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The profile of “super-helpers”? Findings from the Generational Transmissions in Finland survey

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Abstract: This study considers “super-helpers,” namely older adults who help others in the private and public spheres. Although super-helpers can be important actors at individual, community, and social levels, only a few studies have evaluated their characteristics. We explored the profiles of super-helpers by drawing upon population-based data of older Finns (n = 2,174) and examined their provision of: 1) instrumental help (i.e., practical help or personal care) to friends and relatives; 2) financial aid to friends and relatives; and 3) public support (i.e., through volunteering or charitable giving). Of the respondents, 75% provided instrumental help, 44% provided financial aid, and 65% offered public support. Overall, 26% were considered super-helpers, that is, they were engaged in providing all three types of support. Having a partner, higher level of education, better perceived financial condition, being religious, and having a larger number of close relatives increased the probability of being a super-helper. The results are interpreted in light of opportunity structures and role extension approaches.

Keywords: Active aging, care, charity, financial aid, instrumental support, volunteering

Introduction

Whether older adults provide support to others both in private and public realms is a burning topic in rapidly aging societies. Active aging is a key policy goal in present-day European countries with aging populations (Foster & Walker, 2015). It refers to any socially valued – paid or unpaid – activity that produces goods or services (Bass & Caro, 2001; Burr et al., 2007). Active aging is often closely associated with participation in the labor market (e.g., van der Horst et al., 2017) but the present study focuses on unpaid prosocial activities undertaken by older adults. We consider “super-helpers” who are the most active individuals in terms of informal help-giving, and explore how common it is to engage in multiple types of support and to identify the factors that predict the likelihood of being super-helpers.

Super-helpers are committed to supporting others in both public and private domains (Burr et al., 2005). Our investigation considered multiple types of support located in public and private (i.e., instrumental help and financial aid) spaces. Public support includes volunteering and charitable giving. Volunteering is an unpaid activity that is directed toward parties with whom the provider does not have a personal relationship (i.e., support is targeted to strangers) and charitable giving refers to prosocial spending (i.e., donating money for the benefit of others with whom the donor does not have a personal relationship) (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Private support involves providing help to people with whom a helper has a personal relationship (i.e., relatives and friends). Financial support refers to giving money, gifts, and/or covering costs. Instrumental support involves providing tangible or physical assistance with different tasks (i.e., practical help and personal care).

Who provides informal help?

As the provision of support requires resources, help-giving is always related to the resources of the potential helper in question. Studies have emphasized opportunity structures in examining the intergenerational exchange of support (e.g., Szydlik, 2016; Tanskanen & Danielsbacka, 2019). However, the preconditions for adequate resources and opportunities apply to other relations as well. For instance, to provide instrumental support or volunteer, one must have adequate time and physical resources. Providing informal financial aid or donating money to charity requires financial resources. Providing support also requires opportunities to actually share the resources, that is, having social contacts to whom one can offer help. From this perspective, the better the resources and the greater the opportunities available, the larger the number of activities they can engage in and vice versa. Opportunities (or the lack thereof) can be related to social expectations (Szydlik, 2016). For instance, gendered helping patterns can be reflected in opportunities, wherein women are more likely to provide personal care, whereas men tend to provide more financial and practical help (e.g., Albertini et al., 2007; Heberkern et al., 2015; Kahn et al., 2011; Szydlik, 2016). Communities or peer-groups may affect helping behavior and push toward multiple engagements; religious communities emphasize the importance of volunteering and charitable giving, thus offering religious individuals more opportunities to engage in such activities (Son & Wilson, 2012).

One type of engagement may promote another prosocial activity. The role extension approach suggests that participating in several activities can complement each other and lead to greater overall productive engagement (Hank & Stuck, 2008). Engagement in one activity provides opportunities to participate in other productive tasks as well because people who engage in some activities are more likely to interact with others who participate in prosocial activities; thus, these connections may lead to new opportunities to support others (Burr et al., 2005; Choi et al., 2007). For example, individuals supporting family members outside their

households are typically part of formal and informal social networks that may promote prosocial behavior, such as volunteering or charitable giving (Jacobs et al., 2016). Given the digital revolution, individuals can also multitask easily and nowadays, it is possible, for example, to give money to a friend online, while helping an older parent with household tasks offline. Thus, when the activities are not too demanding, different forms of prosocial engagements may promote and complement each other.

