**Title page**

**Companies as catalyst for volunteering: how to engage non-volunteers in volunteering?**

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**Note:** In addition to what is written in this paper, we collected qualitative data conducting 4 focus groups with in total 43 respondents. The qualitative data is yet to be analysed, but will help us deepen the insights of this paper.

**Abstract (as submitted)**

It is argued that workplaces can assist individuals in overcoming organizational and normative barriers that prevent people from volunteering (Hustinx & Meijs, 2011). Previous research has shown that volunteering via the workplace is related to volunteer activities beyond the corporate context (i.e. in private life) (Krasnapolskaya et al., 2015). Despite this interesting relationship between private volunteering and volunteering through the workplace, studies have yet to examine the potential of the workplace to act as a catalyst to activate *inactive* employees (i.e. non-volunteers). As it has yet to be examined why and how employees who are non-volunteers become active as volunteers through workplace volunteering programs, we study the following research question: *Why do non-volunteers become active in volunteering through opportunities via the workplace and how can this be stimulated in this context?*

To explore the main research question, the current study uses a mixed methods approach. We gathered quantitative data through an online survey distributed to all employees of the company (N=780, response rate is 21%). We ask questions on their demographic and job specific characteristics, their barriers and stimuli to participate, their interest in social issues and their preferences in volunteer activities. We conducted a multinomial regression analysis to compare the non-volunteers to those who are active via the workplace, privately and both (i.e. dual volunteers). In addition, we collected qualitative data conducting 4 focus groups with in total 40 respondents.

The results partially confirm the hypothesis that the personal and job-related characteristics, volunteer preferences, attitudes towards corporate volunteering and organizational support of corporate volunteers differ from the other groups. Interestingly, despite some similarities between private volunteers and those who participate in corporate volunteering, the results of this study could imply that many assumptions that could be made about the characteristics, attitudes and preferences of community volunteers should not be projected onto the context of the workplace. It suggest that literature, models and assumptions about private volunteering should potentially not be simply applied to corporate volunteering, but that they should be carefully reconsidered within the specific context of the workplace. The qualitative data is yet to be analysed, but will help us deepen these insights.

**Introduction[[1]](#footnote-1)**

In contemporary society, there are many ways in which citizens can engage socially, with volunteering as one of the most obvious (Adler and Goggin, 2005). This concept, which has been the subject of a strong tradition of scholarship, refers to the reasons that people have for engaging in such behaviour and the characteristics of those who do this (for an overview, see Musick and Wilson, 2008). Scholars have recently begun to examine the contingencies that affect volunteer involvement and, consequently, volunteer management (for a review, see Brudney and Meijs, 2014). For example, the specific contexts in which individual volunteers are solicited (e.g. the workplace or the school) might play an important role in determining who will and will not be attracted to particular types of engagement (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010).

As observed in the literature, third parties – including governmental organizations (Van den Bos, 2013), universities (Gazley et al., 2012) and companies (De Gilder et al., 2005; Krasnapolskaya et al., 2015) – are increasingly playing a role in promoting and enforcing individual volunteering behaviour (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). For example, universities are encouraging students to engage in service learning (Gazley et al., 2012), and governmental organizations are actively designing and facilitating volunteer infrastructures that are favourable to volunteer behaviour (Van den Bos, 2013). The workplace has also been identified a context that influences individual social behaviour, including such extra-role behaviour as corporate volunteering (De Gilder et al., 2005; Grant, 2012; Grant et al., 2008; Organ, 1988; Snell and Wong, 2007; Van Dyne et al., 1994).

Corporate volunteering (also known as employee volunteering, workplace volunteering, and employer-supported volunteering) can be defined as discretionary workplace behaviour in which employees volunteer at non-profit organizations on behalf of their employers (Van der Voort et al., 2009; Van Schie et al., 2011). It allows companies to enhance volunteering by eliminating some of the organizational and normative barriers that might prevent people from volunteering (Hustinx and Meijs, 2011). Without the influence of the corporate context and support, any volunteering by employees simply reflects private behavioural choices (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Houghton et al., 2009).

Corporate volunteering differs from other types of volunteering (e.g. service learning, community volunteering) because of the direct role of the workplace (e.g. managers, colleagues) in soliciting engagement (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Van der Voort et al., 2009). In community-based volunteering, this role is often fulfilled by beneficiaries or charitable organizations (see also for charitable giving: Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011). Corporate volunteering could be seen as a non-traditional avenue through which individuals can engage in volunteering (Brewis, 2004; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Van Schie et al., 2011).

Despite the accumulating body of literature on corporate volunteering (Rodell and Lynch, 2015), few studies have attempted to identify the characteristics of individuals who are attracted to volunteering through the workplace (i.e. corporate volunteering). This chapter contributes to the literature by exploring the distinctiveness of corporate volunteers, focusing on differences between corporate volunteers, community volunteers (i.e. those engaged in volunteering outside the workplace; see also De Gilder et al., 2005) and non-volunteers. More specifically, I explore differences in the characteristics, attitudes, preferences for volunteer assignments and organization-related factors of these categories of volunteers.

This study is relevant in light of findings from previous work on context-specific volunteer involvement, which suggest that these types of volunteers might differ according to some of these variables. For example, Nesbit and Gazley (2012) demonstrate that the demographics and preferences of individuals who volunteer in professional associations differ from those of volunteers who engage in non-professional contexts. The organizational context might also influence individual behaviour (Johns, 2006). It is important to learn more about the characteristics of individuals who are attracted to volunteering through the workplace. Such knowledge could help to explain who volunteers through the workplace, why individuals become involved in volunteering exclusively through the workplace and how this might contribute to the overall volunteer pool within society (Brudney and Meijs, 2009). In addition, comparing corporate volunteers to other types of volunteers could help to clarify the extent to which the volunteer literature might be applicable to corporate volunteering or whether the prevailing general assumptions about volunteering should be reconsidered in light of the contingency of volunteering through the workplace.

In the following section, I position the research question by discussing the central concept of this chapter (i.e. corporate volunteering), emphasizing and contextualizing the importance of the current study. I then present nine hypotheses concerning on personal characteristics (demographics and job-related characteristics), attitudes (anticipated personal benefits, perceptions and social anxiety), volunteer preferences (relating to the interests of the company and specific characteristics of volunteer assignments) and organization-related factors (including organizational support and role modelling). After explaining the research context, sample, procedure, measures and tests, I present the results, as well as the conclusions and their implications for research and practice.

