

Employee Volunteering: A Review and Framework for Future Research

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Employee volunteering is a topic of growing importance in workplaces around the globe. Likewise, research on employee volunteering has seen a marked increase over the past decade, particularly in leading management and psychology outlets. Despite this increasing visibility, there is little consensus on the state of the literature or directions for the future. In particular, research is currently based on a variety of different definitions and operationalizations and is spread across several disciplines. In order to advance management research on employee volunteering, this review focuses on three contributions: (1) clarifying the definition and various forms of employee volunteering, (2) reviewing the current body of knowledge on employee volunteering, and (3) providing a future research agenda for the role of employee volunteering in the workplace.

Keywords: *employee volunteering; work life management; corporate social responsibility; review*

Employee volunteering is a topic of growing importance in workplaces around the globe. Each year, reports suggest that employees continue to devote time and effort—either on their personal time or as part of a company initiative—to volunteering (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Likewise, surveys of corporate volunteering programs indicate that organizations

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worldwide support employee engagement in charitable activities as part of their strategy for corporate social responsibility (Basil, Runte, Easwaramoorthy, & Barr, 2009). Indeed, estimates suggest that close to 90% of companies now support employee volunteering in some fashion (Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy, CECF, 2011; Points of Light Foundation, 2006). Reports also indicate that the newest generation of employees places significant value on volunteering opportunities when evaluating employers (Deloitte Development, 2014).

In reaction to this growing attention to volunteering in practice, research on employee volunteering has markedly increased—particularly in leading management and psychology outlets (e.g., Caligiuri, Mencia, & Jiang, 2013; Grant, 2012; Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014; Rodell, 2013). This work has largely demonstrated that employee volunteering is beneficial for both employees and companies. It provides an opportunity for employees to develop skills, improving morale and ultimately performance (Caligiuri et al.; Jones, 2010; Rodell), and serves as a resource to attract and retain employees (Jones; Jones et al.).

Beyond the increasing popularity of this topic in both research and practice, there are several additional reasons for presenting an integrative analysis and discussion of this literature. First, there is little definitional and operational consensus about the construct of employee volunteering (e.g., Grant, 2012; Penner, 2002; Rodell, 2013; see also Clary & Snyder, 1999; Musick & Wilson, 2008). Scholars have adopted different definitional approaches, for example, examining the intensity versus longevity of volunteering efforts (e.g., Booth, Won Park, & Glomb, 2009; Caligiuri et al., 2013). In addition, they have conceptualized volunteering as having different boundaries, as some scholars have examined volunteering exclusively conducted through workplace initiatives (e.g., DeVoe & Pfeffer, 2007) and others have focused on, or at least included, volunteering after work hours (e.g., Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010; Rodell).

Second, research on volunteering is multidisciplinary and fragmented. It is currently spread across several areas—including organizational behavior (e.g., Grant, 2012), psychology (Clary et al., 1998), sociology (Musick & Wilson, 2008), marketing (e.g., Mattila & Hanks, 2013), corporate governance (Sanchez-Hernandez & Gallardo-Vázquez, 2013), and nonprofit management (e.g., Samuel, Wolf, & Schilling, 2013)—with minimal integration. Although there is a small handful of volunteering reviews, they either focus on a specific aspect of the volunteering experience, for example, reviewing corporate volunteering programs (Henning & Jones, 2013), or take a more global view of volunteering, for example, encompassing the nonworking population (Wilson, 2000). Combined, these issues—a relative lack of definitional convergence and the fragmented nature of existing research on volunteering—present a challenge to systematically integrating the current knowledge in a manner that offers guidance for future research.

The purpose of our review is to provide clarity and cohesion around both (a) the construct of employee volunteering and (b) its role in the corporate world. In addition to reviewing the current state of the literature, we provide frameworks that integrate existing knowledge about the construct and its nomological network with the goal of providing a foundation for research moving forward. In particular, we first review the various definitions of volunteering in the literature and present a framework to guide decisions about conceptualization and measurement. Next, we present an integrative figure that summarizes the existing knowledge about the antecedents and consequences of employee volunteering, taking note of issues such as the

level of analysis and theoretical perspectives. Finally, we discuss directions for future research that would best serve the development of this literature and how they fit into our integrative framework.

Employee Volunteering: Definition and Measurement

Research on volunteering has adopted a variety of different definitions and measurement approaches. For example, adopting a social psychologist's view, Wilson defined volunteering as "any activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group, or organization" (2000: 215), while Penner defined it as "long-term, planned, prosocial behaviors that benefit strangers and occur within an organizational setting" (2002: 448). In the realm of organizational research, the definition of employee volunteering has varied from the "extent to which employees initiate and sustain involvement in volunteering activities" (Grant, 2012: 593; Peterson, 2004b) to "giving time or skills during a planned activity for a volunteer group" (Rodell, 2013: 1274).

Although these definitions may look the same upon first glance, they vary on a variety of components—such as the motivation for engaging in volunteering and the presumed benefit of the recipient—thereby creating relatively low consensus on how to best define and measure employee volunteering. Moreover, defining employee volunteering requires further consideration of whether the behavior can be conducted both through one's work, as part of a company's initiatives, or outside of one's work on an individual's own personal time. In the following section, we build a definition of employee volunteering that is both grounded in existing volunteering research and incorporates aspects unique to employees.

Defining Employee Volunteering

Musick and Wilson (2008) proposed that scholars should adopt a behavioral approach to defining volunteering. They argued that this approach is most conducive for scientific research because it creates an internally consistent concept and clarifies distinctions between the phenomenon of volunteering and other related phenomenon that we might study. Following Rodell (2013), we adopt a behavioral definition that is built from the three most core definitional components of prior theorizing on volunteering (Clary et al., 1998; Musick & Wilson; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Penner, 2002; Wilson, 2000). Thus, we define employee volunteering as

employed individuals giving time during a planned activity for an external nonprofit or charitable group or organization.

There are three core components to this definition. First, volunteering involves *giving time* and not simply financial donations (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Wilson, 2000). The important distinction is that volunteering represents active involvement, whereas monetary donations represent a more passive form of support. An employee who spends an afternoon at a soup kitchen is volunteering, while an employee who writes a check to support that soup kitchen is not. In addition, this component of the definition is focused on *giving time*—regardless of whether that time involves the application of a volunteer's particular skills. Although some volunteers are applying their knowledge or expertise in order to help a

volunteer group (e.g., an accountant volunteering to do taxes for a volunteer group), others are doing something outside of their normal work behavior (e.g., an accountant volunteering on a house build). Moreover, individuals are still volunteering even if their efforts wind up being less than helpful for the volunteer group (e.g., an accountant does a bad job on the house build).

Second, volunteering is a *planned activity* and not a spontaneous act of helping (Penner, 2002; Wilson, 2000). An employee who signs up to clean a local roadway one Saturday morning is volunteering, while an employee who assists an elderly individual across the street on the way to lunch is not volunteering. Scholars have historically noted that volunteering involves either actively seeking out an opportunity or a period of thought and deliberation about engaging in the activity (Clary et al., 1998; Omoto & Snyder, 1995).

Third, volunteering takes place in the context of some *volunteer group or organization* (e.g., charitable or nonprofit groups; Musick & Wilson, 2008; Penner, 2002). Volunteer groups or organizations are the object or recipient of the volunteers' behaviors. A unifying component of most volunteering definitions is that it is a formalized and public activity, where volunteers do not typically know the recipient personally ahead of time (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Wilson, 2000). This third component builds off the previous two components—in order for volunteering to be active and planned, it is nearly essential that it occur in a more formal setting.

