Feelings of Obligation Related to Volunteering as Serious Leisure

Within a Communitarian Framework

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 required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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ABSTRACT

This research explores feelings of obligation to volunteer, which lie at the interface of volunteering as simultaneously individual and collective and challenge traditional understandings of volunteering as leisure. The study examined volunteering within the context of communitarianism, particularly how collective outcomes of volunteering are related to feelings of obligation to volunteer. Phase one of this research focused on scale creation of a measure assessing feelings of obligation in the context of volunteerism. Using exploratory factor analyses of data from a student sample, this first phase yielded two measures: an 18-item *Obligation to Volunteer as Commitment* measure (OVC), encompassing dimensions of reward, affective attachment, flexibility, and side bets; and a 14-item *Obligation to Volunteer as Duty* measure (OVD), encompassing the dimensions of expectation, burden, and constraint. In phase two, survey research was conducted with 300 volunteers at ten community organizations. These new measures were used to examine relationships between obligation to volunteer and the value orientations of individualism and collectivism, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, and the community characteristics of sense of community and social cohesion. Both individualism and collectivism were associated with the commitment but not the duty dimension of feelings of obligation, and both value orientations, but particularly individualism, was linked to serious leisure. Serious leisure very closely aligned with the commitment aspect of obligation as well as sense of community and social cohesion, thus emerging as a possible pathway for nurturing sense of community in a culture of individualism. Correlation and hierarchical regression analyses link the commitment aspect of obligation to sense of community and social cohesion. Feelings of duty to volunteer, in contrast, were inversely related to sense of community. Thus, the nature of feelings of obligation related to volunteering as commitment or duty have significant implications for the collective outcomes of volunteering, particularly sense of community. Also notable are the strong theoretical and empirical relationships between the OVC scale and serious leisure, which suggest that the newly-developed commitment scale could be considered a measure of the agreeable obligation that accompanies serious leisure pursuits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To the people and places of Guelph, Ontario,

my home,

where my understanding and regard for sense of community was nurtured

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Volunteering is often celebrated for keeping volunteers healthy, happy, befriended, and linked to the community (Thoits & Hewitt, 2001; Volunteer Canada, n.d.; Wilson & Musick, 1999). Beyond its benefits for individuals, volunteering is commonly considered a salve for all sorts of community ills, in particular because volunteering brings people together in pursuit of joint goals, providing opportunities for citizenship by involving community members in acts of creation, service, advocacy and celebration (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1996; Omoto & Snyder, 2002; Putnam, 2000). Research about the benefits of volunteerism resonates with my own experiences, which have been positive enough to lead me to study volunteering as my vocation. Is there any reason, then, to be critical of volunteering? Why and how might we look more closely at volunteer experiences and their association with community health?

At the root of the positive outcomes attributed to volunteering are volunteers' choices to become involved and to continue to volunteer. We would not likely expect the same personal and collective benefits from, say, forced labour, as we have come to expect from volunteering. Some might suggest that volunteering is distinct in its defining feature, the freely chosen nature of involvement. Leisure was, early on, associated with choice and freedom. While these ideas continue to figure prominently in conceptualizations of leisure, scholars have come to recognize choice and freedom as complex and abstract ideas that do not always translate well into human experience, which is complicated by cultural norms and expectations, family responsibilities, time constraints, and all sorts of other factors (Shaw, 1985; Stebbins, 2005a; Watkins & Bond, 2007). Taken together, these factors suggest there are strings attached to decisions about our leisure time, including whether and how often we volunteer. Further, because volunteering occurs in the public sphere, it is inherently influenced by levels of community need and the alternative options for servicing these needs (Arai, 2004). Volunteering, then, is not unequivocally associated with freedom and choice, nor with rewards and benefits. In this context, the concept of *obligation* comes to mind as a starting point for thinking about volunteering as an experience reflecting degrees of choice and sometimes feelings of burden. This research is an effort to understand feelings of

obligation in the context of volunteering, and to link these feelings to the community-focused outcomes of volunteering and the experience of volunteering as leisure.

Social and Political Context

While volunteer efforts provide substantial support to organizations working in fields as diverse as recreation, health, social welfare, organized religion, culture and the environment, non-profit organizations are experiencing increasing difficulties recruiting volunteers and maintaining dynamic and skilled volunteer forces (Hall et al., 2004). Between 1997 and 2000, the percentage of Canadians who volunteered decreased almost five percent, from 31.4% to 26.7% (Hall, McKeown, & Roberts, 2001).[1] Nonprofit organizations attribute their increasing difficulties with volunteer recruitment to changing values, particularly among youth, as well as increased employer demands and debt loads that lead to increased time spent working (Hall et al., 2003). In addition, when individuals volunteer, they are increasingly interested in specific, short-term projects, and thus it can be difficult to find volunteers to take on ongoing or leadership responsibilities (Hall et al., 2003; Hall, Lasby, Gumulka & Tryon, 2006). Providing the bulk of volunteer support in Canada are a proportionately small group of volunteers who are intensely involved, devoting hundreds of hours each year to volunteer activities (Hall et al., 2006; Reed & Selbee, 2001; Scott, 2003). In fact, just 10% of all volunteers (4.5% of all Canadians) gave 470 or more hours (per volunteer) in 2004 and together contributed 52% of the volunteer hours (Hall et al., 2006). This heavy reliance on a small portion of the population for volunteer support is a source of vulnerability for non-profits, as even small changes in the number of individuals volunteering can have pronounced impacts (Hall et al., 2001, 2003).

Non-profit organizations are tremendous community resources, as spaces for experimentation, innovation, and relationship-building (Bellah et al., 1996; Coleman, 1988; Van Til, 1988). These organizations, however, are not immune to the changes that are sweeping our economic and political arenas. Over the last several decades, the non-profit sector has become increasingly stretched by community needs as well as government

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[1] A more recent study found higher levels of volunteering, but these values are not comparable with earlier statistics because of changes in how volunteering was defined and data collected (Hall et al., 2006).

demands for increased internal administration. The Canadian federal and provincial governments have decreased their roles in social service provision, and the non-profit sector and its volunteers have acted to fill these gaps (Drache, 1995; Hall & Reed, 1998; Harvey, 2005; Mitchell, 2001). For example, in 1995, welfare benefits were cut by 21.5% by the Ontario government, along with programs providing daycare subsidies to single parents (Hall & Reed). Even as government downloading leads to the need for non-profit organizations to meet increased social welfare needs, government funding for these groups through contracts and grants, when available, comes increasingly with cumbersome reporting requirements that often monopolize staff and volunteer time (Brown & Troutt, 2004; Canada West Foundation, 1999; Eakin, 2004; Fabricant & Fisher, 2002; Scott, 2003). Again, these funds are typically project-driven, and there is little financial support for core programs associated with, for example, attracting and retaining volunteers (Scott; Hall et al., 2003).

There is some evidence in the literature that the strain on non-profit organizations is trickling down to their volunteers. A study of volunteers involved in watershed conservation classified over 75% of the volunteers as experiencing high burnout related to low levels of personal accomplishment (Bryon & Curtis, 2002). In addition, a study of Australian volunteer rugby coaches reported that many coaches felt tied to their volunteer roles because of a dearth of individuals wiling to take over these responsibilities (Taylor, Darcy, Hoye, & Cuskelly, 2006). Sharpe's (2006) research with a children's softball league suggested that attracting and sustaining volunteer involvement was a significant challenge for this volunteer-led league. Further, some research has shown that, at high levels of volunteering, the psychological benefits of volunteering may be impaired because of the overbearing responsibility volunteers feel for the success and continuation of the causes and organizations they serve (Windsor, Anstey, & Rodgers, 2008). In this study with older adult volunteers by Windsor and his colleagues, approximately five percent of study participants were classified as very high level volunteers in terms of time spent volunteering, giving in excess of 800 hours per year, or over 15 hours per week.

The increasing demands on non-profit organizations and volunteers illustrate a wider societal and political trend of valuing individual rights and personal interests above collective goals and responsibilities. Communitarianism is a political and social philosophy that aims to counter this shift, by advocating that individual responsibility and personal interests be

balanced with social responsibility. Bell (1993) describes communitarianism as a form of political thought that "allows people to experience their life as bound up with the good of the communities which constitute their identity" (p. 93). Communitarians value nonprofit organizations for their roles in building participative and healthy communities, and suggest volunteering is an integral component of community life (Bell; Gardner, 1995; Shaw, 2007). In the proposed research, communitarianism provides a relevant framework for examining obligation and volunteering in communities.

Introduction to the Conceptual Framework

The impetus for this research grew from considering volunteering as both an individual activity and a community structure (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). Although an activity performed by individuals, volunteering is an activity embedded in community, as communities provide both the physical setting and opportunities for volunteer contributions. There is much research that explores the individual nature of volunteering, studying such concepts as individuals' motivations, satisfaction and benefits related to volunteering (i.e., Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Wilson & Musick, 1997, 2000). While research related to volunteering has largely focused on these types of concepts, volunteering is increasingly viewed as a means of building, nurturing and sustaining community (Arai & Pedlar; Bellah et al., 1996). Volunteering in this context is an activity that is mutually beneficial for communities and for the individuals that comprise them. Further, communitarians suggest that volunteering is a key way that individuals act on their concern for the public good.

The concepts of *individualism* and *collectivism* provide a framework for exploring individuals' understanding of their relationships to their communities. The terms of collectivism and individualism are often used to refer to individual or cultural value systems giving priority to individual choice, freedom, and independence, or to group membership, identity and goals, respectively (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Shulruf, Hattie, & Dixon, 2007; Triandis, 1995). How might these different value orientations influence feelings of obligation to volunteer?

When there are shortages of volunteers to fulfill important functions, it seems possible that those whose personal value systems give particular emphasis to shared values and goals will feel a particular impetus to volunteer. When they volunteer, they may do so from a sense

of commitment to community. At the same time, it is possible that some volunteers may feel burdened by their volunteer tasks, especially given the political and social climate of increasing need and decreasing numbers of volunteers willing to make long-term commitments (Hall et al., 2003, 2006; Harvey, 2005). Thus, volunteer activities may be imbued with a sense of duty to contribute.

In leisure research, volunteering is often studied as a form of *serious leisure*, a theory that again encompasses both the individual and community realms. Stebbins (1992, 2007) coined the term "serious leisure" to refer to hobbyist, amateur and volunteer pursuits characterized by the acquisition of advanced skills and abilities through perseverance, leading to personal and social rewards and strong identification with the pursuit and its social world. Serious leisure is associated with strong personal commitment, required to build the special skills and abilities that characterize serious leisure and often achieved through perseverance. At the same time, Stebbins describes serious leisure as often associated with strong commitment to a community, characterized by the adoption of a unique ethos of common attitudes, values and practices acquired through involvement in a unique social world. This social world can lead to ties that act as strong "side bets", which spur ongoing commitment in an individual's serious leisure pursuits (Buchanan, 1985; Cuskelly, Harrington, & Stebbins, 2002/2003). Here, again, the individual and social aspects of leisure overlap.

Perseverance and the pursuit of advanced skills and abilities imply the importance of commitment as an element of serious leisure. In fact, commitment is part of what distinguishes serious leisure from other forms of leisure, notably casual leisure. In the context of serious leisure, commitment is understood as a feeling that, while imploring action, is flexible, agreeable and rewarding in nature (Stebbins, 2000). When individuals volunteer, they may be committed to an activity itself, to others who share their values or participate in their social world, or to the pursuit of a common good.

In addition to fulfilling important social welfare needs, volunteering is celebrated because it brings people together in pursuit of shared goals. The concepts of *sense of community* and *social cohesion* capture the intangible yet significant contributions of volunteering to community belongingness and contribution. Relevant to both geographic and relational communities, sense of community is an individual's feeling that she is an influential member of a community—that in turn influences her, provides reinforcement through shared

values leading to needs fulfillment, and provides a shared emotional connection (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The term social cohesion describes communities characterized by common values, identity and solidarity, resulting in a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006; Kearns & Forrest, 2000). Within socially cohesive communities, overlapping affective networks serve as a unifying force (Jaffe & Quark, 2006).

Sense of community and social cohesion are often linked to volunteering (i.e., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Bellah et al., 1996; Putnam, 2000). It seems an intuitive link, particularly when the social benefits of volunteering as serious leisure are considered: sense of group accomplishment, sense of contributing to the development of a group, and social attraction, which is the enjoyment derived from participating in an activity with others (Stebbins, 2007). It seems implicit that these social rewards are associated with volunteering as a leisure activity. In other words, it is easy to see how sense of community and social cohesion can be linked to volunteering as a form of committed leisure. It is less obvious how volunteering, when performed from feelings of duty, might be linked to the social rewards associated with serious leisure, sense of community, and social cohesion. It was these different aspects of feelings of obligation to volunteer and their relationships to serious leisure, social cohesion and sense of community that this research aimed to explore.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to examine volunteering within the context of communitarianism, particularly in terms of how collective outcomes of volunteer activity are related to feelings of obligation to volunteer. Communitarianism in this study was understood as a social philosophy with a focus on the common good, on balancing rights and obligations, and on active community participation (Gardner, 1995; Sandel, 1998). Individualist and collectivist orientations were explored as two related but distinct value systems that may influence obligation to volunteer.

Because there were no established tools designed to measure feelings of obligation in a leisure context, the first phase of this research focused on the creation of such a scale in the context of volunteerism. Subsequently, this research examined the relationships between

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feelings of obligation to volunteer and sense of community, social cohesion, serious leisure, individualism, and collectivism.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed in this study were:

- How do volunteers' collective and individualist orientations influence their feelings of obligation related to volunteering?
- How do feelings of obligation to volunteer influence volunteers' sense of community and their perceived sense of social cohesion?
- How do feelings of obligation to volunteer influence volunteers' experience of volunteering as serious leisure?
- How are the value orientations of collectivism and individualism related to the experience of volunteering as serious leisure?
- How are feelings of obligation to volunteer influenced by characteristics such as length and number of volunteer commitments, and demographic characteristics such as education and income?

Organization of This Dissertation

This first chapter provided a context and rationale for this research and an introduction to the conceptual framework on which it is based. Chapter One also articulated the purpose of this research and the research questions explored. Chapter Two introduces the theoretical framework that framed this research, and reviews the individual concepts and culminating conceptual framework. Chapter Three outlines the methods used to carry out this study and address the research questions. Chapter Four describes Phase I of this research, which involved development of two measures of feelings of obligation to volunteer, one focused on the commitment dimension of obligation and a second focused on the duty dimension. Reflections on the scale development process are shared at the conclusion of this chapter. Chapter Five describes the findings of Phase II of this research, where the newly-developed scales and other instruments were used in a survey with community volunteers. Chapter Six discusses the findings of Phase II, particularly in the context of the research questions. In Chapter Seven, I reflect on the experience of volunteering as suggested by the research

findings, and contextualize the research findings by discussing their meaning within current sociopolitical, theoretical, and research frameworks.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature that informed this study and particularly its theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The previous chapter introduced communitarianism as a social and political philosophy whose tenets align with many of the concepts of interest in this research. Building on this brief introduction to communitarianism, this chapter begins with an exploration of communitarian thought, outlining how this political philosophy influences social structure and function. In doing so, this section grounds the research in a theoretical framework of communitarian social philosophy. Next, literature related to concepts central to the proposed research are reviewed – volunteering, individualism, collectivism, serious leisure, obligation, sense of community and social cohesion. This chapter culminates with the introduction of a conceptual framework emphasizing the relationships between these concepts.

Theoretical Framework

Communitarianism is a political and social philosophy that aims to counter the individualism that underlies Western societies by emphasizing a balance between individual and collective goals and values (Sandel, 1998). Communitarian thought has implications for social and political structure and functioning, as well as for understanding the relationship between self and community.

Communitarianism

As a political philosophy, communitarianism emerged as a corollary to the liberalism underlying Western societies, and particularly its focus on individual choice and liberty. Communitarians suggest that social justice is based not just on maintaining individual rights, but on positioning those rights within the context of the common good (Sandel, 1998).

Philosophically, the debate between liberals and communitarians is a debate about whether individual rights or the common good should form the basis for decisions about fairness and justice. Liberal political philosophers such as Rawls (1973) and Kant (1964) advocate for the priority of right over good, suggesting that justice and fairness are based on ensuring choice and liberty through individual rights. Rawls, in his book *A Theory of Justice,* describes the liberal position as advocating individual rights as supremely important and thus

not to be overridden by concerns about general welfare. Rawls describes justice as achieved when rights are distributed from behind a "veil of ignorance", such that distribution occurs without knowledge of individuals' status or circumstances (p. 136). Thus, liberalists such as Rawls advocate for a society that is neutral or value-free in its conception of justice. Sandel (1998) writes: "[a]s a straightforward moral claim, the priority of right over good means that principles of right invariably outweigh considerations of welfare" (p. 17).

In contrast to the liberals' exaltation of individual rights and their priority over the common good, communitarians question whether it is possible to uphold rights without an understanding of what is good. Sandel (1998) writes: "[t]hose who dispute the priority of the right argue that justice is relative to the good, not independent from it" (p. 186). According to communitarian thought, "rights depend for their justification on the moral importance of the ends they serve" (Sandel, p. xi), and thus rights are not inherent because they further individual choice and liberty, but rather are seen as a way of pursuing the common good. Justice is defined in the context of the common good, and thus individual rights are tempered with concern for others. Sandel writes: "Are we as moral agents bound only by the ends and roles we choose for ourselves, or can we be sometimes be obligated to fulfill certain ends we have not chosen?" (p. 186). While still upholding individual rights, communitarian thought links justice and the common good and thus binds individuals to others in their community through mutual obligation to the common good.

Communitarianism as a Theory of Social Structure and Function

Communitarians aim to temper individual choice with concern for the common good, and therefore see both independence and interdependence as foundational. The close relationships that lead to interdependence necessitate a focus on the common good, in contrast to liberal thought and its sole emphasis on the rights of the individual (Bell, 1993). Communitarians balance values of independence and freedom with concern for the public good. This value system implies specific ways of organizing and understanding both the structure and function of communities and relationships between community members.

Communitarianism and community.

To speak of a community is to allude to a group of people who share something in common that binds them to one another. Of the shared values that unite members of a community, communitarians consider the common good to be the most fundamental. Avineri

and De-Shalit (1992) write: "[t]he community, as a body with some common values, norms, and goals, in which each member regards the common goals as her own, is a good in itself. Communitarians argue that it is morally good that the self be constituted by its moral ties" (p. 7).

Communities are commonly defined as either geographic or relational; that is, bound at least partially through their common space or common interests, respectively. Communities are sometimes defined very broadly, such that even very weak ties can be understood as underlying the formation of a community. Gardner (1995) suggests a rather more rigorous, communitarian definition of community, which encompasses both geographic and relational communities. He describes the six components of community as:

1. *wholeness incorporating diversity*, such that communities appreciate and value pluralism while finding some shared common ground;

2. *shared values* and active pursuit of those values so that a values framework is continually built and reinforced;

3. *caring, trust, and teamwork*, which fosters cooperation, connectedness, and interdependence;

4. *participation* by many individuals, sharing leadership and support roles in a truly collaborative manner;

5. *affirmation*, manifested as a continual building of community morale through celebration;

6. *institutional arrangements for community maintenance*, with responsibility for maintenance shared by many community members.

According to Gardner's (1995) conceptualization, geographic communities are comprised of overlapping social and organizational frameworks, including those of relational communities. Bell (1993) uses the term *constitutional* to refer to the many communities to which an individual belongs. In other words, while people might interact within many communities, their own communities are those that contribute to their self-concept, part of how they define themselves. These frameworks create a structure within which individuals give and receive support. Within geographic communities, an ability to fulfill the six components of community above is related to the presence of the smaller communities within. Sense of community is thus built "from the ground up" (Gardner, p. 178); that is, from a

smaller group or social system to larger ones of which they are a part. Thus, the connections individuals feel to smaller communities of geography or interest also contributes to their sense of community with reference to the larger geographic community in which they live (i.e., town, city).

This conceptualization of community as a diverse, value-laden, cooperative, participative and active entity brings together many aspects of communitarian thought. As the emphasis on active participation in Gardner's (1995) definition of community implies, communitarians value voluntary and non-profit organizations because they provide opportunities for community members to share in leadership, exercise influence, and both contribute to and benefit from their communities. Further, these organizations often serve to reinforce the shared values that are important to a community (Wuthnow, 1995).

Communitarianism and obligation.

Community membership implies rights as well as obligations related to achieving the common good (Sandel, 1998). In understanding the communitarian conceptualization of obligation, it is convenient to again contrast it with that of liberalism. Liberals value individual rights and freedoms and thus envision individuals first as independent and unencumbered, incurring obligations only through choice or consent. These "consent theories" of obligation, which dominate political theories of obligation, suggest that a defining quality of obligation is that obligations are voluntary, engaged in by choice (Ross, 1970). In contrast, communitarians view obligation as an inherent part of membership in a community. In this context, it is not relevant to speak of entering into relationships that incur obligations, as obligations are the result of a joint commitment to the common good (Sandel, 1998). Thus, community membership from a communitarian perspective implies both rights and obligations as an inherent part of community membership.

In a communitarian context, obligation to community builds community, while community ties stimulate obligation. Thus, an ideal community such as the one described by Gardner (1995) above, is self-reinforcing.

Communitarianism as a political ideology.

Communitarianism provides a theoretical framework for understanding social relationships within communities. It is important to note how communitarianism as it is envisioned here departs from how it is conceptualized by some contemporary political

idealists. For these individuals, communitarianism is sometimes focused on nurturing community systems that reflect specific moral values through informal social control. For example, some strains of communitarianism prescribe "ideal" family composition, education, or other community structures (e.g., Barber, 1998; Etzioni, 2004; Galston, 1998). This form of communitarianism, in its efforts to prescribe a specific method through which community might be achieved or a lens through which it must be viewed, veers away from the communitarian perspective that forms the basis for this research. Rather than taking a prescriptive approach, communitarianism in the current context describes communities as groups of individuals bonded by commitment to their communities and the achievement of the common good, while recognizing diverse ways to pursue this goal.

This communitarian perspective provides a theoretical framework for this study. Each of the concepts that are foundational to this work are defined in ways that align with communitarian ways of thinking; that is, a focus on the common good, on balancing rights and obligations, and on active participation in order to create, sustain, benefit from, and celebrate communities.

Conceptual Framework

As introduced in Chapter 1, the concepts of volunteering, individualism, collectivism, serious leisure, obligation, sense of community, and social cohesion provided the conceptual basis for this study. In this chapter, these key concepts are defined and examined, and their interrelationships are explored. The discussion begins by defining volunteering, the activity of interest in this study. Volunteering was positioned as an individual act within a community context. The value orientations of collectivism and individualism are of interest because of theie potential for facilitating understanding of how people interpret, understand and act on their connection to their communities. In addition to defining individualism and collectivism and reviewing relevant research related to these concepts, I provide a short discussion of the social and political history of volunteering in a Canadian context, noting collectivist and individualist influences on volunteer trends. Serious leisure is introduced as a way of understanding both the individual and social contexts and outcomes of volunteering. Within the act of volunteering as serious leisure, feelings of obligation to volunteer are of particular interest, and so the conceptual and operational definitions of obligation that guide this work

are reviewed. Finally, as possible outcomes of volunteer activity, sense of community and social cohesion are introduced and linked both to individuals' perceptions of their communities and their feelings about volunteering.

As each of the key concepts that influenced this work are reviewed, the interrelationships between them are discussed, creating the conceptual framework on which the research was based. This section concludes by pointing out the gaps in our current understanding and suggests how this research provides insight in these areas.

Volunteering as a Community Act

Communitarians believe strongly that communities are nurtured through the active participation of their members, and volunteering is one mode of participation. Volunteering, as an activity that often occurs within the public sphere, is both a contribution to, and a consequence of, community. Omoto and Snyder (2002) write:

> many volunteer efforts are situated squarely in a community. The standards, norms, resources, and institutions of the community provide a backdrop for volunteer efforts. And, in reciprocal fashion, a community is often directly and indirectly changed by the activities of volunteers and the time and energy that they invest in responding to needs of the community. (p. 848)

This quotation alludes to the close connection and multiple relationships between community and volunteerism. Volunteering is one way that individuals can contribute to community, although at the same time it is an individual act with associated individual outcomes (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Omoto & Snyder, 2002). When volunteering is considered as an individual act, the focus is typically on personal choices related to volunteering and their consequences (i.e., motivation, benefits, rewards). Van Til (1988) notes that, historically, volunteering has been typically understood and valued as an individual act, and that it is difficult in this context to realize the full impact of volunteering for communities. When volunteering is considered as a community-based act, interest shifts to the social context in which volunteering takes place, and the consequences of volunteering for both individuals and communities. In this context, volunteering is a civic act of service or participation.

Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) note that volunteering can be defined in many different ways along the dimensions of free choice, remuneration, structure, and intended beneficiaries. For example, volunteering is often understood as a freely-chosen activity,

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although at times those obligated to participate in community service (i.e., students completing community service as a requirement of their educational programs) may also be encompassed under the umbrella of volunteering (i.e., Statistics Canada's *Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* [Hall et al., 2006])*. Similarly, volunteering is often understood as an activity carried out through a non-profit or voluntary organization (sometimes called formal volunteering), although some include direct help given to those outside one's family (sometimes called informal volunteering) within their definitions of volunteering. In this work, volunteering is conceptualized *as uncoerced help performed without significant financial gain through a voluntary organization for the benefit of others* (modified from Stebbins, 2007). This definition aligns with the four dimensions of volunteering suggested by Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth in the following ways:

- Free choice: The proposed research adopts Stebbins' (1996) suggestion that volunteering should be uncoerced, but that it is problematic to suggest it must be freely-chosen because of the many factors at play in motivating volunteerism.
- Remuneration: Volunteering is not performed for financial compensation, although there may be some financial reward associated with volunteering (i.e., free admission to an event). Some volunteer activities may have financial commitments associated with them (i.e., cost associated with membership in a voluntary organization, or for clothing or transportation)
- Structure: This definition of volunteering is focused on individuals performing their volunteer activities through voluntary or non-profit organizations.
- Intended beneficiaries: The primary beneficiaries of voluntary service are others, which may include strangers as well as friends or relatives.

The above definition does not explicitly specify that volunteering must be a leisure activity or define its relationship to obligation, although the dimension of free choice suggests these concepts are central to conceptualizing volunteerism. As early as 1981, volunteerism was conceptualized as leisure because of its nature as a freely-chosen activity and due to the parallels between the benefits of volunteering and the goals (such as self-actualization, socializing or enjoyment) that people often seek in their leisure time (Cuskelly & Harrington, 1997/98; Henderson, 1981, 1984).

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This definition of volunteering is broad, reflecting the diversity of activities that may be defined as volunteering. As an activity that occurs within the public sphere, volunteer roles and activities are not only differentiated in terms of activity and experience but are also influenced by the social and political context in which they take place. These contexts have implications for the roles assumed by volunteers, the way volunteer contributions are valued, and their influence and outcomes. Arai (2004) writes that the social and political contexts of volunteering may encourage "acts of benevolence, community governance, political action and social change, or social control" (p. 151). The social and political contexts in which volunteering occurs are dynamic, shifting, changing, evolving and sometimes devolving throughout history.

A Canadian, Socio-political History of Volunteering

In the 19th century, voluntary religious organizations tended to the sick, mentally ill, developmentally disabled and others in need (Arai, 2004). Volunteers at this time were best characterized as performing acts of benevolence and charity to the deserving infirm. Burman (1996) refers to this form of charitable work as "moralistic giving of charity", because those providing assistance viewed beneficiaries as not only in need of services or material goods, but also moral guidance and direction that would help them to overcome their personal shortcomings.

By the end of the 19th century, Canadians began to recognize problems such as unemployment and poverty as collective issues associated with industrialization and urbanization, rather than as indications of personal failings (Arai, 2004). Service continued to be the focus of volunteer efforts, and by the middle of the 20th century, social services were provided by a wide range of well-organized religious and lay organizations, including service clubs, health organizations, and welfare organizations aimed at addressing specific social ills (Arai).

The Great Depression in the 1930s spawned a widespread sense of caring and concern that lasted for several decades (Murphy, 1999). Murphy writes of the welfare state that expanded during this time, supported by collective concern for the public good: "[W]e spent over 40 years caring about each other. It became acceptable to be concerned, to contribute part of our incomes to looking after those with none" (p. 11). Volunteering in the 1960s and

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1970s focused on political action and social change as volunteers rallied for the needs and rights of marginalized peoples (Arai, 2004).

Since the 1980s, the welfare state has been progressively dismantled through government restructuring, downloading, and disinvestment in social programs (Arai, 2004; Murphy, 1999). In turn, voluntary organizations have acted to fill the gaps left by government, "step[ping] into the vacuum in social provision left by the withdrawal of the state from such activities" (Harvey, 2005, p. 177). Further, volunteer roles related to political action and social change have been discouraged by legislation limiting support for charities with social action agendas. Limitations on advocacy activity are imposed through tax laws restricting charitable status to non-profit organizations for which advocacy is an ancillary activity consuming less than 10% of the organization's budget (Harvie, 2002).

These recent changes reflect a broader cultural shift from a collective to an individual orientation, a change that can be linked to transition to a post-industrial society. In her Massey Lectures in 2001, Stein linked the post-industrial trends of globalization and a quest for efficiency to the emergence of an individualistic society:

> Globalization has pushed markets and their language of efficiency to the forefront of public consciousness. Even more important, the transition to post-industrial society and the emergence of knowledge as our most important economic resource have enabled a shift in values from the collective to the individual among citizens. (p. 46)

Stein (2001) writes of the post-industrial, knowledge-based economy as providing a sense of possibility that fuels individualism:

> Everything is possible in the human mind, and we are moving into a world where what is internally possible is becoming externally conceivable. This expanding sense of possibility, as we shall see, fosters a sense of independence, customization, and a demand for choice among citizens. (p. 52)

As Stein (2001) implies, this cultural shift from a collective to an individualist society has profoundly influenced not just how our country is governed but also a myriad of other facets of life. Nichols and his colleagues, in their assessment of pressures facing voluntary sport organizations in the United Kingdom, write of the influence of individualism on volunteering:

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A reduced willingness to volunteer is related to concerns over the changing nature of citizenship, as reflecting in the psychological contract that binds citizens together, and involves a willingness of some individuals and groups to make sacrifices in order to support others. (Nichols, Taylor, James, Holmes, King, & Garrett, 2005, p. 38)

As suggested by these quotations, volunteerism is influenced by social and political realities as well as by the nature of individuals and cultures as collective or individualist.

Collectivism and Individualism

The terms "individualism" and "collectivism" are often used to refer to individual or cultural value systems that give priority to individual choice, freedom and independence, or group membership, identity and goals, respectively (Oyserman et al., 2002). Those who value collectivism give preference to shared goals and thus are heavily influenced by duty and obligation to their in-groups (Oyserman et al.). Those with individualist orientations give preference to personal goals and value independence. Conceptualizations of collectivist and individualist orientations align well with Durkheim's distinction between mechanical solidarity – the collective focus that evolves from the permanent bonds of traditional societies – and organic solidarity, which aligns with an individual focus that is the result of the transient relations that are common in complex societies (Oyserman et al.). Collectivism and individualism can also be compared to Tonnies' terms of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, contrasting the close relations of small traditional societies with the abstract relationships of modern societies. As implied by these comparisons to Durkheim and Tonnies' work, while representing personal value orientations, individualism and collectivism are often described as cultural attributes and indeed empirical research has explored their cultural roots (e.g., Hui, 1988; Miller, 1994; Oyserman et al.). Hofstede's (1980) foundational work related to cultural underpinnings of individualism and collectivism explored differences in cultural values at the national level by comparing aggregate responses of employees of a corporation with offices in many countries. Hofstede found differences in work satisfaction across nation-based aggregate groups that he attributed to social-structural conditions. Typically, North American and European societies are described as more individualistic, while Asian societies align more with collectivist values (Hofstede; Hui; Oyserman et al.). Further, the nature of a society as individualistic and/or collectivistic may change over time in response to changing cultural values or changing circumstances such as urbanization or industrialization, as described

earlier by Stein (2001) in the context of a shift from collectivism to individualism in Canadian society over the past several decades. Thus, while individualism and collectivism are individual value orientations influencing individual behaviour, they may be heavily influenced by cultural contexts and circumstances.