**Volunteering and the workplace**

Contrary to perceptions of many traditional non-profit organizations that involve volunteers, the number of people engaging in volunteering in Western countries has generally not decreased (Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2003; Hustinx et al., 2011). For example, longitudinal data indicate that volunteer participation rates have remained relatively stable at 42–48% in the Netherlands (Dekker and De Hart, 2009; CBS, 2015), 45–47% in Canada (Statistics Canada[[2]](#footnote-2)); 25–29% in the United States (Corporation for National and Community Service[[3]](#footnote-3)); and 24–35% in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics[[4]](#footnote-4)).[[5]](#footnote-5) Nevertheless, such stability in participation rates does not reflect stability in the forms of citizen engagement. On the contrary, many scholars have observed a shift away from traditional types of volunteering toward less traditional forms, including corporate volunteering (Bussell and Forbes, 2002; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2003; Hustinx et al., 2011).

In this context, corporate volunteering is the result of the efforts of companies to encourage, facilitate or organize volunteer opportunities for employees wishing to volunteer their time and skills to serve the local, domestic or international community, without any additional individual compensation or remuneration (Basil et al., 2009; Basil et al., 2011; Bussell and Forbes, 2008; De Gilder et al., 2005; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Lee, 2011; Van der Voort et al., 2009; Van Schie et al., 2011). It is defined as “employed individuals giving time [through a company initiative] during a planned activity for an external non-profit or charitable group or organization” (Rodell et al., 2015, p.4/5). Corporate volunteering takes place within the context of informal and formal company policies (Houghton, et al., 2009; Van der Voort et al., 2009), and it can be performed either in the employee’s own time (with unpaid leave or other support from employer) or during official working hours (Meijs and Van der Voort, 2004). This form of volunteering offers employees a convenient way to combine volunteering with their professional work (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010), and it encompasses considerable diversity in the types of the activities that could be performed (Raffaelli and Glynn, 2014; Marquis et al., 2009; Marquis and Kanter, 2010).

In Western Europe and North America, corporate volunteering has been identified as the most commonly implemented activity within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Basil et al., 2009; Pajo and Lee, 2011). It is therefore not surprising that it has received considerable attention in the management and business literature in recent decades. Studies have focused on such aspects as the consequences of corporate volunteering for the company (e.g. Caligiuiri et al., 2013; Grant, 2012; Madison et al., 2012) and for the employee (e.g. Rodell, 2013). To date, however, studies have tended to disregard the characteristics, attitudes and preferences of employees who engage in such behaviour (notable exceptions include studies by Peterson, 2004 and by Zapala and McLaren, 2004 on the motivation for corporate volunteering, and by De Gilder et al., 2005 with regard to several personal characteristics). Little comparative research has been conducted on similarities and differences between employees who engage in corporate volunteering, those who engage privately in the community and those who do not volunteer at all. To address this gap in the existing knowledge, I explore these differences based on the nine hypotheses described in the following section.

**Hypotheses**

**Corporate volunteering and employee personal characteristics**

***Demographic characteristics***

There is a rich body of literature explaining the demographic differences between volunteers and non-volunteers (for an extensive review, see Musick and Wilson, 2008). In general, volunteering is more common amongst women than it is amongst men, amongst married people than amongst single people are; amongst couples with children than amongst those with no children, amongst employed people than amongst unemployed people, amongst those with higher levels of education than amongst those with less education, and amongst churchgoers than amongst non-churchgoers (Musick and Wilson, 2008; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). These general differences between volunteers and non-volunteers nevertheless fall short of providing insight into differences with regard to the types of volunteering in which people engage. Specific contexts are likely to influence the type of volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Nesbit and Gazley, 2012). The corporate context is likely to influence the behaviour of employees within the organization (Mowday and Sutton, 1993), even when it is externally oriented (i.e. towards the community). In this case, the workplace is a specific context that could be more likely to entice certain types of individuals to volunteer than would be the case with community volunteering (see also De Gilder et al., 2005). As reported by De Gilder and colleagues (2005), corporate volunteers appear to constitute a more homogenous category than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers. For example, in the study by De Gilder and colleagues (2005), the respondents were more or less equally distributed across the various categories of age, marital status and religion. As revealed by the results of chi-square analyses, those who were attracted to corporate volunteering were similar to non-volunteers. Other authors have also suggested that corporate volunteering might attract different types of people to volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). For this reason, it is logical to expect differences between corporate volunteers and community volunteers based on the organizational context, but not between corporate volunteers and non-volunteers. I therefore hypothesize:

*H1. The demographic characteristics of corporate volunteers differ from those of community volunteers, but not from those of non-volunteers.*

***Job-related characteristics***

According to the Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010), individuals with part-time contracts volunteer more than full-time employees do, thus suggesting the existence of replacement effects. This is in line with resource theory, which predicts that those with the most resources (in this case, time) are more likely to give (Musick and Wilson, 2008). It could be, however, that the resources needed in order to volunteer through the workplace differ from those needed to engage in other types of volunteering. An opposite effect may occur within the context of corporate volunteering, with people who work full-time being more inclined to engage in corporate volunteering. This is because many companies either organize corporate volunteer activities within working hours or arrange volunteer assignments to fit well within the schedules of potential participants (Meijs et al., 2009). If this is the case, it should be easier for full-time employees to engage in this type of volunteering, as it would cause little conflict between working life and private life. It has also been argued that higher-status workers (including managers) are more likely to engage in volunteering because their jobs demand them to do so, particularly within the context of their professions (Nesbit and Gazley, 2012). If this is the case, higher-status employees might be more likely to engage in corporate volunteering, as it is related to their workplace. Moreover, particularly as noted in the literature on organizational citizenship behaviour, one of the most prominent factors determining extra-role behaviour (e.g. corporate volunteering) is job satisfaction, as people who tend to enjoy their work are also willing to put forth additional effort (Podsakoff et al, 2000; Organ and Konovsky, 1986; Organ and Lingl, 1995; Bateman and Organ, 1983). In the specific context of corporate volunteering, De Gilder and colleagues (2005) report that people whose attitudes towards their jobs are more positive are more likely to engage in corporate volunteering. This suggests that the job satisfaction of corporate volunteers might be higher than that of people who do not volunteer through the workplace. Based on these insights, I hypothesize:

