

Intra-organizational Volunteerism: Good Soldiers, Good Deeds and Good Politics

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ABSTRACT. Despite the millions of hours donated to charity each year by employees on behalf of their employers there has been relatively little research into the motives for such pro-social behavior. The current paper extends Peterson's (2004, *Journal of Business Ethics* 49, 371) study by exploring a unique form of employee volunteerism identified as intra-organizational, or employer-sanctioned volunteerism, and uniting the heretofore distinct charity support and organizational citizenship behavior literatures. Results of a preliminary study revealed that employee participation in such intra-organizational volunteer programs is motivated by charity, firm, and personal benefits. Managerial and research implications are presented.

KEY WORDS: corporate philanthropy, organizational citizenship behavior, employee volunteerism

Introduction

It is one of the beautiful compensations of this life that no one can sincerely try to help an-

other without helping himself. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Corporate support of charitable organizations is significant, with over \$9 billion in cash donations from U.S. companies alone in 2001 (Cone et al., 2003). Also significant, however, is the additional support corporations provide each year to charities in the form of employee volunteerism. Employee volunteerism is encouraged by 9 out of 10 U.S. firms (Tuffrey, 1997), and over two-thirds of U.S. firms provide time off for employee volunteerism (Wild, 1995). Further, this volunteer effort can lead to sizeable human resource commitments as demonstrated by General Electric which records over a million hours of employee volunteerism each year (Imagine, 2000).

Welsh (1999) described cause-related marketing (CRM) as a win-win-win scenario for firms, charities and consumers. Employee volunteerism has the potential to offer a similar win-win-win scenario for the charity, the employer and the employee. For instance, charities are often heavily reliant upon volunteers for the delivery of programs and services clearly benefit from the additional support provided by employee volunteers. Employers are seen to benefit from enhanced corporate/brand image as a result of the enhanced positive perceptions of consumers in response to a firm's increased commitment and effort on behalf of charity (Ellen et al., 2000). Companies with employee volunteer programs have also been found to enjoy increased employee morale (Tuffrey, 1997) and recruiting efficiencies (Turban and Greening, 1997). From the employees' perspective, Ross (1997) indicated that workplace volunteering is beneficial in that it provides employees with an opportunity to gain professional and interpersonal skills. Although the benefits of

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employee volunteerism are well documented, the particular form of at-work volunteerism introduced in the current paper is shown to provide a unique set of benefits for each of these stakeholders.

Despite its prevalence and importance to both employers and charities, relatively little is known about employee participation in workplace volunteer programs. Likewise, the importance of these benefits to employees and specifically to the decision to volunteer for employer-supported, charitable initiatives remains unexplored. Given the paucity of research specific to employee volunteerism, the current paper draws upon two established bodies of literature – charitable support behavior (CSB) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) – in order to develop a theoretical framework for the study of employee attitudes toward, and motivations for, volunteering in support of employer-driven philanthropic efforts.

Insights from the OCB literature are seen as particularly germane to the study of employee volunteerism because of a shared focus on the understanding and motivation of pro-social behaviors in the workplace. Specifically, OCB focuses on positive behaviors made by employees on behalf of either their employer or other employees. And while the current paper explores employee volunteerism as a form of OCB, it is important to emphasize that employee volunteerism is a unique phenomenon because the efforts of the employee have benefits that extend beyond the firm to a charitable organization and to its beneficiaries. Similarly, research on charitable support behavior (CSB: Pelozo and Hassay, 2006) has placed considerable emphasis on the study of motives for volunteering as well as other pro-social behaviors such as donating and cause-related marketing. The current paper unites these two previously disparate literatures to examine a particular form of employee volunteerism: *intra-organizational volunteerism*; or volunteerism in support of philanthropic initiatives that are planned and endorsed by the employer. This type of employee volunteerism is in contrast to *inter-organizational volunteerism* that is characterized by the *ad hoc* volunteer activities of individual employees.

Thus, the current paper extends recent research into employee motives for volunteering conducted by Peterson (2004) and in the process makes a

number of contributions to the study of corporate philanthropy and employee volunteerism. First, the paper extends the work of Geroy et al. (2000) on the benefits received by employee volunteers; benefits commonly viewed as incentives for participation. The paper also extends research by Peterson (2004) into employee motives for participating in workplace volunteer programs. However, like Geroy et al. (2000), Peterson's (2004) study examined employee volunteerism in general, and did not differentiate between inter-organizational and intra-organizational forms of volunteerism. Although, the Peterson (2004) study identified both egoistic and altruistic motives for employee participation, it did not examine altruistic motives related to helping the firm; motives that are believed to be a unique and important aspect of intra-organizational volunteering and a central issue in organizational citizenship behavior. Finally, this paper addresses Smith's (1996) call for more research into how firms might derive greater value from their philanthropic initiatives and specifically the role that employees can play in enhancing the value of such initiatives; as both a key audience for philanthropic appeals and as a key contributor to their success.

The paper is organized as follows. First, we introduce and define intra-organizational volunteerism within the broader phenomenon of employee volunteerism. Next, we present intra-organizational volunteerism as a unique form of both OCB and CSB. Results from in-depth interviews with employees and managers engaged in intra-organizational volunteerism and specifically, the motives for employee participation follow. The paper concludes with a discussion of this research and its implications for employers, charitable organizations and future research.

Volunteerism in the workplace

Employee volunteerism is a global phenomenon that is encouraged by both small and large firms, with the latter often pursuing such initiatives as part of a unified, worldwide, corporate effort. For instance, multinationals such as EDS hold special volunteer days on which employees from across the organization and around the world participate in company-

sponsored and organized community-events (Caudron, 1994). According to Alperson (1995), over 70% of U.S.-based firms offer “matching gifts” programs; whereby companies make a donation to an employee’s designated charity whenever he/she completes a specified amount of volunteer time. Indeed, employee volunteerism appears to be on the rise as more firms realize benefits, such as increased morale and productivity (Geroy et al., 2000), from this form of philanthropic initiative.

And, it is not only the employer that benefits from workplace volunteerism, with such programs holding considerable appeal for employees as well. For instance at Timberland, where 95% of employees participate in corporate volunteer programs, employees cite having the opportunity to engage in community service through the workplace as a primary reason for choosing to work there (Pereira, 2003). Moreover, employee volunteerism appears to remain strong even in the midst of significant organizational downsizing (Wall Street Journal, 1996).

The importance of employee volunteerism to corporate strategy is perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that in 1999, 49% of U.S. firms reported having incorporated employee volunteerism into their business plans, up from only 19% in 1992 (Points of Light Foundation, 2000). Indeed, it would appear that firms are making significant strides to incorporate and align employee volunteerism efforts with their core businesses. And yet, despite these efforts and the prevalence of volunteer-at-work programs, Porter and Kramer (2002) argued that companies have failed to realize the full strategic value from such efforts. Specifically, Porter and Kramer (2002) argued that the strategic value of this type of corporate philanthropy was undermined when efforts are directed by individual employees, or made in an *ad hoc* manner, with little or no consideration given to corporate objectives and strategy. To this end, Porter and Kramer (2002) suggested that a firm can increase the value, and ultimately competitive advantage, of its philanthropic investments by increasing the alignment between the charitable cause and business strategy; adopting a long-term, partnership focus, and; providing “in-kind donations” such as equipment, expertise and employee volunteers rather than mere cash donations.

