THE EFFECT OF BENEVOLENCE VALUES AND IMPLICIT THEORIES OF VALUES ON OTHER-FOCUSED BEHAVIORS | Zohar Gilad
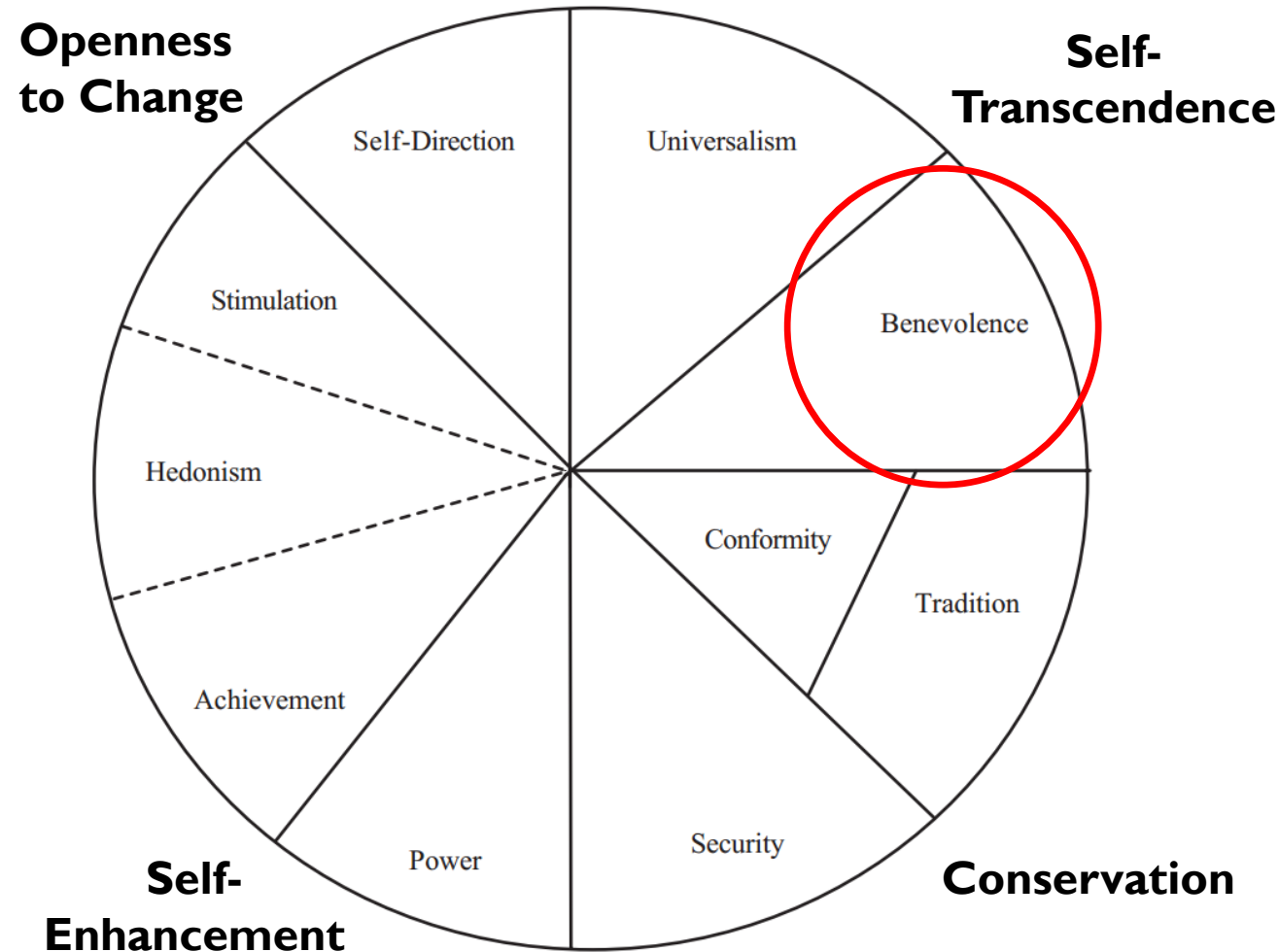
INTRODUCTION

Schwartz' value theory (1992)

- 10 universal values serve as a guiding principle in life
- 4 higher-order groups

Benevolence = Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact

INTRODUCTION

Can values predict behaviors?