*H2. The job-related characteristics of corporate volunteers differ from those of community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

**Corporate volunteering and employee attitudes**

***Perceived personal benefits***

According to theory of planned behaviour, attitudes towards specific behaviours (in this case, corporate volunteering) are positively related to the desired behaviour. These attitudes are thought to stem from underlying beliefs, which link the behaviour to some valued outcome to the individual (Ajzen, 1985). In other words, attitudes toward a given behaviour are determined by an individual’s evaluation of the (expected) outcomes associated with performing the behaviour. In this case, people who engage in corporate volunteering should be more likely to have positive perceptions about the benefits of such behaviour. I therefore hypothesize:

*H3: Corporate volunteers are more likely to have positive perceptions of the personal benefits of corporate volunteering than are community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

***Perceptions of corporate volunteering***

Employees differ in their perceptions of and attitudes towards social responsibility in the workplace (Rupp et al., 2006). For example, De Gilder and colleagues (2005) report that, although community volunteers are slightly more positive towards volunteering in general, corporate volunteers tend to have more favourable perceptions of community programmes than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers. Houghton et al. (2009) argue that employees might refrain from corporate volunteering simply because they believe that volunteering belongs to the realm of private life rather than to the realm of the workplace. People who do participate in corporate volunteering (i.e. the actors who exhibit the behaviour) typically enjoy what they are doing and expect positive effects in some way, and therefore should have more positive attitudes towards corporate volunteering (see also De Gilder et al., 2005; Zapala and McLaren, 2004). For this reason, I hypothesize:

*H4. Corporate volunteers perceive corporate volunteering more positively than do community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

***Social anxiety***

Scholars have argued that psychological barriers (e.g. social anxiety) can influence the process of becoming involved in volunteering (Handy and Cnaan, 2007), particularly in the case of corporate volunteering (see Chapter X). Social anxiety refers to the extent to which people feel uncomfortable entering unfamiliar situations or situations in which other people already appear to be well connected (Handy and Cnaan, 2007). For example, it can be reflected in the reluctance to talk to strangers or engage in new social situations (De Botton, 2008). Social anxiety could thus pose an obstacle to volunteering in unfamiliar organizations (see Chapter X). For example, individuals might feel anxious volunteering outside their known organizational contexts or with people who are unfamiliar to them. Volunteering in the workplace might provide an organizational context in which individuals feel less anxious about becoming engaged. Moreover, because volunteering through the workplace is often performed together with direct colleagues, it is likely to reduce feelings of anxiety. My fifth hypothesis is therefore:

*H5. Corporate volunteers experience less social anxiety than non-volunteers do, but not less than community volunteers do.*

**Preferences and volunteer involvement**

***Issues related to the interests of the company***

Many companies are involved in what is known as ‘strategic corporate social responsibility’ (Porter and Kramer, 2002; 2006), in which a company aligns its socially responsible initiatives (including corporate volunteer initiatives) to its core business (Werther and Chandler, 2014). In this case, there some extent of ‘fit’ between the company’s strategy and the mission of the charitable organization (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Porter and Kramer, 2002). Given that corporate volunteering constitutes extra-role behaviour performed on behalf of the company, it is logical to expect that employees would consider the interests of the company in their choices concerning the types of volunteering in which they would like to be involved. For example, as argued by affective event theory, employees are likely to have a more favourable attitude towards social issues that are relevant to the organizations in which they work (Muller et al., 2014). Employees who engage in corporate volunteering should therefore be more interested in social issues that are more closely related to the company’s core business and thus more relevant to the company. Based on this reasoning, I hypothesize:

*H6: Corporate volunteers are more interested in addressing social issues that are associated with their companies than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

***Characteristics of volunteer assignment***

Volunteering (including corporate volunteering) covers a wide range of activities (Marquis et al., 2009; Marquis and Kanter, 2010). Because the activities involved in corporate volunteering take place within the realm of work, the preferences that corporate volunteers have with regard to volunteer activities might therefore differ from those of community volunteers or non-volunteers. Taken employee volunteering more brpFor example, Nesbit and Gazley (2012) identify differences between the volunteering preferences of community volunteers and those who volunteer in relation to their professions. The volunteer assignments in which individuals volunteering through professional associations engage tend to differ from those of community volunteers. For example, they are more likely to choose volunteer assignments based on their own expertise and skills (Nesbit and Gazley, 2012). In addition, Kutnet and Love (2003) report that one quarter of those who volunteer through the workplace do so alongside their co-workers. This might imply that corporate volunteers prefer activities in which they can work in teams with their colleagues.

*H7. Corporate volunteers have more interest in volunteering in teams with their direct or indirect colleagues and/or in skill-based volunteer opportunities than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

**Corporate volunteering and organization-related factors**

***Organizational support***

Perceived organizational support (POS; Eisenberger et al., 1986) refers to a general belief on the part of employees that their work organizations value their contributions and care about their well-being. It is necessary in order to create a supportive work environment, which includes assistance with and consideration for the goals and values of employees. Research has shown that corporate volunteers are likely to perceive their workplaces as being supportive of this type of behaviour (Muller et al., 2014). Those not engaged in corporate volunteering might perceive less support from their employer to participate than those who do participate. I therefore hypothesize:

*H8. Corporate volunteers perceive higher organizational support for engaging in corporate volunteering than do community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

***Role modelling***

Previous studies have classified social support as a stimulus for employees to develop extra-role behaviours (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Social support at work has been identified as having a motivating potential and as being positively associated with engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). As suggested by the literature on volunteering, role models (e.g. peers or parents) increase the likelihood that people will volunteer (Musick and Wilson, 2008). Role model theory thus predicts that individuals should be more likely to volunteer when others in their direct environment exhibit similar behaviour. This would imply that employees who engage in corporate volunteering should be likely to notice that their managers, peers and even customers exhibit similar behaviour. I therefore hypothesize:

*H9: Corporate volunteers experience greater role modelling in the area of corporate volunteering from their managers, colleagues and customers than do community volunteers and non-volunteers.*

**Methodology**

**Context**

The study is designed as a deductive quantitative investigation to identify characteristics, preferences, attitudes and perceived organizational support amongst three categories of employees: corporate volunteers, community volunteers and non-volunteers. In order to eliminate the effects of private volunteering in the corporate volunteer category, I include a fourth category: ‘dual volunteers’, consisting of employees who volunteer both privately and through the workplace. This makes it possible to create pure categories of workplace volunteers and non-workplace volunteers. The study was conducted in a Dutch-based international company active in the energy sector. In 2010, the company established a corporate foundation and donated an endowment. The mission of the corporate foundation is to increase civic engagement amongst the employees of the company. The foundation pursues this mission by encouraging, facilitating and organizing volunteer activities for the employees of the company.