The volunteerism – corporate strategy link

The Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College (2001) outlines three progressive stages of company engagement and support of employee volunteerism – *basic*, *strategic* and *integrated*. In the “basic” stage, employers set goals for volunteer participation and offer inducements such as matching grants as a way to encourage employee volunteerism. For example, firms commonly agree to make small cash donations to the employee’s charity-of-choice whenever he/she volunteers. However, when charity selection is left solely to the discretion of its employees, the result is likely to be a scattered, unfocused program where employees volunteer with, and seek employer donations for, a wide range of charities for which they have some degree of personal involvement (Radley and Kennedy, 1995). Moreover, few if any of these organizations are likely to deliver the kinds of strategic benefits that Porter and Kramer (2002) argue should be desired of such corporate philanthropic programs. The term *inter-organizational volunteerism* is introduced here to describe volunteer initiatives that are supported by, but not strategically-aligned with the firm and therefore, in this form of volunteerism the goals and strategy of the corporation are secondary to the philanthropic interests of its employees. The term *inter-organizational volunteerism* is used here because it captures the boundary-spanning role played by the employee volunteer; a role that is similar to the one performed by a salesperson charged with developing and maintaining the inter-organizational relationship between buying and supplying firms. And similar to the transactional form of such business-to-business marketing exchanges the “relationship” forged between the firm and the charitable organization is tenuous, and largely if not completely reliant upon the employee volunteer. Although *inter-organizational volunteerism* allows firms to promote their “community” involvement and pro-social attitudes of the firm and its employees, the diversity of community initiatives supported limits its impact on any one charity. Indeed, given that its contribution to any one charity is relatively small, the ability of the firm to identify noteworthy contributions or to strategically partner, promote or leverage these employee hours and efforts is all but lost.

TABLE I
Characteristics of three forms of volunteerism

	Extra-organizational volunteerism	Inter-organizational volunteerism	Intra-organizational volunteerism
Example	An individual gives up one Saturday per month to volunteer at a community soup kitchen	An individual takes advantage of a program at his office whereby the employer makes a cash donation to the community soup kitchen where he volunteers on weekends at he accumulates a pre-determined amount of time (e.g., \$100 for 40 h)	Campbell's Soup® encourages its employees to volunteer at local community soup kitchens and provides employees with extra time off during lunch hours to do so. The firm also donates products and cash to any local community where its employees are active volunteers
Charity selection	Employee	Employee	Employer
Employer involvement	None	Passive support of employee decision to volunteer	Proactive development of strategic volunteer opportunities for its employees

In contrast, and far more common, is the type of volunteerism performed by an individual, outside of work on his/her own personal time. The term *extra-organizational volunteerism* is used here to describe this form of volunteerism because it is performed outside of one's role as an employee and, as a result, provides only minimal, indirect benefit to the firm (e.g., employee skill development). As with the inter-organizational volunteer, the extra-organizational volunteer is likely to choose a charity based on his/her experience and identification with a particular organization or cause. However, because they are not supported by the individual's employer, charities receive no incremental financial support from the extra-organizational volunteer efforts of employees.

According to the Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College (2001) as a firm moves through the *strategic* and *integrated* phases of employee volunteerism, the efforts of its employees become increasingly tied to the needs of the community while simultaneously focused on producing benefits for the firm. Employee motives for participating in such strategically important volunteer initiatives are, as a result, believed to be significantly different from those associated with either inter-organizational or extra-organizational volunteerism. Indeed, we introduce the term *intra-organizational volunteerism* to describe volunteer efforts

made by employees within company-sanctioned programs on behalf of causes/organizations selected by their employer. The use of the term intra-organizational is consistent with terms such as intrapreneurship which suggest that a given behavior is performed within and for the benefit of the organization. Therefore, extra, inter and intra-organizational volunteerism are largely distinguished by the capacity or role in which the individual commits his/her time as an after hours, personal activity (extra-organizational volunteerism); as part of a self-directed, employer-supported program (inter-organizational); or as part of an employer-sanctioned program in support of an employer-selected cause or charitable organization. Table I provides an overview of the distinctive characteristics of the extra, inter and intra-organizational forms of volunteerism.

The extant literature suggests that employee volunteerism is motivated by a mix of altruistic (i.e., doing good deeds) and egoistic motives (i.e., as good politics) typical of other forms of CSB. However, in the current paper, the authors propose that a unique and as yet unexplored motive – the desire to be a good corporate citizen (i.e., good soldier) more typical of OCB – is at least partially responsible for participation in intra-organizational volunteer programs. To this end, the next sections examine

intra-organizational volunteerism as a form of both OCB and CSB.

Intra-organizational volunteerism as organizational citizenship behavior

Similar to Organ (1997) we adopt a definition of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) that is consistent with the concept of *contextual performance* defined by Borman and Motowidlo (1993) as “Behaviors [that] do not support the technical core itself so much as they support the broader organizational, social, and psychological environment in which the technical core must function” (p.73). Although Organ (1997) favored the term OCB over contextual performance, he recognized the value in the Borman and Motowidlo definition stating that it, “does not require that the behavior be extra-role nor that it be rewarded. The defining quality here is that the work be “non-task,” or more to the point, that it contribute to the maintenance and/or enhancement of the context of work” (p. 90). For example, Organ (1997) described OCB as, “things that supervisors like for you to do, even though they can’t make you do it and can’t guarantee a reward for it beyond their appreciation and perhaps an occasional extra kindness or two” (p. 93). Thus, employee participation in intra-organizational volunteerism represents a show of support for the employers’ decision to engage in pro-social activities; participation that is consistent with the definition of OCB. In fact, researchers have often used the term “volunteer” when discussing the OCB phenomenon and the specific behaviors of employees. For example, Borman and Motowidlo (1993) described OCB as “volunteering for activities beyond a person’s formal job expectations” (p. 73), while other studies have sought to understand why employees “volunteer” for extra duties in the workplace (Kim and Murnighan, 1997; Murnighan et al., 1993). Given that volunteering for charity is often a “life altering experience” (Fisher and Ackerman, 1998) and that intra-organizational volunteer programs involve multi-year commitments on the part of the firm, and potentially employee participants, it is our belief that involvement in such programs represent a unique form of OCB. And yet, volunteering for charitable work on behalf of the

employer, or *intra-organizational volunteerism*, has not previously been discussed within the OCB literature.

Previous examinations of OCB have shown the behaviors to be motivated by a mix of both citizenship (i.e., altruistic) and self-serving (i.e., egoistic) motives. For example, altruistic and impression-management behaviors have been shown to be highly correlated (Wayne and Green, 1993), while Leary and Kowalski (1990) found that motives are often a combination of image-management and altruism. It is suggested that workplace volunteerism offers employees similar benefits to those associated with more traditional forms of OCB, such as taking on additional assignments, working overtime, or mentoring co-workers. For instance, participation in non-work activities can “support, facilitate, or enhance work life” (Crouter 1984, p. 430) by providing employees with greater resources with which to perform their work duties (Sieber, 1974). Similarly, employees who participate in intra-organizational volunteer initiatives are expected to recognize personal benefits, such as skill development or networking, in exchange for their support of the organization. In fact, many researchers have drawn parallels between OCB and social exchange theory (e.g., Konovsky and Pugh, 1994; Lambert, 2000).

Making volunteerism a formal part of the workplace provides employees with an opportunity to take advantage of what Bolino (1999) referred to as *audience*, or highly public displays of OCB; and the opportunity to have their good deeds noticed. Indeed, Bolino (1999), who argued that OCB is partially motivated by image-management concerns, identified a number of factors that characterize image enhancing OCB efforts. Specifically, he suggested that employee OCB is more likely to be motivated by image-management if such efforts are made in support of an initiative that is perceived to be sponsored by senior management. Additionally, Murnighan et al. (1993) used a game theoretic approach to uncover self-serving motives for helping behavior. And more recently, Flynn (2003) reported that employees consider tangible, self-serving returns when deciding whether or not to help in the workplace. Finally, researchers have established links between extra-role performance (OCB) and supervisor rankings (e.g. Van Dyne and LePine, 1998; Van Scotter and Motowidlo, 2000), suggesting that these efforts are in fact rewarded.

