours	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1:</b>						
<b>Control variables</b>						
Trust in the organization	0.40	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	-0.06	0.266
Years of service	-0.05	0.420	0.02	0.723	-0.21	0.004
Pastoral care	0.10	0.063	0.05	0.326	0.03	0.704
Rescue service	0.04	0.409	-0.05	0.351	0.29	0.004
West	-0.02	0.740	-0.02	0.695	0	0.983
Central	0.01	0.917	0.03	0.549	-0.15	0.020
Female	-0.06	0.210	0.07	0.132	-0.20	< 0.001
Age	-0.04	0.442	0	0.941	0.13	0.085
Professional status	-0.08	0.075	-0.12	0.012	-0.09	0.118
<b>Step 2:</b>						
<b>Total fulfillment</b>						
<b>Total fulfillment</b>	0.45	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	0.15	0.025
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.30	< 0.001	0.39	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.29	< 0.001	0.37	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Step 1</b>	0.13		0.14		0.01	
<b>N</b>		494		487		357

Table 12 illustrates the comparison of all three models. For the prediction of the outcome variables satisfaction and promoter score, the total importance model has less explanatory power than the other variables. The total fulfillment model has the strongest predictive capability. The pattern changes for the prediction of volunteering hours. Generally, the predictive capabilities of the volunteering hours' models are noticeably weaker than the predictive capability of the satisfaction and the promoter score models. For the prediction of volunteering hours, the total importance and control variables gain importance. It is the characteristic constitution of volunteers that determines whether they are willing to volunteer and to what extent. The characteristic constitution of volunteers relates to their gender and main activity and may explain the significant influence of these variables. The fact that years of service and district negatively relate to volunteering hours may be characteristic to the White Cross. Yet, Holmes & Slater (2011) report varying levels of participation over time, too.

*Table 12: Predictive capability comparison between TMV, total importance and total fulfillment*

	Total member value			Total importance			Total fulfillment		
	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> -Change	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> -Change	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> -Change
<b>Satisfaction</b>	0.34	0.25	0.09	0.24	0.22	0.05	0.45	0.30	0.13
<b>Promoter score</b>	0.36	0.34	0.09	0.24	0.30	0.05	0.46	0.39	0.14
<b>Volunteering hours</b>	0.17	0.18	0.02	0.21	0.19	0.03	0.15	0.18	0.01

The explanatory power of the characteristic constitution, e.g. motive importance, to explain volunteering hours aligns with previous study results (Garver et al., 2009; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Money et al., 2008; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2008; Swanson et al., 2007; Tönurist & Surva, 2016; Wymer, 1997, 2002). Yet, in our study, the characteristic constitution is less relevant to explain satisfaction and promoter score. We can understand that an overall high level of motive fulfillment is positively linked to satisfaction and promoter score. However, we are surprised that an overall high level of motive fulfillment

is more relevant than the fulfillment of important motives. According to the member value concept, the fulfillment of relevant motives leads to higher value and is expected to result in higher satisfaction and promoter score. Data do not support this hypothesis. We conclude that the hypothesis 1 is supported for the volunteer outcomes satisfaction and promoter score. Hypothesis 2 is supported in regard to volunteering hours.

In a third step, we tested if adjusted MV indices additionally explain variance in important volunteer outcomes. We added adjusted MV indices separately to the step 2 model. Table 13 reports the regression model step 3 for and satisfaction. The adjusted MV index values ( $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ,  $R^2 = 0.25$ , contribution to  $R^2 = 0.01$ ) is positively related to satisfaction. This means that the more a volunteer attributes importance to values in comparison to other motives and the more the volunteer feels that this need is fulfilled, the more likely that the volunteer is satisfied with the volunteer activity. Thus, the more values drivers the TMV of a volunteer, the more likely he/she reports high satisfaction. The adjusted MV index career ( $\beta = -0.1$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ) is negatively related to satisfaction. This means that the lower the relative importance and fulfillment of career, the higher the reported satisfaction. Higher satisfaction can be expected from volunteers with a TMV that is driven primarily by values and/or not by career.



Table 13: Satisfaction regressed on adjusted MV indices (Step 3)

	Satisfaction									
	Values		Understanding		Self-enhancement		Social		Career	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1: Control variables</b>										
Trust in the organization	0.40	< 0.001	0.40	< 0.001	0.40	< 0.001	0.40	< 0.001	0.40	< 0.001
Years of service	-0.04	0.424	-0.05	0.417	-0.05	0.417	-0.05	0.417	-0.05	0.417
Pastoral care	0.10	0.065	0.10	0.064	0.10	0.064	0.10	0.064	0.10	0.064
Rescue service	0.04	0.427	0.04	0.408	0.04	0.408	0.04	0.408	0.04	0.408
West	-0.02	0.734	-0.02	0.739	-0.02	0.739	-0.02	0.739	-0.02	0.739
Central	0.01	0.891	0.01	0.924	0.01	0.924	0.01	0.924	0.01	0.924
Female	-0.06	0.244	-0.06	0.210	-0.06	0.210	-0.06	0.210	-0.06	0.210
Age	-0.04	0.429	-0.04	0.433	-0.04	0.433	-0.04	0.433	-0.04	0.433
Professional status	-0.08	0.082	-0.08	0.074	-0.08	0.074	-0.08	0.074	-0.08	0.074
<b>Step 2: TMV</b>										
Total member value	0.35	< 0.001	0.34	< 0.001	0.34	< 0.001	0.34	< 0.001	0.34	< 0.001
<b>Step 3: MV delta indices</b>										
Values	0.11	0.004								
Understanding			-0.01	0.894						
Self-enhancement					-0.01	0.885				
Social							-0.06	0.207		
Career									-0.10	0.019
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.27	< 0.001	0.25	< 0.001	0.25	< 0.001	0.26	< 0.001	0.26	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.25	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.25	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Step 2</b>	0.01		0		0		0		0.01	
<b>N</b>		494		495		495		495		495

Table 14 shows the regression model step 3 for adjusted MV indices and the promoter score. The adjusted MV index understanding ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ,  $R^2 = 0.34$ , contribution to  $R^2 = 0.01$ ) is positively related to the promoter score. The more understanding contributes to the TMV of a volunteer, the more likely that he/she is willing to promote the volunteer activity to a friend. Interestingly, the relation between satisfaction and the adjusted MV index understanding changed direction after the control of other variables (Correlation analysis vs. regression analysis). The adjusted MV index self-enhancement ( $\beta = -0.13$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.35$ , contribution to  $R^2 = 0.01$ ) is negatively related to the promoter score. A negative and relative low contribution of the MV index self-enhancement to the TMV positively influences volunteers' willingness to promote their volunteer activity to others. Volunteers are more likely to promote the volunteer activity to others when understanding drives and self-enhancement lowers their TMV.

As reported in the regression model step 3 in Table 15, adjusted MV indices have no predictive power for volunteering hours. Only the TMV and control variables are significantly related to volunteering hours. Volunteers are more likely to volunteer more hours, the more TMV they obtain, the lower their reported years of service, when they volunteer in the field of pastoral care, when they are men, when they do not belong to a central chapter. Results from regression models step 3 show that the TMV predicts a significant amount of variance in volunteer outcomes, even after controlling for the effects of adjusted MV indices. Against expectation, adjusted MV indices only marginally contribute to the explanation of important volunteer outcomes above the effect of the TMV. Hypotheses 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are therefore not supported. Yet, directions of most hypotheses are correct. There is a tendency that;

- the more the TMV of volunteers is driven by values, the higher their satisfaction.
- the more the TMV of volunteers is driven by understanding, the higher their promoter scores.
- the less the TMV of volunteers is driven by career, the higher their satisfaction.
- the less the TMV of volunteers is driven by self-enhancement, the higher their promoter scores.
- social is neither predicting high nor low volunteer outcomes.

Table 14: Promoter score regressed on adjusted MV indices (Step 3)

	Promoter score									
	Values		Understanding		Self-enhancement		Social		Career	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1: Control variables</b>										
Trust in the organization	0.46	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001	0.46	< 0.001
Years of service	0.02	0.727	0.02	0.724	0.02	0.726	0.02	0.726	0.02	0.724
Pastoral care	0.05	0.340	0.05	0.326	0.05	0.340	0.05	0.340	0.05	0.326
Rescue service	-0.05	0.345	-0.05	0.349	-0.05	0.342	-0.05	0.342	-0.05	0.349
West	-0.02	0.661	-0.02	0.691	-0.02	0.660	-0.02	0.660	-0.02	0.691
Central	0.03	0.551	0.03	0.548	0.03	0.547	0.03	0.547	0.03	0.548
Female	0.07	0.133	0.07	0.131	0.07	0.129	0.07	0.129	0.07	0.131
Age	-0.01	0.915	0.00	0.940	-0.01	0.914	-0.01	0.914	0.00	0.940
Professional status	-0.12	0.011	-0.12	0.011	-0.12	0.011	-0.12	0.011	-0.12	0.011
<b>Step 2: TMV</b>										
Total member value	0.36	< 0.001	0.36	< 0.001	0.36	< 0.001	0.36	< 0.001	0.36	< 0.001
<b>Step 3: MV delta indices</b>										
Values	0.05	0.155								
Understanding			0.12	0.004						
Self-enhancement					-0.13	0.001				
Social							-0.01	0.799		
Career									-0.04	0.336
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.34	< 0.001	0.35	< 0.001	0.35	< 0.001	0.35	< 0.001	0.34	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.32	< 0.001	0.33	< 0.001	0.33	< 0.001	0.32	< 0.001	0.32	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Step 2</b>	0		0.01		0.02		0		0	
<b>N</b>		487		489		488		488		489

Table 15: *Volunteering hours regressed on adjusted MV indices (Step 3)*

	Volunteering hours									
	Values		Understanding		Self-enhancement		Social		Career	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Step 1: Control variables</b>										
Trust in the organization	-0.06	0.237	-0.06	0.275	-0.06	0.237	-0.06	0.237	-0.06	0.275
Years of service	-0.21	0.004	-0.21	0.004	-0.21	0.004	-0.21	0.004	-0.21	0.004
Pastoral care	0.02	0.777	0.03	0.736	0.02	0.777	0.02	0.777	0.03	0.736
Rescue service	0.29	< 0.001	0.29	< 0.001	0.29	< 0.001	0.29	< 0.001	0.29	< 0.001
West	-0.01	0.928	0.00	0.986	-0.01	0.928	-0.01	0.928	0.00	0.986
Central	-0.16	0.016	-0.16	0.017	-0.16	0.016	-0.16	0.016	-0.16	0.017
Female	-0.20	< 0.001	-0.20	< 0.001	-0.20	< 0.001	-0.20	< 0.001	-0.20	< 0.001
Age	0.12	0.116	0.12	0.097	0.12	0.116	0.12	0.116	0.12	0.097
Professional status	-0.09	0.109	-0.09	0.115	-0.09	0.109	-0.09	0.109	-0.09	0.115
<b>Step 2: TMV</b>										
<b>Total member value</b>	0.15	0.007	0.15	0.008	0.15	0.007	0.15	0.007	0.15	0.008
<b>Step 3: MV delta indices</b>										
Values	-0.02	0.759								
Understanding			0.03	0.636						
Self-enhancement					-0.09	0.085				
Social							0.04	0.475		
Career									0.01	0.852
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.18	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001	0.19	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.16	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001	0.16	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Step 2</b>	0		0		0.01		0		0	
<b>N</b>		358		359		358		358		358

## Discussion

We conducted a study among long-term volunteers at the White Cross South Tyrol Italy to investigate what motivates volunteers to provide services free of charge in today's context. Based on the matching principle we proposed that favorable volunteer outcomes are more likely among volunteers who have their relevant motives fulfilled through their affiliation to the organization. We linked the matching principle with the member value concept to present a different theoretical and methodical perspective. We discussed the member value concept and thereupon provided an alternative way to operationalize the matching principle. We introduced the TMV as a more accurate operationalization of the matching principle compared to the TMI as presented in previous research. We further investigated the relation between motive-specific match indices and volunteer outcomes. Data revealed that all three concepts – TMV, total importance and total fulfillment - reliably predict volunteer outcomes and results are comparable across concepts. Although the matching principle per se was supported – the TMV did not better explain volunteer outcomes than total importance or total fulfillment alone. Our analyses therewith revealed some unexpected relations that raise relevant questions for academic research. We also generated insights with practical use that may help organizations to more effectively obtain important volunteer outcomes. We review the contribution of this study, before we add limitations and outline perspectives for future research and discuss the practical significance of our findings.

### *Contribution to academic research and research direction*

We proposed a new way to assess and calculate matches between motive importance and fulfillment. Our recommendation is inspired by the member value concept which has been applied in projects to investigate member engagement in cooperatives and associations. The member value concept defines the average match between importance and fulfillment scores as the TMV. It presumes a complement relation between motive importance and fulfillment. This differentiates the TMV from other approaches such as the functional approach which uses a multiplicative function. We argued that the multiplication of motive importance and fulfillment scores does not operationalize the matching principle accurately because the substitution effect would inflate total match indices. A direct

comparison of constructs is not possible because we used a different study design (see below under Limitations). Nevertheless, we allow explanation of the strong predictive capability of the TMI, as found in previous studies (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Güntert et al., 2015; Stukas et al., 2009), by the strong influence of the total fulfillment variable, as revealed in our sample. Although the TMI has a good predictive capability, we believe that there are alternative operationalization possibilities that reflect the matching principle more accurately. Our operationalization did not prove more explanation of the variance in volunteer outcomes. Therefore, we hold on to the suggestion to test alternative operationalization of the matching principle or to calculate different models. As such we see high potential in moderating or mediating effects between importance and fulfillment scores and outcome variables. Swanson et al. (2007) explored the relationship between the importance of motives, member relationship outcomes and the mediating effect of satisfaction and trust.

As found in other studies (Gruen et al., 2000; Güntert et al., 2015; Stukas et al., 2005; Stukas et al., 2009), our findings indicate that not all outcome variables can be placed under the same umbrella. This is signposted by differences in the explanatory contribution of independent variables across different outcome variables. Firstly, this finding may legitimize investigating volunteer outcomes from only one perspective, either the fulfillment or the importance of motives. However, it would be difficult to know which perspective the most accurate was. To date most research explained volunteer outcomes based on the characteristic constitution of volunteers, e.g. the importance they attribute to different motives (Garver et al., 2009; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Money et al., 2008; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2008; Tönurist & Surva, 2016; Wymer, 1997, 2002). Only some researchers investigated the relationship between motive fulfillment, satisfaction and positive future intentions (Brown et al., 2005; Finkelstein, 2006). With reference to our findings, it is questionable whether previous research has used the most accurate perspective to explain volunteer outcomes. This leads us to the second point: Secondly, the conclusion that different outcome variables are better explained by either the importance or the fulfillment of motives stresses the advantage of analyzing the interplay between importance and fulfillment. Some of our analyses point out the balancing effect of MV variables, for instance the comparison of the normal distribution.

Moreover, independently from the strong predictive power of the total fulfillment of motives, our data does also support the predictive capability of the total match, as found by Clary et al. (1998), Stukas et al. (2005) and Güntert et al. (2015). Therefore, we hold on to the recommendation that it may be beneficial to include both motive importance and fulfillment when analyzing important volunteer outcomes. Yet, this should be done with different approaches to operationalize the concept. The objective should be to develop models that obtain great explanatory power across different outcome variables. In this study, the operationalization of the matching principle and the subsequent calculation of the TMV only led to moderate predictive capability. We therefore call for further research based on the matching principle to test whether the here discussed finding occur in other contexts too and to test whether there is a more accurate operationalization of the matching principle and the member value concept.

In addition to the validation of the member value concept, we promoted the idea of adjusted MV indices. Adjusted MV indices assess which motives are of extraordinary importance and, when fulfilled equally well, disproportionately contribute to the TMV. Firstly, the discriminant and convergent validity of motive constructs, e.g. MV indices, were not obtained. Secondly, the relative value contribution of different motive-specific match indices only moderately contributed to the explanation of volunteer outcomes. Yet, the general direction of hypotheses was correct and in line with previous literature: understanding and values are the most important and the best fulfilled motives (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1996; Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Stukas et al., 2009), followed by self-enhancement, social, and career (Stukas et al., 2009).

Our data further confirms the finding from previous research that the organizational context influences volunteer outcomes (Güntert et al., 2015; Harp et al., 2016; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Neufeind et al., 2013; Oostlander et al., 2014; Snyder & Ickes, 1985; Stukas et al., 2009). In our sample, volunteers who perceive the organization as reliable with clearly comprehensible norms and structures are more satisfied and willing to promote their volunteer activity to others. Our data also confirms that volunteers display varying levels of participation over time. Our data does not confirm that the professional involvement of volunteers or aging are barriers to volunteer activity (Holmes & Slater, 2011; Taysir et al., 2013).

### *Practical implications*

To build quality relationships with volunteers is crucial, because satisfied volunteers are more likely to stay with the organization and to recommend their volunteer activity to friends and colleagues. To increase the commitment of existing volunteers and to increase their willingness to promote their volunteer activity to others is an effective and efficient alternative to costly recruitment activities (Gruen et al., 2000; Haivas et al., 2012; Schloderer et al., 2014; Shields, 2009; Snyder & Martin, 2004; Stukas et al., 2009). This is important because of the increasingly competitive environment and the societal individualization (Güntert et al., 2015; Harp et al., 2016; Stukas et al., 2009). Therefore, it is a valuable insight that there is a positive interplay of motive importance and fulfillment with satisfaction, the organizational involvement and volunteer activity. Results suggest a straight forward relation between the fulfillment of multiple important motives with important volunteer outcomes. To raise satisfaction and the promoter score, managers need to improve the overall level of motive fulfillment. To raise the working hours of volunteers, they need to recruit the right characters and bind them to the organization. An increased involvement may improve the relationship and raise the perception on how important and fulfilled different motives are. Specifically, we derive the following recommendations:

- To raise the satisfaction of volunteers and their willingness to promote their volunteer activity to friends, managers need to establish comprehensible norms and structures, communicate their goals and values, and create an environment in which individuals can fulfill a wide array of motives. However, to meet multiple motives simultaneously seems challenging. Managers of nonprofit-organizations should primarily focus on relations with volunteers for whom values and understanding are the most important and career is the least important motives. Investment in the fulfillment of values and understanding will pay off in satisfied volunteers who are willing to recommend their volunteer activity to friends.
- To raise the level of volunteering hours, managers of nonprofit-organizations should recruit volunteers that already have a broad spectrum of relevant motives, preferably intrinsic motives such as values and understanding. To keep different



motives relevant and fulfilled over time, managers should invest in their relationship with long-term volunteers to counter a possible detachment.

### *Limitations*

Weaknesses that limit our academic and practical implications are discussed hereinafter. Because of missing values, we could only include some of the 645 surveys for our analyses: answers from around 360 volunteers in the volunteering hours' model and answers from 490 volunteers in the satisfaction and the promoter score models. The sample is representative; however, findings represent the view of volunteers from one organization. The White Cross South Tyrol offers comparable services across the country and works with 32 de-central chapters in three main districts. Insights might well be generalized for other de-centralized organizations that combine volunteer activity and the work of professionals to offer services that help citizens in need (Rescue service, pastoral care and patient transport). Yet, results are only with consideration transferable to other kinds of nonprofit-organizations. Some researchers have found significant differences across the motivation of individuals over different kinds of organizations (Hager, 2014; Stukas et al., 2009).

We proposed an alternative way to assess volunteers' motive-specific match indices. There is one data collection at one point in time to reliably assess both the motive importance and fulfillment. The logic of the member value concept and the survey instrument make it more practically useful for organizations than earlier methods to assess and calculate motive-specific matches and the TMV. MV indices and the TMV can be easily calculated for any given volunteer. Although the survey instrument is more practically useful for organizations, there are some methodical drawbacks:

The motive importance and fulfillment scores are reported on the same page. This might influence response behavior and diminish actual differences between importance and fulfillment scores. Other studies were conducted by means of two surveys on two different dates (Güntert et al., 2015; Stukas et al., 2009). Using a different study design than comparative studies diminishes possibilities for comparison.

In alignment with Güntert et al. (2015); Stukas et al. (2009); Tschirhart et al. (2001), we decided to use an odd scale to measure importance and fulfillment scores of dependent variables. With odd scales, there is less likelihood of miscalculating midpoints. On odd scales, respondents with a neutral attitude can accurately map their attitude (Krosnick & Presser, 2010, p. 269). We assessed dependent variables on single-item measures and 10-point scales to align the measurement of dependent variables with previous research (Cripps et al., 2004; Gregory et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2006; Reichheld, 2003; Stukas et al., 2009; Swanson et al., 2007; Tschirhart et al., 2001).

The data consisted of self-reports from volunteers and members. Self-report data is subject to biases such as the tendency to exaggerate socially desirable behavior. In addition, relying on a single source of information increases common methods bias, which may conflate inter-correlations among the calculations in this study (Weijters et al., 2010). For the promoter score an additional problem presents that the “true” propensity to engage in word of mouth is unobserved (Anderson, 1998) and that its practical meaning may be overrated (Grisaffe, 2007; Schulman & Sargeant, 2013; Zaki et al., 2016). Yet, the construct has been analyzed with respect to the prediction of positive attitudes and supportive behavior in marketing of for-profit organizations (Brown et al., 2005; Reichheld, 2003, 2014; Schultz & Block, 2015; van Riet & Kirsch, 2010) and was in this study analyzed in combination with other outcome variables.

All outcome constructs were measured on single-item scales. Single-item measurement of attitudes, knowledge or abilities are discouraged because they may not adequately represent the content domain of conceptually complex constructs (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Fisher et al., 2016; Wanous & Hudy, 2001). However, Scarpello & Campbell (1983) and Fisher et al. (2016) compared single-item measurement of global job satisfaction with facet measurement and concluded that a global single item is more inclusive than summing across the facets. Other researchers legitimize the use of single-item measurement in regard to satisfaction and social support too (Blake & McKay, 1986; Cripps et al., 2004; Gregory et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2006; Stukas et al., 2009; Tschirhart et al., 2001). Practical reasons to consider the use of single items are to minimize respondent burden, reducing criterion contamination or to increase face validity: Perceived survey burden or survey length may have negative effects on responses rates (Fisher et al., 2016; Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). The general wording of

single-item measurement may facilitate more accurate interpretations because of the improved clarity and reduced confusion (Fisher et al., 2016).