**Procedure**

The online questionnaire was distributed on 22 June 2015, followed by two reminders (the last reminder was sent on 6 July). The closing date for data collection was 13 July 2015. The questionnaire was sent by direct email to all of the company’s employees in the Netherlands. Given the international character of the pool of employees, the questionnaire was distributed in both Dutch and English. Respondents could choose the language in which they wished to complete the survey. Both the email and the introduction to the questionnaire included information on the aim of the study, the target audience of study and the researcher’s contact information for respondents wishing to ask questions or provide feedback. In conformity with standard research ethics, the materials included a statement concerning the voluntary character of participation and a guarantee that the responses would be treated confidentially. In addition, a contract between the company and the university specified that all information gathered within the framework of the study would be treated confidentially and with care at all times. The questionnaire consisted of 28 items, including questions concerning the respondent’s personal characteristics, attitudes towards corporate volunteering, volunteer preferences and organizational-related factors relating to corporate volunteering. The information obtained was used to test the hypotheses outlined in the previous section.

**Sample**

In all, the company has 4693 employees, although not all categories of employees have company email addresses. The email containing the link to the questionnaire was sent to the 3705 employees with company email addresses; 980 started the survey, resulting in an initial response rate of 26%. Only 776 employees actually completed the questionnaire, thus yielding a final response rate of 21%. On average, respondents took 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The respondents were tested (T-Test) for representativeness relative to the overall sample (i.e. the employees of the company) according to two variables (i.e. gender and age) for which information that is publicly available in the company’s 2014 annual report. The comparison revealed no significant difference according to age. The mean age of the respondents in the sample was 42.9 years, as compared to the overall mean age of employees was 43.5 (T(972)=-1.843; p>0.05). The respondents did differ significantly from the research sample according to gender. Women comprised 37% of all respondents, as compared to 26% for the research sample as a whole (T(978)= 6.675; p<0.05).

To gain an overview of their overall volunteer profiles, respondents were asked about their civic engagement in terms of volunteering, both privately and through their employer. In all, 52% of the employees were active in some type of volunteering (corporate volunteering, community volunteering or both), and 48% were not involved as volunteers.

**Variables and measurement**

The primary focus of this study is on potential differences between employees who engage in corporate volunteering and those who do not. The dependent variable – ‘employee involvement in volunteering’ is divided into four categories: 1) corporate volunteers (i.e. those who engage in corporate volunteering); 2) private volunteers (i.e. employees who are involved in volunteering, but not through their employers); 3) non-volunteers (i.e. employees who are not engaged in any type of volunteering); and 4) dual volunteers (i.e. employees who volunteer both privately and through the workplace). The reference category is designated as consisting of ‘pure’ corporate volunteers.

To address differences between the groups, items were included in the questionnaire to measure several areas of interest. First, items were included to measure the following personal characteristics of employees: gender, age, level of education and household. Because the survey was conducted within a highly specific context (i.e. a company), other items measured several job-related characteristics: job satisfaction (one item, 5-point Likert scale: *To what extent do you feel satisfied with your job?*); type of contract (full-time versus part-time), job level (senior management, middle management, executive/operating staff, administration/support staff) and tenure. For the overall model, it is important to include job satisfaction, as previous research suggests that this factor could potentially affect any positive outcomes of the survey (see Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Three variables were included to test the attitudes of the respondents: 1) perceptions of the personal benefits of corporate volunteering, 2) the degree to which the respondent would recommend corporate volunteering and 3) overall social anxiety. The first variable was measured according to a three-item semantic differential scale: ‘To me, company-supported volunteer activities in the community are 1) pleasant-unpleasant, 2) useful-worthless and 3) satisfying-unsatisfying’. Exploratory factor analysis indicates that all communalities had values greater than 0.500 (see Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). The total variance explained was 84.73%, and the Cronbach’s Alpha score (0.907) indicated excellent reliability (0.700-0.800 is acceptable, 0.800–0.900 is good, 0.900–0.950 is excellent; see Kline, 2000). The degree to which respondents would recommend corporate volunteering to others was used to measure overall attitudes regarding corporate volunteer initiatives regardless of participation, as research has shown that people can be positively disposed to corporate volunteering without actually participating in it (Brammer et al., 2007). In this context, I distinguish between recommendations to colleagues, clients, and family and friends. Items were based on a Likert scale. The following is one example: ‘To what extent would you recommend the activities of [NAME FOUNDATION] to 1) your friends and family 2) colleagues and 3) clients and others’.Communality values were greater than 0.500, the total variance explained was 79.72% and the Cronbach’s Alpha score was 0.914. Finally, social anxiety with regard to volunteering was measured according to four items (adapted from Robinson et al., 2008) addressing excitement about and avoidance of social situations. The following is an example: ‘I avoid activities that make me interact with people whom I do not know’. Factor analysis reveals that the communalities had values greater than 0.500; the total variance explained was 75.87%, and the Cronbach’s Alpha score was 0.833.

Employee preferences in volunteering were assessed according to three variables: interest in a social issue (particularly in relation to the company’s core business) and characteristics of the volunteer assignment. Interest in the specific social issue most closely related to the core business was measured along a Likert scale representing the extent to which respondents considered the issue important to them, ranging from not important at all to very important. I measured the characteristics of the volunteer assignment by asking respondents to indicate which type of volunteer activity they considered most appealing to them: fundraising, hands-on activities, skill-based volunteering or social activities with beneficiaries. Respondents were also asked about their preferences with regard to types of involvement. More specifically, they were asked if (i.e. whether they would prefer to participate on an individual basis or in groups. Respondents preferring to work in groups were asked about their preferred group composition (e.g. direct colleagues, indirect colleagues, family and friends, employees from other companies).