Other, more debated, components were intentionally excluded from this definition—two of which are particularly relevant to defining employee volunteering. First is the idea of an individual's intent for volunteering. Several definitions reference altruistic intentions for engaging in volunteering, for example, that volunteering is “given freely” (Wilson, 2000: 215), that it is “non-obligatory” (Penner, 2002: 448), or done with the goal to “benefit” others (Wilson: 215). However, scholars have shown that motivations for volunteering can range from individuals fulfilling their values to socializing with others to escaping their own troubles (Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Snyder, 1999). This may be particularly true in regard to employee volunteering, as motivations might extend to managing impressions with one's supervisor or attempting to receive recognition at work (e.g., Booth et al., 2009). The decision to exclude intention from our definition is consistent with Musick and Wilson (2008) and with the broader convention in organizational behavior to separate motives for behavior from a behavior itself (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003).

Another debated aspect of volunteering is whether the act can benefit the volunteer. A “net-cost” definition of volunteering proposes that volunteers sacrifice more than they gain from the experience (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Although a handful of scholars have referenced this sort of sacrifice when defining volunteering (e.g., Clary et al., 1998; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; see also Musick & Wilson), it is less common than the previously discussed components. This concept is not only refuted by empirical research—many volunteers derive immense gratification and growth from the experience (e.g., Austin, 1997; Clary et al.)—but also difficult to evaluate (Musick & Wilson; Wilson, 2000). The notion of volunteers “sacrificing” is particularly problematic when defining employee volunteering, as many employees volunteer on company time (e.g., Cavallaro, 2006; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009) and, thus, receive some form of monetary compensation.

One additional area of “muddiness” with respect to defining employee volunteering pertains to the domain in which this behavior occurs—either part of one's work domain or part

of one's nonwork or personal domain. Does it include volunteering that employed individuals do on their own time or is it limited to volunteering through a specific company initiative? As with the other definitional components, scholars have taken various approaches to this issue. While some studies have examined participation in corporate volunteering initiatives (e.g., Caligiuri et al., 2013; DeVoe & Pfeffer, 2007), others have focused specifically on employees volunteering on their own time (e.g., Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010; Mojza, Sonnentag, & Bornemann, 2011), and still others have taken a broader approach encompassing both of these options (e.g., Booth et al., 2009; Rodell, 2013).

Each of these approaches has its merits depending on the research question. Therefore, we review research that has adopted any of them and employ the following labels in order to make the connection between these approaches more explicit. Namely, we use the term *employee volunteering* to refer to any volunteering exhibited by employed individuals. Under this general heading, employees can engage in either *corporate volunteering* (employee volunteering conducted through a company initiative) or *personal volunteering* (employee volunteering conducted on one's own personal time).

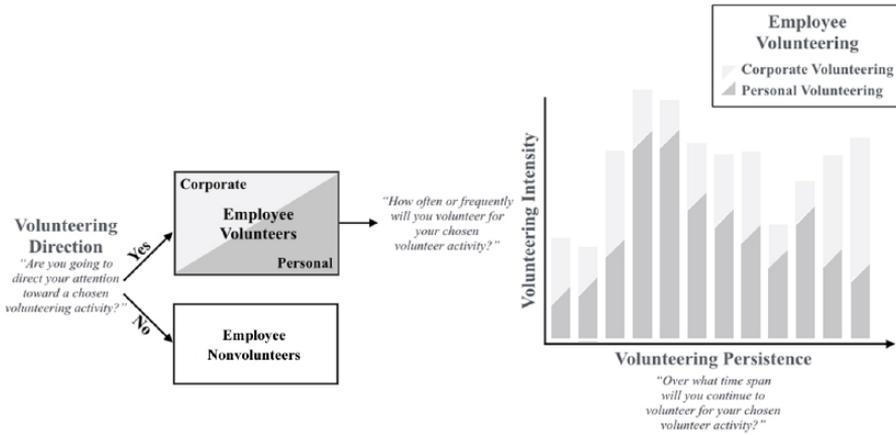
Operationalizing Employee Volunteering

The various conceptual distinctions in defining volunteering have manifested in different approaches to measuring the phenomenon. Studies have operationalized volunteering as anything from a dichotomous decision to volunteer (e.g., Davis, Mitchell, Hall, Lothert, Snapp, & Meyer, 1999; Harrison, 1995; Penner, 2002) to the frequency of volunteering (e.g., Booth et al., 2009; Brockner, Senior, & Welch, 2014; Rodell, 2013) to the length of volunteering service (e.g., Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Caligiuri et al., 2013). Reasonable arguments can be made for and against each of these approaches. However, this decision should depend largely on the research question. Examining the implementation of a new corporate volunteering program may point to measuring the decision to volunteer, whereas examining volunteers' skill development may point to measuring either the frequency or the length of volunteering.

We propose that adopting a perspective traditionally employed with work motivation (Latham & Pinder, 2005; Pinder, 1998) can provide a useful framework to guide this decision. Pinder argued that motivation could be described in terms of the *direction*, *intensity*, and *persistence* of one's effortful behavior. Given that we have defined volunteering as a specific form of effort or behavior, we can draw on these distinctions to make meaningful and valid operationalization decisions. Using a decision-tree format, Figure 1 depicts how this framework—of direction, intensity, and persistence—can be applied to employee volunteering.

Following this framework, *volunteering direction* captures an individual's decision to devote effort toward a volunteering activity rather than toward another activity, such as exercising, spending time with family, or working. Studies of employee volunteering that focus on the decision to sign up for a "day of service" at their company and studies that compare groups of volunteers to nonvolunteers are examining the concept of volunteering direction. In his conceptual model of volunteering, Penner labeled this the "decision to volunteer" (2002: 460). An example of this approach is Peterson's (2004b) research on corporate recruitment strategies for volunteering programs, where individuals responded to a yes/no question about whether they volunteered.

Figure 1
Conceptualizing Employee Volunteering as Direction, Intensity, and Persistence



Volunteering intensity captures the extent to which, or frequency with which, an individual volunteers. The majority of research on employee volunteering has taken this approach, as have a handful of studies on volunteering in general. Similar to other constructs in organizational behavior, such as citizenship behavior (K. Lee & Allen, 2002), scholars pursuing this route to examining employee volunteering are interested in understanding the causes and consequences of the magnitude of employee involvement in volunteer activities. A variety of approaches have been employed to assess volunteering intensity, such as self-reports of the number of hours spent volunteering (e.g., Booth et al., 2009; Mojza et al., 2011; Wilson & Musick, 1997b, 1998), the breadth of volunteering in various categories of activities (e.g., Gillath, Shaver, Mikulincer, Nitzberg, Erez, & Van Ijzendoorn, 2005; Paço & Nave, 2013; Wilson & Musick, 1997a, 1997b, 1998), and scale-based measures of the extent of frequency of volunteering (e.g., Brockner et al., 2014; Rodell, 2013).

Despite the prevalence of measuring volunteering intensity with the number of hours, scholars also point to concerns with that approach (e.g., Cnaan & Amroffell, 1994; Hinkin, 1995; Musick & Wilson, 2008). For example, relying on a self-report of the number of hours volunteered brings with it the reliability problems of other one-item measures, given that reliability cannot be estimated in the absence of measurement repetition (Hinkin; Kenny, 1979; Nunnally, 1978). In addition, this type of measurement may be prone to issues of contamination. Musick and Wilson highlight two such concerns: that reports of volunteer hours may be influenced by the framing of the question (e.g., Is it hours per week, month, or year?) and that people vary in the boundaries they put on the activity (e.g., Does time spent driving to the site count?). Scale-based measures—like the type used by Brockner et al. (2014) and Rodell (2013)—seem less susceptible to these sorts of validity issues.

Volunteering persistence captures the longevity of an individual's volunteering activity. Scholars who adopt this approach are interested in the ultimate impact of volunteering on the volunteer, and the volunteer group, in the long run (e.g., Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Caligiuri et al., 2013; Dawley, Stephens, & Stephens, 2005). A few definitions, in fact,

reference longevity as a component of volunteering (Grant, 2012; Penner, 2002). We argue that although persistence may be an important aspect of volunteering for the volunteer group receiving the assistance (Penner), it is not a necessary component of the definition. For example, employees who participate in a single “day of service” (e.g., serving at a soup kitchen or cleaning a highway) through their company are still *giving their time during a planned activity for a volunteer group* and, thus, volunteering. Indeed, some conceptualizations specifically define volunteering as a “discrete or episodic” (e.g., Harrison, 1995: 372) behavior rather than a continuous behavior. Thus, we propose that persistence is one option for operationalizing employee volunteering, depending on the research question. For example, Caligiuri et al. assessed “continued volunteerism” in an examination of the benefits of employee volunteering programs for volunteer agencies.