Intra-organizational volunteerism as charitable support behavior

Similar to OCB, charitable support behavior has been found to be motivated by both altruistic and egoistic factors (Bendapudi et al., 1996; Piliavin and Charng, 1990). The altruistic motivation behind much CSB is often referred to as “warm glow” feelings (Andreoni, 1990) which captures the emotion connected with pro-social helping behavior, a feeling that in itself is motivating, similar to the “high” that motivates many recreational runners. In contrast, those supporters driven by egoistic motives are concerned with some return in exchange for their CSB. For example, tax incentives have been shown to be a powerful motivator for some donors (Dawson, 1988); Pelozo, 2005. It has also been shown that the higher the cost to the helper (e.g., financial, time), the lower the rate of helping behavior (Smith, 1980). Indeed, Snyder et al. (1999) found that individuals do weigh the costs associated with volunteering before they agree to serve as a volunteer. Other egoistic motives associated with CSB include: recognition (Bruce, 1994), reward seeking (Batson and Shaw, 1991), social pressure (Clary et al., 1998; Guy and Patton, 1988) and expected reciprocity – the belief that one might have need for the services of the charity in the future (Smith, 1980).

Career-based motives have been shown to be important drivers of CSB (Clary et al., 1998; Dawson, 1988). For instance, Bruce (1994) found that recognition by superiors was a motivator for CSB, such as donations. For an employee seeking to enhance his/her profile within a firm, participation in high profile volunteer initiatives, and particularly those supported by a supervisor or senior management, can be an attractive means of achieving this goal. Further, the norms enforced in work groups or within the larger corporate context can be an effective means of encouraging CSB, since individual CSB has been shown to be highly responsive to social pressure (Fisher and Ackerman, 1998; LaTour and Manrai, 1989) and the need for affiliation (Broadbridge and Horne, 1994). For example, pro-social behavior has been shown to increase when the help is solicited from within the individual’s social network (Bendapudi et al., 1996). In the workplace context, Amos (1982) revealed that certain forms of CSB might even be an explicit con-

dition of employment. Indeed, Wilson and Musick (2003) confirmed the correlation between participation in the volunteer activities of young women and their future employment status. The ability to gain or practice skills (Tuffrey, 1997), networking opportunities (Bove, 1987; Donelson, 2003), the opportunity to engage in social activities with friends (Broadbridge and Horne, 1994) and resume building (Hall, 2003) represent some of the other egoistic benefits associated with workplace volunteering.

Based on the preceding discussion, intra-organizational volunteerism is hypothesized to be motivated by either the employee’s desire to help his/her employer (i.e., be a good soldier), to help others (i.e., do good deeds) and/or to help him/herself through image management (i.e., engage in good politics). However, there has been relatively little research conducted on the motives for employee participation in volunteer programs, and none specific to intra-organizational volunteerism. To address this research gap, qualitative research was undertaken to gain insight into the motives for, and decision processes associated with, employee participation in intra-organizational volunteerism. The following sections present the methodology and results of this study.

Method

In order to gain an understanding of employee motives for participation in intra-organizational volunteerism, an exploratory qualitative study was undertaken with employees working within firms that promote intra-organizational volunteerism. A range of employees from various firms were asked to recount their experiences in intra-organizational volunteerism, from recruitment through to the actual effort and where possible, to the post-effort activities performed within the firm (e.g., recognition events). The current study followed the inductive approach of Isabella (1990); the predominant methodology used in similar studies.

Sample

To capture the breadth of the intra-organizational volunteerism phenomenon, interviews were con-

ducted with a diverse group of organizational personnel with varying levels of knowledge and experience related to employee volunteerism. The resultant sample included both employee volunteers and senior managers responsible for administering and guiding the philanthropic efforts of the firms included in the study. In total, 25 interviews were conducted with key informants (Gilchrist, 1992) from nine firms that encourage employee volunteerism as part of their corporate philanthropic efforts. Initial interviews were conducted with the senior management responsible for philanthropic strategy while subsequent interviews were arranged with senior managers, employees responsible for coordinating participation in volunteer programs,

and finally “one-off” to long-time volunteers. Employee tenure with the firm ranged from several months to over 25 years and a balance of male ($n = 12$) and female ($n = 13$) informants were interviewed. The resultant non-probability, judgment sample exceeded the 12–20 participants recommended by Kuzel (1992) for “maximum variation” sampling. Characteristics of the final sample are presented in Table II.

Firms and employees were selected from the population of a large (population approximately 1 million) mid-western metropolitan area. Companies were identified and solicited to participate with the help of the local United Way chapter, because of its extensive knowledge of fundraising with fundraising

TABLE II
Summary of key informants

Industry	Gender	Position*
Public Utility	Female	Senior Manager
	Female	Volunteer Coordinator
	Female	Volunteer
Financial Services	Male	Senior Manager
	Female	Volunteer
Power Generation	Female	Senior Manager
	Female	Volunteer Coordinator
	Male	Volunteer
	Female	Volunteer
Telecommunications	Male	Senior Manager
Oil and Gas Exploration	Female	Senior Manager
	Male	Volunteer Coordinator
	Male	Volunteer
	Female	Volunteer
Law	Male	Senior Manager
	Male	Volunteer
	Female	Volunteer
Integrated Energy	Female	Senior Manager
	Female	Volunteer Coordinator
	Male	Volunteer
Pipeline	Male	Volunteer Coordinator
	Female	Volunteer
Retail	Male	Volunteer
	Male	Senior Manager
	Male	Volunteer

*Position refers to the general role of the informant in the interview. *Volunteer* interviews focused on their previous volunteer experience; *Volunteer Coordinator* were asked about their experience concerning the organization and administration of initiatives in addition to their own volunteer experiences, while *Senior Manager* interviews concentrated on the objectives of his/her firm’s volunteer programs as well as his/her own personal volunteer experiences.

and brokering firm-cause volunteer programs (e.g., *Day of Caring*) within the local corporate community. However, only firms that had some form of intra-organizational volunteer programs were included in the study. The nine firms that ultimately participated in the study represented a cross section of industries including both consumer/retail-oriented (e.g., telecommunications, financial services) and business-to-business sectors (e.g., oil and gas exploration) with a mix of local, national and international firms.

Although firms were selected to represent a cross-section of industries as well as different sized firms, participating firms would typically be classified as large (30,000 + employees) to medium (700 employees) in size. The decision to focus on larger firms was, in part, driven by the fact that larger firms are more likely to have professional management designated specifically to the role of corporate philanthropy (Joseph, 1991), and formalized philanthropic programs. As such, employees in large organizations are more likely to be exposed to strategic forms of philanthropy, and thus opportunities to engage in intra-organizational volunteerism initiatives. Moreover, Burlingame and Frishkoff (1996) found that, as a percentage of total philanthropic support, larger firms actually made fewer donations of employee time than small firms. Thus, understanding attitudes and motives for employee volunteerism in large firms has important implications for program management within these firms, as well as the charities and communities they serve.

Although each of the participant organizations had a formal philanthropic program that included opportunities to participate in intra-organizational volunteer initiatives, promotion of these initiatives emphasized that employee participation was voluntary not mandatory. Voluntary participation in these programs is necessary because as "forced volunteerism" can alter employees' motivations to participate (Clary and Snyder, 2002).

Interview protocol

The desire for depth of insight and few *a priori* themes or questions suggested that depth interviews would be the most appropriate data collection technique (McCracken, 1988). In this regard, data collection in

the initial interviews followed the interpretive paradigm (Stewart, 1992). Although these interviews were focused on employee volunteerism efforts, they also examined charity support more generally. Employees were asked to discuss a recent experience where they had participated in a volunteer initiative promoted by their employer and these responses served as starting points for discussions concerning their volunteer experience, attitudes towards volunteering at work and on their own time and other forms of CSB. Thus, initial interviews were largely unstructured in an attempt to uncover themes and concepts central to the research objective (Miller and Crabtree, 1992). However, as per the methodology described by Schouten (1991), subsequent interviews were guided by previous ones and became more structured in order to more fully probe themes identified in preceding interviews.