Two additional variables were included in order to determine the possible influence of factors relating to the organization: perceived role modelling and the perceived level of organizational support for volunteering. To assess role modelling, adapted a question from a study by Warburton and Terry (2000): ‘How likely do you think it is that the following people or groups will participate in company-supported volunteering over the next 12 months?’ (the groups consisted of supervisors, colleagues and clients). Responses options were arranged along a five-point Likert scale. Communality values were greater than 0.500, the total variance explained was 54.20% and the Cronbach’s Alpha score was 0.713. To measure organizational support for volunteering, respondents were asked to indicate the extent (scale 1-5; ranging from totally not to very much so) to which they felt that their organization encouraged them to participate in volunteering.

**Results**

Multinomial logistic regression was performed in order to test the nine hypotheses regarding factors that could explain participation (or non-participation) in corporate volunteering, including the employees’ personal characteristics, attitudes towards corporate volunteering and volunteer preferences, as well as organization-related factors.

**Descriptive results**

The descriptive outcomes of variables used in the study are presented in Table 1. In all, 215 respondents indicated that they had engaged in corporate volunteering, while 558 employees had not. Of the 215 employees who had participated in corporate volunteering, 88 respondents had engaged only in corporate volunteering, while the other 127 had been active both privately and through the workplace. Of the 558 employees who had not taken part in corporate volunteering, 184 volunteered only in their private lives, thus leaving 374 non-volunteers (see Figure 1).

N=374

N=127

N=184

N=88

Figure 1: Bar chart of groups

Of all respondents in our sample, 63% were men and 37% were women, and the average age was 43 years. Slightly more than half of all respondents (51%) were married or cohabiting and had children; 27% were married or cohabiting, but without children; 5% were single parents; 15% were single with no children, and 3% described their household compositions as ‘other’. In addition, 8% of all respondents had part-time contracts, and the average rate of job satisfaction amongst all respondents was 3.99 on a 1–5 scale.

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| **Table 1: Descriptive statistics** |
|  Variable | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Sd.  |
| Involvement (dependent variable) | 773 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 2.4735 | .97687 |
| **Demographic factors** |   |   |   |   |   |
| Household composition | 771 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 3.1984 | 1.05722 |
| Gender (0=male) | 776 | 0 | 1 | 0.37 | --- |
| Education | 765 | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.9373 | --- |
| Age | 775 | 21.00 | 65.00 | 43.0387 | 10.22479 |
| **Job-related characteristics** |   |   |   |   |   |
| Type of contract | 776 | 0.00 | 1.00 | .9188 | --- |
| Tenure | 767 | .08 | 48.00 | 11.3545 | 9.73792 |
| Job level | 774 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2196 | --- |
| Job satisfaction | 773 | 1 | 5 | 3.99 | .802 |
| **Volunteer preferences** |   |   |   |   |   |
| Issue related to core business | 736 | 1 | 5 | 3.86 | .923 |
| Activity: fundraising and campaigns | 776 | 0 | 1 | .14 | --- |
| Activity: hands-on activities | 776 | 0 | 1 | .54 | --- |
| Activity: skill-based volunteering | 776 | 0 | 1 | .44 | --- |
| Activity: social activities | 776 | 0 | 1 | .54 | --- |
| Activity: employee matching | 776 | 0 | 1 | .13 | --- |
| Involvement: individual volunteering | 776 | 0 | 1 | .30 | --- |
| Involvement: group-based volunteering with direct colleagues | 776 | 0 | 1 | .62 | --- |
| Involvement: group-based volunteering with indirect colleagues | 776 | 0 | 1 | .59 | --- |
| Involvement: group-based volunteering with employees of other companies | 776 | 0 | 1 | .35 | --- |
| **Organization-related factors** |   |   |   |   |   |
| Supportive organizational context | 772 | 1 | 5 | 2.86 | 1.214 |
| Role modelling | 776 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.5303 | .84041 |
| **Attitude towards corporate volunteering** |   |   |   |   |   |
| Satisfaction | 773 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.9851 | 1.04409 |
| Personal benefits | 767 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7353 | .88401 |
| Anxiety | 770 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 1.7589 | .85336 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 687 |   |   |   |   |

Table 1: Overview of descriptive statistics

**Multinomial logistic regression model**

The results of the multinomial logistic regression model based on 1) personal characteristics, 2) attitudes, 3) volunteer preferences and 4) organization-related factors are displayed in Table 2. The chi-square value for the overall model is 404.527 (p<0.00); the goodness-of-fit indicator is significant (p<0.01), and the $r^{2}$ (Nagelkerke) value of 0.483 can be considered sufficient (Cohen, 1988). I used list-wise deletion to deal with missing values.

The results in Table 2 indicate that, as predicted in H1, the demographic characteristics of corporate volunteers differ from those of community volunteers. According to our data, the educational level of community volunteers was significantly lower (p<0.01) than that of corporate volunteers. Community volunteers tended to be older than corporate volunteers (p<0.05), while corporate volunteers were more likely to be married and to have children (p<0.05). The data further reveal that non-volunteers were less educated than corporate volunteers were, although they did not differ according to any of the other demographic variables included. There were no significant differences between corporate volunteers and those who engaged in both corporate volunteering and community volunteering (dual volunteers). Given that corporate volunteers differed according to some but not all of the demographic characteristics, and given the difference between corporate volunteers and non-volunteers with regard to educational level, Hypothesis 1 is partially supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the job-related characteristics of corporate volunteers would differ from those of community volunteers and non-volunteers. The data reveal no significant differences between the groups, however, and H2 must therefore be rejected. Hypotheses 3–5 predict attitudinal differences between corporate volunteers, community volunteers and non-volunteers. The data support H3 (p<0.01), which predicts that corporate volunteers are more likely to have positive perceptions regarding the personal benefits of corporate volunteering than are community volunteers and non-volunteers. The results provide only partial support for H4, which predicts that corporate volunteers are more likely to have positive perceptions of corporate volunteering than are community volunteers and non-volunteers. The only significant difference was observed between corporate volunteers and non-volunteers (p<0.01). There was no support for H5, which predicts that corporate volunteers are less likely to be anxious about volunteering than non-volunteers are, but not less anxious than community volunteers. According to the results, the corporate volunteers responding to this survey experienced less anxiety than community volunteers did, but that they did not differ in this respect from non-volunteers.