As dynamic cultural attributes, the value orientations of individualism and collectivism characterize societies as well as the individuals of which they are comprised. Some conceptualizations of individualism and collectivism view these two concepts as dichotomous, defining two ends of a continuum of inner-outer orientation (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Hui, 1988). However, other scholars are skeptical of this conceptualization, advocating that the two concepts are distinct and that a strong individualistic focus does not always necessitate a lack of collectivist orientation (e.g., Schwartz, 1990; Triandis, 1994). Schwartz suggests three reasons why the conceptualization of individualism and collectivism as dichotomous is a flawed interpretation. First, he notes that some values serve both personal and in-group goals, such as the pursuit of wisdom; he refers to these types of values as "maturity values". He further points out that personal and in-group values and goals can become virtually indistinguishable. Second, Schwartz notes that there are universal values that serve those beyond the in-group, such as social justice and environmentalism, yet viewing individualism-collectivism as a dichotomous continuum makes no space for these universal values. Finally, he suggests that conceptualizing individualism and collectivism as opposites simplifies the complex nature of values and the dimensions of each of these value types, as they can sometimes vary together and are not always opposed to one another. Thus, while simplifying the relationship between individualism and collectivism by conceptualizing them as poles of a continuum is appropriate in some research, recognizing these two orientations as related but distinct attributes better reflects the complexity of these two concepts.

Distinctions are sometimes made between vertical and horizontal individualism and collectivism (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk & Gelfand, 1995). The main distinction between vertical and horizontal forms of both individualism and collectivism is that similarity and equality characterize horizontal orientations, while inequality is accepted within vertical orientations. Thus, vertical individualists see themselves as autonomous individuals within an inequitable, hierarchical society (Singelis et al.). In this context, competition and power are values. Vertical collectivists, like their individualist counterparts, accept inequality as part of

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the structure of their group; they view members of their group as different from one another, with some having more status than others, and individuals having different roles in terms of the services and sacrifices they make to their group (Singelis et al.). Horizontal collectivists, in contrast, see themselves as similar to others in their group, with all having equal status. Finally, horizontal individualists view themselves as distinct and independent from others, while having equal status to others. This multi-faceted description of individualism and collectivism is advocated by some scholars as less abstract than more general conceptualizations, which have proved difficult to measure empirically (Singelis et al.).

The concepts of individualism and collectivism have implications for the way a society functions. Individualism, with its focus on personal goals and independence, reflects the liberalist ideal of limited government intervention and the prioritization of rights over obligations (Oyserman et al., 2002). Triandis (1995) describes individualist societies as nurturing creativity, diversity, tolerance, and democracy. A collectivist orientation presupposes a value orientation that prioritizes the common good over personal goals, as well as the assumption that personal contribution through the fulfillment of one's duties is part of belonging to a group. Collectivist societies, then, are rich in social support although traditional and homogeneous. Triandis describes communitarianism as an "attempt to discover social orders that combine the most desirable attributes of both individualism and collectivism" (p. 39). Depicting communitarianism as an ideal social order rather than an achievable one, Triandis suggests that in communitarian societies citizens would find fulfillment through both satisfaction of their personal needs and meeting their social obligations.

Research suggests that a relationship exists between collectivist and individualist value orientations and the giving behaviours of volunteering and donating, particularly for those who engage in these behaviours regularly. Reed and Selbee (2002) found that the values of Canadians who volunteered at least weekly were significantly different than those who volunteered less often. In particular, active volunteers felt a stronger sense of belonging to their communities as well as a sense of responsibility for the well-being of those communities. Reed and Selbee suggest that volunteers have a distinct ethos characterized by a concern and sense of responsibility for the common good, and a worldview that sees individuals are interconnected. These ideas align well with a collectivist orientation.

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Measurement of Collectivism and Individualism

Several measurement tools have been developed to measure individualism and collectivism, either as two separate constructs (e.g., Shulruf et al., 2007; Singelis, 1994) or as ends of a continuum (e.g., Hui, 1988). The Individualism-Collectivism (INDCOL) scale developed by Hui focuses on addressing different levels of collectivism (e.g., spouse, parents, family, neighbours, friends, colleagues). Each item in the scale is intended to measure collectivism in the context of a specific group. Singelis describes development of the Self-Construal Scale, which is based on a conceptualization of independence and interdependence as separate constructs. Defining self-construal as "a constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning one's relationship to others, and the self as distinct from others" (Singelis, p. 581), the self-construal scale measures these two "sides" of the self. While similar in many ways to individualism and collectivism, interdependence as conceptualized here does not include shared values and goals. Shulruf and his colleagues created the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS) based on the notion that individualism and collectivism are distinct but related concepts. The authors conceptualize individualism as comprised of the dimensions: responsibility (for oneself), uniqueness, and competitiveness, while collectivism is comprised of the dimensions of advice and harmony. The scale incorporates both vertical and horizontal aspects of individualism and collectivism.

This discussion suggests several ways in which the value orientations of collectivism and individualism are linked to volunteering. The feelings of social responsibility that characterize collectivist orientations seem logically linked to volunteer activity as a means of contributing to community goals and acting on shared values. The strong sense of responsibility and belonging that characterize a collectivist orientation also align with the social rewards of group accomplishment, sense of contribution and social attraction associated with serious leisure participation. At the same time, the individualist values of personal goals and independence align with other aspects of serious leisure, namely opportunities for self-actualization, the requirement to persevere, and the acquisition of specialized skills. Thus, serious leisure appears to hold potential for personal fulfillment for those whose value orientations align with individualism and collectivism, although perhaps for different reasons.

Serious Leisure, Volunteering and Community

The concept of serious leisure was developed by Stebbins in the late 1970s amid increasing individualism and the related leisure trends of commodification and consumption. Hence, it is not surprising that serious leisure as a concept focuses on leisure as an individual

experience with outcomes, benefits and rewards for individuals. Despite this narrow focus, many serious leisure pursuits offer opportunity for communal leisure and the creation of shared meaning, suggesting alignment with Arai and Pedlar's (2003) communitarian conceptions of community. Further, the predominance of commitment as an element of serious leisure and its potential for the creation and strengthening of social bonds provides a context for understanding relationships between feelings of obligation to volunteer and outcomes of volunteering at the community level.

Stebbins (2007) describes serious leisure as:

the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that people find so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centred on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experience (p. 5).

Stebbins (1992) describes serious leisure participants as hobbyists, amateurs, and volunteers, and suggests that serious leisure participation is identifiable by six qualities: (1) the occasional need to persevere; (2) the acquisition of specialized knowledge, training, experience or skill; (3) the ability to follow a career path in the activity; (4) the adoption of a common ethos of values, attitudes and practices; (5) strong identification with the serious leisure pursuit; and (6) the experience of durable personal and social benefits.

Conquering adversity through *the occasional need to persevere* is one of the satisfying aspects of serious leisure, and is intrinsically related to other qualities, most notably the personal effort required to acquire skills and abilities in the activity. Stebbins (1977) notes that while a love of an activity is what motivates people to participate, it is perseverance in that activity during times of adversity and frustration that leads to levels of skill and experience that distinguish serious leisure participants from those engaged in casual leisure. Perseverance leads to *specialized knowledge, training, experience or skill*, which allows serious leisure participants to engage in their chosen pursuits at advanced levels compared with their casual counterparts (Stebbins, 1992).

The ability to follow a *leisure career* in the endeavour is another characteristic of serious leisure. Serious leisure careers typically follow a temporal pattern where participants progress through a series of stages, including beginning, development, establishment, maintenance and possibly decline (Stebbins, 2007). Like professional careers, serious leisure

careers may span more than one organization and may involve setbacks, which are usually temporary. Through serious leisure, participants adopt a *unique ethos* of common attitudes, values and practices through involvement in a *unique social world* (Stebbins, 2007). Unruh (1979) described a social world as "an internally recognizable constellation of actors, organizations, events, and practices which have coalesced into a perceived sphere of interest and involvement for participants" (p. 115). Those engaged in serious leisure will also *identify strongly with their pursuits.* For example, they are often eager to describe their serious leisure endeavours to others, and may define themselves in terms of their serious leisure participation. Empirical work on serious leisure has illustrated the strong link between identity and participation in a social world (Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Gillespie, Leffler, & Lerner, 2002; Jones, 2006; Lawrence, 2006).

Participants in serious leisure enjoy *durable benefits*, such as self-actualization and self-expression, defined as the development and expression, respectively, of skills and knowledge (Stebbins, 2007). Further, some of the benefits experienced by serious leisure participants are related to the social nature of serious leisure involvement. For example, the experience of serious leisure may cultivate social interaction and a sense of belonging (Stebbins).

Costs of Serious Leisure

While the defining qualities of serious leisure allude only to its benefits, Stebbins (1998, 2007) notes that there are costs associated with serious leisure as well. Although several studies have considered both the benefits and costs of serious leisure participation (i.e. Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Jones, 2000; Lee & Scott, 2006; Major, 2001; Stebbins, 2005a), Stebbins suggests that the costs are highly dependent on the activity and thus have not been categorized (2005a, 2007). However, Gillespie et al. (2002) write of the "intrinsic tension that a serious leisure pursuit brings" (p. 285). These tensions provide some insight into the costs of serious leisure participation. Stebbins categorizes "tensions" as temporal, relational, obligative and leisure-related. Temporal tensions result from the significant time demands of serious leisure pursuits, such that scheduling serious leisure along with other commitments requires much care and attention. For example, some sea corps cadet volunteers were so protective of their volunteer time that even when they chose not to attend sea cadet activities, they would leave their homes and sit in their cars so that their friends and family would not

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try to infringe on their time for volunteering in future weeks (Raisborough, 2006). Relational tension describes situations where serious leisure participants must balance the time spent on serious leisure activity with relationships and obligations to family and friends. Stebbins (1992) notes that in a study of 22 married amateur actors, two of the marriages dissolved, partially due to the partners' commitment to their art. At the same time, many partners and families of serious leisure participants support (and are proud of) their partner or family members' serious leisure accomplishments, or even share the same interest (Olmsted, 1993; Stebbins, 2005a). Closely related to relational tension, obligative tension arises from difficulties meeting home responsibilities because of serious leisure commitments. Finally, leisure-related tension arises when serious leisure activities leave participants with little time left to pursue other leisure.

Career Volunteering as a Form of Serious Leisure

Career volunteerism is distinct from other types of serious leisure and from volunteering as a casual leisure activity. First, in addition to the six qualities defining serious leisure, and its associated tensions, Stebbins suggests that motivation distinguishes career volunteerism from more casual forms of volunteer involvement: career volunteers participate principally for fulfillment, while casual volunteers engage for enjoyment (Stebbins, 1996, 2007). Stebbins sometimes distinguishes volunteers from hobbyists and amateurs by noting that the former's contributions through serious leisure are primarily altruistic, while those of the latter groups are cultural (e.g., Stebbins, 1992). There is some overlap between these three types of serious leisure participation, and indeed an individual engaged in serious leisure might take on more than one of these roles through their involvement. For example, Baldwin and Norris (1999), in their study of amateur dog enthusiasts involved in American Kennel Club activities, noted that the serious leisure participants they studied tended to be both amateur dog handlers and volunteers.

Commitment, Community and Serious Leisure

Some researchers draw on Tomlinson's (1993) concept of the "culture of commitment" to explain the intense affiliation serious leisure participants have with their pursuits (Gillespie et al., 2002; Lawrence, 2006). Tomlinson suggests that high levels of commitment associated with specific cultural or interest groups can provide a sense of belonging and connectedness in an increasingly disconnected world. A study of football fans

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in Florida found that individuals' social identities, formed around common interests in tailgating and watching football, gave football fans a sense of belonging as a result of their collective interests and activity (Gibson, Willming, & Holdnak, 2002). Further, while it is possible to engage in serious leisure as a solo pursuit, most participants seek social ties through clubs, associations, informal groups, commercial venues, and events (Gibson et al.; Stebbins, 1996). Rojek (2001) asserts that serious leisure participation, when it brings participants into contact with other enthusiasts, becomes a source of meaning, identity, and solidarity. Reid and van Dreunen (1996) suggest that serious leisure "provides a forum which encourages people to redefine themselves and their community through the creation of activity which focuses on ameliorating a negative individual or social condition or through self-development or community betterment" (p. 48). Serious leisure can thus be a mechanism for changing or building community. Further, groups of serious leisure participants are often strongly linked to the wider community. For example, consider the amateur theatre group, orchestra, astronomy society, and countless other volunteers who provide entertainment or education to public audiences (Stebbins).

While serious leisure is often characterized by a sense of belonging to a specific social world and to the wider community, the literature sometimes characterizes serious leisure participants as socially marginalized and isolated as a consequence of the strong social identities adopted through serious leisure participation (Lawrence, 2006; Stebbins, 1992, 2007). For example, Lawrence noted in his work with Star Trek fans that they were sometimes stigmatized, referred to as "fanatics" or "freaks" by others. This can be due to the intense commitment that individuals have for their hobbies or because the activity itself is perceived to be harmful or odd. In addition, a strong culture of commitment may inspire lifestyle choices that are marginal in nature. For example, a dog lover in one study relegated her husband to a spare bedroom so that she had ample space in her bed for her dogs (Gillespie et al., 2002).

Baldwin and Norris (1999) suggest that people persist in their serious leisure pursuits not because of the benefits but rather because they have strong social ties to their identities and the social worlds of their pursuits. Similarly, commitment to a particular cause, social issue or organization can lead to ongoing involvement (Arai, 2000, Cuskelly et al., 2002/2003; Yarnal & Dowler, 2002/2003). Some research indicates that the qualities of

serious leisure, particularly the acquisition of a social identity and participation in a social world affiliated with the leisure pursuit, spawn continued commitment at advanced career stages, regardless of the negative aspects of participation (Cuskelly et al.; Lee & Scott, 2006). For the overburdened volunteer sport administrators that Cuskelly and his colleagues studied, "…the sport club and the social world in which it is embedded (i.e., the social networks, lifestyles, small groups, and collective activity) constitute a distinctive and highly attractive entity" (p. 207). Thus, the volunteers were committed to their serious leisure partially because they wanted to remain members of their social world, with all its associated perks, and despite its negative aspects.

A Measure of Serious Leisure

A recent advancement in the study of serious leisure is the development of the first scale to measure serious leisure involvement (Gould, Moore, McGuire, & Stebbins, 2008). The Serious Leisure Inventory and Measure (SLIM) is a multidimensional measure based on the six qualities of serious leisure: perseverance, leisure career, significant effort, durable outcomes, unique ethos, and identification with the pursuit. In creating the measure, these six qualities were operationalized as 18 factors, 12 based on the durable benefits of serious leisure participation, and six related to the other five qualities of serious leisure (with two factors for serious leisure career). Gould and his colleagues suggest that interpreting scores on the SLIM requires consideration of both serious leisure theory and the specific context. In particular, the 12 factors related to the durable benefits of serious leisure participation do not form an additive index of benefits of serious leisure because all the benefits may not be relevant to all. For example, those who pursue a solitary hobby may not experience the social benefits of serious leisure participation. The authors suggest that scores related to durable outcomes provide an inventory that can be examined to help understand the nature of a serious leisure pursuit.

This overview of volunteerism and serious leisure theory introduced the idea of commitment as a facet of serious leisure closely related to participation in a social world, acquisition of high levels of skill or ability, and perseverance in times of adversity. These ideas imply that ongoing serious leisure participation may be associated with not just a desire to continue one's participation, but indeed a commitment to doing so. With respect to

volunteering, then, volunteering as serious leisure may involve a level of commitment that fosters feelings of obligation to continue.

Obligation in the Context of Leisure

What does it mean to *feel* obligated? In social psychological motivation theory, obligation is conceptualized as a *feeling* (Stebbins, 2000). Stebbins writes, "leisure activities occasionally or frequently have an obligatory side that some participants nonetheless experience as part of leisure, but that other participants experience as offensive, chiefly because it effectively robs the activities of the essential quality of leisure choice" (p. 152). In other words, whether a specific leisure activity is associated with feelings of obligation depends on an individual's perspective.

The Perspective of Obligation as Commitment

Recent conceptualizations of leisure, specifically serious leisure, suggest a conceptualization of obligation as aligned with commitment. In the context of career volunteerism as serious leisure, Stebbins (2007) notes that feelings of obligation that accompany serious leisure pursuits are typically related to high levels of commitment characteristic of serious leisure participation, which lead to its many rewards.

Stebbins (1992, 2005b, 2007) notes in his conceptualization of serious leisure that activities in this type of meaningful, committed and systematic leisure often involve obligation, such as requirements to practice in preparation for a performance (as in the amateur musician), to act in a support role to others (as in the kayakers who watch out for each others' safety on the water), or simply to be in a certain place at a certain time (as in to fulfill a volunteer commitment). Of the six qualities that define serious leisure, the need to persevere and the nature of serious leisure as a career-like endeavour suggest alignment between the concepts of obligation and serious leisure. In contrast to feelings of obligation as unpleasant, Stebbins conceptualizes obligation as a welcome aspect of serious leisure, providing the example of the leading lady who finds her obligations at the local amateur theatre to be a pleasure (Stebbins, 1992, 2000, 2005b, 2007). Feelings of obligation that accompany serious leisure pursuits are typically related to the high levels of commitment characteristic of serious leisure participation and leading to its many rewards (Shamir, 1988; Stebbins, 2007). For example, a study of museum volunteers – including those required to "volunteer" as part of their educational programs – found that volunteering was most

commonly an enjoyable and leisure-like experience even for those who were obligated to participate (Holmes, 2006). Stebbins further observes that obligation associated with serious leisure is often flexible, such that people have some degree of choice in how they fulfill their obligations. For example, volunteers may be able to choose what tasks they take on and when they complete them (Stebbins, 2000, 2005b). Similarly, a runner training for a marathon, while obligated to engage in some strenuous weekend runs, may exert some level of choice in deciding when and where to perform his or her training. Obligation in the context of serious leisure is thus associated with reward, choice, and flexibility. This form of obligation can be described as *obligation as commitment*.

The concept of commitment has received significant attention in the leisure literature (i.e., Buchanan, 1985; Gahwiler & Havitz, 1998; Iwasaki & Havitz, 1998; Pritchard, Howard, & Havitz, 1992; Shamir, 1988; Yair, 1992). Buchanan defines commitment as "pledging or binding of an individual to behavioral acts which result in some degree of affective attachment to the behavior or to the role associated with the behavior and which produce side bets as a result of that behavior" (p. 402). Buchanan suggests that commitment includes three components: (1) behavioural consistency through persistence; (2) affective attachment to an activity, organization or specific values or goal; and (3) side bets, which are peripheral benefits initially unrelated to the activity itself that become important reasons for continuing a behaviour. The existence of side bets increases the net benefit of maintaining behavioural consistency by increasing an individual's losses upon ceasing participation (Becker, 1960; Buchanan). For example, social ties formed as a result of participation in an activity are significant side bets for many leisure participants, because these relationships would be threatened if participation in the activity ceased.

Led by the work of Pritchard et al. (1992), Havitz and his colleagues studied psychological commitment and its relationship to constructs such as behavioural loyalty and involvement in the context of leisure consumers (Gahwiler & Havitz, 1998; Iwasaki & Havitz, 1998). Their conceptualization of psychological commitment is rooted in resistance to change, and thus continuance of an activity or relationship, which aligns with Buchanan's (1985) conceptualization of behavioural consistency as commitment. What distinguishes Buchanan's conceptualization of commitment from Havitz and his colleagues' conceptualization of psychological commitment is the inclusion of affective attachment as a key element. In his

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study of long distance runners, Yair (1992) suggests a definition of commitment similar to Buchanan's. In this work, commitment is defined as having both personal and structural components. The personal component is comprised of affective attachment that results in determination to continue participation in an activity. Structural commitment comes in the form of constraints that encourage continued participation, similar to the side bets of Buchanan's conceptualization. These ideas of commitment are very compatible with serious leisure. Gahwiler and Havitz link psychological commitment to identity and participation in social worlds, both defining qualities of serious leisure (Stebbins, 1992, 2007). Further, Iwasaki and Havitz note that psychological commitment and serious leisure share some experiential qualities. Indeed, one of the qualities of serious leisure is the occasional need to persevere. As well, the tendency for serious leisure participants to experience rewards, identify strongly with their pursuits, and to engage in social worlds leads to the formation of side bets that make participation even more desirable.

Commitment, then, is associated with affective attachment to an activity, persistence in that activity and resistance to change, and the existence of fringe benefits that make continued participation desirable. This conceptualization aligns well with the assertion that *obligation as commitment* is characterized by the experience of rewards resulting from somewhat flexible yet persistent participation.

The Perspective of Obligation as Duty

When performed from a sense of obligation to fulfill expectations of self or others and associated with work or feelings of burden or constraint, volunteering aligns closely with *obligation as duty*. Social psychological studies of obligation within a leisure context often provide evidence of this form of obligation. Participants in these studies often describe obligations as unpleasant tasks, constraints, or responsibilities reflecting limited choice (i.e., Henderson, Stalnaker & Taylor, 1988; Holmes, 2006; Jiniu, Tedrick & Boyd, 1996; Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Snir & Harpaz, 2002; Taylor et al., 2006; Watkins & Bond, 2007). For example, in a study of volunteer rugby coaches in Australia, many coaches reported that their voluntary involvement with the rugby club felt "work like" (Taylor et al., p. 142). Similarly, in a study with volunteer sport administrators, responses about reasons for volunteering included "pressured", "no one else to volunteer", "roped in" and "club survival" (Cuskelly et al., 2002/2003). In a study of the pressures facing sport volunteers (Nichols et al.,

2005), 74% of volunteers who attended focus groups thought there were not enough volunteers, and 65% mentioned that the volunteer tasks were being left to fewer people. Evidence of constraint is also found in this research, as 22% noted that volunteering posed difficulties because of conflict with family commitments.

An understanding of feelings of *obligation as duty* has roots in social psychology. Viewing individuals as independent decision-makers acting based on their own interests reflects an individualistic perspective. The concepts of choice and freedom are central to psychological conceptualizations of obligation, which focus on motivation and perceived freedom. For intrinsically motivated activities, rewards of participation come from engagement in the activity itself (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). In contrast, extrinsically motivated behaviour involves activity in which the incentive for participation is something external to the activity. Externally-motivated activity can reflect varying degrees of choice (Ryan & Deci, 2000). For example, individuals who volunteer to help achieve a certain goal are extrinsically motivated, as are those who volunteer only because there is no one else to take on a certain role. However, the first situation reflects a high degree of choice, while the latter reflects little choice. Obligation, thus, is an extrinsic motivator, whether manifested as commitment or duty, while the degree of choice can help to distinguish between these two forms of obligation.

Neulinger's (1976) "paradigm of leisure" distinguishes between different levels of perceived freedom along a continuum, incorporating the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to create a matrix describing several different possible combinations of work and leisure:

Figure 1. Neulinger's *Paradigm of Leisure.*

Perceived freedom			Perceived constraint		
motivation			motivation		
Intrinsic	*Intrinsic & Extrinsic*	*Extrinsic*	*Intrinsic*	*Intrinsic & Extrinsic*	*Extrinsic*
Pure Leisure	Leisure-work	Leisure-job	Pure work	Work-job	Pure job
Leisure			Non-leisure		

State of mind
◄──►

(*Source:* Neulinger, 1976, p. 18)

Freely-chosen activities that are extrinsically motivated, such as visiting a sick friend to support her and thus strengthen one's friendship, are referred to as "leisure-job". One participates in these activities freely, but only to reap the benefits. It is important to note that "leisure-job" activities are still characterized by perceived freedom, such that one could choose not to participate if she wanted (Neulinger, 1976). Obligation, characterized by the feeling that one *should* act, can be understood as a "leisure-job" activity. This form of obligation, characterized by a sense that one should act in a certain way despite the burdensome and constraining nature of that course of action, is characterized as *obligation as duty*.

A Continuum of Feelings of Obligation

The traditional understanding of obligation aligns closely with work and a lack of choice and freedom. The phrase *obligation as duty* is suggested as a means of describing feelings of obligation rooted in this sense of need to fulfill the expectations of self or others. A more recent reconceptualization of obligation suggests that it need not be burdensome or unwelcome, but instead may be associated with the deep commitment to an activity that is characteristic of serious leisure. The phrase *obligation as commitment* describes this form of obligation.

These two forms of obligation (commitment and duty) are not absolute. Obligation is often experienced as neither of these extremes, but rather as something situated in between. Obligation, then, is conceptualized as involving a *feeling of commitment and duty*. The

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commitment aspect of obligation is associated with rewarding, flexible obligation characterized by affective attachment and side bets that make continued involvement attractive. The duty aspect of obligation is characterized by the work-like attributes of burden, constraint and the fulfillment of expectations of oneself or others.

Obligation and Leisure/Volunteering

Scholars are beginning to explore the complex relationship between feelings of obligation and leisure. For example, Maguire (2008) recently explored the concept of obligation to oneself, suggesting that this form of obligation is an increasingly prevalent influence on decisions related to leisure. Maguire suggests that leisure is increasingly considered a time for self-investment, and thus individuals feel a sense of obligation to use their leisure time productively in pursuit of self-improvement. She writes: "Running parallel with the cultural imaginary of leisure as a time of freedom from work and responsibility is the construction of leisure as a time of freedom to take up the obligation of self-work" (p. 72). While her article focuses on fitness and exercise, she alludes to volunteerism as another form of self-investment.

Within the context of volunteering specifically, Stebbins (1996) uses the term "marginal volunteering" to refer to volunteering motivated at least partially from obligation. Here, Stebbins refers to volunteering that is either directly or indirectly coerced, such as students required to perform community service (direct coercion), or elderly or unemployed individuals encouraged to "keep busy" through volunteering (indirect coercion). Indirect coercion may originate from the self, as illustrated by the "routinizer" subtype of unemployed adults who reported feeling a need to maintain structure and gain a sense of accomplishment from free time in an extensive study of unemployed adults by Havitz, Morden and Samdahl (2004). Volunteering performed under coercion is distinct from the volunteer activity of interest in this study. However, volunteer activity described by Stebbins as indirectly coerced shares similar characteristics with duty-motivated volunteering, including its alignment with work, constraint, and limited choice.

Cuskelly and Harrington (1997/1998) explored the extent to which volunteer sport administrators perceived their volunteerism as work or leisure. Their research revealed that while most individuals reported several reasons for volunteering, obligation was one of the most common. Obligation in this research included those who "felt they should" volunteer,

those who volunteered because there was no one else to take on certain responsibilities, and those who volunteered because they were coerced, pressured, or felt they could not say no when asked to help. Those who reported feeling obligated to volunteer rated their volunteer activities as more aligned with work, while those who pursued volunteer work for self-interest or altruistic reasons were more likely to view their volunteer time as leisure. However, perceptions of volunteering as work or leisure did not vary significantly with the length of volunteer commitment or hours volunteered weekly. The authors advocate for a more complex conceptualization of volunteering as neither work nor leisure, but rather as a multifaceted concept closely linked to non-work obligation.

Windsor et al. (2008) suggest that the benefits of volunteering may diminish at high levels. They studied the relationship between volunteering and well-being for young-old adults, and found that at high levels of volunteering, psychological well-being (positive affect) was reduced. In other words, for volunteers who committed significant amounts of time to volunteering (more than 800 hours annually), volunteer activity was associated with lower psychological well being. They suggest that the increased burden of responsibility that goes with volunteering was partially responsible for the decreases in positive affect in committed volunteers. They write:

> [A]mong volunteers, engagement in certain domains of voluntary activity promotes an enhanced awareness of unmet needs among disadvantaged groups that depend on the services provided by volunteers. This, in turn, could result in some volunteers becoming socially, emotionally, and/or financially overcommitted in attempting to better meet those needs, which could in turn have an adverse impact on well-being. (Windsor et al., p. 69)

While the authors do not explicitly consider how feelings of obligation might influence the outcomes of volunteering, it is clear from their discussion that expectation and burden weigh heavily on some volunteers, possibly reducing the psychological benefits of volunteering for these individuals.

Volunteering and obligation are thus interrelated, and decisions to volunteer may be imbued with obligation. Obligation may be experienced as feelings of duty, commitment, or something in between. These feelings may be influenced by volunteers' own value systems or ways of thinking about their relationships with their communities. The concepts of

collectivism and individualism provide an interpretation of these value systems and their implications for volunteering.

The discussion thus far explored the complex web of relationships between personal value orientations, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, and obligation as duty and commitment particularly related to volunteering. An overarching theme among all these concepts is the connection between the personal realm of feeling and experience and the community-level realm that serves as an arena for serious leisure and volunteer activity, which is shaped by the values of individualism and collectivism. The discussion so far has touched on the ways that volunteering and serious leisure affect the community realm. In the following section, the concepts of sense of community and social cohesion are introduced to bring an explicit focus to the outcomes of individual acts of volunteering for communities. Literature about volunteering often extols the collective benefits of volunteering (i.e., Bellah et al., 1996; Omoto & Snyder, 2002; Putnam, 2000), and sense of community and social cohesion are commonly-cited benefits that have important implications for community well-being (Beauvais & Jenson, 2002; Omoto & Snyder).

An Individual Sense of the Collective: Sense of Community

Sense of community is an individual-level attribute describing community members' relationship to, and feelings about, their communities. There are multiple definitions of sense of community, but one thread of discourse is most prominent in the literature, evolving from McMillan and Chavis' (1986) work to define of sense of community, and subsequently leading to the development and refinement of several measurement tools (e.g., Chavis, Hogge, McMillan, & Wandersman, 1986; Hughey, Speer, & Peterson, 1999; Obst & White, 2004). In 1996, McMillan revisited his earlier conceptualization of sense of community, providing an updated definition that aligns well with the conceptualization published 10 years prior, but further articulates and defines the dimensions of sense of community.

Relevant to both relational and geographic communities, sense of community is defined as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 6). Sense of community is further characterized by its four dimensions: *membership*, *influence*, *integration and fulfillment of needs*, and *shared emotional connection* (McMillan & Chavis). *Membership* is understood as the sense of belonging, the feeling that one has a place in the group. Membership implies that there are boundaries around communities. These boundaries are seen as essential, as they

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provide a sense of emotional security that facilitates open sharing and cultivates a sense of belonging. Membership is cultivated through personal investment – the sense that one has contributed to and earned a place within the group. A common system of symbols and rituals serves to bond a group and create a sense of membership, particularly in heterogeneous groups. The personal investment and common symbols that create membership as part of a sense of community align well with the need to persevere and the social identity that are part of serious leisure. McMillan (1996) later suggested that the dimension *membership* be replaced with *spirit,* a term that is meant to imply the friendships that are created within communities and allow members to fully be and express themselves. While the boundaries that define communities are still part of this updated definition, their importance is downplayed and they are more permeable, as they are based on friendship.

The second dimension of sense of community is defined as *influence*, and refers to both individuals' influence on the group as well as a community's influence on its members. The authors first wrote that influence of a community on its members often leads to conformity, but McMillan's (1996) update notes that complementarity of difference balances conformity in defining community. Community members' influence on their communities often emerges in the form of voluntary efforts that give them a sense of power and ownership of their communities. Thus, this aspect of influence aligns well with Gardner's (1995) inclusion of participation as a key component of community.

McMillan and Chavis' (1986) conceptualization of sense of community also includes *integration and fulfillment of needs*, a dimension focused on the ways in which community membership is rewarding for its members. The authors note that shared values are intrinsically important to needs fulfillment for community members, writing: "When people who share values come together, they find that they have similar needs, priorities and goals, thus fostering the belief that in joining together they may be better able to satisfy these needs and obtain the reinforcement they seek" (p. 13). In his later conceptualization, McMillan (1996) suggests the dimension of *trade* to supercede needs integration and fulfillment of needs, suggesting that community is built on the search for and identification of similarity, as well as the complementarity of differences that facilitates sharing and trade to meet others' needs.

Finally, sense of community includes a *shared emotional connection*, cultivated through positive interactions and shared bonds that are the result of common histories, shared events, investment, recognition, and honours. In short, "strong communities are those that offer members positive ways to interact, important events to share and ways to resolve them positively, opportunities to honor members, opportunities to invest in the community, and opportunities to experience a spiritual bond among members" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 14). McMillan's (1996) conceptualization of sense of community notes that *emotional safety* is a key aspect of sense of community, highlighting the importance of creating a safe space in which emotional connections can be fostered. This later conceptualization suggests the term *art* for the common activities and celebrations that facilitate shared emotional connection, suggesting that these celebrations are a form of communal art that documents and celebrates a community's shared story. This aspect of sense of community links to communitarian thought in terms of a focus on communities as spaces for celebration (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Borgmann, 1992).