Life course transitions may be reflected in the opportunity structures of help-giving; besides extending one's role, individuals may seek to compensate the loss of previous roles by engaging in new activities (Hank & Stuck, 2008; see also Atchley, 1971; 1989). Employment plays a determining role in Western societies. Adults spend a great deal of their time on work or work-related tasks. Thus, retirement usually increases the amount of spare time one has, and may encourage older individuals to adopt compensatory productive roles in other fields of life. For example, the loss of the role as an employee in the labor market following retirement may lead to increased frequency of volunteering (Tanskanen et al., 2021a) and provision of intergenerational help (Tanskanen et al., 2021b).

What do we know about super-helpers?

Empirical studies have shown that people tend to engage in more than one type of prosocial activity at a time. For example, the provision of informal practical help and/or care is positively associated with participation in voluntary work (e.g., Burr et al., 2005; Jegermalm & Grassman, 2013; Strauss, 2021), suggesting that providing one type of support increases the likelihood of providing another kind as well. A preliminary study of older Finns found that practical help and personal care channeled outside one's household were associated with

the increased probability of volunteering, but not with the likelihood of making charity donations (Tanskanen et al., 2022).

Only few studies have focused on individuals who are engaged in multiple types of help-giving. Thus, only a few studies have examined super-helpers. Hank and Stuck (2008) investigated associations between volunteer work, informal help-giving, and caregiving among Europeans aged 50 years and older and found that all these activities complemented each other. Participation in all three activities varied across countries, although higher proportions of active older people were found in Northern Europe, whereas Southern Europe was characterized by lower rates of activity (ibid.).

Burr et al. (2007) investigated the structures of productive activities among middle-aged and older Americans. They analyzed five activities (volunteer, domestic and paid work, providing informal help to others, and caregiving) and detected four distinct clusters of commitments to productive activities, namely home maintainers, workers/volunteers, helpers, and super-helpers. About 4% of the study population were identified as super-helpers. They were characterized by a low probability of engagement in paid work and a high or moderate likelihood of participating in informal help, caregiving, volunteering, and/or home-maintenance. The study examined individual characteristics by comparing super-helpers to home maintainers, and found that high age and incomes were negatively and positively associated with being a super-helper, respectively. The results did not show significant associations pertaining to the respondents' gender, marital status, level of education, or functional status.

Studies have shown that a large number of older adults are involved in several types of prosocial activities; however, their results often considered only two types of help-giving, such as the provision of personal care and volunteering, or instrumental support and volunteering (e.g., Strauss, 2021; Jegermalm & Jeppsson Grassman, 2009). Research on highly active helpers (i.e., super-helpers) has not considered prosocial spending (i.e., informal financial aid and charitable giving) as part of productive activities. Although studies have examined various explanatory factors pertaining to the provision of particular types of support, showing that help-giving is related to many individual characteristics and resources (e.g., Bertogg & Koos, 2021; van den Bogaard et al., 2014; Brandt & Deindl, 2013; Hank & Erlinghagen, 2010; Henretta et al., 2014; Musick & Wilson, 2008; Niebuur et al., 2018; Paarlberg et al., 2021; Szydlik, 2016; Tanskanen et al., 2021b; Wiepking & Bekkers, 2012), investigations of characteristics of super-helpers have been scarce. The few studies available have only considered a relatively limited number of possible explanatory factors at a time.

Research questions

We focused on the most active individuals in terms of engagement in help-giving and examined unpaid support provided in both public and private domains. We investigated the provision of instrumental help and financial aid to friends and relatives as well as public support to strangers (i.e., volunteering and charity). We began by exploring the overall structure of help-giving among older Finns, that is, how the provision of different types of support overlap with each other. The respondents who provided all three forms of support were considered super-helpers. We asked the following question:

Question 1: What proportion of the study population are super-helpers?"

After forming a picture of the prevalence of super-helpers, we investigated the characteristics that predicted engagement in multiple types of help-giving. Based on extant research, we assumed that the tendency to engage in multiple prosocial activities could be associated with factors related to the resources, opportunities, and individual contexts. Thus, we considered a wide variety of possible explanatory variables and asked the following question:

Question 2: What are the characteristics of super-helpers?

