Youth Service Program Participants in Canada: Perceptions on Motivations for Volunteering, Level of Engagement, and Level of Impact

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Encouraging young people to be active in their communities and understanding of and responsive to the issues around them, especially through volunteer and service programs, allows these young people to be healthy and empowered citizens, while also generates positive social change for their community and the causes they advocate for. Given that youth volunteerism and youth service have such benefits, the sector has experienced a boost in activities that seek to meaningfully engage youth and create impact. Likewise, research has also adapted to provide a stream of current, science-based strategies, opportunities, and reflections to the program designers, funders, policymakers, etc., who guide the sector. However, young people and their experiences are still comparably excluded from the discourse. This thesis seeks to amplify the youth perspective by focusing on their motivations, interactions with program design qualities, and self-perceived impact. These objectives are explored through the following research questions: (1) why are young people in Canada participating in youth service programs; (2) what characteristics of the youth service programs are reflective of the young people's personal motivations to apply; (3) how is the affinity between reasons for service and chosen programs significant for the young participants' self-assessment of impact across different levels; and, (4) are there any patterns between personal motivations and program qualities? Youth perspectives were explored via responses to a survey and interview obtained from participants of current youth service programs in Canada after they had completed their respective program. The research methodology and partners, namely Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ocean Wise, and YMCA Canada, who administered the six youth service programs that were studied in this thesis, were adopted from the University of Waterloo's Youth and Innovation Project. A total of 11 motivations to volunteer are discussed, with 'advance personally and/or professionally' and 'engage in social connections' identified as the top two motivations within this dataset. Out of the 10 literature-based program design components, 'high degree of youth involvement' is found to be the prominent across the six service programs. Using a four-pronged scale to measure impact across four levels, i.e., on the volunteer, on the organization, on the community, and on the issue, 'extremely positive' and 'somewhat positive' are the most applicable ratings on the community level and individual and issue level, respectively. This thesis reimagines several existing concepts within the literature of youth volunteerism by bringing together motivations, program design, and impact in one study, synthesizing primary, secondary, and inductive motivations, and using a simplistic rating system to examine impact. While the main objective of this thesis is to highlight youth experience in the discussion, this study also aims to meet several literary and practical gaps by generating ideas for future areas of studies and a set of recommendations for providers of service programs.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to Max for being my way back. Thank you for just being you.

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1.0 Introduction

Youth volunteerism and opportunities for service for youth are known as prominent mechanisms for supporting youth development and successfully integrating youth into society. When young people are encouraged to be healthy, well-educated, engaged, and productive citizens, they become resilient and respond better to challenges throughout their development (Cheng et al., 2016; Mortensen et al., 2014). Recently, these mechanisms have been transforming from focusing on supporting the development of young people to now placing more emphasis on meaningful engagement and lasting impact generated through their participation (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Ramey et al., 2018; Spajic et al., 2019). Due to their developmental and societal positioning, young people possess specific traits and capabilities, i.e., increased potential for creativity, innovation, and risk-taking, that allow them to contribute to civic issues in remarkable ways (Bonnie et al., 2015; Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a). As such, the recent adaptations to youth volunteerism and youth service landscapes release the previously held notions about what young peoples' involvement brings to themselves and to their communities (Warner, Langlois, & Dumond, 2010). As more young people, amongst others in organizations and society, begin to realize and embrace the potential of youth for triggering social change, their understanding of their own role can be amplified through insights derived from youth-focused research.

The study of youth volunteerism and youth service, youth engagement, and youth impact currently incorporates many multi-faceted approaches, employed by a range of relevant stakeholders, for a variety of purposes. This thesis studies these areas through the perceptions of youth service program participants about their volunteerism, engagement, and impact, and unfolds how their personal motivations to become engaged and their chosen pathways for engagement connect, and what, if any, shape this provides to their overall impact across several levels and the scope of meaningful change they are capable of through their participation.

This chapter provides background on the opportunities for and barriers to youth innovation and impact, highlights the current context of young peoples' civic and community participation in Canada, and presents an overview of the Canadian youth volunteerism and service sector. The chapter concludes with a statement of the main problem, the purpose of this study and its research questions, and its contributions to the youth-serving literature.

1.1 Background

Young people, transitioning from adolescence to emerging and early adulthood, navigate unchartered circumstances that are special to their period of development, because of which they hold a unique view of and influence on present society (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Munsey, 2006). For example, young people today are either less inclined to continue with college or take longer to finish their post-graduate education because of recent trends in culture, i.e., taking gap years between high school and post-secondary, and increased economic costs, such as inflated tuition fees (Bonnie et al., 2015). The transitionary period marks the height of an average person's susceptibility to social norms because young people who are undergoing developmental adaptations and growth are most impressionable to societal structures and systems prevalent during this process (Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2019; Schroth, 2019). Thus, while mostly rooted in neuroscience and developmental psychology, this stage of transition from adolescence to adulthood is also influenced by dynamic societal factors, which are difficult concepts to categorize (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; United Nations, 2020). As such, there are very few limits in social sciences for clearly defining the boundaries of what it means to be a young person. Age-based characterizations, derived from neurological understandings and from a grouping of predicted experiences young people are likely to go through during certain ages, are most easily adopted by researchers and leading youth-serving organizations to define 'youth'. For instance, the United Nations (2020) classifies 'young people' as persons between the ages of 15 – 24 years, inclusive. The terms 'children', 'adolescents', 'students', 'young adults', 'young population / Canadians', 'young person(s)/people', etc. are also interchangeably used with 'youth' to highlight a sub-set within this demographic and/or in speaking of this demographic as a whole in the literature. Based on an extensive review of the literature and definitions used by many prominent Canadian youth-serving organizations, this thesis defines 'youth' as persons between the ages of 15 – 30 years, inclusive, and uses the term youth/young people throughout. It becomes important to discuss the characterization of the term 'youth', given its prominence in this study, as the goal of this thesis is to observe the experiences of more than two dozen 15 to 30 years old youth service program participants in Canada as they relate to their motivations, the programs' designs, and their self-perceived impact.

Young people are often seen as key barometers for national measurements of social well-being and estimations about future progress (Barber, 2007). Thus, strengthening avenues that enrich young peoples' roles in society becomes a crucial civil function for ensuring communal success (Barber, 2007). As a demographic, they are more susceptible to social pressures, i.e., the expectation "to plan for and parent the next generation", and societal changes (Cheng et al., 2016). These changes within society mostly occur via shifts in educational standards, in employment prospects, in cultural arrangements, and in civil processes and policies (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007). Such societal shifts influence all aspects of young peoples' lives, including educational options, career trajectories, personal relationships, and lifestyle choices.

Successfully embedding young people in society also helps them develop an ability to exercise "critical social analysis and critical consciousness building" (Allen-Handy et al., 2020, p. 267). Relevant research supports the fact that young people often begin to acknowledge flaws in social structures and systems roughly three years before most adults within the same communities might (Mortensen et al., 2014). This often leads to proactive and productive action "particularly towards issues of social justice", thereby accomplishing effective community change (Allen-Handy et al., 2020, p. 267; Brennan & Barnett, 2009). Research also shows that there are tangible improvements in efforts for sustainable community development when it includes the contributions of its young population (Brennan & Barnett, 2009).

Whenever they have leveraged their societal vantage point, young people, around the world and in Canada, have been recognized as existing and future leaders who can tackle substantial social, environmental, and economic issues of their time (Allen-Handy et al., 2020; Sengupta, 2019). Yet, despite the attention garnered by plenty of young people across times and cultures because of their displays of bold leadership, such efforts are still regarded by many as anomalies for the demographic (Lawford & Ramey, 2020). Society at large continues to hold negative views of young people and their capacity, and fails to deduce an accurate understanding of the group, even though young people have been and continue to be at the forefront of community-based problem-solving initiatives (Barber, 2007; Bonnie et al., 2015).

1.1.1 Youth in the Canadian Context

In recent years, the Canadian government has demonstrated a progressive understanding of the complexities of the youth experience and the importance of maximizing this demographic's human capital by engaging them in civic decision-making (Government of Canada, 2020). For example, the current Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, launched the Prime Minister's Youth Council for the first time in Canada's history in 2016 (Office of the Prime Minister, 2016). This and related initiatives categorize youth as persons between the ages of 16 to 24 years, inclusive, which again speaks to the arbitrary nature of age-based classifications. The Youth Council serves as a direct platform for recruited young Canadians to provide the government with advice on issues that they deem important to them (Government of Canada, 2021). In 2019, the government also developed Canada's Youth Policy – again, for the first time in Canadian history (Government of Canada, 2020). This policy outlines the "government's commitment and practice towards ensuring good living conditions and opportunities for [its] young population" (Denstad, 2009, p. 13). Furthermore, this policy is meant to improve national decision-making through collaboration by providing tangible opportunities for civic participation to young Canadians (Government of Canada, 2020). The Government of Canada's growing appreciation of and efforts with its young population through the Youth Policy is again reflected in The State of Youth Report, published in August 2021 (Canadian Heritage, 2021). The first report captures the experiences of only 1000 young Canadians, which restricts visibility of Canada's true diversity. But, as noted by the government, this report is the first of many to come and aims to serve as checkpoints which will envelop the experiences of Canadian youth and identify priority areas for this demographic at the time of reporting (Canadian Heritage, 2021b). The government states that the primary purpose of these findings is for youth to feel acknowledged and guided towards avenues of community involvement, specifically in their key areas of interest (Canadian Heritage, 2021).

Outside of direct civic participation with the government, Canada also has impressive charity/not-for-profit, volunteer, and youth service sectors, which provide young Canadians with vast opportunities for community involvement (Hall et al., 2005; Lachance et al., 2019). The term 'youth service' carries many synonyms such as 'civic service', 'national service', 'student service', 'youth action', 'youth community service', 'youth participation', etc.; these terms are

interchangeably used throughout the literature (Benard, 1990). This thesis mainly uses the term 'youth service' throughout. This thesis focuses on 'youth volunteerism', which is characterized as activities that, typically for an extended period of time, are carefully planned and implemented to "respond to the needs of communities, and as defined by those communities" (Bhattarai & Bhattarai, 2020; Penner, 2004). Another general denotation behind youth volunteerism and the various terms that are similar to youth service is "youth working in the school or community performing 'socially needed' tasks" (Mosko, 1988, p. 1, as cited in Benard, 1990, p. 7). More specifically, this thesis focuses on youth service programs, that provide opportunities for youth service, which have several individual attributes that collectively explain the phrase (Benard, 1990). For the purpose for clarity, a generally derived definition of the term 'youth service programs' is adopted in this thesis as follows. Youth service programs have "substantial [youth] engagement and contribution to the local, national or world community" (Sherraden, 2001, p. 2). Thus, such programs identify advantages for a community to advocate for youth-led, community-based volunteer and/or service projects and are a sub-section of broader youth volunteerism, thus both are discussed herein.

Excluding hospitals, universities, and colleges, the remaining industries within the charity/non-profit and volunteer sectors rely on government funding as their second main source of revenue (Hall et al., 2005). Due to this considerable financial contribution to support youth-serving organizations, it can be assumed that the government holds notable weight in guiding the direction of these organizations by outlining the categories and objectives of project types that may be eligible for funding. Yet, despite sizable investments from the Government of Canada within recent years and the growing recognition of youth service programs for their ability to engage young people, the sector is still experiencing a lack of support (Lachance et al., 2019). Program developers within Canadian organizations do not have adequate access to relevant research for evidence on effective design strategies and/or evaluation methods to inform their design choices, which cannot be made up for by providing solely fiscal contributions (Lachance et al., 2019). This gap may also crucial be for youth-focused scholars to identify and attempt to bridge, where possible, by sharing relevant expertise with organizational leaders.

Launched in 2018, the Canada Service Corps (CSC), an initiative developed by the federal government, has become a catalyst for community-based youth-service programs. The CSC seeks to boost youth volunteerism and community service in Canada through the provision of up to $150 million in funding until 2022 for programs that enable service opportunities for young Canadians (Connolly, 2018). The goal of the CSC is to "promote civic engagement among young people from 15 to 30 years old through access to meaningful volunteer service placements that help them gain essential life skills and experience" (Canada Service Corps, 2022). To meet its objectives, the CSC works with more than 100 partner organizations to deliver CSC-funded youth service programs to support the areas of reconciliation, building an inclusive Canada, preserving the environment, promoting civic and democratic engagement, strengthening youth resilience, and other possible, newly identified themes (Canada Service Corps, 2022). Among the CSC's partner organizations are Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF), Ocean Wise, and YMCA Canada. These three organizations are also partners of the University of Waterloo's Youth & Innovation Project, which supplies the pool of participants for this research.

1.1.2 Shift in Perceptions on Youth Volunteerism

The inconsistent societal dynamics, from the time of early adolescence to the time when young people are entering early adulthood, play a heavy role in their development. Young people may be subjected to instability because of these ever-changing structures and systems (Goodman et al., 1990). For example, during their adolescent years, social and economic conditions might be favourable for independent living (Bonnie et al., 2015). However, this can change by the time young adults are ready to move out, which may hinder their ability to do so or present several hardships throughout the process (Bonnie et al., 2015). In the past, avenues for community involvement for youth have focused on mitigating such potential disruptions to their development and preparing them to be successful adults; for example, by adequately equipping youth with healthy coping mechanisms (Lindsay, 2016; Ramey et al., 2018). Research in the past has supported this justification for encouraging youth community involvement by identifying volunteerism as a crucial feature of positive youth development, amounting to improved academic performance, successful integration into society, and reduced dependence on drugs and alcohol (Ramey et al., 2018). Thus, this impetus to encourage youth volunteerism influenced the

types of opportunities that were available to young people, which further entrenched the belief that youth volunteerism efforts are mainly mechanisms for promoting positive development.

Emerging theoretical findings on young people's potential for leadership now allow for a practical shift in the kind of opportunities for community involvement available to young people (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Liu et al., 2009). Youth volunteerism can now be seen as a mechanism to cope with a varying society by equipping young people with the ability to play a part in setting the direction of society towards a better future, one which they will inevitably inherit and lead (Warner et al., 2010). For this reason, maximizing new strategies and opportunities that mobilize youth through meaningful civic participation can be seen as a way to support and enrich youth empowerment (Allen-Handy et al., 2020; Ramey et al., 2018). Through associated recent literature, youth empowerment can now be understood as a cognitive state, achieved by positive engagement, that is beneficial to not only the individual but also to the organizations that employ them (Alfes et al., 2016).

The previously held narrative of youth community involvement has recently begun to further widen to include young peoples' unique capabilities, based on the reasoning that young people hold great power to exercise social change (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Spajic et al., 2019). This paradigm shift, supported by research, notes that when young people are meaningfully engaged, their nuanced experiences, fresh skills, and innovative ways of thinking can be employed to generate social change (Ho et al., 2015). Similarly, a recent report published by The Millennial Impact Project, a research-based initiative focused on studying millennials' interaction with social causes, proposes that young people can not only bring about social change but also control the way in which social change occurs (Feldmann et al., 2019). Current examples of youth-led movements resulting in social change, such as Fridays for Futures, etc., and support from contemporary research prompts the on-going discourse around youth service, youth impact, meaningful and lasting youth engagement, and youth-driven social change.

Due to emerging, unique opportunities, young people can participate in community-based service and civic decision-making projects. There are noted positive effects, in the existing literature, of such participation on both youth development and societal advancements (Allen-

Handy et al., 2020; Hussin & Mohd, 2012; Liu et al., 2009). Thus, it is imperative that young people have strategies available that continue to facilitate their successful participation. Ensuring that program participants achieve greatest positive outcomes through their efforts, including, but not limited to, skill- and consciousness-building and favourable community development becomes important in sustaining volunteerism throughout young peoples' life (Taylor & Pancer, 2007).

1.2 Problem Statement

As witnessed through past beliefs regarding who the planners of youth volunteerism are, young people, the beneficiaries, had been mostly disenfranchised in efforts that promote community development, lead policymaking, and shift organizational and social operations (Charles & Haines, 2019; Ho et al, 2015). Although now, there is a growing body of research that studies the prominent, forward-looking, empowerment- and innovation-based volunteer opportunities that seek to include young people in strengthening community development and decision-making processes (Aked, 2015; Brudney, 2016; Dougherty & Clarke, 2018b; Spajic et al., 2019; Wu, 2011). Yet, much of the content and outputs of these studies are being aimed at youth-serving organizations, policymakers, and allies. This practice continues to leave youth outside of the realm of contributors to and recipients of the development of research and resulting courses of actions. For example, Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ocean Wise, and YMCA Canada contracted the services of the Youth & Innovation Project to study their existing youth service programs and provide strategic insights and recommendations for the organizations to improve their services.

Bringing these relevant, youth-serving stakeholders into a youth-focused conversation is important as it allows space for the organizations to reflect on their positionality, authority, and ability of welcoming young people into their organizational and/or social arrangements. However, since most of the research largely overlooks advancing young peoples' knowledge and understanding, it is difficult to support the youth population of volunteers and to stay updated on whether such efforts are subject to improvement via suggestions by the youth demographic that is being engaged. Young people are currently limited in resources directly available to them for learning about their own volunteerism experience and potential for actualizing their capabilities

into action through effective decision-making, in comparison to youth-serving organizations, policymakers, and other allies. As young people venture through this unconventional social positioning of theirs as agents of social change, focusing on their learnings, perceptions, and knowledge becomes critical in solidifying their new status quo.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

To enhance youth-driven positive social change, it is necessary to further youth knowledge of their choices and its implications for different levels of impact (Aked, 2015; Alender, 2016; Boeck, 2009; Broom, 2016; Miller et al., 2002; Primavera, 1999; Snyder & Omoto, 2008; Wu, 2011). This may be possible by providing young people with effective decision-making models. A by-product of doing so is that this kind of knowledge presents youth-serving organizations and researchers with a chance to observe the service experience through the youth lens and create areas of improvement alongside youth. As such, this study delves into understanding young people's motivations for youth service, the ways in which their motivations are reflected in the design qualities of programs they choose, the perception of impact from their viewpoint, and, lastly, how the motivational and programmatic factors may combine to shape the cumulative experience of the youth participants of these service programs.

The following research questions are used for accomplishing the objectives noted above:

1. Why are young people in Canada participating in youth service programs?
2. What characteristics of the youth service programs are reflective of the young people's personal motivations to apply?
3. How is the affinity between reasons for service and chosen programs significant for the young participants' self-assessment of impact across different levels?
4. Are there any patterns between personal motivations and program qualities?

This thesis utilizes data obtained from studying the participants of the youth service programs offered by the Youth & Innovation Project's three partner organizations; namely, Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF), Ocean Wise, and YMCA Canada. As such, this research is well-positioned for collecting current and relevant impressions and knowledge from young

people about their motivations and perceived impact as well as assessing the youth service programs for its qualities and design components. By learning from qualitative surveys and face-to-face (virtual) interviews with the young participants, this research assesses the level of strategic decision-making young people employ to maximize their impact through volunteerism. By doing so, this study aims to fill the gaps in research that currently exists.

1.4 Contributions of Research

Youth constitute only 19.2% of Canada's total population (as per estimates provided for July 2018), yet the demographic possesses the highest volunteer rate of 52% in comparison to any of the other age groups in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2019; Hahmann et al., 2020). Despite the general classification of volunteerism as an engine for positive community change, there has been very little to no research which combines motivations, qualities, and impact for a thorough understanding of youth volunteer experiences, especially for dissemination to youth themselves. Research that has been conducted mostly investigates components such as mandatory school-based programs, social and family determinants, altruism, etc. as factors that may influence young peoples' inclination to volunteer, but these studies have been predominantly situated in the wider context of youth civic participation (Yates & Youniss, 1999). The literature on program factors that evoke and sustain a young person's motivations for volunteering is largely absent, especially within the current Canadian setting (Allen-Handy et al., 2020; Bernard, 1990; Ramey et al., 2018; Śmiechowski, 2019).

Additionally, while service programs in Canada are designed to cultivate long-lasting youth engagement, young peoples' understanding of their decisions, contributions and impact, and factors that promote continued voluntary involvement remains understudied (Government of Canada, 2020). Thus, further exploration is required to explicitly understand the motivations of youth service program volunteers, evaluate the program qualities through a youth-lens, and reveal pathways for young people to amplify their social impact. These research outcomes may potentially shape young participants' volunteerism trajectories in conjunction with recommendations for design of youth service programs in Canada and perhaps for similar programs elsewhere in the rest of the world with an active youth volunteer population (Benard, 1990; Brennan & Barnett, 2019; Grant et al., 2020; Ramey et al., 2018).

Relevant research within the field of social studies sheds light on the phenomena of 'status ambiguity', which outlines the disproportion of power and equality between generations that often results in a disadvantage for youth to endure a vast extent societal failure (Gauthier, 2003). Therefore, youth-centric research with the goal of stabilizing young peoples' capabilities and understanding their experiences to ultimately enhance their community involvement is inherently contributing to society and existing literature in a positive manner as such kind of research advocates for appropriate equity, inclusion, and support for the young population.

1.5 Thesis Outline

This thesis entails six chapters. The Introduction chapter is followed by Literature Review, Methodology, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion. Chapter 2 provides an extensive review of the existing literature relevant to the research topics and discusses the gaps in the literature, some that are fulfilled by this study and others that mandate further research. The methodology chapter outlines the adopted research design and data analyses processes in detail, with insight on the deductive coding framework, that guides part of this research, and on the inductive reasoning approach, that is used for the other parts of the study. Chapter 4 is the results chapter, which discusses the key findings of this research. This chapter is broken down into four categories, following the layout of the research questions, to elaborate on the results for each theme, i.e., volunteer motivations, program qualities, impact, and emerging patterns. The next chapter is the discussions chapter where specific insights on the results are shared as well as the significance of the findings. The final section is the conclusion, which summarizes the research objectives of this study, the success with which these were achieved, i.e., beneficial contributions to theoretical and practical gaps, and the limitations of this study, which may be explored to form the basis of further research on or around this topic.

2.0 Literature Review

This chapter presents existing literature that is related to the areas of focus of this thesis, outlines any gaps in the literature, and identifies potential avenues for further research. The chapter begins with a general discussion on youth, specifically Canadian youth, and youth development. Next, to build the context for the research questions, the chapter addresses youth volunteerism, by explaining it as an umbrella mechanism from which youth service emerges, and the benefits volunteerism holds for young people. This background on volunteerism leads to a discussion on motivations to volunteer and more precisely motivations to volunteer for a specific type of activity, such as youth service programs. The design of youth service programs broadly is considered as well. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the areas of impact created by youth service participants.

2.1 Youth

The general agreement in the literature is that classifications of generational groups are heavily influenced by various dynamic factors including neurological, psychological, social, etc. (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2019; Schroth, 2019). Due to these interdisciplinary components, deriving a blanket definition that covers the entirety of the term 'youth' is quite difficult. Instead, many researchers and prominent organizations apply limited, age-based definitions that categorize the term 'youth' for their varied purposes (Tyyskä, 2017). As such, based on a widely accepted and most used age range, youth are known to be persons between the ages of 15 – 30 years, inclusive (Chong et al., 2013; MacPhail et al., 2009; Yee et al., 2021). However, select researchers may still use different age ranges, outside of these limits, with the lowest being 8 years of age and the highest found in literature being 35 years of age to describe 'youth' (Bryce et al., 2021; Fakhouri et al., 2014; Gunnoe & Moore, 2002; Kontos et al., 2013; Mccarthy et al., 2003; Ruch et al., 2019). This practice reaffirms that the nature of age-based definitions is too arbitrary to be a solid descriptor. As such, it is justified for this thesis to designate the most used ages, 15 to 30 years, inclusive, to describe 'youth'. Furthermore, it is appropriate to use this age range as all the participants of this study fall within this range.

However, it is valuable to note that even within this broad age range, the literature and this thesis recognizes the different stages of life that young people exist in during these years.

Each stage is classified by leading themes that are distinct from the other stages, which results in nested age ranges within this overall range of 15 – 30 years (Munsey, 2006). To explain, those who are 15 – 17 years of age are late teenagers, those who are 18 – 25 years of age approximately are in a recently identified stage called emerging adulthood, whereas those who are 26 – 30 years of age are in early adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Primary characteristics that define 15 to 17 year old youth are cognitive development, emotional regulation through others, and heightened interest in own their physical and social states (Stewart, 2013). Work published by Arnett (2000), the psychologist who coined emerging adulthood, describes features of this stage as the transition between adolescence to early adulthood. More specifically, this stage represents intensified focus on the self in terms of identity, role in society, and exploratory opportunities which lends itself to the intermediary state of being that young people within these ages experience (Arnett, 2000; Munsey, 2006). The final stage in this age range, 26 to 30 years, is known as early adulthood as it represents a period where young people begin the process of adopting their role as 'adults' by working through their own expectations of life while fulfilling relevant societal demands (Bonnie et al., 2015; Gorvett, 2020). This understanding of the multiple youth groups within the broad youth demographic that this study discusses allows for well-rounded insights.

As Traynor (2004) states, young people throughout history have varied from their adult counterparts and continue today to be significant to society in their unique ways. The stage of youth development is affected by surrounding social processes, and not by a fixed life event or milestone. Thus, unique characteristics of this group become even more noteworthy and require a thorough qualitative understanding of youth experiences that go beyond the age-based label (Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2019). A key differentiator of youth from the rest of the population is their ongoing period of development, i.e., the period of "learning to be productive, learning to connect, and learning to navigate", which are influenced by the natural and cultural factors surrounding them (National Research Council, 1996, p. 11). This stretch of time is key for the development of generational variations between youth groups throughout history. These divergencies occur due to a combination of altering factors of influence including, but not limited to, economic, political, cultural, communal, familial, technological, and educational practices and structures (Schroth, 2019). The version of these factors of influence that is

prominent during young peoples' key developmental years shapes their experiences as youth and passage into emerging and early adulthood (Schroth, 2019). For example, women of the Silent Generation, i.e., those born in the late 1920s, were four times less likely to complete a bachelor's degree within the same years as women of the Millennial generation, i.e., those born in the early 1980s (Bialik & Fry, 2019). This discrepancy can be attributed to changes in the economic, political, social, etc. landscapes that occurred throughout the 50-year gap between these two generations.

Along with generational factors and unique sociocultural practices and policies varying throughout geographic regions, another key determinant of the diversity of youth experiences and perspectives, and thus classification, is race (Gajaria et al., 2021). Research suggests that racism can begin to impact a child's self-esteem, self-worth, and identity formation even when they are as little as four years old (Gajaria et al., 2021). These effects may emerge through the ways in which racialization is embedded into the very societal pillars which its young members are influenced by and dependent on (Gajaria et al., 2021). Thus, in studying youth and aiming to understand youth perspectives, it is critical that researchers pay special attention to the distinct perspectives of historically marginalized youth. This underrepresented group may perceive the advantages and disadvantages that societal structures and systems have to offer through the lens of race (Gajaria et al., 2021). The main takeaway to remember is that young people have different needs, from the rest of society and sometimes from each other, which causes important variations in what young people think is valuable and how they experience life (UNICEF Canada, 2019). Furthermore, it is important to note any application of a Western classification of 'youth' as universally or biologically consistent is often incorrect (Pomerantz, 2008). Exploratory studies on the lives of young people in non-Western societies reveal the drawbacks of only using a Western-centric perspective in the literature to describe 'youth'. The factors of influence, from which age-based classifications are derived, that may cause generational variations can also be responsible for geographical differences (Pomerantz, 2008).

Reflecting on the vastly different experiences young people throughout history have had and acknowledging the importance of the youth years in shaping adulthood makes it imperative to attempt to understand the present societal systems and their influence on the current young

population. These types of studies become critical in not only discovering how factors like increased cost of education and competition in the labour market affect young people today, but also how these factors guide circumstances of adults and their descendants in the future. Further, studies like these explore how societal systems are reciprocally adapted under the leadership or for the betterment of the young people involved (Kurth Schai, 1988). Such that, society at large continues to be enhanced through a cycle of reviewing the influence of the education system, the labour market, lifestyle cultures, etc. on young people and redeveloping these systems to function better for the youth (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Kurth Schai, 1988). For example, a thorough understanding of systemic disenfranchisement of young people, that outlines any civil exclusion they experience, shapes the development of new and existing policies to address this problem and boost the safety and inclusion of the community's young members (Leccardi & Ruspini, 2012). However, since youth are continuously being affected by consistently adapting societal factors of influence, it is important to note that the process of understanding youth and the experiences that shape them does not have a fixed endpoint or destination (MacDonald et al., 2019; Nakkula & Toshalis, 2007). Studying young people requires an on-going commitment to understand the fluctuations in their experiences, and as a result, their defining characteristics (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2007).