These four dimensions of sense of community are closely linked and self-reinforcing. For example, the presence of boundaries around a community provides a safe space in which to build emotional connection, while investment in a community gives members a sense that they have contributed or earned their membership. As noted throughout the previous discussion, McMillan (1996) revisited the four dimensions of sense of community and updated them, providing a conceptualization that highlights the reinforcing nature of elements of sense of community. However, the primacy of contact, quality of interaction, and emotional connection were again highlighted in McMillan's 1996 reinterpretation.

Measurement of Sense of Community

Several operationalizations of sense of community have been introduced and used to quantify sense of community for research purposes, most based on the dimensions first defined by McMillan and Chavis (1986) (e.g., Chavis et al., 1986; Hughey et al., 1999; Obst & White, 2004; Royal & Rossi, 1996). As a psychological attribute of individuals, measurement of sense of community invariably examines individuals' perceptions of sense of community (Chavis et al.). While the most commonly used instrument designed to measure sense of community is the 12-item Sense of Community Index (SCI) (Chavis et al.), many researchers encountered difficulties verifying the factor structure of the SCI, obtaining

reliabilities at acceptable levels, and retaining the meaning of items in the scale while altering the context to various communities of geography or interest (e.g., Chipuer & Pretty, 1999; Obst & White). Researchers suggest that development of a scale measuring sense of community is complicated by the complexity of this concept, including its application at several different levels and its applicability to both geographic and relational communities (Chavis & Pretty; Obst & White). To circumvent the difficulties with developing a single instrument that measures sense of community at all levels, and to incorporate the unique ways community organizations further sense of community both within the organization and broader geographic community, Hughey et al. developed a scale designed to measure sense of community within community organizations. The Community Organization Sense of Community scale (COSOC) includes three dimensions: (1) relationship to organization, which touches on membership, influence, needs fulfillment, and emotional belonging, the four elements of sense of community as defined by McMillan and Chavis; (2) organization as mediator, which incorporates the role of community organizations as intermediaries between individuals and the wider communities of which they are a part; and (3) bond to the community, which is the attachment to a wider geographic community. Because the COSOC measures sense of community within community organizations as well as at the broader geographic level, it aligns well with Gardner's (1995) conceptualization of community, introduced earlier, as emerging "from the ground up" (p. 178); that is, from a smaller group or social system to a larger geographic community.

As an individual feeling about one's community, the concept of sense of community provides a valuable means of understanding connections between the individual and collective realms. The dimensions of sense of community have several links to the personal value orientation of collectivism. In particular, the sense of influence and ownership, needs fulfillment and shared emotional connection that characterize sense of community are closely linked to the collectivist value orientation. The distinction between collectivism and sense of community is that collectivism suggests a value orientation or way of understanding one's role within and relationships with one's communities, while sense of community is a perception related to the attachment one feels for a community.

A Collective Sense of the Collective: Social Cohesion

Like sense of community, social cohesion is a concept that spans the individual and collective realms, although social cohesion typically describes the individual-collective relationship from a community rather than an individual perspective. The concept of social cohesion is defined in different ways in different disciplines and by different scholars (Beauvais & Jenson, 2002; Chan et al., 2006). Stemming from Durkheim's (1997) theories related to the social integration that results from organic and mechanical solidarity, social cohesion is typically a measure of community integration. Dimensions of social cohesion may include, depending on the definition, a sense of belonging (Chan et al.); willingness to participate and help others (Chan et al.); shared values (White, 2003); consensus (White); homogeneity in terms of income, status or other factors (Beauvais & Jenson); and social capital (Chan et al.).

Consensus and trust resulting from social cohesion are frequently cited by policy makers and others as a solution to all sorts of social and financial ills, including inequality, a weak welfare system, poor community health, and political apathy (Chan et al., 2006; White, 2003). However, the influence of social cohesion on these types of outcomes depends upon the factors or qualities that serve to link community members and create a socially cohesive community. Jaffe and Quark (2006) note, in their article about social cohesion in rural Saskatchewan, that the form of social cohesion is important in terms of its outcomes. For example, social cohesion is often associated with homogeneity, which can lead to an exclusionary form of social cohesion where members are bonded by similarity and others are excluded. In this context, community resources and power are not equally shared (Chan et al.). DeSena (2006) provides an example of this in her study of the effects of gentrification in a New York suburb, where upper class families arranged to send their children to schools outside the neighbourhood, while working-class families in the neighbourhood had no choice but to access local schools. This led to stratification and non-overlapping of the social webs of these neighbourhood subgroups, negatively influencing community cohesion. Because homogeneity and similarity are often understood as the basis for social cohesion, change is traditionally considered a threat to social cohesion (White). Thus, it is not surprising that some of the major changes shaping Canadian society today – increasing diversity, globalization, and technological advances – are sometimes viewed as threats to social

cohesion (Beauvais & Jenson). However, there is opportunity to consider how social cohesion of a different sort might provide opportunities to foster more inclusive and unified communities.

Social cohesion at the community level is found within and between social groups. Thus, while social cohesion is often described as being based on shared values, this depends on the nature of the common values, as communities may share common values that are intolerant and oppressive (Chan et al., 2006) or groups or individuals may view themselves as existing independently of other social groups or the community as a whole. In contrast, Jaffe and Quark (2006) suggest that social cohesion is rooted in interdependence – in the web of connections that are at the heart of community. With interdependence at the root of social cohesion, building and maintaining a web of connections between community members becomes paramount. Thus, social cohesion based on interdependence implies active participation in community as well as trust, cooperation, and helping. Communities based on this form of social cohesion may be diverse, but their overlapping affective networks serve as a unifying force. Conceptualizing social cohesion as grounded in interdependence aligns closely with the dimension of *trade* or *integration and fulfillment of needs* within sense of community, as both suggest that mutually beneficial helping relationships are central to community.

Chan et al. (2006), in their critique of definitions of social cohesion and their work to establish a common basis for understanding social cohesion, suggest that the following elements are necessary criteria for definitions of social cohesion: that community members trust, help and cooperate with others in their community; that they feel a sense of belonging to their community; and that these feelings are expressed through behaviours. A definition of social cohesion based on interdependence aligns well with these three factors. Chan and his colleagues' criteria suggest that social cohesion has both an attitudinal and a behavioural dimension: community members feel a sense of belonging that leads to trust, help and cooperation, which are manifested through members' behaviour as they participate in the community.

As a group-level characteristic of communities of any size, social cohesion can be conceptualized as a characteristic of communities within communities (Buckner, 1988). In other words, the webs of social relations that lend themselves to development of social

cohesion in a community context can also lend strength to broader geographic or relational communities. For example, a non-profit organization may foster social cohesion within its relational community of volunteers, staff, and members or clients, and this may also foster social cohesion with the broader geographic community in which the organization carries out its work. The opposite may also occur: when members of a small relational or geographic community limit their social interactions to other community members with very similar interests, within-group cohesion may be strong, but the group's strongly independent and marginal nature limits cohesion with other groups. Lawrence (2003) observed this in his serious leisure study of internet-based Star Trek fan clubs, where within-group cohesion was strong as members were tightly linked to others in their interest-based community. However, the limited interactions between this group and other communities limited between-group cohesion, such that the group and its members were isolated from those outside their small group.

Measurement of Social Cohesion

Perhaps because of the many alternative definitions of social cohesion, operationalizations vary widely. Measurement of social cohesion can be roughly divided into objective and subjective measures, or alternatively into indices comprised of a number of community-level measurements and those obtained from the mean or sum of a sample of individual-level variables. For example, Rajulton, Ravanera, and Beaujot (2007) suggest objective means for measuring social cohesion in census metropolitan areas across Canada using data from the most recent Canadian National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (Hall et al., 2006). Their index was comprised of social, political and economic factors and incorporated data such as time spent volunteering, frequency of participation in organizations, incidence of voting, personal income and employment rate. An objective-type measure based on individual-level variables could entail, for example, scores based on the number of friendships between members of a group (e.g., Dimock, 1987) These objective measures of social cohesion are based on a conceptualization of social cohesion as an objective attribute of a group, and include indicators other than the factors that are its antecedents.

Bollen and Hoyle (1990) suggest that perceived cohesion – defined as "an individual's sense of belonging to a particular group and his or her feelings of morale associated with

membership in the group" (p. 482) – is a valuable construct because it is more closely related to other subjective phenomena than are objective measures of cohesion. Like social cohesion, definitions of cohesion abound in the literature. Some, like Bollen and Hoyle's definition, seem equivalent to social cohesion, while others include social cohesion as one facet of the broader concept of cohesion, along with other facets tied to performance of work groups or other collective attributes. In this analysis, social cohesion will be referred to as such, regardless of the terminology used by the authors.

Given the relationship between social cohesion and subjective phenomena such as obligation and sense of community, it seems most appropriate to focus on tools measuring perceptions of cohesion by group members. There are several tools designed to measure perceived social cohesion, including the Neighbourhood Cohesion Index (Buckner, 1988), and the Perceived Cohesion Scale (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990). At the individual level, social cohesion can be understood as a measure of the role of a group in the lives of those belonging to the group (Bollen & Hoyle). The Perceived Cohesion Scale (Bollen & Hoyle) is a six-item scale based on a two-dimensional model of perceived cohesion, which encompasses sense of belonging and sense of morale. While items in this scale seem to align well with the definition of social cohesion as rooted in sense of belonging, Buckner's Neighbourhood Cohesion Index (NCI) seems a more appropriate measure of social cohesion, as its conceptual definition aligns closely with the definition of social cohesion as based on interdependence. The NCI is an 18-item multi-dimensional scale with dimensions of sense of community, attraction to neighbourhood, and social interaction in the neighbourhood. Although developed exclusively for use in a neighbourhood context, the NCI is easily adaptable to groups at other levels. The inclusion of sense of community as a dimension of the NCI implies the close link between sense of community and social cohesion; the authors conceptualize cohesion as the collective-level attribute of sense of community.

Rooted in the communitarian principle of interdependence, the conceptualization of social cohesion outlined here aligns well with the communitarian perspective that guides this research, as well as with the conceptualization of community that envisions community as able to incorporate diversity (Gardner, 1995). Further, a community characterized by this form of social cohesion is one where citizens choose to help one another; consequently, volunteering should be a common activity within communities rich in this form of social

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cohesion. Thus, this conceptualization aligns well with this study's focus on volunteerism and its influence on communities.

Putting it All Together

The literature review thus far defined the concepts of volunteering, serious leisure, obligation, individualism, collectivism, sense of community, and social cohesion. The alignment of each of these concepts with the theoretical framework of communitarianism has been discussed, as well as some relevant research and some of the ways in which they overlap or are interrelated. In this section, I link these concepts together in a conceptual framework representing my understanding of the concepts of interest and their relationships as suggested by the literature.

The purpose of this research was to examine volunteering within the context of communitarianism, particularly in terms of how the collective outcomes of volunteer activity are related to feelings of obligation to volunteer. Figure 2 describes the conceptual framework that guided this research. Obligation was conceptualized as a continuum bounded by commitment at one end and duty at the other. Similarly, personal value orientation was represented as a continuum defined by collectivism at one end and individualism the other. While the relationships between commitment and duty, and between individualism and collectivism, are more complex than the dichotomous relationships implied through use of continua, this simplification was initially intended to illustrate the distinct nature of these concepts from their counterparts.

Building on this conceptualization, individuals' feelings of sense of community and social cohesion may then be influenced both by their value orientation of individualism and collectivism, as well as obligation to volunteer. Because of the alignment between sense of community and perceptions of social cohesion with collectivist ways of thinking, these three concepts were expected to covary (i.e., individuals who exhibit collectivist orientations should also feel a strong sense of community and strong perceived social cohesion) (See Figure 2).

The discussion of serious leisure noted that commitment characterizes activities in this form of leisure. In other words, volunteering that aligns with qualities of serious leisure should theoretically be associated with feelings of obligation that fall closer to the "commitment" rather than the "duty" end of the obligation continuum (see Figure 2). It is

noteworthy that research with serious leisure participants suggests that participation in a social world and adoption of a unique ethos can lead to continued commitment in a serious leisure pursuit. This commitment, in turn, may be felt at times as obligation. At the same time, it is obligation to an activity, manifested as commitment to persevere at times of adversity, which partially defines an activity as serious leisure rather than a more casual form of leisure. Thus, serious leisure may both contribute to, and result from, feelings of obligation as commitment.

Figure 2. A Communitarian Framework for Exploring Volunteering.
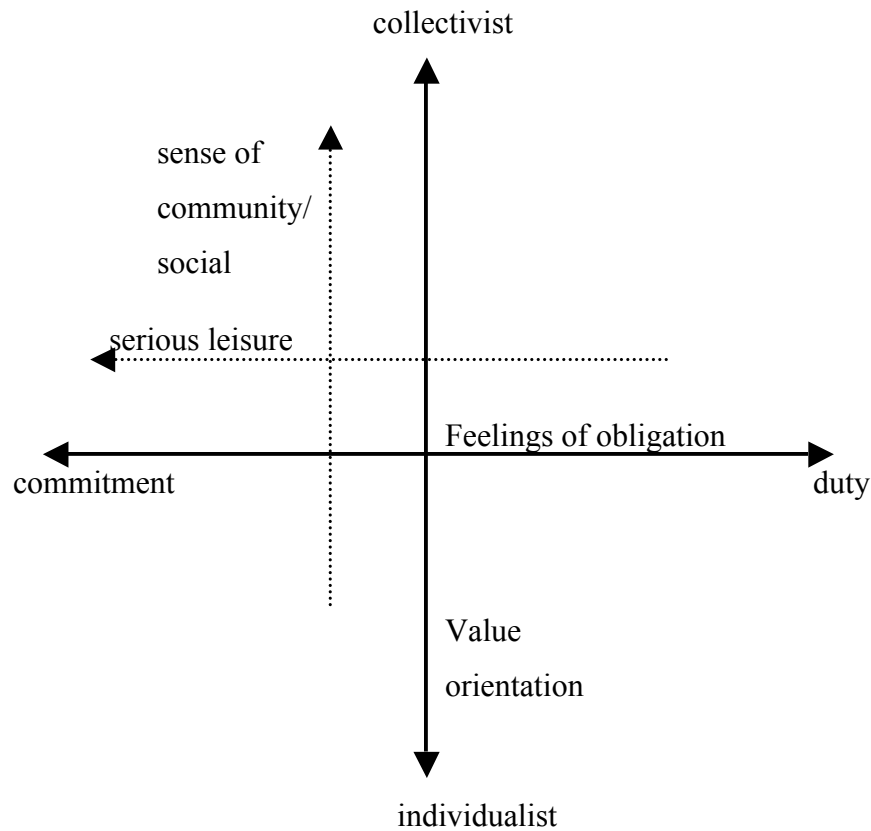
In summary, volunteering was conceptualized as an activity carried out within communities that can be motivated by obligation. Obligation, in turn, as a feeling that one should act in a certain way, may be the result of expectations (duty) from self or other, or the result of a strong sense of attachment (commitment). Individuals' individualist or collectivist

orientations may influence their feelings of obligation as duty or commitment. Feelings of obligation to volunteer may influence sense of community, perceptions of social cohesion, and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure.

CHAPTER 3 – METHODS

The purpose of this research was to examine volunteering within the context of communitarianism. In particular, this study aimed to examine how feelings of obligation to volunteer are felt as commitment and duty and influenced by the value orientations of individualism and collectivism. Further, this research explored how feelings of obligation to volunteer are related to sense of community, social cohesion and the experience of serious leisure.

Research Design

Given the lack of an existing viable measure of obligation and the novel way that it is conceptualized here, the first phase of this research involved development of an instrument to measure feelings of obligation to volunteer. While the scale items are specific to volunteering, they were created with the intention that they be easily adaptable to other leisure contexts. This phase of the research resulted in two distinct measures of feelings of obligation in the context of volunteering: The *Obligation to Volunteer as Commitment* (OVC) and the *Obligation to Volunteer as Duty* (OVD) scales.

The second phase of this research involved using these scales as well as existing measures to examine how obligation to volunteer is related to personal value orientations, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, feelings of sense of community and perceptions of social cohesion. At this stage, individuals volunteering with non-profit and voluntary organizations within the City of Guelph were recruited for involvement in the study.

Phase I: Conceptual Development and Operationalization

Scale development typically begins with the conceptualization of the construct of interest (DeVellis, 2003; Netemeyer, Bearden & Sharma, 2003; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In this study, a literature review provided a strong theoretical foundation for a conceptual definition of obligation, ensuring that this definition of obligation was informed by and based on existing theory. This conceptualization of obligation suggested that it is a *feeling of commitment or duty*. Obligation is felt as commitment or duty, or a combination of these, depending on how it is perceived by an individual. Commitment is characterized by affective

attachment, flexibility, reward, and the existence of side bets that make continued involvement attractive. In contrast, duty is associated with the expectations of self or others, work, constraint and burden. These two dimensions of obligation (commitment and duty) were operationalized as two distinct subscales of obligation during the process of scale development. Conceptual definitions of each of these subdimensions were identified to aid in item creation and to assist expert reviewers with the process of survey refinement. Although "work" was initially conceptualized as a subdimension of duty, during the process of defining each subdimension, it because clear that the conceptual definition of work was encompassed by the burden and constraint subdimensions of duty. Thus, the subdimension of work was considered redundant and was not included as a subdimension of duty in the obligation scale.

Subdimensions of Obligation

Definitions of the remaining seven subdimensions of obligation are described below:

Reward

Serious leisure was characterized as both rewarding and involving aspects of obligation (Stebbins, 1992, 2000, 2005b, 2007). These two characteristics are often linked, such that the obligation that accompanies serious leisure is closely associated with the experience of rewards (Shamir, 1998; Stebbins, 2007). While benefits may be tangible in nature (e.g., financial gain), most often these rewards are intrinsic, intangible rewards related to personal fulfillment or group membership (Stebbins, 2007).

Affective Attachment

Affective attachment was defined as the positive emotional ties people have to other individuals, to activities, to organizations, or to goals related to their volunteer role(s) (Buchanan, 1985; Yair, 1992). Affective attachment is an aspect of obligation as it nurtures a desire to continue involvement with the individuals, activities, organizations or goals to which volunteers are attached (Taylor et al., 2006). Extending this conceptualization to serious leisure, affective attachment is linked to the rewarding outcomes of serious leisure and the social world through which people build the connections that nurture emotional ties (Stebbins, 2007).

Flexibility

Within a volunteer role, flexibility suggests that individuals have some choice about how volunteer responsibilities are fulfilled. Stebbins (2000) writes of flexible obligation as the

form of obligation within serious leisure, suggesting that flexibility within this context is defined as "relative freedom to honour commitments" (p. 28).

Side Bets

Becker (1960) introduced the term "side bets" to refer to peripheral benefits or investments that act as incentives for continuing participation in an activity (Buchanan, 1985). Common side bets within the context of serious leisure include relationships, social status, group membership, or investments in equipment or skill-building (c.f., Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Yair, 1992; Gillespie et al., 2002).

Expectation

Reflecting external motivation with limited choice (Neulinger, 1976), expectation is the sense of pressure to fulfill preconceived ideas about how one should act. Expectation can come from the self, or from others (c.f., Cuskelly & Harrington, 1997/1998; Maguire, 2008). Expectation is similar to Shamir's (1988) concept of external commitment, which he described as "when the individual is obliged by the conditions in which he or she is situated to continue a line of action, a role performance, or a relationship" (p. 242). However, unlike external commitment, expectation can be related to new ways of behaving as well as maintaining current ways of acting. Expectations emerge from social roles (Stebbins, 2000), desire to maintain a certain image, or guilt (c.f., Raisborough, 2006).

Burden

Volunteering characterized by feelings of burden may be demanding, emotionally difficult, distressing, or overwhelming (Cyr & Dowrick, 1991; Raisborough, 2006; Stebbins, 2000). Drawing from the caregiving literature where the concept of burden has received significant attention, burden is conceptualized as a subjective feeling of being overloaded that results from an imbalance between demands and resources (Chou, 2000).

Constraint

Volunteering is a constraining activity when a volunteer feels that her volunteer activities prevent or inhibit participation in leisure or other activities (c.f., Cuskelly et al., 2002/2003; Raisborough, 2006). Although not developed with the theoretical framework of constraints theory, this conceptualization is consistent with Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's (1991) conceptualization of constraints, in that volunteering may be both a structural and an interpersonal constraint that controls or limits other forms of leisure participation or time use.

These conceptual definitions of the subdimensions of obligation guided the creation of scale items as well as the evaluation and refinement process.

Item Creation

Based on the conceptual definition of obligation introduced earlier, a variety of possible items for each subscale were created. As suggested by DeVellis (2003), the list of potential items aimed to "exhaust the possibilities for types of items within those bounds" without going beyond the boundaries of the latent variable of interest (p. 64). Inspiration for the development of scale items came from theory, empirical literature, assessment instruments for related concepts (Haynes, Richard, & Kubany, 1995), and my own experiences with volunteers and volunteering. An important source for possible ideas were qualitative studies that include volunteers' comments about their reasons for volunteering, since their quotations may resonate with respondents' own experiences. For example, in a study of volunteer sport administrators in community sport organizations, one reason given for volunteering or continuing to volunteer was "…no one else to volunteer" (Cuskelly et al., 2002/2003, p. 200). This quotation aligns closely with the burden and lack of choice that are characteristic of duty, and inspired the items "I wish there was someone to help out with all my volunteer work" and "There are not enough other people to help where I volunteer" as possible items in the burden subscale.

Items were worded to accommodate Likert-type scaled responses on a seven-point scale with endpoints of 1 ("strongly disagree") and 7 ("strongly agree"). This type of response scale was considered most appropriate, as it is familiar to most respondents, allows greater precision than dichotomous responses, allows easy conversion of data to composite variables, and results in interval-level data, which is necessary for validity and reliability analyses (Dawis, 1987).

At this early stage of scale development, I created 171 items were created for possible inclusion in the scale (27 reward, 25 affective attachment, 19 flexibility, 31 side bets, 23 expectation, 26 burden, 20 constraint). These initial items were carefully reviewed with my co-advisors and items that were unclear, awkwardly worded, double-barrelled or contained jargon were eliminated. This step reduced the number of possible scale items to 145.

Expert review of the measurement items helped to ensure content validity of the scale. Expert review occurred prior to pilot testing the instrument and was performed by multiple

judges, as suggested by Carmines and Zeller (1979). The expert reviewers critiqued the scale on the basis of relevance, representativeness, specificity and clarity, suggesting which items should be removed because they did not meet these criteria, as well as providing suggestions for rewording existing items or creating new items. Ten experts were recruited to assist with review of scale items: five volunteers, three managers of volunteers, and two scholars whose research interests include leisure volunteering. The documents distributed to expert reviewers are included in the appendices as Appendix A: Scholarly review of obligation scale items and Appendix B: Volunteer and volunteer management review of obligation scale items. Including volunteers among the experts in reviewing the draft scale was intended to ensure face as well as content validity. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) note that face validity, which they define as "the extent to which the test taker or someone else…feels the instrument measures what it is intended to measure" (p. 110), is often important in gaining the support and confidence of respondents and the public. Based on feedback from the expert reviewers, the 145 possible items were narrowed down to 79 items. These 79 items comprised the draft scale, which was subjected to empirical testing to further refine the scale and to perform preliminary reliability and validity analyses.

Construct Validity Testing

A measure of affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1984) was included in the survey, so that the new scale's relationship to this existing measure could be explored as a basis for construct validation (Clark & Watson, 1995). Meyer and Allen's Affective Commitment Scale (1984) defines affective commitment as involvement, identification and emotional attachment to an organization. Although their scale was intended to measure attachment to an organization in a workplace context, items in the scale were a good fit with a volunteer context as well. Sample items include "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me" and "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization."

Pilot Testing

Refinement, reliability and validity testing of the scale were performed using data from a convenience sample of undergraduate students. Students enrolled in six large undergraduate classes of 75 or more students at the University of Waterloo were recruited to

participate in the study. The total enrollment of these classes was 1198 and represented all six faculties on campus. In total, 865 respondents participated in this stage of the research.

With the permission of course instructors, 20 minutes at the beginning of a scheduled class was allotted to allow the researcher to address students, providing a brief introduction to the research and inviting them to complete the survey in class if they chose. A copy of the recruitment script can be found in Appendix C. The survey cover page provided further detail on the study and the ethics process, as well as the researchers' contact information so that respondents could request a summary of the study results if desired. The body of the survey was comprised of the 79 statements that comprised the draft obligation scale, in random order, followed by the affective commitment scale and some basic demographic questions. (A copy of the survey is included as Appendix D.)

Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) suggest the sample should, as much as possible, represent the population for which the scale is intended. However, they note that students are commonly involved as respondents as they represent a convenient and cooperative population. While they deem this practice admissible, they suggest that at later stages a scale should be piloted with the target population. Following this advice, Phase II of this research involved using the new measure with volunteers.

Refining the Scale

In refining the scale, care was taken to ensure the theoretical and conceptual roots of the scale were maintained. Thus, refinements to the scale were made primarily on conceptual rather than statistical grounds. A comprehensive review of all items in the scale was achieved through an iterative process of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using SPSS 17.0.

The proposal for this research noted that data collected to aid in scale testing and refinement would be randomly divided into two subsamples to provide distinct data sets for exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. Many researchers (c.f., DeVellis, 2003; Tinsley & Tinsley, 1987) recommend involving a minimum of five to ten respondents per scale item, noting that the ratio of required respondents to items diminishes as the number of items increases. In this study, an effort was made to involve approximately 10 respondents per scale item to avoid issues with reliability. With the expectation of gathering survey responses from approximately 800 respondents, splitting the sample was expected to yield two sets of 400 respondents. This sample size was expected to prove sufficient for EFA because it was

assumed that a cursory look through the 79 draft scale items would have led to some being removed prior to EFA analyses due to skew, odd distributions, or other indications of poor performance. However, upon cursory review of the draft items, all the items were deemed satisfactory and worthy of further analyses, thus increasing the sample size needed for EFA. In order to have a robust sample to work with for EFA, the entire dataset was used in the analyses. Because the EFA analyses led to identification of strong items and strong evidence of a factor structure, I felt confident about proceeding to the second phase of research without doing confirmatory factor analysis, with the intention that this second phase would provide further data for analyses of the scale's dimensionality, this time with a volunteer population. There is growing acknowledgement that a range of factor analytic models are acceptable and indeed useful for scale development and refinement (Hopwood & Donnellan, 2010).

After preliminary examination of the distributions of each item to ensure they were not overly skewed, the items were subject to EFA on: (1) the items comprising each of the 7 subdimensions, (2) the items within the two dimensions of obligation (commitment and duty), and (3) the items as part of an overall measure of feelings of obligation to volunteer. Four iterations of EFA provided conceptual insights, and the scale was refined at each stage by removing items that were identified as having poor conceptual fit or flaws in wording. At early stages of the EFA (first two iterations), communalities provided particular insight. Where items had poor communalities (<.5), they were scrutinized for conceptual fit. At later stages of factor analysis, the factor structure, factor loadings, and inter-item correlations of the scale dimensions and subdimensions were of particular interest. Reliability analyses also guided refinement of the scale at the last iteration of scale refinement. While scale refinement was primarily guided by the conceptual rationale, an effort was made to maximize the internal consistency of each subdimension, using Nunnally and Bernstein's (1994) standard of 0.70 as a lower benchmark for coefficient alpha. At the same time, care was also taken to ensure that the breadth of the conceptual definition of each subdimension was represented. Each iteration of factor analysis was based on a smaller number of items, with the fourth iteration resulting in a revised scale comprised of 32 items that represented all subdimensions well. Reliability analysis of the refined scale was then performed using coefficient alpha to validate the internal consistency of the scale at the subdimension and dimension levels. Further conceptual scrutiny as well as exploration of relationships between the dimensions and subdimensions of

obligation suggested that the two dimensions of feelings of obligation to volunteer were best understood as two scales. The *Obligation to Volunteer as Commitment* (OVC) scale and the *Obligation to Volunteer as Duty* (OVD) scale represented complementary but distinct aspects of feelings of obligation to volunteer.

Phase II: Exploring Feelings of Obligation to Volunteer

The second phase of this research involved using the newly-created OVC and OVD measures to explore relationships between obligation to volunteer and the value orientations of collectivism and individualism, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, and perceptions of sense of community and social cohesion. This phase of the research employed a survey that included the obligation measures created in Phase 1, as well as established measures of collectivism and individualism, serious leisure, sense of community, and social cohesion, with the goal of examining the relationships between these concepts. This phase of the research also helped to further confirm the construct validity of the OVC and OVD scales.

Research Participants

The second phase of research took place within Guelph, Ontario, a city of 118,000 in Southwestern Ontario (City of Guelph, 2010). In 2008, Guelph was declared "Canada's most caring community" by *Maclean's* magazine (2008) because its rate of volunteerism by citizens in 2004, at 69.7%, was highest in Canada. The City of Guelph was selected the community of focus for this research because of my own familiarity with the city and its voluntary sector. I grew up in Guelph and lived there for all but six years of my life.

Research participants were recruited from various non-profit and voluntary organizations where they were current volunteers. In particular, organizations that were currently members of the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington (VCGW) served as the sample frame for this study. The VCGW was recruited to facilitate connections with voluntary organizations because it serves as a hub for volunteering within Guelph and Wellington County, and because of my strong relationship with this organization. I have worked with this organization as a summer student researcher, and was serving as a member of its Board of Directors at the time that I conducted this research. The VCGW aims to promote volunteerism, link potential volunteers to volunteer opportunities, and to provide services to volunteer organizations themselves, including training related to supporting

volunteers and advocacy on issues related to volunteerism (VCGW, n.d.). The VCGW has over 100 member agencies in Guelph and the surrounding area. All members are non-profit, government or charitable organizations that involve volunteers in the work of their agencies. The member agencies of the VCGW include religious, health-related, social service, sport, educational, environmental and arts organizations of various sizes. Because of the familiarity of VCGW staff with volunteers, volunteerism, and volunteer organizations within the City of Guelph, they provided advice about selecting and recruiting organizations to participate in this research.

Sampling

Volunteer organizations were selectively recruited to participate in this research in order to reach volunteers diverse in terms of age, sex, income, and volunteer characteristics and experiences. Voluntary and non-profit organizations that were members of the VCGW were categorized according to the sectors identified by the International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations (ICNPO) developed by the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project and used to identify volunteer sectors by the CSGVP (Hall et al., 2004; Hall, Lasby, Ayer, & Gibbons, 2009). Most member organizations of VCGW aligned with one of the following nine sectors: (1) sport and recreation; (2) arts and culture; (3) social services; (4) environment; (5) education and research; (6) health; (7) hospitals; (8) development and housing; and (9) grant-making, fundraising and volunteerism promotion. The remaining sectors, of which there are fewer than four VCGW-affiliated organizations in each, were: (1) law, advocacy, politics; (2) international; and (3) business and professional associations and unions. Effort was focused on recruiting one organization from within each of the nine sectors that represent the majority of volunteer activity in Guelph.

From the list of organizations in each of these nine sectors, organizations with more than 100 active volunteers who live principally in the City of Guelph and surrounding (County of Wellington) area were identified. Targeting organizations with more than 100 active volunteers provided an efficient means of reaching large numbers of volunteers but also facilitated access to a broader group of volunteers, since larger organizations tended to have more variety in the roles filled by volunteers. Advice from the VCGW helped to identify which VCGW member organizations met this criterion, as well as to identify, from this short list, the organizations that had the human resources required to help administer the study.

Based on these factors, one organization from each of the nine sectors (sport and recreation; arts and culture; social services; environment; education and research; health; hospitals; development and housing; grant-making, fundraising and volunteerism promotion) was targeted for recruitment, along with a second organization identified as a backup in case the targeted organization was unable to participate.

Plans for recruiting organizations to participate in this research had included promoting this work through *MemberLINK*, a monthly electronic newsletter published by the VCGW for its member agencies. However, the timing of this newsletter proved inconvenient. Further, in discussion with the staff at VCGW, I decided that a more personal approach might be preferable. Thus, a VCGW staff member (Associate Executive Director) made initial phone calls to targeted organizations (typically to the staff member responsible for volunteer management) to introduce the research and encourage the organization to participate. (The script for these calls is attached as Appendix E.) I subsequently contacted each group to reiterate the invitation to participate and to provide additional information, either by phone and email or by setting an appointment to meet with a representative of the organization. At these meetings, I provided an information package including a cover letter (included as Appendix F) and a sample volunteer cover letter and survey (appended as Appendices G and H, respectively). Of the nine organizations recruited to participate in the study, two declined to participate. Reasons for organizational non-participation were related to organizational policies regarding confidentiality of volunteer information or the lack of human resources required to facilitate survey distribution. In these cases, a second organization from within that sector was contacted; of these, one agreed to participate, while in the other case a third organization was contacted and agreed to participate.