To illustrate the value of the framework in Figure 1, consider a research question that might utilize volunteering direction, intensity, and persistence in tandem. For example, a study might be interested in examining why exactly volunteering on one’s own time is beneficial for employees at work: Is it simply the decision to engage in volunteering (*direction*) that improves employee attitudes and morale, or is there a certain threshold of involvement (*intensity*) or long-term investment (*persistence*) required in order to reap those benefits? We believe that the framework described above not only provides a way to integrate the existing research on volunteering but also sets the groundwork for future research questions like this that are important for both the literature and in practice.

In addition, the framework in Figure 1 incorporates the distinction between the two types of employee volunteering discussed above—corporate and personal. Once an employee decides to devote attention toward volunteering (volunteering direction), the intensity and persistence of that effort can be either (or both) corporate or personal in nature. This framework offers scholars a common language to describe the phenomena they are examining and allows them to adapt measures of volunteering direction, intensity, and persistence to reference either employee volunteering in general or its more specific corporate and/or personal substrates.

We should note that some scholars have taken an entirely different approach to examining employee volunteering. Instead of addressing the act of volunteering as a behavior, these scholars have assessed attitudes towards a company’s volunteering programs and/or the existence of company volunteering programs (e.g., Jones, 2010; Jones et al., 2014). Although this decision differs from our behavioral approach, these endeavors are informative and relevant to the current discussion. As noted above, the precise approach and measure adopted by scholars should be driven by their research question. In an effort to increase clarity in this research stream, we will make note of the conceptualization employed as we review the existing research below.

Integrative Framework of Employee Volunteering

Research on employee volunteering has addressed a variety of issues ranging from individual-level motivations and outcomes to company-level program details and reputational implications (Booth et al., 2009; Brockner et al., 2014; Caligiuri et al., 2013; Grant, 2012; Jones et al., 2014; Rodell, 2013). Given that this research spans several areas of study, a multitude of theoretical perspectives have also been employed, varying from motivation to

job design to signaling (Grant; Jones et al.; Rodell). In this section, we present an integrative framework that summarizes the current state of this literature, as depicted in Figure 2. We walk through this framework, starting with individual-level factors and building to organizational-level factors—first for the antecedents of volunteering (including individual factors, workplace characteristics, and company-level factors) and then for the consequences of volunteering (including personal outcomes, work outcomes, company performance, and external perceptions). Figure 2 also includes suggestions for future research (denoted in gray text), which we review in a subsequent section. Table 1 provides a summary of the current employee volunteering literature, noting the various definitions, measures, theoretical perspectives, and context of each study.

Antecedents of Employee Volunteering

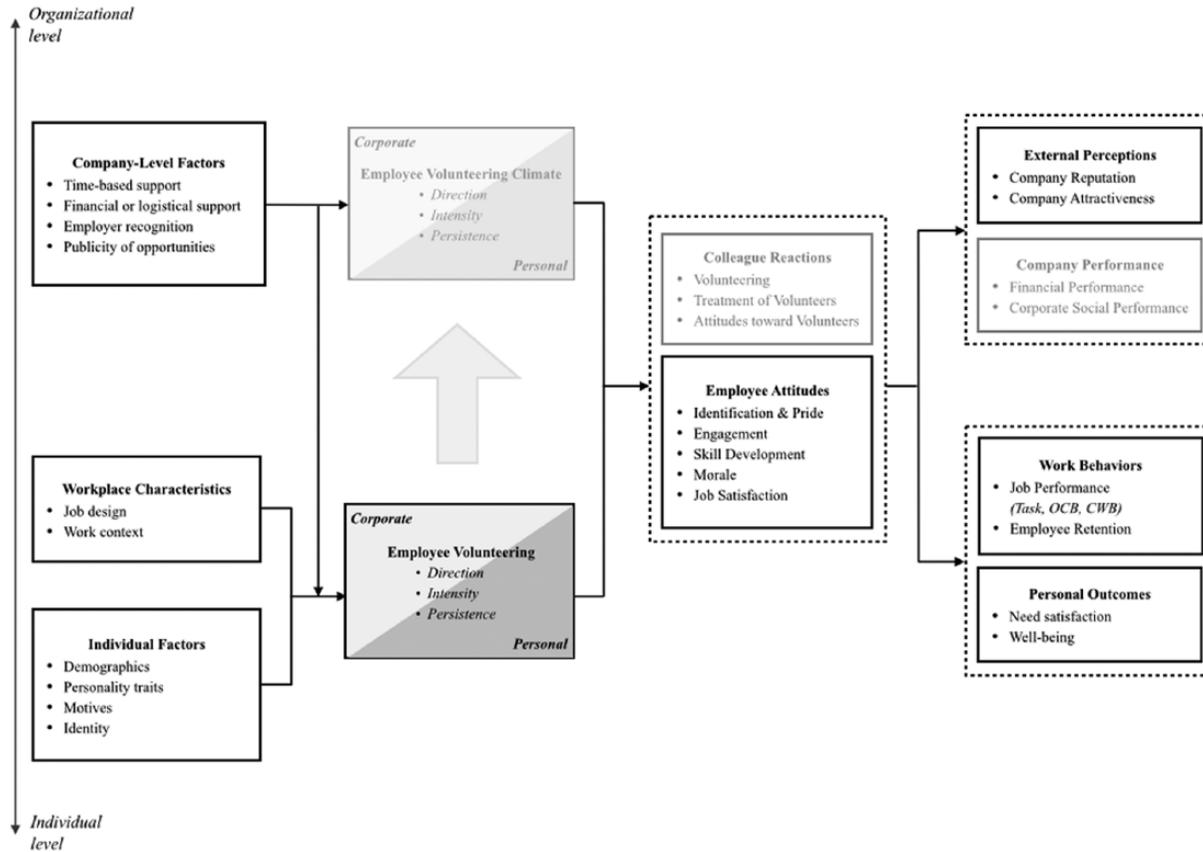
A variety of factors influence employees' decisions to volunteer, as well as their volunteering intensity and persistence. Some of these factors can be found in research on volunteering in general, such as demographic characteristics and personality traits. Others, however, are unique to employees in a work context, for example, aspects of one's job design and work context, as well as organizational-level structures and policies regarding volunteering. In the following section, we review the existing research on these antecedents of employee volunteering, starting with *individual factors* and working up to *workplace characteristics* and *company-level factors* (as depicted in Figure 2).

Individual factors. Research on individual-level antecedents of employee volunteering has built on a prolific body of studies from sociology, as well as personality and social psychology (Musick & Wilson, 2008). These studies have documented how volunteering, both in general and in the corporate context, is associated with four main classes of antecedents: demographics, personality traits, motives, and identity (depicted in Figure 2; see also Henning & Jones, 2013). Below, we summarize the findings of this research, focusing our discussion on employee volunteering.

The *demographic* antecedents of employee volunteering most commonly studied are age, gender, education, and responsibility for children. Studies of employees tend to find that volunteering increases with age (Cornwell & Warburton, 2014; DeVoe & Pfeffer, 2007; Peterson, 2004b; Rodell, 2013). However, Musick and Wilson (2008) have clarified that, across the full human life span, the decision to volunteer (volunteering direction) resembles an inverted U and the amount of time spent volunteering (volunteering intensity) is more linear. Evidence of volunteering intensity by gender is mixed (e.g., DeVoe & Pfeffer; Houghton, Gabel, & Williams, 2009; Houston, 2006; Rodell), although research tends to show that women are more likely to volunteer than men (Cornwell & Warburton; DeVoe & Pfeffer; Y. J. Lee & Brudney, 2012). More consistently, higher levels of education are associated with greater volunteering intensity (Houston; Marshall & Taniguchi, 2012; Rotolo & Wilson, 2006; Wilson & Musick, 1997b). Finally, employees with child-rearing responsibilities, particularly for school-aged children, tend to exhibit more volunteering (Cornwell & Warburton; DeVoe & Pfeffer; Houston; Marshall & Taniguchi; Peterson).