2.1.1 Youth Development

While youth are more recently beginning to receive credit for their potential for leadership through innovation and engagement, their image has not always been viewed in a positive limelight (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). The change in perspectives about young people can be partially traced back to the advertisement of the positive youth development framework. Through this framework, the narrative of managing young people as 'problems' was changed to developing young people and their capacity, i.e., looking at youth 'as resources' (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). While the field of positive youth development is generally accepted and appreciated, some critics of the theory mention that the term positive (or negative) should not be necessary as the work itself involves problem prevention, i.e., mitigating negative behaviours, as a way of developing positive attitudes and skills, and thus the adjectives are redundant (Causadias & Umaña-Taylor, 2018; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). For this reason, in this thesis, this framework is interchangeably referred to as positive youth development and youth

development. Regardless of the minor criticism, youth development came to be regarded as an outline that enables the advancement of certain skills, behaviours, and attitudes in youth to allow for a well-founded adult life (Park, 2004a). This transition allowed society to envision the creation of opportunities and activities that support youth development, through mitigating their problems, in a manner that also prepares them for the future (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). On-going and newer youth studies bring additional concerns to surface, sometimes within specific sub-sections of the youth populations. For example, a model developed by Coll et al. (1996) which studied child development in minority populations presented two important advancements. These were largely grounded in the diverse experiences of minority youth, who still fail to be accounted for in predominant Western models of youth development (Causadias & Umaña-Taylor, 2018; Coll et al., 1996). As such, the aforementioned note on integrating race and non-Western perspectives into youth studies continues to hold value in the establishment of youth-focused programs that are based on research.

Practical applications of the youth development framework, through implementation of programs and initiatives that seek to boost development, open another field of research which focuses on studying the efficacy of such programs so that they may improve as well (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). Multiple studies have shown that the young participants, of programs that have a goal of contributing to positive youth development, have expressed signs of well-being (Taylor et al., 2017). For example, positive youth development programs have been understood to contribute to life satisfaction in cases where low life satisfaction is attributed to psychological, social, and/or behavioural problems. Given that the role of youth development programs is to mitigate these problems, they often provide high life satisfaction through improving adaptation between life stages and regulating mental health (Park, 2004b). Lerner et al. (2003, p. 1) justifies the importance of supporting positive youth development through engagement.

> "Thriving youth become generative adults through the progressive enhancement of behaviors that are valued in their specific culture and that reflect the universal structural value of contributing to civil society. A young person may be said to be thriving, then, if he or she is involved across time in such healthy, positive relations with his or her community and on the path to [ideal adulthood]".

To yield the benefits, the positive youth development programs must accurately serve what is required by the youth to fill the gaps in their developmental progress (Catalano et al., 2019). As such, most programs might seek to enhance employment-related skills and targets, given that career is one of the highly regarded motivators for young people to volunteer (Alender, 2016).

Encouraging youth to be involved citizens allows the young generation to be successful adults that understand their responsibility and positively contribute to civil issues (Lerner et al., 2003). The following statement by Furlong & Cartmel (2007, p.3) presents a clear justification for the importance of studying youth.

> "In many respects, the study of young people's lives provides an ideal opportunity to examine the relevance of new social theories: if the social order has changed and if social structures have weakened, we would expect to find evidence of these changes among young people who are at the crossroads of the process of social reproduction"

Due to the vantage point that youth hold, as being affected by societal systems and in turn shaping those systems, young people, if properly utilized in civic decision-making, can bring about community change efforts and prove themselves as innovative leaders (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018; Mortensen et al., 2014). However, equipping young people with the resources they require to make sound decisions about their involvement and/or the local processes affecting them is still largely missing. Recent societal changes have brought about an abundance of youth-centric and youth-servicing policies and programs, thus the next stage of development of these policies and programs should entail providing youth with the knowledge and tools they need to successfully navigate their options. If provided the resources, young people could use this advantage of foresight, accompanied by their creative thinking and willingness to take risks, to communicate the functional challenges of society from their perspectives and ways to pro-actively improve (Mortensen et al., 2014). In fact, several studies have shown that enlisting youth to problem-solve through their "often-neglected" perspective can benefit the community and provide local groups and entities the means they require for "promoting youth capacities, meeting youths' needs, and fostering substantial community change" (Mortensen et al., 2014, p. 448).

2.1.2 Youth in Canada

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, out of Canada's total population, young people, categorized for statistical purposes as those aged 15 to 29 years old, represented 19.2% as of July 2018 (Statistics Canada, 2019). The report further highlights that this group of youth is becoming "highly diverse", as 27% of this group belonged to a visible minority group in 2018 versus only 13% roughly two decades ago, which again serves a nod to the importance of incorporating multi-cultural perspectives in youth-serving activities (Statistics Canada, 2019). One of the metrics to measure youth progress in Canada is The Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-Being, which assesses inequalities and trends that shape the young population (UNICEF Canada, 2019). The Index suggests well-being as an important measure for tracking the competence of societal systems through youth perspective. The report goes on to signify the findings from the World Health Organization's Healthy Behaviour in School-Aged Children survey (UNICEF Canada, 2019). The survey illuminates that only a "discouraging" 55% percent of young persons in Canada consider themselves to have a high life satisfaction, i.e., high well-being (UNICEF Canada, 2019, p. 16). The importance of youth, the significance of their dissatisfaction, and potential for leadership is arguably recognized by the Canadian government. To mark their understanding of this, the government released a federal youth policy through which they hope to enhance youth collaboration with legislation, thus providing the foundations for a successful young population (Government of Canada, 2020). The federal acknowledgement positions young people in Canada today in a beneficial state to successfully pursue their role in society and tackle civil issues, specifically to advance their own development via available opportunities, such as volunteerism.

2.2 Youth Volunteerism

Literature describes 'volunteering' as a planned effort, typically for an extended period, where people offer non-obligated assistance via an array of activities. In that sense, volunteering may be considered similar in ethos to the services and initiatives provided by the government for the purpose of community well-being (Day & Devlin, 1996; Penner, 2004). Typically, volunteer programs are designed by community groups, such as charities and non-profits, and allow people to devote their time, energy, and skills for organizational operations and/or projects. Research shows that volunteer movements are cornerstone components of civil society (Balashov, 2018).

Volunteering can be especially powerful for groups, such as youth, seniors, marginalized communities, low-income, and low education, that are dependent on civil structures and/or are disproportionately impacted by social systems (Yeung et al., 2017). Volunteerism can serve as a means for developing healthy habits, maintaining and improving societal roles, and exercising democratic rights, among other benefits (Balashov, 2018; Yeung et al., 2017). To understand the true significance of volunteerism in society, it can be helpful to reference a study conducted by Wu (2011) for Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies. The study found that, across 37 countries, 140 million people, on average, took part in volunteerism every year. For comparison, if one were to count these 140 million people as the population of any one country, it would make that country the 9th largest in the world. The number of hours worked by these many volunteers reflects 20.8 million full-time equivalent jobs (Wu, 2011).

In Canada, the sectors with the most volunteers and to which most hours are dedicated to are "social services, sports and recreation, education and research, and religion", which totals 64% of all volunteer hours completed (Crompton & Vézina, 2012, p. 39). Amongst these sectors, the most popular activities for most Canadian volunteers to take part in include developing events and raising funds; however, despite its popularity, only 9% of all volunteer hours are dedicated towards the latter activity (Volunteer Canada, 2013). Out of all of the generational groups in Canada, Statistics Canada (2020) reports that youth were the most inclined to volunteer prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report suggests that 67% of the young persons, aged 15 to 30 years old, are formally, through politics, or informally, through social activities, engaged as volunteers with community groups, organizations, or associations (Statistics Canada, 2020). This is compared to 65% of the total Canadian population that are involved in their communities in similar ways (Statistics Canada, 2020). Although there is no evidence of a specific age for when informal social and civic contributions are considered 'volunteering', age does play a role in youth volunteerism. For example, in the Canadian province of Ontario, all of the approved volunteer activities require the age of at least 14 or above (Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development, 2022).

Since 1999, Ontario, a province in Canada, has made the completion of community service mandatory for students looking to graduate from high school (Yang, 2017). The law, as

regulated by Ontario's Ministry of Education, states that all high school students (who began their education in 1999 or later) are required to complete 40 hours of community service, in an activity that is acknowledged as permissible by the Ministry, in order to graduate (Yang, 2017). The Program and Diploma Requirements since 1999 for Ontario High Schools (Grades 9 through 12) mandate that (Yang, 2017);

> "The service should benefit communities, but its primary purpose is to contribute to students' development. It may take place in a variety of settings, including businesses, not-for-profit organizations, public sector institutions (including hospitals) and informal settings. It must not be for pay or for academic credit and should be completed outside of normal instructional hours"

It is important to note that in 1999, when this policy came into effect, the prominent stimulus for youth volunteerism was to support a positive youth development framework, which is no longer the case but is understandably persistent in the policy even today (Causadias & Umaña-Taylor, 2018; Park, 2004a; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). Thus, for recent volunteer opportunities and youth service programs, this policy may be less relevant (Alfes et al., 2016, p. 1; Augsberger et al., 2018; Broom, 2016; Greene et al., 2013).

2.2.1 Benefits of Youth Volunteerism

A study by Crompton & Vézina (2012) based in Canada with the intention to explore the volunteerism landscape in 2010 found that volunteering in youth years leads to a greater affinity for volunteerism in adulthood. The benefits of youth volunteerism, as society understands them, have shifted throughout history. At first, reasons for offering volunteerism opportunities to young people were focused on helping them successfully progress into adulthood (Warner, Langlois, & Dumond, 2010). It came to be understood that if the youth are in substantial civic roles, it will impact their development positively while they positively impact others (Hussin & Mohd Arshad, 2012). Thus, shaping the well-being of youth through volunteer activities was seen as a key motivation for encouraging civic participation. With the on-going accumulation of various theories, concepts, ideas, programmes, examples, projects, and issues about youth volunteerism and youth empowerment, the potential of youth is becoming more prominent. Through leveraging this often-untapped potential, volunteering can facilitate the creation of outstanding current and future leaders (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018b; Liu et al., 2009; Ramey et

al., 2018; Spajic et al., 2019). By doing so, promoting volunteerism among youth can lead to crucial, positive changes within communities that become the roots of development of a nation (Liu et al., 2009). In this context, the focus has shifted from benefits of volunteerism to youth development to its benefits to community development through youth empowerment.

2.2.2 Youth Empowerment Through Volunteerism

In addition to the benefits of volunteerism, youth empowerment within volunteer programs hosts its own set of benefits (Greene et al., 2013). Through the literature, youth empowerment can be understood as a "positive psychological state that is linked with a range of beneficial individual and organizational outcomes" including but not limited to, pursuit of solutions for social issues with a political interest (Alfes et al., 2016, p. 1). There is often a clear distinction between politically based volunteer activities, for example volunteering to support a certain political campaign, and non-politically based volunteer activities, for example volunteers devoting their resources towards a homelessness asylum (Fernandes et al., 2021). For young people, giving importance to their own capacity of being able to positively influence decision-making contributes to their exploration of identity, building their human and social capital, and bridging young people to their schools and communities (Augsberger et al., 2018; Greene et al., 2013).

A survey commissioned by the Boys and Girls Club of Canada, United Nations Association in Canada, etc. in 2018 illustrated conflicting perspectives by most Canadians on youth empowerment. Most believed that young people do not have the ability to influence policy and decision-making and 70% believe that young people need more preparedness for civic leadership (Coletto, 2018). However, 62% acknowledge the importance of having young people contribute to society through volunteer activities, especially activities that also provide valuable social interactions and build competency in youth (Coletto, 2018). While understanding that young people have the capacity for positive social development is important, reviewing how many young people are involved in opportunities that truly allow them to tackle social issues becomes crucial in accompaniment. A study conducted by Vézina & Poulin (2019) categorized 56.9% of youth, out of the total 327 youth that were surveyed, as those who experience low levels of engagement at a relatively steady rate, with some decline. The remaining survey

respondents were categorized as follows: 25.1% as having moderate and sustained levels of engagement, 12.5% as having high engagement but with a sharp decline over time, and only 5.5% youth as highly engaged with a sustained level (Vézina & Poulin, 2019). On the contrary, a book published by Palgrave Macmillan reports that although young people value their democratic power, they are limited in exercising their rights through civic participation (Broom, 2016).

An often-over-looked aspect of promoting youth empowerment is developing equitable opportunities for marginalized young people to participate. The reality of inaccessibility reveals significant problems and challenges within society because it often disconnects this sub-group of youth from their environments and breeds distrust in the systems that they rely on (Iwasaki, 2016). Thus, aside from enhancing solutions to societal issues, civic empowerment can also serve as a catalyst for shifting societal dynamics and decreasing historic underrepresentation. To achieve this, marginalized youth and their troubles must be incorporated in the reimagining of the same social systems that perpetuate these problems for them (Iwasaki, 2016). Especially in talking about the impact of volunteerism, it is key to note that there may be unequitable access to these opportunities, which perpetuates discrimination of already marginalized community members. For example, a study by Ishizawa (2015) found that third generation Caucasians are much more likely to volunteer than first and second generation Hispanic young people. This may be attributable to generationally low levels of participation in civic matters and extracurriculars, due to historic discrimination patterns, which also contributes to lower socioeconomic statuses still present in many families of colour (Ishizawa, 2015).

2.3 Youth Motivations to Volunteer

Volunteerism and motivations to volunteer are discussed herein, and in the rest of this thesis, at length due to their relevance and their significance to this study. Prior to exploring motivations for volunteering, it is important to clarify that if there is a certain requirement to volunteer, it will influence the motivation for why young people chose to do so (Henderson et al., 2019). According to a study by Alender (2016), a survey of 271 volunteers in the United States reports that career is rated much higher as a motivator for younger volunteers than compared to the average response from all respondents of other ages. Further, the rating for

'career' was the highest for the younger of the two youth age groups, i.e., those aged 20 to 29 years as compared to those aged 30 to 39 years (Alender, 2016, p. 8). This alludes to the features of the emerging and early adulthood stages. Similar variable characteristics can be used to explain the results of another study which finds that the want to help the environment is the main reason for volunteering for environmental-based initiatives with the last reason on the list being advancement of career (Alender, 2016). These two surveys in accompaniment accurately portray the prominent elements of stages within the youth population. The young people deeply care about their communities while working to establish their own identities (Allen-Handy et al., 2020; Barber, 2007; Bonnie et al., 2015; Lawford & Ramey, 2020; Sengupta, 2019). Studies like these, that help researchers understand the motivation behind volunteerism, especially in young people in Western countries, can lead to practical developments of volunteering opportunities that may allow for a successful integration of youth into society through community-based contributions (Wang et al., 2017).

The following table (Table 1) captures some of the most common reasons for volunteering, as identified through an extensive review of the literature. In the table, there are primary motivations, which are inferred from literature as the main deciding factors in the choice to volunteer or not. There are also secondary motivations, which are interpreted through literature as antithetical motivations because they can act as limitations which prohibit the favourability of one or more primary motivation (Alender, 2016; Normah & Lukman, 2020; Smith et al., 2010). For example, if a volunteer seeks an opportunity to benefit their career trajectory but does not have clarity on types of career opportunities offered by the program, they may hesitate to volunteer. As such, a lack of the secondary motivation in itself can act as a supporting factor to be considered with the primary motivation in decision-making. There have been no studies that confirm a relationship that a certain secondary motivation only influences a certain primary motivation, however the correlations can be assumed through interpretation of both and applying common sense. These are still deemed the term secondary motivation in this thesis because the lack of several of these reasons can be significantly motivating or if the weight of the combination of primary motivations is greater than the weight of the combination of these inverse, secondary motivations, then volunteer may still choose to participate. Both motivations, primary and secondary, can apply towards the first volunteer experience or subsequent volunteer

experiences. There is currently little to no research for accurately identifying which motivations are predominant for the first volunteer experience and which are prominent for latter experiences. This is due to the complex nature of intersecting factors involved in volunteerism that are difficult to theorize. However, research does shed light on which categories of motivations are more significant for which type of experiences. The sections following this elaborate more on each type of experience and the kind(s) of motivations that they are associated with. However, overall, there is a gap in literature for scaling these motivations to the current context of young youth-service program participants in Canada. As such, this research will be helpful in providing this data for future use.

Table 1: Important Primary and Secondary Generalized Volunteer Motivations

Primary Motivations	**Secondary Motivations**	**Clarification**	**References**
Acquire information		An appetite to learn with a specific objective, i.e., to establish new thinking patterns, discover personal attributes, obtain greater knowledge	Burns et al., 2006; Burns et al., 2008; Cho et al., 2018; Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Synder, 1999; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Gerstein et al., 2004;
Advance personally and/or professionally		Achieve or refine skills and/or accumulate experiences for personal and/or professional development and explore potential opportunities through learning, networking, and trial-and-error	Alender, 2016; Anderson & Moore, 1978; Bang & Chelladurai, 2009; Burns et al., 2006; Burns et al., 2008; Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Cho et al., 2018; Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Synder, 1999; Dwyer et al., 2013; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Gerstein et al., 2004; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018
Engage in social connections		Build or maintain positive relationships	Alender, 2016; Anderson & Moore, 1978; Bang &

		with existing and/or new people	Chelladurai, 2009; Burns et al., 2006; Burns et al., 2008; Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Cho et al., 2018; Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Synder, 1999; Dwyer et al., 2013; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Gerstein et al., 2004; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2014
Fulfil a sense of duty		The desire to help others by aligning oneself with an issue or cause based on personal beliefs, ideals, passions, principles, and morals	Anderson & Moore, 1978; Bang & Chelladurai, 2009; Burns et al., 2006; Burns et al., 2008; Cho et al., 2018; Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Synder, 1999; Dwyer et al., 2013; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Gerstein et al., 2004;
Access a supportive environment		A mechanism to avoid or process negative situations and feelings through the perceived pleasantness of the experience	Anderson & Moore, 1978; Burns et al., 2006; Clary & Synder, 1999; Gerstein et al., 2004; Dwyer et al., 2013; Gage & Thapa, 2012;
	Lack of structural barriers	The program or external circumstances allow for favourable financial, temporary, and obligatory conditions (i.e., the program offers financial aid, transition period between education, etc.)	Evans & Saxton, 2005; Gerstein et al., 2004; Lee & Chang, 2007; Normah & Lukman, 2020; Smith et al., 2010
	Lack of design and accessibility features	The style of the volunteer opportunity is appealing based on	Normah & Lukman, 2020; Ryan et al.,

		how well it aligns with a volunteer's primary motivation or supports the removal barriers that may otherwise hinder participation (i.e., flexibility in attendance for those experiencing health problems)	2001; Papadakis, 2004; Widjaja, 2010
	Lack of interpersonal barriers (i.e., one's surrounding environment and support)	There is a network of support in one's surrounding environment that stimulates the desire to volunteer and act on a primary motivation (i.e., family and friends also volunteer)	Alender, 2016; Gronlund et al., 2011; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018; Holdsworth, 2010; Normah & Lukman, 2020;
	Lack of intrapersonal barriers (i.e., one's personal feelings)	An intrinsic call to action, which may stem from other experiences, changing perceptions, etc. (i.e., having a positive experience with a previous volunteer opportunity)	Ballard et al., 2019; Kim & Morgül, 2017; Normah & Lukman, 2020

2.3.1 First Volunteer Experience

To determine what can classify as the 'first' volunteer experience, it is important to understand the criteria for what constitutes a volunteer experience. As may be evident from the example of Ontario's categorization of volunteering, there are several components that define the act. Haski-Leventhal et al. (2018) and Cnaan et al. (1996) have identified the following four main components to volunteering as an activity: 1) one's own choice, 2) no (desire for) compensation, 3) humanitarian quality, and 4) facilitated through an organization or, at least, to a designated beneficiary. One's own will represents the extent to which the decision to volunteer was influenced by potential dividends vs not (Cnaan et al., 1996; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018).

For example, between two different people who have decided to shelve books at a library, if one person must complete the work due to court-mandated orders while the other is choosing to do so out of free will, then the latter is a volunteer whereas the former is not (Cnaan et al., 1996). No direct or indirect compensation, as well as no desire for any, is the most indicative feature of whether the nature of the action is voluntary (Cnaan et al., 1996; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018). However, Cnaan et al. (1996, p. 370) notes that "remuneration is acceptable only if it is less than the value of the work or service provided"; thus, receiving honoraria does not change the classification of the act as volunteering. Emphasizing the humanitarian quality maintains that the volunteer and their actions will be altruistic and contribute positively to society for the aid of others (Cnaan et al., 1996). Lastly, facilitation through an organization secures that volunteering is directed towards a specific beneficiary. If the activity is undertaken without an organization, then it can still classify as volunteering if it has a definite recipient (Cnaan et al., 1996; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018). Based on these elements Haski-Leventhal et al. (2018) visualizes volunteerism as a spectrum rather than a specific case. Wherein one end of the spectrum showcases an individual's freedom of choice in deciding to volunteer, with no compensation provided, for charitable purposes, through an organization or intended for specific beneficiaries. The opposite end of the spectrum depicts a requirement to volunteer, with considerable direct or indirect reward, for charitable or non-charitable purposes, undertaken outside of an organization with no clear beneficiaries indicated (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018). To be clear, the various activities along the spectrum can be still regarded as volunteerism, technically, but as Cnaan et al. (1996) explains, with examples, the ways in which society perceives and ranks these activities is varied. Thus, it is possible to identify the 'first' volunteer experience based on how a person ranks all their initial experiences, with the earliest experience that falls near the true definition of volunteerism being deemed as the first experience (Cnaan et al., 1996).

Another possible estimation for the 'first' volunteer experience is the age at which the eligibility for most programs begins, i.e., the legal age at which the activity can be considered volunteerism. Preliminary findings reveal that this age varies between organizations. However, most consider ages 13 or 14 as the first time when young people can pursue a volunteer opportunity by themselves, i.e., without a parent / guardian by evoking free will to participate (The People and Information Network, 2015). Sundeen (1990) found that married parents with

children tend to contribute less time to volunteer activities with their children than single parents with children who allocate more time in supporting their child's volunteer activities. While this provides more context on why some children volunteer more with parents than others, it does not change the age-based estimation for the 'first', unaccompanied volunteer experience. A key takeaway from the age-based categorization is that when volunteering with parents, at a younger age, the activities concentrate on socialization, development, and interests, rather than societal contributions (Grossman & Furano, 1999). Since these factors do not meet the definition of volunteerism, as outlined by Haski-Leventhal et al. (2018) and Cnaan et al. (1996), the 'first' time can be identified as when young people attain volunteerism autonomy and pursue activities within the spectrum of volunteering, as discussed above. Further, it must be made clear that an obligation to volunteer does not have to negatively impact the potential of future volunteerism if the experience was satisfactory for the volunteer (Henney et al., 2017). However, Henderson et al (2019) argue that school-mandated volunteerism has no influence on sustaining volunteerism.

Even if early-life experiences may not classify as 'first' volunteer experiences, they are still important to acknowledge. A study by Crompton & Vézina (2012) identifies that people who obtained such life experiences at a younger age were more likely to continue volunteering as adults, than compared to those who did not partake in volunteer activities as a young person. To demonstrate the significance of this point, the following list exemplifies activities with percentages of likelihood to participate in the specific activity for people with prior experiences versus for people without prior early life experiences in volunteering, respectively.

- Student government participation (64% vs 44%)
- One or both parents were active volunteers (58% vs 38%)
- Religious endeavors (57% vs 43%)
- Volunteering (56% vs 38%)
- A mentor who was an active volunteer (54% vs 39%)
- Door-to-door canvassing for charitable causes (55% vs 41%)
- Participating in youth groups (54% vs 40%)
- Compete in team sports (53% vs 40%)

This list showcases clear distinction between the amount of people in each group who continue their volunteer activities as adults. It should be noted that the study by Crompton & Vézina

(2012) is not inclusive of all types of possible early life experiences that can lead to volunteerism in the future nor is it universally applicable. Having access to these experiences at a young age is not the only path of inception to future volunteerism. Throughout their key developmental period, young people may be embedded in many systems and structures in their environment that promote or weaken their inclination to volunteer (Pearce & Kristjansson, 2019). Based on data from an online survey obtained from a sample of undergraduate students, Pearce & Kristjansson (2019) mapped how diverse social interactions have different effects of on the intensity of formal and informal volunteer activities. The findings reveal strong, positive correlations between a meaningful social environment and fortitude for formal and informal volunteering (Pearce & Kristjansson, 2019).

While the motive to volunteer may arise from externalities, the act of volunteerism reflects the inclination, principles, beliefs, and other personal characteristics of the volunteer (Butt et al., 2017; Schnell & Hoof, 2012; Snyder & Omoto, 2008). Thus, meaningfulness, in the context of volunteerism, can be understood as valuation of one's personal life and social environment as "coherent, significant, directed, and belonging" (Schnell & Hoof, 2012, p.38). As such, when volunteers find meaning in their social environment, they can display that passion through volunteerism, continuing the unintended cycle of perceiving their immediate external environment as meaningful. However, this explanation of meaningfulness is rather simplistic. Much of the literature on the subject describes it as multi-dimensional, stemming from elements of harmony with others through service, and personal development through intentional growth of one's capabilities (Bailey et al., 2019; Colby et al., 2001). The multi-dimensionality brings about conflicts between the self vs others and being vs doing, making it difficult to conceptualize the topic (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012). However, research on the topic is still plentiful, especially in exploring the intersections between meaningful work and meaningful volunteerism. This kind of study centers the organization's social and environmental responsibilities as the influence and as the consequence (Bailey et al., 2019).

2.3.2 Continuation of Volunteerism and Volunteerism Longevity

Given that non-profit organizations extensively rely on volunteers, volunteer retention is critical for progression of operations and cost maintenance (Einolf, 2018; Hall et al., 2005). Yet,

maintaining long-term volunteers is one of the biggest difficulties the non-profit sector encounters (Nencini et al., 2016). A 'long-term volunteer' is formally defined as a someone who has been a regular volunteer, i.e., at least for one hour on at least a monthly basis for at least one organization for a period of at least a year (Aydinli et al., 2016; Elias et al., 2016). In the same regard, a short-term volunteer is someone who has been with one organization regularly for a period of only at least six months (Elias et al., 2016). Organizations can unintentionally and unknowingly influence volunteerism longevity as well. Volunteers' perceptions of the organization, i.e., impression of the organization, the service it provides, and its ability to meet its goals, can affect the volunteer's decision to continue volunteering for that organization (Nencini et al., 2016). The larger impact of this experience is not clearly understood through literature, but it can be inferred as such because previous experiences are often significant motivators for subsequent volunteering (Nencini et al., 2016). Volunteers who have developed satisfactory relationships through their activities at an organization, and thus find volunteering more enjoyable, are also more likely to continue with that organization (Marta & Pozzi, 2008).

Aside from incentives arising from volunteer retention for organizations, such as financial savings, consistent/better service, worker competency, and team building, long-term volunteering is also encouraged for its contributions to optimizing the overall health of the volunteer (Brighton and Hove Community Works, 2022; Jiang et al., 2021). Thus, organizations' influence on the intent to volunteer is an important factor but dispositional factors must also be considered. For instance, Marta & Pozzi (2008) confirm role identity as the best precursor of the intent to continue volunteering. From the perspective of a non-profit organization, volunteers choose a specific activity with a specific organization based on a unique combination of "personal experiences, interests, social bonds, and collected information" (Nencini et al., 2016, p. 620). However, if organizational variables align with the volunteer expectations, based on the elements influencing the decision to join, then the commitment may be maintained (Nencini et al., 2016; Stukas et al., 2016). Since volunteers and their expectations and motivations will adjust to their life stage and circumstances, complexities arise for the organization's ability to influence the intent to volunteer because a single method will not produce the same effect for different volunteers (Oie, 2017; Stukas et al., 2016). However, a contrasting viewpoint offered by Lawton et al. (2021) provides the argument that sustaining volunteerism may not be worthwhile as it

results in repeatedly less time for the volunteer to engage in other activities, a reduction in disposable income due to costs associated with volunteer opportunities (i.e., travel), and possible prolongation of mental health disadvantages brought forward by volunteer experiences, such as stress and fatigue (i.e., symptoms linked to burnout).

Like the study conducted by Crompton & Vézina (2012) which identified early-life experiences that contribute to future involvement in volunteerism, Barber et al.'s (2013) work discovered that individuals who took part in a mix of voluntary and required types of various community-service activities earlier in their life were more likely to continue that commitment to volunteering in their later years. Again, it is important to acknowledge that this causality is not solitarily bound. Other interactions with the social environment also influence long-term volunteerism, such as religious or spiritual connection, sense of belonging, accomplishments, and familial role models with a significant passion for volunteering (Barber et al., 2013; Pearce & Kristjansson, 2019). A successful match between the right organization, self-actualization, and compassion for others also holds the potential to influence the choice to continue to volunteer, especially for young people (Marta & Pozzi, 2008). The combination of motivations studied by Barber et al. (2013) and Pearce & Kristjansson (2019) and those studied by Marta & Pozzi (2008) results in youth who can be extrinsically motivated and intrinsically motivated volunteers. Studies find that the initial decision is primarily extrinsic and self-oriented and the decision to continue is heavily intrinsic and other-oriented (Stukas et al., 2016). Another perspective on motivation to sustain volunteerism, by Luping (2011, p.176), discusses three primary, broad motivations young people feel, as being "the traditional motivation (focused on responsibility), the modern motivation (focused on development), and the postmodern motivation (focused on pleasure)."