It is worthy of note that the sampling strategy described above was simply designed to solicit participation by a wide variety of volunteers in terms of demographic characteristics and volunteer experiences. If the survey respondents currently volunteered with more than one organization, the survey asked volunteers to respond to the survey questions based on their "primary" volunteer role. The survey noted that an individual's "primary" volunteering may be defined as the volunteer role that is most important to them, the one to which they devote the most time, or in another way as defined by the volunteers themselves. A respondent's primary volunteer role may not be associated with the organization through

which they received the survey. Thus, the volunteer experiences described in the surveys likely reflect experiences of volunteering with a broader range of organizations than those that distributed the survey.

In appreciation for volunteers' participation in this study, survey respondents had the option of entering a draw to win one of two $50 gift certificates to a local bookstore in Guelph. A ballot for this draw was included in each survey package, to be returned with the survey. A copy of the ballot is included as Appendix I. When completed surveys were received by mail, the ballots were immediately separated from the surveys in order to maintain anonymity of the survey responses. This method of balancing cost and respondent anonymity was determined with input from the Office of Research Ethics, University of Waterloo.

Data Collection Procedures

Once an organization agreed to participate in the study, they received an adequate supply of individual envelopes with adequate postage, each containing a cover letter, survey, ballot for the respondent appreciation draw, and an addressed, postage-paid return envelope. The organization then affixed address labels for their volunteers and mailed the surveys. I followed up with organizations one week after providing the survey package to confirm the final number of surveys distributed, and to arrange to provide additional survey packages if necessary or to retrieve unused packages.

Initially, I planned to send follow-up postcards two weeks after mailing the surveys. The postcards were to include my contact information so that a second survey could be requested if necessary. However, this proved costly, both in terms of the expense of printing and mailing, as well as the time required by participating organizations to address the postcards. Instead, several other efforts were made to encourage volunteers to complete the survey. These efforts varied depending on the circumstances and resources of the organizations. For example, at one organization where volunteers were regularly on-site for their volunteering, the volunteer manager displayed a notice informing volunteers that they would be receiving the survey by mail and encouraging them to respond. Extra survey packages were also available at this site for those who may have discarded or lost the survey they received through the mail. Several other organizations added their own cover letter to the survey package to voice their endorsement of this research and to encourage their volunteers

to participate. Some organizations sent emails to their volunteers to alert them that the survey would be arriving by mail, and to encourage them to participate. At one organization, a service club that meets regularly, I was able to attend a meeting and briefly introduce the research, and volunteers were able to pick up a survey package at the meeting and then return the survey by mail. In one instance, I volunteered alongside volunteers for a morning and was able to introduce my research during the refreshment break. As these examples illustrate, survey distribution procedures varied depending on the needs of the organization. In all cases, surveys were anonymously returned by mail, and efforts were made to increase the response rate by encouraging participating organizations to promote this research among their volunteers.

Survey Design

In addition to including established measures of the concepts of interest, the survey also asked volunteers to provide demographic information as well as some details about the nature and duration of their volunteer activities. The following six sections comprised the survey:

- *Section 1: Current volunteer involvement.* This section asked respondents to define their primary current volunteer role, volunteer time commitments, and related characteristics.
- *Section 2: Values.* This section included measures of individualism and collectivism.
- *Section 3: Volunteer experience.* This section included a measure of serious leisure participation.
- *Section 4: Feelings about volunteering.* This section included the newly-developed obligation scale.
- *Section 5: Volunteering and the community.* This section included measures of sense of community and perceived social cohesion.
- *Section 6: Demographic characteristics.* This section asked respondents to provide demographic information including their age, sex, education and income level.
  A copy of the survey is included as Appendix H.

Data Collection Instruments

Individualism/Collectivism

The Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (Shulruf et al., 2007), particularly the collectivist dimension of harmony and the individualist dimension of self-responsibility, aligned well with the focus in this research on the relationship between collectivism, individualism and feelings of obligation. Thus, this scale was used to measure volunteers' orientations of collectivism and individualism. The scales' two dimensions are (1) individualism and (2) collectivism, with these two dimensions having sub-dimensions of (1) uniqueness, (2) responsibility, and (3) competitiveness, and (1) harmony and (2) advice, respectively. The 20-item scale includes four items from each of these five sub-dimensions. To establish consistency with other scaled questions in this survey, the response options were altered from a 6-point scale ranging from never or almost never to always, to a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). No wording changes were necessary to accommodate this change. Sample items include: "I consider myself as a unique person separate from others" (unique) and "I prefer to be self-reliant rather than depend on others" (responsibility), "I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others" (competitive), "I hate to disagree with others in my group" (harmony), and "It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making a decision" (advice). In a study involving Australian undergraduate students, these five sub-dimensions had reliabilities of .76 (uniqueness), .73 (responsibility), .78 (competitiveness), .71 (harmony), and .77 (advice) (Shulruf et al., 2007).

Serious Leisure

The extent to which volunteers' involvement in volunteering could be characterized as serious leisure was measured using the only validated measure of serious leisure currently in existence, the Serious Leisure Inventory and Measure developed by Gould et al. (2008). The short form of this tool includes three items for each of the 18 factors that comprise the scale. While confirmatory factor analyses indicated that the 18-factor model performed well on all fit indices (Gould et al.), even the short form of this scale is quite lengthy at 54 items. Further, some of the items, particularly those comprising the nine personal and three social 'durable rewards' factors, have similar wording to items in the feelings of obligation to volunteer scale, and there was concern that this may affect face validity of the survey for respondents. Thus,

the scale was adapted for this research by including items from the short form of six of the original 18 factors: (1) perseverance, (2) effort (earlier discussed as the acquisition of skills and abilities), (3) career progress, (4) career contingencies, (5) unique ethos, and (6) identity. These factors describe the qualities of serious leisure with the exception of durable personal and social rewards. Statements related to durable personal and social rewards were excluded from the survey because items from the six factors named above act as an additive index of serious leisure, while reward items cannot be treated as a simple additive index because of variability in experience of rewards of serious leisure (Gould et al.).

The scale items were designed such that the particular serious leisure activity can be specified within the body of each item, making them easily adaptable to various serious leisure pursuits. Sample items included: "If I encounter obstacles in [volunteering], I persist until I overcome them" (perseverance), "There are defining moments within my [volunteer involvement] that have significantly shaped my involvement in it" (career contingencies), and "I am often recognized as one devoted to [volunteering]" (identity). The response scale was altered from a 9-point to a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree to ensure consistency with the other measures.

Although at the proposal stage of this research, I had drafted items intended to measure the tensions or costs associated with serious leisure as described by Stebbins (1998), I later removed them from the survey because of their overlap with duty items, and because the survey length was becoming unwieldy.

Sense of Community

Volunteers' sense of community was measured using the Community Organization Sense of Community Scale (COSOC) (Hughey et al., 1999). This scale builds on McMillan and Chavis's (1986) conceptualization of sense of community for the specific context of community organizations. The COSOC is of particular relevance to the proposed research because it was designed to measure sense of community at both the organizational and broader geographic community levels, particularly in terms of the mediating influence organizational participation has on feelings of belonging to a larger geographic entity such as a city or town. The COSOC includes three dimensions: (1) relationship to organization; (2) organization as mediator; and (3) bond to the community. The scale is comprised of 11 items, five related to the first dimension and three items related to the second and third dimensions.

Scaling was altered from a 5- to a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The wording of scale items was slightly altered to refer to a non-specific organization with which an individual is affiliated through their volunteer efforts. Sample items from each dimension of the adapted COSOC include: "The organization I volunteer with gets very little done in [Guelph]" (relationship to the organization), "Because of the organization I volunteer with, I am connected to other groups in [Guelph]" (organization as mediator), "[Guelph] is a good place for me to live" (bond to the community). In a study with members of five community organizations, the three dimensions had reliabilities of .87 (relationship to the organization), .86 (organization as mediator), and .82 (bond to the community) (Hughey et al.). A recent study with community residents confirmed the factor structure of the COSOC (Hughey, Peterson, Lowe, & Oprescu, 2008).

Social Cohesion

To measure volunteers' perceived sense of their community's social cohesion, a scale was adapted from the Neighbourhood Cohesion Index (NCI) developed by Buckner (1988). The NCI is a subjective measure of perceived cohesion, which, like the proposed research, is based on a conceptual definition of social cohesion as rooted in interdependence. Although initially theorized as a multi-dimensional scale encompassing dimensions of (1) psychological sense of community, (2) attraction to neighbourhood, and (3) social interaction in the neighbourhood, the final version of the NCI is an 18-item unidimensional scale measuring sense of community/cohesion. The wording of the scale was altered by substituting the word "community" for "neighbourhood" so that the scale aligned with the current community context. While respondents may conceptualize community as either relational or geographic, the wording of the scale items implied geographic community by referring to "this community" rather than "a community." In addition, within the survey the scale items were contained in the same section as the COSOC scale, and several of these items referred explicitly to the city of Guelph, implying a geographic context for community. Sample scale items in the adjusted NCI scale included "The friends and associations I have with other people in this [community] mean a lot to me" and "A feeling of fellowship runs deep between me and other people in this [community]". Again, survey participants were asked to respond to each item using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree

(7). Buckner reported that the scale had both internal consistency and stability coefficients of .95 in a study of residents in three suburban neighbourhoods in Washington, DC.

Demographic and Volunteering Information

In addition to the measures described in the previous sections and the measure of obligation developed specifically for this study, the survey also included questions asking respondents to provide information about the nature of their volunteer activities and basic demographic information. In particular, questions about other factors that may influence feelings of obligation to volunteer were gathered, including volunteer role(s), organizational sector, length of involvement, weekly time commitment, and related characteristics. When possible, these questions were modelled on similar questions included in the National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (Hall et al., 2006) to facilitate comparison with these data. Demographic information of interest included age, sex, education, income, and length of time of residence in the community.

Data Analysis

As described previously, the research questions addressed in this study were:

1. How do individuals' collective and individualist orientations influence their feelings of obligation to volunteer?
2. How do feelings of obligation to volunteer influence individuals' sense of community and their perceived sense of social cohesion?
3. How do feelings of obligation to volunteer influence individuals' experience of volunteering as serious leisure?
4. How are the value orientations of individualism and collectivism related to the experience of volunteering as serious leisure?
5. How are feelings of obligation to volunteer influenced by characteristics such as length and number of volunteer commitments and demographic characteristics such as education and income?

The first four questions were explored using correlation analyses using scores from the measures of individualism/collectivism, serious leisure, sense of community, perceptions of social cohesion, and feelings of obligation to volunteer.

The final research question was explored using hierarchical regression analysis, accounting for personal (demographic) and volunteer-related (role, organization) variables as distinct steps, with obligation to volunteer as the dependent variable.

Summary

The cumulative goal of this research was to examine volunteers' feelings of obligation to volunteer, and how these influenced their experiences of volunteering as serious leisure, their sense of community, and perceptions of social cohesion. This goal was achieved by first creating and validating the OVC and OVD measures of feelings of obligation to volunteer. Then, these scales and other established instruments were used in a survey with volunteers to examine the relationships between feelings of obligation to volunteer, collectivism, individualism, serious leisure, sense of community, and social cohesion.

CHAPTER 4 - DEVELOPMENT OF A SCALE OF OBLIGATION TO VOLUNTEER

This chapter describes the Phase I of this study, the development of the OVC and OVD measures of feelings of obligation to volunteer. First, the steps of scale development are outlined. Then, the characteristics of the sample population whose survey responses facilitated scale testing and refinement are described, and the analyses undertaken to refine the scales for use in Phase II are outlined. Here, particular emphasis is placed on the conceptual definition of obligation as characterized as feelings of commitment or duty. The commitment aspect of obligation includes the dimensions of reward, affective attachment, flexibility, and the existence of side bets that make continued involvement attractive, while the duty aspect of obligation is associated with the expectations of self or others, work, constraint and burden. At the conclusion of this chapter, the refined obligation measures are presented as two subscales describing the commitment and duty facets of obligation.

Item Generation and Expert Review

Scale development began with the creation of potential scale items. Drawing on the conceptual definitions of each subdimension associated with commitment and duty, items were generated to capture essential aspects of each subdimension. While no specific number of items were specified in advance, approximately 20 to 30 items per subdimension were sought to ensure each subdimension was adequately represented. As described in Chapter 3, items were developed based on the academic literature, empirical research, measurement instruments for related concepts, and personal experiences with volunteers and volunteering. In total, 171 potential scale items were developed at this stage. With assistance from my doctoral co-advisors, these initial items were carefully reviewed and items that were unclear, awkwardly worded, inconsistent with the conceptual framework, or vague (encompassing more than one dimension) were eliminated. Although this review resulted in the creation of some new items (e.g., double-barrelled statements separated into two separate items), overall this step reduced the number of potential scale items to 145. For example, "volunteering is a big part of my life", an item created to represent the side bets subdimension of commitment, was removed as it was considered to be conceptually vague and could be misconstrued as an aspect of the constraint subdimension of duty. Similarly, the item "I would feel more free if I

didn't volunteer" was removed because the negative wording could potentially be confusing for respondents. In addition, this item was considered conceptually indistinct from the flexibility subdimension of commitment.

After initial review of potential scale items, ten experts were recruited to assist with review of scale items: five volunteers, three managers of volunteers, and two scholars whose research interests include leisure volunteering. Expert reviewers were invited to critique the items on the basis of relevance, representativeness, specificity, and clarity (DeVellis, 2003; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Reviewers were asked to suggest items that should be removed because they did not meet these criteria, and to provide suggestions for rewording existing items and creating new items. Scale items were identified by subdimension for scholarly reviewers to encourage comments related to content validity and conceptual fit. (See Appendix A for instructions and organization of items for scholarly reviewers). Reviewers who were recruited due to their experience as volunteers or volunteer managers were asked to comment on the clarity and relevance of the items for volunteers. These individuals reviewed the scale items without knowledge of the conceptual definition of obligation on which they were based, to more closely simulate the experience of survey respondents. (See Appendix B for instructions and organization of items for these expert reviewers.) Based on feedback from the expert reviewers, the 145 potential items were honed to 79 items. Items removed from the scale included: "People like me are expected to volunteer" (expectation), which was deemed potentially offensive to respondents; "Volunteering has helped me to expand my social network" (reward), because of potential confusion about the phrase "social network" as well as conceptual overlap with the side bets subdimension; and "I make myself volunteer" (constraint), because volunteer reviewers found this item vague and confusing. Table 4.1 summarizes the number of potential items in each subdimension at each step of the scale development and refinement process prior to empirical testing.

Table 4.1

Item Generation and Refinement Prior to Empirical Testing

Dimension Subdimension	Originally generated	After initial review	After expert review/ Included in Phase 1 survey
Commitment	**102**	**84**	**44**
Reward	27	22	11
Affective attachment	25	21	12
Side bets	31	27	13
Flexibility	19	14	8
Duty	**69**	**61**	**35**
Expectation	23	21	12
Burden	26	21	12
Constraint	20	19	11
Total	**171**	**145**	**79**

The remaining 79 items comprising the draft scale, outlined in Table 4.2, were next subjected to empirical testing to further refine the scale as well as to perform preliminary reliability and validity analyses.

Table 4.2

Final Set of Items Included in Phase 1 Empirical Testing

Dimension: Subdimension   Item
Commitment: Reward
My volunteer activities are rewarding.
I enjoy volunteering.
Volunteering is rewarding for me.
Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me.
Volunteering helps me to reach my potential.
I experience many benefits when I volunteer.
I feel satisfied with the things I accomplish as a volunteer.
Volunteering gives me the opportunity to express who I am.
Volunteering helps me to connect with people in my community.
Volunteering helps me to feel like part of a community.
I enjoy being part of a group when I volunteer.

Dimension: Subdimension
Item

Commitment: Affective Attachment

    I feel passionate about my volunteering.

    I have positive memories of my volunteer involvement.

    I think of those I volunteer with as friends.

    I feel close to the people in the organization where I volunteer.

    I feel a connection with other volunteers in this organization.

    I feel a bond to the people I help through volunteering.

    I am very attached to my volunteer activities.

    I feel a sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer.

    I am very attached to the organization where I volunteer.

    I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer.

    My volunteer work means a lot to me.

    Volunteering is about doing something for a cause that is important to me.

Commitment: Side Bets

    There are many incentives to volunteering.

    Volunteering gives me access to other opportunities that are important to me.

    My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life.

    If I stopped volunteering, my social life would be negatively affected.

    I would lose friends I have made if I stopped volunteering.

    I value the network of people I have established through volunteering.

    Volunteering demonstrates who I am as a person.

    Others know me as a volunteer.

    Ending my volunteering would leave a gap in my life.

    Other people think highly of my role as a volunteer.

    Volunteering gives me access to places that would not normally be accessible to me.

    Others see me in a more positive light because of my volunteering.

    I recognize that my volunteering provides me with new skills and training.

Commitment: Flexibility

    I have flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering.

    I have flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering.

    I have flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering.

    I have flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering.

    I am able to change my responsibilities as a volunteer.

    If I see an opportunity to do something differently, I have the flexibility to do it.

    I feel trapped in my volunteer role.

    I feel that, if I wanted to, I could walk away from my volunteer role.

Duty: Expectation

    I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering.

    I volunteer because I know it's what I should do.

Dimension: Subdimension

    Item

        I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer.

        The organization I volunteer with expects me to continue to volunteer.

        I continue to volunteer because the organization has made an investment in me.

        I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me.

        If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down.

        I feel pressure from others to volunteer.

        Others depend on me to volunteer.

        I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen.

        As a member of this community, I am expected to volunteer.

        I volunteer to set an example for others.

Duty: Burden

        There are not enough other people to help where I volunteer.

        I wish there was someone else to help with my volunteer work.

        I feel overwhelmed by my volunteer activities.

        I feel drained by my volunteering.

        There is just too much to do where I volunteer.

        I often feel stressed about my volunteer activities.

        I often feel I am unable to fulfill my volunteer responsibilities.

        I feel weighed down by my volunteer responsibilities.

        I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities.

        There are a lot of demands on me as a volunteer.

        I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer.

        I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering.

Duty: Constraint

        Volunteering prevents me from participating in other activities I would like to do.

        Volunteering prevents me from doing other things.

        My volunteer activities restrict me from doing other things.

        I would like to pursue other interests, but I can't because of my volunteering.

        My volunteer responsibilities make it difficult for me to spend time with family and friends.

        I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer.

        I feel my life revolves around my volunteer activities.

        I often resent the amount of time I spend volunteering.

        I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer.

        It's hard to accommodate other activities with my volunteer schedule.

        I cannot relax when I know there is so much volunteer work to be done.

Refinement of the Obligation Scale Based on Empirical Analyses

Students enrolled in six large undergraduate classes representing all six faculties at University of Waterloo were recruited to participate in the study. In total, the sample frame was comprised of 1198 students enrolled in six classes. A total of 865 surveys were returned for a response rate of 72%. The students who participated in the study included 456 females (55.9 %), 343 males (42.0%), and 17 transgendered (2.1%). (Note that 49 students did not provide information about their gender.) Respondents ranged in age from 17 to 43 (*M*=19.8, *SD*=2.4). Table 4.3 summarizes relevant demographic characteristics of the study participants.

Table 4.3
Demographic Characteristics of Sample (N=865)

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Sex		
Male	343	42.0
Female	456	55.9
Transgendered	17	2.1
Age		
17	54	6.6
18	194	23.9
19	183	22.5
20	145	17.8
21	115	14.1
22 and older	122	15.1
Faculty		
Applied Health Sciences	162	20.8
Arts	246	31.6
Engineering	53	6.8
Environment	42	5.0
Mathematics	174	22.4
Science	101	13.0

Almost all the students (96.8%) had volunteered at some point in the previous five years, and over 54.0% had volunteered at least one hour per month in the previous year, as illustrated by Table 4.4.

Table 4.4
Volunteer Involvement of Sample (N=865)

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Average volunteer frequency during previous year		
Did not volunteer in previous year	220	27.0
Volunteered less than one hour per month	143	17.5
Volunteered 1-4 hours per month	217	26.6
Volunteered 5-15 hours per month	161	19.7
Volunteered over 15 hours per month	75	9.2
Volunteer frequency during most active period of volunteering in previous five years		
Did not volunteer in previous five years..............	26	3.2
Volunteered less than one hour per month	81	9.9
Volunteered 1-4 hours per month	205	25.1
Volunteered 5-15 hours per month	290	35.5
Volunteered over 15 hours per month	214	26.2

As an initial step in assessing the suitability of each of the 79 items, the distribution of responses to each item was examined using basic descriptive statistics. All of the items showed quite even distributions (i.e., low skewness indicators) and were suitably discriminating (i.e., standard deviations around 1.0 with no response category comprising a majority of the sample). Consequently, all 79 items were retained for subsequent empirical testing.

To explore the conceptual fit of the items comprising the scale and further refine those items comprising its subdimensions, four iterations of exploratory factor analyses (EFA) were performed. Each of these iterations included EFA on: (1) the items comprising each of the seven subdimensions; (2) the items within the two dimensions of obligation (commitment and duty); and (3) the items as part of an overall measure of feelings of obligation to volunteer. The refinements made to the draft scale following each iteration of EFA are described below.

First Iteration: Identification of Poor Items within Subdimensions

The purpose of the first iteration of EFA was to identify items that were poor conceptual fits for the particular subdimension they were intended to measure. These items

were identifiable by their low communalities at the subdimension and dimension level as well as their low factor loadings indicating poor alignment with a particular factor in the rotated factor matrix. More specifically, items that had communalities of less than .5 and did not clearly load on the intended factor (either split across two subdimensions or did not load highly on the expected subdimension) were identified and each item was scrutinized in an effort to determine the reason for poor performance (i.e., wordy, ambiguous, double-barrelled) and consequently were removed. For example, the item "If I see an opportunity to do things differently, I have the flexibility to do it" (flexibility) might have been considered wordy by respondents and hence contributed to its lack of consistency in response. Certainly, its unacceptably low communality of .349 at the subdimension level (.432 within the commitment dimension) suggested this to be the case. Similarly the item "I feel drained by my volunteering" (burden) split across two factors and had communality of .485 at subdimension level and .484 at duty level. The reason for the poor performance of this item may be that volunteering is sometimes physically exhausting activity and thus draining in a physical sense, while not being emotionally demanding or overwhelming. When a conceptual reason for an item's poor performance could not be identified, the item was flagged so that it could be scrutinized again at the next iteration of analysis. For example, the item "There are a lot of demands on me as a volunteer" (burden), had a communality of only .463 at the subdimension level, but because this item appeared clear, easy to understand and conceptually distinct from other subdimensions, it was included in the next phase of analysis. At this stage, 22 items were removed, reducing the number of potential scale items from 79 to 57.

Second Iteration: Further Scrutiny of Poor Items at the Dimension Level

In the second iteration of EFA, I reviewed the items with help from my co-advisors. The focus was again on identifying weak items from among the remaining 57 items following the first iteration and subjecting these to further conceptual scrutiny. Weak items were again defined as those with communalities lower than .5 at the subdimension and dimension level, and those which did not load highly onto a specific factor related to the dimension or subdimension. At this stage, eight more items were removed. These items all had communalities less than .5 at the subdimension level and did not load well on a single factor. For example, the item "I feel trapped in my volunteer role" (flexibility, reverse-scored) had a communality of .134 at the subdimension level. A possible reason for its poor performance is

that feeling "trapped" is perhaps not the opposite of flexibility, as is implied by the reverse scoring of this item. Rather, the item aligns more closely with the items that describe volunteering as a restrictive activity. Further, as this item was the only reverse-scored item in the scale, it was considered potentially problematic. Another item removed from the scale at this stage was "If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down" (expectation). Even though this item had a communality of .688 at the subdimension level, it had a communality of only .416 at the dimensional level and did not load principally on a particular factor within the factor structure for the "duty" dimension. It was theorized that the negative wording of this question may have lead to confusion, and so the item was removed.

Third Iteration: Identification of Best Items by Subdimension

During the third iteration of EFA, working with my co-advisors I focused on the 49 items that remained after the first two iterations of analysis. At this point, the primary focus of the analyses shifted from identifying and removing poor items to seeking the best collection of items to represent each subdimension based on its factor structure. The process to this point not only eliminated the poor items, but retained those that satisfactorily represented each subdimension of commitment and duty. In this iteration, our attention shifted to those items that performed best, in other words, those items that had the highest communalities and, especially, the highest factor loadings on each subdimension and dimension. Any items that performed less well in comparison to the others were examined for their suitability to best represent the dimension. On this basis, six items were eliminated. Among them was the item "I feel pressure from others to volunteer" (expectation), eliminated because it loaded more highly on a second factor distinct from the other four items that comprise the expectation dimension. Upon reflection, this and other items that included a reference to an "other" or "others" tended to do poorly in the analysis, perhaps because references to an "other" are ambiguous. Other such items that presented this potential problem were "there are not enough other people to help where I volunteer" (burden), "I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me" (expectation), "Others depend on me to volunteer" (expectation), and "Others see me in a more positive light because of my volunteering" (side bets). These references to a general "other" or "others" reflected an effort to represent the varied experiences of volunteers, who may interact or be influenced by many "others", including other volunteers, beneficiaries of volunteer activity, staff at voluntary organizations, and family, friends and acquaintances.

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However, the empirical evidence suggested that referring to an ambiguous "other" is problematic as these items tended to split across several factors in the EFA, or grouped together in a unique factor with items also evoking the "other." These items were removed from the scale at this stage of scale refinement (although some had already been eliminated at earlier stages).

Based on analyses of the third iteration of EFA, two "burden" items were removed because they loaded together on a second factor apart from the remaining eight burden items. These two items were: "there are not enough other people to help where I volunteer" and "I wish there was someone else to help with my volunteer work." Upon close inspection of the wording, these two items may be interpreted in two different ways: either as a shortage of assistance with volunteer tasks (burden) or as a shortage of individuals to help through volunteering. When interpreted as a shortage of volunteers to help through volunteering, these items are conceptually distinct from burden and thus may not load on the first factor with the other burden items.

At the end of these preliminary analyses of the factor structure at the subdimension level, 43 items remained. All subdimensions, with the exception of side bets, had a clear factor structure that aligned with conceptual ideas associated with each subdimension. Analyses of the subdimensions of reward, affective attachment, flexibility, expectation and burden all resulted in a single factor. Analysis of the subdimension of constraint resulted in two factors, one related to volunteering as preventing or restricting participation in other activities, and the other related to resentment due to the special accommodations that needed to be made to facilitate volunteering. For example, one of the constraint items related to resentment was "I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer", while an example of an item related to volunteering as a time-constraining activity is "Volunteering prevents me from doing other things." Both of these aspects of constraint are consistent with the conceptualization of constraint in this research, and thus are understood here are related facets of the constraint subdimension.

At this stage, the subdimension of side bets was comprised of two factors, one related to ways that volunteering benefits other aspects of a volunteer's life, and the second related to undesirable consequences associated with ending one's volunteering. Two of the items in the second factor ("If I stopped volunteering, my social life would be negatively affected" and "I

would lose friends I have made if I stopped volunteering"), warranted further examination because they appeared to be entirely unrelated to the first factor as reflected in their factor loadings on the first factor (.069 and -.117 respectively). Upon further reflection, these two items were intended to refer to undesirable consequences associated with ending one's volunteering, but presumably were subject to misinterpretation based on these results. For example, for an individual whose volunteering is very constraining and for whom friends and social activities are not a side bet of volunteering, ending a volunteer commitment may have a positive impact on his or her social life by affording more time and flexibility to participate in social activities. This insight led to further inspection of the remaining four items of the side bets subdimension and the item "ending my volunteering would leave a gap in my life" was removed because it could be prone to similar misinterpretation. After removing these three items, the side bets subdimension contained three items comprising a single factor that showed good conceptual and empirical fit.

Fourth Iteration: Selection of Best Items by Subdimension and Dimension

In conjunction with a final iteration of EFAs, reliability analyses (Cronbach's alpha) were performed at this stage at both the dimension and subdimension level. The data analyses focused on the factor structure of dimensions and subdimensions of obligation, inter-item correlations, and the contribution of each item to subdimension reliability. This iteration of analyses were guided by both the desire to ensure that items comprising each subdimension addressed all of the facets of that subdimension, as well as the goal of parsimony, achieved by removing redundant items (i.e., using fewer items to reduce scale size without compromising the integrity of the sub-scales or overall scale). To meet these goals, items with clearer face validity were retained, while those eliminated had lower factor loading or lower impact on subscale reliability if removed. In the selection of the best items to comprise each subdimension, care was taken to ensure all facets of the conceptual definition were represented and that items in a particular subdimension were conceptually distinct but related. Among the items removed was "My volunteer activities are rewarding" (reward), which overlaps with "volunteering is rewarding for me." The latter item was considered the stronger of the two, because it was not specific about the source of feelings of reward (i.e., the activities) and thus may encompass a broader range of rewarding experiences. Removing this item had little effect on the reliability of the "reward" subdimension. Similarly, the item "I

volunteer to set an example for others" (expectation) was removed because the remaining three items comprising the expectation subdimension focused on expectation of the self, which brought more internal consistency to the subdimension both empirically and conceptually.

The Draft Obligation Measure(s)

At the completion of all of these iterations of analyses, 18 items comprised the commitment dimension of the scale, while 14 items comprised the duty dimension. With the scale at a reasonable length and with each subdimension well represented by its constituent items, the refinement process was considered complete. The items comprising the final scales, along with descriptive statistics and indicators of scale and sub-scale reliability, are unveiled in Tables 4.5 and 4.6:

Table 4.5
Items Comprising the Commitment Dimension of Feelings of Obligation to Volunteer

DIMENSION Subdimension Item	Mean[a]	SD	Cronbach's alpha
COMMITMENT..	**4.60**	**.797**	**.921**
Reward..	**4.79**	**.94**	**.862**
I enjoy volunteering..	4.88	1.18	
Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me.......	4.81	1.06	
Volunteering is rewarding for me............................	4.80	1.17	
Volunteering helps me to reach my potential.........	4.71	1.24	
I experience many benefits when I volunteer.........	4.67	1.14	
Affective Attachment..	**4.40**	**.98**	**.882**
I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer..	4.67	1.24	
I feel a sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer	4.62	1.17	
My volunteer work means a lot to me	4.49	1.20	
I feel passionate about my volunteering	4.38	1.23	
I feel close to the people in the organization where I volunteer	4.37	1.24	
I am very attached to my volunteer activities.........	3.86	1.27	

DIMENSION
  Subdimension
    Item
	Mean[a]	SD	Cronbach's alpha

Flexibility..	**4.43**	**1.08**	**.833**
I have flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering..	4.48	1.23	
I have flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering..	4.43	1.30	
I have flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering..	4.40	1.40	
I have flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering..	4.35	1.30	
Side bets..	**4.50**	**.96**	**.745**
I recognize that my volunteering provides me with new skills and training.............................	5.03	1.25	
Volunteering gives me access to other opportunities that are important to me..............	5.03	1.20	
My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life..	4.93	1.09	

[a] Based on 7-point scales where higher scores reflect greater agreement with item.

For study participants, reward was the most powerful aspect within the commitment dimension of obligation. In particular, items describing volunteering as enjoyable, satisfying and rewarding resonated strongly with participants. Affective attachment, although still generally valued as an aspect of commitment as obligation, was the aspect of commitment least felt by respondents with respect to their volunteering.