Beyond demographics, *personality traits* have attracted considerable attention among volunteering scholars. Among the traits investigated, the one most proximal to volunteering

Figure 2
An Integrative Framework and Future Research Agenda for Employee Volunteering



Note: Black text signifies topics covered in existing research; gray text signifies topics suggested for future research. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; CWB = counterproductive work behavior.

Table 1
Summary of the Empirical Studies on Employee Volunteering

Citation	Volunteering Definition	Volunteering Measure	Theoretical Perspectives	Study Context	Antecedents of Volunteering	Consequences of Volunteering
Bartel (2001)	Corporate	Direction	Categorization Identity	Field study at consumer goods company	—	Company identification Effort and cooperation
Basil, Runte, Easwaramoorthy, & Barr (2009)	Corporate	—	Organizational ecology Organizational stages	Field study across multiple companies	Timing of volunteering Employer encouragement	—
Booth, Won Park, & Glomb (2009)	Corporate	Intensity	Gift exchange Social exchange	Field study based on national survey	Timing of volunteering Employer support	Skill development Job success Employer recognition
Brockner, Senior, & Welch (2014)	Personal and Corporate	Intensity	Functionalist theory	(1) Field study at pharmaceutical company, (2) Field study at technology company	Volunteer motivation Self-integrity	Self-integrity Company commitment
Caligiuri, Mencia, & Jiang (2013)	Corporate	Persistence	Social learning Theory of learning Stakeholder theory	Field study at pharmaceutical company	Volunteer meaningfulness Volunteer group support Utilize work skills	Skill development Engagement
Caudron (1994)	Employee	—	—	Field study across multiple companies	—	Teamwork and morale Skill development Company pride
Cornwell & Warburton (2014)	Personal	Direction	Social capital	Field study based on national survey	Work schedule Education level	—
de Gilder, Schuyt, & Breedijk (2005)	Personal and Corporate	Direction	—	Field study at banking company	Demographics	Volunteering attitudes Work attitudes Company identification Career commitment Turnover intentions Citizenship behavior

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Volunteering Definition	Volunteering Measure	Theoretical Perspectives	Study Context	Antecedents of Volunteering	Consequences of Volunteering
DeVoe & Pfeffer (2007)	Personal	Direction and Intensity	Economic value of time	(1) Field study based on national survey, (2) Online experiment	Employment pay schedule Demographics Industry	—
DeVoe & Pfeffer (2010)	Personal	Direction	Self-determination	(1) Field study across multiple law firms, (2) Experiment with students	Employment pay schedule	—
Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac (2015)	Corporate	Intensity	Social exchange Social identity Attribution theory	Field study across two companies (insurance and airline)	Employer support Employer motives	Company commitment
Geroy, Wright, & Jacoby (2000)	Employee	—	—	Field study across multiple companies	Motivation	—
Gomez & Gunderson (2003)	Employee	Intensity	Household production theory	Field study based on national survey	Work schedule	—
Houghton, Gabel, & Williams (2009)	Corporate	Intensity	Planned behavior	Field study of working masters of business administration students	Industry Employer requirements	Work compliance
Houston (2006)	Employee	Intensity	—	Field study based on national survey	Employment sector	—
Jain, Malhotra, & Guan (2012)	Employee	—	—	Field study across four pharmaceutical companies	Volunteer motives	Affect Service-oriented citizenship behavior Customer loyalty
Jones (2010)	Corporate	— ^a	Social exchange Organizational identification	Field study at consumer goods company	—	Company identification Company pride Task performance Citizenship behavior Intention to stay

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Volunteering Definition	Volunteering Measure	Theoretical Perspectives	Study Context	Antecedents of Volunteering	Consequences of Volunteering
Jones, Willness, & Madey (2014)	Corporate	— ^a	Signaling Social identity Person/organization fit	(1) Experiment with students, (2) Field study of job seekers	Communal orientation	Company pride Values fit Expected treatment Company attractiveness
Kim, Lee, Lee, & Kim (2010)	Corporate	Intensity	—	Field study across multiple companies	—	Company prestige Company identification Company commitment
MacPhail & Bowles (2009)	Employee	Intensity	—	Field study based on national survey	Type of volunteer activity Employer support Timing of volunteering	—
Marshall & Taniguchi (2012)	Employee	Intensity	Gender-identification spillover	Field study based on national survey	Job characteristics Employment status Occupation Gender	—
Mattila & Hanks (2013)	Employee	Direction	Information processing Customer relationship	Online experiment	—	Customer attitudes
Mayer, Fraccastoro, & McNary (2007)	Employee	Intensity	—	Field study of volunteers from one nongovernmental organization	Organizational-based self esteem	—
Mojza & Sonnentag (2010)	Personal	Intensity	—	Field and diary study across multiple public sector companies	Job stressors	Positive affect Active listening
Mojza, Sonnentag, & Bornemann (2011)	Personal	Intensity	Self-determination Recovery	Field and diary study across multiple companies	—	Detachment from work Mastery experiences Need satisfaction Affect at work Active listening

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Volunteering Definition	Volunteering Measure	Theoretical Perspectives	Study Context	Antecedents of Volunteering	Consequences of Volunteering
Paço & Nave (2013)	Corporate	Intensity	Functionalist	Field study at energy company	Motivation	Volunteering satisfaction Happiness
Pajo & Lee (2011)	Corporate	Direction	Job design	Field study at technology company	Motivation Volunteer characteristics	—
Pavlova & Silbereisen (2014)	Employee	Direction	Life span development Transactional stress	Field study of household sample	Occupational uncertainty	—
Pelozo & Hassay (2006)	Corporate and Personal	Direction	—	Field study across multiple companies	Motivation	Work efficiency Team building Company recognition
Pelozo, Hudson, & Hassay (2009)	Corporate and Personal	Intensity	Social exchange	Field study across multiple companies	Motivation Timing of volunteering Coworker volunteering Employer support	—
Peterson (2004a)	Personal and Corporate	Direction	—	Field study of working university alumni	—	Skill development Company commitment Job satisfaction
Peterson (2004b)	Corporate	Direction and Intensity	Functionalist	Field study of working university alumni	Recruitment strategies	—
Rodell (2013)	Employee	Intensity	Enhancement Compensation Resource drain	(1) Field study of working students, (2) Field study across multiple companies	Job meaningfulness Volunteering meaningfulness Prosocial identity	Job absorption Job interference Task performance Citizenship behavior Reduced counter-productive behavior
Rotolo & Wilson (2006)	Employee	Intensity	Rational choice Generation theory	Field study based on national survey	Employment sector Work hours	—

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Volunteering Definition	Volunteering Measure	Theoretical Perspectives	Study Context	Antecedents of Volunteering	Consequences of Volunteering
Stukas, Snyder, & Clary (1999)	Employee	Direction	Theory of planned behavior	(1) Field study of students, (2) Experiment with students	Required participation	—
Tuffrey (1997)	Corporate	—	—	Field study across multiple companies	—	Skill development Employee morale Work motivation
Webb & Abzug (2008)	Employee	Direction	—	Field study of working volunteers	Occupational norms Professional norms	—
Wilson & Musick (1997b)	Employee	Intensity	Spillover theory	Field study based on national survey	Altruism Occupation characteristics	—

^aThese studies used alternative approaches to examining volunteering; instead of measuring the behavior, they measured either employee attitudes about volunteering or the existence of a volunteering program.

is prosocial personality (Penner, Fritzsche, Craiger, & Freifeld, 1995)—a two-dimensional construct composed of other-oriented empathy (prosocial thoughts and feelings) and helpfulness (a behavioral tendency to help). Findings support the notion that prosocial personality is relevant to both volunteering intensity and persistence (e.g., Finkelstein, 2009; Penner, 2002; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998). Research conducted on related topics, such as empathic concern or assuming responsibility for others, corroborates these results (Einolf, 2008, 2010).