The prediction of whether the first volunteer experience is significant for sustaining the activity is difficult to make. For this reason, it is important to note the subjectivity of this discussion. While some volunteers may decide to discontinue, others may renew their intentions and attitudes, alluding to the fickleness of any model that attempts to predict this choice (Marta & Pozzi, 2008). Thus, the question arises whether a new experience, or the potential for such, has the strength to override a past, negative experience to extend longevity. On the other hand,

Stukas et al., (1999) discovered that the positive relationship between previous volunteer experiences and subsequent decisions to continue can be diminished if there is another, compelling factor of influence. For example, a young woman with satisfactory past experiences who is looking to continue volunteering may decide not to if she becomes pregnant, i.e., changing her availability and as a result her commitment. Marta & Pozzi (2008) remark that while the volunteer process models often claim relationships between the intensity of motivation and the length of volunteerism, successive research illustrates no correlation between these two aspects. While this provides an update on research findings, it is not entirely clear whether the experience with one organization is carried beyond the volunteer's time there.

2.3.3 Improving Retention Through Qualities of Volunteer Programs

Literature indicates that organizational variables, such as program design, can remain as a reason for retention regardless of the personal reasons, among other factors, that brought the young volunteer to the organization in the first place (Faletehan et al., 2020; Nencini et al., 2016). Yet, the discourse on quality in the realm of volunteer program design and assessment is largely absent. While an argument can be made that meaningful volunteerism experiences and qualities of volunteer programs are the same, there is little context present in the literature to back this up. Individuals (aka the volunteers) and organizations collectively participate in activities that are designed to fulfil a social responsibility (Omoto & Snyder, 2002). Meaningfulness is associated with the being and doing onto the self and others, in respect to driving social change (Schnell & Hoof, 2012). Whereas quality deals with the design of the program that allows for benefits of the activity to be received by the organization, the community the program serves, and the volunteers themselves (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012; Restler & Glant, 2020). To quantify the element of quality derived from a volunteer program, Lawton et al. (2021) conducted a study where they quantified well-being into dollar amounts. The findings indicate that, for a person from an average household in the UK, roughly £911 is the economic equivalent to the well-being benefits yielded from volunteerism annually. Thus, if this volunteer was to receive an annual decrease in income worth £911, their well-being quotient would not be affected. Whereas, if another person, from an average UK household, who does not volunteer faced the same income reduction, there would be a reduction in their well-being quotient as well by the same amount (Lawton et al., 2021).

Volunteers have untapped potential when they begin an activity, which can be boosted to its maximum capability through appropriate program design (Restler & Glant, 2020). Simpson et al. (2012) suggest leveraging the talents of experienced volunteers as a mechanism to simultaneously advance volunteer capabilities and strengthen program quality. This can be achieved by providing the volunteers with opportunities for leadership and options for growth, and enhancing the design through assessments, in that order. An increasingly relevant aspect to be mindful of is volunteer burnout. This phenomenon is characterized as severe mental, physical, or emotional stress due to the intensity and the load of the work, leading to exhaustion and emotional distancing (Moreno-Jiménez & Villodres, 2010). Avoiding burnout is a critical component of ensuring the program design is of good quality because the way volunteers feel about their service affects their quality of life, which may lead to a decision to stop volunteering (Moreno-Jiménez & Villodres, 2010). Mitigation of burnout allows cost savings for the organization and enhances the positive experience for the volunteer, thus improving quality (Lawton et al., 2021).

2.4 Youth-Based Programs as a Channel for Community Impact

As previously mentioned, volunteerism has the potential for youth engagement if programs are designed appropriately for this purpose. Thus, it becomes important to highlight the types of program designs and outline which ones, if any in specific, allow and/or hinder youth engagement. From community sports clubs, national organizations, and sports events to university-facilitated, abroad programs to employee work-life programs, young people have many types of programs available to them at various stages throughout their progression from childhood to adhulthood (Cao et al., 2021; Cunha et al., 2019; Wicker, 2017). Other examples include, volunteer tourism programs, international volunteer programs for students, faith-based adult volunteer programs and biodiversity nature conservation volunteer programs (Caissie & Halpenny, 2003; Dillette et al., 2017; Durham & Kim, 2019; Woodmansey et al., 2017). Most of these volunteer programs are led by only a handful of different types of organizations. Non-profit organizations are the leaders in volunteer programs likely because they simply have a greater need for volunteers due to their community-based mandate, acquisition of government funding, and low profit status (Einolf, 2018; Hall et al., 2005). However, it should be noted that it is

unlikely for any of these programs to be designed in the exact same way as the other(s). For example, as described by Arnold (2018), a universal guide cannot be used to create similar programs under comparable organization types. Thus, different organizers will have different programs based on different models they seek to follow. In addition to this, there is little literary agreement in identifying a through-line between the various elements that make up these different volunteer programs, which creates more confusion in building themes for program design (Millette & Gagné, 2008). However, there are some distinctions that can be made based on the contributions of the volunteer required by the program. According to Brudney (2016), service programs allow volunteers to help other people and/or tackle issues directly, whereas policy programs are rooted in pushing forward systemic change with helping other people and/or issues as a by-product. Furthermore, Morrow-Howell et al. (2009) express that modifying volunteer programs to best fit the individuals' needs can add to the benefits it yields. However, modifications that arise due to changes in systematic policies and organizational protocols are noted to add more strength to the programs than individualization does (Morrow-Howell et al., 2009).

2.4.1 Youth Service Programs

Out of the most common volunteer programs discussed above, service programs seem to hold the most capacity for enabling youth engagement through their design (Brudney, 2016). Youth-focused service, which is synonymous with "youth action, youth participation, youth community service, national service, student service, civic service, youth service", etc., is described as an activity through which young people participate in societally relevant tasks (Benard, 1990, p.7). Another definition by Sherraden (2001) explains youth service as the undertaking of a commitment to serving the local, national, or international community, through an organized initiative, without receiving any remuneration.

Youth service programs are crucial for tying in the advantages of volunteerism and youth engagement. These programs allow for the completion of important work by enlisting young people; for example, through building bridges between school programs and community service (Taylor et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2005). In turn, the programs utilize the innovative skills of these young people and simultaneously make them conscious of their social responsibilities and

prepare them as civic leaders (Benard, 1990). The deep level of commitment improves psychological, intellectual, and social health, thus supporting positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2003; Park, 2004a; Taylor et al., 2017). As is the case with the nomenclature for the term 'youth service', the categorization of these programs holds even more variability. To name a few, youth service programs can be offered by non-profits organizations, schools, government entities, etc. Furthermore, they can hold any combination of the following criteria (Benard, 1990):

- Be focused by geographic regions, i.e., local, national, international, etc.;
- Facilitated through school or be out-of-school;
- Required (through school or work, for example) or not;
- Provide financial compensation or not; and
- Focused on human/societal development or skills development.

However, Benard (1990) mentions that the programs' goals are more important in determining its classification as youth service and the configuration of factors are less important. To elaborate, youth service programs' goals must address community needs, use a needs-based approach for project development, enhance civic participation, be merged with the work of community-based groups, and incorporate diversity to account for the variables that affect volunteerism, engagement, and activity / service delivery (Benard, 1990).

2.4.2 Service Programs Design

A fundamental part of the design of any type of youth service program is the eligibility criteria that allow youth to volunteer. For example, for research-based projects in the United States, a parental agreement on behalf of the child(ren) is a requirement for participation, which may pose as a barrier for some young people (Sims & Nolen, 2021). For other general volunteer projects, there are little to no 'standard' requirements for participation. The hours, work, and level of commitment are mostly dictated by the organization administering the program (Brudney, 2016; Cuskelly & Hayes, 2021). However, some generic requirements, that may be common at least in Canada, include some sort of formal training arranged by the organization and the provision of a Vulnerable Sector Police Check (aka Criminal Background Check) before signing-on the volunteer (Ministry of the Solicitor General, 2021). Even still, there are some popular and consistent youth service program designs that are led by different organizers, such as

school-based service-learning activities (for high school students), mandatory community service opportunities (for post-secondary students), community-wide youth-focused service programs (local, national, or international), and career-based service programs for unemployed youth (Israel & Nogueira-Sanca, 2011). However, research that explains and evaluates the design characteristics of these programs is unavailable.

The following are other general key components of youth service program design that can lead to meaningful and lasting youth engagement, through encouraging youth development and empowerment, which serve as a resource for enabling youth-led impact.

- Skill-building (Halsall & Forneris, 2018; Maki & Snyder, 2017; Meltzer & Saunders, 2020)
- Youth empowerment (Franks, 2012; Martínez et al., 2017; To et al., 2021)
- Opportunities for meaningful community contributions (Armstrong & Manion, 2015; Chen et al., 2019; Gazley et al., 2012; Iwasaki, 2016)
- Autonomy to shape young leaders (Buzinde et al., 2019; Maki & Snyder, 2017)
- Exercising critical thinking and problem-solving (Buzinde et al., 2019; Gazley et al., 2012; Seymour, 2017)
- Mentorship support for youth (Keller et al., 2019; Lindsay, 2016; Meltzer & Saunders, 2020)

Despite the lack of strict requirements for participation, there are some best-practice guidelines that organizations should keep in mind when designing youth service programs so that there is no hinderance to participation (van Reeuwijk, 2018). In keeping with the goals of youth service programs, the design should reflect equity and fairness. The young people, through the program, should be provided equal access (comparable to the level of adults) to opportunities that seek to enhance their leadership skills, capacity, and knowledge. The program should be made to feel inclusive and welcoming and be representative for both the youth and adult (if any) participants and program providers' staff (van Reeuwijk, 2018).

Based on the review of the literature, there is no real consensus on the design of youth service programs (Lakin & Mahoney, 2006). In fact, many youth service programs vary from one another, like volunteer programs in general, and often do not have a common measurement

tool to evaluate the programs efficacy (Lakin & Mahoney, 2006). In the paper by Lakin & Mahoney (2006), the researchers developed an evaluation tool for service programs that were founded from the principles of the positive youth development framework and were offered via school programs. They found that the programs were developed, reviewed, and refined through a 4-step process. First, the guiding principle of the programs, i.e., the positive youth development framework in this case, was identified. Second, the program was developed and implemented, with pre-participation and post-participation surveys collected from the program participants. Third, attempts were made to measure the effects of the program via a comparative study of a control group and the program participant group. Lastly, the comparative study was completed to discuss the outcomes of the program as compared to its design (Lakin & Mahoney, 2006). Following this 4-step process for program design, program facilitators will need to commit to an on-going remodelling of their program to remain as close to their chosen theoretical aim as possible, i.e., in the case of the school programs in the Lakin & Mahoney (2006) study, which aimed to enhance positive youth development. Criticism of this continual redesign of service programs says all earlier renditions of the program will either fail or be less successful in meeting their goals, as established at the time of program creation, and thus, be limited in their scope to advance youth civic participation and contributions to society (Kirlin, 2002). Through this concept of reviewing and redeveloping, a variety of programs end up vastly differently than their initial version, but stay grounded in their framework, which is most commonly rooted in youth development (Leffert et al., 1996).

As this thesis is written in the time of a global pandemic, it is imperative to recognize the limitations that are present for in-person participation for the volunteer programs under discussion. Although the concept of online voluntary engagement was gaining popularity before the pandemic due to spikes in technological advancements, the pandemic unveiled new areas of research for this type of volunteering (Vromen, 2008). The advantages of youth service programs were reviewed in an analysis to determine how a similar set of advantages can be achieved through virtual engagement by adapting the delivery of youth-service programs (Ettekal & Agans, 2020). Researchers found that virtual program participation can still be as beneficial for youth as in-person activities (Ettekal & Agans, 2020). Specifically, virtual mentoring, although understudied, proves to be just as effective for young people in providing support for academic,

professional, and leadership improvements, skill-building and overcoming more barriers to access, such as location based or economic-status based (Agyemang & Haggerty, 2020). Preliminary findings of studies of virtual-based programs find that the mode of delivery will be more prominent after the pandemic, especially considering accessibility improvements for young people with disabilities and other marginalized sub-groups (Agyemang & Haggerty, 2020).

Table 2, as follows, outlines conceptual considerations that shape the development of youth service programs. This content can be thought of as ingredients for success in developing and executing youth service programs. It is important to note, again, that while these guidelines exist for support through research, there are no definitive process which mandate using or evaluating these strategies. The ultimate design choice rests with the program administrator (Benard, 1990; Lakin & Mahoney, 2006). Further, these generalized program qualities fail to abide by a Canada-specific context, which is the focal area of this thesis. However, it is reasonable to infer that the program design characteristics from studies based in the United States are not drastically different in implementation in Canada. Thus, the use of these guiding components for Canadian-based programs is justifiable. An added benefit of the non-country specific literature review is that it yields studies of youth service program design from developing countries which can offer unique perspectives and often marginalized insights for practice.

Table 2: Common Youth Service Program Design Characteristics

Program Design Qualities	Explanation	References
Careful implementation	During the administration of the program, the provider ensures there are no organizational disruptions to the youth experiences (i.e., strategically matching projects and young people, offering continual mentorship support with no change in mentor, etc.)	Benard, 1990; Brudney, 2016; Cuskelly & Hayes, 2021; Eberly, 1988; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Restler & Grant, 2020

Community-based	The beneficiaries of the youth service programs should be very clearly identified and communicated to the young participants, and include communities from anywhere on the scale of local to international	Benard, 1990; Diem, 2009; Eberly, 1988; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Shields, 2009;
Diversity in youth participants	The pool of participants should be diverse based on factors such as age, gender, sexual orientation, race, socioeconomic status, etc., which ensures that the design of the program is accessible	Benard, 1990; Diem, 2009; Eberly, 1988; Nesbit & Brudney, 2013; Quentin et al., 2015; Smith & Soule, 2016
Developmentally appropriate through lifespan	The program should accurately reflect the abilities and ambitions of the youngest members of the youth demographic as well as for the oldest members of the youth demographic	Benard, 1990; Eberly, 1988; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989;
High degree of youth involvement	To adequately yield benefits, young people should be heavily involved in the implementation and other crucial decision-making processes as well as participate in projects that are meaningful to them	Benard, 1990; Brudney, 2016; Cuskelly & Hayes, 2021; Diem, 2009; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Shields, 2009; Walker et al., 2005
Multi-strategic/multifaceted with a range of opportunities	Programs should be founded on different intended benefits for young people with a variety of different activities through which this can be achieved	Benard, 1990; Eberly, 1988; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Walker et al., 2005
Mutually favourable	Young people should have opportunities to produce external benefits (i.e., to the community) and yield internal benefits (i.e., to the self)	Benard, 1990; Brudney, 2016; Cuskelly & Hayes, 2021; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Restler & Grant, 2020

Relevant context	Design and purpose of the program should resonate with prominent issues facing young people with adequate opportunities to influence such issues, i.e., the program and/or project should not be random and surface level	Benard, 1990; Brudney, 2016; Eberly, 1988; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Quentin et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2005
Rewarding	The participants should be made to feel satisfied with the contributions they make and benefits they generated through their efforts	Benard, 1990; Brudney, 2016; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002; Quentin et al., 2015; Restler & Grant, 2020; Shields, 2009; Walker et al., 2005
Time for reflection and discussion	Participants should have clear and ample opportunities to reflect upon their experiences through a variety of mediums (i.e., writing, discussing with others, etc.)	Benard, 1990; Eberly, 1988; Heffernan & Tarlov, 1989; Shields, 2009;

2.4.3 Impressionable Programs Qualities

The discussion of volunteer program design, in relation to qualities, leads to a potential examination of program components as well, specifically the more impressionable aspects. Literature describes these factors of the volunteer program as those that influence the volunteer's developmental process and/or motivation to begin and/or keep volunteering (Dinas, 2010; Mejis et al., 2007). Especially for youth volunteerism, impressionability is a key element because young people naturally are undergoing a developmental stage of where their interests are constantly being internally questioned, intensified, and eventually crystallized to form well-tested preferences (Dinas, 2010). Currently, the literature lacks a full understanding of impressionable program traits but does offer limited insight into unsuited characteristics, as follows (Eisner et al., 2009).

- Ill-suited matchmaking of volunteer skills with tasks performed,
- Failure to acknowledge a volunteer's efforts,
- No valuation of volunteers and the benefits they bring,
- Inadequate training and human resources management, and

- Lack of strong mentorship provided to volunteers.

Extrapolation of studies that identify tangible benefits of volunteerism that positively affect the volunteers can be used to understand components of the programs that serve these benefits, thus fulfilling a criterion of impressionability. For example, given that one benefit of volunteering is gaining practical experience, programs that boost volunteers' labour market chances may be deemed as more impressionable than those that do not (Lawton et al., 2021; Lindsay, 2016). In a similar respect, programs that provide the ability to increase social prowess may also be perceived positively because social development is another key benefit of volunteerism (Lindsay, 2016). More research is required to identify whether such program characteristics truly exist and function to provide these benefits, which would unleash a new area of study for broader publication regarding volunteer program designs and their efficacy. As mentioned before, program providers may already be reviewing their program designs, but these studies are often restricted to the organization itself and are not scalable given the specific nature of these on-going studies within certain organizations for certain programs.

There is already some promising, preliminary research present that provides tangible steps to achieving a desired outcome through adjusting program components. The classification presented by Butt et al. (2017) divided volunteer motivations into four broad categories of affiliation, beliefs, career development, and egoistic. This can be very useful for non-profit organizations, as leaders of volunteer programs, in deciding the allocation of their often-limited resources to maximize volunteer involvement (Stukas et al., 1999). For example, for a volunteer motivated by affiliation, a task that allows an opportunity to connect with others can prove to be most effective (Alfes et al., 2016; Stukas et al., 1999). Outside of the Butt et al. (2017) classification, adapting the program by understanding volunteers' barriers can be another alternative. For example, young people with disabilities can suffer from inaccessible opportunities and develop negative attitudes as a result (Lindsay, 2016). Thus, improving accessibility and inclusivity can enhance the participant's perception of the program. Other considerations found in literature as it relates to program design and using design as a mechanism to sustain volunteerism include, but may not be limited to, program duration, job characteristics, and volunteer titles and program language (Eisner et al., 2009; Lawton et al.,

2021; Studer, 2016). Outside of changing program design, policy and public education of benefits associated with volunteerism can also play a role in creating a positive perception of volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018; Lawton et al., 2021). Lastly, the lack of research on this subtopic suggests that the field can learn strategies from Human Resources Management (HRM) studies that already apply various tactics within the role and organization to effectively manage employees and improve retention (Studer, 2016).

2.5 Impacts of Youth Service

A certain way to understand the benefits that volunteerism, youth engagement, and youth service programs yield is through the impact that these actions produce. There are many definitions to be found in the literature for the term 'impact', such as being the consequence of volunteerism onto the volunteer itself, having tangible resolution(s) for complex social issues that generate advantages for the public, creating valuable improvements to a social cause, and providing social capital (Boeck, 2009; Schwartz, 2017; Wilson & Musick, 1999). For extended clarification on the last definition, Boeck (2009, p.90) explains 'social capital' to be the product of positive "social interactions, networks and network opportunities which take place in specific environments, [such as] the volunteer experience". Whereas Stebbins (2009, p.158) describes 'social capital' as a "community-wide set of connections among individual participants manifested in the formation of groups, trust, social networks, acts of reciprocity, and the like", which enable shared interests towards a common goal. Analysis of these definitions together shows that there are at least four levels of impact; to the self, to the organization, to the broader society (aka the public), and to the issue. Youth-service programs seem to contain all four of these levels of impact because they provide benefits to the young participants, to the organizations, to the intended community, and, and for the issue (Alender, 2016; Broom, 2016; Government of Canada, 2020; Greene et al., 2013; Ho et al., 2015; Lerner et al., 2003; Park, 2004b; Taylor et al., 2017). To better understand the concept of impact and its significance for this thesis, this section highlights perceptions about youth-led impact and discusses the four above-mentioned levels within which impact is experienced; To better understand the concept of impact and its significance for this thesis, this section highlights perceptions about youth-led impact and discusses the four above-mentioned levels within which impact is experienced.

The following sections also comment on social change. Social change is understood as a gradual by-product of the ever-shifting nature of society, which gets reflected in different cultural and societal systems and has lingering ramifications for societal progression (Dunfey, 2019). Social change has been historically documented as emerging from prominent people's movements such as "civil rights, women's rights, and LGBTQ rights" (Dunfey, 2019). Movements like these have the capacity to reform institutions, societal norms and interactions, and power dynamics (Dunfey, 2019).

2.5.1 Perceptions of Youth-Led Impact

As mentioned in this thesis before, young people endure several challenges as they navigate their development and role in society. Youth are vulnerable to pre-existing discriminatory grounds such as age, racism, homophobia, sexism, and typically must confront these problems in silo from one another (Ginwright & James, 2002). Even though traditional youth development programs materialized from theories of supporting youth to be 'resources', such programs have rarely focused on these types of challenges that young people experience (Ginwright & James, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). Additionally, such programs often minimize how these challenges impede healthy youth development and meaningful youth engagement (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018b; Ginwright & James, 2002; Ramey et al., 2018; Spajic et al., 2019; Warner, Langlois, & Dumond, 2010).

So, even though young people continue to grapple with these serious pre-existing and detrimental social conditions and bear the burden of a lack of democratic powers and support from youth-serving programs, they are resilient in addressing the injustices they face (Dunfey, 2019; Ginwright & James, 2002). This is represented in recent real-world circumstances where, in recognition of their own conditions of inequality, young activists, across Canada, have mobilized to demand a voice in public policy and hope to transform institutions to be fairly accountable to the communities the youth represent (Kroft, 2021). However, this fact that young people have the capacity to resurface from experiencing "intense economic isolation, lack of political power, and subjection to pervasive social stigma" is less valued, even among the youth population (Ginwright & James, 2002, p.27). When young people recognize their ability to create impact, they actualize their potential to "critically analyze the world [around them]

through political and popular education methods" (Ginwright & James, 2002, p. 38). This understanding of power dynamics in decision-making leads to the development of youth, a significant demographic in society, grassroots movements that vocalize institutional- and/or policy-level changes to build a more just and equitable society (Ginwright & James, 2002). Today, more young people have the unconventional ability to understand international and local dimensions of power, inequality, and injustice, which historically have been complex concepts to present to youth.

2.5.2 Recognizing Youth Capacity for Impact

In today's times, there are several youth-led movements seeking to change the tides of present harmful cultural and societal norms (Conner, 2012). For example, the Fridays for Futures movement which demands attention to the climate crisis and need for action (Künhe, 2019). However, perhaps more noteworthy is the understanding that young people are embracing the role of leaders by setting the direction of the action they take and the approaches they use (Conner, 2012). The impressive nature of youth movements unfolds further as research finds that youth movements are progressively globalized, with several young people in one part of the world directly connected to other young people on the other side of the world (Costanza-Chock, 2012). Social media and broadcast media are particularly significant in tying young people together to share strategies and inspiration across the globe (Costanza-Chock, 2012). Due to these platforms, especially during a global pandemic, youth movements can sometimes feel non-existent or smaller than they are since youth mostly use channels that feel familiar to their demographic to drive change and innovate community engagement strategies and tactics (Costanza-Chock, 2012). This reduced visibility can be detrimental to the power of young people especially if people do not associate social change, led by young people, as emerging from youth movements (Coletto, 2018). Thus, many young people begin to seek opportunities that are built into society as a mechanism for influencing community development and gaining visibility for their work and voices (To et al., 2021; Vannier et al., 2021).

This new wave of social change, led by youth and supported by allies, is resulting in shifting paradigms around the capacity that youth have and the support and opportunities that they should be provided with to best use their abilities (Dougherty & Clarke, 2018b; Ginwright

& James, 2002). Specifically for youth-development-focused programming, young people's role in social movements has been receiving more attention (Ginwright & James, 2002). The ways in which young people can successfully lead social change and development has been the most recent input to the design of youth volunteerism programs and policies (Dunfey, 2019). This outcome is strengthened by youth and adult allies working together with a common vision of social justice, requiring that adults take their own relearning seriously and that youth shift how they conceptualize their own development (Dunfey, 2019). Reaching healthy adulthood is not a goal of social-change-based youth development (Ginwright & James, 2002). Rather, it is to build a more equitable society through the engagement of critically conscious citizens through the following principles and strategies (Ginwright & James, 2002; Syed & McLean, 2015).

2.5.3 Levels of Impact Through Volunteerism

Taking a closer look, the discernable impacts derived from youth service programs include, but are not limited to, stronger social interactions and networks, safer and inclusive communities, heightened civic participation, transmission of products and services for the public's benefit, and advancement of the education system (Wu, 2011). Regarding personal impact, volunteers have expressed enhancements in knowledge of self, academic abilities, social awareness, personal growth, self-esteem, and self-competence (Primavera, 1999). Additional benefits believed to have been related to volunteerism, on the volunteer, include "greater longevity, better functional ability, lower rates of depression, less incidence of heart disease…greater life-satisfaction & quality of life…personal sense of purpose and accomplishment and enhancing social networks to stress and reduce disease risk" (Miller, 2011, p.90).

Outside of benefits to an individual, volunteerism is often seen as key for community development as well (Aked, 2015). In this case, community can mean society at large that still falls within the jurisdiction of the program's work, i.e., local, national, international. Volunteering often provides the community with extended benefits through social solutions to pressing issues and improvements in quality of life through sustainable development (Brennan & Barnett, 2009; Dougherty & Clarke, 2018b). For society, volunteerism also can build bridges between separately operating entities in the community, such as local groups, organizations,

governments, enterprises, etc., thus strengthening their collective progress (Reaching Sky Foundation, 2021). As a tool for driving social change, pursuits through volunteer work can redirect the status quo by challenging the present norms, bringing improvements to a faulty social system, and strategizing long-lasting solutions to complex issues (Snyder & Omoto, 2008).

For organizations, volunteers provide time and energy without financial compensation, which relieves the organization of financial burden and allows them to prioritize the goals of the program to be prioritized (Miller et al., 2002). For consolidation, the table below presents the four levels of impact that will also be the basis of examination for one research question of this study. It is important to note that impacts experienced on each level are not limited to specifically positive, there are and can be cases with negative impacts as well (Guttentag, 2009).

Table 3: Four Levels of Impact Through Youth Service

Level of impact	Explanation	References
To the self	This level of impact is personal to the volunteer. It can include, but is not limited to, improved communications skills, stronger professional network, reduced eco-anxiety. It is derived from how the volunteer perceives their experience has added to, if at all, their personal development and well-being.	Clarke & Dougherty, 2010; Eley & Kirk, 2009; Lawton et al., 2021; Primavera, 1999; Smith et al., 2018; Miller, 2011; Newman et al., 1985; Wilson & Musick, 1999; Worker et al., 2020; Vannier et al., 2021
To the organization	For this level, the primary beneficiary is the organization(s) that hosts and/or supports the youth service participants and/or program activities. Examples of benefits yielded by this group include, but are not limited to, improved organizational productivity, increased resources, etc.	Clarke & Dougherty, 2010; Edwards et al., 2001; Hotchkiss et al., 2009; Hotchkiss et al., 2014; Isham et al., 2006; Miller et al., 2002; Schech et al., 2020

To the community	Like the individual level of impact, this level is also personal because the program and/or participants define the community that is served, i.e., neighbourhood, municipality, country, international, etc. Impact could look like cleaner beaches, increased education/awareness, etc.	Clarke & Dougherty, 2010; Kawashima-Ginsberg & Levine, 2015; Eckstein, 2001; Gilster, 2012; Guttentag, 2009; Larsen, 2016; Mohan & Bennett, 2019; Stukas et al., 2016; Vannier et al., 2021
To the issue	Rather than being directed at an entity, like the other three levels of impact, this level focuses on a subject area, such as social issues, environmental issues, etc. Based on which subject area the youth service and/or program activities are aimed at, the impacts can be measured accordingly. For example, a beach clean-up project is aimed at mitigating environmental issues. So, the impacts to the environmental issue could include cleaner water, improved wildlife habitat, etc.	Benenson, 2015; Clarke & Dougherty, 2010; Nesbit & Brudney, 2010; Synder & Omoto, 2008; Wu, 2011

2.6 Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a well-rounded overview of the existing literature on the topics of; (1) youth volunteerism, more specifically motivations to volunteer; (2) youth service programs, as a channel for youth engagement; and, (3) generating growing levels of impact, as an outcome of service program participation. The overview of these topics in this chapter also includes details of young people in Canada, as this is the location of this thesis, past and present perceptions of and stimulants for volunteerism and service programs, and areas of gaps and/or potential for future research.

Since the decision to volunteer is very personalized, it becomes difficult to conceptualize motivations that encompass a general population of volunteers. Yet, the literature has identified

several motivations for engaging with volunteer and/or service programs (Burns et al., 2006; Normah & Lukman, 2020). However, there is little to no research that discusses youth engagement with volunteer and/or service programs in current times in a Canadian context. Thus, this thesis provides specialized contributions to the existing overarching youth-focused literature in social studies. Furthermore, the thesis discusses how the youth motivations reflect themselves in the design of service programs. This is a new area of research because so far there has not been emphasis on building bridges between youth decision-making processes and program design qualities. For this reason, there has not been much mention of the relationship between motivation and program design within this chapter because the literature around this topic within an appropriately relevant context for this thesis is largely missing. Lastly, the thesis examines self-reported impacts of service program participation across four levels of the issue, the organization, the community, and the subject area (Clarke & Dougherty, 2010). Together, these topics address the research question of this study and provide structured, well-balanced additions to the existing literature.