Table 4.6
Items Comprising the Duty Dimension of Feelings of Obligation to Volunteer

DIMENSION
  Subdimension
    Item
	Mean[a]	SD	Cronbach's alpha

DUTY	**3.46**	**.739**	**.852**
Expectation..	**4.06**	**1.07**	**.715**
I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen...	4.74	1.29	
I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering..	3.94	1.39	
I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer.........................	3.49	1.35	

DIMENSION
  Subdimension
    Item
	Mean[a]	SD	Cronbach's alpha

Constraint..	**3.41**	**.96**	**.845**
Volunteering prevents me from doing other things..	3.80	1.33	
Volunteering prevents me from participating in other activities I would like to do	3.70	1.31	
My volunteer activities restrict me from doing other things..	3.56	1.32	
I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer..	3.35	1.30	
I often resent the amount of time I spend volunteering	3.05	1.20	
I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer.........................	3.00	1.27	
Burden..	**3.14**	**1.00**	**.875**
I feel overwhelmed by my volunteering..................	3.25	1.19	
I often feel stressed out about my volunteer activities	3.18	1.24	
I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities	3.11	1.32	
I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering	3.08	1.21	
I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer	3.05	1.19	

[a] Based on 7-point scales where higher scores reflect greater agreement with item.

The expectation dimension of duty was the most powerful influence on participants' feelings of duty as obligation to volunteer. The mean response to items in this dimension (4.06) was distinctly higher than mean responses to items in the burden (3.14) and constraint (3.41) subdimensions.

A Close Look at the Integrity of the Obligation to Volunteer Measure(s)

At each step of the scale refinement process, scale items and structure were scrutinized in an effort to identify the best possible items to operationalize the conceptual definition of feelings of obligation to volunteer. Now, with 32 items identified as together representing the conceptual definition and its dimensions, it is worthwhile to take another look at the structure of this measure. While earlier stages of scale development focused on refining the scale by changing, removing or maintaining individual items, this stage focused on further exploring

the scale's nuances, understanding the relationships between the scale's dimensions and subdimensions, and confirming its integrity as a measure of feelings of obligation to volunteer.

Items comprising the four subscales of commitment were, as expected, positively correlated to one another, with correlations ranging from .287 to .837 (all p<.001). Correlations were strongest between reward, affective attachment, and side bets, and lower (although significant) between flexibility and the other three aspects of commitment. The expectation subscale of duty was also strongly associated with the commitment subscales of reward (r=.688, p<.001), affective attachment (r=.651, p<.001), and side bets (r=.502, p<.001), rather than with the other duty subscales of burden (r=.067, p=.063) and constraint (r= -.111, p=0.002). It is possible that the expectation subdimension, which through the scale refinement process evolved from a broad focus on societal expectations to a defined focus on expectations of oneself, is more closely aligned with commitment than duty as a result of this conceptual shift. Items comprising the burden and constraint subscales were positively and significantly correlated (r=.685, p<.001). Further, Cronbach's alpha for the items comprising the duty scale increased if expectation items were removed, and item-total correlations for expectation items with other duty items were low. Thus, the relationships between subscales comprising the duty dimension of obligation reveal greater complexities underlying peoples' feelings of duty to volunteer than had been originally conceptualised. Some potential reasons for this are discussed in Chapter 5.

Construct Validation of the Obligation Measure(s)

As an initial test of the construct validity of the obligation scale and its dimensions, the affective commitment scale (Meyer & Allen, 1990) was completed by the respondents in Phase I. The affective commitment scale includes eight items designed to measure attachment to an organization so the expectation was that it would be highly correlated with obligation, and in particular, commitment (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7
Items Comprising the Affective Commitment Scale

DIMENSION Item	Mean[a]	SD	Cronbach's alpha
AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT...................................	**4.18**	**.778**	**.757**
I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization[b]	4.77	1.22	
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization[b]	4.50	1.30	
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it...	4.48	1.23	
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	4.38	1.27	
I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization[b]	4.23	1.35	
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my volunteer career with this organization.............	3.90	1.33	
I think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one[b]..........	3.68	1.14	
I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own...	3.46	1.41	

[a] Based on 7-point scales where higher scores reflect greater agreement with item.
[b] Reverse-coded items.

As was expected, the affective commitment scale was positively and significantly correlated with the commitment measure (r=.610, p<.001), and not significantly related to the duty measure (r=.043, p=.233). These findings provided preliminary construct validation of the new measures. These empirical results mirror the strong theoretical relationship between affective commitment and the commitment dimension of obligation. Further, the lack of relationship between the affective commitment and duty measures suggests that the duty dimension of obligation is not simply an inverse of the commitment measure, but rather is measuring something conceptually distinct. Based on other concepts included in the second phase of this study, the validity of these new measures is further confirmed.

Reflections on the Duty and Commitment Dimensions of Obligation

Analyses exploring the factor structure of subscales measuring obligation as feelings of commitment and duty revealed complexities underlying feelings of obligation to volunteer,

and provided some insight about how to understand the relationship between the commitment and duty dimensions of obligation. Here, I share some reflections on these findings and their implications for how obligation is understood in the context of volunteering.

Obligation was conceptualized as comprised of feelings of commitment and duty. Commitment encompasses feelings of obligation characterized by reward, affective attachment, side bets and flexibility, while duty-based obligation is characterized by constraint, burden, and the fulfillment of expectations. Exploratory factor analyses of the obligation measures provide insight about the relationships between these dimensions and subdimensions of obligation. Insights about the relationships between the four facets of commitment (reward, affective attachment, flexibility and side bets), and about the unique relationships of the expectation dimension with both duty and commitment subdimensions are particularly novel and thus are worthy of further reflection. Overall, exploration of these relationships suggests that the commitment and duty dimensions of obligation are best understood as two distinct (i.e., non-additive) aspects which together describe feelings of obligation to volunteer.

Commitment and its Subdimensions

When all 18 of the items associated with commitment were submitted to an EFA, the three subdimensions of reward, affective attachment, and side bets manifested into a single factor, while flexibility emerged as a second factor. Reward, side bets, and feelings of affective attachment are conceptualized as appreciated aspects of the experience of volunteering. Flexibility reflects an aspect of commitment somewhat distinct from its other facets in that it describes conditions of a volunteer experience rather than the experience itself. A volunteer 's feelings of obligation as commitment are influenced by reward, affective attachment, side bets, and flexibility, although flexibility is not experienced *in the same way as the former aspects*. This distinction is evidenced in the factor structure of items comprising the commitment dimension where flexibility is manifested as a distinct factor. At the subdimension level, items within each of these four facets of commitment were best described by a single-factor solution.

Duty and its Subdimensions

When all 14 items associated with duty were submitted to an EFA, the items within the expectation and burden subdimensions comprised a single factor, while the constraint

items constituted two factors, as described earlier. In the overall analysis at the dimensional level of duty, three factors emerge. Most items in the burden and constraint subdimensions loaded principally on the first factor, expectation items loaded on the second factor, and a third factor representing shared variance from items in all three dimensions. Within the duty dimension of obligation, the expectation subdimension is defined as pressure to act in certain ways. Expectation was conceptualized as pressure from oneself, others, a volunteer organization, or related to a specific role (e.g., parent, citizen). The initial version of the scale included 12 items related to expectation, including items representing these multiple sources of expectation. However, as the scale was refined, items related to expectation of the *self* emerged as the core items central to this subdimension. More specifically, the items that emerged as core items were "I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering", "I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen" and "I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer." One possible explanation for the exclusion of items related to the expectations of others is that individuals internalize other people's expectations when volunteering, and these expectations are thus manifested as expectations of self. The internalization of others' expectations aligns with Deci and Ryan's (1985) social psychological conceptualization of introjected regulation, a way of understanding behaviour which appears intrinsically motivated but is the result of the internalization of extrinsic factors such as rewards or expectations. Introjected regulation is characterized by external control of behaviour even in the absence of explicit external controls. If motivated by introjected regulation, individuals may volunteer or continue volunteering to fulfill their own expectations of themselves, even if these expectations are heavily influenced by the expectations of others.

With the refinements made to the subdimension of expectation, it no longer spans the original conceptual definition that included expectations from others, so it seemed prudent to further scrutinize those items created to capture this aspect of expectation in the original scale. Based on the results of the factor analyses and conceptual scrutiny of the items, four items were selected as representing expectations of others. These items are "If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down", "I feel pressure from others to volunteer", "Others depend on me to volunteer", and "I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me." Exploratory factor analyses on these items revealed that they comprise a single factor and had acceptable reliability

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(alpha=.715). It is possible that these items did not perform well in earlier analyses because the university student group that served as the sample population may not have had sufficiently long or enduring relationships with volunteer organizations or individuals within them to develop feelings of expectation from others to volunteer. Based on this possibility, even though these items were not included in the refined scale at this stage, they were included in the Phase II survey so that they could be examined further with data drawn from a sample of volunteers.

Negative correlations among several items in the duty scale suggested that the concept of duty, and particularly the relationships among the three subdimensions of duty, were more complicated than initially thought. More specifically, the subdimension of expectation, while conceptually consistent with feelings of duty, may be more closely aligned with commitment for some individuals. Returning to a communitarian understanding of volunteering, individuals may embrace expectations placed upon them, viewing them as important aspects associated with volunteering that are neither burdensome nor constraining. Communitarian thought suggests that contribution is an essential aspect of community membership. In this context, expectation is not something imposed by others, but rather is embraced as a means of personal expression and contribution (Gardner, 1995; Sandel, 1998). Further, expectations of oneself are often closely related to personal values and that which is personally meaningful. Thus, feelings of obligation to fulfill expectations may be more closely related to feelings of commitment than duty, as they may be both rewarding and likely to stimulate ties of affective attachment. This is often the case for serious leisure enthusiasts, who find that leisure activities they pursue with gusto become accompanied at some point by obligatory activities in which they must participate to fulfill the expectations of those in the social world of their serious leisure pursuit (Stebbins, 2000). For example, Lee and Scott (2006) noted that individuals engaged in birdwatching as serious leisure acquired more responsibility for their birding groups as they progressed in their leisure careers. These responsibilities led to a decrease in self-determination as advanced birdwatchers strove to fulfill the expectations of others in their groups. This loss of self-determination, however, did not hinder birders' experiences of the rewards of serious leisure (Lee & Scott, 2006). Indeed, Lee and Scott concluded that reward and self-determination were unrelated. Stebbins (2000) concurs, noting that obligations associated with serious leisure are typically agreeable in nature.

Two Measures of Obligation to Volunteer: The OVC and the OVD

The conceptual framework introduced in Chapter 2 suggested that obligation be conceptualized as a continuum bounded by commitment and duty. Analyses performed with the draft obligation scale suggested that this conceptualization is overly simplistic. While some aspects of commitment and duty suggested that the two concepts are diametrically opposed (e.g., the significant negative relationship between flexibility as an aspect of commitment and constraint as an aspect of duty), overall the relationship between the duty and commitment dimensions of obligation was more complex than initially conceptualized. The expectation subdimension of duty in particular suggests a connection to feelings of commitment, such that some volunteers may experience feelings of expectation to volunteer as an aspect of obligation characterized by commitment rather than duty.

Analyses performed on the final 32 items of the obligation scale suggest that the commitment and duty sub-scales measure conceptually distinct (although related) aspects of obligation and thus should not be combined to create a summative measure of obligation. Rather, the 18-item measure of commitment and 14-item measure of duty may best be viewed as measures of conceptually distinct dimensions of obligation, with the commitment dimension being closely aligned with the experience of serious leisure, as originally conceived. Thus, the 32-item obligation measure evolved into two measures: a 18-item measure of *Obligation to Volunteer as Commitment* (OVC) and a 14-item measure of *Obligation to Volunteer as Duty* (OVD). These two scales, which together represent feelings of obligation to volunteer, are internally consistent and fully described by their constituent subdimensions. Further, the measures of reward, affective attachment, side bets, flexibility, expectation, constraint and burden show promise as viable indicators of these facets of feelings of obligation to volunteer.

Summary

The 18-item OVC scale and 14-item OVD scale have strong conceptual bases as measures of obligation and showed high internal consistency. Further, the subscales of reward, affective attachment, flexibility, side bets, expectation, burden, and constraint also showed promise as valid and reliable tools for measuring these constructs. These measures may be valuable in understanding obligation in the context of volunteering and perhaps in

other serious leisure contexts as well. Further, these efforts have led to new insights and revealed complexities about the relationship between feelings of obligation as commitment and duty. Along with addressing the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, Phase II of this study afforded the opportunity to further explore complexities in the relationship between the commitment and duty dimensions of feelings of obligation, as well as to further affirm the validity and reliability of the feelings of obligation to volunteer scale with a volunteer population. To this end, the Phase II of the research involved the use of the commitment and duty scales and related tools in survey research with community volunteers.

CHAPTER 5 – FINDINGS OF PHASE II RESEARCH WITH VOLUNTEERS

In the second phase of the study, individuals involved as volunteers with local voluntary organizations were recruited to participate in the study. Survey packages were distributed to 1033 volunteers through ten volunteer associations representing the sectors of sport and recreation, arts and culture (two organizations), social services education and research, environment, health, hospitals, development and housing, and grant-making/fundraising/volunteerism. The organizations varied widely in size, with the smallest having only one paid staff member and approximately 40 volunteers, and the largest having over 500 active volunteers and a full staff complement. In organizations with over 200 volunteers, surveys were sent to a subset of 100 to 200 volunteers, selected through consultation with the organization. This selection process typically involved identifying volunteers who resided in the City of Guelph (as some organizations encompassed both Guelph and surrounding Wellington County) and were currently active volunteers within the organization. Based on these criteria, 1,033 surveys were distributed to volunteers within the ten participating organizations. Thirty-seven surveys (3.6%) were returned without reaching respondents because of incorrect or outdated addresses, while 304 surveys were returned by respondents. Of these, four were returned blank, so the number of usable surveys was 300, representing a response rate of 29.9%.

This chapter describes findings of the survey conducted with volunteers. Demographic characteristics and behavioural attributes of respondents' volunteer involvement are outlined first, followed by examination of key concepts in turn, ending with the commitment and duty aspects of obligation. For each concept of interest, the reliability of the measurement tool was assessed and the composition of the measure examined, followed by an examination of the influence of demographic characteristics such as age and sex on the concept. Finally, relationships among key concepts are explored to address the research questions.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

More than three-quarters of the participants were female (76.9%). In contrast, the most recent *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* (CSGVP*)*, a comprehensive survey of Canadian volunteers, documents the Canadian volunteer population as 58.0%

female (Statistics Canada, 2009). Together, these two findings suggest that while women may be overrepresented in the current study, a representative sample of Canadian volunteers will tend to be predominantly female. As indicated in Table 5.1, survey respondents were diverse in terms of age, ranging from 14 to 92 years (M=51.5, SD=21.2). Comparing ages of respondents in this survey with age ranges in the most recent CSGVP suggested that young and older volunteers (under 24 and over 65 years) may be overrepresented in this research, while volunteers in the 35 to 44 age group may be underrepresented. Age and sex were not significantly related to one another.

Table 5.1
Sex and Age Distribution of the Sample

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Sex		
Male	68	23.05
Female	227	76.95
Age		
Under 18	12	4.14
18 to 24	38	13.10
25 to 34	37	12.76
35 to 44	11	3.79
45 to 54	42	14.48
55 to 64	50	17.24
65 to 74	57	19.66
75 or over	43	14.83
n=290 Mean=51.53 SD=21.18		

As found in a recent study of Canadian volunteers (Statistics Canada, 2009), the volunteers who participated in this study tended to be well educated. Almost 80% (79.5%) had some education beyond high school, and over 40% (44.6%) held a university undergraduate or post-graduate degree. Note that only 10 respondents (3.4 %) had less than a high school education, which suggests that volunteering might be an activity attractive to those with higher education. The sample was diverse in terms of income levels, and echoed

the recognized trend that rate of volunteering tends to increase with income (Hall et al., 2009). One-quarter (25.5%) of the sample had annual household incomes of $100,000 or more, although more than 10% of respondents (13.9%) reported annual household incomes of less than $20,000 in the previous year (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Education		
Less than high school	10	3.40
Some or graduated from high school	44	14.97
Some post-secondary	53	18.03
Post-secondary diploma	56	19.05
University degree	80	27.21
Post-graduate (e.g., MA, Ph.D.)	51	17.35
Annual household income		
Less than $20,000	36	13.90
$20,000 to $39,999	46	17.76
$40,000 to $59,999	51	19.69
$60,000 to $79,999	31	11.97
$80,000 to $99,999	29	11.20
$100,000 or more	66	25.48
Household composition		
Single	59	20.27
Couple	105	36.08
One parent and child(ren)	9	3.09
Two parents and child(ren)	68	23.37
Extended family	24	8.25
Roommates	24	8.25
Other [a]	2	0.69
Religiosity		
n=297 Mean=3.17 SD=1.49		

[a] Households characterized as "other" were some combination of the above alternatives, such as a couple who also live with a friend.

Religiosity was of interest because the literature has linked volunteering and participation in organized religion (e.g., Hall et al., 2009; Wilson & Musick, 1997). Religiosity was measured using an index created by taking the mean of responses to questions about frequency of attendance at religious services and the importance of religion in respondents' lives, both measured on five-point scales. On the resulting scale of 1 to 5, a score of 1 indicated a low level of religiosity while 5 indicated a high degree of religiosity. Respondents' mean score on this index was 3.17 and there was a relatively high degree of variability in their scores (SD=1.49), suggesting that the sample was diverse in terms of their religious participation.

Profile of Respondents' Involvement in Volunteering

Respondents were asked to respond to the survey based on their primary volunteer involvement (i.e., where they spend the most time or have the highest level of responsibility), as well as to provide information about any other organizations with which they volunteered in the previous year.

Respondents were generally heavily involved as volunteers at the organizations where they made their primary volunteer contributions. They were asked to describe the length of their involvement in years and months, as well as their hours devoted to volunteering in a typical month; these data are categorized in Table 5.3, but was used in its ratio-level form in analyses. As indicated in Table 5.3, more than 85% of respondents (87.3%) had been involved for at least a year at the organization where they do their primary volunteering. Length of involvement ranged from 1 month to 40 years (M=8.15 years, SD=8.26). The amount of time volunteered per month in the previous year varied widely. Responses ranged from 0 hours (usually with a note stating that a significant life change such as death of a family member or illness had prevented the respondent from volunteering in the previous year) to 49.8 hours monthly, with 10.5 hours monthly (SD=12.48) representing the mean.

Table 5.3
Time Devoted to Primary Volunteer Involvement

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Length of involvement		
Less than 1 year...	35	12.68
1 to 3 years	52	18.84
3 to 5 years	35	12.68
5 to 10 years	60	21.74
10 to 15 years	50	18.12
15 to 20 years	16	5.80
More than 20 years...	28	10.14
n=276 Mean=8.15 SD=8.26		
Hours of primary volunteer involvement in previous year		
Did not volunteer...	11	4.06
Volunteered less than 1 hour/month..............................	26	9.59
Volunteered 1 to 4 hours/month..................................	57	21.03
Volunteered 5 to 15 hours/month.................................	118	43.54
Volunteered over 15 hours/month.................................	59	21.77
n=271 Mean=10.51 SD=12.48		

As indicated in Table 5.4, volunteers' involvement spanned all sectors identified in the
survey, with the exception of *law, advocacy and politics*. The lack of representation of
volunteers in this sector was not surprising given that only 2% of Canadian volunteers are
affiliated with organizations in this sector (Hall et al., 2009). Only four respondents identified
the sector as "other", indicating that the sector categories included most of the areas in which
volunteers' performed their primary volunteering. (There was an opportunity for respondents
to describe the "other" sector in which they volunteered, but no explanations were provided.)
Volunteers' responses about their main volunteer roles spanned the available response
categories (see Table 5.2). Teaching, educating, or mentoring (n=80, 26.7%), providing health
care or support (n=55, 18.3%), and organizing or supervising events (n=51, 17.0%) were the
most common roles identified. However, the most common response (n=83, 26.7%) was
"other", suggesting the available response categories did not adequately account for the
volunteer roles of respondents. Eighty-one of the 83 respondents provided a written

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description of their "other" role. These descriptions were diverse, but certain activities were commonly named, such as those related to volunteering at a theatre (e.g., bartending, ushering, taking tickets), working at a gift shop or coffee kiosk, and gardening. In addition, many volunteers named very specific roles that were encompassed under one of the broader categories provided, suggesting perhaps that they consider their specific role to be unique.

Table 5.4
Sector and Role of Primary Volunteer Involvement

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Sector		
Hospitals..	77	26.74
Social services.......................................	52	18.06
Arts & culture..	45	15.63
Health...	38	13.19
Education and research	25	8.68
Environment...	13	4.51
Religion..	12	4.17
Grantmaking, fundraising, & volunteerism promotion	9	3.13
Sport & recreation.................................	8	2.78
Development and housing......................	3	1.04
Business & professional associations	2	0.69
Other..	4	1.34
Main volunteer role(s) [a]		
Teaching, educating or mentoring	80	26.67
Providing health care or support	55	18.33
Organizing or supervising events.......................	51	17.00
Sitting on a committee or board.........................	47	15.67
Fundraising...	46	15.33
Canvassing	38	12.67
Counselling or providing advice	33	11.00
Office work	27	9.00
Maintenance or repair	19	6.33
Driving	14	4.67
Conservation or environmental protection.........	7	2.33

| Characteristic | | |
Attribute	n	Pct.
Coaching..	4	1.33
First aid, fire-fighting, or search and rescue.......	4	1.33
Other [b]	83	26.67

[a] Because respondents were able to select more than one option, the numbers and percentages represent responses, not respondents.
[b] Common "other" activities included activities related to volunteering at a theatre (bartending, ushering, taking tickets), working at a gift shop or coffee kiosk, and gardening.

In addition to providing information about their primary volunteer involvement, respondents were asked to describe any other volunteering they had done. The majority (82.8%) of respondents noted their volunteer involvement with at least one additional organization. Further, almost a third of volunteers (31.7%) spent an average of five to 15 hours each month volunteering at organizations other than where they do their primary volunteering, and 21.1% volunteered over 15 hours per month with organizations aside from their primary organization. A few respondents dedicated hundreds of hours of volunteering with organizations aside from those where they made their primary contributions.

Table 5.5
Other Volunteer Involvement of Sample

| Characteristic | | |
Attribute	n	Pct.
Number of other organizations at which respondent volunteered in previous year		
None...	45	17.24
One..	81	31.03
Two..	57	21.84
Three..	50	19.16
Four..	19	7.28
Five..	6	2.30
Six..	2	.77
Nine..	1	.38
n=260 Mean=1.81 SD=1.40		

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Hours of volunteer involvement at other organizations in previous year[a]		
Volunteered less than 1 hour/month..................	30	16.67
Volunteered 1 to 4 hours/month........................	55	30.56
Volunteered 5 to 15 hours/month......................	57	31.67
Volunteered over 15 hours/month......................	38	21.11
n=206 Mean=11.35 SD=23.67		

[a] Approximately one-third of respondents did not provide data about hours volunteered in "other" organizations in previous year. Qualitative comments suggest that some respondents had difficulty estimating their volunteer hours, particularly their "other" hours, which often included volunteer involvement at several organizations.

For most volunteers, time committed to volunteering had either stayed the same over the past couple of years (42.5%) or it had increased (42.9%). Volunteering designated by respondents as primary represents an average of half (50.5%, SD=.277) of respondents' volunteer hours in a typical month.

Table 5.6
Total Volunteer Involvement of Sample

Characteristic Attribute	n	Pct.
Total hours of volunteer involvement (primary and non-primary) in previous year		
Volunteered less than 1 hour/month	6	3.13
Volunteered 1 to 4 hours/month	30	15.63
Volunteered 5 to 15 hours/month	67	34.90
Volunteered over 15 hours/month	89	46.35
n= 192 Mean =21.71 SD=28.34		
Change in time spent volunteering over past couple years		
Decreased a lot..	10	3.40
Decreased a bit..	33	11.22
Stayed about the same...	125	42.52
Increased a bit	67	22.79
Increased a lot	59	20.07

Age was related to the time devoted to volunteering with the primary volunteer organization (r=.147, p=.017), and older adults tended to spend more time than younger adults volunteering with their primary volunteer organization. Further, there was a significant negative relationship between age and change in time spent volunteering with primary organization (r=-.288, p<.001). Thus, older respondents' time devoted to volunteering has tended to decrease over the last few years as compared with younger respondents.

Males devoted significantly more hours at their primary volunteer organizations than females (t=-2.10, p=.037). Sex was not significantly related to any other variables describing time devoted to volunteering, as illustrated in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7
Sex-based Differences in Time Devoted to Volunteering

	Hours devoted to volunteering monthly			t	p
	n	Mean	SD		
Length of association with primary organization				.560	.576
Male	61	7.64	7.34		
Female..................................	210	8.32	8.59		
Primary volunteering				**-2.10**	**.037**
Male	66	13.35	17.26		
Female..................................	200	9.63	10.47		
Non-primary volunteering				-1.58	.115
Male	52	14.12	32.03		
Female..................................	153	8.44	18.06		
Proportion of total volunteering with primary				-1.05	.296
Male	52	.54	.29		
Female..................................	148	.49	.27		
No. non-primary volunteer organizations				-.438	.662
Male	62	1.89	1.73		
Female..................................	198	1.78	1.29		
Change in time devoted to volunteering				-1.11	.266
Male	68	3.57	1.00		
Female..................................	223	3.41	1.06		

Summary Description of Key Construct Measures

The survey instrument included measures of individualism, collectivism, serious leisure, sense of community, social cohesion, and the commitment and duty measures created for this study. Analyses related to each concept are presented in the following sections.

Individualism and Collectivism

The Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (Shulruf et al., 2007), which was used to examine volunteers' personal value orientations, had acceptable internal reliability on both the individualism ($\alpha=.82$) and collectivism dimensions ($\alpha=.71$). The component subdimensions had internal reliabilities greater than .70, with the exception of the "harmony" subdimension of collectivism, which had an internal reliability of .63 (see Table 5.8). However, Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) acknowledge that reliability coefficients above .60 can be acceptable in certain situations, such as in this instance where a complex psychological construct is measured by a scale of relatively few items. On average, the volunteers identified with both collectivism and individualism, particularly the elements of responsibility ($M=5.51$, $SD=.72$), uniqueness ($M=5.28$, $SD=.92$) and advice ($M=5.05$, $SD=1.07$). The three subdimensions of individualism were interrelated ($r>.16$, $p<.001$), indicating that if respondents identified with one aspect of individualism, they also identified with the others. Similarly, the two subdimensions of collectivism were significantly related ($r=.27$, $p<.001$). The subdimensions of individualism and those of collectivism were not significantly related to one another, with the exception of the advice subdimension of collectivism which was significantly correlated to the uniqueness and responsibility subdimensions of individualism ($r=.23$, $p<.001$ and $r=.21$, $p<.001$, respectively). The composite measures of individualism and collectivism were also related ($r=.16$, $p=.006$), suggesting that if respondents identified with individualism, they also identified with collectivism. The links between individualism and collectivism suggested that participants' values about their relationships to their communities were complex and multi-faceted.

Table 5.8

Summary Description of Respondents' Value Orientations of Individualism and Collectivism

Summary description of volunteers' value orientations Dimension[a]	n	Mean[b]	SD	α[c]
Individualism				
Responsibility (4)	295	5.51	.76	.72
Unique (4)...	289	5.28	.92	.85
Competitiveness (4)................................	284	4.01	.97	.73
***Overall scale (12)*................................**	**278**	**4.94**	**.65**	**.82**
Collectivism				
Advice (4)...	282	5.05	1.07	.79
Harmony (4)	279	4.52	.81	.63
***Overall scale (8)*..................................**	**269**	**4.80**	**.76**	**.71**

[a] Number of items comprising scale shown in parentheses.
[b] Items in scales measured along 7-point Likert scale where 1="very strongly disagree" and 7="very strongly agree".
[c] Cronbach's alpha (α).

Responses to items in the dimensions comprising the individualism and collectivism measures did not appear to be associated with sex, with the exception of the competitiveness subdimension of individualism, where males (M=4.26, SD=.92) tended to align more strongly with this dimension than females (M=3.94, SD=.98) (t=-2.35, p=.019). In contrast, age was significantly related to measures of individualism and collectivism, with both tending to decrease as age increased (r=-.176, p=.003 and r=-.184, p=.002, respectively). The tendency for individualism to decrease with age might be explained by the increasingly individualistic society that characterizes North American culture. In other words, older adults in this research likely grew up in a time when Canada was less influenced by the individualism of the neo-liberal climate, compared to younger generations who have their formative years shaped by the individualism of recent decades. At the same time, the tendency for collectivism to decrease with age is more curious, and perhaps represents the tendency for young adults to seek resources, advice, and approval from family members, an idea explored in the *advice* subdimension of collectivism. Further, individualism was associated with lower scores on the index of religiosity (r=-.222, p<.001), although collectivism and religiosity were not related.

The negative relationship between individualism and religiosity could perhaps be explained by the religiosity measure's focus on respondents' involvement in organized religion rather than their spiritual values. The religiosity measure was thus partially a measure of organizational involvement, which I expected to be affiliated with collectivism. This explanation seems to suggest a positive relationship between collectivism and religiosity, although there was no evidence of such a relationship in the data. However, the tendency for organized religions to have varying perspectives on individualism and collectivism (i.e., some advocate individual responsibility and achievement, while others stress interdependence and harmony) may explain the lack of relationship between religiosity and collectivism in the data. The orientations of individualism and collectivism did not vary significantly with either education or income level, nor with any of the measures of volunteer frequency, including hours devoted monthly to primary or non-primary volunteering, proportion of total volunteering that is with primary organization, number of organization with which the respondent volunteers, or changes in time devoted to volunteering in the past couple years. These measures of time devoted to volunteer activities thus appeared to be independent of personal value orientation.

Serious Leisure

The extent to which respondents' involvement in volunteering could be characterized as serious leisure was examined using the short form of six dimensions of the Serious Leisure Inventory and Measure (Gould et al., 2008). These constituent dimensions had consistently high reliability (see Table 5.9), as did the overall measure of serious leisure based on reliability analyses of both constituent items individually (α=.91) and by subdimension (α=.84). In general, respondents' volunteer involvement overall aligned with the qualities of serious leisure (M=5.05, SD=.69). Further, all six aspects of serious leisure were significantly related (r>.209, p<.001), suggesting that the aspects of serious leisure selected for this study resonated consistently with the respondents' volunteer experiences.

Table 5.9

Summary Description of Respondents' Primary Volunteer Involvement as Serious Leisure

Dimension[a]	n	Mean[b]	SD	α[c]
Career progress (3)	291	5.39	.90	.90
Effort (3)	289	5.22	.88	.82
Perseverance (3)	290	5.03	.85	.86
Career contingencies(3)	291	4.98	.87	.81
Identity (3)	289	4.89	1.10	.92
Unique ethos (3)	289	4.81	.84	.84
Overall scale	272	5.05	.69	.91

[a] Number of items comprising scale shown in parentheses.
[b] Items in scales measured along 7-point Likert scale where 1="very strongly disagree" and 7="very strongly agree".
[c] Cronbach's alpha (α).

Neither sex nor age was significantly related to the overall measure of volunteering as serious leisure. However, several dimensions of serious leisure varied with age, as illustrated in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10

Associations of Serious Leisure Dimensions with Age

Dimension[a]	n	r	p
Career progress (3)	288	**-.191**	**.001**
Effort (3)	286	-.080	.180
Perseverance (3)	282	**-.131**	**.028**
Career contingencies(3)	285	**-.135**	**.023**
Identity (3)	282	.071	.328
Unique ethos (3)	284	**.192**	**.001**
Overall scale (18)	282	-.058	.328

[a] Number of items comprising scale shown in parentheses.
[b] Items in scales measured along 7-point Likert scale where 1="very strongly disagree" and 7="very strongly agree".

Specifically, the dimensions of perseverance, career progress, and career contingencies were inversely associated with age while the ethos dimension was positively associated with age. In other words, younger volunteers were more likely to identify with

volunteering as requiring perseverance and characterized by career progression and defining moments. In comparison, older volunteers were more likely to identify themselves are having similar ideals as other volunteers. The tendency to experience volunteering as serious leisure did not vary significantly with education, income level, or religiosity. However, volunteering as serious leisure was associated with higher levels of hours devoted to volunteering monthly (r=.269, p<.001), a higher proportion of total volunteering with the primary organization (r=.159, p=.025), and an increase in time devoted to volunteering over the past couple years (r=.116, p=.050).

Sense of Community

Sense of community was examined using the Community Organization Sense of Community Scale (Hughey et al., 1999). This measure defined sense of community in the context of a community organization and was comprised of three dimensions: (1) relationship to the organization, (2) organization as mediator, and (3) bond to the community. The overall measure had adequate reliability with this volunteer sample (α=.75), as did each of its dimensions (see Table 5.11).

While a consistent pattern of positive responses was generally evident among items, it was worthwhile to look more closely at scores of individual items in this measure because the "organization as mediator" dimension stood out in its relatively lower scores compared to the other dimensions.