Adopting a more distal approach, scholars have also applied the five-factor model of personality to the study of volunteering. Agreeableness and extraversion, in particular, have been linked to volunteering direction (Carlo, Okun, Knight, & de Guzman, 2005; Elshaug & Metzger, 2001), indicating that volunteers are likely to be more extraverted and agreeable than nonvolunteers. Yet when examined alongside other individual differences, the Big Five traits showed no effect on volunteering intensity (Erez, Mikulincer, van Ijzendoorn, & Kroonenberg, 2008). Although these findings do not yield a perfectly clear consensus, they seem to indicate that an orientation toward others is an important factor for volunteering.

Of all of the research conducted on individual-level antecedents of employee volunteering, the majority has focused on *motives* for volunteering. From the perspective of managing employees, motives (as compared to personality) may provide a more useful basis for recruiting and managing employee volunteering efforts in companies (Clary et al., 1998; Peterson, 2004b). Qualitative and quantitative investigations have found that volunteers are typically driven by more than a single motive, suggesting a complex motivational mechanism at work (Geroy, Wright, & Jacoby, 2000; Kiviniemi, Snyder, & Omoto, 2002; Pajo & Lee, 2011; Peloza & Hassay, 2006). Consequently, researchers have adopted and developed several models to examine volunteering motives (e.g., Ajzen, 1991; Clary et al.; Knoke, 1988; Omoto & Snyder, 1995).

Scholars have most commonly adopted a functionalist approach—a theoretical model that suggests that volunteering serves certain functions for individuals, which motivates volunteering behavior (Clary & Snyder, 1999). Broadly, the functional perspective of volunteering distinguishes between self-oriented and other-oriented motives (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Self-oriented motives focus on a variety of potential outcomes for the volunteer, such as increased positive (and decreased negative) affect and self-esteem, acquiring new knowledge and skills, advancing one's career, and maintaining social relationships (Clary et al., 1998; Omoto & Snyder, 1995). Other-oriented motives are concerned with increasing the well-being of those benefitting from voluntary work, which has been modeled as an expression of altruistic values (Clary et al.) or concern for a specific community of people (Omoto & Snyder).

A number of empirical studies have found evidence of the effects of these motives on volunteering. For example, there are generally convergent findings that other-oriented motives are a significant driver of volunteering intensity in students (Carlo et al., 2005; Finkelstein, 2009), the general adult population (Penner & Finkelstein, 1998), and employees (Brockner et al., 2014; Pajo & Lee, 2011; Peloza & Hassay, 2006; Peloza, Hudson, & Hassay, 2009). Results for self-oriented motives, however, tend to be less conclusive. The most common finding is that self-oriented motives have little to no effect on volunteering (Carlo et al.; Finkelstein; Penner & Finkelstein), though only one of these studies was conducted with employees (Brockner et al.).

It is possible that self-oriented motives may be more relevant in an employee context. Pelozo et al. (2009) found that self-oriented motives—a combination of career advancement, social interaction, and learning—increased corporate volunteering intensity but decreased personal volunteering intensity. Furthermore, there may be motives that are unique to corporate volunteering. For example, Pelozo and colleagues found evidence that employees are motivated to volunteer because they believe it will benefit their employer (Pelozo & Hassay, 2006; Pelozo et al.). In addition, employees may volunteer in an effort to look good to their supervisor and manage impressions in the workplace (Pelozo & Hassay).

In addition to functionalism, other theoretical models have been applied to the study of employee volunteering. Harrison (1995) tested the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) in a multiwave sample and found support for the influence of moral obligation on volunteering direction. Booth et al. (2009) chose yet another approach in adopting Knoke's (1988) distinction between affective bonding with others, normative conformity to help, and rational choice. Booth and colleagues reported that affective bonding (operationalized as socializing with others) and rational choice (operationalized as improving job opportunities, exploring strengths, and using skills and experience) were associated with volunteering intensity among volunteers.

Finally, a smaller number of studies have investigated how role *identity* affects volunteering behavior. Identifying with the volunteer role is purportedly driven by prior experiences volunteering, personal values, and individual differences (Penner, 2002). In addition, a strong volunteering identity is thought to result in volunteering intensity and persistence (Grube & Piliavin, 2000; Penner). The effect of a volunteer role identity on volunteering has been demonstrated across research designs and contexts (Finkelstein, 2009; L. Lee, Piliavin, & Call, 1999), and identifying with a specific volunteer role for a certain charitable organization appears to be particularly impactful (Grube & Piliavin). While none of these studies explicitly investigated volunteering among employed individuals, Rodell (2013) found that employees with greater prosocial identity volunteered more frequently.

Several common themes can be identified across the research reviewed above regarding personality, motives, and identity. In particular, research on these individual antecedents of volunteering appears to converge on three common themes—other orientation, social aspects, and self-orientation. First, whether assessed as a form of prosocial personality (e.g., Finkelstein, 2009), prosocial identity (e.g., Rodell, 2013), or helping motives (e.g., Brockner et al., 2014), it appears that increasing others' well-being is a common driver of volunteering. Second, volunteering is also largely driven by a social component, including trait extraversion (e.g., Carlo et al., 2005), perceived moral obligation (Harrison, 1995), or a motive for affective bonding (Booth et al., 2009). Last, self-oriented concerns, such as career advancement and impression management (Pelozo & Hassay, 2006), also seem to factor into volunteering. A small number of studies have explicitly integrated these antecedents of volunteering into a more comprehensive picture, suggesting, for instance, that personality traits give rise to motives, which manifest in behavior (Carlo et al.; see also Mowen & Sujun, 2005; Penner, 2002).

Workplace characteristics. In addition to individual factors, employee volunteering may be influenced by the characteristics of one's workplace. Factors such as the type of job an employee holds, the norms of the workplace, and the behaviors of coworkers may be relevant to employee volunteering. Not surprisingly, a substantial portion of the existing research on employee volunteering has included various workplace characteristics, as they represent a

unique aspect of employee volunteering. The characteristics explored appear to fall under two broad categories—*job design* and the *work context*.

Building on the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and theories about work-nonwork relationships (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), there are contrasting views about how, exactly, the design of one's job influences employee volunteering. One approach posits that employees perceiving their jobs as interesting and challenging may be grateful to the organization for providing a desirable job and may reciprocate through corporate volunteering (Greenhaus & Powell; Slattery, Selvarajan, Anderson, & Sardesai, 2010). The underlying notion is that positive attitudes towards the job and the organization may spill over to behaviors that are indirectly related to the job but still connected to the organization (Wilson & Musick, 1997a).

Taking a different approach, Grant (2012) theorized that participation in volunteering might be driven by compensatory motives, such that employees perceiving a lack of meaningfulness in their jobs aim to compensate by obtaining meaningfulness from volunteering (see also Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Empirical findings by Rodell (2013) provide support for both of these perspectives—that employees with highly meaningful jobs are inspired to volunteer and that employees with less meaningful jobs attempt to compensate through meaningful volunteer experiences. In addition, Pajo and Lee (2011) discuss an employee motive to volunteer as an instrument of occasional diversion from their regular job and responsibilities. Moreover, volunteering differences across occupational and professional groups are thought to be due to varying job characteristics and norms (Webb & Abzug, 2008).

Beyond the general relationship between job design and volunteering, gender-specific differences have also been investigated. Marshall and Taniguchi (2012) observed that women performing supervisory jobs volunteered relatively more hours compared to their male colleagues in similar positions. According to those authors, a potential explanation for this pattern might be that women with supervisory authority seek a chance to compensate for excess masculinity in their regular job tasks. In addition, they found job autonomy to promote men's volunteering but not women's.