 Hypotheses 6 and 7 predict that the preferences of corporate volunteers differ from those of community volunteers and non-volunteers. With regard to H6, which predicts that corporate volunteers are more interested in issues relating to the interests and core business of the company than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers, the data reveal no differences between corporate volunteers and community volunteers, with only marginal differences between corporate volunteers and non-volunteers (p<0.10). These results provide only weak and partial support for this hypothesis. With regard to H7, which concerns differences in preferences for volunteer involvement, the analysis indicates that the community volunteers in this study were significantly more likely than corporate volunteers were (p<0.01) to engage in employee matching programmes. They were also significantly more likely than corporate volunteers were (p<0.05) to engage in individual volunteering, although corporate volunteers were marginally more interested than non-volunteers were (p<0.10) in social activities. The results thus provide partial support for H7.

Hypotheses 8 and 9 concern differences in organizational support and role modelling. The data confirm that the corporate volunteers in this study were more likely than community volunteers and non-volunteers were (p<0.01) to feel that the organization supported their engagement in volunteering (p<0.01). The results nevertheless reveal no indication that role modelling affects the decision to engage in corporate volunteering, as there were no significant differences between the groups. Hypothesis 9 is therefore rejected.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Corporate Volunteers/****Community Volunteers** | **Corporate Volunteers/****Non-Volunteers** | **Corporate Volunteers/****Dual Volunteers** |
|   | B | SE | Exp(B) | B | SE | Exp(B) | B | SE | Exp(B) |
|  Variables |
| Intercept | 4.853 | 1.663 |   | 8.647 | 1.573 |   | -2.484 | 1.741 |   |
| **Demographics** |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Male | .372 | .335 | 1.451 | .028 | .304 | 1.028 | .375 | .330 | 1.456 |
| Female | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   |
| Community College | 1.332 | .452 | *3.788\*\*\** | .920 | .416 | *2.510\*\** | .518 | .457 | 1.679 |
| Bachelor’s Degree | .292 | .374 | 1.339 | -.138 | .334 | .871 | -.060 | .377 | .942 |
| Master’s Degree | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   |
| Age | .042 | .019 | *1.043\*\** | .020 | .018 | 1.020 | .030 | .020 | 1.031 |
| Single, no children (household) | -.427 | .455 | .653 | -.518 | .423 | .596 | .524 | .456 | 1.689 |
| Single, with children (Household) | -1.007 | .696 | .365 | -.570 | .614 | .566 | .286 | .603 | 1.331 |
| Married/cohabiting /married, no children (household) | -.722 | .368 | *0.486\*\** | -.169 | .333 | .845 | -.054 | .375 | .947 |
| Married/cohabiting, with children (household) | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   |
| **Job-related characteristics** |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Part-time employment | 1.076 | .690 | 2.934 | .209 | .689 | 1.232 | .771 | .720 | 2.161 |
| Full-time employment | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   | 0b |   |   |
| Tenure | -.009 | .021 | .991 | -.004 | .020 | .996 | -.007 | .021 | .993 |
| Job Satisfaction | .135 | .203 | 1.144 | -.040 | .185 | .961 | -.107 | .213 | .898 |
| Reference category is indicated as 0b  |   |
| \* Significant p<0.10, \*\* Significant p<0.05, \*\*\* Significant p<0.01 |

Table 2: Outcomes of multinomial regression analysis

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Corporate Volunteers/****Community Volunteers** | **Corporate Volunteers/****Non-Volunteers** | **Corporate Volunteers/****Dual Volunteers** |   |
|  Variables | B | SE | Exp(B) | B | SE | Exp(B) | B | SE | Exp(B) |  |
|   |   |
| **Volunteer preferences** |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Issue related to the core business | -.275 | .177 | .759 | -.298 | .166 | *0.742\** | -.490 | .179 | *0.612\*\*\** |   |
| Activity: fundraising and campaigns | -.196 | .436 | .822 | .037 | .396 | 1.038 | -.261 | .425 | .771 |   |
| Activity: hands-on  | -.200 | .328 | .819 | -.365 | .305 | .694 | -.163 | .335 | .849 |  |
| Activity: skill-based volunteering | .221 | .328 | 1.248 | -.009 | .305 | .991 | -.117 | .334 | .890 |   |
| Activity: social activities | -.263 | .349 | .769 | -.602 | .323 | *0.548\** | .049 | .387 | 1.050 |   |
| Activity: employee matching | 1.503 | .501 | *4.494\*\*\** | -.568 | .542 | .567 | 1.339 | .513 | *3.814\*\*\** |   |
| Involvement: individual volunteering | .710 | .332 | *2.034\*\** | .015 | .316 | 1.015 | -.130 | .348 | .878 |   |
| Involvement: group-based with direct colleagues | -.107 | .343 | .899 | .165 | .321 | 1.179 | -.079 | .361 | .924 |   |
| Involvement: group-based with indirect colleagues | -.056 | .363 | .945 | .049 | .335 | 1.050 | -.175 | .376 | .840 |  |
| Involvement: group-based with employees of other companies | .049 | .333 | 1.050 | .067 | .307 | 1.070 | .333 | .333 | 1.395 |   |
| **Organization-related factors** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
| Role modelling | .008 | .223 | 1.008 | -.088 | .207 | .916 | .397 | .233 | 1.487 |   |
| Supportive organizational context | -.413 | .151 | *0.661\*\*\** | -.298 | .141 | *0.742\*\** | -.074 | .156 | .929 |   |
| **Attitude towards Corporate Volunteering** |   |   |  |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |
| Personal benefits | -.790 | .230 | *0.454\*\*\** | -.800 | .213 | *0.449\*\*\** | .702 | .256 | 2.018 |   |
| Satisfaction | -.263 | .205 | .769 | -.716 | .193 | *0.489\*\*\** | .006 | .213 | 1.006 |   |
| Anxiety | -.445 | .201 | *0.641\*\** | .064 | .181 | 1.066 | -.197 | .208 | .821 |  |
| \* Significant p<0.10, \*\* Significant p<0.05, \*\*\* Significant p<0.01   Table 2 (continued): Outcomes of multinomial regression analysis  |  |   |  |  |   |  |

