

# Values, intention-to-help, and examinational stress in Russian adolescents

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## Introduction

Cross-situational moral sustainability attracts a very high interest of personality and social psychologists. It is very important, to study how intention-to-help is moderated by real everyday situations especially if their content and sense lay outside of obvious altruistic goals. There are theoretically expected two variants of view on the world.

The first of them is based on the understanding of disjunctive composition of altruism and personal achievements; the second one means a conjunctive composition, that is, a possibility to be successful and to help other peoples at the same time.

So our investigation is an attempt to link together researches in the field of Self-consciousness and values on the one hand and ones in the field of intention stability on another hand. Our highest aim is to contribute to the problem of person integrity and synergy.

We proposed that persons who don't oppose altruism and achievements demonstrate higher intention-to-help stability in comparison with persons who are intended either to serve other people or to be successful. Integrated personality can be more stable in different situations.

We consider values as basic aims that administer the all person's activities.

## Hypothesis

Situational intention-to-help stability is influenced by composition of altruism and achievement values in the Self-conception of the personality.

## Procedure

Participants were 77 adolescents from Moscow school (29 girls, 48 boys, aged of 13-15 years). We used Osgood semantic differential scale to investigate how images of Successful Person and Altruistic Person in the Self-conception correlate, and developed by author questionnaire "Intention-to-help" including 12 items.

We also collected data about school achievements, and about the sociometric status of every participant concerning his/her helping behavior to get information about really working values of our respondents.

## Criteria for sociometry

1. Who of your classmates could help you on the competition or exam?
2. Who of your classmates would like to participate in charity activities (for example, to deliver supper to old people)?
3. If your classmates had got into conflict who could conciliate them?

## Questionnaire "Intention-to-help"

1. I am feeling empathy to other people (+).
2. It is difficult for me, to leave my business at once, even if other people need it (-).
3. I am feeling I can help other people (+).
4. I cannot be glad for somebody's sake now (-).
5. I cannot help other person if I don't like him/her (-).
6. It isn't easy, not to get irritated at 'Losers' who always need help (-).
7. It isn't obligatory, to create any new things, the essence is to get on with other people (+).
8. I am annoying by other people now (-).
9. I want share all best things in my life with other people (+).
10. I am feeling a lot of people need my help now (+).
11. It is easy for me, to find nice features of every person now (+).
12. There are situations when they shouldn't feel shy to refuse to help somebody (-).

We assessed the level of intention-to-help three times: first time 3 weeks before the exam ('Acquaintance'), second time one day before the exam, and third time after adolescents had known their result and their mark. We proposed that examinational stress could 'switch' pupil's intentions to egoistic adaptive purposes. So it could happen that readiness to help other people decrease.

We computed Student's t, Fisher's F, and Pearson's  $\chi^2$ .

## Results

Based on data of sociometry and Osgood semantic differential we found 5 types of helping behavior: there are groups of "Sympathetic", "Indifferent", "Egoistical", "Maximalists", and "Active Altruists".

They can be described by following characteristics.

"Sympathetic" are ready to help other people. Boys from this group have high school achievements. Their intention-to-help is stable both before an exam, and after exam independent on its outcome (high or low mark).

"Indifferent" very seldom help other people. Their school achievements are average. Intention-to-help other people decreases before an exam in girls and doesn't change in boys. "Egoistical" usually don't help other people in everyday life. They have very high school achievements. Intention-to-help other people doesn't change before an exam and decreases if they lose.

"Maximalists" often help other people but have average school achievements. Intention-to-help increases before an exam but decreases after the loose in girls. It is stable in boys.

"Active Altruists" help other people (especially boys) and have high school achievements. Intention-to-help doesn't change both in boys and girls.