(Bardi & Schwartz, 2003)

- Self-transcendence values can predict prosocial behavior

- However, the correlations were rather weak, especially for benevolence (r = .30~.50)

Value Domain	No. of Behavior Items	Value-Behavior Correlation Same Domain
Power	8	.52**
Achievement	7	.33**
Hedonism	7	.62**
Stimulation	6	.68**
Self-direction	9	.42**
Universalism	8	.55**
Benevolence	10	.30**
Tradition	9	.67**
Conformity	8	.39**
Security	8	.32**

$**p < .01.$

INTRODUCTION

Can values change?

- **Values** are typically viewed as **relatively stable** (e.g., Feather, 1971; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1997)

- Recent findings – personal **values can change** under certain circumstances, such as major life transitions (e.g. Goodwin, Polek, & Bardi, 2012).

What about beliefs regarding the malleability of values?

INTRODUCTION

- According to the literature on **implicit theories** (Molden & Dweck, 2006):
  - The implicit belief about the malleability of human attributes (e.g. intelligence) alters the meaning people give to basic psychological processes (e.g. self-control)
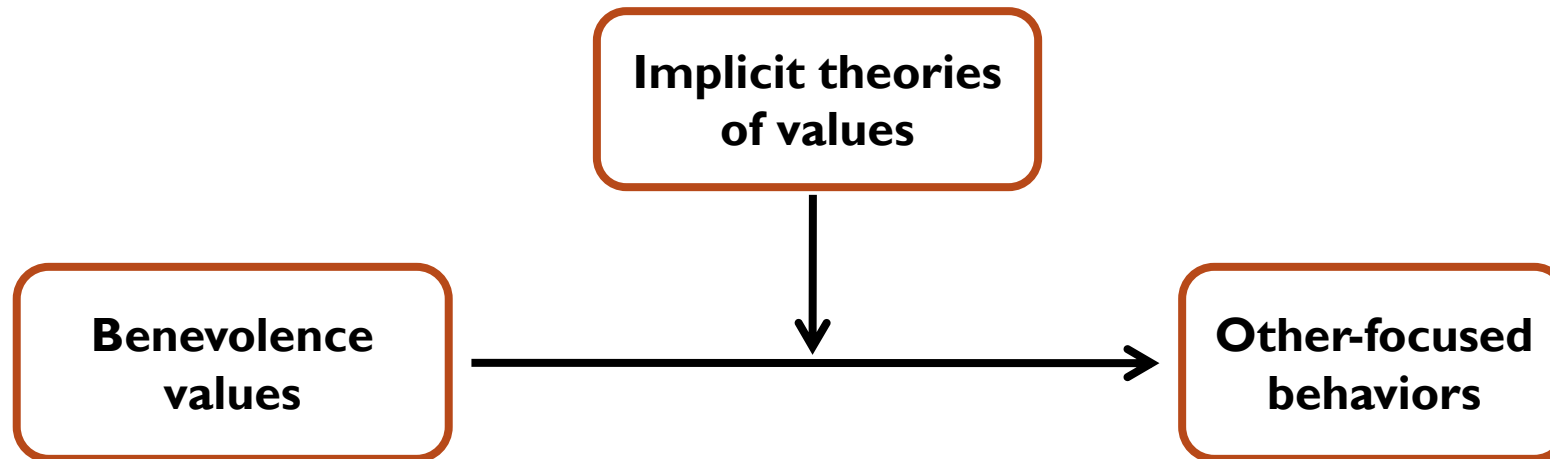 - This in turn affects their behavior

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To better understand **who are the people who engage in other-focused behaviors**.

- To explore the role of **implicit self-theories of values as a moderator** in the link between benevolence values and other-focused behaviors.

Hypotheses

Method

Subjects and procedure

- 99 participants, recruited using Prolific Academic platform
  - 59 men, mean age = 31.28 years.

- All participants answered 3 questionnaires assessing benevolence values, implicit theories of values and other-focused behaviors.
  - Benevolence values → implicit theories of values.

Method

Measures

- **Benevolence values**:
  - Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ; Schwartz, Melech, Lehmann, Burgess, Harris, & Owens, 2001)
    - 40 different hypothetical people, gender-matched with the participant.
    - How much the person in the description is like you?
    - 7-point Likert type scale (1 'not like me at all' to 7 'very much like me').

  - Participants completed the entire Questionnaire
    - Value scores are relative.
    - asking about benevolence alone might prime benevolence instead of assessing it.