Material and methods

Sample

This study utilized population-based survey data from the Generational Transmissions in Finland (Gentrans) project, which gathered information on older Finnish adults born between 1945 and 1950. We used data from the second wave of data collection, as the survey included more questions that pertained to our examination (e.g., wider range of background variables and more specific information on the provision of informal support) when compared to the other rounds of data collection (wave 1 or 3) (see Danielsbacka et al., 2013; Haavio-Mannila et al., 2009; Hämäläinen et al., 2021). The survey data were collected by Statistics Finland in 2012 and included 2,278 participants with a response rate of 65%. The present study sample comprised 2,174 older adults who were aged between 62 and 67 years at the time of data collection. We also utilized the Finnish administrative register data that were available on every participant who took the survey. With the permission of the respondents, the register information was merged with the survey data. This provided more background information on each individual.

Dependent variables

Our dependent variables were based on multiple questions measuring the provision of different types of support, namely the provision of personal care, practical help, financial aid, volunteering, and charitable giving. To gather data on practical help and financial support, the respondents were asked to report on the help they offered to their children, parents, siblings, parents' siblings, cousins, and friends. To gather data on care, they were asked about caregiving to their parents, siblings, parents' siblings, cousins, and friends. Information on older parents caring for their adult children was not considered as it is extremely rare in contemporary Finland (Hämäläinen & Tanskanen, 2021).

The participants were asked to report whether they had participated in voluntary work in the preceding 12 months (0 = no, 1 = yes). Respondents were asked whether they had donated money to any charity in the preceding 12 months (0 = no, 1 = yes). Participation in volunteering and charity were recoded into a single dummy variable: public support (0 = no, 1 = yes). The respondents were requested to report whether they had provided practical help, financial aid, or care to their relatives and/or friends. Respondents were told that financial aid referred to giving money and covering costs, practical help to support the performance of household tasks, paperwork, using technology, transportation, etc., and that care referred to personal care, such as helping with washing, eating, and dressing. To gather data on financial aid, the participants were asked if they had given financial aid in the preceding 12 months (0 = no, 1 = yes). To gather data on the provision of practical help and personal care, the participants were asked how often they had provided such support in the past 12 months via a 5-point scale (ranging from 0 = never to 4 = several times a week). Practical help and care variables were recoded into a single dummy variable: instrumental support (0 = no help, 1 = at least occasional help).

Finally, we constructed a variable comprising information on the types of support that the respondents provided (0 = none, 1 = one or two types of support, 2 = all types of support). In the main analyses, we compared super-helpers with those who were not super-helpers and recoded this into a dummy variable (0 = no help / some help, 1 = all types of support). For sensitivity purposes we used different cut-off points and compared super-helpers with non-helpers (0 = no help, 1 = all types of support) as well as only to those who have provided some help (0 = some help, 1 = all types of support; see Appendix Table 1).

Explanatory variables

Based on extant research, several factors were identified as related to providing financial aid, instrumental support, participating in voluntary work, and making donations to charity. Here, we utilized the potential of our survey and register data and examined a wide variety of variables that could presumably be associated with the level of prosocial activity. These potential explanatory variables were: gender, partnership and employment status, level of education, perceived financial situation, type of home municipality, religiousness, self-rated health, number of close relatives (0 to 20 or more), and number of friends (0 to 20 or more). The descriptive information of the explanatory variables is shown in Table 1.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Analytical strategy

We began by investigating the structure of the respondents' prosocial activity and constructed a Venn diagram showing the different combinations of instrumental help, financial aid, and public support. The Venn diagram was constructed using an R package “*ggvenn*” with

RStudio (see Linlin, 2022). It illustrated the frequency and proportion of the engagement in multiple forms of support, which is the main target of interest in the following statistical analyses. We executed binary logistic regression analyses to examine the predictors of super-helpers. The findings were illustrated by calculating predicted probabilities with 95% confidence intervals. Besides the abovementioned Venn diagram, analyses were conducted using statistical software Stata version 17.