3.0 Methodology

This chapter details the methodology adopted for this study. The following sections provide an overview of the design of this research, methods used for data selection, data collection, and data analyses, statements on reliability and validity, as well as general limitations associated with the research methodology, and the social positioning of the researcher.

To reiterate, the findings of this research aimed to support young people in understanding the overlap between their reason(s) for volunteering, decision to participate in certain community programs over others, and the impact of their efforts because of their overall choices. Further, the results observed whether, and if so, then how, the reasons to volunteer and design quality factors combine to shape the cumulative experience of the youth service participants. The research was designed as a qualitative study to obtain the relevant data that fulfils these objectives. As such, these objectives were accomplished by analyzing the participation of youth through self-reporting and self-reflection of their experiences in existing youth service programs in Canada. Furthermore, attempts to discern relationships between the two variables contributed to the bigger picture of youth volunteerism, engagement, and impact in the literature and in practice. Thus, the results may be useful in providing recommendations for further areas of research to enhance understanding of these aspects in the literature and/or for strategies to enrich these aspects of the young peoples' volunteer experiences through programmatic modifications. An even deeper level of context was provided by evaluating each emerging pattern through a comparison between those for whom this was not their first volunteer experience and those for whom this was their first volunteer experience, i.e., returning volunteers versus first-time volunteers, respectively.

To identify participants' motivations for volunteering, responses to a survey instrument and structured interviews were synchronously coded deductively, via insights obtained from the literature, and inductively (Burns et al., 2006; Normah & Lukman, 2020). It should be noted that surveys from YMCA participants were not used because individual participant data could not be collected from the survey responses but this did not have a large effect on the findings. Similarly, through research on program descriptions via publicly available resources shared by host partner organizations, the program design characteristics were deductively coded, using the literature

review findings, into qualities (Benard, 1990). Next, to abductively pair program design with motivations to volunteer, the categorized program qualities were observed through the youth participants' accounts of the program components as experienced through their recent involvement. Finally, participants' understanding and self-evaluation of impact across the four levels was examined mainly through responses to the structured interviews, with data from the responses to the survey being drawn from for clarification or further insight, as needed. Compatibility between the abductively reasoned motivations to volunteer and program qualities, and any emerging patterns among these variables, was assessed also (Benard, 1990; Burns et al., 2006; Clarke & Dougherty, 2010; Normah & Lukman, 2020).

3.1 Research Framework and Site Selection

This study utilized the data that was obtained under the terms of the multi-year Youth & Innovation Project, which had already received the required ethics clearance from the University of Waterloo (See Appendix A) (Youth & Innovation Project, 2022). The methodology of and the availability of resources through the Youth & Innovation Project formed the basis of this research including the design, data selection processes and data collection methods. As such, the structure of the Youth and Innovation Project was adopted to fulfil the objectives of this thesis. Partnerships with host and local organizations, selection of programs and assessment needs, criteria for selection of youth participants, and the survey instrument and structured face-to-face (virtual) interview tools were also acquired from the Youth & Innovation Project accordingly to supplement this thesis.

The overarching goal of the Youth & Innovation Project is "to ensure young people … are meaningfully engaged in finding and implementing solutions to social, environmental, and economic problems" (Clarke et al., 2018b, p. 2). The purpose of this research was derived from a similar goal. This study hopes to deepen the understanding of youth service program participants, i.e., volunteers who are being recruited for meaningful engagement, and of youth-serving organizations, researchers, and policymakers about the young people's experiences. This was achieved via observation of why the participants made their choices to volunteer, how this decision influenced the kinds of programs they gravitated towards and the level of impact they could successfully achieve through their participation. A further distinction emerged from

comparison between experiences of first-time volunteers and experiences of returning volunteers. These insights are significant for youth service program funders, policymakers, i.e., Canada Service Corps, and providers, especially the partners of the Youth & Innovation Project – namely Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ocean Wise, and YMCA Canada. The knowledge derived from this thesis, rooted in examination of the programs' design features and self-observation of impact across four levels, revealed tangible avenues for improvements to the programs from a youth perspective to enrich successive volunteer engagements. Thus, youth-serving organizations and policymakers could apply recommendations generated from this research to strengthen existing and potential programs and opportunities by incorporating youth perspectives into their strategic choices.

3.1.1 Youth & Innovation Project's Partner Organizations

To ensure practical real-world significance of this research, it was necessary to examine existing programs for identification and assessment of participant motivations, design components, and impact. Thus, the adoption of the Youth & Innovation Project's methodology was justified for this research. The Youth & Innovation Project is affiliated with three national Canadian organizations who had previously contracted the Project's services to assess their existing service programs over multiple years. Since this study fell under the larger Project, it also had the consent and support from these partner organizations to execute the research plan using the data obtained for the Project, as per the conditions of the partnership between the Youth & Innovation Project and its national partners. These three national organizations are the host organizations, who independently deliver their own set(s) of service programs through unique partnerships with select local organizations.

The Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) runs two programs, that were observed as part of the Youth and Innovation Project research, and thus this research. The two programs from CWF were the *Canadian Conservation Corps* program and the *WILD Outside* program. These programs recruit youth between the ages of 18 – 30 years (inclusive) and 15 – 18 years (inclusive), respectively. Both programs aim to educate young people about environmental conservation and inspire action through administration of local projects that meaningfully impact their communities. Young people who take part in *WILD Outside* are encouraged to complete

120 hours during their commitment, over a period of one calendar year. Examples of activities designed to engage youth for conservation in *WILD Outside* include, but are not limited to, canoeing and kayaking, nature walks, tree planting, and shoreline cleanups. *Canadian Conservation Corps* on the other hand is a three-staged program, beginning with a wilderness adventure that seeks to instill a passion for the natural environment and wildlife, then an immersive field learning experience that adds to the participant's knowledge and dedication towards conservation, and finally, outreach and service where participants develop their own conservation projects. CWF has more than 40 partners for the second stage of the program, with whom participants can complete their field experience, including, but not limited to, Kawartha Land Trust, BC Wildlife Foundation, and Assiniboine Park Zoo. Both programs are designed to be no- or low-cost to prevent further barriers to participation, which was noted as significant in this thesis for inclusion of diverse youth (Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2022a; Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2022b).

Ocean Wise's Ocean Bridges provides three programs, *Direct Action*, *Learning Journeys*, and *YouthToSea,* with a common goal between all to supplement learning about and action for ocean conservation. The programs engage youth aged 18 – 30 years (inclusive), except YouthToSea, which focuses on youth aged 15 – 18 years (inclusive), to work with local organizations to first discover and then educate their local communities about the negative cycle of harm to the ocean, and through the ocean to its neighbouring environments. The *Direct Action* program is a three month long immersive learning experience, where participants are placed with partner organizations who have on-going field based and/or virtual conservation projects for service-learning. The *Learning Journeys* program, now called Ocean Bridge Classic, is a six-month long program that brings together 140 young people as 'Ocean Ambassadors'. The young people are engaged through distant learning opportunities, two learning journeys (one remote and one urban) and an action project that solves an ocean or water problem in their home communities. Finally, the *YouthToSea* program is specifically designed for young people residing in Lower Mainland in British Columbia, Canada to participate in learning journeys, skill building, and action projects for a period of five months (Ocean Wise, 2022).

Finally, the YMCA Canada works with young people aged 15 – 30 years (inclusive) through their *YMCA Community Action Network (YCAN)* program. This program encourages a two-way positive impact by allowing young people to identify and develop projects in service of specific issues in their communities while also getting a chance to craft their own skills (YMCA of Northern BC, 2021). It is up to each Member Association of the Canadian YMCA Federation to administer the *YCAN* program in their community, even though the program is nationally based. Each project can be tailored to meet the needs of the community within which that Member Association operates (YMCA Canada, 2021). Examples of previous projects include, but are not limited to, growing community gardens and hosting a drive for persons without homes (YMCA of Northeastern Ontario, 2019)

These six programs, from the three different partners, were ideal focus areas for this research study for reasons other than their affiliation with the Youth and Innovation Project. Firstly, the programs are nation-wide and highly regarded for their youth-based work, thus as a youth-serving and youth-centered study, this thesis would have had to work with organizations of a similar stature for adequate data collection, regardless of whether there was a partnership with the Youth and Innovation Project or not. The programs attract a large enough sample size since their participants are from across Canada, which boosted diversity within the research sample. Diversity is also high in the programs because they are established to be no- or low-barrier to participate, which allows more accessibility to marginalized young people who face systemic barriers to participation. Also, all programs are similar in function yet different enough in design that it allowed for a comprehensive understanding of different program elements. For example, while all focus on community-based youth-led projects, the theme and facilitation of these vary across programs, i.e., Ocean Wise focuses on ocean conservation while YMCA focuses on issues personal to the young peoples' home communities. All programs are funded by the Canada Service Corps and work with youth and local youth-serving organizations, which qualified them for multiple levels of impact generated through their efforts: on the self (participant), on the organization, on the community, and on the social and/or environmental issue. Given that all six programs focus on meaningful community-based engagement of young people to generate positive impact, they were appropriate for examination for this study.

3.2 Data Selection

The CWF, Ocean Wise, and YMCA programs under study provided clear pathways for meeting the main objective for this thesis by evaluating participant choice(s), observing their experiences, and understanding the perceived impact. Table 4 outlines the program metrics reflected in the methodology, i.e., the total number of interviewees from each program.

Table 4: Outline of Youth Service Program Metrics

Host Organization	Program	Number of Participants
Canadian Wildlife Federation	Canadian Conservation Corps	5
	Wild Outside	5
Ocean Wise	Direct Action	3
	Learning Journey	7
	YouthToSea	1
YMCA Canada	YCAN	5
	TOTAL	**26**

All of the participants of all six youth service programs were provided with a voluntary-to-complete post-program survey by the host organizations (See Appendix B). This survey presented the participants with a choice to opt-in for the structured interviews, conducted by the Youth and Innovation Project team, that served as an essential mode of data collection for this research. The pool of participants to interview was generated from those who responded to the survey, indicated interest in the interview, and provided consent for the research team to contact them. Overall, there were approximately 245 participants in the Canadian Conservation Corps program, 621 in the Wild Outside program, 20 in Direct Action, 153 in Learning Journey, 77 in YouthToSea and 149 in YCAN, who were sent the post-program survey during the data collection period of this study. Thus, the data collection sample size, i.e., the pool of participants who were sent the survey and might have participated in the interviews, was 1,265 in total. Out of these 1,265 total participants, only a subset completed the survey, and of those, only a subset opted into a follow-up interview. All those who opted in were invited to an interview, of which only a portion followed through to schedule and complete the interview. This thesis only includes data collected from 26 participants across programs, following the breakdown provided

in Table 4. The following criteria was drafted by the Youth and Innovation Project research team for interviewee selection that reduced bias and maintained diversity in data collection and analysis.

- Personal characteristics, such as age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, race, and highest completed level of education. The research project ensured that there was no discrimination based on these protected human rights grounds.
- Location, across Canada, from urban and rural communities were selected in proportions that as closely as possible mimicked their true ratio in the program.
- Type of project, through judging the goals of the various independent projects, the different projects were put into categorizes and selected equally.
- Results achieved or desired. This criterion ensured that projects that were unsuccessful in achieving their desired results were reflected in the feedback as much as projects that were successful in achieving their desired results, in alignment with their overall ratios in the programs.

The application of this selection criteria, adopted from the Youth and Innovation Project, protected this study from errors based on possible grounds for discrimination, in reliability and validity, and researcher bias. However, categories such as sexual orientation, ability, type of project, and results achieved or desired of the selection criteria, as listed above, were not applicable. This is because the composition of the final pool of interviewees that were selected did not represent these categories and/or were unidentifiable, i.e., sexual orientation of interviewees was not asked for. The following table (Table 5) details how the participants that were selected for this thesis matched the selection criteria, under the categories that were demonstrated in the final interviewee distribution.

Table 5: Adherence of Research Sample to Study Selection Criteria

Program		Participant Selection Criteria				
		Personal characteristic (age)	Personal characteristic (gender)	Personal characteristic (race)	Personal characteristic (highest academic level)	Location (urban vs rural vs virtual)
CWF CCC	Participant 1	30	Male	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Rural
	Participant 2	24	Male	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Urban
	Participant 3	26	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Urban
	Participant 4	25	Male	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
	Participant 5	21	Male	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	High school	Urban
CWF WO	Participant 1	19	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	High school	Urban
	Participant 2	18	Male	Member of a historically underrepresented group	-	Urban
	Participant 3	17	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	-	Urban
	Participant 4	17	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	-	Rural
	Participant 5	19	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	High school	Urban

OW DA	Participant 1	24	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
	Participant 2	24	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Urban
	Participant 3	25	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Rural
OW LJ	Participant 1	25	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
	Participant 2	22	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Urban
	Participant 3	27	Male	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
	Participant 4	24	Male	Member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
	Participant 5	26	Male	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – graduate degree	Rural
	Participant 6	25	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
	Participant 7	30	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Virtual
OW YTS	Participant 1	19	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	High school	Urban
YMCA YCAN	Participant 1	-	Female	Not a member of a historically underrepresented group	-	Virtual
	Participant 2	-	Female	Not a member of a historically	-	Virtual

				underrepresented group		
	Participant 3	-	Male	Member of a historically underrepresented group	-	Virtual
	Participant 4	-	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	University – undergraduate degree	Urban
	Participant 5	-	Female	Member of a historically underrepresented group	-	Virtual

All the participants fit into the age range of 15-to-30-years-old, which was adopted for this study to define 'youth', with the youngest being 17 years old and the oldest participant being 30 years of age. Information about age was missing for the five YMCA YCAN participants, but this did not largely influence the study or results as they were understood to still fall in this range during the virtual interviews, especially because this range is also the limits set by YMCA for participation in the program. From a perspective of gender diversity, nine out of the 26 participants were male, meaning that there were almost double the number of women than there were men, with a total of 17 females. The thesis had a roughly equal split between racialized and non-racialized participants, with 12 participants belonging to a historically underrepresented group and 14 who were not members of a historically underrepresented group. Information about the highest level of education that the participants had completed was missing for four YMCA YCAN participants and three Canadian Wildlife Federation Wild Outside participants. The latter three participants were assumed to be in high school but not yet finished, however this assumption was still not included. The exclusion of this information did not have large effects on the study or results. For the other participants, only four participants were high school only graduates, only one person had a graduate degree, and the rest of the participants were undergraduate degree holders. Lastly, for location, virtual was added as a criterion because this research was conducted during a global pandemic. 11 out of 26 participants had projects that occurred virtually, or their contribution was only limited to a virtual form. The number of projects that occurred virtually was not surprising due to the on-going restrictions across Canada because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The same number of participants had projects that occurred

in urban spaces in their identified communities, and only four participants had rurally focused projects.

3.3 Data Collection

A link to the online survey, attached in Appendix B, was emailed to each youth participant by the host organizations after the program was completed. The survey was hosted on the Qualtrics Survey Software. It included an introductory paragraph, informing the respondents of its objectives, followed by a section for consent. Parent / guardian consent was required for young participants under the age of 16 and residing in Quebec and participants under the age of 18 and residing anywhere else in Canada. The survey also collected demographic information and disclosure for Indigenous participants such that responses from historically and systemically underrepresented groups could be carefully and appropriately handled. The survey consisted of the following five parts, each with its own set of questions: project details; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); impact; intergenerational collaboration; and, reflection. The first part of the survey, project details, corresponded with the focuses of this thesis, i.e., motivations and personal interests, project objectives, and level of participation. The second part asked about the project's relationship to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are developed by the United Nations as a framework for determining equitable societal progress. The third part described the participants understanding of impact. The succeeding sections, parts four and five, considered intergenerational collaboration and provided space for participants to reflect on their service experience, respectively. For this research, parts one to three were most extensively used for data, but part five was also considered, where appropriate, i.e., if it included a thorough description that encapsulated the participants' experience relative to the objectives of this thesis.

At the end of the survey, young people were invited to participate in an optional, structured face-to-face (virtual) interview by indicating their interest via response to a survey question and providing their contact information for the Youth & Innovation Project staff to get in touch. For those who agreed to be interviewed, the Youth & Innovation Program Coordinator sent an 'invitation to participate' email (see Appendix C), which included a request to schedule a day and time for the interview through the Acuity Online Appointment Scheduling Software. The scheduling software allowed the participants to select an interview time based on their

availability from several proposed options that indicated the availability of the interviewer. Next, the software automatically sent a confirmation email to the participant with the details of the Zoom meeting upon successful selection of a day and time. An information letter (see Appendix D) was also attached to the 'invitation to participate' email to inform the respondents of their role in achieving the goals of the Youth & Innovation Project's study. If a participant did not respond to the initial invitation email sent by the Program Coordinator, a follow-up email was sent one week later. If there was still no response from the participant or they withdrew their consent for an interview, another interested participant was selected using the selection criteria and contacted using the same steps. Participants must have completed a consent form (or have had a parent / guardian complete on their behalf) as part of the scheduling process on Acuityscheduling.com (see Appendix E). A reminder email and text message (see Appendix F) was sent 24 hours prior to the interview and another reminder email was sent 2 hours before the interview to the participants automatically via Acuity. The frequency and channel of communication for the reminders was re-defined to ensure a better success rate after there were several participants who were significantly late or failed to attend their scheduled interview despite RSVP'ing 'yes'.

The structured face-to-face (virtual) interviews collected comments, reflections, and feedback from 26 youth participants. The interviews were conducted over Zoom and were set to be an hour long to provide enough time for valuable insights. However, the interviews only lasted between 20 minutes to a maximum of 45 minutes. Some interviews lasted until the hour mark because the participants were late to join, however this is insignificant because the actual interview times were still between 20 to 45 minutes. The Zoom meeting was automatically recorded to the cloud and transcribed through Zoom's built-in transcription software. The transcript was downloaded to the interviewer's computer and immediately transferred to a secure OneDrive folder at the end of each interview, with all local files permanently deleted. The interview guide (see Appendix G) contains the process for recruiting interviewees, disclaimers, steps undertaken, interview script, and the list of questions that were asked during the interviews. At the beginning of the interview, if the interviewee was younger than 16 years of age and lived in Quebec or younger than 18 years of age and lived anywhere else in Canada, the interviewer received the participant's verbal assent to be interviewed, in accompaniment to the written consent provided by the participant's parent or legal guardian prior to the interview. The

structured interview consisted of open-ended questions, which provided a well-rounded overview of the participant's justification to participate, from which motivations were derived, knowledge of their experience, and their perceived impact to the local organization(s), community, and issue. Once the interview was completed, the Youth & Innovation Program Coordinator sent the participants a 'thank you' email (see Appendix H). The interview recordings were used by the interviewer to better format the Zoom transcript as a new file in the protected OneDrive folder, such that the exact words of the participants were noted without errors, while the original unedited copy of the transcript remained safely stored for record-keeping.

Data was also collected, through the host organization's online websites, to obtain more information about the six programs under study in this thesis. This strategy for data collection was purposefully chosen, instead of obtaining detailed data or classified information from the host organizations directly, through their partnership with the Youth and Innovation Project. Since the goal of this thesis was to gain an understanding of the youth perspective as it relates to participation in service programs, exploring the description, components, design, etc. of the service programs through the same tools, i.e., online websites, that young people would have used supplements that goal. In this way, the researcher was able to examine the programs without additional bias from the host organizations, Youth and Innovation Project team, etc. because similar steps, as to what the young people would have taken, were followed by the researcher to arrive at an understanding of the program's design. The researcher's positionality as a previous youth service program participant was favourable for this strategy as it allowed for a closer resemblance between the pathways the interviewed service program participants would have adopted in their exploration of the organization, program, etc. and the pathways that the researcher undertook.

3.4 Data Analysis

The multi-approach data analysis processes of this study aligned with some of the principles of grounded theory, that seek to develop a general, abstract theory about participants' strategic selection process and youth service programs design, grounded in the views of the participants themselves (Creswell, 2014). Deductive reasoning was used for the first research

question to validate the literature that identifies, within a general population, the main reasons for volunteering and was used for parts of the second and fourth research question. Inductive reasoning allowed this research study to further expand on the literature, such as by adding more reasons for service program participation and specialize the generic data to a specific subset, i.e., young participants of Canadian youth service programs. The results of the deductive and inductive analyses were then put through an abductive reasoning approach to deduce patterns, i.e., to identify how the deductively, and where included the inductively, arrived at motivations to volunteer relate to the deductively established program design components. This design strategy of nested, hybrid approaches successfully answered the four research questions, met the overall objective of this thesis, and abided by the requirements of the Youth and Innovation Project. Each successive process also built on the previous data analysis. For example, participants' responses to the interview were first studied to obtain their reasons for volunteering, and then the examination of common program design qualities was conducted to observe whether the qualities reflect the previously identified reasons for volunteering. Throughout, the nested hybrid reasoning approaches were maintained by first applying a mixed approach to understand reasons for volunteering, and then using one approach for program design components, and then bringing together the results of both for further examination.

Since this study focused on data-driven code generation, a coding protocol was applied such that each response from each interviewee was examined and initially coded line-by-line based on an early understanding of emerging themes. The derived set of codes were then analyzed using NVivo, a qualitative data assessment software, to generate themes and plausible relationships.

The first step in data analysis was to code the correctly formatted interview transcripts in NVivo to identify whether any of the five primary motivations or four secondary motivations, as detailed in Table 1, were present in the participants' responses. An inductive lens was also applied to surface any new codes that indicate the presence of motivations different from the nine literature-based motivations. The responses to the surveys were used as supplementary information to defend the codes once they were generated.

Once the participants' motivations were identified, the data collected from host organizations' websites about program descriptions was coded similarly in NVivo to determine the number of youth service design recommendations, as outlined in Table 2, that were present in the service programs under examination in this study. For this step, the interviews were used as the supplementary data source to validate that the participants' limited perceptions of the program design components matched the produced codes.

There were direct responses to inquiries about the levels of impact to the self, organization, community, and issue in the interview that were deductively coded under labels of 'extremely positive', 'somewhat positive', 'no impact', and 'negative' for analyzing the self-evaluated impact across all four of these levels. These labels were explained in this thesis, in chapter 4, section 4.3, before Table 9 was introduced.

Up to this point, youth participants' motivations and the service programs' design components were coded for. Next, in order to observe any patterns between these two aspects, i.e., the reflection of motivations in program design, an abductive analysis was completed. Before the abductive analysis, the same youth participants' responses to the interviews, with supplementation from the surveys, that were deductively and inductively coded to derive motivations were now deductively coded to generalize the interests for volunteering into programmatic qualities. For example, if a response was earlier coded as the motivation 'fulfil a sense of duty', where the participant spoke of giving back to the community, the same response was now coded as the 'community based' program design quality using Table 2. The codes were limited only by the design qualities that were actually observed to be present in the service program, as shown in Table 8 of the results chapter. Once the participants' responses were coded to understand which program design quality/qualities their interests reflected, an abductive pairing was possible. For each response across all interviewees, the motivations to volunteer codes and the program design quality codes were examined together. Whenever, a certain motivation and program quality appeared together, it was counted as one incident of reflection of that motivation in that program quality. Completing this for all interviewees and codes revealed an understanding of which prominent motivations most commonly appeared with which program design characteristics. This allowed the participant level analysis to be examined more broadly to

develop ideas of what each program design component provided for the participants and analysis of what the participants overall were seeking from the programs. This mix of deductive first, followed by abductive pairing and reasoning, was helpful in establishing motivations and program qualities as the study's static variables allowing the participant responses to remain as the focal point. Strategic recommendations and insights were developed based on the theories and probable relationships derived from this approach.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

To ensure that the design of this research study met acceptable standards, the process was considered for reliability and validity. Specifically, given the qualitative nature of this study, construct validity, external validity, and internal validity were tested for, and amendments were made, as required, to strengthen the design of this research.

The test for reliability demands that the research be replicable (Yin, 2014). While the exact youth service programs that this research project partnered up with may not be possible to duplicate in future studies, the research design illustrated herein provided a well-defined criterion. With a selection of closely related programs, youth participants, and structured survey and interview methodology, the study may be repeated with minor variability. Additionally, youth service programs, especially those funded by Canada Service Corps, typically follow similar goals, and thus, similar program design components. The transparency of the research methodology, results, and analyses of results served as a solution to meet the standards of reliability (Yin, 2014). While the exact results may not be replicable due to inherent variability in participant responses, the structured interviews provided the most reasonable attempt for replication, such that new insights from new findings could positively contribute to the literature.

Next, there were three types of validity that were accounted for throughout the design of this research study. This paragraph explains each validity and measures used to mitigate any possible concerns. First, to satisfy the test of construct validity, it was required that the research protocol be chosen appropriately to study the concepts and theoretical perspectives that serve as the foundation of the research (Yin, 2014). To resolve arising concerns about this, the study had referenced multiple sources in literature that research the same, or similar, concepts that

themselves apply, or recommend the use of, the same, or similar, methods selected for this study. Further, an extensive literature review was conducted to create the deductive codes that this study relied upon for its analysis. This research study also needed to review its internal validity as it aimed to predict a cause-effect relationship (Creswell, 2014), i.e., between the alignment of personal interests and program qualities. The research design and methodology tools, such as the survey and interview guides, were put under careful consideration for internal validity. Thus, while the research study enhances the understanding of a possible relationship between these factors, by specifically looking at the volunteer experience, the claims made were still strong. The last test of validity that this research considered is external validity. This deals with generalizations and biases present outside the scope of this research, that may have interfered with the research design and/or the researcher's understanding and evaluation of the results. To attest for external validity, any strong claims present in the research are based on the literature, upon which the design of this research rests. Furthermore, the methodology tool had been reviewed by multiple stakeholders, and any individual generalizations were mitigated and/or were not substantial enough. Finally, this research study, while maintaining reliability, was focused on a specific demographic of volunteer youth participants, service programs, and partner organizations.

3.6 Limitations

A key, possible limitation of the study design is experimenter expectancy effect, whereby the researcher's hypotheses can create unintended bias which may misguide the research inquiry process (Rosenthal, 2005). To avoid this, the survey and interview questions were scrutinized by the research team to identify and correct any misplaced biases prior to implementation. The format of the interviews was chosen to be structured to also alleviate additional unnecessary scoping of participant responses.

Since the follow-up interviews were only conducted with respondents that provided consent via the survey, the sample size for the interviews was moderate. To mitigate this concern, the host organizations were sent email reminders by the Youth and Innovation Project team to solicit more responses to the surveys, and the option to participate in the interview was highlighted. In addition to the less-than-expected interest for interviews from survey

respondents, the research team faced further barriers that resulted in a low number of interviewees. Out of all the participants that indicated interest, consent, and availability, and were contacted for an interview, seven did not attend their scheduled interview and failed to respond to reschedule. This is significant as it represents approximately ¼ of the total selected interviewee data pool. Some measures were put in place by the Youth and Innovation Project research team to relieve these barriers, such as sending additional email reminders and text message reminders about the interview to the youth participants. Although, this subsequently lessened the number of no-show interviewees, this is still recognized as a limitation of the research process as it was not proactively implemented.

An additional limitation of the data selection process was that there were no participants with unsuccessful projects who were interviewed. This may have been because participants with unsuccessful projects did not wish to opt-in for interviews or could have been a result of other possibilities. Regardless, this is an important limitation as it possibly largely influenced the results of this study, i.e., impact across all four levels may have been presented to be higher than it would have been if the participants with unsuccessful projects were included in the analysis. In a similar regard, the diversity of interviewed participants is greater than actually reflected. Racial diversity of the participants was designated based on responses to the following survey question and interview questions, respectively:

- Are you a person of colour?
- Do you identify as an Indigenous person?
- Are you a member of another historically underrepresented group?

Some participants who answered "yes" to the survey question (the first question above) and/or were assumed to be diverse, based on their name and/or physical appearance, replied with "no" to the last question above during the interview. Thus, it is hypothesized that participants misunderstood the interview question because of the ambiguous description of racial diversity as belonging to a historically underrepresented group. As such, the diversity count was higher than indicated by the participants' responses because it was based on a best-guess approach that relied

on corresponding the survey question to the interview question and on the researcher's ability to identify diversity based on previous knowledge of and experience with various ethnicities.

Given the exploratory nature of this study and the adoption of a qualitative approach, a boundary formed around the study's potential. As such, it was not possible to confirm the existence of relationships between the variables under investigation or prove a correlation or causation (Queirós et al., 2018). However, the study was still useful in identifying broad themes or possible linkages between variables that may serve as the foundation for future models and theories. For example, the influence of personal interests matched with program qualities on sustaining volunteerism itself, especially for first-time volunteers.

3.7 Researcher's Positionality

Beyond the considerations for reliability and validity and study limitations, as noted above, it was crucial to identify the researcher's identity, as it related to the scope of this study. This rationalized additional unintentional biases that may have been present and may have influenced the understanding of the literature, chosen methodology, and analysis of the results of this study.