Interviews were scheduled for 45 minutes duration with some interviews lasting an hour or more. Interviews were recorded (audio-only) and transcribed for subsequent analysis. Member checks were used to validate the data collected during the interviews.

Analysis

Analysis followed the grounded theory approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967), which requires that generated data and theory be contrasted and compared in an iterative manner such that there is a fluid movement between theory and data. This analytic approach is similar to the hermeneutic approach described by Thompson and Arsel (2004) in which "provisional understandings are formed, challenged, revised, and further developed through an iterative movement between individual transcripts and the emerging understanding of the entire set of textual data" (p. 632).

In addition to transcripts from the interviews, the researchers' notes from the interviews and subsequent debriefing sessions were examined to identify emerging themes. As themes emerged, verbatim sections from the transcripts were coded under general themes or categories, and subsequently reviewed to capture the nuances under the general themes. A total of approximately 150 verbatim transcript sections were extracted.

Results

Interviews provided support for the three hypothesized categories of motives for employee participation in intra-organizational volunteer programs: OCB (i.e., to be a good soldier), CSB (i.e., to do good deeds) and egoism (i.e., to engage in good politics). Each of these motives is discussed in greater detail in the sections that follow.

Intra-organizational volunteerism as CSB – to do good deeds

Not surprisingly, the majority of informants indicated that it is the charitable organization that benefits most from their participation in intra-organizational volunteerism. In fact, many respondents began their discussions by speaking about the benefits that such organizations and more importantly, the causes that they support, received from volunteer efforts; perhaps because employers commonly promoted volunteer programs on this basis. For instance, one informant stated, *I didn't realize there was such a need for this kind of thing [helping the homeless] in our community. Once I found out how big the need was. I wanted to do my part to help fight it* (Female, Volunteer). In contrast, other employees spoke of their volunteerism as simply an extension of their overall charitable support behavior including extra-organizational and other forms of support such as cash donations. *It's just something I've been brought up to do – help thy neighbor* (Male, Volunteer).

However, interviews also revealed that intra-organizational volunteerism offers a number of significant benefits over other forms of volunteerism. Specifically, it was found that intra-organizational volunteerism benefits the charitable organization by: overcoming the inertia often associated with pro-social action; helps legitimize a charity and/or cause; and introduces and attracts new segments of potential supporters. Each of these facets of intra-organizational volunteerism is discussed in turn in the sections that follow.

Overcoming inertia

Informants commonly revealed that their employer's involvement made it easier for them to support charity. In fact, many respondents indi-

cated that while they had wanted to support charitable organizations in their community, they were overwhelmed by the amount of need and the number of charitable organizations. In fact, beleaguered respondents commonly described how feelings of anxiousness lead to a kind of paralysis that prohibited them from supporting any organization. However, participants also revealed that because employer-sanctioned volunteer programs provided a single, focused volunteer opportunity, they were able to overcome their inertia and participate.

Informants also reported that the ability to get involved with minimal effort was especially important. To this end, employees perceived the workplace opportunity to be easier and more convenient than extra-organizational support options; both of which were described as important factors in breaking the inertia associated with volunteering. *I was looking for a chance to get involved, but you never know who to call, or how to start. The company takes care of all that* (Female, Volunteer). Indeed, this finding is consistent with research by Romney-Alexander (2002) which found “ease of donating” to be correlated with participation in payroll deduction programs in support of charity. The fact that employers provided guidance, and actually managed the program and its volunteers made participation “painless” and more effective. For instance, one informant stated:

You know that if the company organized it, it's going to be well thought out. They tell you where to go, when to be there and exactly what you will be doing. When you show up, everyone knows exactly what they are supposed to do. It's even easy to get there – we have a bus waiting outside the building when we are supposed to go over. Everything is taken care of for you (Female, Volunteer).

Another aspect of corporate volunteer programs seen to facilitate volunteerism was flexible scheduling, and specifically the ability to volunteer during regular work hours. For the employee, having this flexibility insured that scarce personal/family time during evenings and weekends was not sacrificed – an important issue, especially for those firms promising and promoting work-life balance.

Charity legitimacy

Research suggests that a perceived lack of organizational efficiency is a primary reason for not contributing to charitable organizations. For example, non-givers are more likely to perceive charities as dishonest, and feel that their money is wasted (Sargeant et al., 2000). Other researchers have found that efficient use of funds (i.e., administrative ratios) is a significant factor in the decision process of donors (e.g., Harvey and McCrohan, 1988). However, when employees are asked to lend their support to corporate-sanctioned initiatives, these concerns appear to be significantly diminished. Indeed, corporate involvement or support for a charity appears to lend a charity or cause “instant credibility” amongst employees. This phenomenon appears to be magnified in larger organizations, where employees trust that the company has researched the charity before entering into the relationship. As a result, employees report greater confidence in employer-sanctioned programs and that their support is in service of a worthwhile cause and a charity with integrity. For example, one employee said that the benefit of volunteering through her employer, rather than on her own (extra-organizational volunteerism), is that she knows the charity is “legit”. Specifically, she stated that, *A company this size is going to do its homework, and isn't going to get involved with a shifty, fly-by-night charity that is going to run a scam. I know if I get involved that my support is going to mean something, and go to helping people* (Female, Volunteer Coordinator).

Making Introductions and increasing awareness

Personal philanthropy is often associated with an individual's identification with or personal connection to a cause or charity (Dawson, 1988). For example, a person who supports cancer research is likely to have had personal experience with the disease. Interestingly, interviews with intra-organizational program volunteers revealed that support for corporate philanthropic initiatives does not appear to require the same type of personal attachment or identification. Rather intra-organizational volunteerism appears to follow the low involvement donor decision process proposed by Hibbert and Horne (1997); where simply being asked is often sufficient to elicit a donation. In fact, many employees revealed that they knew little or nothing about the charity being supported by their corporate

program when they first volunteered. One participant commented:

I agreed to get involved with this thing the company was sponsoring. I had to check on the web to see what this charity was all about. I wasn't even sure what they did, so I figured I should learn a little bit before I show up (Male, Volunteer).

However, it was equally interesting to discover that once employees had become involved with a charity that it was common for them to internalize the mission of the organization and identify with the cause. For example, in one instance an employee volunteered at a women's shelter revealed how, after being exposed to the work of the shelter, and the people benefiting from its services, he and a co-worker became regular volunteers outside of the program organized by the firm. Moreover, these two men in turn recruited their wives to volunteer at the shelter. A volunteer coordinator with one firm reported that experiences such as this are frequent, and stated:

We have a matching grant program where anyone can volunteer for a charity of his/her choice, and the company makes a donation of \$250 per year [to that charity]. I administer that grant program, and after a company volunteer event I start to see employees applying for the matching grant – volunteering for that same charity. They end up getting involved personally with the charity long after the company has gone [changed programs]. (Male, Volunteer Coordinator)

Interestingly, in each of the preceding comments we see evidence intra-organizational volunteer programs as the impetus for an inter/extra-organizational volunteer effort. Thus intra-organizational volunteerism serves not only to enhance awareness, but also as kind of pro-social matchmaker, introducing employees to charities to which they might form longstanding, committed relationships.

Intra-organizational volunteerism as OCB – to be a good soldier

Another significant difference between the intra-organizational and other forms of volunteerism is the

degree to which it offers benefits to the employer. Informant comments revealed that virtually everyone held his/her firm in high regard because of its commitment to philanthropy. Indeed, support of charitable organizations was viewed as a tangible example of the “soul” of the organization. For employees with such a positive attitude towards the pro-social efforts of their firm, it was perhaps not surprising to learn that their participation in an at-work volunteer program was partially motivated by OCB. However, according to Williams and Anderson (1991), OCB can be motivated by either a desire to act on behalf of the organization or for a colleague. And, while interviews revealed that intra-organizational volunteerism was viewed by informants as an opportunity to represent the firm to other organizations and to others in the community, comments revealed that employees also volunteer to support fellow employees affected by the cause (e.g., he/she is afflicted with cancer), or working on its behalf. Themes supporting intra-organizational volunteerism as a form of OCB directed toward the organization and toward other individuals within the organization emerged during the course of interviews. These are discussed separately in the sections that follow.