Results

First, we provided descriptive results of the structure of support provided by the respondents. Overall, 75% of the participants provided some instrumental support, 44% provided financial aid, and 65% provided public support. Figure 1 highlights all possible combinations of the different forms of the types of support examined.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

In Figure 1, every circle represents one type of support; the bottom circle comprises all respondents who had participated in public support, top-right circle represents all those who provided financial aid, and the top-left circle represents all those who had given instrumental help. The intersections of the circles illustrate the overlap in the provision of different types of support. About 26% of the respondents provided only one type of support. Around 39% had provided two types of support. Further, 11% had given both instrumental help and financial aid and 24% had provided instrumental help and public support. Finally, 4% provided financial aid and public support. The intersection of all circles showed that 26% of

the respondents were super-helpers, that is they had been involved in providing all three types of support.

Next, we examine the predictors of super-helpers. Table 2 shows the results from the logistic regression analysis. These results are illustrated by calculating predicted probabilities with 95% confidence intervals, which are shown in Table 3. Respondents with partners were more likely to be super-helpers than those without partners (no partner = 21.9%; with partner = 27.3%). Level of education predicted being super-helpers, where respondents with higher levels of education were more likely to be super-helpers when compared with those with lower levels of education (low = 18.2%; middle = 26.5%; high = 37.9%). Perceived financial condition was positively associated with the likelihood of being a super-helper. Respondents with better perceived financial conditions were more likely to be super-helpers as opposed to those who had a poorer perceived financial condition (low-income = 20.1%; middle-income = 30.0%; at least comfortably off = 31.4%). Those who considered religion very important were more often super-helpers than those who did not (not important = 22.1%; very important = 32.7%). The results showed that the number of close relatives was positively associated with the likelihood of being a super-helper, that is individuals who had a larger number of close relatives were more likely to be super-helpers when compared to individuals with fewer close relatives (no close relatives = 22.7%; mean (6.47) = 26.0%; at least 20 close relatives = 33.5%). We detected a few marginally significant associations ($p < 0.1$).

Employed respondents (22.6%) were less likely to be super-helpers than those who were unemployed (26.9%). Respondents who considered their state of health at least good (27.3%) were more likely to be super-helpers than those who rated their health poor or very poor (19.1%).

[Insert Table 2 about here]

[Insert Table 3 about here]

We ran logistic regression analyses with different cut-off points. These results are shown in Table 1 in the Appendix. While examining super-helpers against providers of some kind of help (0 = provide some help, 1 = super-helper) or super-helpers against those who did not provide any help (0 = no help, 1 = super-helper), the results were very similar to the main analyses, although the magnitude of the odds ratios and a few significance levels changed slightly.

Discussion

Active aging after retirement is a burning question in rapidly aging societies. Studies on the topic have been scarce and have mostly considered only a few prosocial activities at a time, such as volunteering or some form of instrumental help (e.g., practical help and/or personal care). Here, we investigated the profiles of the most active older individuals and considered multiple forms of support. We examined the act of providing 1) instrumental help and 2) financial aid to friends and relatives; and 3) public support to strangers (i.e., volunteering or charitable giving). Those who had provided all three types of support were considered super-helpers.

First, we considered the share of super-helpers and detected that the vast majority of older Finns had provided some type of support. Of the total, 75% provided instrumental help, 44% provided financial aid, and 65% provided public support. Further, 26% were identified as

super-helpers, in that they had provided all types of support examined. These results are in line with previous studies that examined multiple engagements in unpaid help-giving outside one's household (Hank & Stuck, 2008; Jegermalm & Jeppsson Grassman, 2009; Jegermalm & Grassman, 2013). Our results suggest that the provision of different types of help may complement rather than displace each other to some extent, which is in line with Hank and Stuck (2008), although our results indicated also \cap -shaped trend in the engagement in prosocial activities. Providing two types of support was most common among the respondents, indicating that most individuals may be reluctant or unable to take on new prosocial activities after a certain point or engaging in additional activities may lead to the substitution of previous ones.

We examined the characteristics of super-helpers. Improved resources and opportunities predicted multiple engagements as having a partner, higher level of education, better perceived financial conditions, being religious, and having a larger number of close relatives increased the probability of being a super-helper. Marginally significant results suggested that employment were negatively and good state of self-rated health positively associated with the likelihood of being a super-helper. These findings align with studies that provided evidence of different factors being related to participants' resources and opportunities associated with the increased provision of support (e.g., Niebuur et al., 2018; Tanskanen et al., 2021b).