Our approach to assess and create MV indices has some flaws too. We refer to VFI motives, but assessed these motives based on our own item battery. The corresponding item battery has so far not been explored in the volunteering context. The data did not confirm the structure of the VFI: Factor loadings are low and inter-factor relations are moderate to high. To find high correlations between MV indices is supportive for the idea of the TMV, however, discourages the idea of MV indices. The reason for this may be the multifaceted and interrelated characteristic of different motives as described by Suter (2012). Suter (2012) states, with reference to Maslow (1943), McClelland (2010) and Max-Neef (1991), that the concept of needs is a system in which all needs are interrelated and interactive. Each motive covers a wide range of aspects that have both complementary and substituting relations. Consequently, the constructs of different MV indices are neither explicitly formative nor reflective. Looking at the low factor loadings of MV items, it appears that some items cannot be viewed as totally independent or complementary to each other as required for formative constructs. For example, the fifth and sixth self-enhancement items “The volunteer activity is perceived as an important contribution to society” and “The volunteer activity is perceived as diversified activity” are more a formative complement to the other reflective self-enhancement items such as “The volunteer activity makes me feel successful” or “The volunteer activity makes me feel needed”. Another example are the understanding items “The volunteer activity means working in teams” versus “The volunteer activity lets me learn things through hands-on experience” or “I make useful experiences which contribute to my personal development”. In the attempt to cover the multifaceted aspects of the abstract constructs of the five MV indices, the distinction between measurement types was not clearly made. In regard to the problematic goodness-of-fit, future research might have to consider to either assess and derive constructs that obtain greater convergent validity – assessment of only one main aspect of each motive, thus coherent and convergent items – which may also foster the discriminant validity of the model or to further promote the idea of a TMV.

## Appendix 1<sup>st</sup> Project

Table 16: *Outcome variables*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Scales</b>
<b>Satisfaction</b>	
How satisfied are you, overall, with your volunteer activity at the White Cross South Tirol?	1 = not at all satisfied; 10 = very satisfied
<b>Promoter score</b>	
How willing are you to recommend the volunteer activity at the White Cross South Tirol to a friend?	1 = not at all to recommend; 10 = highly recommendable
<b>Volunteering hours</b>	
How many hours do you volunteer per year (on average)?	open question format

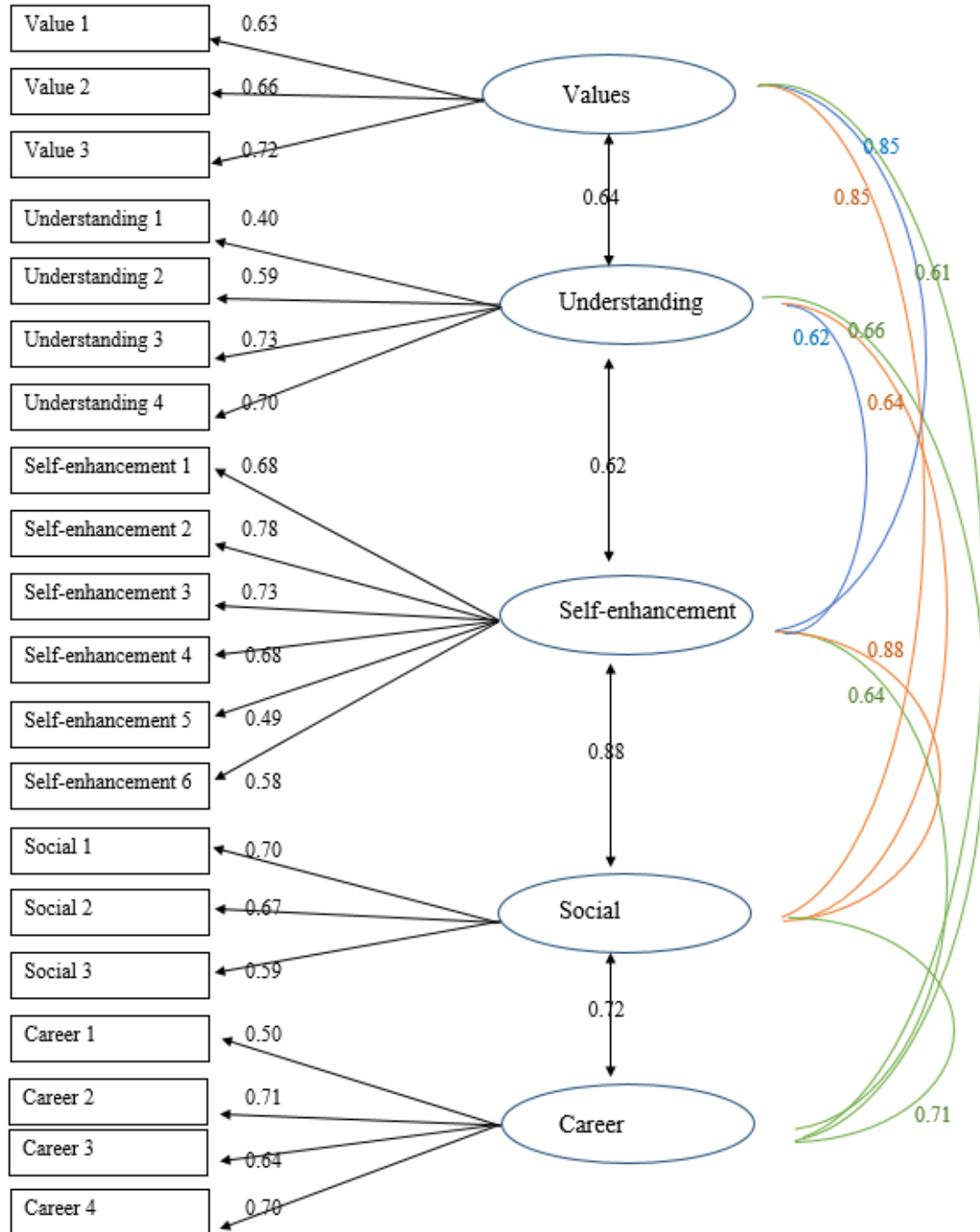
Table 17: *Member value indices*

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Scales</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<b>Values</b>			0.704
We share common values and norms at the White Cross South Tirol	Val 1	Importance: 1 = not at all important; 5 = very important Fulfillment: 1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very much fulfilled	
I see the volunteer activity at the White Cross South Tirol is important to society	Val 2		
I see the volunteer activity as well invested time	Val 3		
<b>Understanding</b>			0.759
The volunteer activity means working in teams	Und 1	Importance: 1 = not at all important; 5 = very important Fulfillment: 1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very much fulfilled	
I can participate in events where I can learn a lot	Und 2		
The volunteer activity lets me learn things through hands-on experience	Und 3		
I make useful experience which contribute to my personal development	Und 4		
<b>Self-enhancement</b>			0.813
The volunteer activity makes me feel successful	Self 1	Importance: 1 = not at all important; 5 = very important Fulfillment: 1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very much fulfilled	
I receive recognition for my volunteer activity	Self 2		
The volunteer activity makes me feel needed	Self 3		
Others perceive the volunteer activity as important activity	Self 4		
The volunteer activity is perceived as important contribution to society	Self 5		
The volunteer activity is perceived as diversified activity	Self 6		
<b>Social</b>			0.719
I can make friends and develop my social network through my volunteer activity	Soc 1	Importance: 1 = not at all important; 5 = very important Fulfillment: 1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very much fulfilled	
I can socialize with people with whom I share values and interests	Soc 2		
I perceive myself as an important part of the White Cross South Tirol	Soc 3		
<b>Career</b>			0.758
I can make leadership experiences	Car 1	Importance: 1 = not at all important; 5 = very important Fulfillment: 1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very much fulfilled	
I can contribute to the development of the White Cross South Tirol	Car 2		
I can actively participate in committees and working groups	Car 3		
I am supported to realize my own ideas	Car 4		

Table 18: Control variables

Variables	Scales	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Trust in the organization</b>		0.822
The volunteering activity is clearly structured	1 = not at all; 5 = very much	
They have a professional infrastructure at the White Cross South Tyrol		
The White Cross South Tyrol is a reliable organization		
The White Cross South Tyrol is a competent contact		
The White Cross South Tyrol has clear rules		
<b>Years of service</b>		
For how many years have you volunteered at the White Cross South Tirol?	open question format	
<b>Main activity field</b>		
What is your main volunteer activity at the White Cross South Tirol?	Rescue service = 1; others = 0 Pastoral care = 1; others = 0 Transport service = 1; others = 0	
<b>District</b>		
In which chapter do you volunteer?	Open question format Chapters are grouped into three dummy variables; West = 1, others = 0; Center = 1, others = 0; East = 1, others = 0	
<b>Gender</b>		
What are you?	Female = 1; Male = 0	
<b>Age</b>		
What is your age?	open question format	
<b>Professional status</b>		
What is your professional status?	No job = 0; Part-time job = 1; Full-time job = 2	

Table 19: Factor loadings from confirmatory factor analysis



Factor loadings are all significant with  $p < 0.001$

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Project

### **Organizational identification as mediator between member value and member engagement**

In this study, the relationship between members' self-reported member value and their engagement is explored. Economic, normative, relational, and self-actualization value drivers as (in)direct antecedents of organizational identification and member engagement are distinguished and explored.

The analysis reveals that member engagement is derived from identification together with self-actualization and relational value. Identification fully accounts for the relationship between relational value and member engagement, and it partially mediates the relationship between self-actualization value and member engagement. Identification derives from all four member value drivers. The data confirm the key roles of member value and identification in building quality relationships with members. Overall, the findings provide evidence that the member value construct – the congruence between the importance and fulfillment of members' relevant motives – is a promising construct to better understand member behavior in associations. The paper concludes with a discussion of results, directions for future research, and implications for practitioners.



### Introduction

Membership associations face the challenge of motivating members to participate actively and to assume responsibilities inside the organization. This is especially true for growing associations, which are often perceived as business-like. This is a problem because associations rely on members' supportive behavior, including their positive attitudes and engagement. Member support is the critical factor in sustaining associations' legitimacy and collective performance (Balassiano & Chandler, 2009; Brilliant & Young, 2004; Gruen et al., 2000; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Schloderer et al., 2014; Schmid et al., 2008; Wang & Ashcraft, 2014). Because member engagement is a crucial resource for associations it is important that association managers understand how to build solid relationships with their members. They must identify antecedents that drive members' identification with the association and lead to member engagement. The success of these relationships – the relative contribution and commitment of members – is influenced by the associations' ability to satisfy their members' relevant needs (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Inglis, 1994; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Preston & Brown, 2004). Members' psychological motivation together with their evaluation on how well they can fulfill their relevant needs through the affiliation explain their commitment and which member role they take on. Being able to assess and fulfill members' needs will therefore substantially alter the ability of association managers to develop solid relationships and increase the commitment and co-production of members (Arnett et al., 2003; Blau, 1964; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Schervish & Havens, 1997).

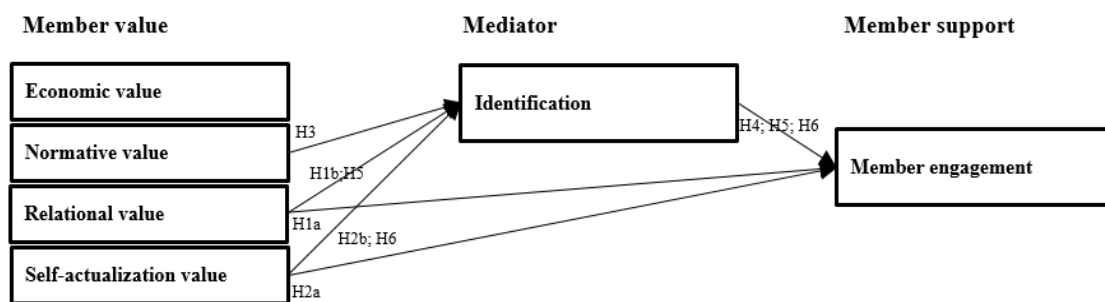
A comprehensive motive analysis will help association managers better understand which motives and motive fulfilment are relevant to which member category. Thereupon, they can effectively adapt their strategies to increase member engagement. Despite the relevance of this matter to the managerial agenda, academic research has so far put little effort into understanding engaged members' motives and how associations can fulfill their relevant motives (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999; Gruen et al., 2000; Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Rupp et al., 2014; Tschirhart & Gazley, 2014). Members' satisfaction with the fulfillment of their relevant motives is defined as their subjective member value. We expect member value to be the foundation of fruitful member relationships and a driver of member engagement. Another important relationship variable is identification. Organizational identification is a primary psychological

substrate for deep, committed, and meaningful relationships (Arnett et al., 2003; Taylor et al., 1991). We try to explain relationship success – the relative contribution of members – based on the value members obtain from their affiliation and their identification with the association.

### Research model development

Figure 10 presents the model of member engagement in a member association with all hypothesized paths. We try to contribute to a better understanding of member behavior by investigating how members’ satisfaction with the fulfillment of their relevant motives – their subjective member value – influences their behavior. We distinguish between economic, normative, relational, and self-actualization member value drivers as direct antecedents of identification and as (in)direct antecedents of member engagement. Members’ identification with the association is positioned as a mediator between member value and member engagement. In explaining the model, we begin by defining the constructs in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Model of member engagement with all hypothesized paths



### *Member engagement*

Member associations rely on a substantial base of supportive members for their legitimization and attainment of collective goals, their financial independence, and their competitive edge (Balassiano & Chandler, 2009; Gazley, 2013; Gruen et al., 2000; Hager, 2014; Knoke, 1981, 1990). In this paper, we investigate the dimension of member engagement as an important dimension of member support. Engaged members assume ownership of the organization and have both legal and fiduciary responsibilities. These formal roles in membership structures involve responsibility and obligation and are distinct from direct service volunteering (Inglis & Cleave, 2006). Engaged members ensure the representation of member interests and the ultimate control of the member base through their participation in the association's life and policy-making processes. They also support innovation and contribute to the creation of relational value. Member engagement is essential to the smooth functioning of associations' unique member structures and to the effectiveness of their actions (Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Knoke, 1986, 1988; Schwarz, 2005; Smith, 2010; Widmer, 1985).

### *Member value*

Members' relevant motives define which value they consume or co-produce. When their relevant motives are fulfilled through their consumption or co-production, they obtain value. The value members obtain is based on their sensations of satisfaction and subjective goal attainment from having their relevant needs fulfilled (defined as member value) (Suter, 2012). Member value is divided based on its individual drivers. This is important because different motives and forms of motive fulfillment result in different behavioral outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982). From prior academic research, we derive four kind of motivation that are relevant to individuals' decisions to enter an association and to participate actively.

The three most established motives are (Knoke & Adams, 1987; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Widmer, 1985):

1. Rational choice, which is subject to cost-benefit calculi that maximize members' expected utility.

2. Normative conformity, which reflects members' motivation to adhere to principled behavior for the attainment of collective goals.
3. Affective bonding, which reflects members' desire for emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community.

Another relevant motive is the following (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Searle, 1989):

4. Self-actualization, which reflects members' need for personal development, achievement, competence and autonomy within the sector-specific and associational realm.

Based on this segmentation of motivation, we can distinguish four member value drivers: Economic, normative, relational, and/or self-actualization value. The linkages between economic, normative, relational, and self-actualization motives and the resulting member value are displayed in Table 20 and hereinafter explained.

Members that are motivated by economic value seek economic prosperity through their member in exchange to the payment of their member fee. They obtain value from individually consumed services, consulting services and discount systems (Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Suter, 2012).

Members that are motivated by normative value attribute importance to the attainment of collective goals. Members consume normative value from the attainment of collective goals and/or co-produce normative value from their adherence to standards of conduct and principled behaviors. The more members adhere to standards of conduct, the higher is the collective performance and the more normative value results (Knoke & Adams, 1987; Olson, 1965).

Members that are motivated by relational and self-actualization value seek emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community as well as personal-development. The value they obtain is linked to their involvement in membership structures. Members must become an integral part of the association as a whole, for the attainment of relational and self-actualization value. In the case of relational value, members attribute importance to and obtain value from their

participation in the associational life: Joint social and recreational activities, information exchange among members, networking activities, as well as the sense of community and solidarity. The more members actively participate, the greater the co-production and reception of relational value (Bennett, 1999; Knoke, 1981; Suter, 2012; Zimmer, 2010).

Self-actualization value relate to constitutional elements of membership structures such as membership engagement and member-based ownership. Democratic membership structures create a context of trust in which individuals can learn, exert power, and experience personal achievement (Bennett, 2000; Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Widmer, 1985). Members obtain intrinsic value from working towards something they believe in, or from developing their skills through engaging in committees and other voluntary functions (Inglis, 1994; Searle, 1989; Seyd & Whiteley, 1992; Widmer, 1985). Members obtain value from the felt sense of personal-development, achievement, competence and autonomy through their active participation and engagement within the community (Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Walston & Khaliq, 2012; Widmer, 1985).

Table 20: Motivation and member value drivers

Psychological motivation	Sample items	Member value drivers
<p><b>Rational choice</b></p> <p>Cost-benefit calculi that maximize individuals expected utility.</p>	<p>The membership improves my economic state.</p> <p>The association supports the acquisition of critical resources such as financial contributions, subsidies, volunteers, and professionals.</p>	<p><b>Economic value</b></p> <p>Value from positively perceived ratio between costs and individually consumed value by the member.</p> <p><i>Members consume.</i></p>
<p><b>Normative conformity</b></p> <p>Motivation to adhere to principled behavior for the attainment of collective goals.</p>	<p>The association contributes to the development of normative standards of professional conduct in the sector-specific realm.</p> <p>The association diffuses sector-specific initiatives and innovations.</p> <p>The association is strong in collective bargaining and lobbying activities.</p>	<p><b>Normative value</b></p> <p>Value from normative conformity and collective activity performance.</p> <p><i>Members consume and/or co-produce.</i></p>
<p><b>Affective bonding</b></p> <p>Desire for emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community.</p>	<p>The association helps me to exchange ideas and build productive relationships with other members</p> <p>The membership helps with the creation and strengthening of my network.</p>	<p><b>Relational value</b></p> <p>Value from affective bonding and productive relationships among members.</p> <p><i>Associations and members co-produce.</i></p>
<p><b>Self-actualization</b></p> <p>Need for personal-development, achievement, competence and autonomy within the sector-specific and associational realm.</p>	<p>The membership enhances my self-determination and autonomy.</p> <p>I can take on responsibilities and have opportunities for personal-development.</p>	<p><b>Self-actualization value</b></p> <p>Self-actualization and self-enhancement within the sector-specific and associational realm through active participation and engagement within the community.</p> <p><i>Members produce.</i></p>

Source: Following (Bennett, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Inglis, 1994; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Noel & Lockett, 2014; Searle, 1989; Widmer, 1985).

### *Identification*

Identification is defined as the degree of overlap between the member's self-schema and the organization's schema (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Moriano et al., 2014). Identification is the extent to which a member accepts or identifies with the goals, values, and principles of the association, as well as with the success and failure of the collectivity (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Dutton et al., 1994; Rho et al., 2015; Schwabenland, 2010; Stoel & McClintock, 2004). Conceptually, identification is comparable to commitment. It is, as well, a motivational phenomenon through which actual behavioral outcomes, such as positive word of mouth or member engagement, are maintained. It is an important aspect of relationship quality and comprises those characteristics that give its members a sense of distinctiveness, pride and connectedness. Thus, strong identification provides the association with a strategic advantage (Arnett et al., 2003; Knoke, 1981; Rho et al., 2015; Schloderer et al., 2014; Simon et al., 1998; Stoel & McClintock, 2004).

### *Linking member value with member engagement and identification*

Findings from prior academic research indicate that members who are interested in relational and self-actualization value are more likely to engage in associations than members who are interested in economic or normative value (Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Hager, 2014; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Widmer, 1985). This seems logical because active involvement in membership structures is a prerequisite for members to obtain relational and self-actualization value. Members need to be involved in membership structures to obtain relational and self-actualization value. Members who attribute importance to associational life and who participate actively are likely to co-produce and obtain relational value. They obtain value from their increasing sense of solidarity, belonging, and social approval. Social ties and social approval become stronger with ongoing positive (social) exchanges among members and between members and the association (Arnett et al., 2003; Knoke, 1981; Suter, 2012; Zimmer, 2010). This relational value is likely to enhance members' intrinsic motivation for extra co-production (Arnett et al., 2003; Blau, 1964; Knoke, 1986, 1988; Schwabenland, 2010). Schervish & Havens (1997) state that member support derives from identification and that

identification derives from relationships and participation. Additionally, Babchuk & Booth (1969) and Gruen et al. (2000) recommend that associations invest in social bonds among members to increase their co-production. We therefore expect that relational value intrinsically motivates members to engage in membership structures.

Hypothesis 1a: Relational value positively influences member engagement.

Social ties and social approval become stronger with ongoing positive (social) exchanges among members and between members and the association (Arnett et al., 2003; Knoke, 1981; Suter, 2012; Zimmer, 2010). With ongoing positive exchanges, members start to define the values and goals of the association as their own (Arnett et al., 2003; Blau, 1964; Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004; Knoke, 1986, 1988; Oostlander et al., 2013; Schwabenland, 2010). We therefore expect that relational value increases members' identification with the association.

Hypothesis 1b: Relational value positively influences identification.

The attainment of self-actualization value is linked to intrinsic motivation and active participation in membership structures. Members who are motivated by self-actualization are likely to be engaged because they can only fulfill their relevant motives through active participation. They fulfill their needs for personal-development, achievement, competence and autonomy when member participation and engagement within the community are accessible. They obtain value from engagement in working committees and formal leadership roles through self-esteem enhancement (Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Walston & Khaliq, 2012). Self-esteem enhancement reinforces their intrinsic motivation to participate and engage in membership structures (Arnett et al., 2003; Oostlander et al., 2013). We therefore expect that not only the motive of self-actualization but also the value from self-actualization are positively linked to member engagement.

Hypothesis 2a: Self-actualization value positively influences member engagement.