**Conclusions**

This study was designed to identify who engages in corporate volunteering by testing how corporate volunteers differ from those who volunteer privately and from non-volunteers. The results provide partial conformation for my predictions that the personal characteristics, attitudes, volunteer preferences and organization-related factors of individuals who engage in corporate volunteering differ from those of community volunteers and non-volunteers (see also table 3). The data provide support for two of the nine hypotheses, with partial support for three hypotheses and no support for four hypotheses. In general, the results reveal only a few differences between corporate volunteers and non-volunteers, with the greatest differences observed between corporate volunteers and community volunteers. These results are likely to constitute the most important contributions of this study, as well as the most fruitful avenues for future research.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hypotheses** | **Result** |
| H1. The demographic characteristics of corporate volunteers differ from those of community volunteers, but not from those of non-volunteers. H2. The job-related characteristics of corporate volunteers differ from those of community volunteers and non-volunteers. H3: Corporate volunteers are more likely to have positive perceptions of the personal benefits of corporate volunteering than are community volunteers and non-volunteers. H4. Corporate volunteers perceive corporate volunteering more positively than do community volunteers and non-volunteers.H5. Corporate volunteers experience less social anxiety than non-volunteers do, but not less than community volunteers do.H6: Corporate volunteers are more interested in addressing social issues that are associated with their companies than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers. H7. Corporate volunteers have more interest in volunteering in teams with their direct or indirect colleagues and/or in skill-based volunteer opportunities than is the case for community volunteers and non-volunteers. H8. Corporate volunteers perceive higher organizational support for engaging in corporate volunteering than do community volunteers and non-volunteers. H9: Corporate volunteers experience greater role modelling in the area of corporate volunteering from their managers, colleagues and customers than do community volunteers and non-volunteers. | \*-+\*-\*-+- |

*+ is accepted, - is rejected and \* is partially accepted*

Table 3: overview of outcomes

With regard to demographic differences, corporate volunteers appear to be more highly educated than community volunteers are. This result is somewhat surprising, given the context of the Netherlands (in which the study took place), where previous studies have indicated that people who volunteer tend to be more highly educated (Dekker and De Hart, 2009). Another study in a company in the Netherlands revealed no differences between corporate volunteers and community volunteers with regard to educational level (De Gilder et al., 2005). Given that corporate volunteering is a more non-traditional form of volunteering, it is not surprising that the average age of corporate volunteers in the current study was slightly younger than was the case for community volunteers, as younger people tend to be attracted to more non-traditional forms of volunteering (Hustinx et al., 2011). Other studies, however, have revealed no age differences between corporate volunteers, community volunteers and non-volunteers (De Gilder et al., 2005). Our results suggest that corporate volunteers are more likely than community volunteers are to have partners and no children. This result is also surprising in light of a previous study, which concludes that there are no differences in household composition between corporate volunteers, community volunteers and non-volunteers (De Gilder et al., 2005). This difference might be explained by economic theory, which suggests that people who have more time available are more likely to give (Musick and Wilson, 2008). In this case, employees with no children need less time for their families, thus possibly having more time (i.e. resources) available for corporate volunteering. In addition, resource theory would argue that couples with children often volunteer in environments directly associated with their children (Musick and Wilson, 2008), thus possibly making community volunteers less likely to volunteer through their workplaces, due to commitments elsewhere.

The outcomes concerning job-related characteristics provide no support for my expectation that the corporate context would influence volunteer behaviour through the workplace. For the employees in this sample, longer tenure nor job satisfaction did not contribute to either engagement. This result is in contrast to findings reported in studies on other types of organizational citizenship behaviour (Organ and Ryan, 1995). The data also provide no support for the hypothesis that full-time employment increases the likelihood of being attracted to corporate volunteering (i.e. that community volunteers would be more attractive to employees with part-time contracts).

With regard to organization-related factors (as measured by role modelling and perceived organizational support), the data reveal no significant differences between corporate volunteers and the other groups with regard to role modelling. The finding that role modelling apparently does not influence the decision to become engaged in corporate volunteering is surprising, given that role-modelling theory is often advanced as an explanation in the volunteering literature (Musick and Wilson, 2008). Nonetheless, I need to note that I did not measure actual current or actual past behaviour of peers, colleagues and customers. Rather, I used the expectations of the respondents to which they expect others to participate in corporate volunteering. The data do reveal differences between corporate volunteers, community volunteers and non-volunteers with regard to perceived organizational support, however, with corporate volunteers being more likely to feel that their organizations provide them with a context within which to become engaged. The corporate volunteers in this sample thus experienced a greater degree of organizational support than did either community volunteers or non-volunteers. This finding suggests that the perception that the employer is supportive of engagement could play an important role in encouraging employees to start volunteering.

In this sample, the perceptions that corporate volunteers had of corporate volunteer were no more positive than were those of community volunteers, although they did differ from those of non-volunteers. This finding is partly consistent with previous research, which has demonstrated that corporate volunteers tend to be more positively disposed towards corporate volunteering programmes than are community volunteers and non-volunteers. In the current study, the perceptions that community volunteers and corporate volunteers had of corporate volunteering were equally positive. Nevertheless, the corporate volunteers apparently did have a different view of the potential gains to be realized by engaging in corporate volunteering. More specifically, corporate volunteers perceived that they had much more to gain from participation than was the case for either community volunteers or non-volunteers. This finding might be due to the fact that corporate volunteers had experience with volunteering through the workplace and might thus have vivid recollections of the actual gains. In this case, the anticipated personal benefits might be less than the actual perceived benefits. Nonetheless, this is important information to corporate volunteer managers as organizations can use this to motivate people to engage in corporate volunteering by clearly outlining the benefits for participants.

The data provide no support for the hypotheses that corporate volunteers feel less anxious about volunteering than non-volunteers do, while not differing from community volunteers in this regard.The findings reveal an opposite outcome: in this sample, the level of anxiety experienced by corporate volunteers did not differ from that of non-volunteers, although it was lower than that of community volunteers. This result is quite surprising in light of previous studies, which report that non-volunteers experience greater social anxiety than volunteers do (Handy and Cnaan, 2007). Future research could examine the possible influences of context on this type of anxiety.

Volunteer preferences did not differ in the way I had anticipated. Corporate volunteers are not more likely than community volunteers to pursue volunteer activities related to the core business, but are a bit more likely to so than non-volunteers. This might imply that employees attracted (solely) to corporate volunteering might perceive this is (desired) extra role behavior (see Van Dyne and LePine, 1998) and are willing to go the extra mile for the organization. At least, they might associate corporate volunteering with their employer and their responsibilities at work. Not hypothesized, but corporate volunteers are less likely to engage in individual volunteer assignments than community volunteers. Although they are not more interested in group volunteering as a corporate volunteer activity than community or non-volunteers, this might suggest that corporate volunteers would prefer volunteering in groups as we did specifically ask about the corporate volunteer preferences, not general volunteer preferences. If community volunteers would participate in corporate volunteering they are as likely as corporate volunteers to engage in group volunteer activities. However, they would be more likely to engage in employee matching programs and individual volunteering than corporate volunteers.