Other factors of the *work context* can facilitate or hinder employee volunteering as well, including work schedules, payment schedules, and job uncertainty. These aspects of work are influential because they determine employees' temporal and financial autonomy, which are essential to planning and taking part in volunteering activities. Relative to a regular day shift at work, options to split one's shift or telecommute increase the probability of volunteering, possibly because they provide the flexibility to fit volunteering into the day (Gomez & Gunderson, 2003). In contrast, rotating shifts do not seem to increase volunteering, which might be due to reduced opportunity for long-term planning with constantly changing work hours. More generally, temporal role conflicts can limit possibilities to volunteer in spite of willingness (Farmer & Fedor, 2001). Furthermore, DeVoe and Pfeffer (2007) reported a relationship between the schedule of work payment and volunteering. Workers paid by the hour were less likely to volunteer and spent less time volunteering than colleagues who were salaried. Presumably, some of these factors may exert weaker influence on corporate volunteering than personal volunteering because time off for volunteering is often granted by the employing organization.

A final aspect of work-related antecedents concerns individual perceptions of job uncertainty. Pavlova and Silbereisen (2014) examined the implications of coping with occupational uncertainty for volunteering at different stages in one's career. Across two field studies,

they found that employees early in their career who were actively focused on coping with occupational uncertainty were more likely to volunteer than employees who simply disengaged from the uncertainty that they perceived. However, methods for coping with uncertainty were unrelated to volunteering at later career stages.

Company-level factors. Rising up another level within the organization, it is also likely that company-level factors influence employee volunteering. Reports suggest that the majority of companies in today's business world have some involvement or affiliation with employee volunteering (Points of Light Foundation, 2006). The primary method of this involvement is through some form of employee volunteering program. Indeed, at least 60% of companies have formal programs for employee volunteering, and that estimate increases with company size (Basil, Runte, Basil, & Usher, 2011; CECP, 2014). In addition, these programs are flourishing; employee participation rates are growing each year, as are the median number of hours volunteered (CECP).

A handful of scholars have focused their research specifically on these employee volunteering programs (for a recent review, see Henning & Jones, 2013). In some cases, studies have focused on the formalization of company involvement, which can range from initiating and coordinating volunteering opportunities to supporting employee-driven initiatives to no involvement at all (e.g., Basil et al., 2011; Cavallaro, 2006). In other cases, studies have examined the various features along this spectrum, such as providing time incentives for volunteering, recognizing employees for their volunteering, and providing financial support in the form of donations to the charities or reimbursement of employee costs for volunteering (e.g., Basil et al., 2009; Booth et al., 2009; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Pelozo et al., 2009; Peterson, 2004b).

Despite the broad range of features that could be considered, they appear to fit into four main categories (as depicted in Figure 2): time-based support, financial or logistical support, employer recognition, and publicity of volunteering opportunities. First, and most commonly examined, is *time-based support* for volunteering (e.g., Basil et al., 2009; Booth et al., 2009; Bussell & Forbes, 2008; Cavallaro, 2006; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009; Pelozo et al., 2009; Peterson 2004b). By and large, these efforts typically include either providing employees paid time off in order to volunteer or allowing employees to adjust their work schedules to accommodate volunteering. Reports indicate that anywhere from 50% to 80% of companies provide time off or allow employees to volunteer during work hours (Cavallaro; CECP, 2014). In addition, approximately 80% of companies provide employees flexible work hours in order to accommodate their volunteering (Basil et al.).

Second is a category that we label *financial and logistical support* (Booth et al., 2009), which refers to the monetary and physical assets that a company donates in order to support employee volunteering. A wide range of actions fit into this category, including allowing employees to use company facilities, equipment, or transportation (Basil et al., 2009; Booth et al.; Cavallaro, 2006); donating goods, such as prizes, gift certificates, or T-shirts, for the volunteering efforts (Booth et al.; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009); making financial donations to the charity (Basil et al.; Booth et al.; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Peterson, 2004b); or providing financial support, such as paying entry fees or reimbursing costs, for employee volunteering efforts (Booth et al.; Cavallaro; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac).

Third, several scholars have examined the role of *employer recognition* of employee volunteering. Recognition may come in the form of awards, receptions or lunches, letters of appreciation, commendations, or articles in newsletters or newspapers (Basil et al., 2009; Cavallaro, 2006; Peterson, 2004b). Reports indicate that slightly more than half of companies with volunteer programs make an attempt to recognize and reward employee volunteering (CECP, 2014). Finally, companies have different philosophies and approaches to the *publicity* they give to employee volunteering opportunities. They can choose to take a passive approach where employees need to seek out opportunities on their own or they can actively publicize that information to employees (Basil et al.; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Peterson). Going a step further, Basil et al. reported that a smaller subset of companies go beyond publicizing volunteering opportunities and educate their employees about the importance of volunteering, as well as maintain records of employee skills and experience in order to make them aware of best-fitting opportunities.

Although the studies discussed above provide valuable descriptive information about the nature and structure of employee volunteering programs, only a handful of them examined the impact on workplace outcomes. In general, these studies confirm the expected positive effects—that such company efforts increase the direction of employee attention toward volunteering (Peterson, 2004b) as well as employee volunteering intensity both in terms of volunteering hours and the breadth of volunteer activity (Booth et al., 2009; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009; Peterson). There are also, however, a few studies that appear to contradict the expected benefits of company-level factors. For example, Peloza et al. (2009) found that time-based support and recognition for volunteering were not effective methods of increasing employee participation. Likewise, in both a field study and a laboratory experiment, Stukas, Snyder, and Clary (1999) showed that perceptions that volunteering was mandatory—“voluntolding”—reduced future intentions to volunteer.

These seemingly contradictory findings suggest that there may be a “fine line” in the appropriate level of company involvement in employee volunteering. This possibility mirrors findings from the broader literature in organizational behavior, which has shown that relying on formal rules and policies (rather than norms and behaviors) to control employees may backfire, causing them to rebel and resist (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1996). Indeed, Li, Chiaburu, and Kirkman (in press) recently reported that organizational support was not necessarily a positive force for employees; rather, in some conditions, employees responded negatively.

Consequences of Employee Volunteering

Research conducted on volunteering outside the field of management has demonstrated a variety of outcomes associated with the behavior. For example, volunteers tend to report higher levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction (e.g., Harlow & Cantor, 1996), as well as better physical health and lower depression levels (e.g., Musick, Herzog, & House, 1999; Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). Although these outcomes are likely true for employee volunteering as well, there are also a host of outcomes unique to employee volunteering, for example, the impact on job performance, employee retention, and company reputation. In the sections that follow, we summarize the current knowledge on these types of consequences. Following the design in Figure 2, we begin with the most individual-level outcomes—*personal outcomes*—and work

our way up through *work outcomes*, *company performance*, and, finally, *external perceptions*. Whenever possible, we also discuss the various mechanisms, particularly in the form of *employee attitudes*, that have been demonstrated to account for those types of outcomes.

Personal outcomes. The personal outcomes of employee volunteering broadly pertain to *need satisfaction* and general well-being. Evidence suggests that employees may satisfy a variety of personal needs through volunteering. The largest portion of this research demonstrates that employees feel a sense of accomplishment from volunteering—either corporate or personal—and believe that they have been able to develop and grow from the experience (Booth et al., 2009; Caligiuri et al., 2013; Mojza et al., 2011; Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010). Employee volunteering also provides employees an opportunity to connect with others and experience a sense of belonging (Mojza et al.; Mojza & Sonnentag). Moreover, there is some evidence that employees derive a sense of meaning or purpose from their volunteer experiences (Brockner et al., 2014; Caligiuri et al.; Geroy et al., 2000; Rodell, 2013). Mojza et al. and Mojza and Sonnentag demonstrated that such effects of employee volunteering exist even beyond other forms of leisure activity.