On average, respondents felt fairly neutral toward items in the dimension "organization as mediator" (M=4.13, SD=.90), although they generally agreed with items in the "relationship to the organization" (M=4.95, SD=.75) and "bond to the community" (M=5.59, SD=.99) dimensions. Further, the "organization as mediator" dimension was not related with the "bond to the community" dimension (r=.061, p=.308), although it was related with the "relationship to the organization" subdimension (r=.131, p=.027), and the latter two subdimensions were related with one another (r=.345, p<.001). Further, within the "organization as mediator" subdimension, the item "Being a volunteer at this organization allows me to be around important people" had a lower mean and higher standard deviation (M=4.00, SD=1.24) than the other two items in this dimension, suggesting much higher variation in the responses. Further, anecdotal evidence in the form of comments written directly on several surveys suggest that the word "important" was interpreted as vague or

even offensive to some respondents because of its suggestion that some people are more important than others. In future analyses, rephrasing this item may be worthwhile.

Table 5.11
Summary Description of Respondents' Sense of Community

DIMENSION[a] Item	Mean[b]	SD	α[c]
RELATIONSHIP TO ORGANIZATION (5).........	**4.95**	**.745**	**.73**
The organization where I volunteer gets very little done in Guelph [d]	5.45	1.11	
No one at the organization where I volunteer responds to what I think is important [d]	5.13	1.03	
The organization where I volunteer gets overlooked in Guelph [d]	5.08	1.18	
Everyone at the organization where I volunteer is pushing in different directions [d]	5.02	1.06	
Most members of my organization lose their feelings of connection to the organization when they are not volunteering [d].....................	4.08	.93	
ORGANIZATION AS MEDIATOR (3)...................	**4.13**	**.90**	**.76**
Volunteering with this organization allows me to be part of other groups in Guelph................	4.28	.96	
Because of the organization where I volunteer, I am connected to other groups in Guelph	4.09	1.09	
Being a volunteer at this organization allows me to be around important people	4.00	1.24	
BOND TO THE COMMUNITY (3)	**5.59**	**.99**	**.89**
I would really rather live in a different city. Guelph is just not the place for me [d]	5.69	1.19	
Guelph is a good place for me to live....................	5.62	1.05	
Living in Guelph gives me a sense of community	5.45	1.05	
Overall scale..	**4.90**	**.59**	**.75**

[a] Number of items comprising subdimension shown in parentheses.
[b] Items in scales measured along 7-point Likert scale where 1="very strongly disagree" and 7="very strongly agree."
[c] Cronbach's alpha (α).
[d] Indicates reverse-scored items.
[e] Removing item "Being a volunteer at this organization allows me to be around important people" from this dimension results in α=.80, as discussed later in this section.

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Scores on the sense of community measure did not vary according to sex, age, income, education level, or religiosity, nor with any of the measures of volunteer frequency, such as hours devoted to volunteering monthly, proportion of volunteering that was with the primary organization, increase in volunteer frequency over the past couple years, and number of organizations with which the respondent volunteered. In addition, sense of community was not associated with length of residency in the community, although the "bond to the community" dimension was associated with length of residency (r=.256, p=.004). Higher scores on the "organization as mediator" dimension were associated with volunteering with a higher number of organizations (r=.224, p<.001), suggesting that volunteers who were involved with more organizations felt that volunteering linked them more strongly to the community than those who volunteered with fewer organizations.

Social Cohesion

The Neighbourhood Cohesion Index (Buckner, 1988), used to assess volunteers' sense of social cohesion, was a unidimensional measure of 18 items. This measure had high reliability (α=.92). Volunteers generally felt a sense of social cohesion within the community of the City of Guelph (M=5.02, SD=.70) and there was a relatively low degree of variability.

Scores on the social cohesion measure did not vary by sex or religiosity, nor with any of the measures of frequency or length of volunteering. Social cohesion scores did tend to increase with age (r=.142, p=.017). In addition, social cohesion was associated with a higher number of years of residency in the community (r=.273, p=.002). Although social cohesion was not related to education, it was associated with household income (F=3.61, p=.004) although the only groups significantly different from one another were the lowest and highest income earners (see Table 5.12).

Table 5.12

Relationships Between Household Income and Social Cohesion (ANOVA)

Variable	Social cohesion			F-ratio	p
Attribute	n	Mean*	SD		
Income level					
Less than $20,000..........	36	4.70^a	.70		
$20,000 to $39,999........	45	4.96^{ab}	.60		
$40,000 to $59,999........	48	5.03^{ab}	.64	3.61	.004
$60,000 to $79,999........	30	4.96^{ab}	.73		
$80,000 to $99,999........	28	5.21^{ab}	.66		
$100,000 or more	65	5.26^b	.76		
Overall...........................	**252**	**5.05**	**.70**		

* Items in scales measured along 7-point Likert scale where 1="very strongly disagree" and 7="very strongly agree." Superscripts indicate groups that are significantly different based on the Scheffe post hoc test ($p<.05$).

Commitment and Duty

This second phase of research provided an opportunity to use the measures of commitment (OVC) and duty (OVD) with a volunteer sample. The scale had high internal reliability on both the commitment ($\alpha=.93$) and duty dimensions ($\alpha=.85$) when reliability was analyzed using all constituent items. Reliability analyses using composite scores of constituent subdimensions provided reliabilities of .84 for commitment and .53 for duty. Component subdimensions of commitment had high reliabilities ($\alpha>.76$) as outlined in Table 5.13. Within the duty dimension, the constraint and burden subdimensions had high internal reliability ($\alpha>.84$), while the expectation subdimension had a reliability of .48. This low reliability was likely due to the item, "I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer" ($M=3.86$, $SD=1.40$), which had a lower mean than the other two items, "I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen" ($M=5.74$, $SD=.98$) and "I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering" ($M=5.43$, $SD=1.24$). At the same time, these latter two items were significantly negatively related with other duty items suggesting that perhaps respondents' did not associate these aspects of expectation with feelings of duty to volunteer.

Table 5.13
OVC and OVD Scale Items

DIMENSION
    Sub-dimension[a]
        Item
	Mean[b]	SD	*α*[c]

COMMITMENT	**5.27**	**.69**	**.930**
Reward (5)	**5.49**	**.84**	**.880**
I enjoy volunteering	5.86	1.01	
Volunteering is rewarding for me	5.82	.95	
Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me	5.75	.98	
I experience many benefits when I volunteer ...	5.36	1.05	
Volunteering helps me to reach my potential ...	5.00	1.13	
Affective Attachment (6)	**5.24**	**.83**	**.874**
My volunteer work means a lot to me	5.73	1.00	
I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer	5.60	.97	
I feel passionate about my volunteering	5.35	1.13	
I feel a sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer	5.19	1.02	
I am very attached to my volunteer activities..	5.15	1.12	
I feel close to the people in the organization where I volunteer	4.76	1.21	
Flexibility (4)	**5.13**	**.97**	**.865**
I have flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering	5.30	.99	
I have flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering	5.19	1.14	
I have flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering	5.12	1.25	
I have flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering	4.94	1.23	
Side bets (3)	**5.24**	**.95**	**.757**
My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life	5.53	1.12	
I recognize that my volunteering provides me with new skills and training	5.13	1.14	
Volunteering gives me access to other opportunities that are important to me........	5.05	1.23	

DIMENSION Sub-dimension[a] Item	Mean[b]	SD	α[c]
DUTY	**3.26**	**.67**	**.853**
Expectation (3)...	**5.01**	**.85**	**.478**
I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen...............................	5.74	.98	
I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering...................................	5.43	1.24	
I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer...................	3.86	1.40	
Burden (5)..	**2.74**	**.87**	**.848**
I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering.......	2.87	1.19	
I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities..	2.84	1.14	
I often feel stressed out about my volunteer activities..	2.80	1.16	
I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer..	2.59	.98	
I feel overwhelmed by my volunteering..........	2.57	1.07	
Constraint (6)..	**2.80**	**.87**	**.846**
I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer	3.13	1.22	
Volunteering prevents me from doing other things...	2.98	1.17	
Volunteering prevents me from participating in other activities I would like to do	2.88	1.18	
My volunteer activities restrict me from doing other things	2.86	1.12	
I often resent the amount of time I spend volunteering	2.70	1.19	
I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer	2.26	1.00	

[a] Number of items comprising subdimension shown in parentheses.
[b] Items in scales measured along 7-point Likert scale where 1="very strongly disagree" and 7="very strongly agree."
[c] Cronbach's alpha (α).

Results using these scales suggested that volunteers in this sample generally identified with feeling commitment to their volunteer involvement ($M=5.27$, $SD=.69$). Feelings of duty to volunteer were less common ($M=3.26$, $SD=.67$), particularly as manifested by feelings of constraint ($M=2.80$, $SD=.87$) and burden ($M=2.74$, $SD=.87$).

Commitment and duty dimensions of obligation were inversely related to one another (r=-.189, p=.001), suggesting that respondents who felt more commitment also felt less duty, and vice versa. However, at the level of their subdimensions, there was evidence of a complex relationship between commitment and duty. All commitment subdimensions were related to one another (r>.289, p<.001), and the burden and constraint subdimensions of duty were strongly related (r=.763, p<.001). At the same time, the expectation subdimension of duty was not significantly related to either burden or constraint, but was related to the commitment dimensions of reward, affective attachment, side bets, and flexibility (r>.134, p<.022). As in the previous phase of research with student respondents, expectation seems to be associated with feelings of commitment rather than duty for the volunteers.

Mean scores for items comprising the commitment dimension were consistently higher for volunteer respondents than in the previous phase of research with student respondents. Similarly, items in the expectation subdimension of duty had higher means than with student respondents. However, mean scores were lower for burden and constraint items than when the scale was tested with student respondents. Reliabilities at the dimension and subdimension levels were the same or higher with volunteer respondents, with the exception of expectation, where reliability with a student population was .72 as compared to .48 with volunteers. Thus, the expectation subdimension of duty was again an anomaly that warranted further examination.

To probe into the expectation subdimension, four items deleted from the obligation scale during the first phase were included in this second phase of data collection so that they could be further scrutinized for conceptual and operational fit. As discussed in the previous chapter, these items all referred to the expectations of *others*, an aspect of expectation that had emerged as peripheral to the core theme related to expectations of *oneself*. These four deleted items were "Others depend on me to volunteer", "I feel pressure from others to volunteer", "If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down", and "I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me." In this second phase, the four items again showed low reliability (α=.46). A close examination of the mean scores and inter-item correlations for these four items provided little insight about how they may be related. It is interesting that these items seemed to resonate more with the student population that likely had less affiliation to volunteering than did the sample of active volunteers. Perhaps expectation was felt more keenly by new volunteers, and

thus was not relevant to Phase II respondents because many of them had been volunteering at their respective organizations for many years. Conceptually, the expectation dimension, focused on expectations of *oneself*, appeared more closely related to the commitment dimensions than to expectations imposed by others.

Feelings of commitment and duty to volunteer did not vary significantly by sex or age, although age was inversely related to both the reward (r=-.121, p=.042) and side bets (r=-.174, p=.004) aspects of commitment. Income was not related to scores of commitment or duty, and although there appeared to be a significant relationship between education and commitment (F=3.513, p=.008), no clear pattern emerged that suggested that higher levels of education were necessarily linked to greater or lesser feelings of commitment to volunteer. At the same time, higher ratings on the index of religiosity were associated with feelings of duty to volunteer (r=.154, p=.010). Indeed, some religious traditions suggest that service to community through activities such as volunteering is very important. Obligation as both commitment and duty were associated with more hours of volunteering with a primary organization per month (r=.252, p<.001 and r=.165, p=.007, respectively), and commitment was also associated with a higher proportion of total volunteer hours devoted to the primary volunteer organization (r=.233, p=.001). Relationships between volunteer activity characteristics and the commitment and duty dimensions of obligation are outlined in Table 5.14.

Based on these findings, feelings of obligation appeared to be associated with increased time devoted to volunteering. Feelings of both duty and commitment to volunteer were associated with hours of primary volunteering monthly. In other words, obligation, whether manifested as commitment or duty, was associated with higher numbers of hours devoted to volunteering with a primary organization. Duty (particularly the dimension of constraint) was associated with length of association with the primary volunteer organization. In other words, volunteers tended to feel more constrained over time by their volunteering with a particular organization. While the change in time (i.e., number of hours monthly) devoted to volunteering was not related to duty, this score was related to commitment (r=.118, p=.045). In particular, the commitment dimensions of reward (r=.176, p=.003), affective attachment (r=.124,

$p=.034$), and side bets ($r=.156$, $p=.008$) were related to increases in time devoted to volunteering over the past couple years. Considering the rewarding nature of these aspects of commitment, it was perhaps not surprising that they should be associated with an indicator of increased volunteer involvement.

Table 5.14

Relationship Between Volunteer Activity Characteristics and Obligation

Characteristic	Commitment				Duty		
	Reward	Affective attachment	Flexibility	Side bets	Expectation	Burden	Constraint
Length of primary vol. involvement		**-.027** (.653)				**.140** (.020)	
	-.120 **(.048)**	.044 (.468)	-.058 (.341)	-.103 (.093)	.057 (.351)	**.114** **(.059)**	**.131** **(.030)**
Total primary vol. hours monthly		**.252** **(<.001)**				**.165** **(.007)**	
	.217 (<.001)	**.312** (<.001)	-.010 (.869)	**.140** (.023)	**.265** (<.001)	.096 (.115)	**.131** (.032)
Proportion of total volunteer hours with primary org.		**.233** (.001)				**-.021** (.764)	
	.194 (.006)	**.257** (<.001)	.063 (.372)	.105 (.141)	**.194** (.006)	-.098 (.165)	-.030 (.676)
No. organizations aside from primary..............		.092 (.140)				.047 (.449)	
	.102 (.102)	.086 (.170)	.021 (.739)	.187 (.003)	.084 (.181)	.060 (.333)	-.012 (.846)
Increase in time devoted to volunteering...........		**.118** **(.045)**				.033 (.574)	
	.176 **(.003)**	**.124** **(.034)**	.001 (.981)	**.156** **(.008)**	.063 (.289)	.006 (.921)	.024 (.689)

Note: Correlations reported above with probability below in parentheses.

Commitment and Duty to Volunteer in the Context of Communitarianism

Relationships among duty and commitment aspects of obligation and related communitarian concepts were of principal interest in this study. Thus, the relationships among these concepts were explored as a foundation for examining the research questions. Table 5.15 documents these relationships.

Table 5.15
Relationships Among Obligation and Communitarian Concepts

Concept	Commitment	Duty
Individualism	**.329**	-.094
	(<.001)	(.109)
Collectivism	**.240**	.024
	(<.001)	(.682)
Serious leisure	**.763**	-.006
	(<.001)	(.925)
Sense of community......	**.525**	**-.298**
	(<.001)	(<.001)
Social cohesion	**.471**	**-.140**
	(<.001)	(.018)

Note: Correlations reported above with probability below in parentheses.

The value orientations of individualism and collectivism were both positively associated with commitment (r=.329, p<.001 and r=240, p<.001, respectively), while duty was not related to either value orientation. Given the rewarding nature of serious leisure as it is characterized in the literature (c.f., Stebbins, 1992, 2007), it was not surprising that volunteering as serious leisure was related to feelings of commitment to volunteer (r=.763, p<.001), but unrelated to feelings of duty. Feelings of commitment toward volunteering were linked to a sense of community (r=.525, p<.001) and perceptions of social cohesion (r=.471, p<.001), while feelings of duty were negatively associated with these measures of community strength (r=-.298, p<.001 and r=-.140, p<.001, respectively). Because these relationships were critical to addressing the research questions, they were further probed by examining the relationships among the concepts' constituent subdimensions, as described in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16

Relationships Between Subdimensions of Commitment, Duty and Communitarian Concepts

Concept Subdimension	Commitment				Duty		
	Reward	Affective attachment	Flexibility	Side bets	Expectation	Burden	Constraint
Individualism							
Competitiveness	.009	-.003	-.017	.049	.005	.082	.046
	(.874)	(.956)	(.767)	(.413)	(.938)	(.163)	(.430)
Unique	**.343**	**.236**	**.267**	**.225**	**.161**	**-.224**	**-.218**
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.006)	(<.001)	(<.001)
Responsibility..............	**.427**	**.352**	**.323**	**.321**	**.295**	**-.180**	**-.213**
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.001)	(.006)	(.001)
Collectivism							
Advice	**.172**	.075	**.150**	**.208**	**.158**	-.052	**-.051**
	(.004)	(.205)	(.011)	(<.001)	(.008)	(.378)	(.021)
Harmony......................	**.195**	**.174**	.088	**.173**	**.269**	-.068	.047
	(.001)	(.003)	(.137)	(.003)	(<.001)	(.245)	(.722)
Serious Leisure							
Perseverance................	**.449**	**.420**	**.220**	**.410**	**.443**	**-.164**	-.096
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.005)	(.103)
Effort	**.616**	**.571**	**.162**	**.568**	**.439**	**-.148**	**-.153**
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.004)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.011)	(.008)
Career progress............	**.693**	**.624**	**.213**	**.610**	**.481**	**-.233**	**-.217**
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.007)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)
Career contingencies ...	**.538**	**.530**	**.186**	**.560**	**.424**	-.041	-.097
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.483)	(.097)
Unique ethos................	**.495**	**.616**	**.326**	**.375**	**.284**	**-.176**	-.055
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.002)	(.351)
Identity........................	**.543**	**.627**	**.219**	**.489**	**.482**	-.062	-.006
	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(<.001)	(.294)	(.912)
Sense of Community							
Relationship to the organization.	**.313** (<.001)	**.347** (<.001)	**.268** (<.001)	**.162** (<.001)	.186 (.002)	**-.301** (<.001)	**-.227** (<.001)
Organization as mediator.................	**.344** (<.001)	**.369** (<.001)	.102 (.085)	**.526** (<.001)	**.214** (<.001)	.015 (.796)	-.048 (.423)
Bond to the community.............	**.399** (<.001)	**.379** (<.001)	**.265** (<.001)	**.161** (<.001)	.090 (.128)	**-.427** (<.001)	**-.391** (<.001)

Note: Correlations reported above with probability below in parentheses.

The unique and responsibility subdimensions of individualism tended to align positively with commitment and negatively with duty to volunteer. Within the construct of serious leisure, every aspect of serious leisure examined here (i.e., perseverance, effort, career progression, career contingencies, ethos, and identity) was positively related to each aspect of commitment. While duty overall was not related to volunteering as serious leisure, all subdimensions of serious leisure were positively related to the expectation subdimension of duty. The nature of these relationships again suggested that expectation, although theoretically associated with feelings of duty, empirically aligns in many ways with commitment.

The duty dimensions of burden and constraint were inversely associated with the "relationship to the organization" and "bond to community" subdimensions of sense of community, but not to the "organization as mediator" subdimension. These findings suggested that feeling burdened or constrained by volunteering was associated with weaker ties to both the voluntary organization and the broader community. The "organization as mediator" subdimension of sense of community was significantly related to the commitment subdimensions as well as expectation, but unrelated to the burden and constraint subdimensions of duty.

Volunteer Role and Commitment/Duty to Volunteer

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their main roles associated with their primary volunteering. As previously noted in Table 5.4, responses spanned 13 response categories, and in addition, approximately one-third of respondents selected the "other" option and described a volunteer role that was not among the response options. These data provided some indication of the types of volunteer activities in which respondents were engaged. Several of these categories were collapsed to facilitate analyses based on volunteer activity. For example, responses identifying either canvassing or fundraising as primary activities were combined into a new variable representing fundraising activities. Similarly, volunteer roles characterized by direct service to others were combined into a new variable representing human services. The new categories and associated descriptive statistics are shown in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17

Composition of Categories Describing Primary Volunteer Roles

Role category	Role as identified by survey respondents	n	Pct.
Fundraising	Fundraising Canvassing	78	26.00
Human services	Coaching Counselling and providing advice Teaching, educating or mentoring Health care or support..	86	28.67
Leadership	Committee and board membership Organizing or supervising events......................	73	24.33

It is important to note that all response options were not used in creating these new categories, and respondents could be included in more than one group (since they could select more than one role if applicable). After creating these collapsed categories representing volunteer role, I explored how commitment and duty varied by role. Those who identified fundraising or canvassing as a volunteer role reported significantly less commitment ($t=-4.43$, $p<.001$) and more duty ($t=2.45$, $p=.015$) than other volunteers. In comparison, those in leadership roles felt significantly more commitment ($t=2.74$, $p=.007$) but were not different in terms of duty from those who did not volunteer in these roles. Volunteers in human services were not significantly different than other volunteers in terms of either commitment or duty. Further, volunteers who identified fundraising as a volunteer role scored lower on the serious leisure inventory ($t=-3.75$, $p<.001$) compared with those whose volunteering did not include fundraising activities. In contrast, volunteering in human service or leadership roles was associated with volunteering as serious leisure ($t=2.112$, $p=.0436$ and $t=2.330$, $p=.020$, respectively). Thus, volunteering that included fundraising tended to be associated with duty whereas volunteering that included human services or leadership roles tended to be associated with commitment and serious leisure.

Individualism, Collectivism, and Serious Leisure

Relationships among the value orientations of individualism and collectivism and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure were of particular interest, as

articulated in the fourth research question. These relationships are documented in Table 5.18.

Table 5.18
Relationship Among Value Orientations and Serious Leisure

CONCEPT Subdimension	Serious Leisure					
	Identity	Unique ethos	Career contingencies	Career progress	Personal effort	Perseverance
INDIVIDUALISM	.365 (<.001)					
Competitiveness	-.027 (.653)	.036 (.538)	.052 (.374)	.097 (.097)	.081 (.170)	.064 (.277)
Unique	**.133** **(.024)**	**.131** **(.025)**	**.263** **(<.001)**	**.340** **(<.001)**	**.277** **(<.001)**	**.352** **(<.001)**
Responsibility	**.272** **(<.001)**	**.262** **(<.001)**	**.325** **(<.001)**	**.423** **(<.001)**	**.368** **(<.001)**	**.382** **(<.001)**
COLLECTIVISM	.309 (<.001)					
Advice	.082 (.167)	.016 (.792)	**.240** **(<.001)**	**.221** **(<.001)**	**.225** **(<.001)**	**.328** **(<.001)**
Harmony	**.161** **(.006)**	**.181** **(.002)**	**.221** **(<.001)**	**.192** **(.001)**	**.189** **(.001)**	**.249** **(<.001)**

Note: Correlations reported above with probability below in parentheses.

Individualism, particularly the uniqueness and responsibility aspects, appeared to be strongly related to all aspect of serious leisure. Similarly, collectivism was closely related to serious leisure. Within the collectivist orientation, the aspect of harmony was related to all aspects of serious leisure, while the advice dimension was related to all aspects but unique ethos and identity. Overall, then, the value orientations of individualism and collectivism were similarly related to volunteering as serious leisure, with the exception of the competitiveness aspect of individualism which was not related.

Obligation, Volunteering, and Community Building: Putting it all Together

Hierarchical regression analyses were used to further explore relationships and mitigating influences among variables of interest. The first two analyses specifically addressed the final research question by exploring the extent to which feelings of obligation to volunteer (one analysis for each of commitment and duty) are explained by characteristics such as length and number of volunteer commitments and demographic characteristics such as sex, age, and education. The second two analyses delved into the overall purpose of this study to explore the extent to which feelings of obligation to volunteer could be explained by various concepts associated with communitarianism. More specifically, the contributions of personal factors, value orientations, and volunteering as serious leisure to feelings of commitment and of duty were explored at this stage. The final two analyses explored how feelings of obligation to volunteer, along with personal factors, value orientations, and serious leisure, combined to explain variations in, first, volunteers' sense of community and second, their perceptions of social cohesion.

Variables selected for inclusion in each of these analyses were those that had a strong conceptual link to, or had been identified as, significant influences on the dependent variables in previous analyses. For example, income was not included among the demographic characteristics in the first analyses because it was not related to commitment or duty. In each analysis, *personal* factors of sex, age, education, and religiosity were entered first into the model. Following the personal factors, other variables of interest were added at each stage as illustrated in Tables 5.19 to 5.24.

Tables 5.19 and 5.20 document analyses that explore how feelings of obligation to volunteer were explained by personal factors and attributes of primary and overall volunteering. In each case, personal factors were entered into the model first, followed by characteristics related to overall volunteer involvement, and then characteristics related to primary volunteer involvement. Finally, the volunteer roles of fundraising, human services and leadership were added at the final stage as dummy variables. Table 5.19 documents the analysis with the commitment aspect of obligation as the dependent variable, while Table 5.20 documents the analysis using the same model with the duty aspect of obligation as the dependent variable.

Personal factors of age, sex, education and religiosity had little influence on commitment as an aspect of obligation to volunteer. Rather, both primary and overall volunteer characteristics were the most significant explanatory factors to the variations in feelings of obligation as commitment to volunteering, accounting for 7.3% and 9.3% of the variation, respectively. Focusing specifically on Model 4 where all variables have been entered into the analysis (see Table 5.19), the change in time devoted to volunteering (β=.156, p=.038) and hours devoted to primary volunteering monthly (β=.206, p=.016) were significant predictors of feelings of commitment to volunteer. Volunteer role, whether fundraising, human services, or leadership had no effect on commitment once the influences of these other factors were taken into account. This is surprising given the significant relationships between volunteer roles and feelings of obligation described in Table 5.17.

Table 5.19

Contribution of Personal Factors and Volunteer Characteristics in Explaining Feelings of Commitment to Volunteer (N=181)

Factor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	p	β	p	β	p	β	p
Female[a]	-.015	.850	-.020	.786	.041	.572	.054	.466
Age	-.008	.925	.036	.662	.001	.992	.013	.886
Education	-.049	.547	-.124	.129	-.101	.199	-.115	.146
Religiosity	.056	.458	.071	.335	.099	.164	.094	.203
# volunteer commitments			.145	.057	**.162**	**.029**	.140	.061
Change in time spent vol.			**.211**	**.006**	**.154**	**.040**	**.156**	**.038**
Proportion of volunteering that is primary					.151	.063	.122	.154
Hours primary volunteering monthly					**.219**	**.009**	**.206**	**.016**
Years with primary org.					.001	.987	.025	.771
Fundraising [a]							-.102	.206
Human services [a]							.075	.306
Leadership [a]							.041	.585
R^2 change	.006		.067		.092		.016	
Total R^2	.006		.073		.166		.182	
n	181		181		181		181	
F	.256		6.331		6.317		1.114	
p	.906		.002		<.001		.345	

[a] Binary variables.

When the duty aspect of obligation was considered as the dependent variable, personal factors overall had no influence, although age emerged as significantly associated with feelings of duty to volunteer (see Table 5.20, Models 3 and 4). This suggestion of a negative relationship between age and duty was not evident in correlation analyses and suggested that as the volunteers' time and involvement with their primary organization increased, coincident advancing age was associated with reduced feelings of duty. Of the four blocks of variables considered in the regression analyses, the third block describing primary volunteer characteristics was the only significant contributor, accounting for 8.1% of the variation in feelings of obligation as duty to volunteer. Within this dimension, hours devoted to primary volunteering monthly (β=.264 p=.003) was the principal factor explaining feelings of duty to volunteer in the final model. Like the analyses of feelings of commitment as the dependent variable, volunteer role had no effect on duty once the influences of other factors were considered.

The second set of analyses explored the extent to which the value orientations of individualism and collectivism and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure explained the obligation aspects of commitment and duty. Like the previous analyses, the personal factors of sex, age, education, and religiosity were entered first, followed by individualism and collectivism, and then finally, serious leisure. Two separate analyses were performed for the two distinct dimensions of obligation to volunteer. Results of these analyses are summarized in Tables 5.21 and 5.22.

While the combined effect of the value orientations of individualism and collectivism predicted a significant amount of the variance (11.9%) in feelings of the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer, neither individualism nor collectivism was significant once serious leisure was added to the analysis (see Table 5.21, Models 2 and 3). After controlling for personal factors and value orientation, a further 35.4% of the variance in the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer was explained by the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, which was by far the most important factor in explaining commitment (β=.779, p<.001). The strong explanatory power of serious leisure in explaining feelings of commitment to volunteer suggests that the two concepts are very closely aligned.

Table 5.20

Contribution of Personal Factors and Volunteer Characteristics in Explaining Feelings of Duty to Volunteer (N=181)

Factor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	p	β	p	β	p	β	p
Female[a]	-.029	.697	-.032	.672	.011	.887	.002	.983
Age	-.128	.111	-.121	.147	**-.237**	**.009**	**-.245**	**.008**
Education	**-.094**	**.024**	-.091	.227	-.057	.435	-.072	.344
Religiosity	.181	.206	.159	.055	.146	.070	.150	.065
# volunteer commitments			.061	.429	.031	.678	.037	.630
Change in time spent vol.			.046	.558	.028	.713	.031	.685
Proportion of volunteering that is primary					-.128	.123	-.105	.232
Hours primary volunteering monthly					**.263**	**.002**	**.264**	**.003**
Years with primary org.					**.192**	**.023**	.170	.057
Fundraising [a]							.054	.516
Human services [a]							.028	.711
Leadership [a]							-.062	.427
R^2 change	.042		.006		**.081**		.007	
Total R^2	.042		.048		.129		.136	
n	181		181		181		181	
F	1.922		.548		5.280		.440	
p	.109		.579		**.002**		.722	

[a] Binary variables.

When the influences of the same factors on the duty aspect of obligation were considered, the results were quite different from those related to the commitment aspect of obligation. Although personal factors overall did not have significant explanatory power, religiosity was the sole significant predictor of feelings of duty to volunteer in the final model (β=.135, *p*=.040). The strong relationship between commitment and serious leisure evident in the analysis presented in Table 5.21 was not evident when the duty dimension of obligation was considered, nor were individualism and collectivism significant in explaining variations in feelings of duty.

Table 5.21

Contribution of Value Orientations in Explaining Feelings of Commitment to Volunteer (N=274)

Factor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β	p	β	p	β	p
Female[a]	-.007	.910	.024	.675	-.056	.157
Age	-.038	.555	.042	.054	-.005	.899
Education	.087	.155	.056	.339	**.080**	**.043**
Religiosity	-.068	.293	-.048	.435	-.034	.421
Collectivism			**.198**	**.001**	-.019	.645
Individualism			**.276**	**<.001**	-.001	.990
Serious leisure					**.779**	**<.001**
R^2 change	.015		**.119**		**.473**	
Total R^2	.015		.135		.608	
n	274		274		274	
F	1.048		18.420		321.314	
p	.383		**<.001**		**<.001**	

[a] Binary variable.

Table 5.22

Contribution of Value Orientations in Explaining Feelings of Duty to Volunteer (N=274)

Factor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β	p	β	p	β	p
Female[a]	.050	.414	.046	.454	.041	.507
Age	-.037	.566	-.043	.511	-.046	.485
Education	**-.040**	**.021**	-.028	.643	-.027	.661
Religiosity	.149	.514	**.134**	**.041**	**.135**	**.040**
Collectivism			.019	.643	.006	.924
Individualism			-.087	.167	-.104	.124
Serious leisure					.048	.485
R^2 change	.027		.007		.002	
Total R^2	.027		.034		.036	
n	274		274		274	
F	1.870		.971		.490	
p	.116		.380		.485	

[a] Binary variable.

The final analyses explored the broad theme of the influence of feelings of obligation to volunteer on collective outcomes of volunteering, specifically sense of community and social cohesion. These analyses were identical to those in the preceding analyses, with the addition of feelings of obligation to volunteer (commitment and duty) as the final block, to assess the explanatory power of these two factors above and beyond the other factors. Two separate analyses were conducted to understand the combined effects of the above factors on sense of community and social cohesion. The results of these analyses are summarized in Tables 5.23 and 5.24.

Perceptions of sense of community were not explained in any meaningful way by personal factors and value orientations (see Table 5.23). However, the nature of the primary volunteer experience as serious leisure accounted for 13.1% of the variance in sense of community. However, when the obligation dimensions of commitment and duty were added to the analysis, the experience of serious leisure as volunteering became insignificant while both the duty (β=-.223, p<.001) and particularly the commitment (β=.507 p<.001) aspects of obligation were significant predictors of sense of community. Overall, feelings of obligation to volunteer explained a further 5.8% of the variance. Within this block of factors, the negative beta value describing the influence of the duty aspect of obligation suggests that feelings of duty to volunteer were associated with weaker perceptions of sense of community, while the commitment aspect of obligation was positively associated with sense of community.