METHOD

BENEVOLENCE
12. It's very important to him to help the people around him. He wants to care for other people. 18. It is important to him to be loyal to his friends. He wants to devote himself to people close to him. 27. It is important to him to respond to the needs of others. He tries to support those he knows. 33. Forgiving people who might have wronged him is important to him. He tries to see what is good in them and not to hold a grudge.

Cronbach's α = .731

METHOD

- **Implicit theories of values**:

    A 8-item questionnaire developed by Levontin (2016), included the following items:

    - The personal values someone hold, is something basic about them, and it can't be changed very much (R).
    - People can do things differently, but their personal values can't really be changed (R).
    - Everyone holds a certain set of personal values, and there is not much that can be done to really change that (R).
    - As much as I hate to admit it, you can't teach an old dog new tricks. People can't really change their personal values (R).
    - Everyone, no matter who they are, can significantly change their personal values.
    - People can substantially change their personal values.
    - No matter what kind of a person someone is, they can always change their personal values very much.
    - People can change even their most basic personal values.

    Cronbach's α = .937

Method

- **Other-focused behaviors**:
  - Based on Bardi & Schwartz, 2003
  - A questionnaire assessed frequency of engaging in common behaviors <u>relative to opportunities</u> to do so during the <u>past 6 months</u>.
  - 5-point Likert type scale (0 'Never' to 4 'All the time').
  - 28 behaviors, 7 other-focused.

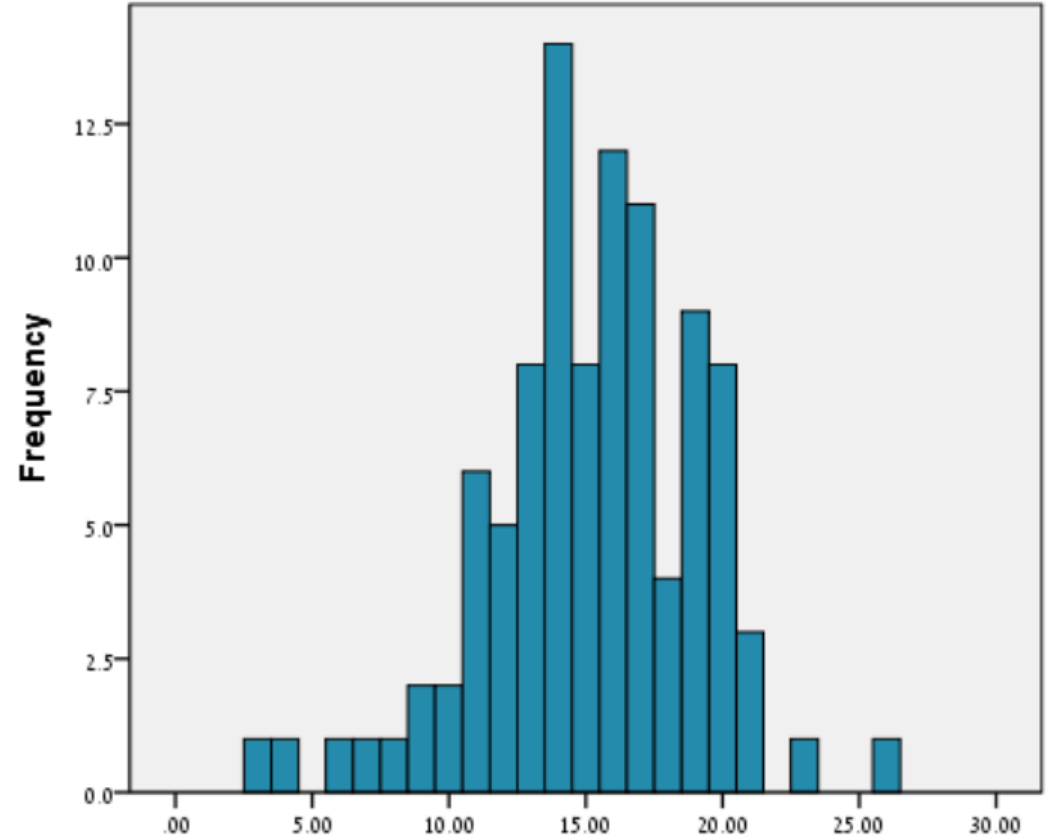| High-Order Groups of Values and Examples of the Items That Measure Related Behaviors		
Self-transcendence	Universalism, Benevolence	Lend things to people I know
Self-enhancement	Power, Achievement, Hedonism	Make sure others know about my successes (e.g., good grades, pay raise, praise from my boss).
Openness to change	Self-direction, Stimulation	Look for stimulating activities that break up my routine.
Conservation	Security, Conformity, Tradition	Follow the advice of family members from the older generation