Although previous studies have detected gender differences in help-giving, these results usually concern particular types of support. For instance, men are more likely to provide practical help, such as help with repairs, whereas women are more likely to provide personal care (e.g., Haberkern et al., 2015; Kahn et al., 2011). In contrast, our results show that while

considering a wide range of support, gender did not serve as a predictor of being a super-helper (see also Burr et al., 2007). Although studies have found that individuals help less in urban than in rural areas, these results mostly concerned volunteering (e.g., Balish et al., 2018; Paarlberg et al., 2021). We did not detect any significant association between urbanity and super-helpers. Studies have also shown that rural dwellers are not more prosocial than their urban counterparts (Grueter et al., 2020; Zwirner & Raihani, 2020). However, rather different environments provide different opportunities to offer help (see Amato, 1993; Paarlberg et al., 2021). We examined volunteering as part of public support, which included donations to charity. Whereas the residential area may affect opportunities to volunteer, charitable giving depends less on the characteristics of the individuals' neighborhoods and more on resources in order to make donations. The number of friends one had was not associated with their likelihood of being a super-helper. One explanation for this could be that even though friends are important social contacts one can provide support to, private support can be often channeled toward relatives. Studies have shown that individuals tend to help their close kin more than others (e.g., Burnstein, 2005; Madsen et al., 2007). Our results show that the number of close relatives did indeed increase the likelihood of being a super-helper.

A significant strength of our study was that the data helped us examine a wide variety of explanatory factors while investigating multiple forms of support. The few studies on super-helpers (Burr et al., 2007; Hank & Stuck, 2008) have examined only a limited number of explanatory factors and have not considered the provision of financial aid or charity donations. This means that our results offer a more comprehensive insight on the characteristics of super-helpers. One downside is the cross-sectional nature of the data, meaning that while the results are informative on the proportion and predictors of super-

helpers, they do not provide evidence for causal associations or shed light on the dynamics of multiple engagement over time. Thus, studies should investigate whether changes in an individual's resources and opportunities affect the likelihood of being a super-helper. Studies should examine whether the composition of prosocial activities remains stable or changes over time, for instance, because of engagements in new tasks, that is, whether additional activities displace or complement previous ones. Another limitation is that we could not measure the intensity of support provided and thus, further investigations should consider the frequencies of support among super-helpers and whether, for instance, the frequency of one type of support affects the composition of help-giving. Our results concerned only one country, and future research should explore whether the prevalence of super-helpers and predictors differ across countries and welfare state regimes.

Active aging is a key policy goal in countries with rapidly aging populations (Foster & Walker, 2015). However, the value of unpaid prosocial activities of older adults may not always be adequately recognized as policymakers often consider active aging only from the perspective of the labor market. Our results show that a vast majority of older adults are providing several types of support to different parties. While engagement in help-giving can be beneficial for older adults themselves, for example, by strengthening their social networks and improving their health and wellbeing (e.g., Burr et al., 2021; Musick & Wilson, 2008), by providing support, they also become an important asset for their social networks and society at large. Thus, promoting older adults' resources and opportunities to participate in prosocial activities should become an integral part of active aging policies.