A key connection that underlined the researcher's interest in this study is that the researcher is a youth volunteer herself. The researcher had participated in two youth service programs, Innovate MY Future and Youth Climate Leadership Program, through the organization Youth Challenge International prior to beginning this research project. Based on a general curiosity originating from these personal experiences, the researcher gravitated towards the study of motivations and corresponding youth decision-making strategies and outcomes. Another extension of the worldview generated through these previous experiences is also that the projects that the researcher was involved in heavily aimed for environmental impact. In addition to the projects via the service programs being environmentally focused, the researcher co-founded an environmental non-profit organization shortly before undertaking this study, which also influences the researcher's worldview. This worldview could have unintentionally fixated the researcher on projects that also aimed for an environmental impact and/or the environmental impact of the service projects more than their social and/or economic impact. Further, as a

founding member of a new, youth-led non-profit organization, the researcher had personal interests in understanding the volunteer's decision-making pathways, especially for first-time volunteers and returning volunteers alike, as it corresponds with volunteer retention. Similarly, the fact that the researcher's previous experiences were based in Canada, akin to the youth service program participants of this research study, and that the researcher grew up in Canada herself informed the context of this study to be set in Canada.

Other broadly-based life experiences that related to the researcher's interpretation of the components of this study were that the researcher has lived only in urban and sub-urban geographical locations and is a member of a historically underrepresented group. Since the researcher did not have lived experiences in a rural or remote setting, this could have clouded the researcher's understanding of the full scope of experiences of youth service program participants who are based in rural or remote areas themselves or carried out their projects in rural or remote locations. Only four participants had projects that were rurally focused, so this does not have a large effect on the study. Separately, as a person of colour herself, the researcher was equipped to better understand some of the experiences shared by participants who belonged to a historically underrepresented group. This lived experience with racial diversity also meant that the researcher had an awareness to not interpret the data of all youth participants similarly, i.e., as though they represent a monolith of the demographic, but instead to intentionally represent diversity, where applicable, in the literature, the results and the discussion of this study.

4.0 Results

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate and explain the results of this study. The following sections highlight the empirical findings as derived through the data collection methods, which include deductive, inductive, and abductive reasoning analyses (as described in the methodology). Although the results are tabulated together, they offer program level insights for each individual program administered by the three host organizations, namely Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ocean Wise, and YMCA Canada.

To serve as a reminder, these three organizations are partners of the University of Waterloo's Youth and Innovation Project, thus supplying the source of data for this thesis. Canadian Wildlife Federation offers two youth service programs; Canadian Conservation Corps and Wild Outside, both of which are evaluated in this study. The three youth service programs executed by Ocean Wise, that are studied in this thesis are Direct Action, Learning Journey, and YouthToSea. The data only includes one participant from the YouthToSea program, thus the depth of insights for this program is limited in certain sections. Finally, the only program of YMCA Canada's that is included in this thesis is the YMCA Community Action Network (YCAN). As noted in the methodology chapter, participant surveys for the YCAN program were not used, like all other programs, but this does not have negative repercussions for the analysis.

The following sections of this chapter, respectively, present the data on the motivations of the young participants for volunteering for their selected youth service program, design characteristics and qualities of each of the six programs, the self-assessed impact of the volunteering efforts on the individual, on the supporting community organization, on the broader local community, and on the sustainability issue. Further, the next section after those three demonstrates the patterns that emerged from the combination of volunteer motivations and program qualities. The layout of this chapter has been carefully selected to follow the research questions. For ease of reference, the research questions grounding this thesis are:

1. Why are young people in Canada participating in youth-service programs?
2. What characteristics of the youth service programs are reflective of the young peoples' personal motivations to apply?

3. How is the affinity between reasons for service and chosen programs significant for the young participants' self-assessment of impact across different levels?
4. Are there any patterns between personal motivations and program qualities?

4.1 Volunteer Motivations

This section focuses on the reasons for why youth choose to participate in service programs. There is a section dedicated to this due to the acknowledgement that, from the beginning to end of their volunteer experience, many of the choices involved, i.e., timelines, placements, etc., are out of the hands of the volunteer. Thus, the moments where the young people possess the ability to decide for themselves hold considerable weight because it accurately highlights their preferences and judgement rather than those imposed onto them. The first research question, from the list re-stated in the section above, is associated with this objective. This is central in a youth-focused and youth-serving study because it allows the perspectives of the young volunteers to be at the forefront of the study and, thus, as the basis of any outcomes that arise from this research.

Based on an extensive literature review, five primary motivations and four secondary motivations were identified. These are outlined in chapter 2, section 2.3 in Table 1. The motivations listed in that table are general in context, i.e., without a Canadian-specific setting and not particularly directed at youth programming. Yet, they serve as a constructive framework for exploration of motivations of the interviewed service program participants. The deductive analysis strategy was paired with an inductive reasoning approach to account for motivations that may not be found in the literature but were observed from the volunteers' feedback, especially since the study occurs during a global pandemic, is unique in geography, and specifically looks at youth volunteers. The following table (Table 6) uses the same layout as Table 1 from the literature review chapter to discuss the motivations established through the inductive analysis.

Table 6: Inductively Identified Motivations

Primary (inductive) motivations	**Clarification**
Nature of the organization and/or program	An urge to volunteer based on positive relationships with and/or understanding of the

	organization and/or the unique and enjoyable style of the program
Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic	Given that this study and observed volunteer experiences took place during a time of a global pandemic, it is reasonable that it would interfere with the study. Effects can include, but may not be limited to, (greater or lesser) availability of time, inaccessibility, or closure of other opportunities, etc.

Together with the literature-based motivations, these additional couple motivations capture the fundamental reasons for why the volunteers choose to participate in the youth service programs. The summary of results from this analysis is found in the table below.

Table 7: Motivations of Surveyed Youth Service Program Participants

		Canadian Wildlife Federation		**Ocean Wise**			**YMCA Canada**	**Total**
		Canadian Conservation Corps (CCC)	*Wild Outside*	*Direct Action*	*Learning Journey*	*Youth to Sea*	*YMCA Community Action Network (YCAN)*	
Primary Motivations	*Acquire information*		2	1	2			5
	Advance personally and/or professionally	5	2	3	2	1	1	14
	Engage in social connections	1	3	1	2	1	3	11
	Fulfil a sense of duty	1	2	1	2		3	9
	Access a supportive environment							0
Secondary Motivations	*Lack of structural barriers*	1			2			3
	Lack of design and accessibility features	3	2				3	8

	Lack of interpersonal barriers (i.e., one's surrounding environment and support)		1		1		1	3
	Lack of intrapersonal barriers (i.e., one's personal feelings)		2	1	4	1	1	9
Inductive Motivations	Nature of the organization / program	2			3			5
	Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic			2	1			3

Table 7 demonstrates the number of volunteers of each program that were designated a literature-based primary motivation and secondary motivation, or any of the inductively identified primary motivations, including 'nature of the organization/program' or 'effects of the COVID-19 pandemic' to capture their informal responses about reasons for volunteering on the survey and in the interview. The 'access a supportive environment' motivation was not applicable to any participant. As such, from the table, the motivations that are specified equal four literature-based primary, four literature-based secondary, and two inductively identified primary – totalling 10 motivations altogether. Each motivation is discussed a bit further for clarity in the following sections, with representative quotes from select participants.

As a reminder, there are 26 volunteers that participated in the required interview, and preceding survey, methodology for data collection of this thesis, with five volunteers from CCC, five from Wild Outside, three from Direct Action, seven from Learning Journey, one from YouthToSea, and five from YCAN. Through analysis, it is identified that each volunteer exhibits an average of three distinct motivations. In general, this combination of motivations includes two primary motivations and one secondary motivation. There are some major variations observed, such as eight participants who only had one primary motivation and one secondary motivation, four participants who had three primary motivations, where the inductively identified motivation

replaced the need for labelling a secondary motivation, and one participant who had two secondary motivations and one primary motivation instead. As such, there are 70 total motivations, with 54 resulting from 18 participants and 16 resulting from the eight participants who only had two motivations instead of three like the rest of the majority.

4.1.1 Acquire Information

This motivation is described as a want for knowledge. Under this reasoning, a volunteer's primary rationale for participating is to obtain new information about external or internal (themselves) elements or update their previous learning(s) on any matter. From the literature-based primary motivations, this is the least adopted reason for volunteering in this study since it is only applied five times out of a total of 70 motivations in circulation. This motivation is only identified by participants of CWF's Wild Outside and in greater number by Ocean Wise's Learning Journey program participants than by the participants of Ocean Wise's Direct Action program.

> *"It was an education program outside of school and it was a good way to learn as outside of school, be more hands on, etc." – Ocean Wise, Learning Journey Participant*

The above quote serves as a good example of the ethos one adopts in their rationale for this motivation. In general, the other applications of this motivation from other participants were also centralized around the theme of learning, whether it be about oneself or externalities.

4.1.2 Advance Personally and/or Professionally

This was the leading motivation overall, i.e., across all programs, because it accounts for 14 out of the total 70 motivations, with the greatest sum in CWF's Canadian Conservation Corps program. The motivation is found in the literature and presents itself as a tactic to enhance personal qualifications and professional development through some commonly sought after traits including, but not limited to, career exploration, relevant workforce experience, etc.

"I will be totally honest and say it was definitely career driven in this case, as I talked about before, between education and conservation. So, there was intrinsic value to me" – CWF's CCC Participant

"I figured it would be a great opportunity to further my own knowledge in environmental conservation efforts, and to further my experience in event planning" – Ocean Wise's YouthToSea Participant

"But I also enjoy any kind of leadership opportunities. I consider myself a leader, so I always like to sort of gain new skills to sort of help out even more people and be more of a leader in the community" – YMCA's YCAN Participant

These representative quotes provide an adequate framework for this motivation. Generally, throughout the responses for this study, it is discernable that career development, personal development through learning and skill-building, and gaining new experiences is at the top of the list of reasons for volunteering for the participants classified under this motivation. Even at times when knowledge seems to be at the forefront of reasoning, it is only observed as a means to an end with the ultimate goal, under this motivation, remaining personal and/or professional advancement.

4.1.3 Engage in Social Connections

Engaging in social connections is associated with a desire to make and/or maintain connections with existing and/or new members of desired communities. Throughout the literature, and as validated by the results emerging from this study, this motive can stem from a longing for a satisfactory social life, and be plausibly achieved by interacting with like-minded individuals, practice and/or refine social skills, etc. Some quotes that are indicative of these aspects are provided below.

"I think I'm somebody who likes to work upfront with people, I love to socialize so that's something I try and keep in mind when I pick volunteer experiences and opportunities so mostly the social aspect of it" – YMCA's YCAN Participant

"I guess I was just kind of excited to meet other youth in the area who were interested in nature" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant

This motivation is highest in CWF's Wild Outside and among the top motivations for YMCA's YCAN programs, and is the second highest overall, accounting for a total of 11 of 70.

4.1.4 Fulfil a Sense of Duty

This is a broadly categorized motivation because it encompasses subjective beliefs, ideals, passions, principles, among other attributes, which are difficult to classify under one umbrella. As such, this motivation seeks to recognize in a high-level that the innate impulse of volunteers who fit this motivation category is based on any combination of these individually held attributes. The motivation is the third highest in this study, as indicated in the table above, and it is tied three-way as the top motivation for participants of YMCA's YCAN program.

"I would say the satisfaction of helping other people, knowing that you could create some kind of impact on the community" – YMCA's YCAN Participant

"I'm really passionate about social justice and I realized that giving back to the community is one way to act on it. And so, I guess that's what has pushed me to do this. And also, I just think that as a young person it's important for me to do things for my community. Just because the community is there for me, so it's that reciprocal relationship" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant

Through the examples of these quotes, it is noted that this motivation is very closely tied with the desire to stimulate a greater good in a personally identified community. While this may be one of the roots of this motivation, it is important to distinguish that not every participant's devotion can be classified in this manner. For example, some participants may choose to define their beneficiary as a non-human community. This is exemplified in the following quote.

"Just seeing all the human impact that makes it even harder for [the salmon] to [get to where they need to be], that was really inspiring, just to see them struggling. And overfishing is really bad in my home community as well with salmon. So, seeing that too…I'm like, 'no, we can fix this, you just need to come together as a collective'." – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant

4.1.5 Lack of Structural Barriers

This secondary motivation is based on external circumstances that demand the creation or retention of favourable conditions for the volunteer, such as financial assistance, flexibility in time management, etc. This motivation is only elected three times overall and is not especially prominent in any one program over the others, which may be due to its status as a secondary motivation. Nonetheless, the following quote depicts the significance of this as a catalyst.

"Being that just, from my understanding, other typical programs, and similar nature are often more like foreign country travel, and often come with a financial barrier that is usually only reachable for somebody who's in a comfortable financial situation. So, those are some reasons why I kind of decided to pursue it" – CWF'S CCC Participant

4.1.6 Lack of Design and Accessibility Barriers

Out of the literature-based secondary motivations that are adopted in this study, this motivation ranks as the second highest, and is the fourth leading motivation overall, with a total of eight participants whom this applies to. This motivation is mainly fused with an understanding of the anticipated experience that builds the volunteer's perception of whether their participation would be invited or prevented. As such, this motivation supports or deters from a primary motivation.

"I wasn't sure how it's going to work because like I hadn't done a group, collaborative volunteering experience before. And it was like remotely, so I was confused and like whether it was, how it was going to work. Um, but once we got started it like it made more sense and how we were going to operate" – YMCA's YCAN Participant

"Yeah, so my expectations were that it wouldn't be very organized and I thought it was just one person doing it and then just kind of like piecing the other things here and there but it's actually fairly organized" – Ocean Wise's YouthToSea Participant

It is important to note that despite the dominance of this motivation in this study, it is still categorized as a secondary motivation, and follows the description provided in chapter 2, section 2.3, which prescribes this motivation as only a support to the primary motivations because it is not a strong enough motive as a standalone for inspiring participation.

4.1.7 Lack of Interpersonal Barriers

Again, this motivation is not prominent in this study, as recognized in the table above. The ability to identify this as a secondary motivation is based on the participant's vulnerability and acknowledgement of the conditions in their surrounding environment that may have influenced their decision to volunteer. For example, in the survey, under the question seeking clarification on why these young people chose to participant, the following was one of the responses.

"My sister" – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant

Based on such little information provided, it is difficult to conceptualize the true nature of the influence this family member had and in what ways, but it is reasonable to infer that there is some level of contribution to the participant's rationale for enrolling in the service program.

4.1.8 Lack of Intrapersonal Barriers

Similar to the primary motivation of fulfilling a sense of duty, it is difficult to theorize the root cause for this motivation because it is derived from unique and underrepresented perceptions, past experiences, negative attitudes, etc. Regardless of this difficulty, this motivation takes place as the most applicable secondary motivation with a total of nine times out of the 70 overall. The highest representation of this motivation is in Ocean Wise's Learning Journey program. Below is a quote from a participant of this program.

"Through that project and many other projects with non-profits, government, everything, the population [of the salmon] is booming. So, that was just in like the last 10 years, so to see that- like to go from a to b, to watch that, it's so inspiring" – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant

For others, it is less than straightforward to infer lack of intrapersonal barriers from their reasons for participating but there is a similar ethos for this intrinsic call-to-action that is present.

4.1.9 Nature of the Organization and/or Program

This was an inductively identified motivation. While being similar in components to the 'lack of design and accessibility barriers', this was justified as a separate motivation because it can serve as a primary motivation. Under this motivation, participants identify the disposition of the organization and the composition of the program to be satisfactory to the extent that they are willing to participate. As mentioned earlier, this primary motivation may be supported by the participant's secondary, 'lack of design and accessibility barriers', motivation or be hindered by the same. Regardless, in the study, out of the two inductive motivations, this is ranked higher and is tied in number of times applicable with the 'acquire information' primary motivation. The two programs where this motivation is used were CWF's CCC and Ocean Wise's Learning Journey.

"Um, well I think my whole experience, volunteering with Ocean Bridge and getting to see the work that they were doing and getting to see how their programming and my ability to get outdoors that summer really made a difference for me" – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant

"Yeah, I thought it was a unique opportunity coming across it, being that it's Canadian focused, and it's in kind of the education conservation field and just being familiar with the CWF beforehand." – CWF's CCC Participant

It can be inferred that the participants who adopt this motivation believe the organizational structure and/or type of program to be encouraging. This judgement may be conceived from past interactions with the same organization and/or organizations that the

participants casually assess to be similar. The same can be true for the interpretation of the program.

4.1.10 Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Finally, this inductive motivation was established to correlate the interference, if any, of the (effects from the) pandemic with the participant's decision. While this motivation may not be vastly different from any of the other nine motivations in this thesis, it is very useful to classify it as separate to account for the pandemic as a potential underlying impetus.

> *"I was unable to secure a job in my field due to COVID-19, so instead started looking for an internship" – Ocean Wise's Direct Action Participant*

This motivation is only identified three out of the total 70, and only in Ocean Wise's Direct Action and Learning Journey programs. Although there are other mentions of the pandemic in the other participants' responses, it is not associated with an inclination to volunteer.

4.2 Program Qualities

This section contains details of the design characteristics of the six programs under study, namely Canadian Wildlife Federation's Canadian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Wild Outside (WO), Ocean Wise's Direct Action (DA), Learning Journey (LJ), and YouthToSea (YTS), and, lastly, YMCA's YMCA Community Action Network, more commonly referred to as YCAN. The findings are first presented as a general overview of which of the program qualities found in the literature are reflected in each of these six youth service programs, then the results are explained for each program by each organization. The literature-based program design components can be found in Table 2 in chapter 2, section 2.4, sub-section 2.4.2. For ease of reference, the table includes 10 design guidelines that have been found, through previous research, to be useful for the effectiveness and success of youth service programs.

The research question that is associated with this section is the second out of the four, asking 'what characteristics of the youth service programs are reflective of the young peoples' personal motivations to apply?'. The first step, before getting to a later analysis, is to compare

similarity of the design of each of the six youth service programs under review in this thesis to the design frameworks for youth service programs broadly, as found in the literature. This preceding analysis allows the objective of this question, which is embedded in the overall objective of this thesis, to be met through discovering whether these programs are suitably representative of the motivations with which volunteer choose to participate.

The table below, Table 8, presents a high-level overview of the number, out of ten, program design qualities each service program possesses based on publicly made available data through the host organization's websites and validated through the youth's descriptions of the program.

Table 8: Design Qualities Exhibited by Each Program

		Program Design Characteristics										
		Careful implementation	Community-based	Developmentally appropriate through lifespan	Diversity in youth participants	High degree of youth involvement	Multi-strategic / multifaceted with a range of opportunities	Mutually favourable	Relevant context	Rewarding	Time for reflection	Total
CWF	Canadian Conservation Corps	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	10
	Wild Outside	x	x		x	x		x	x	x		7
Ocean Wise	Direct Action	x		x	x	x			x	x		6
	Learning Journey		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
	YouthToSea		x			x		x		x		4
YMCA	YMCA Community Action Network		x		x	x		x	x			5
Total		3	5	2	5	6	2	5	5	5	2	

The table depicts the number of literature-based program design characteristics reflected in each of the host organization's program(s). CWF's Canadian Conservation Corps program employs each of the ten design characteristics. Next, Ocean Wise's Learning Journey has the second highest number of literature-founded design qualities, with a total of eight out of 10. Then, CWF employs a total of seven design guidelines for the Wild Outside service program. Ocean Wise's Direct Action and YouthToSea programs use six and four, respectively. Finally,

YMCA's YCAN program includes half of the 10 design qualities. Supplementary insights, and basis of these findings, for each program level is provided below.

4.2.1 Design of Canadian Conservation Corps

This program has the maximum number of design considerations, as founded in the literature, reflected in the program's current qualities. These classifications are deduced from the explanations of program, as found on the web, and the participant's personal and informal descriptions of the program. Representative quotes, as they relate to depictions of program qualities', from each of these sources are as follows.

> *"This immersive type of experience is recognized by leaders in the field of education and social development as an ideal way for individuals to learn about themselves, their peers and the community at large. By travelling and reflecting together, they will build social capital, conservation ethic and the tenacity required for success in life…Corps members will have a chance to complete meaningful service learning to deepen the lessons learned in the first stage of the program [through] exciting hands-on conservation and environmental field learning, labouring alongside experts in a variety of opportunities…As part of their CCC journey, many participants are creating exceptional resources that are available for use or for sharing with others [and] are making a huge difference in the home communities of individual CCC members" – Canadian Wildlife Federation, Description of the CCC Program & it's Stages*

> *"So, I would say, generally what interested me is the first and second stages. And the third stage just so happened that I agreed with that. That's like a while you're sending me on this lovely trip, and I get experience working in a field that I'm interested in. I would say, giving back would only be the fair thing to do" – CWF's CCC Participant*

The program descriptions offered by the host organization are much more useful in identifying design qualities through a coding process, but participants' summaries of their experiences are also valuable in confirming and/or, in some cases, visualizing the participants' understanding of the objective of the program. Various phrases in CWF's descriptions

straightforwardly indicate design characteristics, such as “learn about”, “social capital”, “reflecting together”, among others. Thus, the overall program description in association with the researcher’s understanding of the program and participant descriptions, prove to be sufficient for accurate identification of the design qualities that the program contains.

4.2.2 Design of Wild Outside

As demonstrated in Table 8 above, Wild Outside has the third highest number of design recommendations identified in their program qualities, with a total of seven. These characteristics include careful implementation, community-based, diversity in youth participants, high degree of youth involvement, mutually favourable, relevant context, and rewarding. The description presented by CWF includes subtle as well as direct indications of design components.

> *“WILD Outside is a national conservation-based youth leadership program designed for youth ages 15 to 18. The program is open to all regardless of physical or economic barriers; this is a no cost program with free enrolment that encourages people of all levels of physical capability to join. By participating in this unique and flexible program, youth across Canada will experience opportunities for personal growth while developing and encouraging their own “conservation ethic.” Learning alongside their peers from our CWF facilitators, youth who join the WILD Outside program will enjoy opportunities for outdoor adventure and immersive nature experiences. They will also connect with other local participants in the planning and delivery of community-based conservation service projects in their own community designed to have a positive impact on their local environment” - Canadian Wildlife Federation, Description of the Wild Outside Program*

4.2.3 Design of Direct Action

Aside from CWF’s Canadian Conservation Corps, this was the only other program that included the ‘developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan’ design component. The following description is reduced in breadth to only include clear statements of design qualities.

> *“Ocean Bridge Direct Action is an exciting immersive program for in-depth learning and youth engagement with oceanic and aquatic conservation efforts across Canada. This*

national service-learning program will connect Canadian youth and young professionals with experts in marine and aquatic conservation organizations, empowering them with experiences in direct marine and aquatic conservation initiatives, adventurous opportunities for fieldwork, professional research projects, and educational and outreach programs. Youth receive coaching sessions and training by Direct Action staff to build their capacity as water leaders and to support them throughout their service-learning placements. Direct Action will fund all costs associated with travel, living expenses, training, and materials for the duration of the 3 months for each youth participant. Direct Action will also be responsible for recruiting, matching, and placing eligible youth candidates with a partner organization and arrange for the travel and accommodation directly to the chosen site" – Ocean Wise, Description of the Direct Action Program

This program employed the following six literature-based design guidelines: careful implementation, developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan, diversity in youth participants, high degree of youth involvement, relevant context, and rewarding.

4.2.4 Design of Learning Journey

The description of this program was utilized for primary identification of the program qualities, along with the participants' descriptions to match. The shortened, for brevity, version of the program summary is provided below.

"The diverse participants in the program contribute by co-creating service projects as active civic participation. The programs have three core elements that build on our Ocean Wise education mission. The first is a multi-day outdoor Experiential Journey, where members will be immersed in nature to increase understanding, wonder and appreciation for our oceans and biotic environment. Secondly, we maintain and grow our Online Learning Environment for Ocean Literacy, and thirdly, the program will support community members in Reflective Action Projects, where members will take their experience and create a project to share these messages with others. In serving to steward our shared responsibility and joy, a brighter future for our oceans, Learning Journey participants become ambassadors and champions for ocean conservation, global

citizenship and a collaborative, hopeful future" – Ocean Wise, Description of the Learning Journey Program & it's Stages

This program has the second highest number of literature-based design considerations detected in the current version of the program's offering, totalling eight out of the maximum of 10. The discussions of program design from the participants were not in-depth enough to offer any valuable insights into the program qualities and/or participants' understanding of the program but were still useful to review. The eight identified design guidelines for this program include community-based, diversity in youth participants, high degree of youth involvement, multi-strategic/multifaceted with a range of opportunities, mutually favourable, relevant context, rewarding, and time for reflection and discussion.

4.2.5 Design of YouthToSea

Only one interviewee was a participant of this youth service program, as such this volunteer's standalone insights are not used to create the chart of adopted program qualities because it lacked the relevant information. However, the minor comments on design made during that interview were useful for understanding that particular participant's perception of the program, even though it cannot be generalized to adequately represent the overarching experience of the other youth participants of this program. Regardless, the youth service program is found to employ a total of only four design guidelines, which means this program has the lowest number from the six programs under examination. The characteristics that are detected in the program include community-based, high degree of youth involvement, mutually favourable, and rewarding.

"At YouthToSea, we endeavor to unite youth with one common goal: to protect and conserve our oceans. Our mission is to coach youth (15-18) and provide them with opportunities to develop their problem-solving, critical-thinking, and communication skills. At the end of our program, youth are equipped with skills, tools, and strategies to be active decision-makers in their local, regional, and national communities. Youth engage with their local community through learning journeys and ocean service projects." – Ocean Wise, Description of the YouthToSea Program

As evident from the representative quote above, the program description, provided by Ocean Wise, from which the design characteristics were derived is minimal in explanation. Thus, the results are not rigorous enough for this program's design qualities.

4.2.6 Design of YCAN

Before exploring the results of this program, it should be noted that because of its design, there were repeated projects, i.e., one or more interview participants worked on the same project. This is because the arrangement of the YCAN program requires all participants of the same cohort within the same regional hub to create and work on the same project. This program is the second lowest scoring, out of the all programs, in its utilization of literature-founded youth service program design recommendations. The five adopted guidelines include community-based, diversity in youth participants, high degree of youth involvement, mutually favourable, and relevant context. These are confirmed through the participant's description of their involvement in the program, as shown through quotes below:

> *"And then, as we kept going around and people were throwing the ideas and that I was like "wow, like this is coming together" and then after seeing the final project. I think, it just went way above my expectations of what a group of youth could do" – YMCA YCAN Participant*

> *"Well, when I first heard about this project, I thought it would be really cool opportunity because you're working on something with people around the same age and working on something that can actually benefit your community for the better and for the positive" – YMCA YCAN Participant*

The participants' descriptions of design characteristics, through their recollection of their own experience in the program can be matched with the actual program description, as offered by YMCA of Northern BC on their website. This description is as follows:

"The YMCA Community Action Network (YCAN) is an innovative national program that engages leaders across Canada to address community needs through service projects. The program, which is part of the Canada Service Corps initiative, supports youth with opportunities to identify and execute a local service project that is meaningful to them."
– YMCA Canada, Description of the YCAN Program

4.3 Self-Assessed Impact

The third research question focuses on the affinity between reasons for volunteering and design of the chosen service program as it relates to the volunteer's self-assessment of impact. In order to answer this question, a preliminary analysis is completed to understand what the measurable impact across the four previously identified levels is. As such, in keeping the results chapter aligned with the progression from question one to question three, this section includes participant-level and program-level insights into the summary of impact on the self, on the partnering, local organization(s), on the community, and on the issue itself. Further, each consecutive subsection following in this section delves deeper into each level of impact and outcomes associated with that level for the participant and for the program design.

The third research question and its associated objective to examine impact was crucial to include in this youth-focused, youth-serving study. Apart from fulfilling a literary gap of the lack of information on the current state of impact of young people's service program participation in Canada broadly, this objective also fulfilled a practical knowledge gap by examining and presenting the story of impact, as described by the young participants themselves. Further, the objective is well-aligned with the ambitions of the Youth and Innovation Project.

The impact on the participant is understood as consequences of participation in the youth service program that only affect the participant themselves and no one else. For example, making a professional connection with a future employer is an impact on the participant only, and not to the organizations, community, or issue. The other three levels are similar in that they only focus on the impact on the organization, i.e., increase in operational capacity, or on the community, i.e., supporting local businesses in the community, or on the issue, i.e., less plastic in the ocean.