The good soldier

Employees reported a great deal of “company pride” when representing the firm in the community as volunteers. Employees recognized and acknowledged their role as “ambassadors” of the firm and took this role seriously and sought to make a good impression. Interestingly, interviews revealed that some charities were supported by employee volunteers from a number of different firms. While Porter and Kramer (2002) might question the strategic value of such competitive initiatives, insights gleaned from participants demonstrates how inter-company volunteer program rivalry can be positive. For example, “teams” of company volunteers often found themselves at the same location at the same time, which fostered friendly competition between the teams and further identification with the employer. As one employee noted,

There is another big law firm in town that also has volunteer teams at events. When we see them, it makes everyone work a little extra hard

to make a good showing. It's not mean or anything, it just makes it a bit better if we can show that we are better than them. (Female, Senior Manager)

Employees also placed high value on the various “identification badges” offered to volunteers, such as T-shirts or hats. Indeed, for many volunteers wearing corporate clothing while volunteering was viewed as an expression of company pride, and was generally seen to enhance the volunteer experience. As one informant stated, *Everyone who gets involved is given a T-shirt, and it's amazing to see hundreds of people all wearing these shirts fixing up the park. I've never felt so proud to be part of this company.* (Male, Senior Manager)

Some employees went so far as to suggest that it was their “duty” to support their company in its philanthropic efforts. These employees appeared to be motivated to enhance or change public perception of their employer – a sentiment perhaps more common amongst oil company employees. For instance, it was revealed that the general public doesn't understand or appreciate the level of support that their companies give to the local community. And so, it was felt that by lending their support in a “visible” way, that company would receive recognition for such efforts, and an enhanced community profile. This perspective is captured in the following statement:

I'm so proud to say our people are terrific people. They're the most generous, most willing – it's amazing. But you see, and I don't mean to brag or anything, for me when I saw all those years when nobody ever talked about what we did in the community and all it seems to take is gosh, you know, people to start taking an interest (Female, Volunteer).

Employees in this study were found to place a great deal of importance on the philanthropic activities of their employers. For example, when informants were asked how they would feel if the firm were to cease its support of charity, reactions were severe. In fact, a number of employees were adamant that such an action would prompt them to begin looking for alternative employment opportunities, while others simply could not imagine a time or situation in which their employer would not support charity. One informant simply stated, *That would never happen* (Male, Senior Manager). Still other informants felt

that corporate support of charity was necessitated, and not just warranted by, the profit motive of the firm. This position was clearly conveyed by an employee who suggested that, *With all the money this place makes, they should give something back to the community, and it's important that they know that we [the employees] think it's important* (Female, Volunteer Coordinator).

Further demonstration of the “good soldier” phenomenon was illustrated by the reaction of participants to questions concerning the possibility of their employer switching support from the current charity beneficiary to another charitable organization. And while many employees had already identified with the cause as a result of their involvement, a number of participants reported that they would likely shift their support if the firm did. This willingness to shift support was even witnessed amongst those who were making personal contributions above and beyond the intra-organizational volunteer program. For example, one of the informants said that she would support such a change, but would ... *want to make sure that the company had support behind its plans. If they say they are going to support a charity I want to make sure we don't let them [the charity] down* (Female, Volunteer).

The good friend

For some other employees, volunteerism appears to be at least partially dependent upon the person requesting the support. For example, one informant reported that she would be more likely to help if asked by someone with whom she had a connection or “relationship.” Alternatively, she stated that if she were trying to get others involved she would start with her immediate circle of friends because they were *more likely to say yes* (Female, Volunteer Coordinator). Informants also reported that volunteering for a cause that had personally touched a co-worker provided an *extra little motivation* (Male, Volunteer) for getting involved. Another employee offered the following insight:

Someone in the office has a daughter who has cancer. When the firm sponsored the Kids' Cancer Care charity – she made sure everyone knew about the opportunities to get involved. I think cancer is a terrible disease, and maybe would have volunteered anyway, but I saw how much it meant to [my coworker] – how could I ever say no? (Male, Senior Manager)

Informant comments revealed that firms receive a number of unique benefits from intra-organizational volunteerism, benefits unavailable from other forms of volunteerism, and indeed other forms of corporate philanthropy. Specifically, firms were found to benefit from workplace efficiencies, team/morale building and marketing opportunities. Moreover these benefits were largely attributed to two factors: (1) employee desire to support their employer and (2) the fact that intra-organizational volunteerism often involves groups of employees.

Workplace efficiencies

If intra-organizational volunteerism is, as it is proposed in this current paper – a unique form of OCB – then, like conventional forms of OCB it should lead to increased organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff and MacKenzie, 1997). Interviews revealed that the networking opportunities provided by employee volunteer programs did indeed pay dividends beyond the camaraderie experienced during a specific volunteer event. For instance, a number of informants spoke of the benefits of meeting others within the company and how getting to know each other in a “non-work setting” had made their corporate interaction easier and more enjoyable. To illustrate one informant, who performed an audit function within his organization spoke, of the challenges his job carried. In fact, he indicated that it was common for co-workers to be resistant when he called on them, but as a result of his volunteer experience, he found that his co-workers became much more cooperative after having the chance to personally interact with him in a non-work setting. He explained:

Now when they see me coming, or answer the phone, it's much easier to get them to respond to my questions. They actually treat me like they like me now! I get the information I need more quickly, so I'm able to respond to problems faster. It has made my job much more pleasant (Male, Volunteer).

Team/morale building

Participants described “volunteer events” for their ability to spawn a kind of company “folklore,” that when shared amongst employees serves to promote

future events and the volunteer experience. These stories cultivate a sense of camaraderie that strengthens employee identification and attachment to the firm while fostering a sense of community within the company. Thus, interviews revealed that volunteer events and programs can improve employee morale and foster greater unity within the organization. In addition, some employees referred to their involvement in volunteer programs as an employment “perk.” The following story is typical of those shared throughout an organization following a volunteer event:

It was pouring rain like you wouldn't believe. I thought people would be backing out because they didn't want to get wet. But you know, you could feel the energy – first of all, people were dressed differently that day. They all had on their T-shirts, hats and running shoes and stuff. So when people saw someone dressed like that they'd say *Oh, are you riding in the bike race today? Gee, I wish I was, maybe next time.* If you could see the senior management; all on the same bike, getting wet – all having a bad hair day. I mean, there's whistles blowing, music going on. It's really something to see (Female, Volunteer).

In addition, intra-organizational volunteer initiatives are often organized as group activities that allow employees to meet and develop relationships outside the context of work. Different from the aforementioned organizational efficiencies, here the benefits to the organization are focused on corporate team building. In large organizations individual employees may never have an opportunity to work together or even come in contact outside of such experiences. And, as a result of such “intense” experiences (i.e., quality interactions), they develop an appreciation or at least respect for others at different levels and in different parts of the firm. This view was expressed by one employee as follows:

It's a chance for us to go have some fun together away from the office. Yeah, sometimes it's hard work but that's OK – it gives you a chance to see people with a different hat on. Like last year, I worked on a project with a Vice President. Where else am I ever going to get a chance to spend 4 hours with a VP? (Male, Volunteer)

Marketing opportunities

According to Brammer and Millington (2003), most corporate philanthropy initiatives are spear-headed by the marketing/PR department of the firm. Indeed, a number of informants involved in the management of corporate volunteer programs identified the firm's ability to “market” the efforts of its employees as a key benefit of intra-organizational volunteerism. For instance, as one such informant explained, *When we have 50 people out cleaning up a park, and everyone is wearing a company T-shirt, the public sees it and we benefit from that* (Male, Senior Manager).