RESULTS

Values-Behaviors Correlations

Other-focused behaviors	Current research										Bardi et al.	
	Values										Values	
	PO	AC	HE	ST	SD	UN	BE	TR	CO	SE	UN	BE
Show my objections to prejudice (e.g., against racial groups, the homeless)	.041	.072	.105	.109	.195	.239	**.315**	.030	.098	.005	.36	
Take time to understand other people's world views	.171	.166	.253	.255	**.328**	.159	.168	-.125	-.052	.165	.34	
Sign petitions to support environmental protection efforts	.141	.137	.024	.122	.022	**.171**	.084	.035	-.020	.050	.26	
Forgive another person when they have hurt my feelings	.084	.050	.184	.152	.170	.235	**.502**	.118	.136	.162		.26
Lend things to people I know	.128	.163	.203*	.200*	.041	-.072	**.293**	.018	.052	-.147		.21
Give small gifts to my friends and family for no reason	.045	.074	.014	.194	.342	.274	**.407**	.152	.078	.113		
Keep promises I have made	-.025	.017	.081	-.030	.258	.266	**.497**	.160	.160	.206		.22

PO = power, AC = achievement, HE = hedonism, ST = stimulation, SD = self-direction, UN = universalism, BE = benevolence, TR = tradition, CO = conformity, SE = security.

Results

Sum of other-focused behaviors as the dependent variable

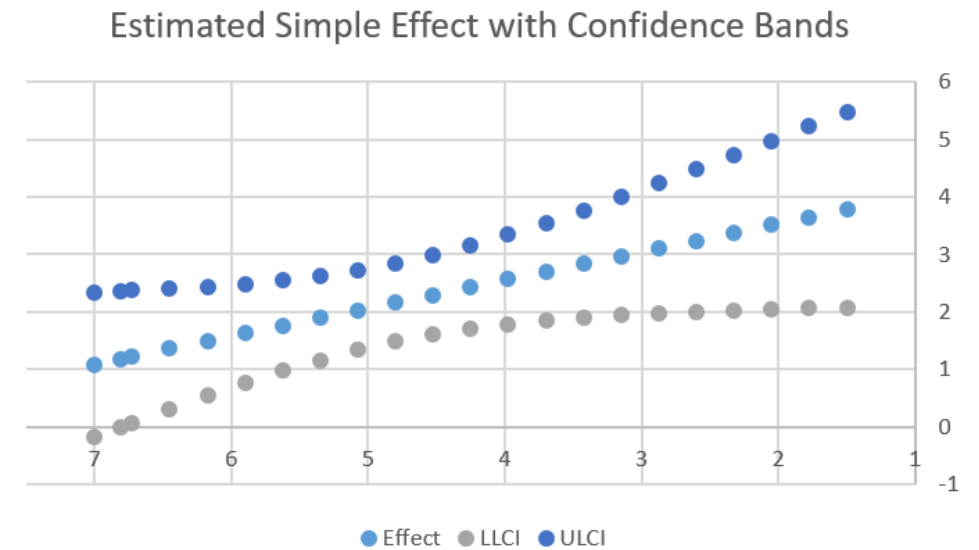- Range: 0-28 (actual range: 3-26)
- Mean = 15.21
- SD = 3.90

RESULTS

Sum of other-focused behaviors ($R^2 = .324$, p $< .001$):

- Main effect of benevolence values b = 2.203, p $< .001$

- No main effect of implicit theories of values p = .421

- Significant interaction b = -.4887, p = .0434
  - Johnson-Neyman analysis:
    Value - 6.8123
    % above -10.10

Estimated Simple Effect with Confidence Bands

DISCUSSION

- Benevolence values are a <u>strong</u> predictor of other-focused behaviors.

- However, implicit theories of values moderate the effect:
  - High rates of implicit belief in the malleability of values weakens the role of benevolence values as guiding principles in people's life.
  - In <u>very</u> high rates, the effect disappears altogether.

- Future research
  - Manipulate benevolence and/or implicit theories of values.
    - Priming benevolence with sentence sorting task increased volunteering for an extra study (Maio et al. 2009).
  - Mechanism – focus on the self or on others?

THANK YOU!