Thus, the following table (Table 9) correlates the feedback on these four levels from all interviewed participants into the following categories:

- Negative impact – this classification, across levels, is experiencing disadvantageous consequences because of youth participation in the service program. Since the goal of the service programs are to facilitate net positive impact across the four levels, this category is not scaled into varying degrees of negative because it is futile to understand the extent since either way achievement of that goal remains unsuccessful.
- No impact – this category suggests there is neither a positive nor negative impact, i.e., the conditions across levels remain the same as they were prior to the youth service program. This could be because the participant reflected on their efforts as having no impact or could be because of a lack of data, which ties into the lack of participant's knowledge.
- Somewhat positive impact – this designation indicates creation of favourable outcomes in the relevant level because of the youth service program. Favourability is subjective because what one perceives as favourable may be neutral for someone else, but that is insignificant since this study is based in understanding the subjective experience of youth across interviewees and comprehensively evaluates youth experiences overall.
- Extremely positive impact – this tier indicates that the creation of favourable outcomes in the relevant level because of youth participation in the youth service program is notably to a greater degree. This distinction is important, because unlike negative impact, this classification has the potential to showcase meeting and surpassing the goal of youth service programs of facilitating net positive impact. As such, recognizing this category can be empowering for the program participants and providers.

Table 9: A Summary of Designated Impact of Four Levels

		Category					
		Extremely positive	Somewhat positive	No impact	Negative		
Level of	On the organization	2	3			CCC	**Program**
		1	4			WO	
		1	2			DA	
		3	3	1		LJ	
			1			YTS	

		1	4			YCAN	
	TOTAL	**8**	**17**	**1**	**0**		
	On the community	1	3	1		CCC	
		1	3	1		WO	
			2	1		DA	
		1	6			LJ	
			1			YTS	
		2	2	1		YCAN	
	TOTAL	**5**	**17**	**4**	**0**		
	On the social and/or environmental issue		5			CCC	
		1	3	1		WO	
		2	1			DA	
		1	6			LJ	
				1		YTS	
			5			YCAN	
	TOTAL	**4**	**20**	**2**	**0**		
	On the volunteer themself		5			CCC	
		1	3	1		WO	
		1	2			DA	
		1	6			LJ	
			1			YTS	
		1	4			YCAN	
	TOTAL	**4**	**21**	**1**	**0**		

Out of the four categories of impact classification, somewhat positive is the most applied designation across all four levels. 17 participants out of a total of 26 participants across all six programs for the organization level and community level each, 20 participants for the issue-based level, and 21 participants for the on-the-self level identified with this 'somewhat positive' description. The second most used descriptor is 'extremely positive', adopted by eight out of 26 participants for the organizational level, five out of 26 for the community level, and four participants each for the issue and self-based levels. The category of 'no impact' is minimally utilized, with the highest number of participants being four out of 26 in the community level. The 'negative' classification is not observed across programs and levels. A more detailed participant and program degree breakdown on each level of impact is provided in the following subsections.

4.3.1 Level of Impact on the Individual

As stated earlier, this level of impact is derived by observing consequences that only affect the participant. It is important to note that self-prescribed ratings of impact on the other

three levels may influence how a participant self-reflects on this level of impact. For example, if a participant speculates that the impact of their efforts on the community or issue was moderate, this might influence the impact on the self that they infer during the interview. Some representative quotes are highlighted below to demonstrate the general outlook of the interviewees on this level of impact.

> *"Well, mostly, I just, kind of stuck around. I mean, it's hard work a lot of the time but it's good fun. And there's always something new, whenever you go to a Wild Outside meeting" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant, with a No Impact Rating*

> *"I think within the group there's a lot of social stuff, because it kind of like- like I said for one of the things that I was interested in was meeting other youth who was interested in nature. So, it definitely created a good atmosphere to like to learn and interact with nature with other people your age" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant, with a Somewhat Positive Rating*

> *"And people were just really inspired by my project and wanted to get more involved and you know, I love the idea that talking about this could generate more ideas for other people, because they see themselves, they might see themselves in me and see like, "oh, like if this person can do it, I can do it too" – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant, with an Extremely Positive Rating*

A total of 21 participants out of the 26 interviewed identify their overall impact from their experience, onto themselves, as 'somewhat positive'. The remaining five participants are split into 'extremely positive', with four respondents fitting this category, and 'no impact', with one respondent under this classification. The participant who is placed under the 'no impact' label had difficulty conceptualizing the impact of their experience onto themselves, representing lack of clear data obtained so this label is still the most fitting, as justified earlier. No participants feel that they experienced negative impacts because of their participation in the service program.

Out of the six programs, those who participated in CWF's Canadian Conservation Corps program hold the highest percentage, 100%, of respondents who classify their impact onto the self as 'somewhat positive'. Participants of CWF's Wild Outside program have the lowest ratio, three out of five respondents, under the 'somewhat positive' category for impact on the self. The YouthToSea program is omitted from this comparison because there is only one interviewee from that program included in the data set. All other programs have all but one respondent claiming the impact on them from their participation was 'somewhat positive'. Only one participant from each of the four following programs identified their impact on themselves as extremely positive: CWF's Wild Outside, Ocean Wise's Direct Action, Ocean Wise's Learning Journey, and YMCA's YCAN. Only one CWF's Wild Outside program participant applies the 'no impact' to summarize the impact of their experience on themself.

4.3.2 Organizational Level of Impact

This level is classified around the impact that the projects, which young participants carried out as part of their involvement in the youth service program, has on the community-based local organization(s) they partnered with and/or the host organization itself, in some cases where the host organization was the sole partnering organization. The 'somewhat positive' category is the one within which the impact of most participants on this level sits. Participants of CWF's Wild Outside and YMCA's YCAN programs hold the highest ratio, four out of five, in this category of interviewees who consider their impact on the organization as 'somewhat positive'. Among the remaining nine participants, majority (eight) classify their impact as 'extremely positive' and only one feels that the organizational impact was absent. No 'negative' designation of impact was observed across participants for this category.

These impact classifications were derived directly from coding the respondents answering the interview question of 'what impact did the project have on the community organization you worked with?'. Below are a couple representative quotes from the participants who fit into the 'extremely positive' and 'somewhat positive' categories, in that order.

> *"So, they say it had a huge impact on them, they... talk about it all the time to promote the program like 'these people wrote a book and got it published… they've sent it to*

teachers like packages, so 30 books to one teacher or whatever and it's been distributed across the country. So, I think it had a good impact on the organization for sure" – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant, with an Extremely Positive Rating

"Well, they had to do less work, and they got it done a lot quicker, that's for certain. I think that's about it. Yeah. We didn't really help them too much but they helped us mostly" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant, with a Somewhat Positive Rating

4.3.3 Community Level of Impact

Like the organizational level of impact, this level also has the most ratings as 'somewhat positive', for a total of 17 out of 26 participants, followed by the 'extremely positive' category with five participants out of 26, and then four for the 'no impact' category and none for 'negative'. The following quotes exemplify the collective ideology of participants for each of the three categories that are adopted for this level of impact.

"So, in terms of the local community that was part of the project itself, it really allowed people to gain hands-on and probably the most in-depth and immersive conservation work that you can find in the country… for example, the population of Muskoka and Georgian Bay and that area, there was definitely a huge impact in terms of citizen science for example, where we actually had community members actively involved, participating in, for example, nesting surveys, participating in public events with us, calling the hotline to signal a ninja turtle or nesting turtle or something like that" – CWF's CCC Participant, with an Extremely Positive Rating

"So, I think, yeah, just the research, kind of, it was more of a support system. I don't think it directly kind of changed the way that the directive was written, maybe a little bit, but it was very supportive and so I think it was important to do that research to protect those coastal communities" – Ocean Wise's Direct Action Participant, with a Somewhat Positive Rating

"Um, well I see a lot of people using it still, and they seem to be enjoying it. You know, it's a nice little walking trail right. Yeah, I don't know, it didn't really impact the environment too much in good or bad, so I guess that's a good thing. Net zero" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant, with a No Impact Rating

As evident from the representative quotes above, this level of impact surrounds the delivery of positive attributes and contributions to the local community. The question that was answered in the interview for the purpose of obtaining this information was 'what impact did the project have on the broader local community?'. The participants of the Learning Journey program exhibit the greatest affinity for a 'somewhat positive rating' of impact of their participation on this level, with a total of six out of seven participants adopting the classification.

4.3.4 Issue-Based Level of Impact

This level of impact is derived from responses to the interview question which asks, 'what impact did the project have on social and environmental issues in general?'. The objective of this interview question is to determine the participants' perceptions on their contributions to the social and/or environmental issue that was selected to be resolved through their service projects. Akin to the results of the other levels of impact, this level also has the highest number of respondents fitting in the 'somewhat positive' category. A significant 20 out of 26 total participants identify that the nature of their impact was only somewhat positive in resolving the issue. A 'no impact' classification is examined in only two participants.

"We had a lot of comments say "oh, I did not know that waste management was a municipal thing, I always thought it was provincial" or "I never thought about that" or people who made comments were just like "I didn't know about x, y, z and without this, I wouldn't have known". Or when speaking about the panelists, because we had a few people say that they were in school taking either their undergrad or masters, saying that "with that connection, that helped me with a project" or "when this person talked about this certain thing, that helped me because I was learning about that in school" – Ocean Wise's Learning Journey Participant, with an Extremely Positive Rating

"But I think we made a small impact on a small amount of people, like to have them become more knowledgeable. And that, even though that's a small impact, but I think we were still able to help somebody in some kind of way" – YMCA's YCAN Participant, with a Somewhat Positive Rating

"So hopefully we'd- like the goal was to divert single use masks away and replace them with reusable masks, so hopefully that was achieved through handing out these masks and through spreading awareness about the issue. So, that was kind of the goal, and we just don't really have any data if that was actually achieved or not, but that may be a good thing to add next time, is doing like a feedback survey or something" – Ocean Wise's YouthToSea Participant, with a No Impact Rating

There are varying degrees of uncertainty about the tangible impact on social and environmental issues amongst participant responses, which was considered during coding for a more unaffected representation of the participants' perspectives. The participants feelings around their impact are centered rather than hierarchical about a measurable quantity of their impact.

4.4 Emerging Patterns

Are there any patterns between personal motivations and program qualities? This section includes the findings related to this research question. The section presents results of exploring, through deductive coding, which program qualities are suitable for the interviewed youth service program participants. This is illustrated with a shared understanding of which program qualities can be reflective of which volunteer motivations. Further, based on this combination of motivations with qualities, a relation between these two aspects is explored. The objective of this research question is to investigate whether there are any potential emerging patterns arising from the combination of these aspects of a participant's volunteer experience to carefully construct strategies and/or decision-making pathways that could be of help for future participants and program planners.

4.4.1 Volunteer Motivations as Reflected in Program Qualities

For ease of reference, there were five primary and four secondary motivations from the literature, and two inductively identified motivations, totalling 10 altogether. One of the primary motivations, 'access a supportive environment', is not identified for any participant. Additionally, for assessment in this section, the four secondary motivations were not included as codes, and thus are not assigned to an associated program quality because the nature of them being secondary would make it so that the motivation is not directly tied with any qualities of the service program, but rather are tied with primary motivation they most commonly appear with instead. As such, there are only six possible motivations to use for building relationships with program design characteristics, which include the four primary and two inductively identified motivations. Each participant has at least two or more motivations. Table 10 below depicts the number of times a certain program design quality is associated with a certain volunteer motivation across all participants from all programs.

Table 10: Correlating Volunteer Motivations with Program Qualities

		Motivations						
		Acquire Information	Advance personally and/or professionally	Engage in social connections	Fulfil a sense of duty	Nature of the organization and/or program	Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic	TOTAL
Program Design Characteristics	Careful implementation					2		2
	Community-based			2	7	1		10
	Developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan					1		1
	Diversity in youth participants			5				5
	High degree of youth involvement			4	1	2	2	9
	Multi-strategic / multifaceted with a range of opportunities	1	3					4
	Mutually favourable		7	2	1		1	11
	Relevant context	5	6	1	2	2		16
	Rewarding		5		4	1	1	11
	Time for reflection and discussion							0

TOTAL		6	21	14	15	9	4	

The results of the investigation about volunteer motivations yields that ‘advancing personally and/or professionally’ is the highest applied motivation, followed by ‘fulfil a sense of duty’, ‘engage in social connections’, ‘nature of the organization’, ‘acquire information’ and, finally, ‘effects of the COVID-19 pandemic’, in that respective order. Similar to this hierarchy, the program qualities that are most associated across motivations in descending number of associations, are: ‘relevant context’, ‘mutually favourable’ which is tied with ‘rewarding’, and ‘community-based’.

Observing the table above illustrates that ‘relevant context’ is the most prominent program design characteristics that is in association with the identified volunteer motivations. This motivation is linked with five out of the six motivations, for a sum of 16 times. Tying for second highest associated design characteristics are ‘mutually favourable’ and ‘rewarding’, showing up in the analysis for a total of 11 times each across the same four out of the six total motivations. Next, ‘community-based’ was identified as a key program design quality through 10 linkages with three volunteer motivations. This is followed by ‘high degree of youth involvement’, ‘diversity in youth participants’, ‘multi-strategic / multifaceted with a range of opportunities’, ‘careful implementation’, and ‘developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan’ with nine, five, four, two, and one associations, respectively, across the six motivations that were focused on for this analysis.

5.0 Discussion

This study consists of four research questions around the themes of youth motivations to volunteer, service program qualities and their ability to reflect volunteer motivations, and four levels of self-analyzed impact. The questions are arranged in a particular manner such that each successive question allows for a deeper layer of discussion on youth volunteerism and the youth experience of engagement and impact.

The objectives of this research study, which guided the establishment of the research questions, include fulfilling a much-needed literary and practical gap in acquiring, examining, and recognizing the significant perspectives of youth service program participants to contextualize the volunteerism experience through a youth lens. In doing so, this study aims to understand the current state of reasons for engagement, subjectivity of their convergence with program design, and arising perceptions on impact. Exploring these aspects which are under the control of and/or influenced by the participants allows this study to be well-situated in the youth-focused and youth-serving fields of research. A by-product of this research can be that it may lead to further insights for practice, shaping recommendations for improved decision-making.

This section discusses the results that are outlined in the previous chapter, in relation to the literature review from chapter 2. As such, it follows the layout of the results chapter, i.e., a section-by-section discussion, which is also the arrangement of the research questions. First, this section briefly states the key findings from the results of this study, then outlines, in a high-level fashion, motivations carried by youth service program volunteers, program qualities, and perceived impact on four levels. Thus, the consecutive sub-sections of this chapter are themed around the reflection of the motivations in the programs' design qualities, the participants' judgement on their impact, and, lastly, any connections between motivations and program design. Each sub-section will include specific interpretations and implications of the findings, as it relates to the objectives of this study and to the literature and practice, to offer deeper insights.

5.1 Key Findings

This section provides a quick glance at the key findings that are discussed in greater detail in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Apart from the nine motivations gathered from the literature, there are two new motivations inductively obtained in this study. These include 'nature of the organization and/or program' and 'effects of the COVID-19 pandemic'. The conception of these two motivations provides new contributions to existing literature on motivations to volunteer. However, this study is also significant in providing precise contributions to the field by looking at participation by young people, in service programs, based in Canada. Another interesting finding is that majority of the volunteers possess multiple motivations, with a maximum of three, including various combinations of primary, secondary, and inductive motivations.

Like the motivations, a list of 10 program design criteria was also adopted from the literature. The Canadian Conservation Corps program by the Canadian Wildlife Federation has all 10 program qualities, followed by Ocean Wise's Learning Journey at eight out of 10, and ending with Ocean Wise's YouthtoSea program, which has the lowest number with only four out of 10. However, since there was only one participant from this program in this study, YMCA's YCAN program, which has the second lowest number of literature-based program qualities, will be used in comparisons between the program with most program qualities and the program with the least number of program qualities, for accurate and equal representation of youth perspectives from each program. Out of the 10 qualities, the 'high degree of youth involvement' was most prominent across programs with 'developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan', 'multi-strategic / multifaceted with a range of opportunities', and 'time for reflection' tied for last place. Even though most programs showcase a positive number of literature-based characteristics, how well these qualities are carried out in running the program was not studied under the scope of this thesis.

Among the four established levels of impact, the *on the organization* was the level with the highest number of 'extremely positive' ratings. Whereas the levels of *on the issue* and *on the self* were lowest in amount of 'extremely positive' ratings, but highest in the number of 'somewhat positive' ratings. 'No impact' was minimally applicable throughout all levels, and the 'negative impact' rating was not identified by any participant for any level.

5.2 Volunteer Motivations

From an extensive review of the literature, nine motivations were identified including five primary motivations and four secondary motivations. The primary motivations, which are significant in the decision to volunteer, include 'acquire information', 'advance personally and/or professionally', 'engage in social connections', 'fulfil a sense of duty', and 'access a supportive environment' (Burns et al., 2006; Cho et al., 2018; Clary & Synder, 1999; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Gerstein et al., 2004). The secondary motivations, which are less significant than the primary motivations and can work in tandem or against the primary motivations, include 'lack of structural barriers', 'lack of design and accessibility barriers', 'lack of interpersonal barriers', and 'lack of intrapersonal barriers' (Gerstein et al., 2004; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018; Normah & Lukman, 2020). The nature of these secondary motivations is such that the lack of the barriers in itself acts as a supportive factor to the primary motivations, so that if the barrier was present, it would slightly inhibit a primary motivation (Alender, 2016; Normah & Lukman, 2020; Smith et al., 2010). Thus, the secondary motivations, although carry less weight, are still important for consideration in this study for a well-rounded overview of what brings youth to the service programs they participate in or deters them from it. Additionally, the set of secondary motivations is noted to be considered more frequently by young volunteers than other demographics of volunteers which justifies their use in this study further (Gerstein et al., 2004). In-depth explanations of each primary and secondary motivation are catalogued in Table 1.

A significant contribution of this study to the literature is the synthesis of primary and secondary motivations under one tent. The literature review reveals that primary motivations are discussed as one set of factors of influence for volunteering, whereas secondary motivations are discussed as another set with some, however minor, influence for volunteering. Whereas this study presents these two components within the same conditions, in a hierarchical manner, that serves to construct a more comprehensive review of motivations. This synthesis was validated through empirical testing, with findings that demonstrate relationships between the primary and secondary motivations. This could establish grounds for future work around these factors. Furthermore, this study ranks the primary and secondary motivations, individually, from those that are most commonly applicable to those that are less commonly applied. This ranking indicates which motivation, from both sets, are more significant, at least for this study.

The motivation that is represented, through participants' feedback on the surveys and interviews, in the highest quantity is 'advance personally and/or professionally'. Young people, i.e., those who are 15 to 30 years old (inclusive), are at a developmentally crucial stage in their life. Thus, their desire to volunteer can be understood as a strategy that benefits their own development (Arnett, 2000; Bonnie et al., 2015; Gorvett, 2020; Munsey, 2006; Stewart, 2013). This is agreeable with the findings from the literature review because career development is identified as one of the leading reasons that young people, in general, decide to volunteer (Alender, 2016). Further, many of the volunteer programs are structured around and promote positive youth development which also favours the results of this study (Ramey et al., 2018; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). Another interesting facet of this motivation, given that it is the one that is in highest quantity in this study, among others, is that the rating of impact on the level of the self particularly might serve as an indication of how well these motivations were embodied in the program design. This thesis touches upon this finding very briefly, but this outcome can be explored further in other studies to better understand the relation between volunteers' motivations, service program design, and impact on the volunteers. The second highest ranked primary motivation is 'engage in social connections' which is again conducive with the literature because young people yearn for and thrive from positive social interactions (Augsberger et al., 2018; Greene et al., 2013; Stewart, 2013).

The 'access a supportive environment' motivation is not identified by any participant. This may be because this motivation is highly personal, as such detection of presence is based on the participants' urge and ability to share vulnerably. Thus, the lack of representation of this motivation in the data does not equate to its absence in participant's lives and rationales for volunteering and does not invalidate the findings from the literature. However, it could also be a possibility that the motivation is not as applicable to the new generation of volunteers as it was for the previous. The 'access to a supportive environment' motivation was adapted, through synthesis of relevant literature, from Clary et al.'s (1998) *Volunteer Functions Inventory*, which was developed in the late 1980s. Under the classification of generations, early 1980s to mid 1990s loosely was the age of the millennial generation (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). The millennial generation, as compared to Gen-Z who dominate the period between mid 1990s to late 2000s,

was more focused on self instead of pragmatism. Thus, it could be that the motivation is less fitting for Gen-Z. However, this is only a hypothesis that should serve as justification for why the motivation was not found in the results of this study, and does not arrive at a definitive conclusion, which would require further examination that falls beyond the scope of this thesis. Additionally, 'access a supportive environment', which is listed in this thesis as a motivation may be subjectively perceived by youth as a design feature, i.e., as a component of a program that would be satisfactory to have rather than a motivation that would influence participation. This would also influence its presence in this thesis as the interview obtained information about motivations, and not specifically desirable program features. Access to a supportive environment, which enables the feeling of being in a safe space, for participants should be a crucial component of youth-based programming. Thus, despite the results and discussion surrounding this motivation in this thesis, it should be studied more intensively in future studies.

Out of the four secondary motivations, 'lack of design and accessibility barriers' and 'lack of intrapersonal barriers' appear in highest quantity with totals of eight and nine, respectively. At the root of both motivations is the absence of past/potential negative experiences and attitudes that may otherwise hinder participation. During the youth years, young people deeply care about and wish to interact with the world around them despite the challenges they are presented with throughout these formative years (Allen-Handy et al., 2020; Barber, 2007; Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Greene et al., 2013; Sengupta, 2019). However, it can be inferred that youth, who are highly aware of challenges present in their normal lives, will be notably sensitive to the experiences they readily engage with as they strive to avoid additional challenges. 'Lack of design and accessibility barriers' is especially crucial for youth due to a history of underrepresentation experienced by the demographic (Gajaria et al., 2021; Iwasaki, 2016). Young people may be inclined towards experiences that seem considerate to their circumstances, favourable, and pleasant. Thus, a lack of a negative experience and attitude can ultimately support future volunteerism.

The 'lack of intrapersonal barriers' motivation is tied for third place overall with 'fulfil a sense of duty', which is a primary motivation. It is unsurprising that the two have an equal amount of representation in the participants' motivations to volunteer because they are very

similar. ‘Fulfil a sense of duty’ is described in Table 2 as ideologies and personal paradigms and perspectives that individuals hold closely, which underpin a desire to take action to resolve any issues that prohibit their worldview (Anderson & Moore, 1978; Burns et al., 2006; Cho et al., 2018; Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Synder, 1999; Gerstein et al., 2004). These unique viewpoints can be a result of upbringing or influence by close networks, etc. (Bang & Chelladurai, 2009; Burns et al., 2008; Dwyer et al., 2013; Gage & Thapa, 2012). Whereas, ‘lack of intrapersonal barriers’ is an ability to take action for a certain experience based on previous, positive accounts of similar and relevant experiences that constructed valuable principles and ideals (Ballard et al., 2019; Kim & Morgül, 2017; Normah & Lukman, 2020). This stems directly from connected experiences and influences subsequent complementary experiences. Furthermore, the more interesting aspect to note is that none of the volunteers who fit in the ‘lack of intrapersonal barriers’ motivation category were first-time volunteers and only one volunteer, out of nine, participants who cohere to ‘fulfil a sense of duty’ was a first-time volunteer. This thesis does not delve deeper into this element, but it might be useful to study whether this motivation arises from an inherent psychosocial construct, such as generativity, or whether it develops over time as youth volunteer more (Lawford & Ramey, 2015). If the latter, could participation in youth service programs contribute to generativity? Generativity is understood as an adopted responsibility to care for subsequent generations (Erikson, 1968; Lawford & Ramey, 2015). Ryff and Heincke (1983) argue that generativity is highest in the younger generation whereas McAdams et al. (1993) challenge that assumption saying that the youngest generation has the lowest scores on generativity. Insights on motivations to volunteer might become part of broader studies in areas of generativity research.

Beyond the nine primary and secondary motivations that were identified from the literature, this study also contributes two volunteer motivations of its own through inductive analyses, namely ‘nature of the organization and/or program’ and ‘effects of the COVID-19 pandemic’, which are elaborated on further in Table 6 above. Neither of these motivations were highly applicable overall. ‘Nature of the organization and/or program’ admittedly seems similarly to ‘lack of design and accessibility barriers’ and ‘lack of intrapersonal barriers’ but is different, although it can be aided by the two secondary motivations. This inductive motivation indicates a level of respect for and trust in the host organization that the young people hold.

Thus, further exploration might reveal suggestions that organizations, who participate in intentional relationship building and possess the respect and trust of young people, can witness a greater influx of volunteers for their programs than organizations who do not do the same. 'Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic' is a necessary inductive motivation to include in this study because a few participants noted that if the unforeseen pandemic had not changed their circumstances, they likely would not have volunteered. This is a special case structural barrier to participate that was important to individuate because it is not a common or persistent challenge, but rather a unique circumstance that does not have on-going limitations in the same manner.

Lastly, there is no significant distinction in this study between the motivations adopted by those for whom this was their first volunteer experience and the motivations applicable to those for whom this was not their first volunteer experience. However, there were also very few participants within the data who were volunteering for the first time and there is not enough literature on this topic to provide a foundation for deeper examination. Thus, perhaps with a larger dataset of first-time volunteers and future research studying these factors, discrepancies may be more prominent.

5.3 Program Qualities

The study of youth service program design qualities, and more importantly, of the ability of these qualities to accurately reflect volunteer motivations is a key objective of this research. There is a large gap in literature in this type of relational analysis between volunteer motivations and youth service program design qualities. As such, this thesis yields positive contributions to the literature, regardless of the outcome of this investigation, because it studies a significantly overlooked area of examination in youth literature. Despite a lack of this particular information, the literature does discuss general motivations to volunteer and youth service program design characteristics, albeit separately. Specifically, the literature offers 10 guidelines that are deemed to be fundamental to developing and executing effective, i.e., beneficial to the participants, youth service programs (Benard, 1990). The 10 guidelines are presented in Table 2 along with an explanation for each. This list, adopted from Benard (1990), was refined through synthesis across several other authors and validated through the empirical findings of this study.

Out of the six programs under study, Canadian Wildlife Federation's (CWF's) Canadian Conservation Corps (CCC) program possesses all 10 of the literature-based design recommendations. Ocean Wise's YouthtoSea has the least with only four, however there is not more than one participant from this program in the data for this study, thus this program was overlooked intentionally and the second least program was discussed in greater detail during comparisons. YMCA Canada's YCAN program has the second least, with only five, program qualities as found in the literature. The literature suggests that following the 10 guidelines helps create successful service programs. So, theoretically, the CCC program should be the most successful out of the batch of programs studied in this thesis because it adopts all 10/10 of the guidelines; with the YCAN program observed as the least successful. Although there is no thorough analysis to prove or disprove this hypothesis, a brief examination of the results reveals that, at least on the level of self-analyzed impact, the programs are relatively analogous. Generating an understanding of success of each program based on another measure would require a different scope of study that this research does not have. Thus, investigating whether adoption of the guidelines truly lends itself to developing highly successful youth service program can be a potential area of future examination.

The 'high degree of youth involvement' design quality is most apparent across programs, with it being identified as a component of all six programs under study, as demonstrated in Table 8. This is an interesting, but not surprising, result because the premise of the youth service program is to offer opportunities through which young people can be involved in their communities to a greater extent (Benard, 1990; Sherraden, 2001). Further, youth service programs have only recently begun shifting their focus from being primarily engrossed in the positive youth development framework to allowing youth to be active leaders (Hussin & Mohd Arshad, 2012; Warner, Langlois, & Dumond, 2010). Next, moving from greatest to least apparent, there is a tie between the 'community-based', 'diversity in youth participants', 'mutually favourable', 'relevant context', and 'rewarding' design qualities for second place, followed by 'careful implementation', and then another tie for least apparent between the 'developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan', 'multi-strategic / multifaceted with a range of opportunities', and 'time for reflection' qualities.

The ‘time for reflection’ program design characteristic being one of the three that is least included across the six programs is an interesting result. As mentioned in chapter 4, section 4.1, young people are more than often not provided the appropriate tools that facilitate observation, contemplation, or decision-making. Whereas, having resources and space dedicated to this could serve to be a powerful empowerment tool for sustained youth engagement. Practitioners of youth service programs who would like to implement this might benefit from following a model similar to this thesis that is based on asking questions such as ‘why did you volunteer’, ‘what program quality was most appealing’, ‘what was your impact’, etc. and then creating avenues for discussions and strategizing after. How practitioners might apply this to existing programs could also be an insightful potential area of further research.

‘Developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan’ and ‘multi-strategic / multifaceted with a range of opportunities’ design qualities being ranked as one of the lowest is understandable because they are difficult to achieve. Different age groups have different reasons for volunteering (Alender, 2016). Thus, service programs would have to adopt a broad lens to their planning to enforce the ‘developmentally appropriate through lifespan’ quality, which would prevent an immersive experience. Similarly, being multi-strategic might require an intersectional approach, which was not observed in the literature to be part of the practice.

Another minor note on the topic of program qualities is that all programs outwardly meeting the literature-based program design guidelines does not necessarily equate to these guidelines being implemented as noted and successfully carried out in the program. Thus, service program providers, who are curious about their administration of the adopted guidelines, should be encouraged to use a process like Lakin & Mahoney’s (2006) 4-step evaluation method to investigate and re-model the program, as deemed necessary, on an on-going basis.