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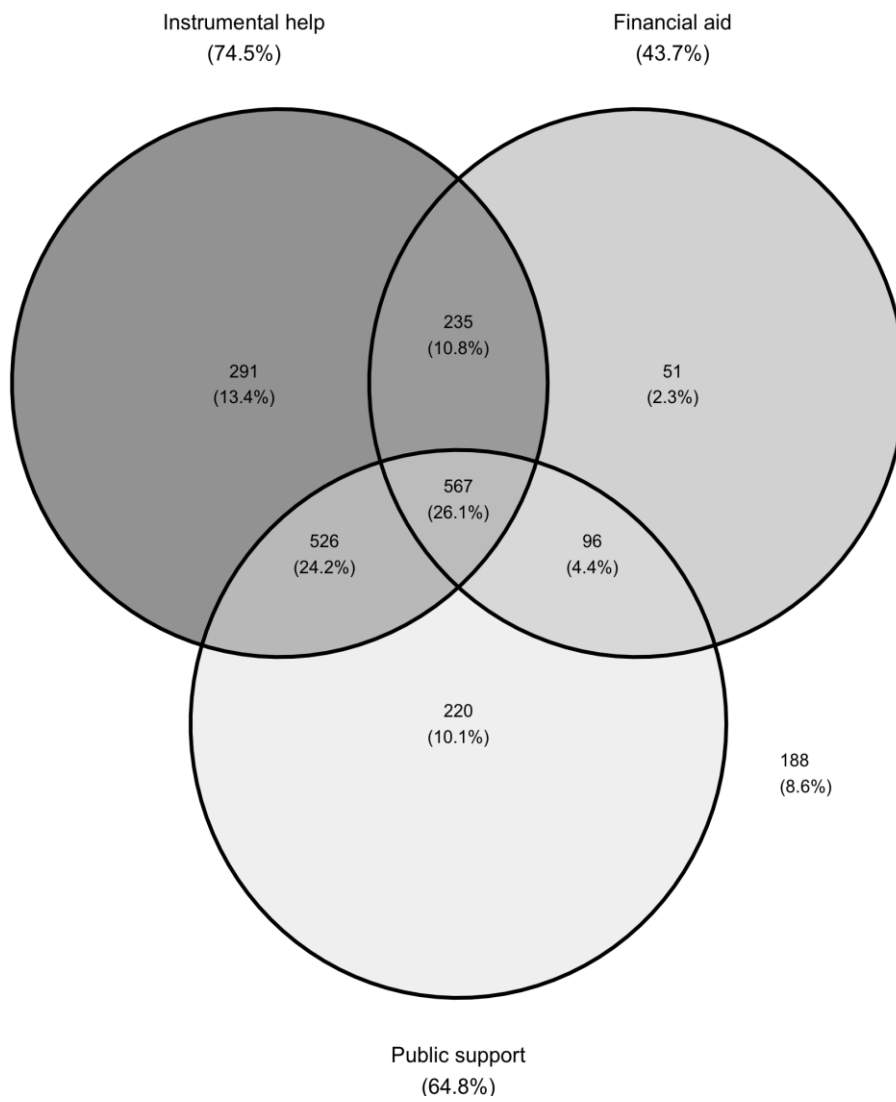


Figure 1. Structure of the provision of support (N = 2174).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics (n = 2174)

	n	%	mean
Gender			
Female	1239	57	
Male	935	43	
Partnership status			
No spouse/partner	540	24.8	
Have a spouse/partner	1634	75.2	
Education			
Low	704	32.4	
Middle	1097	50.5	
High	373	17.2	
Employment status			
Not working	1806	83.1	
Working	368	16.9	
Financial condition			
Low-income	977	44.9	
Middle-income	811	37.3	
At least comfortably off	386	17.8	
Home municipality			
Urban	1454	66.9	
Semiurban	349	16.1	
Rural	371	17.1	
Importance of religion			
Not important	329	15.1	
Not very important	656	30.2	
Somewhat important	865	39.8	
Very important	324	14.9	
Self-rated health			
Poor or very poor	129	5.9	
Fair	909	41.8	
Very good or good	1136	52.3	
Number of friends (0–20)	2174		6.46
Number of relatives (0–20)	2174		5.42

Table 2. Predictors of super-helpers. Logistic regression (N = 2174).

	OR	p	95% CI	
			lb	ub
Gender				
Female	ref.			
Male	0.98	0.840	0.79	1.21
Partnership status				
No spouse/partner	ref.			
Have a spouse/partner	1.36*	0.020	1.06	1.75
Education				
Low	ref.			
Middle	1.65***	0.000	1.28	2.11
High	2.85***	0.000	2.07	3.92
Employment status				
Not working	ref.			
Working	0.78+	0.070	0.59	1.02
Financial condition				
Low-income	ref.			
Middle-income	1.74***	0.000	1.38	2.21
At least comfortably off	1.88***	0.000	1.39	2.54
Home municipality				
Urban	ref.			
Semi-urban	1.14	0.350	0.86	1.51
Rural	1.21	0.180	0.92	1.6
Importance of religion				
Not important	ref.			
Not very important	1.08	0.640	0.78	1.5
Somewhat important	1.34+	0.070	0.98	1.84
Very important	1.79**	0.000	1.24	2.59
Self-rated health				
Poor or very poor	ref.			
Fair	1.47	0.150	0.87	2.48
Very good or good	1.64+	0.060	0.97	2.78
Number of friends	0.98	0.180	0.96	1.01
Number of relatives	1.03**	0.010	1.01	1.05
Pseudo R2	0.062			

Notes: OR = odds ratio, CI = confidence interval, lb = lower bound, ub = upper bound; ref = reference category; + $p < .1$ * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. Predicted probabilities of super-helpers.