In essence, the ability of the firm to leverage the efforts of its employee volunteers for promotional gain demands a focused volunteer effort. One manager actively involved in trying to focus the efforts of her firm's employees, and a move from inter-organizational volunteerism to intra-organizational volunteerism, explained that her efforts were driven by a desire to *develop a smaller number of much deeper relationships that allow me to promote those relationships to our customers and other stakeholders* (Female, Senior Manager) Under her organization's existing inter-organizational volunteerism model, and its program of providing matching grants for employee volunteer hours, the firm was indirectly supporting over 1,200 charities. Many of these charities were relatively obscure and recognized by only the individual employee volunteer. As a result, promotion of the firm's contribution was limited to general statements of community support. And while the manager recognized the value of the program to the employees, she rated the marketing value of the investment at close to zero.

Intra-organizational volunteerism as egoism – good politics

Similar to previous studies of employee volunteerism, the majority of informants in the current study revealed that their participation in the company's intra-organizational volunteer program was significantly influenced by egoistic motives. And as expected, employees reported that receiving skills training or gaining profile within the firm were important factors in their decision to offer their support. Moreover, informants indicated that the ability of the volunteer effort to pay personal

dividends was critical to their involvement. For instance, one informant was quite direct in stating that, *There has to be something in it, otherwise you wouldn't do it* (Male, Volunteer).

Indeed some employees revealed that they carefully weighed the decision to support a given initiative based on its potential benefits and costs. For example, one employee noted that she was more likely to support a cause if she knew that it was personally supported by senior managers. She said, *If the right manager is involved or asks, you do it* (Female, Volunteer). Still others reported that their decision to support corporate philanthropic initiatives, and in particular their decision to donate time as a volunteer, was influenced by how they felt they would be viewed by others. Indeed, one informant expressed caution by suggesting that it was not a good idea to get too involved, or jump at every opportunity to volunteer, because management might view such activity as a sign of a light workload, or expendability.

However, unlike inter-organizational volunteerism participation in intra-organizational volunteerism was found to provide employees with two unique benefits: increased social benefits and increased opportunities for rewards and recognition in the workplace.

Social rewards

Informants spoke of their intra-organizational volunteer experience as more personally satisfying than other volunteer experiences; further evidence that intra-organizational volunteerism is unique. The most commonly cited personal benefits were those associated with the social and fun aspects of employee volunteerism. Although inter-organizational and extra-organizational volunteerism offer similar opportunities meet new people or engage in social activities, intra-organizational volunteerism efforts often take place in groups and as such, employees are able to socialize with colleagues and work “friends” – an opportunity which appears to make the experience and work atmosphere that much more enjoyable. For instance, one informant reported that:

One of the best things about doing it [volunteering] is that you get to spend time with your friends from work. I have made a lot of friends here over the years, and when we volunteer it

gives us a chance to spend time away from our desks. A lot of us get our families involved too, and so I've made a lot of new friends too. (Female, Volunteer Coordinator)

Rewards/recognition

The second benefit that emerged from the interviews was the opportunity to gain rewards or recognition as a result of participation in a corporate-sanctioned volunteer initiative. For instance, employees that participated in intra-organizational volunteerism were regularly exposed to senior managers to whom they would not ordinarily have had any opportunity for interaction. And while volunteering was described by one informant as *a great way to network* (Male, Volunteer), others saw their participation in such initiatives as a way of ingratiating themselves to management. One participant who enjoyed better relations with her supervisor after volunteering for a charity event personally important to the supervisor, said, *I'm sure she didn't do it on purpose, and it's not why I got involved, but we just seemed to be a bit closer after that. She was a little bit more compassionate toward me, and would let me leave early sometimes, just little things like that* (Female, Volunteer).

Interestingly, a number of employees reported that the opportunity to engage in workplace volunteer initiatives had taken precedence over other, personal (e.g., extra-organizational) commitments to charity. Echoing the experiences of other employees, one informant spoke of prioritizing a work-related volunteer commitment over one that he personally identified with; he commented:

I have had personal experience with juvenile diabetes and was hoping to get involved with them – then this opportunity came up through work to get involved with the United Way, so I jumped at it. The diabetes thing is still something I'm interested in doing though. I think I'll eventually get back to it when my commitment through work is over. (Male, Volunteer Coordinator)

That intra-organizational volunteerism takes priority over other forms of volunteerism is, in part, an acknowledgement of the significant, egoistic benefits

that can accrue to employees from such programs. In addition, after a decade of downsizing the kind of image management that intra-organizational volunteerism offers may be seen as critical to employment and/or career management. To this end, one informant succinctly stated: *At the end of the day, the job comes first* (Female, Volunteer).

Organizational influences on intra-organizational volunteerism

During the course of the interviews, participants frequently referred to organizational factors that either encouraged or tempered an individual employee's motivation to participate in an at work volunteer initiative. Specifically, two factors were repeatedly brought up during the course of employee interviews, both of which were described as having a profound effect on employee involvement. The first factor dealt with the existence of social norms, or pro-social climate, within either the overall corporation or the individual's workgroup. The second factor focused on the level of immediate and/or senior management support for such volunteer initiatives.

Social networks – the ties that bind

Similar to other forms of OCB and CSB, virtually all informants reported that social networks were instrumental in their awareness of, and decision to join, a volunteer effort. The most common way to learn about volunteer opportunities was through others in the work place, and many employees got involved after one member of their work group expressed an interest. For instance, the following comment was common: *There's a bunch of us that go for coffee – someone mentioned this charity she was going to volunteer with, and asked us if we would help out. Every single one of us said yes* (Female, Volunteer). Moreover, interviews revealed that those charged with recruiting volunteers were well aware of the fact that social networks influenced participation decisions. For instance, employees responsible for recruiting employees for an intra-organizational volunteer program, they typically begin with those within their "sphere of influence" and those within their social circle. The following comment was typical of such recruiting efforts:

You just start with the people you know won't be able to say no to you. But there are some people whom you just know aren't going to do it. It sounds bad, but some people are just anti-social. You never see them talking to anybody, so why would I ask them to get involved? I don't even bother. (Female, Volunteer Coordinator)

Although no one reported any company-wide social pressure to participate, employees reported that their immediate work group or "circle of friends" at work provided a source of "security" when deciding to volunteer. Thus, beyond its ability to introduce employees to a charity or cause, intra-organizational volunteerism also appears to help individuals overcome the inertia associated with volunteering by reducing or eliminating the social awkwardness or discomfort associated with meeting new people, doing new things, and generally getting outside one's "comfort zone." For example, one informant reported that he would be more likely to get involved if he knew of someone else also getting involved, so he wouldn't *show up not knowing anybody* (Male, Volunteer). That individuals need or appreciate such social "handholding" is arguably exacerbated in the context of volunteerism where an individual may be asked to deal with people (e.g., sick, elderly, special needs) and conditions (e.g., impoverished, imprisoned, catastrophic) with which they have limited or no experience.

Managerial support

In general, senior management support for any volunteer initiative is critical to program success. In fact, employees reported that management support was important if their involvement was to be recognized and rewarded, and conversely, and perhaps more importantly, to insure that their involvement would not be punished. For example, while many employees weighed the potential rewards and costs of participating in a volunteer initiative, they also reported that they looked to their immediate managers for signals regarding the value and priority of such activities. For instance one employee stated that, *If my boss isn't getting involved and [instead he/she's] working late every night, I can't just tell him that I'm taking a day off to go work in a food bank* (Male, Volunteer). In fact, participants described how

mid-level managers could easily scuttle the programs supported by senior management. To illustrate, one employee who said: *We had all these company rallies supporting volunteers and giving opportunities to get involved, but when we get back to the office if your boss says “what a load of BS” you’d better think twice before you jump in and start volunteering* (Female, Volunteer).