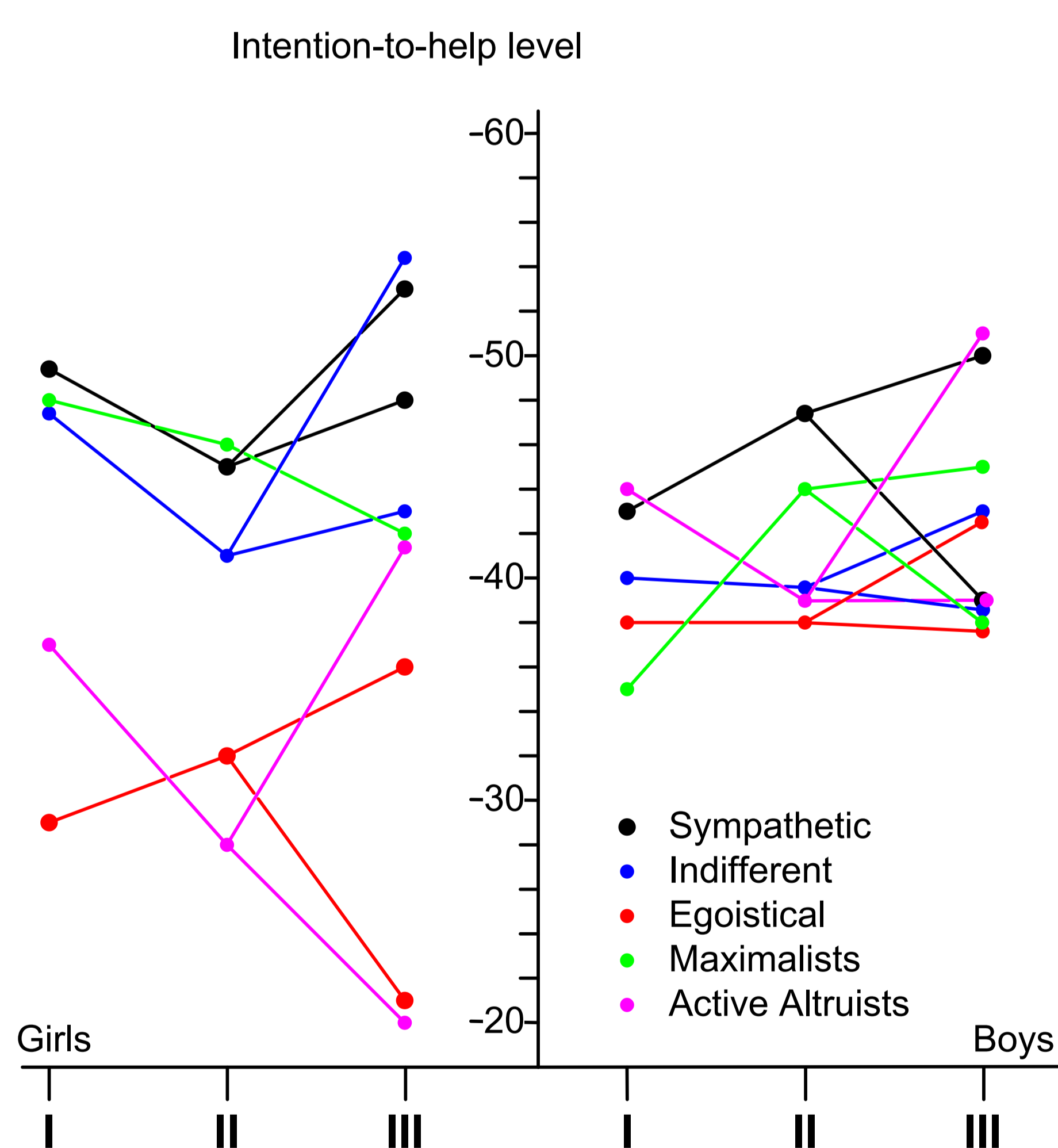


Fig. 1. Dynamics of Intention-to-help in different groups.

## Conclusion

Hypothesis is confirmed.

Situational dynamics of intention-to-help is caused by this type and gender.

It is really possible, to combine school and altruistic achievements in everyday life. Persons who contrast these values are less successful.

## Limitations and Prospects

Investigation need to be realized on the more representative sample.  
There also should be used other stressful situations.

## References

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