Active participation in membership structures increases the probability of positively perceived exchanges, socialization and internalization processes. The accumulated member value from the felt sense of solidarity, control, competence, and autonomy is



likely to increase members' identification with the organization (Arnett et al., 2003; Knoke, 1988; Oostlander et al., 2013; Schervish & Havens, 1997). We therefore expect a positive relationship between self-actualization value and identification.

Hypothesis 2b: Self-actualization value positively influences identification.

The motivation to obtain economic and normative value is distinct from the intrinsic motivation linked to relational and self-actualization value. Instrumental motivation has rarely been observed with member engagement (Bennett, 2000; Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Hager, 2014; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Markova et al., 2013; McCroskey & O'Neil, 2010). Transaction-oriented members see the association as a business selling a service. They wish to maximize their economic value through the consumption of direct services or advantages from collective activity performance (Bennett, 2000; Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Knoke & Adams, 1987; McCroskey & O'Neil, 2010; Olson, 1965). The fulfillment of economic motives does not require that they participate in associational life or conform to standards of conduct. The same is true for the fulfillment of normative motives. Members who do not adhere to common norms, as well as non-members, may take advantage of collective goal attainment. However, the collective performance and normative value increase, the more members adhere to standards of conduct. We do not expect a direct link between instrumental member value and member engagement and presume that transaction-oriented members are less involved in membership structures. The absence of qualitative social exchanges and social ties is likely to discourage members' identification with the association. This is especially true for the exchange of economic value. We therefore do not expect a direct link between economic value and identity. For normative value findings from prior academic research indicate that it is an important complement to the intrinsic gains that bind members to their associations and define their level of identification (Bennett, 2000; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Gruen et al., 2000; Hager, 2014; Taylor et al., 1991). Bhattacharya & Sen (2003) state that organizational identity is, among other things, shaped by an organization's mission and vision. This means that an association's collective goal attainment, the normative value, influences its organizational identity. Therefore, we expect that normative value does enhance members' identification with the association.

Hypothesis 3: Normative value positively influences identification.

### *The mediating role of identification*

Identification as a congruence of goals and values between individuals and organizations has theoretically and empirically been linked to positive attitudes, intentions to remain with an organization, and supportive behaviors (Arnett et al., 2003; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Gruen et al., 2000; Kang, 2016; Knoke, 1986; Leiter & Newton, 2010; Moriano et al., 2014; Preston & Brown, 2004; Schwabenland, 2010; Taylor et al., 1991; Wang & Ashcraft, 2014). We therefore expect a positive relationship between identification and member engagement.

Hypothesis 4: Identification positively influences member engagement.

In addition, we expect identity to be a key mediating construct between member value and member engagement. The value members obtain from social rewards or self-esteem enhancement is likely to strongly influence their identification with the association and their level of engagement (Arnett et al., 2003; Gruen et al., 2000; Kang, 2016; Moriano et al., 2014; Schervish & Havens, 1997; Wang & Ashcraft, 2014). Members who obtain relational and self-actualization value feel confirmed in their status as a member of the identity group. This reflects positively on self-evaluation and enhances their self-esteem. Self-esteem enhancement increases members' identification with the association and motivates them to successfully perform the behaviors that are associated with the organization's identity and its success (Arnett et al., 2003; Kang, 2016; Rho et al., 2015).

In particular, relational value (social approval, social ties and respect) is likely to increase members' willingness to support the organization through enhanced identification (Arnett et al., 2003; Schervish & Havens, 1997; Taylor et al., 1991). A strong identification with the identity group does lead to self-esteem enhancement and influences the way members perceive their engagement in formal leadership roles: they feel an intrinsic motivation to conform to common standards and support the collectivity instead of feeling obliged to engage because of social pressure (in-group peers) (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Oostlander et al., 2013). Because of the strong link between relational value, identification and member engagement, we expect that identification fully mediates the effect of relational value on member engagement.

Hypothesis 5: Identification fully mediates the relationship between relational value and member engagement.

Additionally, the value obtained from self-actualization reflects positively on self-evaluation and enhances members' self-esteem. Self-esteem enhancement increases their identification with the association and intrinsically motivates them to further support the association (Arnett et al., 2003). Knoke (1981) links the experienced senses of control, competence, and autonomy with member commitment and higher levels of member engagement. Members' involvement in democratic processes and formal functions positively influences their identification and reinforces their willingness to engage. Despite this link, we expect identification to only partially mediate the relationship between self-actualization value and member engagement. Previous research results point at a strong direct link between self-actualization value and member engagement (Hager, 2014; Inglis, 1994; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Oostlander et al., 2013; Searle, 1989). It appears reasonable that self-actualization motives are main drivers over group identification.

Hypothesis 6: Identification partially mediates the relationship between self-actualization value and member engagement.

### Method

#### *Data collection and sample*

Data were collected from a German social welfare association that operates on the national, regional, and local scale. The national peak association has 15 regional peak associations which themselves have 280 local offices. They aim at achieving greater impact for their member organizations by engaging in critical public policy and collective bargaining activities. They provide a platform for member organizations to collectively influence public policies at local, state, and national levels. Besides, they offer direct services which help their member organizations to reduce costs or manage and lead more effectively. They also provide a platform where colleagues from the field can collaborate and exchange ideas as well as problem-solving strategies.

The sample was drawn from the regional peak association of Baden-Württemberg (State in the South-West of Germany). This peak association covers 38 districts and operates 11 local associations. It has 830 member organizations, each of which runs several welfare facilities. They cover the sub-sectors of the elderly and nursing care, adolescence and migration, handicapped people, citizen engagement, self-help, health, families and children, crisis intervention and livelihood security, work and qualification.

A first beta version of the survey was discussed with an internal expert committee to align item formulations – based on the concept of needs (Suter, 2012) to measure the multifaceted member value – with the organizations' context. In November 2015, the president sent a link to the online questionnaire together with a call for participation to all member organizations and their facilities. In total 430 representatives of member organizations participated. We excluded representatives who are not chief executive officers of a member organization or one of its facilities. Chief executive officers decide on whether they want to enter an association and on how much they actively participate in or show commitment to the association. Based on this preselection, we used a total of 311 completed surveys for the analyses.

## *Measurements*

### Member engagement

Member engagement refers to members' engagement in voluntary leadership roles: chairs, board membership, committee participation, or other formal roles. We asked members to select the leadership roles in which they were engaged. Through expert interviews, we assessed the average working time linked to these leadership roles. Based on the average time expended on all functions we derived factors that reflect the relative effort of each task compared to the mean value. Time factors calculated based on all expert specifications reflect the overall insight that an engagement in the role of “board member in the national association” requires double the working time, and an engagement in a “leadership function of a member consulting group” requires half the working time of an engagement in other formal roles. Table 21 lists the assessed functions with the corresponding time factor. A factor of one means that the time effort corresponds to the mean value. The factor of 0.5 means that the time effort for the respective engagement is lower than the average time effort. A factor above 1 means that the time effort is higher than the average.

*Table 21: Engagement levels*

<b>Posts and functions</b>	<b>Factor</b>
Chairperson in the national association	2
Member of the working committee	2
Chairperson in the regional association	1
Member of a support team	1
Member of the advisory board	1
Member of the technical committee	1
Vice chairman of the technical committee	1
Leader of a member support team	0.5

### Member value

We used 5-point scales to assess either importance or fulfillment of motive statements, in alignment with previous motivational research (Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Tschirhart et al., 2001). We considered the 5-point scale as an alternative odd number in comparison to 2-point or 7-point scales used in other studies (Clary et al., 1998; Güntert et al., 2015; Knoke, 1988; Stukas et al., 2009). Respondents were asked to rate, on a 5-point scale, the importance (1 = not at all important; 5 = very important) and the experienced fulfillment (1 = not at all fulfilled; 5 = very fulfilled) of 24 items. These 24 items cover a wide range of needs that underlie the following four motives: rational choice, normative conformity, affective bonding, and self-actualization. We use the lower of the two scores [ $\min(\text{Importance}, \text{Fulfillment})$ ] to assess each member's member value. On the one hand, members who are not motivated by a specific motive will not obtain the respective value, regardless of the association's ability to fulfill the motive. On the other hand, members who aspire to a specific value may not obtain it, unless they experience satisfactory fulfillment of their motive.

### Identification

Identification was measured by assessing two aspects of the multifaceted construct. The first aspect is the extent to which a member identifies with the goals, values, and principles of the association (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Dutton et al., 1994; Moriano et al., 2014; Rho et al., 2015; Schwabenland, 2010; Stoel & McClintock, 2004). Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they identify with the goals and values of the association (1 = not at all; 10 = very strongly) on a 10-point scale. The second aspect is the extent to which a member identifies with the success and failure of the collectivity and felt pride to be member of the organization and would therefore help the association to acquire new members (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Kang, 2016; Mandal, 2014; Moriano et al., 2014; Reichheld, 2003; Rho et al., 2015; Swanson et al., 2007). Respondents were asked to rate how likely it was that they would recommend a membership in the respective association to a friend or colleague on a 10-point scale (1 = not at all likely; 10 = extremely likely).

### Control variables

Criteria for the inclusion of control variables are theoretical and practical. Based on a list of possible control variables, the internal expert committee determined which variables were most likely to influence intended analyses. Control variables included in the models are the kind of respondents in regard to the organization level they represent, membership tenure, organization size and the kind of sub-sector represented:

We assessed whether respondents are chief executive officers who represent a member organization or one of its facilities. This is measured as a dummy variable with 0 = Management facility and 1 = Management member organization. Membership tenure was assessed with two variables: Membership tenure of representatives and the membership tenure of the member organization. The size of the member organization was measured by the number of employees.

Controls for sub-sectors were consolidated into the categories “elderly people and nursing care” and “work and qualification”. According to the internal expert committee, most member organizations are comparable with respect to their interests, expectations, and satisfaction. Exceptions are member organizations that cover the fields of work and qualifications and elderly people and nursing care. According to experts, member organizations that cover the field of work and qualifications have a slightly more distinct business than other member organizations. Member organizations that cover the field of elderly people and nursing care are reported to be less satisfied with their membership for different reasons. For instance, its members pay the highest membership fee. Thereupon, they have high expectations on the associations’ performance. However, exactly in this field the association down-sized the member support and consulting services. We therefore include two dummy variables that control whether the member organization covers the field of elderly people and nursing care, respectively work and qualification.

### Analyses

#### *Descriptive statistics*

We examined the distribution of the dependent variable. Information on the distribution of the population is not available. Out of 311 respondents, 89 are engaged (= 29%). Among those, 48 are engaged in one post, 21 in two, 13 in three, 4 in four, and 3 in five functions. Because of the high percentage of non-engaged members, the dependent variable member engagement is slightly left skewed. The mediating variable identification is almost normally distributed, with only a slight right skew. More members report medium to high than very low identification.

We determined the scale reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Values range from 0.81 to 0.86 and confirm that internal consistencies of scales are obtained (Table 22). Table 22 lists items that represent the four member value drivers: Economic value, normative value, relational value, and self-actualization value. Table 23 lists variables included in the analyses, their mean and median values, standard deviations, and Spearman correlation coefficients. Correlation coefficients support anticipated relationships: member engagement positively correlates with identification, relational and self-actualization value. Identification positively correlates with all member value drivers. Member values are positively correlated among each other. Correlation coefficients between 0.67 and 0.73 are critical to multicollinearity. We therefore conduct regression analyses that independently assess the explanatory power of the four member value drivers.



Table 22: *Member value scale reliability*

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Member value drivers</b>
<b>0.803</b>	<b>Economic value</b>
	I consider this association as a competent partner
	The association supports me with the acquisition of critical resources such as financial contributions, subsidies, volunteers, and professionals
	The membership safeguards the existence of my organization
	The membership improves my economic condition
<b>0.862</b>	<b>Normative value</b>
	I can benefit from the association's collective bargaining and lobbying activities
	I can participate in social exchanges among members that contribute to sector-specific innovations
	The association contributes to the development of normative standards of professional conduct in the sector-specific realm
	I can actively contribute to the creation of the sector-specific political realm
	The association contributes to the development of a positive image of social welfare organizations
<b>0.863</b>	<b>Relational value</b>
	The membership facilitates the exchange of information and experiences among members
	I feel safe in the membership community
	The association helps me to exchange ideas and build productive relationships with other members
	The membership helps with the creation and strengthening of my network
	I feel a sense of community and solidarity among members
<b>0.813</b>	<b>Self-actualization value</b>
	I can diffuse sector-specific initiatives and innovations through my engagement
	I can take on responsibilities and for personal development
	The membership enhances my self-determination and autonomy
	I can participate in attractive social and recreational activities
	I consider a membership in this association to be meaningful
	I can access information that increases my competence
	I gain a sense of achievement and acknowledgement through my participation in the membership association

Table 23: Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

Variables		Range	M	SD	Correlations											
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Member engagement	Number of posts multiplied by time effort factor	0.50	0.96												
2	Member value mean	1 - 4.83	2.96	0.89	0.15**											
3	Economic value	Mean / items with scale 1 - 5	3.07	0.90	0.04	0.83**										
4	Normative value	Mean / items with scale 1 - 5	3.13	0.87	0.07	0.88**	0.72**									
5	Relational value	Mean / items with scale 1 - 5	3.24	0.86	0.12*	0.85**	0.71**	0.73**								
6	Self-actualization value	Mean / items with scale 1 - 5	3.09	0.81	0.22**	0.86**	0.67**	0.76**	0.73**							
7	Identification	Mean / items with scale 1 - 5	6.87	2.41	0.39**	0.54**	0.42**	0.44**	0.55**	0.51**						
8	Management member organization	1 = CEO member organization 0 = CEO facility	(1)	0.43	0.24**	0.14*	0.05	0.03	-0.01	0.06	0.07					
9	Membership tenure individual	0 - 45	10.22	8.17	0.26**	0.07	-0.04	-0.05	-0.05	-0.10	0.04	0.07				
10	Membership tenure member organization	1 = 1 - 3 years 2 = 4 -10 years 3 = 11 years and more	(3)	0.60	0.08	-0.10	-0.14*	-0.17**	-0.14*	-0.11	-0.08	0.08	0.38**			
11	Member organization: Number of employees	1 = 1 - 5 employees 2 = 6 - 50 employees 3 = 51 - 100 employees 4 = 101 - 500 employees 5 = more than 500 employees	(2)	1.19	0.16**	-0.01	-0.14*	-0.17**	-0.18**	-0.12*	-0.14*	-0.05	0.10	0.19**		
12	Member organization: Elderly people/nursing	1 = Elderly people / nursing care 0 = Other activity field	(0)	0.50	-0.04	-0.13*	-0.19**	-0.18**	-0.17**	-0.23**	-0.20**	0	0.07	0.14*	0.35**	
13	Member organization: Work / qualifications	1 = Work / qualification 0 = Other activity field	(0)	0.43	0.09	0.11	0.03	-0.03	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.05	-0.03	-0.07	0.03	-0.18**

N = 311, M = Mean/(Median), SD = Standard deviation, Significant correlation: \*\* = p(t)<.01 / \* = p(t)<.05

### *Regression analyses*

We ran a multiple regression analysis to explain member engagement by member value drivers. Table 24 reports the results from the multiple regression analysis, which confirm hypotheses 1a and 2a. The relational value contributes with a change in  $R^2$  of 0.02, and a standardized Beta-coefficient of 0.14 ( $p = 0.011$ ), to the explanation of member engagement. The self-actualization value contributes with a change in  $R^2$  of 0.06, and a standardized Beta-coefficient of 0.25 ( $p < 0.001$ ), to the explanation of member engagement. Economic and normative value drivers do not significantly contribute the explanation of the variance in members' engagement. Changes in  $R^2$  between Models 0, 3 and 4 indicate that member value drivers only moderately contribute to the explanation of why members engage compared to control variables. Important control variables to explain member engagement are the type of chief executive officer and his membership tenure, as well as the type and size of the member organization.

Table 25 shows the multiple regression analysis used to test the direct link between identification and member value drivers. The results support the proposed hypotheses 1b, 2b, and 3. The assumption that economic value does not contribute to the explanation of identification is not confirmed. All member value drivers are positively related to identification. Standardized Beta-coefficients are: Economic value 0.42 ( $p < 0.001$ ), normative value 0.45 ( $p < 0.001$ ), relational value 0.57 ( $p < 0.001$ ), and self-actualization value 0.49 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Compared to the model that explains member engagement by member value drivers (Table 24), member value predominantly and control variables only marginally contribute to the explanation of the variance of identification.

Table 24: Multiple regression analysis to explain member engagement by member value drivers

Member engagement Variable	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	$\beta$	p(t)	Economic value		Normative value		Relational value		Self-actualization value	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
Management member organization	0.19	< 0.001	0	0.187	0	0.179	0	0.165	0	0.150
Membership tenure individual	0.28	< 0.001	0	0.275	0	0.277	0	0.248	0	0.224
Membership tenure member organization	-0.03	0.614	0.77	-0.017	0.78	-0.015	0.79	0.002	0.97	0.032
Member organization: Number of employees	0.21	< 0.001	0	0.217	0	0.206	0	0.216	0	0.190
Member organization: Elderly people/nursing care	-0.13	0.024	0.04	-0.124	0.04	-0.106	0.08	-0.095	0.10	-0.095
Member organization: Work/qualifications	0.02	0.712	0.62	0.028	0.61	0.030	0.59	0.035	0.51	0.015
Economic value			0.07	0.217						
Normative value					0.09	0.099				
Relational value							0.14	0.011		
Self-actualization value									0.25	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.16	< 0.001	0.17	< 0.001	0.17	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001	0.22	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup></b> <i>in comparison to Model 0</i>			0		0.01		0.02		0.06	
<b>N = 293</b>										

Table 25: Multiple regression analysis to explain identification by member value drivers

Identification Variable	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	$\beta$	p(t)	Economic value		Normative value		Relational value		Self-actualization value	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
Management member organization	0.12	0.039	0.12	0.027	0.12	0.019	0.09	0.069	0.08	0.128
Membership tenure individual	0.18	0.004	0.15	0.007	0.17	0.003	0.18	0.001	0.12	0.028
Membership tenure member organization	-0.19	0.002	-0.12	0.035	-0.13	0.017	-0.14	0.009	-0.14	0.014
Member organization: Number of employees	0.06	0.380	0.09	0.112	0.10	0.085	0.04	0.405	0.07	0.202
Member organization: Elderly people/nursing care	-0.12	0.062	-0.06	0.286	-0.07	0.225	0	0.960	-0.04	0.459
Member organization: Work/ qualifications	0.02	0.793	0.06	0.255	0.05	0.303	0.05	0.272	0.04	0.388
Economic value			0.42	< 0.001						
Normative value					0.45	< 0.001				
Relational value							0.57	< 0.001		
Self-actualization value									0.49	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.07	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.27	< 0.001	0.38	< 0.001	0.30	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup></b> <i>in comparison to Model 0</i>			0.16		0.19		0.30		0.23	
<b>N = 288</b>										

The multiple regression analysis in Table 26 explains member engagement by identification. Hypothesis 4 is supported: identification predicts member engagement after controlling for the influence of control variables. The total variance explained by the model as a whole is 24.8% ( $p < 0.001$ ). The standardized Beta-coefficient is 0.31 ( $p < 0.001$ ).

*Table 26: Multiple regression analysis to explain member engagement by identification*

Member engagement Variable	Modell 0		Modell 1	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
Management member organization	0.19	0.001	0.15	0.005
Membership tenure individual	0.28	< 0.001	0.22	< 0.001
Membership tenure member organization	-0.03	0.645	0.03	0.575
Member organization: Number of employees	0.21	0.001	0.19	0.001
Member organization: Elderly people and nursing care	-0.13	0.028	-0.10	0.094
Member organization: Work and qualifications	0.02	0.720	0.02	0.772
Identification			0.31	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.16	< 0.001	0.25	< 0.001
<b>Change in R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Modell 0</b>			0.09	
<b>N = 293</b>				

To test the mediating effect of identification between the relational and self-actualization value drivers and member engagement, we followed the instructions of Baron & Kenny (1986). The three-variable system assumes two causal paths feeding into the outcome variable. Based on previous models we can confirm that the independent variables affect the mediator as well as the dependent variable and that the mediator affects the dependent variable. The comparisons that allow us to test the final mediation effects are reported in Table 27 and Table 28. Table 27 shows the comparison between the original model (to

explain member engagement by the relational value) and the model in which identification as mediator is controlled. Reported values show that identification fully mediates the relationship between relational value and member engagement. Relational value has no effect when identification is controlled (Hypothesis 5 confirmed).

*Table 27: Mediating effect of identification on relational value and member engagement*

Member engagement  Variable	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	p(t)	Relational value		Identification and Relational value	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
Management member organization	0.19	0.001	0.18	0.001	0.15	0.005
Membership tenure individual	0.28	< 0.001	0.28	< 0.001	0.22	< 0.001
Membership tenure member organization	-0.03	0.645	-0.02	0.793	0.03	0.571
Member organization: Number of employees	0.21	0.001	0.21	< 0.001	0.19	0.001
Member organization: Elderly people/nursing care	-0.13	0.028	-0.11	0.077	-0.10	0.078
Member organization: Work/qualifications	0.02	0.720	0.03	0.590	0.01	0.825
Relational value			0.14	0.011	-0.05	0.469
Identification					0.33	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.16	< 0.001	0.18	< 0.001	0.25	< 0.001
<b>Change R<sup>2</sup></b> <i>in comparison to Model 0</i>			0.02		0.09	

N = 288

Table 28 lists the original model (to explain member engagement by the self-actualization value) and the model in which identification as mediator is controlled. The explanatory contribution of the self-actualization value is lower when identification is controlled. Thus, identification partially mediates the relationship between self-actualization value and member engagement (Hypothesis 6 confirmed).