Social cohesion was unrelated to personal factors overall, although age was significantly and positively related to social cohesion at all stages of the analysis (see Table 5.24) suggesting that as volunteers grew older, their perceptions of the social cohesiveness of the community were stronger. In model 3, the degree to which respondents' primary volunteer involvement could be described as serious leisure explained an additional 12.8% of the variation in perceptions of social cohesion, the most significant single factor explaining perceptions of social cohesion. However, even after this and other relevant factors were taken into account, the commitment aspect of obligation had strong explanatory power (β=.233, p=.010). Interestingly, unlike sense of community, feelings of duty did not explain a significant portion of variation in perceptions of social cohesion.

Table 5.23
Contribution of Value Orientations and Feelings of Obligation in Explaining Sense of Community (N=271)

Factor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	p	β	p	β	p	β	p
Female[a]	.045	.473	.055	.373	.013	.828	.051	.324
Age	-.070	.280	-.047	.477	-.071	.251	-.083	.131
Education	.069	.262	.054	.381	.067	.245	.019	.719
Religiosity	-.026	.687	-.013	.847	-.005	.940	.044	.423
Collectivism			.045	.467	-.068	.265	-.054	.312
Individualism			.118	.063	-.027	.665	-.048	.393
Serious leisure					**.409**	**<.001**	.024	.784
Commitment							**.507**	**<.001**
Duty							**-.223**	**<.001**
R^2 change	.012		.016		**.131**		**.189**	
Total R^2	.012		.028		.159		.348	
n	271		271		271		271	
F	.836		2.182		40.906		37.772	
p	.504		.115		**<.001**		**<.001**	

[a] Binary variable.

Table 5.24
Contribution of Value Orientations and Feelings of Obligation in Explaining Perceptions of Social Cohesion (N=268)

Factor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	p	β	p	β	p	β	p
Female[a]	.077	.214	.100	.102	.047	.391	.069	.204
Age	**.149**	**.022**	**.198**	**.002**	**.170**	**.004**	**.164**	**.004**
Education	.094	.127	.073	.226	.087	.113	.065	.226
Religiosity	-.025	.697	-.014	.827	-.001	.989	.019	.735
Collectivism			**.146**	**.018**	.018	.759	.023	.684
Individualism			**.165**	**.008**	.000	.999	-.007	.909
Serious leisure					**.476**	**<.001**	.299	.001
Commitment							.233	.010
Duty							-.103	.068
R^2 change	.033		**.051**		**.179**		**.040**	
Total R^2	.033		.084		.263		.303	
n	268		268		268		268	
F	2.232		7.261		63.203		7.450	
p	.066		**.001**		**<.001**		**.001**	

[a] Binary variable.

Summary

The 300 respondents involved in Phase II of this research together represented a diverse group of volunteers both in terms of demographics and the characteristics of their volunteer experiences. Further, the measures included in this research proved to be reliable measures of the constructs of interest. However, the expectation dimension of duty may not be reliable and thus analyses involving this measure must be interpreted with caution.

Participants in this research tended to identify with the commitment dimension of feelings of obligation to volunteer. Further, they tended to experience their volunteering as serious leisure, while duty, in the form of feelings of expectation, constraint and burden, was less commonly reported. The results suggest the commitment and duty dimensions of obligation to volunteer have very different relationships with the value orientations of individualism and collectivism, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, and the measures of community strength (sense of community and social cohesion). Feelings characterized by the commitment aspect of obligation were associated with sense of community and social cohesion, while complementary findings suggesting a negative relationship between the duty dimension of obligation and the community indicators of sense of community and social cohesion. The current study linked both individualism and collectivism to the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer, while duty was not related to these two constructs. Further, both value orientations, but particularly individualism, were closely connected to the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, which was in turn very closely aligned with the commitment aspect of obligation as well as sense of community and social cohesion. Implications of these relationships are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine volunteering within the context of communitarianism. The interdependent, participative nature of the communitarian conceptualization of community draws attention to the value orientations of individualism and collectivism, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, and sense of community and social cohesion as community characteristics. Further, feelings of obligation to volunteer are particularly relevant in studies of community within a communitarian framework, because communitarianism asserts that membership in a community implies both maintenance of individual rights as well as a commitment to the common good (Bell, 1993; Gardner, 1995; Sandel, 1998). Thus, the relationships between the commitment and duty aspects of obligation to volunteer and the related concepts of value orientation (collectivism/individualism), serious leisure, sense of community and social cohesion were the focus for this study.

Phase I involved creation of a scale to measure feelings of obligation as commitment and duty. In this research, commitment was conceptualized as aspects of reward, affective attachment, flexibility and side bets, while duty encompassed the dimensions of expectation, burden and constraint. Scales measuring the commitment and duty aspects of obligation were developed, refined, and validated in a rigorous process that involved expert review and testing with a sample of over 800 participants. Analyses suggested that the concept of feelings of obligation to volunteer was best operationalized using an 18-item scale measuring obligation to volunteer as commitment (OVC) and a 14-item measure of obligation to volunteer as duty (OVD). Further, this phase of research suggested that commitment and duty dimensions of obligation were distinct but related aspects of feelings of obligation to volunteer. The complexity between these two aspects of obligation was manifested particularly in the expectation dimension of duty, which was closely connected to the reward, affective attachment, and side bets aspects of commitment. The second phase of this research explored the concepts of interest, utilizing the newly-developed OVC and OVD scales and other established tools in survey research with volunteers. Data from these analyses suggested an intricate pattern of relationships that is further examined in this chapter, and linked back to the conceptual framework in which this study was grounded.

This chapter focuses on Phase II of this research, as a discussion of the scale development phase was included in the latter part of Chapter 4. First, a discussion of the notable trends related to demographic and volunteer characteristics of the sample population and relationships to the concepts of interest are discussed to provide a context for the current research. Next, relationships between concepts of interest are explored as each research question is addressed in turn, drawing on data from the present study and positioning it within existing literature. Then, these analyses are integrated through a discussion of the broader implications and insights gained from this research, particularly related to how feelings of obligation are understood in the context of volunteering and communitarianism. This discussion culminates in a reflection on the utility of the conceptual framework on which this research was based.

A Portrait of Volunteers and Feelings of Obligation

Phase II of this research involved community volunteers in survey research exploring the relationships between the value orientations of individualism and collectivism, feelings of obligation to volunteer, the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, and sense of community and social cohesion. Although survey respondents were asked to identify their sex as male, female, or transgendered, the majority of respondents identified themselves as female, and none identified as transgendered. The sample contained a larger proportion of older adults than would be expected in a representative sample of adult volunteers (c.f., Statistics Canada, 2009). With the large proportions of female and older adult respondents, it was unclear if they were more likely to respond to the survey or if more women and older adults received the survey through their volunteer organizations. Overall, the study sample, gathered by inviting participation from volunteers affiliated with 10 voluntary organizations within the City of Guelph, was diverse in terms of age, education, income and volunteer experience.

Scores on the obligation measures suggested that volunteers tended to identify more with the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer, conceptualized in this research as encompassing the aspects of reward, affective attachment, flexibility, and side bets. While there was evidence of the duty aspect of feelings of obligation to volunteer, these feelings were less prevalent.

Influences of age, sex, and other demographic characteristics on the concepts of interest in this study were examined to provide some context for exploring the research questions. In particular, individualism and collectivism both resonated more strongly with younger respondents, in contrast to some research and thought which posits that collectivism should resonate more strongly with older adults because they have become more embedded in society and social networks and tend to think of themselves and others in the context of those communities (Triandis, 1995). However, the population who participated in this research, as volunteers, may have distinctly different value orientations than the general public.

The findings describe the volunteer experiences of research participants as generally aligning with aspects of serious leisure. Table 5.10, in particular, draws attention to variations in the experience of serious leisure with age. Younger volunteers were more likely to identify with career-related aspects of serious leisure as well as perseverance as defining features of their volunteering. The unique ethos associated with serious leisure resonated strongly with older volunteers. Although the current research did not ask respondents to indicate their employment status, it was likely that many older volunteers were volunteering in retirement, and thus may have placed more emphasis or were more heavily involved in the social world of their volunteer pursuits. Scholars such as Reid (1995), Rojek (2002) and Stebbins (2004), have noted the potential role of volunteering and volunteer social worlds as alternatives to work-based sources of identity and belonging. It is interesting, however, that the identity aspect of serious leisure did not resonate more strongly with older volunteers, given the close relationship between identity and social world evident in other literature (c.f., Gillespie et al., 2002; Lawrence, 2006; Unruh, 1979).

The measures of sense of community (Hughey et al., 2008) and social cohesion (Buckner, 1988) used in this research were associated with years of residency in the City of Guelph. In particular, the "bond to the community" dimension of the COSOC was associated with length of residency, while the overall measure of social cohesion tended to increase with years of residency. Neither of these measures of community strength varied with measures of volunteer frequency, such as number of organizations with which respondents volunteered, hours devoted to volunteering monthly, or change in time devoted to volunteering over the past couple years. Perhaps other influences on sense of community not accounted for in this research, such as socioeconomic status or employment characteristics (DeSena, 2006; Hughey

et al., 2007; Royal & Rossi, 1996) were more dominant influences on sense of community and social cohesion than volunteer characteristics. Another possibility is that the nature or quality of volunteer experience was a stronger influence on sense of community than frequency or duration. This may be a fruitful area for future research.

The commitment aspect of feelings of obligation to volunteer resonated strongly with respondents involved in this research, with the reward and side bets dimensions of commitment resonating particularly strongly with younger volunteers. The duty aspect of obligation to volunteer was less prevalent, although it, like the commitment aspect, tended to increase with time devoted to volunteering. Duty, and constraint in particular, was associated with higher years of involvement with a primary organization, suggesting that volunteer involvement becomes more constraining over time. This is consistent with Lee and Scott's (2006) analyses of serious leisure enthusiasts' career progression in birdwatching, where birdwatchers tended to take on leadership roles that curtailed their self-determination and sometimes constrained their birdwatching activities.

Addressing the Research Questions

With some initial understanding of the characteristics of research participants and their volunteer involvement and community affiliation, I am now ready to consider how the findings described in Chapter 5 address the research questions. Each research question is addressed in turn, drawing upon relationships and trends highlighted in the previous section, findings presented in the previous chapter, and relevant literature.

Research Question #1: Personal Value Orientations and Obligation to Volunteer

The first research question asked: How do individuals' collectivist and individualist orientations influence their feelings of obligation to volunteer? Findings from Phase II suggested that both collectivist and particularly individualist orientations were associated with the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer. In other words, volunteers who identified with either or both of the personal value orientations of individualism and collectivism also tended to identify with the commitment dimension of obligation to volunteer. The relationship between collectivism and the commitment aspect of obligation can be understood based on collectivists' focus on group relationships. For example, the affective attachment aspect of commitment aligns well with collectivists' focus on group relationships and harmony

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(Triandis, 1994, 1995), and the side bets of commitment are intrinsic to collectivists' understanding of community. The strong association between individualism and the commitment aspect of feelings of obligation to volunteer might seem at odds with individualists' focus on personal goals and responsibilities (Oyserman et al., 2002; Triandis, 1995). However, the commitment dimension of obligation as it was conceptualized in this research characterized commitment to volunteering as personally rewarding (through both the reward and side bets dimensions) and flexible in nature, which may explain why individualism and the commitment aspect of obligation were associated in this research. The competitive aspect of individualism was not associated with either the commitment or duty aspects of obligation to volunteer, indicating that feelings of obligation to volunteer were independent of a sense of competition with others.

Study findings provided little evidence of a relationship between collectivist or individualist value orientations and the duty dimension of feelings of obligation to volunteer. The lack of a relationship between individualism and duty aligns with theoretical views of individualism, particularly its focus on individual choice and independence (Oyserman et al., 2002). Within the subdimensions of individualism and feelings of duty to volunteer, there were significant inverse relationships between burden and constraint and the unique and responsibility aspects of individualism, suggesting that a sense of oneself as a unique being and a sense of responsibility for oneself are both associated with weaker sense of volunteering as constraining and burdensome. One explanation for these relationships is that people who identify with individualism simply volunteer less, and thus are less constrained or burdened by volunteering; however, this research found no evidence of a relationship between individualism and measures of volunteer frequency. Another possibility is that volunteering is a source of identity, and thus aligns with individualist orientations such that it is neither constraining nor burdensome, but rather an identity-forming experience. Indeed, the literature on serious leisure notes the potential for identity formation through volunteering (Lawrence, 2006; Rojek, 2001; Stebbins, 2007). Further, a communitarian perspective views individuals as at once independent and interdependent (Bell, 1993; Delanty, 2003; Sandel, 1998). From this perspective, taking responsibility for oneself, a key aspect of individualism (Oyserman et al., 2002), is intertwined with responsibilities to others and the community as a whole. This could perhaps help to explain why the responsibility dimension of individualism was strongly

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associated with the expectation dimension of duty, while inversely related to burden and constraint.

A positive relationship between collectivism and feelings of duty to volunteer may have been expected given the collectivist emphasis on group obligations (Oyserman et al., 2002). While there was no overall relationship between collectivism and feelings of duty to volunteer, examination of the dimensions of collectivism and duty provided some evidence of a relationship between them. In particular, the expectation dimension of duty to volunteer was associated with the advice and harmony dimensions of collectivism. Collectivism is characterized by a focus on shared goals and obligation to the groups of which collectivists are members (Oyserman et al., 2002). These characteristics are closely associated with the expectation aspect of duty, particularly its emphasis on expectations of oneself as in the refined duty subscale. Other research exploring the values of Canadian volunteers found that volunteers shared a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the communities to which they belong (Reed & Selbee, 2002). This sense of responsibility for others could be understood as an expectation of oneself to contribute to the well-being of the community. In this way, collectivism can be theoretically linked to duty to volunteer, and particularly to expectations of oneself.

While length of time a volunteer had been involved with a particular organization was associated with duty, and the average number of hours volunteered monthly was positively associated with both commitment and duty, these indicators of strength of association with a volunteer organization had no relationship to collectivist or individualist orientations. Thus, a collectivist or individualist orientation was not clearly linked to volunteering either in the form of length of affiliation with a particular organization or hours volunteered monthly. This finding is interesting when examined in the context of the association between individualism, collectivism, and the commitment aspect of obligation. Volunteers who report a sense of collectivism or individualism tended to identify with the commitment aspect of obligation to their volunteering, but these feelings had no relationship with the length of their primary volunteer involvement or hours volunteered weekly. In other words, individualism and collectivist orientations influence feelings of obligation as commitment but not time devoted to volunteering. This is an interesting finding that warrants further exploration.

Research Question #2: Obligation to Volunteer, Sense of Community and Social Cohesion

The second research question asked how feelings of obligation to volunteer influence individuals' sense of community and perceptions of social cohesion. Findings indicated that commitment to volunteering was associated with both sense of community and social cohesion. While these cross-sectional analyses cannot determine that feelings of obligation as commitment to volunteering increased sense of community and social cohesion (or that sense of community or social cohesion lead to feelings of commitment to volunteering), there was clearly a link between the aspects of obligation characterized as commitment and both sense of community and social cohesion. These associations were evident even after personal factors, the value orientations of individualism, collectivism, and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure were taken into account.

A key characteristic of sense of community is shared emotional connection (McMillan, 1996; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). McMillan and Chavis describe this emotional connection as stemming from positive interactions and shared goals, and, similar to Borgmann (1992), McMillan (1996) used the term "art" to describe the celebrations and acts of creation that nurture relationships. The definition of the affective attachment aspect of commitment, with its focus on emotional ties, is closely linked to the shared emotional connection that is intrinsic to sense of community. McMillan and Chavis also note that the influence aspect of sense of community is often manifested as volunteering. Further, the integration/needs fulfillment aspect of sense of community, referred to as "trade" in McMillan's (1996) updated conceptualization of sense of community, is closely related to the side bets dimension of commitment as obligation to volunteer. Thus, there are several theoretical links between sense of community and the commitment aspect of obligation that help to explain the close relationship between the two as evidenced in the findings.

The duty facet of obligation to volunteer, particularly the constraint and burden aspects, was inversely related to sense of community and social cohesion. Research participants whose volunteering was characterized by constraint or burden reported lower sense of community and social cohesion. After controlling for personal factors, value orientation, and the experience of serious leisure, sense of community was still strongly predicted by feelings of duty to volunteer, with increased sense of duty to volunteer being associated with lower sense of community scores. This research thus provided compelling

evidence that feelings of burden or constraint related to volunteering are associated with dampened sense of community. The potential of volunteering to nurture and sustain sense of community (Bellah et al., 1986; Omoto & Snyder, 2002; Putnam, 2000), then, may be dependent upon the experience of volunteering as associated with commitment rather than duty. In other words, opportunities to foster affective attachment, experience rewards, build side bets, and experience flexibility within volunteer experiences may be essential to building and sustaining sense of community. There is little research exploring the duty-laden aspects of volunteering, and, given the negative impact of this form of obligation on sense of community, there is a strong rationale for exploring this phenomenon further.

In contrast to the link between duty and sense of community, the association between duty and social cohesion may be more tenuous, as duty did not explain variations in social cohesion after the other control variables were taken into account. Thus, in the context of feelings of duty as obligation to volunteer, there is evidence of a distinction between its relationship to sense of community and social cohesion. The findings suggested that several factors aside from feelings of obligation were significant in explaining variations in perceptions of social cohesion, including age, value orientation, and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure. In contrast, only obligation (commitment and duty) and serious leisure were significant in explaining variations in sense of community—age and value orientations were insignificant. Looking more closely at the conceptualizations and measures of sense of community and social cohesion suggest some distinctions between them that may help to explain their distinct relationships with the duty aspect of obligation to volunteer. The Community Organization Sense of Community Index (Hughey et al., 1999) used as a measure of sense of community in this research, focuses specifically on how volunteering contributes to sense of community at a particular organization and more broadly with the community. Items in two of the three dimensions, "relationship to the organization" and "organization as mediator", make specific reference to the influence of volunteering on sense of community. These dimensions include items such as "Volunteering with this organization allows me to be part of other groups in Guelph" and "Everyone at the organization where I volunteer is pushing in different directions" (reverse scored). In contrast, items in Buckner's Neighbourhood Cohesion Index (1988), are related more broadly to the presence of shared values, relationships and interdependence among community members.

Items such as "I agree with most people in my community about what is important in life" and "I borrow things and exchange favours with members of my community" probe respondents' sense of belonging in a broader sense than items in the sense of community measure, which explores more specifically the contribution that volunteering with a specific organization makes to community. This distinction may explain why sense of community was, in this research, closely linked to obligation to volunteer and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, while variations in social cohesion were explained by a broader range of factors including age and value orientation.

Research Question #3: Feelings of Obligation and Volunteering as Serious Leisure

The third research question focused on how feelings of obligation to volunteer influence individuals' experiences of volunteering as serious leisure. The commitment dimension of feelings of obligation was very closely related to the experience of volunteering as serious leisure. This empirical finding echoes research and theory characterizing obligation associated with serious leisure as agreeable and flexible (Holmes, 2006; Stebbins, 2000, 2007). In contrast, there was no association between duty-laden volunteering and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure. Looking more closely at the constituent dimensions and subdimensions of obligation and those of serious leisure provides further insight into the relationships between these two concepts. The expectation aspect of duty was positively and significantly related to serious leisure overall as well as to all of its constituent dimensions, suggesting that the expectation subdimension of obligation aligns more closely with commitment than duty in terms of its relationship to serious leisure. Indeed, the requirement to persevere, to seek a career in the serious leisure pursuit, and to make a considerable personal effort to acquire skills and abilities are all qualities that suggest serious leisure volunteers may have specific expectations of themselves. However, the burdensome and constraining aspects of obligation were inversely associated with some of the qualities of serious leisure, particularly effort, career progress, perseverance, and ethos. Thus, feelings that volunteer activities are burdensome and constraining are related to lower levels of effort, perseverance, career progress, and less of a sense of sharing common attitudes, practices, and values with other members of a social world (ethos). In other words, the more demanding the volunteer experience in terms of imposing burden and constraint, the less effort volunteers are willing to contribute and the less likely they are to persevere in their efforts. Burden in

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particular is characterized as a sense of being overloaded, of not being to handle the demands of a volunteer role (Chou, 2000). The inverse relationship between burden and the perseverance and effort aspects of serious leisure suggests that volunteers may give up or "lose heart" when the demands on them are misaligned with what they are able to contribute. This finding echoes the frustrations expressed by some of the volunteers involved in Arai's (2000) work with social planning organizations, who felt their skills and knowledge were inadequate to meet the needs of the organizations they served. Volunteers' feelings of burden can be contextualized within the current political climate where downloading and contracting of critical social services has become a common cost-cutting measure that has resulted in increasing demands on volunteers and voluntary organizations (Arai, 2004; Harvie, 2005; Murphy, 1999).

The very strong empirical relationship between commitment aspects of obligation and experiences of volunteering as serious leisure reflects the strong theoretical link between these concepts. More specifically, the commitment aspect of obligation was defined based on Stebbins' conceptualization of obligation within the context of serious leisure, where it is understood as flexible and agreeable in nature, and closely associated with the many benefits entwined with serious leisure participation (Stebbins, 2000, 2007). An interesting aspect of the close association found between the serious leisure measure and the scale measuring the commitment aspect of obligation is that, while the experience of reward is closely associated with serious leisure, the dimensions representing the durable benefits of serious leisure as developed by Gould and his colleagues (2008) were not included in the adapted measure of serious leisure used in this research. Thus, the close association between serious leisure and commitment measures found in this research was not a product of the overlapping aspect of benefit or reward within the two distinct measures. Rather, the commitment aspect of obligation as it is conceptualized in the current research and operationalized in the commitment to volunteer scale may be closely enough aligned with serious leisure to be considered a measure of the "agreeable obligation" (Stebbins, 2000) experienced within the context of serious leisure. This suggestion merits further research, particularly related to the extent to which the commitment aspect of obligation may resonate with participants in hobbyist and amateur serious leisure pursuits.

Research Question #4: Individualism, Collectivism, and Volunteering as Serious Leisure

Relationships between the value orientations of individualism and collectivism and the experience of volunteering as serious leisure were the focus of the fourth research question. Both individualism and collectivism were related to the experience of volunteering as serious leisure. Examination of the relationships between the dimensions of the two value orientations and serious leisure indicate that individualism and particularly its subdimensions of uniqueness and responsibility were more strongly associated with volunteering as serious leisure than the collectivist subdimensions of advice and harmony. While volunteering seems implicitly aligned with the collectivist focus on group values and goals (Oyserman et al., 2002; Triandis, 1994, 1995), serious leisure, with its focus on personal progress and achievement (Stebbins, 2007), resonates strongly with the individualist focus on personal choice and independence. Thus, the experience of volunteering *as serious leisure* in a sense juxtaposes the more self-focused nature of serious leisure with the other-focused nature of volunteering. Shen and Yarnal (2010) have very recently been critical of Stebbins' (1992, 2007) conceptualization of serious leisure as an individual experience with individual outcomes and benefits. The experience of serious leisure is often a social one, with outcomes for communities as well as for individuals. Since these aspects of serious leisure are neither captured within current conceptual definitions of serious leisure nor in the associated operationalization of serious leisure (Gould et al., 2008), the relationship between collectivism and serious leisure may not be fully explored or accounted for in the current research. This is why individualism, rather than collectivism, was found to be more closely associated with serious leisure in this research.

It is worthy of note that the competition aspect of individualism was not closely associated with any of the aspects of serious leisure. Survey participants generally had mixed feelings, but on average did not feel strongly about items in the competitiveness subdimension. Further, volunteering is an activity more often associated with cooperation than competition. In research with participants in varied forms of serious leisure, it would be interesting to explore how the relationships between the value orientations of individualism and collectivism and their

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subdimensions and serious leisure and its dimensions varied from the relationships found through this research. While previous research has not explicitly explored the relationship between value orientation and the experience of serious leisure, some literature has noted the competitive nature of serious leisure pursuits such as kayaking, mountain climbing and running (c.f., Bartram, 2001; Kane & Zink, 2004; Major, 2001; Stebbins, 2005c).

Respondents who identified with collectivism also tended to identify with individualism, and within the findings there was also evidence of a tendency for scores of both value orientations to decrease with age. Given the positive associations between both individualism and collectivism and serious leisure, there is much support for the assertion that collectivism and individualism are not dichotomous. Considering the tendency for individualism and collectivism to vary together, the two value orientations could perhaps even be conceptualized as complementary! While this may at first seem counterintuitive, this relationship could perhaps be rationalized by returning to the communitarian conceptualization of individuals as both independent and interdependent (Bell, 1993; Delanty, 1993; Sandel, 1998). Communitarians agree that mutual care and concern should balance individualism and competitiveness. Thus it is not only possible, but perhaps even preferable, that people should identify with both the individualistic values of uniqueness and competitiveness and the collectivist value of collective harmony.

Research Question #5: Factors Influencing Feelings of Obligation to Volunteer

The final research question explored the extent to which feelings of obligation to volunteer are influenced by characteristics such as length and number of volunteer commitments and demographic characteristics such as education and income. Findings exploring the relative influences of these factors suggested that characteristics related to overall volunteer contributions and primary contributions in particular were the most significant factors explaining variation in the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer. In particular, increases in time devoted to volunteering over the past couple of years and hours devoted to volunteering monthly were the most significant factors predicting the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer. In the analyses exploring influences on the duty aspect of obligation, hours devoted to volunteering monthly was again significant, along with age. In

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this case, increased age predicted decreased feelings of duty to volunteer. However, the relationship between obligation and hours devoted to primary volunteering monthly was, in both cases, a positive one, with increased hours of volunteering associated with increased feelings of both commitment and duty to volunteering.

The inverse relationship between age and duty was not evident in correlation analyses and was only revealed in hierarchical regression analyses after the volunteer characteristics of (1) change in time devoted to volunteering over the past couple of years, and (2) number of volunteer commitments were taken into account. The relationship remained after primary volunteer characteristics were taken into account, despite evidence of the strong influence of hours devoted to primary volunteering monthly on feelings of duty. Why would feelings of duty tend to decrease with age? There are several possible explanations worth exploring. First, this research did not exclude "volunteers" participating in mandated community service from participating in the study. Because of the requirement in Ontario that students complete 40 hours of community service prior to high school graduation (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999), it is likely that some of the younger respondents may in fact have been required to volunteer to fulfill this educational requirement. (Note that only 12 respondents, 4.14% of the study population, were under the age of 18.) Further, citizens more generally are sometimes required to complete court-ordered community service. Research suggests that mandated volunteers may have very different experiences and outcomes associated with their volunteering compared with people engaged in non-mandated volunteering (Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 1999; Warburton & Smith, 2003). Warburton and Smith studied Australian adults and high school students mandated to perform community service through governmental mutual obligation or active citizenship policies. Their work suggests that mandated community service may be less fulfilling because participants do not feel they experience personal or social benefits from their involvement. The inclusion of mandated volunteers within the study sample could thus be considered a limitation of this research. However, for most volunteer organizations it is cumbersome to distinguish mandated volunteers from other volunteers, and thus removing them from the sample frame would have proven difficult. Further, mandated volunteers typically comprise a small proportion of an organization's volunteer base.

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An alternative explanation for the inverse relationship between age and duty may lie in age-related differences in the pressure felt by individuals to use their leisure time for self-investment. Maguire (2008) wrote of "the obligation of self-work" in leisure, and while her research did not provide insight in terms of how use of leisure for self-investment might vary with age, other research (Bussell & Forbes, 2002; Handy et al., 2010) has noted that younger volunteers tend to volunteer for instrumental reasons such as to gain job experience or attain scholarships. (In contrast, older adults' volunteering is often linked to altruism or socialization (c.f., Misener, Doherty, & Hamm-Kerwin, 2010; Stergios & Carruthers, 2002/2003). Younger volunteers' instrumental reasons for volunteering may be classified as "leisure-job" activities according to Neulinger's (1976) Paradigm of Leisure and would align closely with the conceptualization of the duty aspect of obligation that underlies this research. Thus, the tendency for volunteers' feelings of duty to decrease with age may be attributable to their reasons for volunteering and the instrumental rewards that younger volunteers seek, as compared with the more intrinsic motivations of older volunteers.

Recall that the average number of hours devoted to primary and overall volunteering monthly reported by participants in Phase II of this research were much less than the 800 hours annually (66 hours monthly) associated with erosion of the psychological benefits of volunteering in a study by Windsor et al. (2008). In other words, most of the respondents involved in this research volunteered at moderate levels that, based on Windsor, Anstey, and Rodgers' research, we would not expect to be associated with impairments of psychological well-being due to burden associated with volunteering. However, the current research, in its finding that hours devoted to volunteering at a primary organization was associated with increased duty, suggests that the burden associated with volunteering may be felt by volunteers with time commitments much less than those studied by Windsor, Anstey, and Rodgers. Whether or not these feelings of burden impair the psychological benefits of volunteering was beyond the scope of the current study, although there was evidence of its negative influence on individuals' sense of community. While in this research sense of community has mainly been discussed in terms of its implications for community health (i.e., Chavis et al., 1986; McMillan & Chavis, 1986), it has also been linked to individual health and well-being (i.e., Davidson & Cotter, 1991).

The number of hours devoted to volunteering at the primary organization emerged in these analyses as a key factor linking the commitment and duty aspects of obligation. At the same time, correlation analyses suggested that commitment and duty were inversely related, such that volunteers who felt more commitment also felt less duty, and vice versa. How might we reconcile the inverse relationship between commitment and duty with the strong positive association that both aspects of obligation have with hours devoted to primary volunteering? This is a question I continue to ponder, and plan to explore as an aspect of my ongoing research program.

Each of the five research questions explored in this study provides insight relevant to the overall purpose of this study, which was to examine volunteering within the context of communitarianism. With insight gleaned from these research questions, I now return to the purpose of this study, and reflect on how these analyses have furthered understanding of feelings of obligation to volunteer in the context of communitarianism.

Obligation in the Context of Communitarianism: Returning to the Purpose

While each of the research questions explored aspects of the broader purpose of this study, particularly useful were the analyses that considered the relative influences of value orientations, serious leisure, commitment and duty to volunteering, and sense of community and social cohesion. Communitarianism was described in the literature review as a political and social philosophy that balances individual interests with concern for the common good, balancing personal rights and community obligations, and suggesting that active participation is an essential element of community (Avineri & De-Shalit, 1992; Bell, 1993; Gardner, 1995; Sandel, 1998). In this context, the personal value orientations of individualism and collectivism, and the concepts of sense of community and social cohesion, each describing the relationship between community members and the community, were deemed relevant to exploring the role of feelings of obligation to volunteer. Serious leisure was included in the analyses as a way of understanding the experience of volunteering as an activity and process with both individual and community implications.

The analyses provided support for the utility of the conceptualizations of commitment and duty to volunteer in understanding the link between volunteering, sense of community, and social cohesion. Volunteering is often celebrated (c.f., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hall et al.,

2001, 2004; Hemingway, 1996; Putnam, 2000; Rojek, 2002; Van Til, 1988) as activity that nurtures community by bringing people together in pursuit of common goals, celebration and relationship-building. At the same time, volunteering may have particular potential to be personally fulfilling when it aligns with serious leisure and its qualities, including challenge, skills acquisition, career pursuit and identity (Gallant, Smale, & Arai, 2010). However, volunteering has sometimes been characterized in the literature as constraining, burdensome, and related to fulfilling expectations of self or others (c.f., Cuskelly & Harrington, 1997/1998; Misener et al., 2010). The current research contributes to the discussion about the relationship between volunteering as serious leisure and the community implications of volunteering by drawing attention to the role of feelings of obligation to volunteer in nurturing community. In particular, sense of community and social cohesion are closely related to feelings of commitment to volunteering. Commitment, conceptualized as reward, affective attachment, flexibility, and side bets, is in turn related to hours volunteered monthly. Thus, commitment grows with increased time per month devoted to a particular volunteer organization (but not with years of primary volunteer involvement). Volunteering characterized by feelings of duty, while less commonly reported in this research, nevertheless has significant implications for community. In particular, volunteering characterized by duty, particularly its constraint and burden aspects, does not have the same community-building effects as commitment-based volunteering, and in fact may dampen volunteers' sense of community. This finding suggests it is not simply the act of volunteering that builds community; rather, the nature and process of volunteering as *experience* and the feelings it evokes for volunteers comes to the forefront.