Discussion

In comparison to other forms of corporate philanthropy, intra-organizational volunteerism appears to offer firms, employees and charities with a number of benefits not available from other forms of volunteerism and indeed other forms of charitable support. These benefits are summarized in Table III.

Results of the qualitative interviews presented here suggest that employees are motivated to participate in intra-organizational volunteerism for a variety of reasons, and that these motives are consistent with and represent a combination of both OCB and CSB. If one were to look for the degree of overlap – or shared motives – between these two previously disparate concepts, one might look at egoistic motives and primarily impression management that is common to both OCB and CSB. Fig-

ure 1 presents a conceptual framework that is grounded in the OCB and CSB literatures and enhanced and refined by insights gleaned from the key informant interviews of this preliminary study.

The charity is perhaps best positioned to reap the benefits of intra-organizational volunteerism relative to other forms of volunteerism. First, because the charitable organization is selected at the corporate level, the individual employee may not have had any prior exposure to the charity. And therefore, intra-organizational volunteer programs provide charities with an opportunity to attract new sources of charitable support. In the current study employees were shown to increase their support for a given charity beyond their duties as an employee volunteer. This finding supports the Pelozo and Hassay (2006) contention that once an individual is introduced to a charitable organization, he/she begins to identify with the cause and becomes increasingly committed to it; the result of which is increased and varied kinds of support (e.g., donations, extra-organizational volunteerism, purchasing). Also, because the volunteer effort is sanctioned and promoted by the employer, employees are more likely to view their involvement as in-role versus extra-role behavior (Morrison, 1994) and therefore agree to participate. Regardless, the incremental egoistic

TABLE III
Three forms of employee volunteerism: a comparison of benefits

Extra-organizational volunteerism	Inter-organizational volunteerism	Intra-organizational volunteerism
<i>Employee</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egoistic benefits • “Warm glow” 	Extra-organizational benefits <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible time of work 	Inter-organizational benefits <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social benefits • Increased opportunity for recognition and rewards
<i>Charity</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer support 	Extra-organizational benefits <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible incremental support (e.g., matching grants) 	Inter-organizational benefits <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcome inertia • New volunteers/awareness • Legitimacy
<i>Employer</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible employee skill development 	Extra-organizational benefits <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing/promotion opportunity 	Inter-organizational benefits <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morale/team building • Increased efficiencies • Focused opportunity for promotion

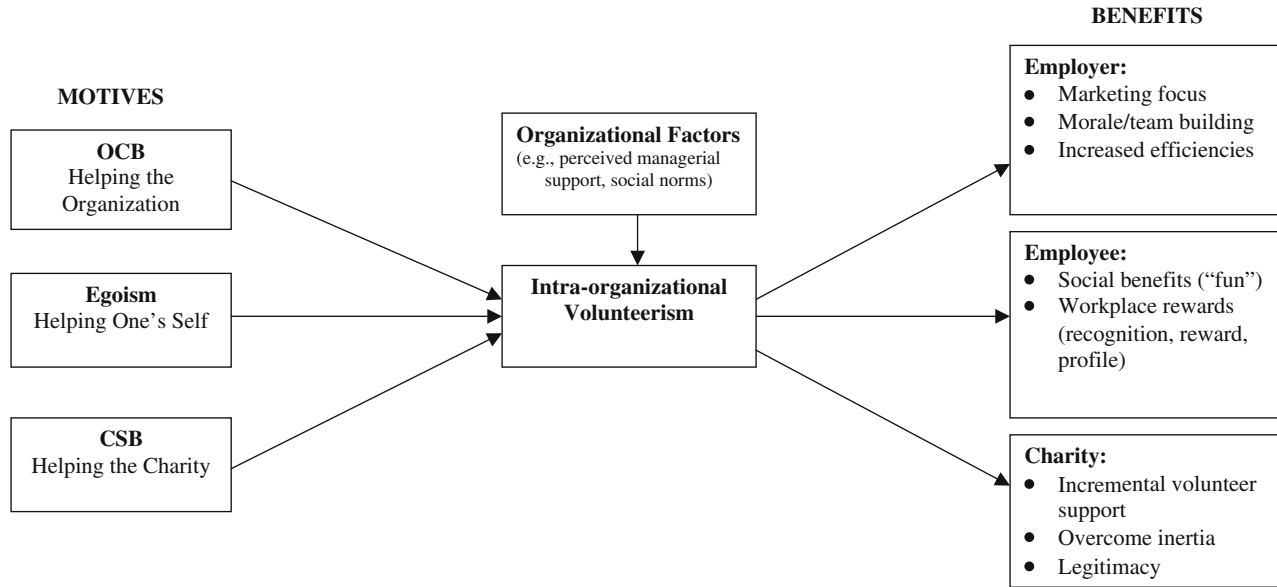


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for intra-organizational volunteerism.

rewards available to those who volunteer as employees, helps to ensure a larger, more diverse pool of volunteers.

The very nature of the employment context, and the formal and informal organizational structure and the various social networks that exist within firms represent a unique opportunity for charities seeking incremental support. And while, similar structures exist in traditional forms of volunteer recruitment (i.e., family and friends), the employment context provides two unique benefits: (1) efficient communication of volunteer opportunities to a large number of potential volunteers and (2) the organization of volunteer teams and the creation of volunteer options that facilitate employee participation. The intra-organizational form of volunteerism also offers the most significant incremental benefit to the charity beneficiary because it concentrates the firm's philanthropic efforts.

Finally, intra-organizational volunteerism presents an opportunity for relatively unknown or smaller charities to establish their legitimacy and overcome potential volunteer concerns. When a charity formally partners with a well-known and respected firm, the legitimacy afforded by the relationship can extend across the employee base and beyond. For example, high profile corporate philanthropic efforts

can ultimately help raise the public profile of smaller charities thereby overcoming public concerns over the organizational legitimacy and efficiency of a new/small charity.

There is a volume of research that demonstrates the effect of "fit" (i.e., congruence between the business strategy of the firm and the supported cause) upon consumer perceptions of corporate philanthropy (e.g. Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). Surprisingly, the degree of "fit" between the cause and the firm did not emerge as a significant factor in the decision to support intra-organizational volunteerism for the informants in the current study. In fact, many volunteer programs within firms were successful despite a complete lack of fit. For charities, this finding is encouraging as it suggests that a much wider range of corporate support opportunities exist than would otherwise have been believed.

Employees reported that while they experienced the kind of "warm glow" feelings commonly associated with CSB, unlike extra-organizational volunteerism, the workplace appeared to provide a more fertile and supportive environment for volunteerism. Moreover, employers are in a unique position to encourage employee support of charity as a result of this unique set of organizational

factors. This finding has important implications for charities seeking corporate support. If employees prioritize intra-organizational volunteerism initiatives over other forms of volunteerism, then there could be a dramatic shift in the way charities recruit volunteers. Indeed, insights gleaned from this study suggest that charities should be actively approaching firms for not just financial contributions but volunteer support as well. Indeed, discussions with managers involved in philanthropic decision-making indicated that the vast majority of charity appeals to their respective firms made no mention of employee support. As a consequence, charities may be missing out on the opportunity to tap into a potentially rich source of support. And alternatively, managers may be missing out on opportunities to provide their employees with an important set of skills.

For firms, because of the strategic nature of the philanthropic initiative, intra-organizational volunteerism presents a number of benefits. According to Porter and Kramer (2002) when volunteer efforts are focused on a single or small number of charities, the firm is better able to use such efforts for strategic gain. For example, promotional efforts are likely to be more effective and efficient because the firm benefits from public perceptions of increased effort and commitment. Next, because intra-organizational volunteer programs often include teams of employees, in contrast to extra-organizational or inter-organizational volunteerism, it represents an opportunity to realize benefits associated with increased morale and team-building. Finally, as previously mentioned, team building can also translate into increased efficiencies and effectiveness in the day-to-day responsibilities of employees as a result, of the networking opportunity provided by volunteer programs.