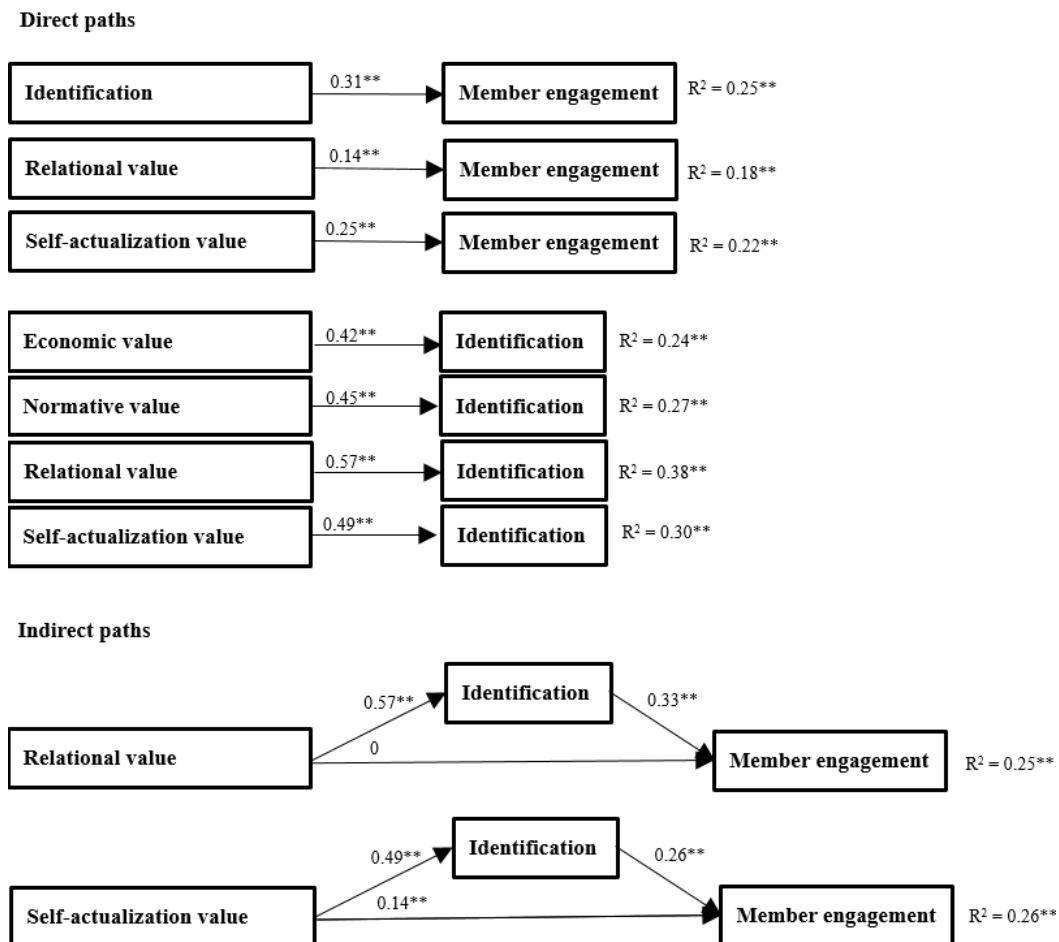
*Table 28: Mediating effect of identification on self-actualization value and member engagement*

Member engagement  Variable	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	p(t)	Self-actualization value		Identification and Self-actualization value	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
Management member organization	0.19	0.001	0.17	0.002	0.15	0.005
Membership tenure individual	0.28	< 0.001	0.25	< 0.001	0.22	< 0.001
Membership tenure member organization	-0.03	0.645	0.00	0.969	0.04	0.536
Member organization: Number of employees	0.21	0.001	0.22	< 0.001	0.20	< 0.001
Member organization: Elderly people/nursing care	-0.13	0.028	-0.09	0.100	-0.08	0.148
Member organization: Work/qualifications	0.02	0.720	0.04	0.509	0.02	0.644
Self-actualization value			0.25	< 0.001	0.14	0.026
Identification					0.24	< 0.001
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.16	< 0.001	0.22	< 0.001	0.26	< 0.001
<b>Change R<sup>2</sup> in comparison to Model 0</b>			0.06		0.10	
<b>N = 288</b>						



In the conclusion of our analyses, we present the model of member engagement with supported direct and indirect paths (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Model of member engagement with significant direct and indirect paths



## Discussion

In this paper, we provided a model to aid in the understanding of member behavior in associations. To better understand members' supportive behaviors, we investigated how members' satisfaction with the fulfillment of their relevant motives influences member behavior. The congruence between importance and fulfillment of members' relevant motives reflects the member value that members obtain. The model integrates four different member value drivers and organizational identification. Although the explained

variances in the reported models are only moderate, the data does confirm the proposed model.

The data confirms the direct and indirect effects of self-actualization value on member engagement. The better self-actualization needs are fulfilled, the stronger the reinforcement of the intrinsic motivation to engage. The effect of self-actualization value on member engagement is partially mediated through identification. Self-esteem enhancement increases members' identification with the association, which motivates them to successfully perform the behaviors that are associated with the association's identity and success.

The data also supports the indirect relationship between relational value and member engagement. Identification fully accounts for the relation between relational value and member engagement. Through ongoing social exchanges and the attainment of relational value, members feel confirmed in their status as a member of the identity group. The sense of social belonging and the value derived from social approval, social ties and respect increase their identification with the association and their intrinsic motivation to co-produce relational value.

The data also supports the central role of identification as the primary psychological substrate for the type of committed and meaningful relationships that are important to member support. Identification is positively influenced by all member value drivers. However, relational and self-actualization values are the strongest drivers of identification. Internalization and socialization exchanges are stronger when members are actively involved and seek relational and self-actualization value.

### *Contribution to academic research*

We aimed to contribute to a better understanding of member behavior by investigating the relationship between member value drivers, identification, and member engagement. Although the explanatory powers of different models are only moderate, the findings generally show that the member value construct – the congruence between importance and fulfillment of members' relevant motives – is a promising construct to better understand member behavior.

The findings support previous research on the positive relationship between the importance of relational and self-actualization motives and member support. Members who are interested in relational and self-actualization value are more likely to engage in associations than members who are interested in economic value. As in other studies, normative motives are important but not the differentiating force between different member segments. Economic value is positively related to identification, which previous research did not suggest. As presumed there is a mediation between relational and self-actualization value, identification and the level of engagement. This finding contributes to academic research by pointing to the importance of the self-actualization motive and the central role of identification. The positive effect on member engagement from self-actualization value and identification were, in comparison to other variables, particularly strong. These constructs have so far received little attention in non-profit research. Future research in the non-profit sector should look into the relationship between self-actualization and relational value, identification and member engagement.

### *Practical implications*

For association managers, we conclude that delivering member value is fundamental to building flourishing relationships with members. Investing in solid relationships is important to cultivate sufficient member support. The sense of satisfaction from motive fulfillment fosters members' identification with associational values and goals and leads to member engagement. Association managers should emphasize the creation of relational and self-actualization value. Building quality relationships is especially promising with members who seek relational and self-actualization value. The fulfillment of their relevant motives allows the building of meaningful relationships that are highly likely to result in member engagement.

The motivation of members who seek relational and self-actualization value are distinct from other membership motivation. The desire for emotional attachment to other members and people within the sector-specific community as well as the desire for personal-development, achievement, competence and autonomy are intrinsic in nature. This exchange-oriented motivation differs from a more transaction-oriented exchange. The attainment of relational and self-actualization value requires that members become

an integral part of the association as a whole. Transaction-oriented members desire to maximize their economic value through the consumption of direct services or advantages from collective activity performance. They do not need to participate in associational life or conform to standards of conduct to obtain member value. It therefore makes sense that these member segments voice lower identification and are less likely to be engaged.

For association managers, it is especially beneficial to address relational and self-actualization motives. These member segments are more inclined to long-lasting relationships and member engagement. To fulfill their intrinsic motives, association managers must preserve unique characteristics and principles of associations. They need to offer attractive social and networking activities in order to attract a broad participation. It is important that members feel a sense of community and are encouraged to develop productive relationships among themselves. Association managers also need to establish democratic processes and participative membership structures. Only when members perceive opportunities and are able to engage in formal functions, they can fulfill their self-actualization motives. Thus, maintaining the unique characteristics of membership structures help to deliver relational and self-actualization value and to build long-lasting supportive relationships.

We recommend that association managers not only create opportunities to obtain relational and self-actualization value but also that they actively promote these opportunities. The promotion of economic value often predominates marketing campaigns, because the promotion of tangible value is seemingly easier. Nevertheless, the findings indicate how important other membership aspects are. Consequently, strategic marketing activities that endorse relational and self-actualization aspects of the membership should obtain more attention. Active members seek a sense of solidarity, shared values and norms, self-actualization and democratic membership structures more than they seek economic value. Therefore, the promotion of relational and self-actualization value may help associations to change their image as sole service providers and attract (potential) members who are more likely to support the association.

### *Limitations and research direction*

We present and discuss weaknesses that limit our analyses before we conclude with a perspective for future research. The number of engaged members in this study is low compared to the large number of participants. Regression analyses are sensitive to distortion that can result from low numbers. A higher number of engaged members would have improved the regression analysis. Furthermore, data is collected from one association. Findings can only be generalized to a limited extent. Hager (2014) reported differences between two fields of professional associations and states that future research should pay attention to field differences and resist overgeneralization. Additional research should therefore be conducted to further verify the member value approach and results.

The chosen member value approach implies that member value drivers strongly correlate among each other and with the overall member value. Due to multicollinearity, we calculated the explanatory power of member value drivers in separate models. The strong correlation between the overall member value and single member value drivers does not allow the calculation of meaningful models that include more than one member value variable. The four member value drivers are likely to overlap and members who generally hold a positive attitude towards the association are more likely to obtain greater member value. This assumption is supported by the fact that correlations are high among items as well as among member value drivers. Our four abstract member value constructs overlap and only have small differences that can hardly be grasped. Therefore, neglecting to control for the overall member value leads to an overestimation of the influence of single member value drivers. This effect may be fostered by the calculation of different independent regression analyses. On the one hand, a structural equation model could have been more reasonable not to overestimate the influence of single member value drivers. Such a method would have accounted for the complex interaction effects that underlie our member value drivers (Chin, 1998; Hoyle, 1999; Sardeshmukh & Vandenberg, 2016). On the other hand, single regression analyses are less complex in regard to model conditions and assumptions. They are more comprehensible and transparent and more likely to lead to reliable results in the case of small samples (Chin, 1998; Cohen et al., 2013; Hoyle, 1999).

It can also be argued that a structural equation model could have brought other advantages too. Structural equation modeling is the favored approach to test mediation and

moderation (Hair et al., 2012; Sardeshmukh & Vandenberg, 2016), despite its complex model assumptions and conditions such as the dependency on large samples (Hoyle, 1999). Above the issues of complexity and the requirement for large samples in structural equation modeling, we have other good reasons to use the casual step procedure by Baron and Kenny (1986). Nevertheless, we will reflect most apparent criticism and discuss advantages of structural equation modeling. Zhao et al. (2010) criticize the mediation logic as proposed by Baron & Kenny (1986). According to their criticism, the full mediating effect of identification between relational value and member engagement must be interpreted cautiously. They reason that the strength of mediation should not be measured by the lack of the direct effect when controlling the path between the independent and mediating to the dependent variable. With reference to Iacobucci, (2008), they state that full mediation is seldom because it is probable that it will be accompanied by other direct effect(s). They further argue that the significant direct effect between independent and dependent variable point to “the possible existence of some omitted second mediator” (Zhao et al., 2010, p. 201). This concerns complementary mediation. Accordingly, the test of the direct effect between independent and dependent variable is redundant. This means that our hypotheses with respect to the direct effects are redundant (Zhao et al., 2010). We cannot exclude secondary direct and indirect effects based on our data and analyses. Probable second and third mediators should be pursued in future research. However, we can fend off their criticism regarding competitive mediations. Competitive relationships between member value drivers, identification and member engagement are not reasonable.

Structural equation modeling, furthermore, has the advantage of testing the significance between different equations. The applied z-test, as suggested by Baron & Kenny (1986), does not imply a significant difference between the different equations (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Zhao et al., 2010). It is also argued that the automatic procedures with structural equation modeling allow differentiation between different concepts more reliably (Byrne, 2016; Zhao et al., 2010). However, this refers more to the measurement on single item scale than on the methodological procedure. In our analyses, we captured the mediating variable on a 2-item scale. This is not per se bad, as some researchers confirm with their specific analyses (Fisher et al., 2016; Ole Borgen, 2001; Rho et al., 2015; Scarpello & Campbell, 1983), however, single-item measures do not allow testing

the validity of different concepts used to calculate mediation effects. Additional items to assess organizational identification could have improved the validity of this variable and our overall model (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Moriano et al., 2014; Stoel & McClintock, 2004; Zhao et al., 2010). On that note, we critically acknowledge that we might have over-interpreted the meaning of the second identification item (promoter score) (Grisaffe, 2007; Schulman & Sargeant, 2013; Zaki et al., 2016). Because of the 2-item scale, we did not test the discriminant validity of identification versus member value drivers or member engagement. This leads us to the next limitation. Structural equation modeling software offer testing the validity of constructs and correct for measurement errors. This could have improved our calculations of, and brought additional insights to, our constructs (Byrne, 2016; Chin, 1998; Sardeshmukh & Vandenberg, 2016).

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Project

### Member value optimization and organization design in multisite business associations

This paper addresses the important question of the right balance between centralized and de-centralized incentive provision. It analyses how multisite business associations should optimally spread the provision of incentives between central and de-central chapters. The optimal centralization of incentive provision is assessed from a member perspective. It will therefore maximize the value members obtain from their membership. This is important to attract a broad member base and sufficient membership participation and engagement.

The investigation bases on data generated by a Swiss contractors' association. Data reveal that there are two distinct member segments: 1. Members who expect a de-central provision of exchange-based incentives. For this member segment, it is important to socialize and self-actualize in de-central chapters. 2. Members who expect a central provision of instrumental incentives. This member segment seeks to attain economic prosperity from centrally provided instrumental incentives. A point of discussion remains that non-engaged and engaged members have different expectations.

Conclusions are drawn for practitioners who seek to optimize the value they provide to their members. On the one hand, business associations should exploit the unique value potential from exchange-based incentives in de-central membership structures. This will safeguard their unique value proposition and niche position in the membership market. On the other hand, business associations should centralize the provision of instrumental incentives. This will bring twofold benefits by increasing the value transaction-oriented members obtain from instrumental incentives and the organizational efficiency.



### Introduction

Business associations represent the interests of their members that are businesses or entrepreneurs in a particular sector, be it in relation to favorable economic conditions or sector-specific issues (Bennett, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010). The collective activity is the principal goal of almost all business associations and key part of their democratic membership structures (Bennett, 2000). The collective activity performance depends on high membership numbers, participation and engagement. High membership numbers legitimize associations in the public and political realm. Membership participation and engagement enable the well-functioning of democratic membership structures and the effectiveness of action (Bennett, 1999; Knoke, 1988). Business associations must propose member value to attract a broad member base and to attain sufficient membership participation and engagement (Bennett, 2000; Knoke, 1988; Markova et al., 2013; Suter, 2012). Business associations provide member value when they offer incentives that fulfill their members' important needs. They undermine member value when they do not meet members' expectations in regard to the fulfillment of their important needs. Business associations must therefore identify members' important needs and their expectations in regard to the place of need fulfilment. Specifically, members' expectations regarding the kind of incentives and the place of incentive provision must be identified. Kind, quality, and place of incentive provision interrelate because of the relationship between incentives and constitutional elements of membership structures. Meeting members' expectations concerning the provision of incentives with high importance will maximize the value members obtain from their membership (Byrne et al., 2012; Schulz-Walz, 2006; Suter, 2012).

To date, academic research has only investigated what kind of incentives members expect from their membership (Bennett, 2000; Knoke, 1988; Markova et al., 2013; McCroskey & O'Neil, 2010; Noel & Lockett, 2014), leaving the interrelationship with organization design unacknowledged. In the absence of prior academic research, we will assess members' expectations on whether incentives should be centrally or de-centrally provided. Therewith we can identify the optimal centralization of incentive provision. The alignment of the organization design with members' expectations will maximize the value members obtain from incentive provision. In our investigation, we will distinguish members according to the importance they appoint to different incentives and their

membership engagement. Insights on different member segments will help business associations to develop an organization design that optimizes member value creation among a broad member range.

### Theoretical foundation

#### *Organization design*

The organization design of multisite associations emerges from their history and the nature of activity (Melville, 2010; Taylor & Lansley, 2000). The most common strategies are bottom-up and top-down development. The decision of a larger association to structure in multiple layers of semi-autonomous chapters often emerges from the need for a local presence and responsiveness (Taylor & Lansley, 2000; Young & Faulk, 2010b). Federations operate as unified corporations with their de-centralized chapters tightly held and better characterized as “branch offices” (Oster, 1992). Bottom-up developments emerge from the need of local associations to reduce uncertainty in their task environments and to increase their efficiency through federated resources (Taylor & Lansley, 2000; Young & Faulk, 2010a; Zimmer, 2010). In de-central structural arrangements, local chapters are autonomous and the central association is substantially confined to a support role. Autonomous member chapters may voluntarily choose to follow guidelines or policies defined by the central chapter, but retain discretion to deviate from those policies (Oster, 1992). Taylor and Lansley (2000) examined both top-down and bottom-up strategies. They identified tensions that most associations need to address at some point in time. One major tension concerns “centralization” as one of the elements of organization design by Weber (1947). It is the “balance between the economies of scale and consistency of quality associated with larger central bodies on the one hand and flexibility and responsiveness claimed for smaller organizations on the other” (Taylor & Lansley, 2000, p. 422). To find the right balance is challenging. The prosperity of most business associations mainly depends on the provision of member value and secondly on their efficiency. Members and their engagement are the core element of any membership association (Bennett, 2000; Knoke, 1988; Markova et al., 2013). We therefore assess the optimal centralization of incentive provision from a member perspective. It is the degree

of centralization that aligns with members' expectations and therefore maximizes the value they obtain from their membership.

#### *Incentive provision*

Multisite business associations are characterized by organizational membership. This means that business representatives (members) consume services from the association or are involved in the associational life. According to Bennett & Ramsden (2007) behavior of representatives from small and medium sized businesses can be interpreted as the behavior of single individuals. We can therefore rely on incentive categories that are used to explain individual behavior in membership associations: economic, normative, social, and self-actualization incentives (Clark & Wilson, 1961; Knoke & Adams, 1987; Widmer, 1985). Incentive categories are arranged in accordance with the instrumentality of motivation. Table 29 displays incentive categories, their characteristics, and sample items. Incentive categories and their characteristics are hereinafter explained:

Economic and normative incentives are categorized as instrumental incentives because of their extrinsic and transaction-oriented nature. Members can consume value without becoming involved. Economic incentives cover the rational aspects of members' decisions to join a business association. Members are motivated by the economic prosperity they can reach through their membership (Knoke & Adams, 1987; Seyd & Whiteley, 1992). Examples for economic incentives from business associations are free legal services, education, as well as access to sample documents, publications and market statistics (Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Markova et al., 2013; Noel & Luckett, 2014).

Normative incentives concern the collective activity. For the collective activity performance, normative conformity is not a prerequisite but favorable. The more members adhere to common values and principles, the higher the collective activity performance (Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Seyd & Whiteley, 1992). However, members with low commitment and non-members (free riders) can also benefit from collective activity performance (Bennett, 2000). In consequence, intrinsic aspects of normative incentives are often out-ruled by extrinsic aspects such as economic prosperity from lobbying and collective bargaining. The business associations' advocacy influence and

legitimation in the political and public realm creates value for most businesses in the sector (Bennett, 1999; Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; McCroskey & O'Neil, 2010).

Social and self-actualization incentives are categorized as exchange-based incentives because of their intrinsic nature. To obtain value from social or self-actualization incentives members need to participate and engage. Their needs are satisfied by internal reward from participating in the activity itself (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Examples for social incentives are network and friendship opportunities and recreational activities. Members obtain intrinsic value from in-group solidarity, their participation in the associational life, and the development of long-term formal and informal relationships (Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Markova et al., 2013; Noel & Lockett, 2014).

Self-actualization incentives relate to constitutional elements of membership structures such as membership engagement and member-based ownership. Democratic membership structures create a context of trust in which individuals can learn, exert power, and experience personal achievement (Bennett, 2000; Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Widmer, 1985). Members obtain intrinsic value from working towards something they believe in, or from developing their skills through engaging in committees and other voluntary functions (Inglis, 1994; Searle, 1989; Seyd & Whiteley, 1992; Widmer, 1985).

Table 29: *Incentive categories and characteristics*

Incentive categories		Characteristics	Sample items
<b>Instrumental</b>	Economic incentives	Private goods in the form of direct services to members that are consumed individually without any externalities.	<p>Access to documents for daily operations (e.g. template excel sheets or cost accounting sheets)</p> <p>Access to the economic forecast, forecast of the public-sector budget and the annual location determination</p> <p>Provision of training and education services</p> <p>Legal consultation services</p>
	Normative incentives	Public goods for the benefit of members. Non-members may take advantage as well. The more members adhere to common principles and values, the higher is the collective performance.	<p>Development of a strong image through regular public relation and advocacy campaigns, branding and marketing activities</p> <p>Collective bargaining (e.g., concerning the standard employment contract for national and foreign businesses)</p> <p>Coordination and transparency activities (code of ethics, norms and values: sample contracts, fixed minimum wages, working hours practice)</p>
<b>Exchange-based</b>	Social incentives	Joint social and recreational activities that are reserved for members only and therefore exclude free riders.	<p>Fostering of friendly and beneficial cooperation, fellowship, fairness, and reciprocity through the organization of recreational activities, professional excursions, regular meetings, and assemblies</p> <p>Coordination and organization of regular meetings to exchange experiences and information</p> <p>Fostering of common interests and contacts</p>
	Self-actualizing incentives	Self-actualization and self-esteem enhancement within sector-specific and associational realm through participation and engagement within the community.	<p>Support and implementation of operative marketing activities to encourage and draw young professionals (e.g., school attendances, profession fairs)</p> <p>Guarantees of democracy and member-based ownership through members' opportunities for participation and influence in committees, posts, and functions</p> <p>Fostering of members' political engagement</p>

Source: Following (Bennett, 1999, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Inglis, 1994; Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Markova et al., 2013; Noel & Lockett, 2014; von Schnurbein, 2008; Widmer, 1985).