5.4 Self-Assessed Impact on Four Levels

Young people are highly inclined to make a difference in society because of a multitude of factors, and when they are given an opportunity to generate impact, they are able to pragmatically address societal issues (Ginwright & James, 2002; Wimbrone, 2020). As such, when researching youth volunteerism, a discussion on impact becomes vital. This study looks at

the following four levels of impact: on the organization, i.e., how youth participation affected the organizations the young people served; on the community, i.e., whether the community benefited from the act of service provided by the young people through their volunteering; on the issue, i.e., whether there were positive contributions to a specific social and/or environmental issue accompanying the service projects; and, lastly, on the individual, which illustrates the consequences that young people yielded on to themselves as a result of their participation (Aked, 2015; Clarke & Dougherty, 2010; Ho et al., 2015; Miller, 2011; Miller et al., 2002; Snyder & Omoto, 2008; Wu, 2011). This study uses ratings of 'extremely positive', 'somewhat positive', 'no impact', and 'negative' impact to conceptualize impact across these four levels. This study validates the reviewed literature by using these four levels of impact and introduces new information by using a simple rating method to categorize self-examined impact.

Many participants used certain language and/or expressed emotions that would otherwise seem to portray that they had a greater level of impact than they truly had. For example, some representative quotes provided below imply as though the impact is higher than it is found to be.

> *"I think, **pretty positive**, again, just right now. Attention, you know, just communication. That's the biggest piece that we've contributed so far"*

> *"So, I think, yeah, as an educational tool. It **could have** a huge impact on all those areas: on salmon, environmental conservation, human impact, culture, science, like so many things. Absolutely, yeah**, I think it's had** an impact in all those areas"*

The first quote shown here exemplifies the argument that young participants were found to often use much more reassuring language than accurate. The second quote presents an interesting imbalance between thought processing within the same response, i.e., the participant begins the statement that their project "could have" had an impact on multiple areas and ends the statement with a conclusion that the project "had" an impact. This discrepancy between sentiment and appraisal can be interpreted in one of two ways. It may be plausible that the young participants overestimate the level of impact that their efforts resulted in. This may be the case because 18 out of the 26 interviewed participants used mostly anecdotal reasoning for impact,

which may skew their understanding. The remaining eight respondents used a somewhat measured source of impact either by chance encounters or through their own attempts to seek this type of feedback. The second way of interpreting the results is that the participants have lower standards, than what is possible, for the level of impact that they can achieve through their efforts. In this scenario, young people may be undermining their own capacity and contributions. In either case, researchers can support young people by assessing their impact more frequently to provide a well-examined depiction and/or contributing to strategies through which young people may leverage their strengths. More importantly, providers of youth service programs may assist young people by including tools for measuring impact into the design of the program itself, such that it allows more objective forms of impact measurements.

Overlooking the lack of clarity behind participants' justifications for ranking their impact, majority of the participants who were interviewed classify their level of impact as only 'somewhat positive'. Among the four levels of impact, *on the organization* has the highest number of participants reasoned to have an 'extremely positive' impact. This outcome is validating because with the lack of tools to understand and reflect on their impact, participants presumably relied on feedback that they gathered on the different levels to conceptualize what their impact might have been. As the young people worked most closely with the organizations than any other recipient of the other levels, it is likely that they received sufficient feedback from the organizations through dialogue to interpret their impact as 'extremely positive'. While the same logic can be applied for the *on the community* level of impact, the levels of impact *on the issue* and *on the self* are much more abstract to conceptualize without proper support, which could be why the latter two have the highest number of 'somewhat positive' ratings, totalling 20 and 21, respectively. The *on the self* level of impact seems to be the most strenuous for participants to perceive. Thus, evaluation of this level of impact that can be undertaken by youth participants could be a potential area of further study. This level of impact *on the self* is also implicitly most closely related, than the other three levels, to the top two volunteer motivations identified in this study ('advance personally and/or professionally' and 'engage in social connections'). Thus, if these motivations are strong opportunities for encouraging or sustaining youth participation in self programs, it is justifiable to focus more on the level of impact, i.e. on the self, that correlates with the two motivations.

For the last remaining level to discuss, 'no impact' was leading in the category of impact *on the community*. This is not a surprising result because a community is comprised of several aspects, where tackling one could feel overwhelming or futile, and when change is not visible, it can be disappointing. Adopting the same logic as why the *on the organization* level of impact had the greatest number of 'extremely positive' ratings, if service program providers facilitate dialogues between members of the community affected by the youth participants, it could provide a greater understanding of the informal, immeasurable impact. For example, the following are the shortened versions of the three quotes used in chapter 4, section 4.3, sub-section 4.3.3:

> *"We actually had **community members actively involved**, participating in, for example, nesting surveys, participating in public events with us, calling the hotline to signal a ninja turtle or nesting turtle or something like that" – CWF's CCC Participant, with an **Extremely Positive** Rating*

> *"It was very supportive and so I think it was important to do that research to **protect those coastal communities**" – Ocean Wise's Direct Action Participant, with a **Somewhat Positive** Rating"*

> *Um, well I see a lot of people using it still, and **they seem to be** enjoying it" – CWF's Wild Outside Participant, with a **No Impact** Rating*

The first quote, with an 'extremely positive' rating, explains how the participant had close interactions with the community members impacted by their project. The second quote, with the 'somewhat positive' rating, had little interaction with the community after the deployment of the project, however the project was developed with the community in mind. The final quote has a 'no impact' rating and no direct interaction with the community that benefited from their efforts, i.e., only an observation of whether the community is liking the project or not. These quotes are significant verification that participants will have greater understanding of their impact on the community if they are provided with a chance to interact with the community, ideally before,

during, and after they conduct their project. Thus, this is a recommendation for a practice that service program providers can build into their design. However, this recommendation is noted cautiously as these ratings were assigned by the researcher, rather than the participants. So, in addition to the limitations discussed earlier in this subsection with participants' perceptions on impact, it is possible for the researcher's analysis to have limitations as well.

Finally, it was noted in section 5.2 of this chapter that the CCC program includes the highest number of literature-based program design guidelines whereas the YCAN program includes the lowest number. However, in analyzing impact across programs, the ratio of participants of the CCC program who fit into the 'somewhat positive' rating is exactly the same as the ratio of participants of the YCAN program for the *on the issue* level of impact. Since the CCC program had all 10 design guidelines, that would mean that all participants had their motivations reflected in the program design. Thus, if the strength of the match between motivations and program design translates to a greater level of impact, this would mean that CCC participants should have a greater rating of impact on all levels, especially in comparison to YCAN participants. However, this was not the case. This is a symbolic result because it leads to the inference that the program may not have successfully achieved a greater level of engagement or impact than other programs, despite incorporating more design guidelines. Though, this causality cannot be proved solely based on this finding, so this serves as another area for future research.

5.5 Emerging Patterns Between Volunteer Motivations and Program Qualities

The last research question seeks to find 'any patterns between personal motivations and program qualities'. However, there are no compelling patterns derived from the observed connections between the motivations of young service program participants and design qualities of these programs. This can by itself be considered a critical contribution because this study brings a fresh perspective to the discussions of motivations to volunteer and program qualities, by speaking of these two aspects together, since they are often found siloed in the literature. Further, these insights can also form the basis of future examination to determine whether there is any potential alignment between the relationship of motivations and program qualities with level of impact. For example, could it be possible that an individual, who has a very close

alignment between their reasons for volunteering and offerings of the program through design, has a comparably greater level of impact than someone who does not have alignment amongst these two factors? Regardless, the main contribution of this section to the literature is the synthesize of discussions on this topic in a manner that has not been studied before. Further analysis reveals that regardless of whether the young participants make a conscious decision to volunteer for a youth service program based on its design or not, the participants do not have a huge variation in their alignment between motivations and program quality. This may be a factor that skews any patterns that may otherwise emerge from the data, and could be thus identified as a limitation to this research.

Lastly, another contribution of this section to the broader youth volunteerism literature is that it validates the motivations for volunteering and effective program qualities, as found in the literature, at the same time. The literature claims that 'advance personally and/or professionally' is a priority motivation for the youth demographic (Alender, 2016). While this study also finds that to be true, it additionally introduces the fact that this motivation was the highest correlated motivation with program design qualities, i.e., a total of 21 times that it was found to be reflected in the program design characteristics. Further, this study illustrates that the program design component that is most prominent across motivations is 'relevant context'. This is in line with the literature that remarks the importance of context for young people in choosing service programs among a plethora of options. Specifically, Brudney (2016) and Morrow-Howell et al. (2009) speak about grounding service programs in tackling present and relevant issues which concern the demographic, and how doing so yields greater benefits through participation.

6.0 Conclusion

This thesis is embedded within University of Waterloo's Youth & Innovation Project because the young participants, i.e., the sources of data for this study, are volunteers of the youth service programs hosted by the organizations that are partners of the Project. The youth participants used for this study fall between the ages of 15 to 30 years old. There is extensive support in the literature for positive youth development, advancement of youth capacity and civic role, and youth-led impact and social change through volunteerism during these years (Allen-Handy et al., 2020; Brennan & Barnett, 2009; Dougherty & Clarke, 2018a; Dunfey, 2019; Liu, Holosko, & Lo, 2009; Ginwright & James, 2002). Further, in Canada, despite accounting for less than a quarter of the total population, young people make up more than half of the demographic of people that volunteer (Hahmann et al., 2020; Statistics Canada, 2019). As such, this thesis seeks to provide an accurate portrayal of current youth service program participants' volunteer experiences, beginning from the rationale that brings them to enlist, the interaction of their motivations with the design qualities of the service program they end up choosing, and ultimately, the narrative impact that they believe to have had. The purpose of this is to identify areas that may unknowingly be promoting or prohibiting their successful engagement and capacity for social and/or environmental change.

There were nine general broad-based motivations identified in the literature for why people volunteer. These include five primary motivations, such as 'acquire information', 'advance personally and/or professionally', 'engage in social connections', 'fulfil a sense of duty', and 'access a supportive environment', and four secondary motivations, such as 'lack of structural barriers', 'lack of design and accessibility barriers', 'lack of interpersonal and intrapersonal barriers'. Further, there were two inductively identified motivations, unique to this study; specifically, 'nature of the organization and/or program' and 'effects of the COVID-19 pandemic'. More information about each of these motivations can found in Table 1 and Table 6 of this study. There were also 10 basic youth service program design recommendations compiled from the literature and validated through the empirical analysis, which seeks to provide developers of these programs with a framework for effective and successful program implementation and execution. These 10 qualities include 'careful implementation', 'community-based', 'developmentally appropriate throughout lifespan', 'diversity in youth

participants', 'high degree of youth involvement', 'multi-strategic/multifaceted with a range of opportunities', 'mutually favourable', 'relevant context', 'rewarding', and 'time for reflection and discussion'. Clarification of these design qualities can be found in Table 2 of this document. The four levels of impact that young participants can contribute to, through their volunteer efforts, were identified in the literature and validated herein. These four levels include personal level, organization level, community level, and issue level. Detailed explanations of each level are provided in Table 3 above. First, these aspects are explored separately and then the findings across the motivations and program design are integrated to form the basis of the results obtained from this study.

6.1 Contributions to Theory

A key theoretical extension arising from this research is the infrequent merger between the distinct components of the total volunteer experience, i.e., motivations and program design and to some extent, impact. Often, studies of these aspects are approached in silos from one another or only include a reference to the other piece, without incorporating it into the research (Benard, 1990; Burns et al., 2006; Normah & Lukman, 2020). Thus, this thesis contributes new information to the numerous studies that have considered these aspects individually. Future studies can use this exploratory study to build on the connections between these aspects further.

Another theoretical contribution is the recognition and reorganization of certain motivations as secondary motivations and utilization of these secondary motivations as supportive factors to certain primary motivations as well as the establishment of the two inductively identified motivations, i.e., 'nature of the organization and/or program' and 'effects of the COVID-19 pandemic'. The study of secondary motivations, especially in this particular context, is special to this research because existing literature considers this set of motivations as factors that are separate from the factors identified in this study as primary motivations but still influence, to some extent, the decision to volunteer. Thus, the results contribute new knowledge to literature, instead of confirming already present information, because the two separately identified factors of influence are reimagined together as primary and secondary motivations. There is a literary gap in correlating secondary motivations with primary motivations, and while this study does not confirm or deny the existence of any relationships between these two types of

motivations, it can be useful for future studies to reflect on how these motivations link with one another. The inductively identified motivations can, with further research, become well-known primary motivations if there are enough occurrences of them.

Theoretical contributions of this study also consist of the addition of new knowledge to an existing body of research around reasons why young people volunteer and validation of the program design characteristics as found in the literature. The new insights are current, based in Canada, and specific to young service program volunteers. Moreover, the finding that most young people are motivated by their desire to advance personally and/or professionally agrees with the literature on what is important for young people. However, a crucial area of further study, which is only slightly touched upon in this research, is the close examination of young people's perceptions on impact. There needs to be more unison in literature around how young people reflect on their own on levels of impact, and thus, ways they may enhance this impact.

6.2 Contributions to Practice

There are two key contributions to practice emerging from this study. One of these contributions is directed at the developers, funders, stakeholders, and supporters of youth service programs. It is alarming that most young people classified their overall impact as only 'somewhat positive', especially without being provided with any support or tools from the partnering or host organizations to concretely measure this. Thus, a key practical change to include in the design and administration of these youth service programs is to provide tangible pathways through which young people may attempt to evaluate, discuss, and reflect on their contributions to the four levels of impact as well as their motivations and the program design.

The next practical contribution is intended to support the young volunteers. It was identified, through the findings and interpretations of the results of this study, that young people may be closer in aligning their motivations with program qualities than they realize during their decision-making. This is a crucial practical insight because it reaffirms that young people are mindful when undertaking volunteer opportunities. This observation also provides the young people with a tangible recommendation for attributes upon which they can base their decisions to volunteer. While this study did not identify any relationships between greater alignment of

motivations with program design qualities leading to greater satisfaction for the volunteer or heightened impact, this could be a potential future area of research to further supplement youth decision-making.

6.3 Limitations and Future Suggestions

A major limitation of this thesis is that it occurs during a time of a global pandemic. Due to this, many of the participants could not participate in the youth service programs in the ways that they traditionally would have to. Many experiences incorporated in the program design were transitioned to be virtual or hybrid, which influences the kind of engagement that young people had with the organization, community, and issue. The virtual / hybrid setting can be predicted to have hindered the design and delivery of multiple service projects, requiring young people to adapt or reduce their scope to meet COVID-19 restrictions. If future studies, like this exploratory research, were to take place, it would be significant to reflect on the discrepancies that arise due to a pandemic and a lack thereof in the future. For example, one estimated distinction is that impending studies would not recognize effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as one of the primary reasons why some young people chose to volunteer.

Another limitation of this study was the size and diversity of youth participants. As mentioned in chapter 3, section 3.3, this study did not adequately meet the personal characteristics of the participant selection criteria, as the information was not collected. As such, future studies should be mindful to include the perspectives of young people from historically underrepresented groups to a greater extent by incorporating measures to identify these groups. Doing so can unveil whether there are any notable differences in youth perspectives, and thus overall results of the study. However, another possible understudied area of research, that can be extracted from this consequence, is investigating whether young people from historically underrepresented groups have equal access to and opportunity to volunteer for youth service programs, i.e., whether they face little to no barriers for participation.

Several recommendations for future research are provided throughout the discussion chapter, which are restated as follows for ease of reference. Firstly, understanding impact as it relates to other components of the volunteer experience is an easy extension of the reflection of

emerging patterns between motivations and program design that is included in this thesis. This relationship in itself can be explored in many ways, one of which was proposed in the discussion as an examination of whether successful embodiment of the motivations within the program design lends to a greater positive impact. Within the elements of motivations and program design, individually, there is potential for other considerations that were not part of this study. For example, studying the inductive motivations further and building them into the existing literature and investigating whether the extent of inclusion and implementation of the design guidelines influences the degree of success of the program. New contributions from this study to the literature also include using a blanket, four-pronged rating system to classify impact. The use of this rating system is subject to further inspection in relation to the literature, and also establishes a fresh medium through which the issue-based and self-based levels of impact can be thoroughly studied and improved upon.

The suggestions for practice listed earlier are directed at program hosts as well as the Youth and Innovation Project. One main insight is that program providers should support qualitative, and where applicable quantitative, measurements of motivations, tracking of program design, and scale of impact during the program with the participants, rather than solely pre- and/or post-program with only minor input from the participants. Compliance with this recommendation would have implications for the researchers of, and alike, the Youth and Innovation Project, as the project focuses on post-program observations of the participants' experiences. Further with this recommendation, the program hosts are encouraged to facilitate dialogues between the community and time for self-reflection as one possible strategy to develop a qualitative understanding of different features of service program participation.

6.4 Concluding Statements

The existing domains of research currently largely underrepresent young people as direct beneficiaries of the derived evidence-based recommendations. Rather, most of the research supports organizations and stakeholders that work with and for youth. Thus, the research reaches young people indirectly through program- or organizational-level adaptations, as suggested through research, made by these youth serving organizations and/or stakeholders. Additionally, program developers within Canadian organizations do not have adequate access to relevant

research for evidence on effective design strategies and/or evaluation methods to inform their design choices, which cannot be made up for by providing solely fiscal contributions (Lachance et al., 2019). To bridge these gaps in support for the youth and youth-serving organizations, this thesis seeks to disseminate the findings back to the youth participants of this study so that the young volunteers may reflect on their involvement and may determine strategies for improving their experience and impact as well as to the partner organizations whose programs were studied such that they may benefit from the recommendations listed herein.

The thesis was successful in meeting the objectives upon which it is based, and provided ample insights into the existing literature around the topics that were studied, contributions to the literature, and recommendations for practice and future studies.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Notification of Ethics Clearance to Conduct Research with Human Participants

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Principal Investigator: Amelia Clarke (School of Environment, Enterprise and Development)

Co-Investigator: Ilona De-Gosztonyi-Dougherty (School of Environment, Enterprise and Development)

File #: 40348

Title: Ocean Bridge Evaluation - Community Impact Component

The Human Research Ethics Committee is pleased to inform you this study has been reviewed and given ethics clearance.

Initial Approval Date: 07/04/19 (m/d/y)

University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committees are composed in accordance with, and carry out their functions and operate in a manner consistent with, the institution's guidelines for research with human participants, the Tri-Council Policy Statement for the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS, 2nd edition), International Conference on Harmonization: Good Clinical Practice (ICH-GCP), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), the applicable laws and regulations of the province of Ontario. Both Committees are registered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Federal Wide Assurance, FWA00021410, and IRB registration number IRB00002419 (HREC) and IRB00007409 (CREC).

This study is to be conducted in accordance with the submitted application and the most recently approved versions of all supporting materials.

Expiry Date: 07/05/20 (m/d/y)

Multi-year research must be renewed at least once every 12 months unless a more frequent review has otherwise been specified. Studies will only be renewed if the renewal report is received and approved before the expiry date. Failure to submit renewal reports will result in the investigators being notified ethics clearance has been suspended and Research Finance being notified the ethics clearance is no longer valid.

Level of review: Delegated Review

Signed on behalf of the Human Research Ethics Committee

Karen Pickles

[redacted]

This above named study is to be conducted in accordance with the submitted application and the most recently approved versions of all supporting materials.

Documents reviewed and received ethics clearance for use in the study and/or received for information:

file: OceanBridge Ethics Questionaire June 2019 FINAL.docx

file: Oceanbridge Consent Form June 2019 FINAL.docx

file: OceanBridge Ethics Follow up Letter June 2019 FINAL.docx

file: OceanBridge Ethics Information Letter June 2019 FINAL.docx

Approved Protocol Version 2 in Research Ethics System

This is an official document. Retain for your files.

You are responsible for obtaining any additional institutional approvals that might be required to complete this study.

Appendix B: Community Impact Survey – Youth

Introduction

This study will evaluate the impact of the [HOST ORGANIZATION] youth service program on participating organizations, local communities, and social and environmental issues. You were asked to complete this questionnaire because you were a participant in the [HOST ORGANIZATION] youth service program. It should take approximately 20 mins to complete.

Your responses will be collected and analyzed to create a summary report for [HOST ORGANIZATION] and will be shared with [HOST ORGANIZATION]'s funders as part of the project evaluation.

Your responses will not be linked to your name anywhere in the summary report, and [HOST ORGANIZATION] will not have access to any data that would connect you to specific comments.

If you do not wish to participate, you can withdraw from this study and your responses will be deleted, anytime up until the data has been analyzed and the summary report is submitted to [HOST ORGANIZATION] in late spring 2021. You may also skip any questions in the questionnaire that you do not wish to answer.

Qualifying questions

1. What is your age?
    a. 15
    b. 16
    c. 17
    d. 18
    e. 19
    f. 20
    g. 21
    h. 22
    i. 23
    j. 24
    k. 25
    l. 26
    m. 27
    n. 28
    o. 29
    p. 30

2. What Canadian province or territory do you live in?
    a. British Columbia
    b. Alberta
    c. Saskatchewan
    d. Manitoba
    e. Ontario

f. Quebec
g. New Brunswick
h. Nova Scotia
i. Prince Edward Island
j. Newfoundland and Labrador
k. Nunavut
l. Northwest Territories
m. Yukon

Parent / Guardian Consent form

Before your start answering the questionnaire, please ask your parent or guardian to read and fill out this consent form.

Introduction
This study will focus on evaluating the impact of the [HOST ORGANIZATION] youth service programs on participating organizations, local communities, and social and environmental issues. Your child is being asked to complete this questionnaire because they participated in the [PROGRAM NAME] program.
Your child's responses will be collected and analyzed to create a summary report for [HOST ORGANIZATION] as well as contributing to academic research. Your child's responses will not be linked to your name or your child's name anywhere in the summary report, and [HOST ORGANIZATION] will not have access to any data that would connect you or where applicable your organization to specific comments.

If you do not wish to participate, you can withdraw from this study and your responses will be deleted, anytime up until the data has been analyzed and the summary report is submitted to [HOST ORGANIZATION] in late spring 2021. You may also skip any questions in the questionnaire that you do not wish to answer.

By agreeing to participate in the study you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

Consent form
I have heard about the study being conducted by Dr. Amelia Clarke and Ilona Dougherty of the Youth and Innovation Project at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario. I have had the opportunity to ask questions related to this study and I have received satisfactory answers to my questions and any additional details that I requested. I was informed that participation in this study is voluntary and that I can withdraw my consent by informing the researcher, up until the data has been analyzed and the summary report is submitted to [HOST ORGANIZATION] in late spring 2021.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #40348).

Please check the box to state your agreement:

☐ With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to have my child participate, in this research study.

☐ I understand that the data collected in this study may be used in future academic publications or in studies that further explore the impact of youth service programs and that my responses will not be linked to my child's name in any future publications. I agree to have the data from this study used in future studies or publications.

Name of participant:
Parent's name:
Parent's email:
Parent's phone number:

Consent form
By agreeing to participate in the study you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Dr. Amelia Clarke and Ilona Dougherty of the Youth and Innovation Project at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario. I have had the opportunity to ask questions related to this study and I have received satisfactory answers to my questions and any additional details that I requested. I was informed that participation in this study is voluntary and that I can withdraw my consent by informing the researcher, up until the data has been analyzed and the summary report is submitted to [HOST ORGANIZATION] in late spring 2021.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #40348).

Please check the box to state your agreement:

☐ With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this research study.

☐ I understand that the data collected in this study may be used in future academic publications or in studies that further explore the impact of youth service programs and that my responses will not be linked to my name or the name of my organization in any future publications. I agree to have the data from this study used in future studies or publications.

Project details

1. Which part of the [HOST ORGANIZATION] [PROGRAM NAME] youth service program did you participate in?
    a. Calgary
    b. Charlottetown
    c. Edmonton

d. Halifax
e. Kitchener-Waterloo
f. Moncton
g. Montreal
h. Ottawa
i. Regina
j. Saskatoon
k. St-John's
l. Toronto - GTA
m. Vancouver
n. Winnipeg

2. Why did you decide to participate in the [HOST ORGANIZATION] youth service program? TEXT BOX

As you answer questions in this questionnaire relating to the project young people worked on, this refers to [PROGRAM NAME] [STAGE NAME, IF APPLICABLE] project your organization may have supported.

3. As part of [HOST ORGANIZATION] youth service program, did you join an existing project an organization was already working on (for example you volunteered for an organization) or did you create a new project?
    a. I joined an existing project.
    b. I created a new project.
    c. Other (please specify): TEXT BOX

4. How involved were you in the planning and design of the project?
    a. Very involved: I (and other participants if applicable) led the planning and design.
    b. Involved: The planning and design was an equal partnership between myself (and other participants if applicable) and the organization we worked with.
    c. Not very involved: The organization we worked with did most of the planning and design and myself (and other participants if applicable) contributed a little bit.
    d. Not involved: The organization we worked with did all of the planning and design and myself (and other participants if applicable) just carried out the work.

5. What were the main goals of the project you worked on? TEXT BOX
6. Did your project align with an issue that the organization or the local community had told you was a key priority? YES/NO/I don't know

7. Did your work on align with your personal interests and passions? YES/NO/I don't know

8. How many other young people did you work with over the course of this project?
    a. 0-2
    b. 3-5
    c. 5-7

d. 7-10
e. 10 or more

9. How many hours total did you dedicate to the project?
    a. Less than 10 hours
    b. 10 to 20 hours
    c. 30 to 40 hours
    d. 40 to 50 hours
    e. 50 hours or more

10. What specific contributions did you make to the project? TEXT BOX

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

1. Are you aware of the Sustainable Development Goals? YES/NO/I don't know

2. Which of the following goals did your work specifically target? Please select up to three of the most relevant goals.
    a. GOAL 1: No Poverty
    b. GOAL 2: Zero Hunger
    c. GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being
    d. GOAL 4: Quality Education
    e. GOAL 5: Gender Equality
    f. GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
    g. GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
    h. GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
    i. GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
    j. GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality
    k. GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
    l. GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
    m. GOAL 13: Climate Action
    n. GOAL 14: Life Below Water
    o. GOAL 15: Life on Land
    p. GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
    q. GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal
    r. None of the above

Impact

1. What kind of impact did your project aim to achieve? Please select all that apply.
    a. It was aiming to raise awareness about a conservation issue.
    b. It was aiming to encourage individual community members to take action on a conservation issue.
    c. It was aiming to encourage the local community to collectively take action on a conservation issue.
    d. It was aiming to influence decision-makers at either our organization or in the local community to think or act differently regarding a conservation issue.

e. It was aiming to influence decision-makers beyond our local community, either regionally, nationally or internationally to think or act differently regarding a conservation issue.
f. It was aiming to directly impact conservation (for example a beach clean- up)
g. Other (please specify): TEXT BOX
h. I don't know

2. What kind of impact was your project successful in achieving? Please select all that apply.
    a. We were successful in raising awareness about conservation.
    b. We encouraged individual community members to take action on a conservation issue.
    c. We encouraged the local community to collectively take action on a conservation issue.
    d. We influenced decision-makers at either the organization we worked with or in the local community to think or act differently regarding a conservation issue.
    e. We influenced decision-makers beyond the local community, either regionally, nationally or internationally to think or act differently regarding a conservation issue.
    f. We directly impacted conservation (for example a beach clean-up)
    g. Other (please specify): TEXT BOX
    h. None of the above
    i. I don't know

3. What accomplishment are you most proud of? TEXT BOX

4. What challenges did you face in creating the impact you wanted? TEXT BOX

5. Did your work increase the capacity of the organization you worked to reach its mission?
    a. Definitely yes
    b. Probably yes
    c. May or may not have
    d. Probably no
    e. Definitely no

    Please explain (optional): TEXT BOX

6. Did your work positively contribute to the local community?
    a. Definitely yes
    b. Probably yes
    c. May or may not have
    d. Probably no
    e. Definitely no

    Please explain (optional): TEXT BOX

7. Did your work positively contribute to conservation?
    a. Definitely yes

b. Probably yes
c. May or may not have
d. Probably no
e. Definitely no

Please explain (optional): TEXT BOX

8. How long do you think this positive impact will last?
    a. Less than 6 months
    b. More than 6 months, but less than one year
    c. 1-3 years
    d. 3 years or more
    e. Not applicable

9. Did the project have any other positive impacts on the organization you worked with or on the community that were unrelated to conservation or unexpected? If so, please explain: TEXT BOX

Intergenerational collaboration

1. Did you have the opportunity to work directly with people of different ages as part of your project?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

2. Were you supported by a mentor from the organization you worked as part of your project?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

3. If so, how did your mentor support you? TEXT BOX

4. Were you and the other young participants given the opportunity to:
    a. To make decisions independently?
        i. Yes
        ii. No
        iii. I don't know
        iv. Not applicable
    b. To take risks?
        i. Yes
        ii. No
        iii. I don't know
        iv. Not applicable
    c. To take on real responsibilities that mattered to your organization?
        i. Yes
        ii. No

iii. I don't know
iv. Not applicable

d. To challenge the status quo
   i. Yes
   ii. No
   iii. I don't know
   iv. Not applicable

e. To experiment
   i. Yes
   ii. No
   iii. I don't know
   iv. Not applicable

f. To be creative
   i. Yes
   ii. No
   iii. I don't know
   iv. Not applicable

5. Did you have the opportunity to share your ideas with decision-makers? Please select all that apply:
   a. Yes, I shared my ideas with the staff leadership of the organisation
   b. Yes, I shared my ideas with our board of directors
   c. Yes, I shared my ideas with community leaders
   d. Yes, I shared my ideas with elected officials
   e. No, I did not share my ideas with any decision-makers
   f. Other (please specify): TEXT BOX

6. If yes, how likely it is that these decision-makers:
   a. Listened to your ideas?
      i. Very likely
      ii. Somewhat likely
      iii. Neither likely or unlikely
      iv. Somewhat unlikely
      v. Very unlikely
   b. Took your ideas seriously?
      i. Very likely
      ii. Somewhat likely
      iii. Neither likely or unlikely
      iv. Somewhat unlikely
      v. Very unlikely
   c. Acted on your suggestions?
      i. Very likely
      ii. Somewhat likely
      iii. Neither likely or unlikely
      iv. Somewhat unlikely
      v. Very unlikely

7. Were the contributions that you made recognized by the organization? YES/NO/I don't know

Reflection questions

1. To what extent was your experience positive?
    a. Extremely positive
    b. Somewhat positive
    c. Neither positive nor negative
    d. Somewhat negative
    e. Extremely negative

Indigenous participation disclaimer

This research recognizes the responsibility of Indigenous peoples to preserve and maintain their role as traditional guardians of these ecosystems through the maintenance of their cultures, spiritual beliefs and customary practices. This research respects the integrity, morality and spirituality of the culture, traditions and relationships of the Indigenous communities and aims to avoid the imposition of external conceptions and standards. We recognize that Indigenous communities have the right to exclude and/or keep any information concerning their culture, traditions or spiritual beliefs confidential. Further, we acknowledge the traditional rights of Indigenous peoples to control the way the information they provide is used and accessed.