Employee volunteering is also largely beneficial for employees' *well-being*. On the basis of a 2-week diary study, Mojza et al. (2011) found that personal volunteering served as a form of recovery for employees by allowing them to psychologically detach from their work. They also demonstrated that, by fulfilling employee needs, volunteering improved employees' emotional states—allowing them to exhibit more positive affect and less negative affect the following day at work. Similarly, Paço and Nave (2013) found that satisfaction with corporate volunteering was related to greater happiness in volunteers. In a related vein, research shows that employees are also able to benefit from volunteering in the form of employer recognition and appreciation for their efforts (Booth et al., 2009; Pelozo & Hassay, 2006).

Work behaviors. In addition to the personal rewards of employee volunteering, employees may benefit in terms of improved important work behaviors, namely, *job performance* and *employee retention*. Although only a handful of studies have addressed the performance implications of employee volunteering, the results are largely supportive of this relationship. In particular, it appears that employee volunteering—both corporate and personal—is related to increases in core task performance and citizenship behaviors, as well as decreases in counterproductive behavior (de Gilder, Schuyt, & Breedijk, 2005; Jones, 2010; Rodell, 2013).

Scholars have adopted a variety of theoretical approaches to examine the possible explanations for such performance improvements. One explanation regarding corporate volunteering in particular is that it provides employees a stronger sense of connection (identification) with their employer on the basis of a sense of respect and pride for the company's support of such activities (e.g., Caudron, 1994; de Gilder et al., 2005; Jones, 2010; Kim, Lee, Lee, & Kim, 2010). In terms of personal volunteering, research suggests that it can have a cross-domain enhancement effect on employee engagement and motivation (Rodell, 2013; Tuffrey, 1997). For example, Rodell demonstrated how volunteering, regardless of whether it was corporate or personal, acted as a psychological resource that employees could use in the workplace.

There is also evidence that employee volunteering provides an opportunity for people to develop and improve work-related skills, such as communication, interpersonal skills, and

active listening (Booth et al., 2009; Caligiuri et al., 2013; Mojza et al., 2011; Tuffrey, 1997). Indeed, Caudron referred to employee volunteering as a “low cost training option” (1994: 38). Last, studies have also indicated that employee volunteering is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and a boost in employee morale (Caudron; Peterson, 2004a; Tuffrey).

Moving beyond job performance, a handful of studies also speak to the relationship between employee volunteering and retention by examining either company commitment or employee intentions to remain with the company (de Gilder et al., 2005; Jones, 2010; Kim et al., 2010; Pelozo & Hassay, 2006; Peterson, 2004a). Peterson found that employees who volunteered through their company’s program reported higher levels of commitment to the company than employees who did not volunteer. Likewise, Pelozo and Hassay reported that employees reacted negatively to hypothetical interview questions about their company potentially reducing support for employee volunteering initiatives and stated it would prompt them to seek employment elsewhere. In terms of explanations for these findings, Jones reported that employees who viewed their company’s volunteering programs positively were more likely to remain committed to the organization through a sense of pride and identification. Despite these positive indications, we should note that, in a study comparing corporate and personal volunteering with nonvolunteering, Peterson did not find any differences among employees’ commitment to their employer.

External perceptions. There is also the potential for employee volunteering to influence perceptions and behaviors of individuals outside of the company—potential employees, customers, or other stakeholders. In particular, evidence thus far indicates that employee volunteering programs have the potential to improve a *company’s reputation*, as well as attract potential employees. Although the majority of this information comes from industry reports (e.g., Deloitte Development, 2011; Points of Light Foundation, 2000), scholars are beginning to examine these outcomes as well (e.g., Jones et al., 2014; Jones & Willness, 2013).

By and large, companies tend to believe that supporting employee volunteering will help improve their image and reputation (de Gilder et al., 2005; Points of Light Foundation, 2000). Indeed, as early as 2000, the Points of Light Foundation reported that over 80% of companies were investing in employee volunteering in order to improve their public relations. A study conducted by the Conference Board and the Points of Light Foundation also noted that consumer behaviors are increasingly influenced by the perceived social responsibility of the company (Wild, 1993). Using an experiment that manipulated a company’s level of volunteer involvement, Mattila and Hanks (2013) found that thoughtful consumers tended to have more positive perceptions of corporate volunteering programs, which affected their attitudes toward the company.

Likewise, there are also indications that employee volunteering opportunities may increase *company attractiveness* to potential employees, improving the recruitment process (Jones et al., 2014; Jones & Willness, 2013). The majority of millennials (70%) reported that a company’s community involvement would significantly influence their decision between two potential jobs, holding location, responsibilities, pay, and benefits constant (Deloitte Development, 2011). This trend was consistent for individuals who rarely, if ever, volunteered (Deloitte Development). In both lab and field settings, Jones et al. recently found that companies can use corporate volunteering programs to distinguish themselves from other potential employers. In particular, they found that people were more attracted to a company when their recruitment materials included information about employee volunteering and

giving behavior. Moreover, by integrating theorizing on signaling, social identity, and fit, they were able to conclude that these recruitment materials increased attraction because of the signals it sent regarding the company's prestige and values.

Future Research Agenda

Given that employee volunteering is a relatively new area of research, there are quite a few avenues for scholars to explore in the future. We would like to devote this section to a few key areas where research is currently lacking. Our suggestions generally fall into two general categories—either opportunities for refinement and clarity regarding existing areas of inquiry or currently unexplored areas of inquiry that represent new directions of research. We believe that examination in these directions will not only broaden our understanding of employee volunteering but also provide critical information to companies in terms of adopting and managing employee volunteering programs.

Addressing Discrepancies in Existing Findings

A considerable part of existing research on employee volunteering has focused on individual and work-related antecedents and outcomes of participating in volunteering opportunities and has yielded valuable insights. However, there is surprisingly little convergence of results in some areas, such as which motives drive participation or to what extent volunteering affects commitment to the company. We see two methodological explanations and corresponding ways forward. First, discrepancies in results may be due to differences in conceptualizations (employee, corporate, and personal volunteering) and measurement (direction, intensity, or persistence) of employee volunteering. For example, scholars have noted differences in employee attitudes as a result of corporate versus personal volunteering (Peloza & Hassay, 2006; Peterson, 2004a). We suggest that, drawing on Figure 1, scholars can make more informed and deliberate decisions about these issues in the future, bringing more clarity to this literature.

Second, volunteering scholars could strengthen causal inferences by employing more rigorous designs and analyses in future research (Aguinis & Edwards, 2014; Aguinis & Vandenberg, 2014). The majority of studies summarized in Table 1 relied on cross-sectional research designs, limiting causal interpretation of findings. A small percentage of the existing studies (approximately 17%) employed alternative approaches, such as experiments or longitudinal designs (e.g., DeVoe & Pfeffer, 2007, 2010; Jones et al., 2014; Mojza et al., 2011; Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010).

We encourage scholars to not only follow these examples in future research but also purposefully select their research design and analyses in order to combat potential problems associated with examining volunteering. For example, given the fact that employees typically self-select into volunteering (which prohibits randomized experiments; Grant & Wall, 2009), we advocate making use of the rich toolbox of quasi-experimental designs. In addition, estimates of volunteering outcomes may suffer from bias because volunteers are not randomly sampled from employees (Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart, & Lalive, 2010; Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). Future studies could take steps to alleviate this potential bias, for example, by using well-matched control groups (e.g., nonvolunteering coworkers) or collecting repeated measurements of focal variables before and after volunteering (Shadish

& Cook, 2009; Shadish et al.). Moreover, several data-analytic tools for improved causal inference are available, including propensity scores, instrumental variables, and Heckman selection models (Antonakis et al.).

Company-Level Factors

Although scholars have examined various company-level factors—particularly the different aspects and designs of corporate volunteering programs—there is little consensus about how to best categorize and integrate that information for future research and practice. One option is for scholars to apply existing organizational behavior frameworks. For example, drawing from the culture literature, aspects of corporate volunteering programs can be thought of as artifacts—the things and actions that employees easily observe at work—that signal what the company values (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1996; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1990). It may be possible for future research to use this framework of artifacts to categorize and theorize about the various aspects of a corporate volunteering program. The more artifacts a company has that support volunteerism (such as time-based support, financial or logistical support, recognition, and publicizing opportunities) may signal that volunteering is more valued and normative (O’Reilly & Chatman; Salancik, 1977), which may increase employee volunteering.