Results presented here suggest that employee participation in corporate-sanctioned volunteer efforts is, at least partially, motivated by the employee's desire to support his/her employer. In fact, results suggest that employees recognize that they play an important role in the success of the philanthropic efforts of the organization as well as the philanthropic reputation of the firm. In addition, employees reported a sense of "company pride" and perceived themselves as ambassadors for the firm when they volunteered on behalf of their employer in the community.

Based on these findings, managers seeking employee support for such strategic volunteer initiatives should highlight the fact that these activities are an important form of citizenship behavior when promoting such efforts. For instance, managers should position volunteer opportunities as a means of supporting not only the charity, but also the firm; and more specifically make it clear to employees that there are public relations and other workplace benefits associated with volunteering. In doing so, the firm can help employees understand the full value of intra-organizational volunteerism to the firm, thereby tapping into a broader range of volunteer motives.

Finally, employees receive a number of additional egoistic benefits from intra-organizational volunteerism. First, it represents an opportunity for them to participate within their existing social networks in the workplace which makes the experience more enjoyable. Employees also report a number of significant incremental egoistic rewards from intra-organizational volunteerism relative to other forms of CSB. Specifically, while employees still receive the "warm glow" associated with many forms of CSB, they can also improve their profile and connections within the firm. For example, Van Scotter and Motowidlo (2000) found that managers are more likely to reward employee citizenship behaviors made on behalf of the firm. Indeed, practitioners have long recognized the benefits of volunteerism to career-minded employees and as Isenberg (1993) stated, "Carefully selected volunteer experience is a new fast track for high-potential managers. It can be both a training ground and a proving ground for a company's best people" (p. 5).

Therefore, employees are motivated to participate in these employer-sanctioned and encouraged volunteer initiatives because they know that such programs offer benefits such as opportunities for networking and increased profile in the firm. Although other forms of volunteerism are also motivated by egoism, intra-organizational volunteerism appears to offer a unique set of rewards for both career-minded employees as well as those employees simply motivated to spend "quality" time with friends/co-workers outside of the office, plant or institution. And while such benefits are not formally promised or expected, employees generally recognize that benefits do accrue to those who participate

in intra-organizational volunteerism. As a result, managers seeking to promote volunteer opportunities can foster greater support by helping employees understand the kinds of personal benefits (e.g., time off work, networking opportunities) that they can receive. Specifically, volunteer efforts can be maximized by ensuring that the initiatives provide the opportunity for team involvement, and that such efforts include public recognition and perhaps most importantly, the opportunity to network with senior managers.

Indeed, results from this preliminary study suggest that the employee's decision to volunteer is moderated by two factors: degree of managerial support and strength of social norms and interactions within the workplace. First, managerial support helps to ensure participation by employees seeking recognition or other rewards. The attitudes and opinions expressed by managers can also serve as significant impediments to employee participation, especially if the employee feels that his/her involvement will have negative career consequences.

The ability for individual managers to counter the efforts of the company's promotional efforts demands that program coordinators gain consensus across a wide range of departments and at numerous levels within the organization to ensure the widest possible support. In addition to asking for employee input into the volunteer process, firms must also ensure that all levels of management are represented. Moreover, firms should ensure that managers understand the full value of intra-organizational volunteerism to both the overall corporate strategy and the efficient functioning of the organization and their respective work units.

Second, the strength of social norms and interactions within an employee's immediate workgroup was also found to influence participation in intra-organizational volunteer programs. As much of the recruiting for such initiatives is conducted on a person to person basis, through word of mouth, workgroups characterized by a high degree of employee interaction are likely to enjoy higher participation rates in intra-organizational volunteerism. Conversely those work units and organizations characterized by fewer employee interactions will likely be less efficient at promoting volunteer opportunities and securing employee participation.

Limitations and future research

The current paper introduced the concept and term intra-organizational volunteerism to the literature and a conceptual framework based upon an exploratory study of the intra-organizational volunteerism phenomenon. And while there were limitations associated with this preliminary investigation, it is believed that each of these limitations represents an opportunity for future research into the intra-organizational volunteerism phenomenon. Specifically, more research is needed to uncover perceptions of non-volunteering employees, effects of firm reputation on employee volunteerism, individual-specific factors that influence employee participation, and optimal internal marketing strategies to promote intra-organizational volunteerism. Each of these opportunities is discussed in greater detail in the paragraphs that follow.

First, the current study focused solely on the attitudes of employees and managers who have at least some familiarity with intra-organizational volunteerism garnered from a large organizational perspective. And while this sample limits the generalizability of the results it also provides only limited insight into the attitudes of those who have not yet or refuse to participate in intra-organizational volunteerism. Although the current study did include informants with various levels of participation and experience with such initiatives, more research is needed into the factors that distinguish highly active participants from those with lower levels of participation, and those employees who do not participate at all.

Second, the current study included employees working at organizations with good reputations, both from a public and an employee perspective. Employees in the current study were generally found to hold their companies in high regard as an employer, and each firm enjoyed either a positive or at least neutral public perception. As a result, employees in firms with a negative reputation, with either group of stakeholders, might experience intra-organizational volunteerism differently than those identified here. The effect of firm reputation on employee attitudes and participation represent an important direction for future research.

Third, it is anticipated that a host of personal and corporate factors could influence employee attitudes toward intra-organizational volunteerism. For

example, Radley and Kennedy (1992) found that blue-collar workers viewed charitable contributions differently than professionals or white-collar employees. In addition, factors such as perceived job security, and major events such as a merger or acquisition could significantly affect the corporate culture and, in turn, positively or negatively influence employee attitudes toward intra-organizational volunteerism. Drawing upon both the CSB and OCB theoretical frameworks, more research into the effect of personal (e.g., gender, personality) and work or corporate factors (e.g., position, job autonomy) upon employee participation in intra-organizational volunteerism is needed.

Finally, future research should examine the effectiveness of corporate efforts designed to capitalize upon the employee motivations presented here. For example, many firms include their employees in the decision making process, while others place more emphasis on their customer base and view the philanthropic function as more of an external marketing initiative. And it could be hypothesized that the more a firm includes its employees in the selection of a charitable partner the more likely employees will be to support the initiative. However, a firm's client orientation (i.e., B2B versus B2C) may affect the degree to which employees are included in such decisions. For example, firms without a retail-oriented customer interface may place more emphasis on their employees as a key audience for their corporate philanthropy.

And although employees report egoism as an important motive for participation in intra-organizational volunteerism, more research is needed into the effectiveness of egoistic versus altruistic recruiting messages and the optimal internal marketing strategies for employee participation. Specifically, researchers should examine the extent to which personal rewards should be promoted to employees and how directly such egoistic benefits should be tied to an employee's participation in intra-organizational volunteerism.

Conclusion

Research estimates suggest that one third to one half of the population volunteers (Reed and Selbee, 2000; Bussell and Forbes, 2002), with Americans volunteering an average of 52 hours per year in 2003

(Philanthropy Journal, 2004). However, the competition for volunteers is fierce and despite robust levels of volunteer activity, many predict that the pool of volunteers has peaked causing charities to compete for a shrinking population of potential volunteers (Bussell and Forbes, 2002). Employee volunteerism presents an opportunity for firms to provide much needed support to charity, while increasing the returns on investments in corporate philanthropy. Specifically, intra-organizational volunteerism represents is seen as a particularly compelling opportunity for managers because of its alignment with other strategic investments of the firm.

The preliminary study results presented here support the existence of incremental benefits to the firm, charity and employee while offering insight into employee motives for participation in intra-organizational volunteerism. These results provide important guidance for those seeking to increase employee support of volunteer programs and returns from investments in corporate social responsibility. When formally managed as part of the firm's philanthropic function, intra-organizational volunteerism is seen to represent a win-win-win for charities, firms and employees. As such, it represents a unique opportunity for managers of both charities and the firms that support them.

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