## Research question development

### *Optimal centralization of exchange-based incentive provision*

Self-actualization and social incentives depend on constitutional elements of membership structures. Constitutional elements of membership structures are regular meetings, the associational life, democratic processes in respect to members' ultimate control, or the possibility to contribute to the collectivity (Bennett, 2000; Hager, 2014; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Knoke, 1988; Smith, 2010; Widmer, 1985). An important factor that influences how much value members obtain from constitutional elements of membership structures is the organization design. De-central chapters, for instance, are important for maintaining the special relationship with members and the uniqueness of the associational life. The uniqueness of the associational life relies on social interaction, group cohesion, and reciprocity. These are weaker in larger, central chapters because of the remoteness of friends and the emergence of inner and outer circles (Holmes & Slater, 2011; Putnam, 2001; Skocpol, 2003; Zimmer, 2010). The size influences members' perception on how difficult it is to become an active part. To meaningfully contribute to the collectivity is perceived more difficult in larger chapters (Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Kyriacou, 2010). The perceived loss of the democratic rules of coordination and control in larger chapters suppresses the unique value from the context of trust and the connectedness felt in membership structures (Jussila & Tuominen, 2010; Skocpol, 2003). We therefore presume that members for whom social and self-actualization incentives are important expect a de-central provision of exchange-based incentives:

- Hypothesis 1: The higher the importance of social incentives to a member, the more likely the member expects a de-central provision of social incentives.
- Hypothesis 2: The higher the importance of self-actualization incentives to a member, the more likely the member expects a de-central provision of self-actualization incentives.

*Optimal centralization of instrumental incentive provision*

The organization design also influences the value members obtain from instrumental incentives. A central coordination of marketing activities and the use of federated resources are cited with an efficient and effective instrumental incentive provision. Higher degrees of centralization help to generate economies of scale and scope regarding collective bargaining and lobbying activities, business services and other support functions. A central coordination and control of brand management fosters the development of a strong cooperative and corporate identity (Flanagan & Taliento, 2004; Melville, 2010; Taylor & Lansley, 2000; Young & Faulk, 2010b). However, a centralized incentive provision may not only allow efficient work but also convey a professionalized impression (Holmes & Slater, 2011). Larger, centralized chapters are associated with good service quality and efficiency. The link between centralization and professionalization is especially relevant to members for whom instrumental incentives are particularly important. They see the business association as service provider and are less appreciative of unique elements of membership structures. These members seek high service quality, credibility, and political voice at minimum cost (Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Holmes & Slater, 2011). We therefore expect that:

- Hypothesis 3: The higher the importance of normative incentives to a member, the more likely the member expects a central provision of normative incentives.
- Hypothesis 4: The higher the importance of economic incentives to a member, the more likely the member expects a central provision of economic incentives.

*Members' engagement as influence on the optimal centralization of incentive provision*

Democracy and member-based structures often change with growing size and centrality of associations. The influence usually shifts from voluntary to paid management (Bennett, 2000; Rego & Varanda, 2010). Larger chapters often employ more paid staff than smaller chapters. Generally, they are more professionalized. This conveys the impression that membership contribution and the ability to influence outcomes are low. The so-called diminishing impact of contribution rises with the size of the chapter (Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Holmes & Slater, 2011; Kyriacou, 2010). This is particularly undesirable for members who engage in de-central chapters. These obtain value from contributing to the collectivity and fellowship among members. Therefore, they may want to maintain principles of member-based ownership and participation in de-central chapters. Particular interests may also be an issue here. For many engaged members it is important to maintain the autonomy of their de-central chapters (Rego & Varanda, 2010). In contrast, most non-engaged members seek a transaction-oriented exchange. A centralization of incentive provision does not infer a loss of member value to them, because exchange and relationships in de-central chapters are not important (Gallagher & Strauss, 1991; Holmes & Slater, 2011). They are likely to expect higher degrees of centralization for a more professionalized incentive provision. We therefore presume contradictory expectations between non-engaged and engaged members. Hence:

Hypothesis 5: Members are more likely to expect a de-central incentive provision with increasing engagement in de-central chapters.



### Method

#### *Data collection and sample*

The Contractors Association of Switzerland (SBV) is a multisite business association for owner-managers from small and medium sized businesses in the field of building construction, civil engineering, and specialized construction activities. It operates at the national level and has 21 independent chapters in different states (in Switzerland called “Canton”). Cantonal chapters, on their part, are split into local chapters. Chapters are dispersed geographically and conform in terms of their business focus and activities. The national office is more confined to a support role. De-central chapters are the *raison d’être* and the controlling force. They represent the interests and fulfill the needs of the member base.

Most de-central chapters of the SBV have recorded decreasing membership numbers due to market consolidation. In consequence, the management must save costs and simultaneously maintain the provision of member value. They are interested to develop an organization design that allows cost savings through centralization to the extent that the creation of member value is sustained. Therefore, we constructed a survey to assess which incentive categories must be provided centrally and which de-centrally to align with members’ expectations. This aimed at identifying the member value optimal centralization of incentive provision.

We generated data by means of one chapter, The Contractors Association of Grison (GBV). The survey was sent to all 137 members of the GBV in May 2014. To animate member participation, email reminders were sent and telephone calls were made. Out of 137 members, 88 participated. This corresponds to a response rate of 64.2%.

#### *Measurements*

Measurement details are hereinafter explained and reported in the Appendix Table 32 and 33. We start with the explanation of the two important variables of the optimal centralization of incentive provision and the importance of incentive provision. We continue with the explanation of members’ engagement in de-central chapters.

To promote common interests of members, the GBV undertakes manifold tasks. These can be captured by means of 25 incentives. The 25 incentives provided by the GBV, were categorized into economic, normative, social and self-actualization incentives. The assignment of incentives to the four categories was made by comparing the 25 incentives with incentives that previous research has linked to the different categories (Following Bennett, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Inglis, 1994; Knoke, 1988; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Markova et al., 2013; Noel & Lockett, 2014; von Schnurbein, 2008; Widmer, 1985). Categories and their corresponding items are listed in the Appendix Table 32 and Table 33.

#### Optimal centralization of incentive provision

The optimal centralization of incentive provision was measured by asking members to vote whether they expect a central or de-central incentive provision of 25 incentives. It is a binary variable: de-central incentive provision (= 1), central incentive provision (= 2). Higher values represent a higher degree of expected centralization.

#### Importance of incentives

The importance of incentives was measured by asking members to report the importance (1 = not at all important, 5 = very important) they appoint to 25 incentives. We used the same list of incentives that we deployed for the assessment of the expected centralization of incentive provision.

We conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), based on the importance scores, to evaluate how well data fits the presumed structure of the four incentive categories. Factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are provided in Table 32 and Table 33. Convergent validity was analyzed with AVE. Convergent validity is obtained for economic, normative and self-actualization incentive categories with AVE above 0.5 (Byrne, 2016). To determine the scale reliability as to evaluate the internal consistency of scales we looked at Cronbach's Alpha (Table 32 and Table 33). Internal consistencies of scales are obtained, except for categories of economic optimal centralization scale and social importance scale. The internal consistency of scales could not have been improved with the elimination of single items. Because their Cronbach's Alphas are just underneath the limit, we continued with the intended constructs. Cronbach's Alphas for the importance scales are: economic incentives (0.77), normative

incentives (0.78), social incentives (0.63), and self-actualization incentives (0.80). Cronbach's Alpha for the centralization scales are: economic incentives (0.67), normative incentives (0.81), social incentives (0.78), and self-actualization incentives (0.78). In the case of discriminant validity, the shared variance between the categories and its items should be larger than the variance shared with other categories (Byrne, 2016). Such is not the case for our categories. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.58 is indicative of a poor fit of the model to the data. Problematic is in particular the category of social incentives, which is why we continued with our categories (see Limitations).

### Members' engagement in de-central chapters

Members' engagement in de-central chapters, ranges from 1 = non-engaged, over 2 = partially engaged, to 3 = highly engaged members. This corresponds to common engagement categories: 1) non-engaged members who show low levels of involvement; 2) partially engaged members who show some level of involvement; 3) highly engaged members who engage in president posts, the board, or commissions.

## Analyses

### *Descriptive statistics*

Table 30 displays descriptive statistics and Spearman correlation matrix of variables used in the analysis. From 88 participants four members are engaged in the national chapter (SBV) and 40 members are engaged in the GBV. We want to assess the influence of members' engagement in de-central chapters and exclude members who engage in the national chapter. From members who engage in de-central chapters, 13 are partially and 27 are highly engaged. In regard to the optimal centralization of incentive provision data report that members expect a de-central incentive provision of exchange-based incentives. An optimal provision of instrumental incentives lies between a central and de-central incentivization. The ambiguity of the latter value might be explained by the stronger influence of contradictory expectations between non-engaged and engaged members. Hereinafter presented results indicate that transaction-oriented members expect a central and engaged members a de-central incentive provision.

### *Regression analyses*

We used multiple regression analyses to test our hypotheses. Results are reported in Table 31. Data support hypothesis 1 that members are more likely to expect a de-central provision of social incentives, the more importance they appoint to social incentives. Data also support hypothesis 2 that members are more likely to expect a de-central provision of self-actualization incentives, the more importance they appoint to self-actualization incentives. In general, the more importance a member appoints to exchange-based incentives, the more relevant becomes a de-central incentive provision. Hypothesis 3 is not supported, although the hypothesized path is correct. Data reveals that members expect a central incentive provision of normative incentives, the more importance they appoint to economic incentives. The importance members appoint to economic incentives also influences their expectation of economic incentive provision. Members who appoint importance to economic incentives are more likely to expect a central incentive provision. Hypothesis 4 is supported. We conclude that members who appoint importance to economic incentives expect a central provision of instrumental incentives.

Hypothesis 5 is only partially supported. Hypothesized paths are correct, but only significant regarding self-actualization, normative, and economic incentives. With increasing engagement in de-central chapters, members are more likely to favor a de-central instrumental and self-actualization incentive provision. This result can also be interpreted as non-engaged members expecting a higher centralization of incentive provision.

Table 30: Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

	Variables	Range	M	SD	Correlations								
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Optimal centralization of economic incentive provision	1 = de-central 2 = central	(1.5)	0.30									
2	Optimal centralization of normative incentive provision	1 = de-central 2 = central	(1.5)	0.32	0.64**								
3	Optimal centralization of social incentive provision	1 = de-central 2 = central	(1)	0.21	0.40**	0.31**							
4	Optimal centralization of self-actualization incentive provision	1 = de-central 2 = central	(1)	0.25	0.34**	0.23*	0.36**						
5	Importance of economic incentives	1 = not at all important 5 = very important	4.24	0.56	0.13	0.18	-0.16	-0.28*					
6	Importance of normative incentives	1 = not at all important 5 = very important	4.01	0.44	0.01	0.08	0.02	-0.18	0.51**				
7	Importance of social incentives	1 = not at all important 5 = very important	3.70	0.62	-0.13	-0.02	-0.20	-0.12	0.48**	0.57**			
8	Importance of self-actualization incentives	1 = not at all important 5 = very important	4.09	0.72	-0.01	0.08	-0.15	-0.36**	0.58**	0.56**	0.46**		
9	Members' engagement in de-central chapters	1 = non-engaged 2 = partially engaged 3 = highly engaged	(1)	0.89	-0.34**	-0.32**	-0.15	-0.34**	0.18	0.18	0.31**	0.27*	

N = 81, M = Mean/(Median), SD = Standard deviation, Significant correlations \*\* = p(t)<.01 / \* = p(t)<.05

Table 31: Results of multiple regression analysis for the expected centralization of incentive provision

Variable	Model 1 Optimal centralization of social incentive provision		Model 2 Optimal centralization of self-actualization incentive provision		Model 3 Optimal centralization of normative incentive provision		Model 4 Optimal centralization of economic incentive provision	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
Importance of economic incentives	0.07	0.66	-0.15	0.31	0.31	0.04	<u>0.30</u>	<u>0.05</u>
Importance of normative incentives	0.34	0.04	0.12	0.42	<u>0.20</u>	<u>0.21</u>	0.11	0.49
Importance of social incentives	<u>-0.31</u>	<u>0.03</u>	-0.02	0.90	-0.02	0.86	-0.13	0.33
Importance of self-actualization incentives	-0.27	0.11	<u>-0.33</u>	<u>0.04</u>	-0.19	0.24	-0.10	0.53
Members' engagement in de-central chapters	<u>-0.09</u>	<u>0.44</u>	<u>-0.24</u>	<u>0.03</u>	<u>-0.36</u>	<u>&lt; 0.001</u>	<u>-0.39</u>	<u>&lt; 0.001</u>
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.14	< 0.001	0.24	< 0.001	0.2	< 0.001	0.21	< 0.001
<b>N = 77</b>								

### Discussion

In this study, we assessed the optimal centralization of incentive provision from a member perspective. The optimal centralization of incentive provision aligns with members' expectations on whether incentives should be centrally or de-centrally provided. It is the centralization of incentive provision that maximizes the value members obtain from their membership. Data reveals that there are two distinct member segments: 1. Members who expect a de-central provision of exchange-based incentives. For this member segment, it is important to socialize and self-actualize in de-central chapters. 2. Members who expect a central provision of instrumental incentives. This member segment seeks to attain economic prosperity from centrally provided instrumental incentives. Data also reveals that non-engaged and engaged members have contradictory expectations. Members who are engaged in de-central chapters expect a de-central incentive provision. Vice versa, non-engaged members expect a central incentive provision. This is particularly the case for the provision of self-actualization, normative, and economic incentives.

### *Contribution to academic research and research direction*

In line with existing literature, our findings confirm that an optimal provision of exchange-based incentives requires a de-centralized incentive provision. A de-central provision of social and self-actualization incentives taps the member value potential from constitutional elements of democratic membership structures such as membership participation, fellowship, reciprocity, and member-based ownership. Membership participation and member-based ownership are especially relevant to engaged members. We correctly presumed that these expect a de-central incentive provision. It is likely that they seek to maintain constitutional elements of democratic membership structures and the autonomy of their de-central chapter.

We can add to existing literature new findings regarding members' expectations of the optimal centralization of instrumental incentive provision. Our data report that members who appoint high importance to economic incentives expect a central provision of instrumental incentives. Non-engaged members also expect a central provision of instrumental incentives. A central incentive provision is especially attractive to

transaction-oriented members. We can expect that they link centralization with higher degrees of professionalization. They seek better service quality, more credibility and political voice, as well as lower levels of membership participation and engagement from centralized chapters.

Future research should investigate contradictory expectations from non-engaged and engaged members in more detail. It is important to understand conflicting motives to avoid a disproportional loss of member value. This is especially relevant for the creation of member value for engaged members. Engaged members are highly interested in social and self-actualization incentives. Conflicting interests exist for: a) non-engaged members who expect a central provision of exchanged-based incentives; and b) engaged members who expect a de-central provision of instrumental incentives. On the one hand, engaged members could link a centralized incentive provision with a loss of member value. This would be the case when the value provision from different incentives interrelate (supplementary and complementary effects). In this scenario, business associations should reassess which incentives interrelate. They should only centralize the provision of incentives that are not linked to the value from de-centrally provided incentives. On the other hand, engaged members' particular interests could be the driving force behind their desire for a de-centralized incentive provision. In this scenario, their main motive would be to safeguard their control and autonomy. A centralization of instrumental incentive provision would not undermine other member values. Nevertheless, underlying motives and latent fears should be addressed to keep engaged members motivated. Associations will not be able to meet expectations of all member segments. However, they can address unmet motives and shape members' expectations by effective communication. This is important to remain attractive to a broad member base.

#### *Practical implications*

Our study results lead to vital managerial implications. According to the member value theory, association managers should primarily be interested in meeting members' expectations on the provision of incentives that are important to them. Associations managers are recommended to de-centrally provide exchange-based incentives and centrally provide instrumental incentives. Therewith they maximize the member value



for different member segments. This is important to attract a broad member base and sufficient membership participation and engagement. A de-central provision of exchange-based incentives will optimize the value provision for engaged members and members who seek to socialize and self-actualize in de-central chapters. This is relevant to reinforce membership participation and engagement, which is needed for the well-functioning of democratic membership structures and the effectiveness of action. An increased efficiency through centralization at the expense of democratic principles is not recommendable. This may lead to membership disengagement and lapsing. We recommend association managers to invest in the uniqueness of the associational life and democratic rules of coordination and control in de-central chapters. Components of membership structures give business associations a certain context of trust and form special market relationships. These differ from the setting in profit-organizations. This can be seen as an investment in the business associations' niche position on the membership market and long-term competitive strength.

A central provision of instrumental incentives will optimize the value provision for non-engaged members and members who seek economic prosperity from instrumental incentives. Literature review indicates that a central provision of instrumental incentives offers diverse efficiency potentials; business associations can increase their efficiency through centralizing their branding and image campaigns, lobbying and collective bargaining activities, the provision of business services and support functions. In consequence, a central provision of instrumental incentives will increase the value creation based on enhanced service quality, advocacy influence, as well as a stronger cooperative and corporate identity. Thus, a central provision of instrumental incentives will bring twofold benefits. It will increase the value created based on instrumental incentives to transaction-oriented members and the organizational efficiency.

Yet, contradictory expectations from non-engaged and engaged members remain a point of discussion. Business associations are recommended to address underlying motives and latent fears. Effective communication from association managers may shape expectations. Over time, certain expectations become institutionalized or socially constructed. Non-engaged members should be convinced of the necessity and advantages from a de-central provision of exchanged-based incentives. Engaged members should be

convinced of the necessity and advantages from a central provision of instrumental incentives.

#### *Limitations*

Consideration should be given to several limitations of this study. Firstly, to confirm transferability and generalizability further research should be run. The sample is rather small. In addition, research across different kind of associations would contribute to the generalizability of our findings. Moreover, the range of activities and services of Swiss business associations is primarily comparable to business associations from countries in which membership is non-compulsory. Research in business associations from different countries would therefore contribute to the transferability of our findings. Secondly, we assumed that recommended changes in the organization design result in an efficiency increase and member value optimization. Further research should assess whether assumed interrelationships are true. This would be an important contribution to literature which underpins our assumptions but lacks empirical verification. Thirdly, we did not assess non-engaged and engaged members' motives behind their contradictory expectations. To explore members' motives in a qualitative analysis would provide further insights. This would allow to make proper recommendations to practitioners.

A methodical limitation is the validity and reliability of incentive categories. The assignment of the 25 incentives, as provided by the GBV, to the four categories was made by comparing the 25 incentives with those that previous research has linked to the different categories (Following Bennett, 2000; Ebbinghaus & Koos, 2010; Hager, 2014; Inglis, 1994; Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Noel & Lockett, 2014; Widmer, 1985). These 25 incentives reflect those that the GBV provides to its members. Therefore, incentive categories include varying numbers of incentives. With AVEs slightly above 0.5, the convergent validities are only moderate (Byrne, 2016). In the case of social incentives, the AVE is below 0.5. The internal consistency of the social scale is problematic too. Looking at the item battery and the parameters of construct validity and reliability, it can be argued that formative and reflexive constructs were not properly differentiated. Within incentive categories there are aspects that are neither totally independent of each other nor clear complements. For example, it remains open whether "Access to documents that

are relevant for daily operations such as template excel sheets or cost accounting sheets”, “Access to the economic forecast, forecast of the public-sector budget and the annual location determination”, or “Access to research publications on the economic situation for the profession group, businesses and sector” have a substituting or a complementing character from members point of view. For some members, these aspects may be a cumulative expression of their perceived economic advantages. These members would perceive such incentives as exchangeable. The perceived importance of the category of economic incentive would influence their rating on how important different economic incentives are. In this case, all economic incentives are correlated and commonly constitute to the category of economic incentives. Others may perceive economic incentives as distinct and not exchangeable. The importance they appoint to different economic incentives may vary. The appointed importance to the one or the other economic incentive would then cause the importance of the category of economic incentive increase. In this case, economic incentives are not obligatorily correlated and yet constitute the construct of the economic incentive category. Another illustration of this problematic are the two social incentives “Fostering of friendly and beneficial cooperation, fellowship, fairness, and reciprocity through the organization of recreational activities, professional excursions, regular meetings, and assemblies” and “Coordination and organization of regular meetings, for example, to exchange experiences”. For some members, the two incentives may be an expression of what they perceive as an important manifestation of the category of social incentives. For others, these two incentives may be very distinct. In addition, they may be interested only in one of the two. The perceived importance of the category of social incentives would only be high, if different social incentives are rated as highly important.

In addition to the problematic convergent validity, there is a lack of discriminant validity. The CFI did not support the hypothesized categorization ( $CFI < 0.9$ ). A discriminant validity was not obtained. The shared variance between the categories and its incentives is lower than the variance they share among each other (Byrne, 2016). This questions the use of different incentive categories as hypothesized in our model. The interchangeable character of items and constructs in our data points at the necessity to conduct further research and appoint more attention to the derivation of valid and reliable incentive categories. The underlying problem is the multifaceted aspects of different categories

which may have to be limited in order to derive coherent and convergent items. A focus on the main aspects of each incentive category may also help to better distinguish different categories, e.g. the discriminant validity.