Are you an Indigenous person? YES/NO/Prefer not to disclose

If yes, is there anything that you would like us to consider when we are handling and processing your responses? TEXT BOX

Are you a member of another historically underrepresented group? YES/NO/Prefer not to disclose

If yes, is there anything that you would like us to consider when we are handling and processing your responses? TEXT BOX

Demographic information

This demographic information will not be linked to your comments above or shared with [HOST ORGANIZATION] or the organization you worked with in a way that would connect you to any specific comments.

1. What organization did you work with? TEXT BOX

2. What was the name of your contact at that organization? TEXT BOX

3. What is your gender?
    a. Female
    b. Male
    c. Please describe:

    d. Prefer not to disclose

4. Do you identify as LGBTQ2S+? YES/NO/Prefer not to disclose

5. Are you differently abled? YES/NO/Prefer not to disclose

6. Are you a person of colour? YES/NO/Prefer not to disclose

7. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
    a. High school
    b. College diploma
    c. University – undergraduate degree
    d. University – masters degree
    e. None of the above

8. Are you currently enrolled as a student?
    a. Yes, I am in high school
    b. Yes, I am in college
    c. Yes, I am in university
    d. No, I am not currently a student

9. Are there any other comments or information relevant to this study you wish to provide: TEXT BOX

10. Would you be willing to participate in a short follow up interview by phone? YES / NO

11. If yes, please provide the following:
    a. Name: TEXT BOX
    b. Email: TEXT BOX
    c. Phone Number: TEXT BOX

Thank you
Thank you for your participation in the [HOST ORGANIZATION] Community Impact Evaluation. If you have any questions about participation in this research study or about the Youth & Innovation Project, please feel free to contact me by phone or email as listed below. Thank you for your assistance with this research study.

Appendix C: Invitation to Participate Email – Young Participants

This is an email template to be sent to community partners and young participants.

[INSERT NAME],

Recently you (and your organization) participated in the [INSERT ORG NAME] youth service (or youth intrapreneurship) program and you indicated in the post-program survey that you were willing to participate in a follow-up interview with researchers from the Youth & Innovation Project at the University of Waterloo.

I am writing with the hope that we can set up a time for that interview.

The main topics of the interview are related to your participation in the youth service program (or youth intrapreneurship), and the impact of the program on the local community, as well on social and environmental issues.

The interview will be 45mins long and can be scheduled at your convenience. You will find here a link to our scheduling software, where you can indicate which date and time work best for you: [INSERT LINK]. The interview will be hosted through Zoom, so you can join the interview through a laptop or you can dial in by phone.

We have also attached an information letter which we encourage you to read.
If there anything we can do to facilitate your participation in this interview or any accessibility needs that you would like to make us aware of please don't hesitate to reach out to me in advance of the interview.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your time,

[INSERT YOUR NAME & EMAIL SIGNATURE]

Attach Appendix D and E to this email.

Appendix D: Information Letter

This information letter should be sent as a PDF with the YouthInn logo at the top of each page, attached to the invitation to participate email.

Title of the study: Youth Service & Intrapreneurship Programs - Impact Study

[INSERT DATE]

Dear [INSERT ORG NAME] community partner, participant or staff,

I am writing to you from the Youth & Innovation Project at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario.

My colleague Dr. Amelia Clarke and I are conducting a study that aims to evaluate the [INSERT ORG NAME] youth service (or youth intrapreneurship) program. This evaluation will focus on the impact of the [INSERT ORG NAME] youth service (or intrapreneurship program on participating organizations, local communities and social and environmental issues.

[INSERT this paragraph for community partners & young participants only]
As part of this research study, you recently filled out a survey because you or your organization participated in the [INSERT ORG NAME] youth service program. At the end of that survey you indicated that you were willing to participate in a follow up interview.

You have been selected to participate in an interview. Neither participating in or deciding not to participate in this interview will affect your relationship with [INSERT ORG NAME]. Participation in this interview is voluntary and will take the form of a 45 minute interview via Zoom and will take place at a mutually convenient time. We will ask you to share your experience and perspectives on your participation in the [INSERT ORG NAME] youth service (or youth intrapreneurship) program. With your permission, the interview will be recorded for transcription purposes only. This recording will only be viewed by the researchers and it will be securing stored to ensure your confidentiality is maintained. Your responses will be collected and analyzed to create a summary report for [INSERT ORG NAME]. Your responses will not be linked to your name or if applicable the name of your organization anywhere in the report, and [INSERT ORG NAME] will not have access to any data that would connect you or if applicable your organization to specific comments. However, if applicable the name of your organization will be included in the report in an appendix indicating which organizations who participated in this study. The data collected in this study may be used in future academic publications or in studies that further explore the impact of youth service (or intrapreneurship) programs, the responses will not be linked to your name or the name of your organization in any future publications. As a result, there is no risk associated with participating in this interview. If you do not wish to participate, you can withdraw from this study anytime up until the data has been analyzed and the report submitted to [INSERT ORG NAME] in [INSERT DATE] and your responses will be deleted. You may also skip any questions in the interview that you do not wish to answer. The information collected from this study will be kept for a period of at least seven years and will be password protected.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #40348).

If you are an Indigenous person and/or representing an Indigenous organization, we would like to assure you that this research recognizes the responsibility of Indigenous peoples to preserve and maintain their role as traditional guardians of these ecosystems through the maintenance of their cultures, spiritual beliefs, and customary practices. This research respects the integrity, morality and spirituality of the culture, traditions and relationships of the Indigenous communities and aims to avoid the imposition of external conceptions and standards. We recognize that the Indigenous communities have the right to exclude and/or keep any information concerning their culture, traditions, or spiritual beliefs confidential. Further, we acknowledge the traditional rights of Indigenous peoples to control the way the information they provide is used and accessed. As such we will include time during in the interview for you to provide us with any comments that you would like us to consider when we handle and process your responses.

If you would like to participate, please follow the link provided in the email sent to you to indicate a time and date that works for you for the interview.

Thank you for your assistance with this research study.

Sincerely,

Ilona Dougherty
Managing Director
Youth & Innovation Project
University of Waterloo
https://uwaterloo.ca/youth-and-innovation/

Appendix E: Consent Form

This should be integrated into the Acuity scheduling software so that consent is received when the interview is scheduled.

Introductory text
This study will focus on evaluating the impact of the youth service programs of Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ocean Wise and the YMCA of Greater Toronto on participating organizations, local communities and social and environmental issues. You were asked to participate in this interview because you participated in a youth service program of one of the three organizations previously listed as a participant, community partner or staff.

Your responses will be collected and analyzed to create a summary report for the organization with whom you participated in a youth service program, as well as contributing to academic research. Your responses will not be linked to your name, or if applicable the name of your organization anywhere in the summary report. Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ocean Wise and the YMCA of Greater Toronto will not have access to any data that would connect you or, if applicable, your organization to specific comments. However, if applicable, the name of your organization will be included in the report in an appendix indicating which organizations participated in this study.

If you do not wish to participate, you can withdraw from this study and your responses will be deleted, anytime up until the data has been analyzed and the summary report is submitted to each of the three organizations in March 2022. You may also skip any questions in the interview that you do not wish to answer.

Consent form
By agreeing to participate in the study you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Dr. Amelia Clarke and Ilona Dougherty of the Youth and Innovation Project at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario. I have had the opportunity to ask questions related to this study and I have received satisfactory answers to my questions and any additional details that I requested. I was informed that participation in this study is voluntary and that I can withdraw my consent by informing the researcher, up until the data has been analyzed and the summary report is submitted to each organization in March 2022.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #40348).

Please check the box to state your agreement:

☐ With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate or if applicable, have my child participate, in this research study.

☐ I agree to my interview being recorded on Zoom to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

☐ I understand that the data collected in this study may be used in future academic publications or in studies that further explore the impact of youth service programs.

☐ I understand that my responses will not be linked to my name or the name of my organization in the summary report or in any future publications.

☐ I understand that if applicable the name of my organization will be listed at the end of the summary report along with the names of all organizations who were interviewed.

Interviewee Name:

Interviewee/Parent or Guardian Digital Signature (if over 18 and living in Quebec or over 16 and living anywhere else in Canada):

Parent' or Guardian's Name (if under 18 and living in Quebec or under 18 and living anywhere else in Canada):

Parent or Guardian Email (if under 18 and living in Quebec or under 18 and living anywhere else in Canada):

Parent or Guardian Phone Number (if under 18 and living in Quebec or under 18 and living anywhere else in Canada):

Date:

Indigenous participation disclaimer

This research recognizes the responsibility of Indigenous peoples to preserve and maintain their role as traditional guardians of these ecosystems through the maintenance of their cultures, spiritual beliefs and customary practices. This research respects the integrity, morality and spirituality of the culture, traditions and relationships of the Indigenous communities and aims to avoid the imposition of external conceptions and standards. We recognize that Indigenous communities have the right to exclude and/or keep any information concerning their culture, traditions or spiritual beliefs confidential. Further, we acknowledge the traditional rights of Indigenous peoples to control the way the information they provide is used and accessed.

Do you identify as an Indigenous person or do you represent an Indigenous organization?

If so, is there anything that you would like us to consider when we are handling and processing your responses?

Are you a member of another historically underrepresented group or are you part of an organization that represents another historically underrepresented group?

If so, there anything that you would like us to consider when we are handling and processing your responses?

Is there anything we can do to facilitate your participation in this interview or any accessibility needs that you would like to make us aware of?

Appendix F: Reminder Email and Text Message

Hi [INSERT NAME],

We noticed that you were not able to attend the interview [INSERT TIME OF MISSED INTERVIEW]. Would it be possible for you to reschedule a time at your convenience? Here is a link where you can do so: [INSERT LINK]

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Best,

[INSERT NAME AND SIGNATURE]

Appendix G: Community Impact Evaluation, Interview Guide

April 2021

Introduction

The Youth & Innovation Project's community impact research and youth intrapreneurship research aim to measure the impact of young people's projects carried out as part of youth service and youth intrapreneurship programs respectively, have on the community partners and communities they engage with as well as determining whether the programs are leading to meaningful and lasting environmental, social and economic change.

In advance of the interviews being conducted as outlined in this guide, a post-program survey or in the case of the youth intrapreneurship research, a pre-program and post-program survey, have been filled out by both young participants and community partners involved in these two programs.

This interview guide describes the follow-up interviews that will be conducted in order to gather qualitative data with a select number of host organizations, community partners, and young participants.

Definitions

Host organizations: The organizations who hosted the youth service or youth intrapreneurship program: Ocean Wise, YMCA of Greater Toronto, Canadian Wildlife Federation and St. Paul's University College GreenHouse.

Community partners: The local community organizations that worked with young participant(s) on their project for a minimum of 5 hours. The organizations will have filled out the survey and opted in to participating in an interview.

Young participants: The young people who were participants of the youth service or youth intrapreneurship program. The young people will have filled out the survey and opted in to participating in an interview.

Interview participant selection

Those who filled out the survey were asked at the end of the survey if they would be open to participating in an interview. The pool of potential interview participants will be those young people and community partners who indicated their willingness to participate in an interview and provided their contact information, as well as a select number of staff from the host organizations that are hosting a youth service or youth intrapreneurship program. A list of staff from each host organization will be provided by the host organization. These staff will not have filled out a survey.

The YouthInn Program Coordinator will work with the interviewers to determine the number of interviews to be conducted.

From the young participants and community partners who opt-in to the interviews, those who are selected to be interviewed will be selected using the following criteria:

- Diversity characteristics in the case of young participants (age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, education);
- Diversity in type of organization (size, social or environmental issue addressed, population targeted or represented) in the case of organizations;
- Regional diversity; urban vs. rural;
- Diversity in the type of project carried out; and
- Diversity in the type of results achieved e.g., it is important to ensure that projects that were unsuccessful in achieving impact are included as often as projects that were successful in achieving impact.

When it comes to interviewing staff from the host organizations, the organization will provide a list of potential staff to be interviewed and then those who are selected to be interviewed will be selected using the following criteria:

- Regional diversity; and
- Those with the most experience supporting projects.

Once candidates for interviews are selected, record their names and contact information in the tracking sheet and in partnership with the YouthInn Program Coordinator keep this sheet up to date throughout the interview process: See YouthInn Program Coordinator for link to tracking sheet.

Setting up interviews

The following steps should be taken to set up the interviews:

1. For the community impact research we will be using Acuityscheduling.com to schedule interviews. The YouthInn Program Coordinator will set up this platform for you and coordinate with any other students or staff who are conducting interviews at the same time as you are. The participants will be asked to fill out the consent form (Appendix D) as part of the scheduling process.
2. To carry out the interviews, for the community impact research we will be using Zoom. The YouthInn Program Coordinator will set up Zoom for you to use.
3. For the community impact research once Acuity scheduling and Zoom are set up and a list of interview participants has been determined, the YouthInn Program Coordinator will send out an individual email to each potential interview participant (see Appendix A and B). The information letter (Appendix C) will be attached to that email as a PDF. If a participant does not respond to their first email, the YouthInn Program Coordinator will send a reminder email one week later. If a participant doesn't respond or chooses not to be interviewed another participant will be selected using the criteria above.
4. For the community impact research, once an interview is scheduled, Acuity will automatically send out a calendar invite with the Zoom link and then the YouthInn Program Coordinator will send out a reminder to the participant the day before to remind them of the interview.

Taking notes, recording the interview & tech check
All interviews should be recorded on Zoom so that they can be transcribed.

For the community impact research during the interview you should also take notes. These notes should capture overall impressions, detailed notes regarding content are not necessary given that we will be transcribing the interviews. Comments about body language or tone are also helpful to keep track of. For example "they seemed really uncomfortable when I asked that question" is helpful to note.

Before the interview, make sure to test Zoom to ensure you know how to record the interview and how to enable audio transcription. Ensure you have set the session to be recorded in advance. The YouthInn Program Coordinator The YouthInn Program Coordinator will download the recording and files from the Zoom Cloud, and will let you know where the recording and the transcript should be saved. Once the YouthInn Program Coordinator confirms with you that the files are available on the OneDrive, proceed to name the video, audio and text files using the following name format: AbbriviatedNameoftheProgramNameoftheInterviewee – date – typeofdocument. For example: CIRJaneSmith-April252021-zoomuneditedtranscript

Once the interview is done, edit the recording transcript from Zoom using the below format. Make sure to edit the recording transcript as a new document, keeping the original transcript from Zoom.

- Full name of interviewee and organization aligned to the left
- Full name of interviewer and date aligned to the right
- Font: Arial 12; Line Spacing 1.15
- When interviewer is speaking, format the text in bold and start with the interviewer's name initials followed by a colon (e.g., **VCC: What was the impact of the program?**
- When the interviewee is speaking, format the text starting with the interviewee's name initials followed by a colon (e.g., VCC: The impact was…). (See format sample provided by the YouthInn Program Coordinator).

All written notes should be saved. The YouthInn staff team will let you know where the notes should be saved. A word document with your notes should be saved with the following name format: AbbriviatedNameoftheProgramNameoftheInterviewee – date – typeofdocument. For example: CIRJaneSmith-April252021-notes.

Tips for interviewers
Below are some tips for you to keep in mind as you conduct the interviews:

- **Stable internet & a quiet location:** Ensure you have stable internet and a quiet location where you can conduct your interviews. If either are any issue, please let the YouthInn Program Coordinator know and they can support you to make necessary arrangements.
- **Avoid subjective comments:** Avoid comments such as 'good answer'. Stay neutral in any reactions and comments you make. For example: 'Thank you for sharing that' or 'I appreciate your comments' are appropriately neutral responses.

- **Be patient:** Be sure to allow for different pacing of an interview when working with individuals from diverse communities. Not allowing enough time for replies or cutting someone off will decrease the chances of them being candid and sharing their thoughts fully.
- **Keep it professional:** Remember you are representing the Youth & Innovation Project and the University of Waterloo when you are conducting these interviews. Make sure to dress in business casual, ensure your background is relatively neutral and be kind to and respectful of your interviewee.
- **For further reading on how to conduct interviews we recommend:**
    - Cormac McGrath, Per J. Palmgren & Matilda Liljedahl (2019) Twelve tips for conducting qualitative research interviews, Medical Teacher, 41:9, 1002 1006, DOI: 10.1080/0142159X.2018.1497149
    - Bojana Lobe, David Morgan, Kim A. Hoffman (2020) Qualitative Data Collection in an Era of Social Distancing. International Journal of Qualitative Methods. Vol 19, doi.org/10.1177/1609406920937875

Interview wrap up

Once the interview is complete make sure to do the following:

- Let the YouthInn Program Coordinator that the interview is complete so they can download the Zoom recording, and send the participant a thank you email (Appendix F).
- Make sure the Zoom recording is saved and confirm that the recording worked. The videos and audio files should be saved with the following name format: AbbriviatedNameoftheProgramNameoftheInterviewee – date – typeofdocument. For example: CIRJaneSmith-April252021-Zoomrecording.
- Make sure the raw file of the Zoom transcript is saved with the following name format: AbbriviatedNameoftheProgramNameoftheInterviewee – date – typeofdocument. For example: CIRJaneSmith-April252021-Zoomuneditedtranscript.
- Edit the Zoom transcript as described above, and make sure the edited file of the Zoom transcript is saved with the following name format: AbbriviatedNameoftheProgramNameoftheInterviewee – date – typeofdocument. For example: CIRJaneSmith-April252021-Zoomeditedtranscript.
- Review your notes and clarify anything that would be difficult for someone who did not participate in the interview to understand, then save these notes. A word document with your notes should be saved with the following name format: AbbriviatedNameoftheProgramNameoftheInterviewee – date – typeofdocument. For example: CIRJaneSmith-April252021-notes.
- Ensure interviewee information in tracking form is complete: See YouthInn Program Coordinator for link to tracking sheet.

The YouthInn staff team will let you know where the above files should be saved.

Interview script – Young participants

Below is the script and interview questions to be used when you are carrying out interviews with young participants.

This script assumes that the participant if they are over 18 in Quebec or over 16 in the rest of Canada or their parents if they are under those ages have given consent through the Acuity scheduling software. If that is not the case, please ensure the participant is sent the consent form (Appendix E) by email and fills it out ahead of time. ***You should NOT conduct an interview if consent has not been received in written form in advance.***

Confirm that Zoom is recording the interview as programmed before you begin reading this script, there should be red dot in the left-hand corner of your Zoom screen and ensure you have enabled audio transcription. Ensure you have the image for question 13 (Appendix G.1) ready to be shared when that question is answered.

1. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

Before we get started, is there anything I can do to facilitate your participation in this interview?

Do you have any accessibility needs that you would like to make me aware of?

This interview is being conducted as part of a study by the Youth & Innovation Project at the University of Waterloo. I will share the link to the Youth & Innovation Project's website in the chat in case you would like to learn more about their work: https://uwaterloo.ca/youth-and-innovation/

My name is [INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]. And I am an [INSERT YOUR ROLE & EXPLAIN YOUR AFFILIATION WITH YOUTHINN HERE] with the Youth & Innovation Project.

The aim of this study is to measure the impact of the projects young participants like yourself carried out as part of the [INSERT ORG NAME HERE] youth service (or youth intrapreneurship) program on community partners and communities as well as determining whether these projects led to meaningful and lasting environmental, social and economic change.

I want to remind you that this interview is anonymous, and it is being recorded for transcription purposes only. You can also keep your camera turned off if you wish to.

2. Consent

Read the following and request verbal assent (they are not able to give full consent because they are underage) from the participant ONLY if the participant is under 18 and lives in Quebec or is under 16 and lives anywhere in the rest of Canada and written consent has already been received from the parent or guardian. Gaining assent from the participant assures we are following a youth-friendly process where the participant as well as their parent or guardian both agree to the interview.

You parent or guardian has already given their consent for you to participate in this interview but we also want to ensure that you agree as well. Please state your agreement to the following:

- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this research study.
- I agree to my interview being recorded via Zoom to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.
- I understand that the data collected in this study may be used in future academic publications or in studies that further explore the impact of youth programs and that my responses will not be linked to my name in any future publications. I agree to have the data from this study used in future studies or publications.

Do you identify as an Indigenous person?

If yes, is there anything that you would like us to consider when we are handling and processing your responses?

Are you a member of another historically underrepresented group?

If yes, there anything that you would like us to consider when we are handling and processing your responses?

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

3. Interview questions

The following are the questions to be asked as part of this interview. If you feel like you need additional information from a participant, you can ask additional questions such as 'Can you tell me more about....?'. If you feel like a participant has already answered a question before you ask it you can skip it.

The interview should last no longer than 45 mins. Keep a close eye on the time throughout the interview to ensure you don't go overtime.

1. What is your name?
2. Tell me about the project itself:
    a. What were the main goals of the project?
    b. Over what period of time did it take place?
    c. Was the project remote, in person, or mixed?
    d. Who was involved?
    e. What types of interactions did you have with the community organization you were working with?
3. Tell me about your expectations of what you thought it would be like working on this project before it started?
4. What challenges did the project face along the way?
5. How were these challenges overcome or if they were not overcome, why not?
6. What about the project are you most proud of?
7. What impact did the project have on the organization you worked with?

8. What impact did the project have on the broader local community?
9. What impact did the project have on social and environmental issues in general?
10. Are you familiar with the Sustainable Development Goals?
11. I am going to share my screen to show you the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. *At this point in the interview share your screen with the interviewee (Appendix E).* The Sustainable Development Goals are an international framework from the United Nations adopted by 193 countries. The mission of the Sustainable Development Goals is to achieve a sustainable future for all by 2030. I will give you some time for you to go through the SDGs, and once you are done, could you please tell me which SDG do you think the project had a positive impact on?
12. I am going to share my screen to show you the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. *At this point in the interview share your screen with the interviewee (Appendix E).* I will give you some time for you to go through the Sustainable Development Goals, and once you are done, could you please tell me which Sustainable Development Goal do you think the project had a positive impact on?
13. What was the collaboration between you and any other young people you worked on the project with and the adults involved like?
14. What about the collaboration between the young people involved in the project and the adults involved? do you think it led to positive outcomes of the project? What about the collaboration between the young people involved in the project and the adults involved? do you think led to any challenges you faced?
15. What did you find most frustrating about working on this project?
16. What did you find most satisfying working on this project?
17. Was there anything unexpected that you learned through the course of this project?
18. What would you do differently next time?
19. Is this your first volunteer experience?
    a. If yes, what made you want to volunteer for this service program?
    b. If no, what elements of your first experience made you want to take on this latest volunteer experience?
20.
    a. If yes to Question 19, how did this experience further your understanding of having a positive impact through volunteering?
    b. If no to Question 19, how did your first experience further your understanding of having a positive impact through volunteering?
21. Do you have any future plans to volunteer?

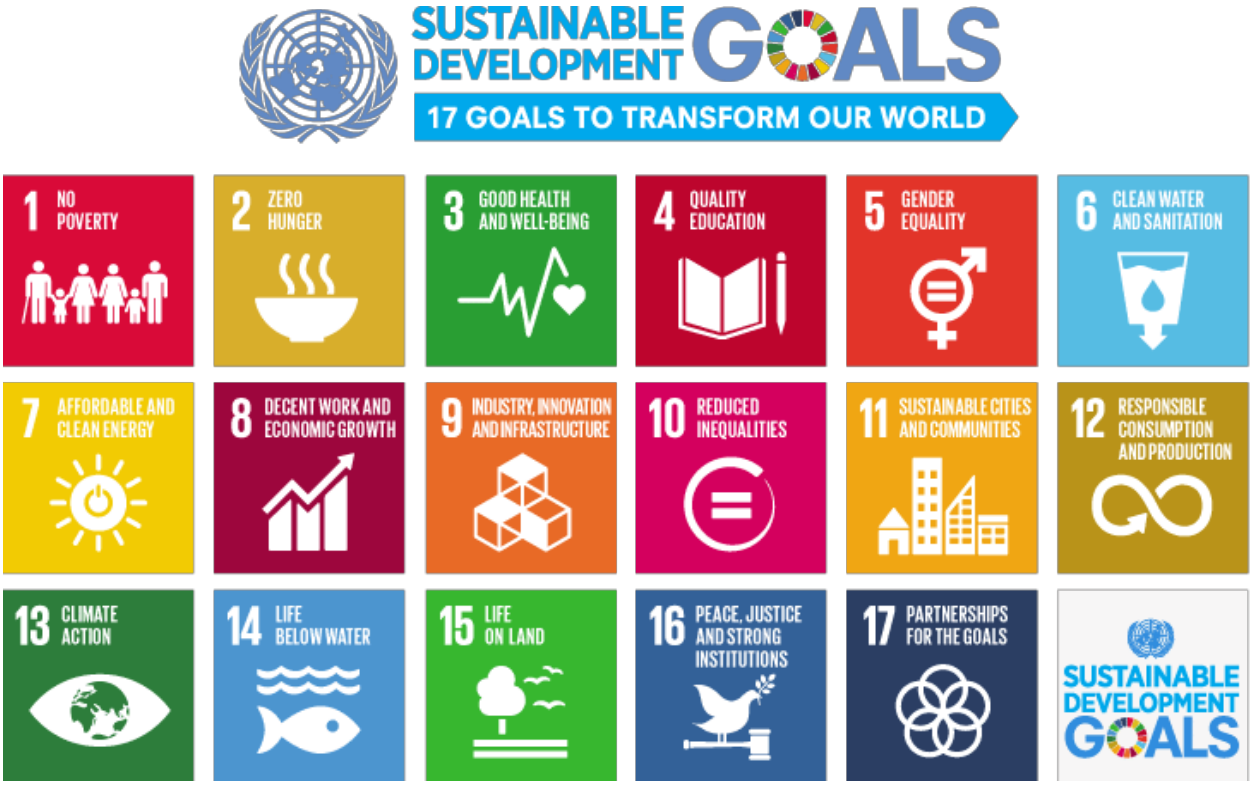
Thank you so much for answering my questions. Do you have any questions for me?

If you have any questions in the coming days don't hesitate to reach out to the Youth & Innovation Project team and we will be happy to answer them for you.

Thanks again for your participation in this interview.

End of interview.

Appendix G.1: Image of the SDGs



Appendix H: Thank You Email

This email thank you should be sent after an interview is conducted.

[INSERT NAME],

Thank you for taking the time to participate in an interview for the Youth Service & Intrapreneurship Programs - Impact Study.

We very much appreciate your time and insights.

The data collected will contribute to a better understanding of the impact of the [INSERT ORG NAME] youth service program had on participating organizations, local communities, and social and environmental issues.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #40348).

Your responses will not be linked to your name or the name of your organization anywhere in the report, and [INSERT ORG NAME] will not have access to any data that would connect your name or your organization to specific comments. However, the name of your organization, if applicable, will be included in the report in an appendix indicating which organizations completed the interviews. The data collected in this study may be used in future academic publications or in studies that further explore the impact of youth service programs, the responses will not be linked to your name or the name of your organization in any future publications. The information collected from this study will be kept for a period of at least seven years and will be password protected.

If you have any questions about the study or wish to withdraw your participation at any point up until the data has been analyzed and the report submitted to [INSERT ORG NAME] in [INSERT DATE] and your responses will be deleted, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you again for your participation!

Sincerely,

[INSERT YOUR NAME & EMAIL SIGNATURE]