Adopting existing frameworks such as this may provide the foundation for scholars to more deeply explore the implications of corporate volunteering programs for the company and employees. Only a handful of the studies that we reviewed empirically linked aspects of a corporate volunteering program to volunteering levels and company commitment (Booth et al., 2009; Gagnon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009; Peterson, 2004b). There are still many remaining unanswered questions about these relationships. For example, do each of these aspects (or artifacts) have a similar effect on volunteering? And do these aspects influence volunteering direction, intensity, and/or persistence? Is there a “tipping point” beyond which certain characteristics are perceived as such strong normative pressure that people rebel and resist volunteering? Beyond the act of volunteering, “stronger” corporate volunteering programs may also affect employees’ attitudes and behaviors (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1996). For example, does the existence of a strong corporate volunteering program improve employee engagement, morale, and performance? And can it deter a subset of potential employees, such as introverts, from applying to the company?

A related line of inquiry pertains to the mechanism through which the effects of company-level factors occur. Do these factors affect employees’ attitudes and behaviors through their individual level of volunteering behavior or some aggregated perception regarding the level of volunteering among employees at the company? Future research could explore the idea of a *volunteering climate*—the degree to which employees as a whole devote time during a planned activity for a volunteer group or organization in terms of either the direction, intensity, or persistence of such effort. Such a volunteering climate could be assessed with a scale-based measure that was adapted to reference the work group as a whole (e.g., “Employees around here give their time to help a volunteer group”) and then aggregated to the group or company level. This form of creating a group-level construct is what Chan (1998) refers to as a referent-shift consensus. This potential is illustrated with the gray arrow in Figure 2. Once aggregated to the organizational level in this manner, research can also expand to

examine organizational outcomes of employee volunteering, such as financial and social performance, as well as organizational reputation and attractiveness.

Personal Outcomes

Although quite a bit of research speaks to individual-level consequences of volunteering, the findings thus far have been overwhelmingly positive. Employees appear to benefit personally (e.g., Mojza et al., 2011; Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010) as well as professionally (e.g., Jones, 2010; Rodell, 2013) from volunteering. However, outside of a few exceptions, most of this work has not examined the possible risks of volunteering (e.g., Kiviniemi et al., 2002; Rodell). In one exception, Gatignon-Turnau and Mignonac (2015) recently found that the positive relationship between company support for volunteering and organizational commitment disappeared when employees attributed that support to public relations motives. Moreover, Kiviniemi et al. found that volunteering in order to fulfill multiple motives (compared to a single motive) was detrimental and related to greater stress and lower satisfaction. Although their experiment was not conducted among employees exclusively, their findings may be particularly relevant to employee volunteering as the research reviewed above hints that employees may have many motives for their volunteering (e.g., Pajo & Lee, 2011; Pelozo & Hassay, 2006).

Future research may benefit from a more in-depth study of the potential risks of employee volunteering, as well as the conditions under which various consequences may emerge. For instance, employees may react differently to volunteering and their company's volunteering program depending on the level of autonomy provided in their volunteering tasks (Grant, 2012; Pelozo & Hassay, 2006). Similarly, personal outcomes may depend on the extent to which the company attempts to reap business benefits from its employees' volunteering (Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Pelozo & Hassay). Examining the full scope of risks and rewards from employee volunteering may benefit from drawing on other relevant literatures, such as work-family theorizing (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Colleague Reactions

Despite research focus on the impact of employee volunteering on the individuals who volunteer (e.g., Booth et al., 2009; Brockner et al., 2014; Caligiuri et al., 2013; Mojza et al., 2011; Rodell, 2013), little is known about the influence that volunteering may have on the other individuals in the workplace. A couple of scholars have alluded to the idea that employee volunteering may benefit nonvolunteers through improved external perceptions, such as the reputation of the company (de Gilder et al., 2005; Jones, 2010). In addition, Jones et al. (2014) provided evidence that job seekers anticipate a sense of pride for and are attracted to companies who support volunteering.

However, less attention has been given to explicitly examining how employees' volunteering may influence their fellow coworkers. For example, is there a contagion effect? Are coworkers of volunteers more likely to volunteer? In the only study of this nature that we are aware of, Pelozo et al. (2009) found evidence that employees' personal volunteering was related to the volunteering behaviors of their coworkers, hinting that this is indeed a possibility. Moreover, future research may ask, Can coworkers "bask" in a positive affect or meaningfulness glow of the employee volunteers? In other words, do other employees even need to volunteer in order to receive the benefits of their colleagues' volunteering behaviors?

There is also a host of other unanswered questions regarding nonvolunteers in a workplace (see Figure 2). For example, what do nonvolunteers think of their coworkers who volunteer? Do they respect them for it, perceive it as a waste of company time, or judge them for it? In one of the only studies of its kind, Snyder, Omoto, and Crain (1999) demonstrated that volunteers could be stigmatized based on the nature of their volunteer work (e.g., working with AIDS patients). Ultimately, then, does this opinion affect how nonvolunteers treat employee volunteers? In addition, outside of reports that employee volunteering is growing (CECP, 2014), there is little examination of how exactly this behavior spreads. Which affects nonvolunteers' decisions to get involved more: having a coworker who volunteers or working at a company with a strong corporate volunteering program?

Company Performance

Another avenue for future research is to examine company-level performance implications of employee volunteering. Although few studies have attempted this directly, there are a few examples that support this relationship. For example, Lewin and Sabater (1996) provide some evidence that companies can improve their business performance through community involvement. In a sample of U.S. companies, they found that community involvement—measured as a combination of employee volunteering, company financial and logistical donations, and recognition of employee volunteering—was related to both return on assets and return on investments. In addition, a relatively recent report by the CEB Corporate Leadership Council (2010) compared employee engagement levels and turnover rates between companies with and without volunteering programs in an attempt to quantify the company-level performance implications of volunteering. Their calculations suggested that approximately \$2,400 of value is generated by each employee volunteer.

There are also indirect indications of the relationship between employee volunteering and company-level performance by linking the behavior to individual-level performance. For example, employee volunteering has been shown to increase in-role and extrarole performance (de Gilder et al., 2005; Jones, 2010; Rodell, 2013) as well as higher retention rates among employees (de Gilder et al.; Jones; Kim et al., 2010; Peloza & Hassay, 2006; Peterson, 2004a). Meta-analytically, these and other forms of individual-level performance have been linked to company-level performance (Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, & Pierce, 2013; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). Taken together, these studies suggest that employee volunteering contributes indirectly to company performance.

However, the fact remains that employee performance is just one factor of a company's larger performance levels, such as return on assets, return on investment, and reputational rankings. The employee volunteering literature may also benefit from more direct attempts to establish the company-level performance implications. As Koschmann, Kuhn, and Pfarrer (2012) describe, it is difficult to link these types of social movements to hard data, such as the return on investment. However, there are perhaps alternative ways in which scholars may be able to establish the value of employee volunteering at a company level. For example, scholars may be able to compare the effectiveness of volunteering programs by comparing the financial performance of firms that provide different types of support for employee volunteering (e.g., time off or logistical support). In addition, it may be possible to compare performance indicators between companies with different strengths of volunteering climates.

Conclusion

Employee volunteering is a rapidly growing topic in both the workplace and academic research. The purpose of this review was to provide clarity and structure to the expanding literature on employee volunteering and its role in the corporate world. By integrating a motivational perspective from management—based on direction, intensity, and persistence of effort (Latham & Pinder, 2005)—with traditional volunteering definitions (e.g., Penner, 2002; Wilson, 2000), we provide a more structured approach to conceptualize and operationalize employee volunteering. In addition, this review provides an integrative framework that summarizes the existing knowledge on employee volunteering as well as the potential avenues for future research.

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