## Appendix 3<sup>rd</sup> Project

Table 32: *Items instrumental incentive categories*

<b>Instrumental incentives</b>	<b>Loading CFA Importance scale</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Importance Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Centralization Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<b>Economic Incentives</b>		0.57	0.77	0.67
Access to documents that are relevant for daily operations such as template excel sheets or cost accounting sheets	0.65***			
Access to research publications on the economic situation for the profession group, businesses and sector	0.51***			
Access to the economic forecast, forecast of the public-sector budget and the annual location determination	0.41***			
Contact point for information and consultation services that are relevant for daily operations in the field of human resource management, market prices, or quality norms	0.70***			
Provision of training and education services	0.70***			
Financial support for training and education	0.53***			
Free legal consultation services	0.51***			
<b>Normative Incentives</b>		0.54	0.78	0.81
Development of a strong image through regular public relation and advocacy campaigns	0.65***			
Development of a strong image through branding and marketing activities such as new homepage design, logo, and billboard advertising	0.53***			
Stakeholder-management and contact point for public sector entities, state, and other relevant stakeholders	0.73***			
Representation of interests and lobbying activities	0.49***			
Political statement regarding market and sector relevant subjects	0.47***			
Establishment of a uniform playing field for all members, for example, the law of tenders	0.45***			
Collective bargaining, for example, a collective bargaining agreement concerning the standard employment contract for Swiss and foreign businesses	0.54***			
Coordination and transparency in the sector specific market (code of ethics, norms and values: sample contracts, minimum wages, working hours model, and so forth)	0.50***			

Type of measurement: 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important; 5 = very important); \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \* $p < 0.05$

Table 33: *Items exchange-based incentive categories*

<b>Exchange-based incentives</b>	<b>Loading CFA <i>Importance scale</i></b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Importance Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Centralization Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<b>Social Incentives</b>		0.42	0.63	0.78
Fostering of friendly and beneficial cooperation, fellowship, fairness, and reciprocity through the organization of recreational activities, professional excursions, regular meetings, and assemblies	0.49***			
Coordination and organization of regular meetings, for example, to exchange experiences	0.15***			
Fostering of common interests and contacts	0.47***			
Personal contact for new members and others	0.57***			
<b>Contributory and Self-actualization Incentives</b>		0.64	0.80	0.78
Voluntary support of businesses with apprentices and apprentice trainers/mentors	0.79***			
Voluntary support and implementation of operative marketing activities to encourage and draw young professionals, for instance, with school attendances and profession fairs	0.73***			
Voluntary care support for mentors and trainers of apprentices	0.81***			
Voluntary contact point for expert knowledge in the field of education, professional schools, and partners from the education sector	0.78***			
Responsibility that democracy and member-based ownership are guaranteed in ways that all members have the opportunity to participate and engage in committees, posts, and functions	0.44***			
Fostering the members' political engagement	0.28***			

Type of measurement: 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important; 5 = very important); \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \* $p < 0.05$

## 4<sup>th</sup> Project

### **Member retention and recruitment in Swiss business associations**

This paper addresses the important question of how business associations can recruit and retain members. This question is especially important to Swiss business associations which face the challenge of recruiting new members and retaining and activating their existing members. To sustain a broad member base and sufficient membership participation and engagement is a key requisite for business associations. Business associations need an active and broad member base to keep their political influence and attain their collective goals. To help business associations successfully address the challenge of member recruitment and retention, this paper analyzes what members of Swiss business associations expect from their membership. To develop an incentive provision in accordance with members' expectations will help business associations to foster important relationship outcomes such as satisfaction and commitment.

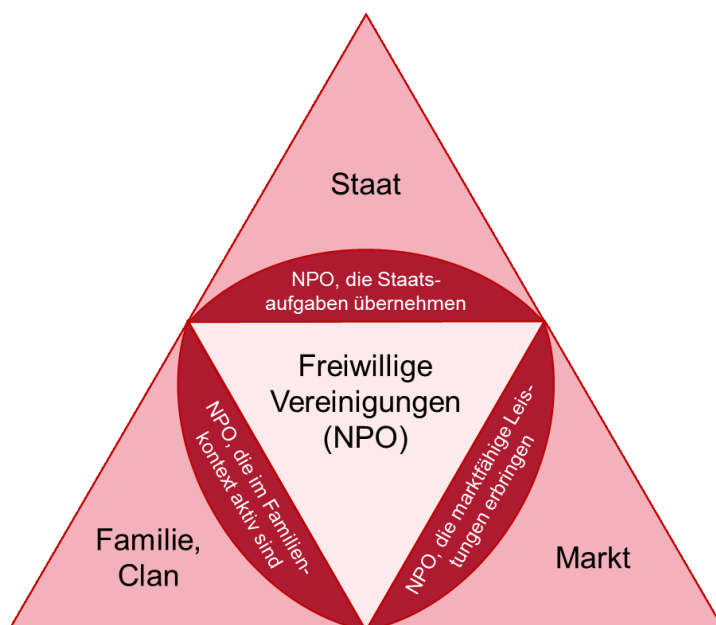
Specifically, the paper assesses why members belong to their associations, what they consider to be the most important services and activities, and how members' evaluation of incentive importance and fulfillment relate to important relationship outcomes. Lastly, the paper addresses whether engaged members differ from the typical member regarding their expectations and evaluations.

Data from three Swiss business associations were used to analyze the important question of how Swiss business associations can increase their attractiveness and optimize the value they provide to their members. The data reveals that business associations can increase their attractiveness to new and existing members by achieving high collective activity performance and by establishing a level playing field in the sector. Traditional membership attributes such as networking and personal contact are only relevant to engaged members. Although findings indicate that the membership in business associations is for many members an act of solidarity, selective incentives are relevant too. In addition, findings report that members' satisfaction with different services and activities have more explanatory power than other influences such as their relevance to members. These findings are discussed at the end of this paper before final recommendations and practical implications are derived.

## Einleitung und Problemstellung der Mitgliedergewinnung und -bindung in Schweizer Wirtschaftsverbänden

Verbände entstehen in der Regel da, wo sich Menschen in Eigenverantwortung und Selbstorganisation zusammenschliessen, um spezifische Bedürfnisse zu decken, die weder in der gewünschten Form am Markt angeboten noch vom Staat zur Verfügung gestellt werden (Bidet, 2010; Zimmer & Scholz, 1992). Als organisierte Bürger- oder Zivilgesellschaft agieren sie ergänzend zu den klassischen Systemen der Familie, des Staats und des Markts. Die Grenzen zu den drei Bereichen gestalten sich dabei meist fließend, wie Evers und Laville (2004) in ihrem Vier-Sektoren-Modell aufzeigen (Abbildung 12). Je nach Gründungsmotiven und Verbandszielen stehen die Verbände in einem mehr oder weniger starken Austausch mit den drei Teilsystemen. Sie beeinflussen diese und ergänzen sie mit ihren Aktivitäten und Leistungen (Lichtsteiner et al., 2015).

Abbildung 12: Verbände im Vier-Sektoren-Modell



Quelle: Evers & Laville (2004) in Lichtsteiner et al. (2015).

Dabei bestimmen die Mitglieder im Rahmen der Verbandsdemokratie über die Prioritätensetzung des Verbands und damit indirekt über die Art und Intensität des Austausches mit den Teilsystemen. Die Mehrheit entscheidet letztlich darüber, wo und



wie sich ihr Verband in diesem Dreieck positionieren soll, um möglichst vielen Erwartungen zu entsprechen. Versucht man die individuellen Motivstrukturen der Mitglieder analog zum Vier-Sektoren-Modell nach Evers & Laville (2004) zu typologisieren, ergeben sich folgende vier Mitgliedertypen (Abbildung 13):

- Der standesorientierte „Visionär“ hat klare Vorstellungen über die Rolle und Einbettung seiner Interessensgruppe in die Gesellschaft. Er setzt sich für die Anliegen und Ideale seiner Gruppe ein.
- Der eigennutzenorientierte „Ökonom“ möchte primär Leistungen des Verbands erhalten und Vorteile für sich herausholen. Er handelt zweckrational und denkt vorwiegend wirtschaftlich.
- Der gemeinschaftsorientierte „Gesellige“ sucht Kontakte, um ein Netzwerk aufzubauen. Die persönliche Wertschätzung, Solidarität und Beziehungen sind ihm wichtig.
- Der mitwirkungsorientierte „Selbstverwirklicher“ nutzt den Verband zur Realisation seiner Ideen und strebt nach Selbstbestätigung. Er möchte sich persönlich und fachlich entwickeln.

Je nach Zusammensetzung und Einfluss dieser Mitgliedertypen setzen Verbände ihre Prioritäten. Sie üben für den Visionär Einfluss auf die Politik und die gesellschaftlichen, wirtschaftlichen und rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen aus (Interessenwahrung), bieten den Ökonomen spezifische Leistungen ergänzend zum Marktangebot an (Individualleistungen), bilden für den Geselligen eine Solidargemeinschaft, um Informationen auszutauschen, Risiken abzufedern und gemeinsam Chancen zu nutzen (Persönlicher Austausch), und bieten dem Selbstverwirklicher die Chance, im Rahmen von Gremienarbeit eigene Ideen um- und durchzusetzen (Mitwirkung) (Lichtsteiner et al., 2015).

Wie entscheidend diese einzelnen Tätigkeitsfelder für die Mitgliederbindung sind, bestimmt letztlich die Motivstruktur der Mitglieder. Je besser ein Verband mit seinem Leistungsmix die Bedürfnisse und Motive der einzelnen Mitglieder abdeckt, umso höher wird der Nutzen, den er für seine Mitglieder schafft. Demnach generiert ein Verband einen Nutzen für das Mitglied, wenn er die vom Mitglied als wichtig empfundenen Leistungen zufriedenstellend erbringt (Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Markova et al., 2013;

Suter, 2012). Zur Berechnung des Nutzens gibt es verschiedene Möglichkeiten. Eine Möglichkeit ist die Gewichtung der Zufriedenheit mit der Leistungserbringung zur Motivdeckung mit der Wichtigkeit des entsprechenden Motivs/der entsprechenden Leistung (Eggers & Hollmann, 2010; Stukas et al., 2009; Wildemann, 2003). Es ist anzunehmen, dass der Nutzen als gewichtete Zufriedenheit mit der Motivdeckung/Leistungserbringung in einem positiven Zusammenhang mit der Mitgliederzufriedenheit und -bindung steht. Für die Ausschöpfung des Nutzenpotentials wäre es demnach von zentraler Bedeutung, dass die relevanten Leistungen in besonders guter Qualität erbracht werden. Eine tiefere Zufriedenheit bei den weniger wichtigen Leistungen dürfte die Mitgliederzufriedenheit und -bindung weniger stark beeinflussen (Lichtsteiner, 2014; Stukas et al., 2009). Von besonderer Relevanz ist es also, dass die Betrachtung der Zufriedenheit und Wichtigkeit aus Mitgliedersicht erfolgt. Entsprechend besteht die Herausforderung einer erfolgreichen Mitgliedergewinnung und -bindung darin, die verschiedenen Bedürfnisse und Motive der Mitglieder richtig zu erkennen und diese mit passenden, qualitativ hochstehenden Leistungen und Aktivitäten zu bedienen.

*Abbildung 13: Mitgliedertypologien im Vier-Sektoren-Modell*



*Quelle: In Anlehnung an Schwarz (1984) und Lichtsteiner (2014).*

Weil die Zusammensetzung der verschiedenen Mitgliedertypen respektive Motivstrukturen branchenspezifisch ist (Hager, 2014), macht es Sinn, eine Analyse der Mitgliedschaftsmotive sektorenspezifisch durchzuführen. Der vorliegende Beitrag beschränkt sich deshalb auf die Motivstruktur von Mitgliedern Schweizer Wirtschaftsverbände. Für sie ist die Mitgliedergewinnung und -bindung von besonderer Relevanz. Denn im Vergleich zu den Nachbarländern Deutschland und Österreich, wo Unternehmen per Gesetz verpflichtet sind, sich einer Kammer als öffentlich-rechtliche Körperschaft anzuschließen, genießen Schweizer Wirtschaftsverbände und Kammern als privatrechtliche Vereine dieses Privileg nicht. Sie müssen die Firmen überzeugen, sich freiwillig an der Produktion von Kollektivgütern, dem Interessensausgleich oder der Berufsbildung zu beteiligen. Wie wichtig und gesellschaftspolitisch wünschenswert eine Beteiligung aller an diesen Leistungen ist, zeigt die gesetzliche Verpflichtung zur Mitgliedschaft in einer Kammer in unseren Nachbarländern.

Damit Wirtschaftsverbände ihre Aufgabe als Interessensvertretungsverbände auch in der Schweiz optimal wahrnehmen und ihre einflussreiche Position im politischen System aufrechterhalten können, sind sie auf einen hohen Organisationsgrad angewiesen (Lichtsteiner & von Schnurbein, 2008; von Schnurbein, 2008). Sie brauchen möglichst viele Mitglieder, um ihre Interessen im politischen System geltend zu machen, aber auch um die Kosten der Kollektivleistungen solidarisch zu tragen. Denn ohne Pflichtmitgliedschaft besteht die Gefahr des Trittbrettfahrens: Nicht-Mitglieder kommen kostenlos in den Genuss der Kollektivleistungen des Verbandes wie auch der Interessensvertretung und können von deren Nutzung nicht ausgeschlossen werden (Lichtsteiner & von Schnurbein, 2008; Olson, 1965).

Wirtschaftsverbände sehen sich entsprechend mit der Herausforderung konfrontiert, über die Kollektivleistungen hinaus den (potentiellen) Mitgliedern ein Leistungspaket zu bieten, um sie trotz der Möglichkeit des Trittbrettfahrens zu einer Mitgliedschaft zu bewegen. Grundlage dazu bilden genaue Kenntnisse der Motivstruktur der Mitglieder. Nur so kann die Effektivität der gebotenen Leistungen zur Mitgliedergewinnung, -aktivierung und -bindung optimiert werden.

Die Klärung folgender Fragestellungen ist deshalb zentral:

- Was sind die Motive, um Mitglied in einem Wirtschaftsverband zu sein?
- Wie kann der Leistungsmix eines Wirtschaftsverbands optimiert werden, damit er den Erwartungen möglichst vieler Mitglieder entspricht?
- Inwieweit entscheiden der Leistungsmix sowie die Qualität der einzelnen Leistung über die Zufriedenheit und die Bindung der Mitglieder?
- Unterscheiden sich die Motivstrukturen von Mitgliedern mit Engagement respektive langer Verweildauer von den übrigen Mitgliedern?

Zur Klärung dieser Fragen wurden auf Basis des Member Value Ansatzes nach Suter (2012) diverse Studien durchgeführt. Das Member Value Konzept diente dabei als wissenschaftlich fundiertes Instrument zur Erfassung der Wichtigkeit und des Erfüllungsgrades der verschiedenen Bedürfnisse. Um die Zufriedenheit der Mitglieder mit ihrer Verbandsmitgliedschaft und ihre Bindung an den Verband zu messen, wurde das Konzept des „Net Promoter Scores“ (NPS) eingesetzt. Der NPS wird seit Jahren im For-Profit Sektor als verlässliches Messinstrument zur Erhebung der Qualität von Kundenbeziehungen eingesetzt (Brown et al., 2005; Reichheld, 2003, 2014; Schultz & Block, 2015; van Riet & Kirsch, 2010). Als Indikator für eine hohe Mitgliederzufriedenheit und –bindung wird eine hohe Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft verwendet. Die eindimensionale Messung des in sich komplexen Konstrukts der Qualität von Kundenbeziehungen wird dabei bewusst in Kauf genommen. Die Wirkung des NPS und damit die Resultate müssen entsprechend mit Vorsicht interpretiert werden, wie dies bereits in vergleichbaren Anwendungen festgehalten wurde (Grisaffe, 2007; Schulman & Sargeant, 2013; Zaki et al., 2016).

### Erhebungsmethode und Datenbasis

Innerhalb der letzten zwei Jahre wurden in drei Schweizer Wirtschaftsverbänden vergleichbare Studien durchgeführt. Um die Anonymität der drei Wirtschaftsverbände zu wahren, wird jeweils auf Verband A, B und C verwiesen. Verband A ist ein kantonaler Branchenverband mit acht Regionalstellen. Sein Ziel ist es, die überbetrieblichen Interessen seiner Mitglieder – Unternehmer und Firmen – im politischen und ökonomischen Umfeld zu wahren. Verband B ist ein nationaler Fachverband und Verband C ein nationaler Arbeitgeberverband. Ihr Ziel ist die Imagesteigerung der Branche sowie die Interessensvertretung ihrer Mitglieder – Unternehmer und Firmen – gegenüber der Öffentlichkeit, der Politik und den regulierenden Behörden. Die Datenbasis aus der ersten Studie (Verband A) weicht nicht nur in Bezug auf das Bezugsobjekt und Aktivitätsfeld, sondern auch in Bezug auf das Erhebungsinstrument von den beiden Folgestudien ab. Das eingesetzte Erhebungsinstrument wurde nach der ersten Studie leicht modifiziert und optimiert und war sodann in den beiden Folgestudien (Verband B und C) identisch. Aufgrund dessen fließen die Daten aus dem Verband A nicht immer direkt in die quantitativen Auswertungen mit ein, sondern werden zum Teil auch nur als Validierung der Resultate der Verbände B und C herangezogen. Das Erhebungsinstrument gliedert sich in fünf Teile:

In einem ersten Teil werden Informationen zum Befragungsteilnehmer und der Firma, in welcher dieser arbeitet, erhoben. Zudem wird eruiert, ob und in welcher Funktion eine Person im Verband engagiert ist. In einem zweiten Teil wird erfragt, welche Bedürfnisse (vgl. Tabelle 33) wie wichtig sind, um Mitglied im entsprechenden Verband zu sein und inwieweit der Verband diese Bedürfnisse deckt. Die Abfrage der Wichtigkeit und des Erfüllungsgrades erfolgt mittels einer fünfstufigen Likert-Skala (1 = nicht wichtig / nicht erfüllt; 5 = sehr wichtig / sehr gut erfüllt).

In einem dritten Teil will man von den Befragten ungestützt wissen, welche drei Verbandsleistungen besonders wichtig sind für den Entscheid, Mitglied des Verbands zu sein. In einem vierten Teil wird in der Folge gestützt erhoben, wie wichtig die einzelnen Leistungen und Aktivitäten des Verbands für den Befragungsteilnehmer sind und wie zufrieden er mit der entsprechenden Leistungserbringung ist. Die Abfrage der Wichtigkeit und Zufriedenheit erfolgt mittels einer fünfstufigen Likert-Skala (1 = nicht wichtig / nicht zufrieden; 5 = sehr wichtig / sehr zufrieden). Im fünften Teil letztlich wird

abgefragt, inwiefern der Befragungsteilnehmer bereit ist, den Verband einer befreundeten Person weiterzuempfehlen. Die Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft wird analog zum Konzept des NPS mittels einer zehnstufigen Likert-Skala erfasst (Wahrscheinlichkeit einer Weiterempfehlung 1 = unwahrscheinlich; 10 = sicher).

*Tabelle 34: Verbandsmotive*

<b>Bedürfnis</b>	<b>Erläuterung</b>
<b>Anerkennung &amp; Vergleich</b>	Bedürfnis die Lage der Firma und der eigenen Arbeit einzuordnen und zu vergleichen
<b>Autonomie</b>	Bedürfnis selbstbestimmter und selbständiger zu arbeiten
<b>Existenz</b>	Bedürfnis nach Leistungen und Aktivitäten die helfen, die Existenz der Firma zu sichern
<b>Genuss</b>	Bedürfnis nach Anlässen und geselligen Momenten
<b>Identität</b>	Bedürfnis nach einem starken WIR-Gefühl und einem kollegialen Umgang unter den Mitgliedern
<b>Macht</b>	Bedürfnis anhand Verbandsarbeit Macht auszuüben
<b>Mitwirkung</b>	Bedürfnis eigene Initiativen und Innovationen umzusetzen
<b>Ökonomischer Mehrwert</b>	Bedürfnis wirtschaftlich profitieren zu können
<b>Ordnung</b>	Bedürfnis nach klaren Regeln und Strukturen in der Branche
<b>Partizipation</b>	Bedürfnis eigene Interessen zu vertreten und auf branchenpolitische Fragen Einfluss zu nehmen
<b>Sicherheit</b>	Bedürfnis nach einer kompetenten Anlaufstelle
<b>Verständnis</b>	Bedürfnis nach Informationen, die helfen, Sachverhalte besser zu verstehen
<b>Zugehörigkeit</b>	Bedürfnis zum Austausch mit Gleichgesinnten

*Quelle: In Anlehnung an Suter (2012).*

Die Umfragen bei den Mitgliedsfirmen der Wirtschaftsverbände erfolgten elektronisch mit einem EDV-Tool, welches ein serielles Beantworten der Fragen sicherstellte, indem das Tool keine Korrekturen oder Ergänzungen bereits beantworteter Fragen zulässt. Dies sollte gewährleisten, dass ungestützte Fragen nicht nachträglich korrigiert oder komplettiert werden konnten. Eine weitere Qualitätssicherung war die Überprüfung mittels redundanter Frageitems, inwiefern die Befragungsteilnehmer ihren Angaben treu blieben. Des Weiteren beinhaltet das Untersuchungsdesign bewusst die ungestützte und gestützte Abfrage der Bedeutung einzelner Leistungen und Aktivitäten. Damit wird kontrolliert, ob der Befragte diejenigen Leistungen, die er gestützt im vierten Teil der Befragung als wichtig einstuft, bereits auch ungestützt im dritten Teil explizit aufgeführt hat. Ein Abgleich zwischen den ungestützten Nennungen und der Wichtigkeitsbeurteilungen im gestützten Fragebogenteil diente der Evaluation, ob bestimmte Leistungen zwar wichtig sind für die Mitglieder, jedoch zu wenig im Bewusstsein präsent sind. Letztere Prüfung diente als Indikator, ob ein Verband ein Marketing- respektive Kommunikationsproblem bei einzelnen Leistungen hat.