An important note has to be made on the assumption of causality in my research. My data analysis does not allow to draw any firm conclusions on the causality of the relationship I propose. I assume in my hypothesis and the data interpretation that the causality is from the identified independent variables (characteristics, attitudes, preferences) to the dependent variable (type of volunteering). However, I am aware that the causality could also be reversed (e.g. participating corporate volunteering could influence attitudes about corporate volunteering).

In conclusion, although there are important similarities between employees engaged in community volunteering and those engaged in corporate volunteering, many assumptions that could be made about the characteristics, attitudes and preferences of community volunteers cannot simply be projected onto context of the workplace. The results of this study thus contribute to the available knowledge by providing deep insight into the ways in which different types of people are attracted to different types of volunteer involvement. More specifically, this study demonstrates that, as a specific category, corporate volunteers who differ from community volunteers in many respects, while exhibiting fewer differences from non-volunteers. These findings provide empirical evidence that companies can act as third parties to expand the overall pool of volunteers available to benefit non-profit organizations and civil society (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Meijs et al., 2009).

**Implications**

The results of this study relate to previous research on re-embedding volunteering and third-party involvement in volunteering. The finding that corporate volunteers differ more from community volunteers than they do from non-volunteers might be due to normative and organizational pressure within companies to start engaging in volunteering (Hustinx and Meijs, 2011). The ability of corporate volunteering to attract different types of individuals might be explained by the tendency of companies either to require their employees to volunteer or to enable them to volunteer. For example, one could question the extent to which social teambuilding activities organized by departments (and, ultimately, by managers) truly constitute discretionary behaviour on the part of the employee (Hustinx and Meijs, 2011). Because it is difficult for employees to decline an invitation to the annual corporate or departmental outing, such practices could be regarded as a form of coercion to take part in volunteering. Such pressure could be one reason why individuals who are not involved in the community start volunteering through the workplace. In addition, companies are able to eliminate some of the barriers that could impede individuals from volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Hustinx and Meijs, 2011; see also Chapter X). For example, companies can organize volunteer opportunities, colleagues can solicit peers and companies can provide time off to volunteer. The finding that not everyone engages in corporate volunteering (558 did not participate in corporate volunteering; 215 employees did participate in the program) suggests that these functions are limited as well. In future research, it would be interesting to explore the enabling and enforcing functions of companies (for example, see Chapter X). Companies have an interest in having their employees engage in corporate volunteering, as participation in such programmes has been shown to benefit the relationship between the employee and the organization (see also Chapters X and X).

From the perspective of employee engagement in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR, which is the central theme of this dissertation), the results of this study do not justify the conclusion that employees who engage in volunteering through the workplace differ from those who do not (participants versus non-participants in corporate volunteering). From this perspective, employee participation in CSR appears to be somewhat more complex, particularly in the case of corporate volunteering. The ability to explain the various processes/forms of CSR engagement apparently requires identifying the ways in which people are involved in volunteering. In this regard, scholars should consider the differences and similarities between those individuals who are active in CSR programmes and those who are either active or uninvolved in the community, thereby addressing possible enabling or enforcing mechanisms on the part of companies.

The results of this study also suggest that it might not be appropriate simply to project the insights of volunteering theory onto the context of the workplace. For example, although corporate volunteering often takes the form of short-term volunteer commitments in non-profit organizations (also conceptualized as episodic volunteering), the employees continue as members of the company. Even if the non-profit organization does not ever see an employee again after the volunteer assignment, the employee remains active in the company. This situation might have implications for corporate volunteer managers within the company, as well as for the relationship between employees and the company, and between employees and their colleagues (see Chapters X, X). Given the need for caution in applying the volunteering literature to the corporate context, I combine insights from the literatures on CSR (including employee engagement) and on volunteering throughout this dissertation (and particularly in Chapters X, X and X).

From the perspective of the non-profit and volunteer literatures, the findings of this study tentatively suggest that current volunteer theory may not be applicable to the case of volunteering through the workplace, possibly indicating that corporate volunteers potentially should be regarded as a different ‘species’ of volunteers. In particular, the data suggest that there are no simple conclusions regarding differences between volunteers (either corporate or community) and non-volunteers, given the few differences identified between corporate volunteers and non-volunteers. On the contrary, there are many differences between the pure types of volunteers. As such, this study highlights the need to go beyond simply comparing volunteers to non-volunteers, in order to investigate the possibility that different pathways to volunteering might influence the likelihood of particular types of individuals to engage.

For scholars of volunteering, this study provides further evidence of the need to investigate possible differences in the volunteering literature ( including models of volunteer management models; see Meijs et al., 2009), given the presence of differences between basic assumptions (e.g. regarding demographic characteristics, preferences and attitudes) concerning corporate volunteers and community volunteers. Proceeding from the assumption that corporate volunteers constitute a distinct type of volunteers, Chapters X and X are devoted to the implications of involving such volunteers.

The results of this study identify perceived organizational support as an important factor in attracting employees to volunteering. This finding implies that future studies should investigate ways in which companies could serve as catalysts for civic engagement amongst their employees. In other words, future research should examine the role of the workplace as a soliciting organization for volunteering. Chapters X and X report on conceptual efforts to this end.

Although findings of this study highlight interesting differences between corporate volunteers and those who do not engage in such behaviour through the workplace, it is important to note that the outcomes are highly specific to the context of the organization in which the study was conducted. For this reason, the conclusions drawn here cannot be generalized to other contexts. Researchers with similar questions or interests are therefore cautioned against generalizing these findings and encouraged to test them in different contexts and samples. Despite the limitations of this study, its findings offer tentative justification for exploring the questions raised in the remaining chapters of this dissertation.

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2. [statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2012001/t/11638/tbl01-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2012001/t/11638/tbl01-eng.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [volunteeringinamerica.gov/national](http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/national) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Chapter4102008 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Please note that these numbers are provided only as an illustration of the stability in rates within contexts. They should not be interpreted as indicating differences in participation rates between countries, as there is no consensus on the definition and measurement of volunteering [↑](#footnote-ref-5)