	Predicted %	95% CIs	
		lb	ub
Gender			
Female	26.2	23.8	28.7
Male	25.9	23.1	28.6
Partnership status			
No spouse/partner	21.9	18.4	25.5
Have a spouse/partner	27.3	25.3	29.4
Education			
Low	18.2	15.2	21.2
Middle	26.5	24.0	29.1
High	37.9	32.8	43.1
Employment status			
Not working	26.9	24.9	28.9
Working	22.6	18.6	26.6
Financial condition			
Low-income	20.1	17.4	22.8
Middle-income	30.0	26.9	33.0
At least comfortably off	31.4	26.7	36.1
Home municipality			
Urban	25.1	23.0	27.3
Semi-urban	27.5	23.0	32.1
Rural	28.6	24.0	33.2
Importance of religion			
Not important	22.1	17.7	26.4
Not very important	23.3	20.1	26.5
Somewhat important	27.2	24.3	30.1
Very important	32.7	27.8	37.7
Self-rated health			
Poor or very poor	19.1	11.7	26.4
Fair	25.3	22.4	28.1
Very good or good	27.3	24.8	29.8
Number of friends			
Min (0)	27.9	24.7	31.2
Mean (5.41)	26.1	24.3	27.9
Max (20)	21.6	15.3	27.9
Number of relatives			
Min (0)	22.7	19.9	25.6
Mean (6.47)	26.0	24.2	27.7
Max (20)	33.5	27.5	39.5

Notes: CI = confidence interval, lb = lower bound, ub = upper bound

Appendix Table 1. Predictors of super-helper with different cut-offs.

Logistic regression (N = 755–1986).

	Some help				No help			
	OR	p	95% CI		OR	p	95% CI	
			lb	ub			lb	ub
Gender								
Female	ref.				ref.			
Male	1.00	0.980	0.81	1.24	0.80	0.280	0.53	1.21
Partnership status								
No spouse/partner	ref.				ref.			
Have a spouse/partner	1.30*	0.040	1.01	1.68	2.08**	0.000	1.34	3.21
Education								
Low	ref.				ref.			
Middle	1.55***	0.000	1.21	1.99	2.32***	0.000	1.53	3.51
High	2.57***	0.000	1.86	3.55	11.12***	0.000	4.66	26.54
Employment status								
Not working	ref.				ref.			
Working	0.77+	0.060	0.59	1.01	0.96	0.880	0.54	1.70
Financial condition								
Low-income	ref.				ref.			
Middle-income	1.67***	0.000	1.31	2.12	2.37***	0.000	1.54	3.64
At least comfortably off	1.71***	0.000	1.26	2.32	7.22***	0.000	3.08	16.90
Home municipality								
Urban	ref.				ref.			
Semi-urban	1.13	0.380	0.86	1.50	1.34	0.300	0.77	2.31
Rural	1.20	0.210	0.90	1.58	1.29	0.330	0.77	2.17
Importance of religion								
Not important	ref.				ref.			
Not very important	1.05	0.780	0.75	1.47	1.55	0.160	0.84	2.85
Somewhat important	1.29	0.120	0.94	1.78	1.91*	0.030	1.05	3.48
Very important	1.68**	0.010	1.15	2.44	3.79***	0.000	1.74	8.23
Self-rated health								
Poor or very poor	ref.				ref.			
Fair	1.40	0.220	0.82	2.38	1.58	0.250	0.73	3.45
Very good or good	1.55	0.110	0.91	2.65	2.02+	0.080	0.91	4.48
Number of friends	0.98	0.160	0.95	1.01	1.00	0.980	0.95	1.06
Number of relatives	1.03*	0.020	1.00	1.05	1.07**	0.000	1.02	1.13
Observations	1986				755			
Pseudo R2	0.049				0.240			

Notes: OR = odds ratio, CI = confidence interval, lb = lower bound, ub = upper bound, ref = reference category; + p < .1 * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.