Insgesamt konnte bei allen Überprüfungen fast ausnahmslos festgestellt werden, dass die Fragen sehr reflektiert und konsistent beantwortet wurden. „Ausreisser“, insgesamt zehn Fragebögen, wurden identifiziert und aus dem Datensatz eliminiert, um die Qualität der Datenbasis sicherzustellen. So entstand letztlich eine Datenbasis aus den folgenden drei Datenstämmen:

*Tabelle 35: Datenbasis der Untersuchung*

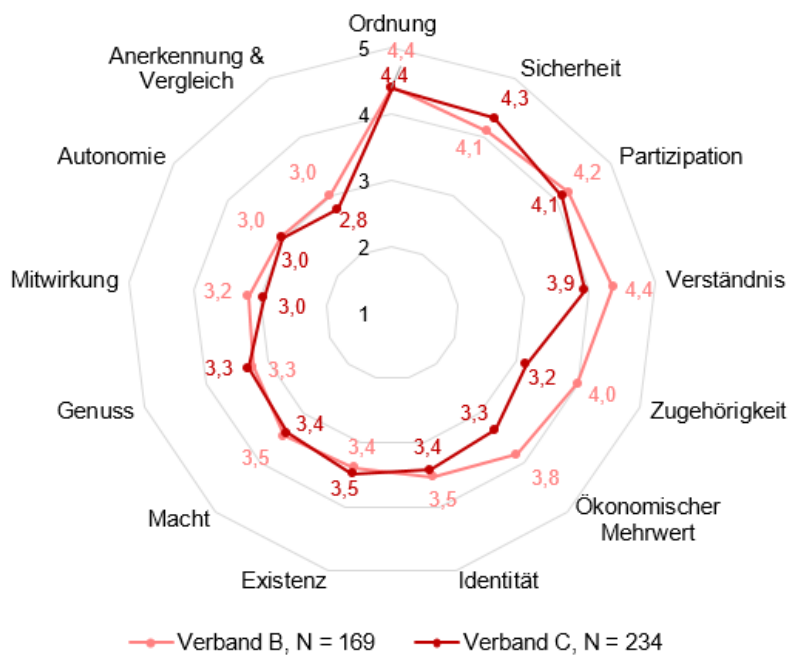
	Verband		
	A	B	C
<b># Mitglieder</b>	137	437	2'127
<b># Teilnehmer</b>	88	175	283
<b># Ausreisser</b>	6	4	0
<b>Rücklaufquote in %</b>	64	40	13
<b># engagierter Mitglieder</b>	55	53	40
<b>%-Anteil engagierter Mitglieder</b>	63	30	14
<b>%-Anteil "junger" Mitglieder</b> (Dauer < 5 Jahre)	18	23	42
<b>%-Anteil langjähriger Mitglieder</b> (Dauer > 10 Jahre)	63	32	18

## Analysen und Resultate

### *Verbandsmotive und die wichtigsten Leistungen und Aktivitäten*

Analysiert und vergleicht man zuerst die Motive, Mitglied in einem Verband zu sein, so sind die Resultate über alle drei Verbände hinweg betrachtet erstaunlich vergleichbar, jedoch nicht identisch. Abbildung 14 illustriert die durchschnittliche Wichtigkeit der einzelnen Mitgliedschaftsmotive in den Verbänden B und C. Die durchschnittliche Wichtigkeit über alle Verbandsmotive liegt für Verband B bei 3.7, für Verband C bei 3.5. Bei zehn von dreizehn Motiven weichen dabei die Einschätzungen der Mitglieder bezüglich Wichtigkeit nur geringfügig voneinander ab.

*Abbildung 14: Wichtigkeit der Verbandsmotive im Vergleich*



Wichtigstes Motiv für den Entscheid, Mitglied in einem Verband zu sein, ist das Bedürfnis nach klaren Regeln und Strukturen in der Branche. Der Verband soll dafür sorgen, dass in der Branche faire Wettbewerbsbedingungen herrschen. Eng gekoppelt mit diesem Motiv ist auch das dritt wichtigste Motiv, dank der Verbandsmitgliedschaft die Möglichkeit zu haben, eigene Interessen zu vertreten und Einfluss auf branchenpolitische



Fragen zu nehmen. Das bedeutet die Rahmenbedingungen, in denen man sich bewegt, auch selber mitgestalten und beeinflussen zu können. Ebenfalls inhaltlich eng miteinander verbunden sind die Motive an zweiter und vierter Stelle, nämlich der Sicherheit und des Verständnisses. Die Option, dank der Verbandsmitgliedschaft über eine kompetente Anlaufstelle zu verfügen, die u.a. Informationen bereithält, um Sachverhalte besser zu verstehen, scheint für die Mitglieder ebenfalls sehr zentral zu sein.

Unterschiedlich bewertet werden durch die Mitglieder die Bedürfnisse nach Verbandszugehörigkeit zwecks Austausch mit Gleichgesinnten sowie nach dem ökonomischen Mehrwert, den ihnen ein Verband bieten soll. Den Mitgliedern aus dem Verband B sind diese Bedürfnisse nur leicht weniger wichtig als die vier Topmotive. Für den Verband C hingegen fallen die Bewertungen merklich tiefer aus. Sie reihen sich damit in die grosse Gruppe der untergeordneten Motive für eine Verbandszugehörigkeit ein. Für beide Mitgliedergruppen nachgeordnet sind dann wiederum die Bedürfnisse nach Mitwirkung, Macht, Identität, Genuss, Existenz, Autonomie und Anerkennung. Sie alle liegen bei oder unter der durchschnittlichen Wichtigkeit der Bedürfnisse insgesamt.

Auffällig ist, dass entgegen des Olson Theorems “of the logic of collective action” (Olson, 1965) das Motiv des ökonomischen Mehrwerts nicht zu den Topmotiven für eine Mitgliedschaft zählt. Für viele Mitglieder ist die Mitgliedschaft in einem Wirtschaftsverband primär ein Solidarakt.

Vergleicht man nun die Resultate aus der Wichtigkeitsanalyse der Motive für eine Verbandsmitgliedschaft mit der Einschätzung der verschiedenen Verbandsleistungen und -aktivitäten, so erweisen sich die Resultate als absolut stringent und über die drei Verbände hinweg auch als überraschend vergleichbar. Dies sowohl in Bezug auf die ungestützten Nennungen von Leistungen wie auch auf die gestützte Abfrage zur Einschätzung von Leistungen. Die offenen Antworten auf die Frage nach den wichtigsten Leistungen und Aktivitäten zeigen, dass wiederum die Interessensvertretung, die Medienarbeit zur Imagesteigerung der Branche, die Setzung von Branchenstandards sowie die Beschaffung von aktuellen Informationen und Branchenneuigkeiten diejenigen Leistungen sind, welche Mitglieder als zentral erachten. Diese Leistungen und Aktivitäten dienen alle der Bedürfnisdeckung der als am wichtigsten eingestuften Verbandsmotive nach Ordnung, Sicherheit, Partizipation und Verständnisförderung. Diese Wichtigkeitsbeurteilung wird auch durch den Fragebogenteil der gestützten

Einschätzung der Leistungen weiter verfestigt. Auch hier stehen diese Leistungen mit Wichtigkeiten über der Durchschnittsbeurteilung an der Spitze:

- Sicherstellung gleicher Wettbewerbsbedingungen  
(Mittelwert Verband A 4.51; B 4.44),
- Durchsetzung des Gesamtarbeitsvertrages  
(Mittelwert Verband A 4.65; B 4.24; C 4.45),
- Einflussnahme auf das regulatorische Umfeld zugunsten der Branche  
(Mittelwert Verband A 4.51; B 4.47; C 4.23),
- Interessensvertretung  
(Mittelwert Verband A 4.22; B 4.57; C 4.23) und die
- Medienarbeit und Durchführung von Werbeaktionen  
(Mittelwert Verband A 4.12; B 4.48; C 4.08).

Leistungen wie fachliche Hilfsmittel, Marktdaten und -statistiken sowie Beratungsleistungen erzielten eine mittelhohe Wichtigkeit. Als weniger wichtig beurteilen die Mitglieder aller drei Verbände Sonderangebote und Rabatte, die Förderung eines gedeihlichen Zusammenwirkens durch die Koordination von Veranstaltungen, Regionalmeetings, ERFA-Gruppen oder die Generalversammlung.

Für einen zusammenfassenden Vergleich der Leistungsbeurteilung über die verschiedenen Leistungen und Verbandsmitglieder sind in der Tabelle 36 die durchschnittlichen Zufriedenheiten, Wichtigkeiten und Nutzen aufgeführt. Die Leistungen sind gemäss der in Abbildung 13 dargestellten Typologie zusammengefasst<sup>2</sup>. Der Nutzen wird berechnet aus der Multiplikation der Wichtigkeit und Zufriedenheit. Eine Multiplikation berücksichtigt die zu Beginn aufgeführten Überlegungen, dass ein Verband einen Nutzen für das Mitglied schafft, wenn er die vom Mitglied als wichtig empfundenen Leistungen zufriedenstellend erbringt (Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Markova et al., 2013; Suter, 2012).

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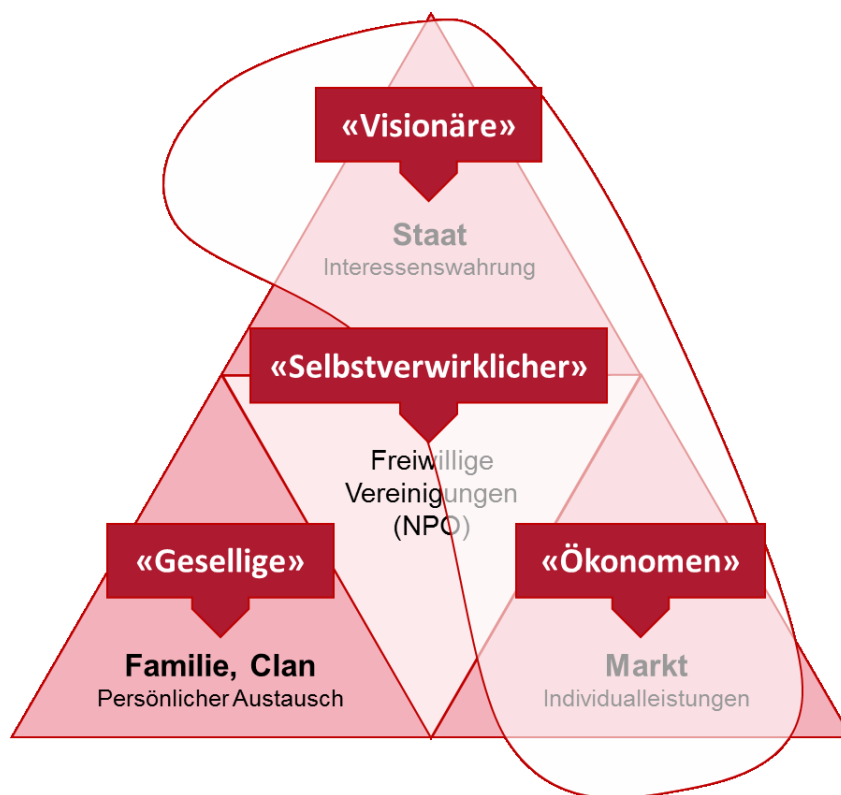
<sup>2</sup> Im Verband C wurden auf expliziten Wunsch des Verbandes keine Items zur Mitwirkung erhoben.

Tabelle 36: Vergleich der Leistungsbeurteilungen der Verbandsmitglieder: Zufriedenheit, Wichtigkeit und Nutzen

Leistungen	Verband A N = 81			Verband B N = 162			Verband C N = 268		
	Zufriedenheit (ZF)	Wichtigkeit (WK)	Nutzen (ZF * WK)	Zufriedenheit (ZF)	Wichtigkeit (WK)	Nutzen (ZF * WK)	Zufriedenheit (ZF)	Wichtigkeit (WK)	Nutzen (ZF * WK)
	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert	Mittelwert
<b>Interessenswahrung</b>									
- Interessensvertretung									
- Medienarbeit	3.8	4.2	15.9	3.4	4.3	14.5	3.8	4.2	15.9
- Die Setzung von Branchenstandards									
- ...									
<b>Individuelleleistungen</b>									
- Fachliche Hilfsmittel									
- Rabatte für Veranstaltungen & Versicherungen	3.4	4.1	14.1	3.7	3.9	14.5	3.8	4.0	15.2
- Beratungsleistungen									
- ...									
<b>Mitwirkung</b>									
- Partizipationsmöglichkeit verbandsinterne Entscheidungsfindung									
- Mitwirkung in Fachkommissionen und Gremien	3.2	3.8	12.4	3.1	3.7	11.6	x	x	x
- Generalversammlung									
- ...									
<b>Persönlicher Austausch</b>									
- Erfahrungsaustausch Gruppen									
- Regionalmeetings	3.5	3.5	12.1	3.7	3.9	14.5	3.6	3.5	12.9
- Networkinganlässe									
- ...									
<b>Total</b>	3	4	14	3	4	14	4	4	15

Versucht man nun aus den bisherigen Auswertungsreihen Rückschlüsse auf die eingangs beschriebene Mitgliedertypologie zu ziehen, so zeigt sich, dass auf Grund der Mitgliedermotive und der Leistungspräferenzen das typische Wirtschaftsverbandsmitglied am ehesten dem standesorientierten „Visionär“ entspricht, kombiniert mit dem wettbewerbsorientierten „Ökonom“ (vgl. Tabelle 36). Es pflegt seine Verbandsmitgliedschaft primär deshalb, um klare Regeln und Strukturen in der Branche zu fördern, eigene Interessen zu vertreten und Einfluss auf branchenpolitische Fragen zu nehmen. Des Weiteren sieht es im Verband eine kompetente Anlaufstelle, die ihm Zugang zu aktuellen Informationen und weiteren Leistungen verschafft wie fachliche Hilfsmittel, Beratung und Rabatte für Veranstaltungen. Die Mitglieder Schweizer Wirtschaftsverbände verkörpern demnach am meisten Aspekte des Visionärs, Ökonoms und des Selbstverwirklichers – wie dies in Abbildung 15 im erweiterten Vier-Sektoren-Modell nach Evers & Laville (2004) eingezeichnet ist.

*Abbildung 15: Die Mitgliedertypologie in Schweizer Wirtschaftsverbänden*



### *Zusammenhang zwischen der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und der Leistungsbeurteilung: Zufriedenheit, Wichtigkeit und Nutzen*

In einem nächsten Schritt wurde analysiert, ob einfache statistische Zusammenhänge bestehen zwischen der Höhe der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und a) der Zufriedenheitsbeurteilung, b) der Wichtigkeitsbeurteilung sowie des entsprechenden c) Nutzens. Tabelle 37 zeigt anhand des Verbands B (N = 175), dass die Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft signifikant positiv mit den untersuchten Erklärungsfaktoren korreliert. Am stärksten sind die linearen Zusammenhänge zwischen der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und der Zufriedenheitsbeurteilung sowie des Nutzens. Die Korrelationen zwischen der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und der Wichtigkeitsbeurteilung fallen etwas schwächer aus.

*Tabelle 37: Korrelationen zwischen der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und der Leistungsbeurteilung: Zufriedenheit, Wichtigkeit und Nutzen*

	<b>Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft</b>
<b>Zufriedenheit</b>	
Interessensvertretung	0.55**
Individuelleistungen	0.61**
Mitwirkung	0.61**
Austausch	0.55**
<b>Wichtigkeit</b>	
Interessensvertretung	0.28**
Individuelleistungen	0.30**
Mitwirkung	0.24**
Austausch	0.29**
<b>Nutzen</b>	
Interessensvertretung	0.58**
Individuelleistungen	0.54**
Mitwirkung	0.54**
Austausch	0.46**

*Skala: 1 = unwichtig/unzufrieden bis 5 = sehr wichtig/sehr zufrieden //*

*\*\*.* Korrelation ist bei Niveau 0,01 signifikant (zweiseitig).

Der stärkste positive Zusammenhang liegt zwischen der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und den Leistungsgruppen Mitwirkung und Individualleistungen vor: Es besteht also eine starke positive Beziehung zwischen der Weiterempfehlung und der Möglichkeit zur aktiven Partizipation sowie der Wahrnehmung des Verbands als kompetente Anlaufstelle zur Beschaffung relevanter (Branchen-)Informationen und Hilfsmittel. Es folgt der starke positive Zusammenhang zwischen der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft und dem Nutzen aus der Interessensvertretung.

In einer nächsten Phase stand mittels Regressionsanalyse die Untersuchung im Zentrum, inwiefern die verschiedenen Faktoren zur Erklärung der Unterschiede in der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft beitragen. Damit wurde zugleich geprüft, ob die einfachen statistischen Zusammenhänge auch nach Kontrolle möglicher Scheinkorrelationen bestehen bleiben. Die Regressionsanalyse erfolgte in zwei Schritten. In einem ersten Schritt wurden die Kontrollvariablen integriert. Die beiden Kontrollvariablen Engagement (1 = engagiertes Mitglied, 0 = nicht engagiertes Mitglied) und Mitgliedschaftsdauer (= Anzahl Mitgliedschaftsjahre) erklären 7.3% der Varianz (siehe Tabelle 38; Modell 1/Schritt 1). Insbesondere die Kontrolle darüber, ob ein Mitglied engagiert ist oder nicht, beeinflusst die Zusammenhangsanalyse. Der positive Betakoeffizient deutet darauf hin, dass engagierte Mitglieder eher eine hohe Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft aufweisen.

Tabelle 38: Erklärungsfaktoren für die Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft im Vergleich

	<b>Modell 1: Kontrollvariablen</b>		<b>Modell 2: Zufriedenheit Total</b>		<b>Modell 3: Wichtigkeit Total</b>		<b>Modell 4: Nutzen Total</b>	
	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)	$\beta$	p(t)
<b>Schritt 1: Kontrollvariablen</b>								
Engagement	0.27	0.002	0.27	0.002	0.27	0.002	0.27	0.002
Mitgliedschaftsdauer	0	nicht sign.	0	nicht sign.	0	nicht sign.	0	nicht sign.
<b>Schritt 1: R<sup>2</sup> Modell Schritt 1</b>	7.3%	< 0.001	7.3%	< 0.001	6.8%		7.3%	< 0.001
<b>Schritt 2: Verbandsleistungen</b>								
Zufriedenheit Total			0.63	< 0.001				
Wichtigkeit Total					0.33	< 0.001		
Nutzen Total							0.58	< 0.001
<b>Schritt 2 im Vgl. zum Schritt 1: Delta R<sup>2</sup></b>			37.1%		10.4%		31.6%	
<b>R<sup>2</sup> Modell insgesamt</b>			44.3%	< 0.001	17.1%	< 0.001	38.9%	< 0.001
N		147		146		147		146

In einem zweiten Schritt wurden einzeln die (totale) Zufriedenheit, d.h. die Summe aller Zufriedenheitsbeurteilungen über die verschiedenen Leistungen (Modell 2/Schritt 2), die (totale) Wichtigkeit, d.h. die Summe aller Wichtigkeitsbeurteilungen über die verschiedenen Leistungen (Modell 3/Schritt2), und der (Totale) Nutzen, d.h. die totale Zufriedenheit multipliziert mit der totalen Wichtigkeit (Modell 4/Schritt 2) als Erklärungsfaktoren in das Modell integriert. Die durchschnittliche Zufriedenheitsbeurteilung der Mitglieder über alle Verbandsleistungen (Zufriedenheit Total) erklärt zusätzliche 37% der Varianz der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft (Erklärungskraft Modell 2 insgesamt = 44%). Die durchschnittliche Wichtigkeitsbeurteilung über alle Verbandsleistungen (Wichtigkeit Total) erklärt zusätzliche 10% der Varianz der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft (Erklärungskraft Modell 3 insgesamt = 17%). Der totale Nutzen erklärt zusätzliche 32% der Varianz der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft (Erklärungskraft Modell 4 insgesamt = 39%). Der geringere Erklärungsbeitrag der totalen Wichtigkeitsbeurteilung lässt sich unter anderem auch aus den standardisierten Betakoeffizienten ablesen: Zufriedenheit = 0.63 und Nutzen = 0.58 versus Wichtigkeit = 0.33.

Die zweite Auswertungsreihe zeigt anschaulich, dass die statistische Erklärungskraft der Zufriedenheiten am stärksten und die Erklärungskraft des Nutzens am zweitstärksten ist. Die Erklärungskraft der Wichtigkeit fällt hingegen stark ab. Die Zufriedenheit mit der Leistungserbringung ist bei den untersuchten Wirtschaftsverbänden folglich wichtiger für die Bindung der Mitglieder als die Zusammensetzung des Leistungsmix. Fast ebenso relevant ist der Nutzen. Dieser steht in einer fast ebenso starken Beziehung zur Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft der Mitglieder. Verbände sollten demgemäß der Qualität der als wichtig eingestuften Leistungen speziellen Beachtung schenken. Eine nicht zufriedenstellende Leistungserbringung kann sich hier besonders negativ auf die Weiterempfehlung des Verbandes auswirken.



### *Unterschiede in der Motivstruktur engagierter und langjähriger Mitglieder*

Abschliessend wurde untersucht, inwieweit es Unterschiede gibt in der Motivstruktur engagierter respektive langjähriger Mitglieder im Vergleich zu den übrigen Mitgliedern. Auch hier wurde wiederum eine Korrelationsanalyse durchgeführt um festzustellen, ob einfache statistische Zusammenhänge zwischen dem Engagement sowie der Mitgliedschaftsdauer und den Erklärungsfaktoren Zufriedenheit, Wichtigkeit und dem Nutzen vorliegen. Des Weiteren wurden die Mittelwerte der beiden Gruppen mittels statistischer Tests miteinander verglichen. Zwischen der Mitgliedschaftsdauer und den Erklärungsfaktoren konnten keine signifikanten linearen Zusammenhänge gefunden werden. Hingegen zeigen die Korrelationskoeffizienten in Tabelle 39, dass das Engagement, d.h. die Tatsache, ob ein Mitglied engagiert ist oder nicht, in einem Zusammenhang steht mit der Leistungsbeurteilung und dem Nutzen. Zusätzlich zur Korrelationsanalyse wurden die Mittelwerte zwischen engagierter und nicht engagierter Mitglieder miteinander verglichen. Die Resultate der statistischen Mittelwertvergleiche decken sich mit den Resultaten aus der Korrelationsanalyse in Tabelle 39. Engagierte Mitglieder haben höhere Zufriedenheitswerte bezüglich Mitwirkung, des persönlichen Austauschs und der Interessensvertretung. Ebenso bewerten die engagierten Mitglieder die Mitwirkung und den persönlichen Austausch in der Tendenz als wichtiger. Einen speziell positiven Zusammenhang zwischen der Wichtigkeitsbeurteilung der Interessensvertretung und dem Engagement besteht hingegen nicht. Die Relevanz der Interessensvertretung befindet sich über alle Gruppen auf hohem Niveau. Es ist evident, dass sodann signifikant positive Zusammenhänge zwischen dem Engagement und dem Nutzen aus der Mitwirkung und dem persönlichen Austausch bestehen.

*Tabelle 39: Korrelation zwischen der Ausprägung des Engagements und der Leistungsbeurteilung: Zufriedenheit, Wichtigkeit und Nutzen*

	<b>Engagement</b>
<b>Zufriedenheit</b>	
Interessensvertretung	0.21*
Individuelleistungen	0.15
Mitwirkung	0.30**
Austausch	0.29**
<b>Wichtigkeit</b>	
Interessensvertretung	0.04
Individuelleistungen	0.05
Mitwirkung	0.25**
Austausch	0.20*
<b>Nutzen</b>	
Interessensvertretung	0.12
Individuelleistungen	0.12
Mitwirkung	0.37**
Austausch	0.28**

*Skala: 0 = Nicht engagiert; 1 = Engagiert //*

*\*\*.* Korrelation ist bei Niveau 0,01 signifikant (zweiseitig) //

*\**. Korrelation ist bei Niveau 0,05 signifikant (zweiseitig).

### Fazit

Zusammenfassend lassen sich aus den Untersuchungen für Wirtschaftsverbände folgende fünf Handlungsempfehlungen ableiten, um Mitglieder zu gewinnen respektive an sich zu binden:

1. Die Mitglieder stufen in allen drei Wirtschaftsverbänden die Interessensvertretung als die zentrale Verbandsaufgabe ein. Mitgliedschaftsmotive wie der persönliche Austausch unter Mitbewerbern erachten sie als wenig relevant. Die Mitglieder erwarten von ihrem Verband primär die Schaffung guter und fairer Wettbewerbsbedingungen durch Interessenwahrung gegen aussen sowie Regulierung gegen innen. Sie wollen jedoch nicht, dass der Verband den Wettbewerb behindert. Wirtschaftsverbände sind entsprechend gefordert, eine Balance zwischen Wettbewerbsregulierung und Nivellierung zu finden.
2. Dem typischen Mitglied sind die Interessensvertretung, die Medienarbeit zur Imagesteigerung der Branche sowie die Schaffung gleicher Wettbewerbsbedingungen mittels Schaffung und Durchsetzung von Branchenstandards ein besonderes wichtiges Anliegen. Wirtschaftsverbände können ihre Attraktivität gegenüber potentiellen Mitgliedern steigern und den Mitgliedernutzen für das typische Verbandsmitglied optimieren, indem sie ihre Kräfte zur Stärkung der Interessensvertretung und der Kommunikation von Vertretungserfolgen einsetzen.
3. Der Zugang zu aktuellen (Branchen-)Informationen und Hilfsmitteln für das Tagesgeschäft sind ebenfalls wichtige Motive, Mitglied im Verband zu werden. Über diese Leistungen kann ein Verband einen selektiven Anreiz setzen für die Gewinnung neuer Mitglieder. Bei den anderen als wesentlich empfundenen Motiven kann kein Ausschlussprinzip hergestellt werden, weil es sich ausschliesslich um Kollektivleistungen handelt.
4. Die Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft der Mitglieder steht in einem stark positiven Zusammenhang mit der Einschätzung und der Zufriedenheit der Leistungsqualität. Die Zufriedenheit mit der Leistungserbringung und der Nutzen aus der zufriedenstellenden Leistungserbringung der als wichtig erachteten Leistungen beeinflussen die Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft stärker als die Wichtigkeit einzelner

Leistungen. Eine erfolgreiche Mitgliederbindung hängt folglich stärker von der Qualität der erbrachten Leistung ab als vom Leistungsmix. Demzufolge empfiehlt es sich, bei der Interessensvertretung in die Qualität zu investieren und auch vermehrt über die Vertretungsaktivitäten und -erfolge zu berichten.

5. Mitglieder mit einem Verbandsengagement unterscheiden sich signifikant von den übrigen Mitgliedern. Sie sind generell zufriedener mit dem Verband und eher bereit, ihre Mitgliedschaft weiterzuempfehlen. Für sie ist die Möglichkeit, aktiv im Verband mitzuwirken und den persönlichen Austausch zu pflegen, wichtiger als den übrigen Mitgliedern. Die Zufriedenheiten und der Nutzen aus diesen Kategorien stehen in einem positiven Zusammenhang mit der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft. Für die Entwicklung besonders starker Beziehungen, sollten Wirtschaftsverbände versuchen, Mitglieder zu aktivieren und in das Verbandsgeschehen einzubinden.

## Summary of study results and final considerations

### Academic findings and contribution to academic research

This dissertation aimed to further evolve the conceptualization of the member value concept to establish its practical and theoretical application in the context of membership associations. The member value concept assumes that the value members obtain from motive fulfillment through their affiliation in organizations explains their attitudes and behavior. It is based on the matching principle that constitutes the theoretical foundation of different concepts that are used in research to explain member and volunteer motivation. This link explains why the conceptual advancement of the member value concept and research findings of this dissertation are relevant to academic research on member and volunteer motivation. Findings with academic relevance are hereinafter summarized in the order of the four projects. Findings from the first two projects relate to the importance and fulfillment of motives and member value drivers and their relation to member attitudes and behavior:

1. Based on data from the White Cross South Tyrol the explanatory power of the matching principle was propped. The study aimed to advance the conceptual development of the matching principle and the member value concept. It was an attempt to validate the matching principle by means of the total member value (TMV). The TMV was introduced as a more accurate operationalization of the matching principle compared to the total match index (TMI), as proposed in earlier literature. In addition, the contribution of motive-specific match indices to explain volunteer outcomes was propped. Although the matching principle per se was supported – the TMV does explain volunteer outcomes – the TMV did not better explain volunteer outcomes than total importance or total fulfillment alone, despite its strong theoretical foundation.

The total fulfillment variable reported the strongest explanatory power to explain satisfaction and promoter score. The total importance of motives had the strongest explanatory power to explain actual volunteering hours. Differences in the explanatory contribution of variables across different outcome variables indicate that not all outcome variables can be placed under the same umbrella. This points at the relevance to include both motive importance and fulfillment when analyzing

important volunteer outcomes. Yet, it is presumed that there is a better way to operationalize the matching principle which would allow the explanatory power of the model to evolve across different outcome variables. The applied operationalization of the matching principle and the subsequent calculation of the TMV only led to moderate predictive capability. However, the theoretical discussion may have raised questions to motivate other researchers to continue looking for an accurate operationalization of the matching principle.

Other contributions are the confirmation of the most relevant motives for highly engaged volunteers – values and understanding – as well as the influence of control variables such as the organizational context. Volunteers who perceive the organization as reliable with clearly comprehensible norms and structures are more likely to report favorable relationship outcomes. In line with previous literature volunteer activity also varies over time. Nonconforming is that the professional involvement of volunteers or aging are barriers to volunteer activity.

2. Based on data from a large German social welfare organization, the predictive capability of different member value drivers was explored. The main contributions of this study are insights into the relationship between member value drivers, organizational identification, and member engagement. Findings indicate that the member value drivers – the congruence between importance and fulfillment of members' relevant motives – are promising constructs to better understand member behavior.

A contribution to academic research is the finding that all member value drivers positively influence organizational identification. However, the positive relation between the economic value and identification was not signposted in previous literature. As indicated in existing literature, normative value was positively related to member engagement but not the driving force. Relational and self-actualization value were most relevant to explain the engagement of members in governance posts and functions. Results reported good explanatory powers of relational and self-actualization value and organizational identification to explain member engagement. Analyses supported the presumed mediation between relational and self-actualization value, identification and member engagement. The support of the mediation

contributes to academic research, because the influence of organizational identification on member behavior has so far hardly been investigated in research on member motivation.

The third project generated findings on the optimal organization design of membership associations. The project addressed the research gap on how associations can develop effective structures and provide values that motivate their members to remain and actively engage in their association in today's context:

3. Based on data from a Swiss contractors' association, the expectations of members in regard to a member value optimal organization design were explored. The main contribution of this study to academic research is the empirical validation of assumptions that are made in literature on the optimal organization design of membership associations. A key finding that confirms assumptions made in existing literature is that exchange-based incentives are expected from de-central chapters. A de-central provision of social and self-actualization incentives realizes the member value potential from constitutional elements of democratic membership-based ownership structures. A key finding that contributes to existing literature is that all members expect instrumental incentive from central chapters. Although this may be expected from an economic point of view, the expectations of members regarding the provision of instrumental incentives have so far not been assessed. An additional finding of this study is that two distinct member segments with differing needs exist and must be considered when planning a member value optimal organization design in membership associations. To address the expectations of both segments is important to attract a broad member base and sufficient membership participation and engagement.

The fourth project contributes to academic research on business associations. It does so by providing insights on the kind of members who are primarily active in business associations and how their commitment can be improved through effective resource allocation. To date, there is only little research on how business associations can effectively improve their member relationships:

4. Based on data from three Swiss business associations, members' motivation for their membership as well as an important relationship outcome were analyzed. The

analyses of member motivation confirmed findings from previous literature that the collective activity is the main incentive for memberships. Yet, selective incentives were relevant too. Findings further confirmed that relational and contribution incentives are the driving forces for member engagement.

New to the literature on business associations are findings regarding members' evaluation of perceived quality and importance as well as the member value on relationship outcomes. Satisfaction with the quality of services and activities explained member commitment and engagement better than the member value or the importance of services alone. Literature has so far highlighted the key influence of the importance of incentives to explain member attitudes and engagement. Here presented findings signpost the explanatory power of members' satisfaction with the quality of service provision. Yet, data also signaled that one could confirm the assumption made in existing literature that it is especially important to deliver high quality regarding critical services: The member value from importance and quality satisfaction had a good explanatory power too. This would support the assumption of existing literature regarding the positive relationship between perceived service quality of important services and relationship outcomes.



## **Practical findings and implications**

This dissertation contributes to the advancement of management practices in membership associations by providing examples of the practical use of the member value concept as member management instrument. Based on the member value concept, insights were gained on how associations can more efficiently and effectively create a healthy member base and stimulate member engagement. To develop solid relationships and increase the commitment and co-production of members are the critical factors in sustaining associations' legitimacy and collective performance. Although practical instruments and recommendations that help practitioners to manage and activate their member base whilst increasing their organizational efficiency are of high relevance, they are still rare. Member-oriented studies that present ways in which associations can most efficiently and effectively maximize the value they provide to their members are few. The absence of research on practical management instruments underpins the relevance of the herewith presented project findings.

The member value concept was used to establish a practical instrument that allows associations to assess which services, activities and organizational aspects are relevant to the provision of member value. Corresponding research findings provide insights into how relevant different member value drivers are to different member segments and how members evaluate the quality and value of different incentives. These insights may enable managers to better understand the strategic value of different services and activities, and, to more efficiently and effectively allocate their limited resources. Services, activities and organizational aspects can be categorized into member value drivers and member value destructors. To maximize the member value, limited resources should be appointed to the provision of member value drivers. The higher the quality of member value drivers, the greater the provided member value. No resources should be invested in the provision of services and activities that only cost but do not provide any value. Therewith, the managers of associations can increase their organizational efficiency and effectivity whilst optimizing the value they provide to their members. In addition, they can choose to differentiate member value drivers and destructors for different member segments. This becomes relevant, when the managers of associations need to control specific member segments such as volunteer members. In that case, the knowhow on which value is

relevant to engaged members helps to effectively allocate resources to those members who are more inclined to support the association.

Specific insights on how associations can more effectively and efficiently manage successful relationships with their members were gained based on the four projects and hereinafter summarized:

1. Based on data from the White Cross South Tyrol the practical insight was gained that the basic characteristic constitution of a volunteer explains whether he/she is willing to volunteer and to what extent and the general level of motive fulfillment explains whether he/she is satisfied and willing to promote the volunteer activity to friends. To acquire volunteers with high potential, managers of nonprofit-organizations should recruit volunteers that already have a broad spectrum of intrinsic motives such as values and understanding. In this study, men were also more likely to invest more of their time in volunteer activity, but it is questionable whether this is generalizable. It may be linked to the activity fields of the organization, such as rescue service. For practitioners, it is relevant to know that there is a straightforward relation between the fulfillment of multiple important motives with important volunteer outcomes. To increase the level of volunteer activity and the organizational commitment, they need to create an environment in which volunteers can fulfill a wide array of motives. Furthermore, they can improve important relationship outcomes by the provision of the right organizational context, consisting of comprehensible norms and structures, and a clear mission statement. In addition, the study confirms the phenomenon that practitioners face the challenge to keep volunteers motivated over time. Therefore, the recommendation is made that they need to proactively invest in the relationship with long-term volunteers.
2. Data generated by a large German social welfare organization confirmed the key roles of member value and identification in building quality relationships with members. Findings reported that all four member value drivers – economic, normative, relational, and self-actualization – are relevant to increase the identification of members with the values and goals of the organization. The organizational identification itself is relevant to explain member engagement. In the example, member engagement is derived from identification together with self-

actualization and relational value. This indicates that social welfare association managers should primarily invest in the promotion and fulfillment of relational and self-actualization motives to activate their member base. Members for whom relational and self-actualization motives are relevant are more likely to remain and engage in the association.

3. Data generated by a Swiss contractors' association indicated that multisite business associations have two distinct member segments which they need to consider when planning a member value optimal organization design. On the one hand, there are members who expect a de-central provision of exchange-based incentives. For this member- segment it is important to socialize and self-actualize in de-central chapters. On the other hand, there are members who expect a central provision of instrumental incentives. This member -segment seeks to attain economic prosperity from centrally provided instrumental incentives. To optimize the value which they provide to their members, multisite business associations should therefore exploit the unique potential of exchange-based incentives in de-central membership structures. This will safeguard their unique value proposition and niche position in the membership market. Instrumental incentives should be centrally provided. A central provision of instrumental incentives will bring twofold benefits by increasing the value transaction-oriented members obtain from instrumental incentives and by improving the organizational efficiency.
4. Data generated by means of three business associations showed that the collective activity and the establishment of a level playing field in the sector are the main reasons for their membership. The collective activity is achieved by means of lobbying and collective bargaining activities, negotiations with counterparties, as well as the establishment of common rules and norms. Selective incentives such as access to documents for daily operations and sectoral forecast are second most important services.

Findings further indicated that satisfaction with the quality of service provision is more relevant than the importance of motives to explain important relationship outcomes. This implies that managers should first spend their limited resources to

improve the quality of service provision. Only if enough resources are available, should they extend the range of services to meet other potentially relevant motives.

In this study, the provision of high quality services regarding the collective activity and selective and contributory incentives, were the critical ones to explain why members would promote the membership to others. To deliver high quality is especially relevant regarding the collective activity and contributory incentives. Members are more critical with the quality evaluation of the latter two intangible incentive categories. The intangibility of these member value drivers, points at the relevance of making their value more accessible. Business associations should not only invest more of their resources in collective activity performance, but also actively promote collective activity achievements to better their members' perception on collective activity success. This will also help to attract and acquire potential members because the collective activity is the main reason for memberships.

Another finding points at the potential of promoting social and contributory incentives. The possibility of influencing the action of associations and to have personal contact is very important to engaged members. These are not only the most satisfied and committed members, but, they also keep the democratic membership-based ownership structures alive. Across the three business associations, engaged members reported longer membership tenure, higher satisfaction and promoter scores.

## Limitations

Consideration should be given to several limitations of this study. Project specific weaknesses are discussed at the end of each project. The most meaningful methodological weaknesses are hereinafter summarized.

A weakness of the survey instrument is that the motive importance and fulfillment are assessed on the same page. This might bias response behavior and explain the small differences between importance and fulfillment scores among some participants. Consistent with other study designs an odd scale was used to measure independent variables. The odd scale aimed to avoid misinterpretation of midpoints (Krosnick & Presser, 2010). Yet, dependent variables were measured on an even scale in order to align the measurement of outcome constructs with previous research (Cripps et al., 2004; Gregory et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2006; Reichheld, 2003; Stukas et al., 2009; Swanson et al., 2007; Tschirhart et al., 2001).

The data consisted of self-reports from volunteers and members. Self-report data is subject to biases such as the tendency to exaggerate socially desirable behavior. Generally, relying on a single source of information increases common methods bias, which may conflate inter-correlations among the measures in this study (Weijters et al., 2010). In different studies the net promoter score was used as indicator of important relationship outcomes such as member commitment and support (Brown et al., 2005; Reichheld, 2003, 2014; Schultz & Block, 2015; van Riet & Kirsch, 2010). However, the net promoter score has received many critical voices too. The practical meaning of the promoter score is often overrated (Grisaffe, 2007; Schulman & Sargeant, 2013; Zaki et al., 2016) and with such measures one should keep in mind that the “true” propensity to engage in word of mouth remains unobserved (Anderson, 1998).

The use of single-item measures of attitudes, knowledge or abilities are generally discouraged because they may not adequately represent the content domain of conceptually complex constructs (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Fisher et al., 2016; Wanous & Hudy, 2001). Yet, there is empirical evidence that a global single item can be more inclusive than summing across facets (Fisher et al., 2016; Scarpello & Campbell, 1983). Different researchers measured satisfaction and social support with single-item measures (Blake & McKay, 1986; Cripps et al., 2004; Gregory et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2006;

Stukas et al., 2009; Tschirhart et al., 2001). Practical reasons to consider the use of single items are multifaceted and range from minimizing respondent burdens to the clarity of wording that reduce confusion (Fisher et al., 2016; Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007).

Another methodical weakness is the validity and reliability of incentive categories and member value constructs. Over different projects the presumed model structures were not confirmed. The convergent validities were problematic, however, not as problematic as the discriminant validities. The reason for this may be the multifaceted and interrelated characteristic of different motives as described by Suter (2012). Suter (2012) states, with reference to Maslow (1943), McClelland (2010) and Max-Neef (1991), that the concept of needs is a system in which all needs are interrelated and interactive. Each motive covers a wide range of aspects that have both complementary and substituting relations. Consequently, the constructs of different MV indices are neither explicitly formative nor reflexive. Goodness-of-fit parameters are illustrative that the multifaceted aspects of the member value are abstract and overlapping. CFA pointed at the interchangeability of items across constructs and constructs highly correlated with each other which may be indicative of how difficult it is to assess the multifaceted aspects of the member value with valid and distinctive constructs.

## Perspective for future research

The projects presented here help to evolve the theoretical and practical application of the member value concept in the context of membership associations. Findings point to the potential of the member value concept to analyze important attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. However, there are different limitations and drawbacks that have developmental potential. The strong theoretical foundation and results from previous literature are not fully supported by the present results. In most projects the fulfillment of motives reported the highest explanatory power. This questions the need to assess both the importance and fulfillment of motives. Yet, in some cases the combined use of motive fulfillment and importance led to additional insights. The moderate statistical support of motive-specific matches may have been caused by the survey instrument – that importance and fulfillment were assessed on the same page – or the inaccurate approach to operationalize the matching principle. Based on the presented projects and their critical evaluation, other researchers should continue seeking an accurate approach to operationalize the matching principle and to calculate the value members obtain from their affiliation in organizations. Based on an improved survey design and a more accurate operationalization of the member value concept, researchers should try to establish the member value concept as an academic and practical research instrument. This will contribute to academic research which still needs a reliable construct to assess the value members obtain from their affiliation to explain their attitudes and behavior. The establishment of one reliable construct would allow comparison of results from different research and over different fields. In pursuit of this objective the following points should be considered:

- To date the survey instrument is of great practical use, however, for academic research the survey design should be changed. It might be reasonable to assess motive importance and fulfillment on separate pages. Another possibility would be to directly ask for the value members obtain from the fulfillment of relevant motives or the match between quality expectation and fulfillment.
- Dependent variables should be measured using more than one or two items. Another way would be to include an additional external source of information to assess dependent variables, instead of only relying on self-reports from volunteers and

members. This way, for example the actual behavior or the “true” propensity to engage in word of mouth could be analyzed.

- Member value items were generated based on the concept of needs by Suter (2012) and adjusted to the specific context of each organization. Based on data and feedback from members it can be said that the item battery facilitates the assessment of the multifaceted member value. Although the multifaceted aspects of the member value could be relatively well assessed, these are too overlapping and intersecting for distinct member value drivers to be derived. Another problematic is whether the construct should and can be assessed in an either clear formative or reflexive measurement model. Future research should therefore continue working with an item battery based on the concept of needs by Suter (2012) in order to assess the multifaceted member value. However, the composition and formulation of items should be alternated in order to clearly distinguish between formative and reflexive measures. The identification of reasonable and valid member value drivers remains an unresolved challenge. Future research should focus on how to assess and derive constructs that obtain greater convergent validity. Greater validity may be obtained by the assessment of only one main aspect of each motive, thus the inclusion of only coherent and convergent items. This may also foster differences between constructs, e.g. the discriminant validity. Another approach could be to further promote the idea of a total member value assessed with the comprehensive item battery based on the concept of needs by Suter (2012). The data of this dissertation is indicative that it is more proximate to assess the member value in the sense of a total member value (TMV).
- In the case that different member value drivers are being explored, researchers should still be mindful of the TMV. The member value concept implies that motive-specific matches/different member value drivers moderately to strongly correlate to each other and the TMV. This implies that meaningful models cannot be calculated when multiple member value drivers are included in the models. This justified the attempt to control for the TMV and/or to calculate delta indices. To control the TMV should prevent overestimating the influence of single member value drivers. Member value delta indices provide a different method of interpreting and calculating the influence of different motive-specific matches. They represent the relative value contribution



of different motive importance and fulfillment. However, the conceptual innovation of member value delta indices is only moderately supported. Future research should therefore develop other ways of interpreting and analyzing the influence of motive-specific matches.

Another field of interest for future research is the member value optimal organization design. To find an optimal division of task and competences is a permanent field of tension in multisite organizations. Considering the high relevance of this issue to membership associations, it is surprising that not more empirical research has been conducted. Moreover, literature from profit organizations shows the high research potential and practical relevance of such investigations. For membership associations, the optimal organization design should be assessed from a member perspective. This is a prerequisite to sustain principles of membership-based ownership structure and the motivation of members to support their organization. Membership associations need to meet expectations of different member segments to attract a broad member base and sufficient membership participation and engagement. The applied study design to investigate the member value optimal organization design in membership associations should be applied in other organizations. Findings were reliable and of high relevance to practitioners. Special attention should be paid to contradictory expectations from non-engaged and engaged members. Study results point at conflicting interests of: a) non-engaged members who expect a central provision of exchanged-based incentives and b) engaged members who expect a de-central provision of instrumental incentives.

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