It is also notable that volunteering as serious leisure was not linked to duty or in some cases its subdimensions were negatively associated with aspects of duty. Thus, aligning volunteer experiences with serious leisure may provide an avenue for volunteers to experience not only the benefits that characterize the reward and side bets aspects of obligation as commitment, but also the challenge and progress aspects of volunteering as serious leisure without these aspects being experienced as overly burdensome and constraining. This finding aligns well with my previous research (Gallant et al., 2010) suggesting that the rewards associated with serious leisure may counter the obligatory nature of community service experiences.

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Commitment and Duty: The Relationship

The relationships between commitment and duty and their subdimensions described in Chapter 5 echo those evident in the data obtained with a student population discussed in Chapter 4. While there is evidence of an overall inverse relationship between the commitment and duty facets of obligation, associations between their constituent subdimensions suggest the relationship is complex. More specifically, the expectation subdimension of duty is related to the reward, affective attachment, and side bets dimensions of commitment. In Chapter 4, these three subdimensions of commitment were characterized as distinct from the flexibility subdimension of commitment because the former focus on the experiences and outcomes associated with volunteering while the latter focuses on the conditions related to volunteering. The latter three dimensions of commitment were also described as similar in that all three could be conceptualized as rewards related to volunteering. Perhaps the expectation dimension of duty should be considered a dimension of commitment, because fulfilling expectations of oneself is experienced as rewarding and thus is closely affiliated with experiencing rewards associated with volunteering. The expectation dimension of duty and its relationship to both the commitment and duty aspects of obligation is an area deserving of continuing study.

While the commitment and duty aspects of obligation are in some ways dichotomous, the complexity of the relationship between commitment and duty is evident in the relationships between the expectation dimension of duty and the other duty and commitment dimensions, as well as in the tendency for both commitment and duty to increase with hours volunteered monthly with a primary organization. In other words, time devoted to volunteer activity nurtures commitment while at the same time increasing the likelihood that volunteering will be experienced as burdensome and constraining. The commitment and duty aspects of obligation are thus intertwined. At the same time, the close link between serious leisure and commitment suggests that serious leisure may provide an avenue for developing the commitment aspects of volunteer experiences. This assertion finds support in Arai's (1997) work with volunteers, which suggested that involving volunteers in visioning and decision-making was essential to volunteers' experiences of benefits and their engagement as career volunteers.

Revisiting the Conceptual Framework

In Chapter 3, the conceptual framework for this research was presented, illustrating my understanding of the concepts of interest and their relationships to one another. Here, I revisit this framework and offer a critique based on the findings of this research. In the conceptual framework presented in Figure 2, feelings of obligation (commitment and duty) and value orientations (individualism and collectivism) were illustrated as oppositional. While representations of these dualities as dichotomous was identified as a simplification of more complex relationships, at the time I considered the use of continua a useful way of representing the distinct, but interrelated, nature of these concepts. While there is some evidence of a dichotomous relationship between commitment and duty, overall the use of a single continuum to represent these two aspects of obligation has proved problematic, as has the use of a continuum bounded by individualism and collectivism. (The non-duality of individualism and collectivism has been discussed by Schwartz [1990] and Triandis [1994]). Feelings of obligation (commitment and duty) and value orientations (individualism and collectivism) may better be represented as pairs of parallel lines. These pairs of lines suggest both the distinct nature of each concept (as each is represented by a distinct line) as well as the complementary nature of each pair of concepts. Further, the close alignment between the commitment dimension of obligation and volunteering as serious leisure found in this research suggests these concepts should be almost juxtaposed when representing their relationship graphically. In addition, this research suggested that the value orientations of collectivism and individualism both align with experiences of serious leisure. Finally, sense of community and social cohesion were closely related to commitment and serious leisure, as suggested in the revised conceptual framework presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. A Revised Communitarian Framework for Exploring Volunteering.
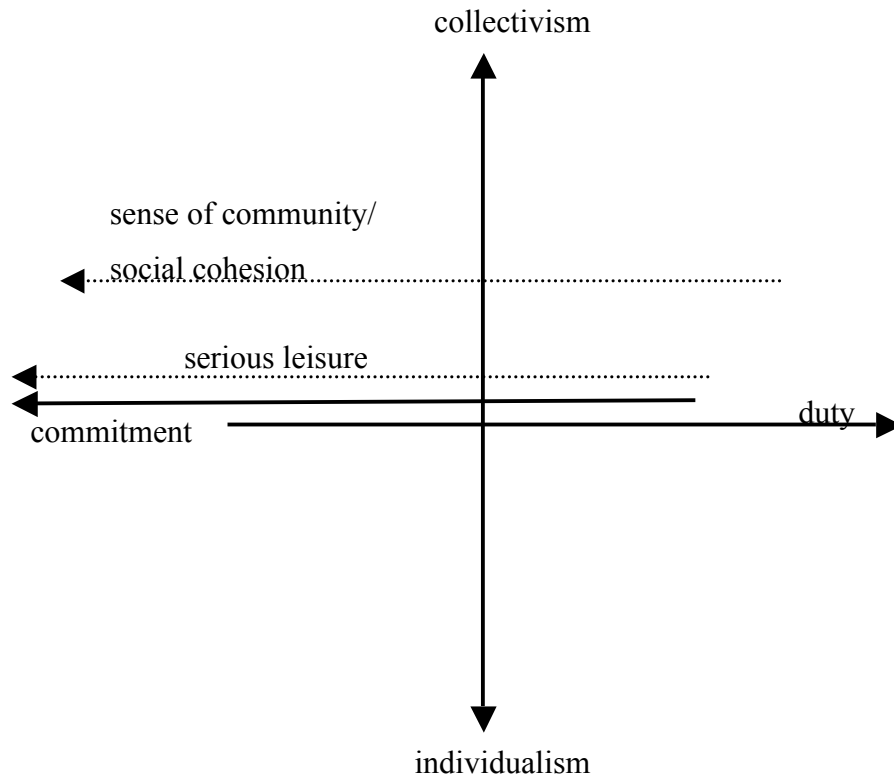
While the revised conceptual framework presented in Figure 3 captures aspects of the relationships between key concepts, there are challenges in being able to fully represent the research findings in a two-dimensional, static diagram. Consequently, this framework fails to capture the complexity of the relationships between key concepts, and within these complexities are some key insights. For example, relationships between serious leisure and individualism, as well as serious leisure and sense of community or social cohesion, are not adequately represented here. Similarly, the notion of *experience*, which is critical to understanding the link between volunteering and community, is not presented here. However, comparing the revised conceptual framework presented in Figure 3 with the initial conceptual framework presented in Figure 2 suggests how this research has influenced my understanding of the relationships between key concepts.

Summary

These reflections on the research findings suggest that the research questions have been largely addressed, but some new and provocative insights have emerged from the study that suggest new ways of thinking about feelings of obligation, volunteering, and community.

Perhaps the most significant findings of this research are those that link the commitment aspect of feelings of obligation to volunteer to the community-based characteristics of sense of community and social cohesion, as well as the complementary findings suggesting a negative relationship between the duty dimension of obligation and the community indicators of sense of community and social cohesion. Taken together, these findings suggest that volunteering has the potential to both nurture and disrupt community.

Another key finding of this research concerns the relationship between the value orientations of collectivism and individualism and feelings of obligation to volunteer. While value orientations are known to be heavily influenced by culture (Hui, 1988; Oyserman et al., 2002; Miller, 1994; Triandis, 1995), and while the increasingly individualistic nature of contemporary Western culture has been deplored in prominent works that have garnered both scholarly and popular acclaim (c.f., Bellah et al., 1996; Putnam, 2000), the current study linked both individualism and collectivism to the commitment aspect of obligation to volunteer. The duty aspect of obligation, on the other hand, was not related to either value orientation. Further, both value orientations, but particularly individualism, were closely connected to the experience of volunteering as serious leisure, which was in turn very closely aligned with the commitment aspect of obligation as well as sense of community and social cohesion. Serious leisure thus emerges as a possible pathway for nurturing sense of community in an individualistic culture. Further, serious leisure may provide an avenue for volunteers to address the challenging and frustrating aspects of volunteering without these aspects being experienced as overly burdensome or constraining.

Variables describing volunteers' feelings of obligation and the alignment of their volunteering with serious leisure were powerful predictors of their perceptions of sense of community and social cohesion, as compared with variables describing volunteers' activities such as the length of their volunteer involvement. Thus, conceptualizing volunteering as *experience* rather than activity is important in understanding the link between volunteering and community building.

CHAPTER 7 – VOLUNTEERING: THE PROMINENCE OF EXPERIENCE

This research firmly links volunteers' feelings of community strength (sense of community and social cohesion) with their feelings about their volunteering. In doing so, this research draws attention to the importance of the *experience,* rather than the *act*, of volunteering for community-building. While spanning and indeed linking the spheres of individual and community, positioning volunteering as an *experience* rather than simply an *act* draws attention to both the quality or nature of that experience as well as to how that experience is facilitated. The focus is thus on volunteering as a process rather than an outcome, and, likewise, sense of community and social cohesion come to be understood not as outcomes of volunteering, but rather as facets of the experience and process of volunteering. This conceptualization in turn creates space for sense of community and social cohesion to be understood as dynamic and constructed through the interactions between people and their communities.

This research suggests volunteering is not an unqualified contributor to community, but rather there is opportunity within the experience of volunteering as serious leisure to nurture feelings of community. In particular, the commitment aspect of feelings of obligation to volunteer was linked to sense of community and social cohesion. Thus, when feelings of obligation to volunteer are characterized by the experience of rewards, affective attachment to a cause, organization, or people, the presence of side bets, and/or flexibility in how obligations are met, volunteering has positive implications for the development of sense of community and social cohesion. At the same time, volunteering characterized by feelings of duty, particularly a sense of burden and constraint, may not have the same community benefits and may actually serve to dampen volunteers' sense of community. Therefore, volunteering emerges an activity with *potential* to strengthen community under certain circumstances.

These findings resonate with other scholars' qualitative work exploring the links between individualism and collectivism, volunteering, serious leisure, and community (Arai, 2000; Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Reid & van Dreunen, 1996). In addition, Arai and Pedlar (2003) explore civic engagement, including volunteering, as a context for community. They position communitarian conceptualizations of leisure, such as the conceptualization of volunteering on

which the current research is based, as having enormous potential for furthering civic engagement. The development of community was a key theme in Arai and Pedlar's (1997) study of volunteers participating in a healthy communities initiative. In this research, volunteering was associated with the benefits that characterize serious leisure as well as with camaraderie, a sense of connection to the community, and shared emotional connection. These themes align closely with sense of community. Similarly, Reid and van Dreunen's (1996) action research with volunteers involved in community revitalization projects suggests that leisure can be a mechanism for social transformation. They describe leisure as a venue for resolving conflict and building relationships, although not typically the focus of community development efforts. Further, they suggest that the same physical spaces and community structures facilitate both leisure and community capacity building, and indeed that activities often serve both of these functions. Finally, Arai's (2000) study of volunteers with social planning organizations found, like this research, that the quality of experience was critical both the rewarding nature of volunteer involvement and its contributions to the community. The current research applies a broader lens to these same issues through its quantitative exploration of these concepts, linking the themes from these research projects to create an overarching framework through which the relationship between leisure (particularly volunteering) and community can be understood.

Volunteer Experiences in the Sociopolitical Sphere

This study has positioned volunteering as an experience that spans the realms of individual and community, is imbued with feelings of obligation, and has implications for individual volunteers and the communities to which they belong. Based on both the exploration of volunteers' feelings of obligation as commitment and duty, and examination of the relationships between feelings of obligation to volunteer and the community-based characteristics of sense of community and social cohesion, this research reinforces the link between individual volunteer experiences and the communities through which they occur.

The finding that volunteering, when imbued with feelings of duty, is associated with dampened sense of community, is particularly significant given the enthusiasm with which volunteerism is encouraged as a means of building community (Hall et al., 2001, 2006, 2009; Volunteer Canada, n.d.). Further, this finding can be contextualized by considering the current

Canadian social and political context. The Canadian government's dismantling of the welfare state and the consequent increase in services provided by non-profit organizations, sometimes contracted by government in an effort to find a cheap or no-cost alternative to adequate public service provision (Arai, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Hall & Reed, 1998; Murphy, 1999). Government leaders suggest that increased use of non-profit organizations in service delivery (often fuelled by volunteers) is positive because it offers opportunities for increased citizen participation (Browne, 1996). Underlying these sentiments is the awareness that volunteer involvement an essential component in the cost-effectiveness of service delivery by non-profit organizations and is part of what makes the non-profit sector an attractive alternative to government service provision (Brown & Trout, 2004; Hall & Reed, 1998). Volunteerism in the context of service provision to a community with increasing needs and few resources aligns with the burden and constraint aspects of obligation in this research, which in turn were linked with dampened sense of community and social cohesion.

While government reports on volunteers celebrate the benefits of volunteering (c.f., Hall et al., 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009), policy efforts seem to focus on increasing volunteer hours rather than facilitating volunteer experiences that are rewarding, affect-laden and flexible and not burdensome nor constraining. For example, the policy requiring high school students to complete 40 hours of community service could be considered one example of a focus on volunteer activity rather than experience (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999). Embracing the perspective that community building is linked with certain qualities of volunteer experiences might lead to increased support for the core needs of volunteer associations, so that they might develop dynamic, engaging and supportive volunteer programs. Indeed, there are many organizations that have done so already. However, consider that 45% of voluntary organizations in Canada have no paid staff (Hall et al., 2004), and further that government grants typically fund specific programs of non-profit organizations rather than core operating costs, such as those associated with supporting a volunteer program (Scott, 2003). There are clearly inadequate human resources devoted to ensuring that volunteers have positive experiences. The voluntary sector must be provided with adequate resources to support and nurture volunteers so that their volunteering involvement may be characterized by the reward, attachment, flexibility and side bets that were shown in this research to stimulate sense of community and social cohesion.

Focusing a Reflexive Lens on this Research

This research was inspired by my own feelings and experiences of volunteering, and was influenced by my ideas and perceptions of volunteering and their relationships with community. I conceptualize volunteering as intrinsically linked to community, as it was through volunteering that I came to know my own community as well as *feel* myself embedded within it – a feeling that I would now label as sense of community. Even before beginning this research, I was sceptical of the idea that volunteering is inherently good for communities. Some of my role models have been extremely dedicated to community causes, to an extent that I would consider detrimental to their own well-being. The role of community members in pursuing their own needs and goals as well as those of the collective thus represents a struggle or balance that has long been of interest to me. Like Triandis (1995), I consider communitarianism, which sees an ideal social order in which individual interests are balanced with concern for the common good, is not necessarily an achievable one.

My feelings and experiences about volunteering and this research have been pondered in written form in a personal journal where I like to document and reflect on my life's happenings. About two years ago, when my journal became dominated by thoughts about my dissertation research, I began a new journal focused exclusively on my research experiences (out of consideration for my baby daughter who might want one day to read about her first years without having to skim for bits of information among the musings about my research). I gradually realized that this ongoing written reflection on my research was akin in some ways to the reflexivity that many qualitative researchers bring to their work (Dupuis, 1999). In particular, Dupuis writes of note taking throughout the research process as introspection, facilitating reflection on the research process and data, as well as a researcher's personal experience of and response to that process. Although my research approach was post-positive, deductive and quantitative, and although I remained distanced from my research participants, I found that journaling allowed me to cast a critical eye to both the research process and data analyses. I found my (somewhat limited form of) reflexivity to be both meaningful and insightful in this quantitative research endeavour. For example, my reflections on the meaning of obligation and its conceptual definition in the context of volunteering and leisure inspired some of the scale items for the OVC and OVD measures.

Further, through a reflexive process I have become conscious of my own decisions related to the research process, how tentatively some of these decisions were made, and their possible implications for the research process and findings. These admissions are at odds with the objective reality that is the exclusive habitat of post-positivists (Crotty, 1998). This research is, of course, influenced by my decisions and experiences and represents only one way of understanding obligation in the context of volunteerism and community. Throughout this dissertation, I have acknowledged myself as the researcher rather than an objective "other" by using the first person perspective at times in my writing.

Reflection on the research process provided insights that will influence the way I conduct research in the future. For example, fatigue of students involved in the lengthy survey used in the first phase of my research to test and refine the obligation scales was evident in their mannerisms as they completed the survey as well as in the number of respondents who began but did not complete the survey. In the future, I could create several different versions of the survey, each with the possible scale items listed in a different yet random order. Similarly, I sensed at times that the volunteers themselves were uncomfortable with the quantitative nature of this research. For example, one respondent returned the survey with a short note wishing me luck on my research, saying she began to complete the survey "but found it rather mundane." This was also evident in the response rate for this survey, which, at 30%, was what might have been expected for an unsolicited survey. This response rate was somewhat disappointing given the buy-in from volunteer organizations and their enthusiastic efforts to encourage their volunteers to participate. Complementing this discomfort with survey methods was respondents' obvious enthusiasm for their volunteering and their desire to share that experience using their own words. At one organization where I volunteered for several hours and then introduced my research during a refreshment break, volunteers were eager to hear about my research and interests related to volunteerism and to share anecdotes about their volunteering, but were visibly discouraged by both the length and structure imposed by the survey itself. The survey used in the second phase of this research invited respondents to provide qualitative comments at the end of the survey. These comments provided me with context for understanding survey responses and a thorough analysis of these comments will occur at a later phase of research to provide another layer of understanding of the relationship between volunteering, obligation, and community. The sheer number of these

comments suggests respondents' desire to share their personal experiences and values related to volunteering, something which cannot be captured in the scaled questions posed in the survey.

Theoretical Contributions and Implications

Quantitative analyses of the types of questions posed in this research apply a broad lens to the study of volunteering and its relationship to other concepts within the context of community. The broad perspective I was able to adopt in this research through use of quantitative methods allowed me to draw upon and build on qualitative research exploring the link between volunteerism, serious leisure, community and individualism/collectivism (c.f., Arai, 2000; Arai & Pedlar, 1997, 2003; Reid & van Dreunen, 1996). My work finds support, within a macro context, for the themes emerging from these studies, drawing these themes together in a broader discussion of the relationship between volunteering and community. Further, my research draws attention to the importance of qualitative research exploring the nature of volunteer experiences and their connections to community building.

This research extends existing work in this area (i.e. Holmes, 2006; Juniu et al., 1996; Maguire, 2008; Stebbins, 2000) by providing a conceptualization of feelings of obligation in a leisure context. One of the key contributions of this research is the creation of the OVC and OVD scales measuring the commitment and duty dimensions of feelings of obligation in a leisure context. While this research has validated the scale for use in studying volunteering as leisure, the scales are potentially applicable to other leisure contexts where feelings of obligation may be relevant, such as in other serious leisure contexts, caregiving, family or work-oriented leisure, or in the context of leisure as self-work (Maguire, 2008).

While volunteering is often studied in the context of individual motivations and benefits, the communitarian conceptual framework that guided this research facilitated exploration of the links between volunteering as an individual activity and a community process. Building on discussion about the importance of community (i.e., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Borgmann, 1992; Putnam, 2000), this research explored the implications of volunteering in terms of its relationship to community, expanding our collective understanding of the link between the leisure of individuals and its connection to social and community processes. Further, this research extends serious leisure theory beyond its current

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focus on individual experience and explores its implications for the social sphere. Despite its somewhat narrow conceptual focus on individual activity and experience, serious leisure emerged in this research as a concept with enormous potential for community, particularly in individualistic cultures. In addition, the commitment (OVC) scale developed in this research can be understood as a measure of the agreeable obligation that accompanies serious leisure pursuits. This new measure complements the existing measure of serious leisure (Gould et al., 2008) through its focus on one aspect of serious leisure—obligation—which is both theoretically and empirically linked to the qualities of serious leisure. Further this research has suggested both theoretical and empirical relationships between serious leisure, personal value orientations, and measures of community strength, providing a foundation for further study of serious leisure in the social sphere.

Suggestions for Future Research

Suggestions for future research were noted implicitly within Chapters 4, 5 and 6, but deserve explicit mention as well. First, the process of developing two scales measuring aspects of obligation to volunteer suggested that further exploration of the relationship between duty and commitment, and particularly the expectation aspect of obligation, is needed. Further research might explore the questions: *Why and how do volunteers feel expectation as a form of commitment? Why and how do volunteers feel expectation as a form of duty?* There is growing evidence that expectation is experienced as an aspect of commitment rather than the duty dimension of feelings of obligation to volunteer. Further, the duty dimension of obligation deserves further attention given its inverse relationship with sense of community and thus its potential to negatively impact community health. Longitudinal studies would provide insight into the nature of the relationship between the duty aspect of obligation to volunteer and sense of community, while qualitative studies could be helpful in further understanding duty as an aspect of obligation felt and experienced by volunteers. Finally, future work could focus on adapting the commitment and duty scales for application in other leisure and serious leisure contexts, such as in the activities of serious leisure hobbyists or amateurs, or in the context of caregiving or family leisure.

Current research suggests it is the nature or quality of volunteer experience, rather than simply time devoted to volunteering, that is significant in understanding the link between

feelings of obligation to volunteer and measures of community strength (sense of community and social cohesion). While variables such as hours spent volunteering monthly were insightful in this research, the research findings suggest that conceptualizing volunteering as a process of experience would provide deeper understanding of the nature of feelings of obligation. Qualitative research may best be able to explore volunteers' experiences and the nature of these experiences in the context of feelings of obligation.

I have suggested that the OVC scale, as a measure of the commitment aspect of feelings of obligation to volunteer, can also be considered a measure of the agreeable obligation associated with serious leisure. Further research should test this assertion, particularly whether the commitment measure resonates with serious leisure amateurs and hobbyists.

This research has drawn attention to the need to contextualize serious leisure by incorporating into its conceptualization its significance as a community-based and community-building experience and process. The collective aspects of serious leisure warrant further thought and research.

Final Thoughts

This research draws attention to volunteering as a complex experience that links the spheres of individual and community. Within this context, obligation is understood as a feeling that can have positive implications for community building. I assert that through volunteering there is potential to enhance social cohesion and particularly sense of community, and that this potential is rooted in the committed nature of volunteer experiences as characterized by reward, affective attachment, side bets, and flexibility. At the same time, volunteer experiences may diminish sense of community when characterized by feelings of burden and constraint. The quality of the volunteer experience and the context in which it occurs thus come to the forefront. Volunteer experiences characterized by feelings of commitment are similar in significant ways to serious leisure experiences, and thus serious leisure emerges as a theory with relevance for the social sphere.

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Appendix A: Scholarly Review of Potential Scale Items

Review of initial statements comprising the obligation scale

As you know, one of the goals of my research is to develop a scale that measures feelings of obligation to volunteer. Obligation is conceptualized as a feeling of commitment or duty. Obligation as commitment stems from attachment to a rewarding activity characteristic of serious leisure, and is characterized by **affective attachment, flexibility, reward**, and the existence of **side bets** that make continued participation attractive. In contrast, duty is a feeling characterized by **burden** and **constraint** and rooted in feelings of need to fulfill the **expectations** of self or others. Definitions of the sub-dimensions of commitment and duty are provided on the following pages.

I have generated statements for the four dimensions of commitment (affective attachment, flexibility, reward, side bets) and three dimensions of duty (burden, constraint, expectations), and Sue and Bryan have done some preliminary review of the items. I am asking you to evaluate the statements with respect to:

1. Content validity – Is the statement relevant and representative of the underlying dimension of obligation and appropriate in the context of volunteerism?

2. Clarity – Is the statement clear? Does it require rewording?

As you are reviewing the items, keep in mind that:
- The scale will employ a 7-point Likert scale with endpoints of 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree'
- It is my intention that this scale be easily adaptable to other leisure contexts (i.e., family leisure, caregiving)

Using the "track changes" feature in Word, or writing on a hard copy if you prefer, simply cross out those statements that you feel should be discarded (and say why, if possible), suggest modifications that you think would improve the wording/clarity of the statements, provide notes or comments as relevant, or add any new statements that you feel would better capture elements of obligation as defined in this research.

Thanks so much for your help!

Commitment: Reward

A volunteer activity is rewarding when there are benefits related to participation. Rewards are most often intrinsic, intangible benefits related to personal fulfillment or group membership (Stebbins, 2007).

Potential item
1. I get a lot out of volunteering.
2. My volunteer activities are rewarding.
3. I enjoy volunteering.
4. Volunteering is a rewarding activity for me.
5. Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me.
6. Volunteering is an enriching experience for me.
7. Volunteering has helped me to reach my potential.
8. When I volunteer I experience many benefits.
9. Volunteering is its own reward for me.
10. Many of my volunteer activities are not rewarding for me. (reverse-scored)
11. Volunteering is satisfying for me.
12. I feel satisfied with the things I accomplish as a volunteer.
13. Volunteering gives me the opportunity to express who I am.
14. Volunteering is an expression of who I am.
15. Because of my volunteering, I feel as though I belong in this community.
16. Volunteering has helped me to connect with my community.
17. Volunteering has helped me to connect with people in my community.
18. Volunteering has helped me to expand my social network.
19. I value the social interactions I have when I volunteer.
20. Volunteering helps me to feel like part of a community.
21. When I volunteer I enjoy being part of a group.
22. Volunteering helps me feel like part of my town/city.

Commitment: Affective attachment

Affective attachment is the positive emotional ties people have to other individuals, to activities, to organizations, and/or to goals related to their volunteer role(s).

Potential item
1. I am passionate about my volunteering.
2. I am emotionally connected to my volunteer role.
3. I have positive memories of my volunteer involvement.
4. I feel a sense of loyalty the people I volunteer with.
5. I think of those I volunteer with as friends.
6. I feel a sense of fellowship with other volunteers.
7. I feel a close bond to the people in the organization where I volunteer.
8. I feel a strong connection to the other volunteers in this organization.
9. I feel a close bond to the people I volunteer with.
10. I feel a close bond to the people who benefit from my volunteer activities.
11. I feel passionate about my volunteer activities.
12. I am very attached to my volunteer activities.
13. I feel connected to my role as a volunteer.
14. I feel a sense of loyalty to the organization where I volunteer.
15. I feel a close connection to the organization where I volunteer.
16. I feel a strong sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer.
17. I am very attached to the organization where I volunteer.
18. I am passionate about the cause for which I volunteer.
19. I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer.
20. My volunteer work means a lot to me.
21. Volunteering is about doing something *for a cause that is* important to me.

Commitment: Flexibility

Flexibility suggests that individuals have some choice about how their volunteer responsibilities are fulfilled. Stebbins writes of flexible obligation as "relative freedom to honour commitments" (2000, p. 28).

Potential item
1. When I'm volunteering, I can do things my own way.
2. I have some freedom in terms of how I carry out my volunteer activities.
3. There is some flexibility in my role as a volunteer.
4. I have the flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering.
5. I have the flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering.
6. I have the flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering.
7. I have the flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering.
8. I am able to change my responsibilities as a volunteer.
9. I am able to change my volunteer activities.
10. If I wanted, I could change how I do things where I volunteer.
11. I feel restricted about how I do my volunteering. (reverse)
12. There is opportunity for spontaneity in my volunteer activities.
13. I feel trapped in my volunteer role. (reverse)
14. I feel like I could walk away from my volunteer role if I wanted to.

Commitment: Side bets

Becker (1960) introduced the term "side bets" to refer to peripheral benefits or investments that act as incentives for continuing participation in an activity. Common side bets within the context of serious leisure include building and/or maintaining relationships, social status, group membership, or investments in skills and time.

Potential item
1. In my volunteer role, there are many other benefits that keep me volunteering.
2. There are many incentives to volunteering as well as its direct rewards.
3. Volunteering is a big part of my life.
4. The personal costs of leaving my volunteer role would be significant.
5. Volunteering gives me access to other activities that are important to me.
6. My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life.
7. If I ended my volunteering, my social life would be affected.
8. I would lose the friends I have made if I stopped volunteering.
9. Discontinuing my volunteer involvement would disrupt friendships I have made.
10. I value the network of people I have established through volunteering.
11. I continue to volunteer to maintain the connections I have made.
12. Volunteering defines who I am as a person.
13. My volunteering is key to how others see me.
14. Others know me as a volunteer.
15. Volunteering is a constant in my life.
16. Volunteering is a central part in my life.
17. I would feel a deep sense of loss if my volunteering ended.
18. Ending my volunteering would leave a gap in my life.
19. I would lose too much if I stopped volunteering.
20. Other people hold my volunteer role in high esteem.
21. There is prestige associated with my volunteer role.
22. Volunteering gives me access to people who would not normally be available to me.
23. Volunteering gives me access to places that would not normally be accessible to me.
24. Others see me in a more positive light because of my volunteering.
25. I feel more accepted by others because of my volunteering.
26. I appreciate that my volunteering has provided me with new skills and training.
27. If I discontinued my volunteering now I would have nothing to show for my efforts.

Duty: Expectation

Reflecting external motivation with limited choice, expectation is the sense of *pressure* to fulfill preconceived ideas about how one should act. Expectation can come from the self or from others. Expectation can be related to new ways of behaving as well as maintaining current ways of acting. Expectations emerge from social roles, desire to maintain a certain image, and/or guilt.

Potential item
1. I would be disappointed in myself if I ended my volunteering.
2. I have a duty to volunteer.
3. Volunteering is something I feel I have to do.
4. I would be upset with myself if I didn't volunteer.
5. I volunteer because I know it's what I should do.
6. I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer.
7. The organization I volunteer with has come to depend on me.
8. The organization I volunteer with expects me to continue to volunteer.
9. I continue to volunteer because the organization has made an investment in me.
10. I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me.
11. If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down.
12. Others expect me to volunteer.
13. I feel pressure from others to volunteer.
14. Others depend on me to volunteer.
15. I would stop volunteering but others expect me to continue.
16. I feel that volunteering is an important aspect of being a good citizen.
17. I feel that volunteering is part of being a contributing member of society.
18. Volunteering comes along with being a parent.
19. People like me are expected to volunteer.
20. As a member of this community, I am expected to volunteer.
21. I volunteer to set an example for others.

Duty: Burden

Volunteering characterized by feelings of burden is demanding, emotionally difficult, distressing, or overwhelming. Burden is conceptualized as a subjective feeling of being overloaded that results from an imbalance between the demands of volunteering and resources of time, energy, and skills.

Potential item
1. There are not enough other people to help where I volunteer.
2. I wish there was someone else to help out with all my volunteer work.
3. I have too much to handle where I volunteer.
4. When I volunteer, there is too much to do.
5. I feel overwhelmed by my volunteer activities.
6. Volunteering exhausts me.
7. I feel drained by my volunteering.
8. I don't have enough resources to fulfill the demands of my volunteer role.
9. There is just too much to do where I volunteer.
10. I often feel stressed by my volunteer activities.
11. My volunteer activities are very stressful for me.
12. I often feel I don't have the capabilities to fulfill my volunteer responsibilities.
13. I feel weighed down by my volunteer responsibilities.
14. I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities.
15. If I stopped volunteering, I would feel like a weight had been lifted from my shoulders.
16. Volunteering places a large burden on me.
17. There are a lot of demands on me as a volunteer.
18. I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer.
19. I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering.
20. I often wonder if I can handle all the demands placed on me as a volunteer.
21. My volunteer activities involve too much responsibility.

Constraint

Volunteering is perceived as a constraining activity when a volunteer feels that his or her volunteer activities prevent or inhibit participation in leisure or other activities (Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991). Participation in volunteering may be thus a structural, interpersonal or intrapersonal constraint that controls or limits other forms of leisure participation or time use.

Potential item
1. Volunteering prevents me from participating in other leisure activities I would like to do.
2. I have little time left for leisure pursuits after volunteering.
3. Volunteering prevents me from doing other things.
4. Volunteering prevents me from getting involved in other things.
5. My volunteer activities are restricting.
6. I would like to pursue other interests, but I can't because of my volunteering.
7. My family and friends resent how much time I spend volunteering.
8. My volunteering responsibilities make it difficult for me to find time for my family and friends.
9. I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer.
10. I often miss out on other important events because I'm volunteering.
11. I feel my life is controlled by my volunteer activities.
12. I often resent how much time I spend volunteering.
13. I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer.
14. It's hard to accommodate other activities with my volunteer schedule.
15. I feel like I make myself volunteer?
16. I can't let myself get distracted by activities other than my volunteering.?
17. I try not to let myself get distracted by activities other than my volunteering.
18. I cannot relax when I know there is so much volunteer work to be done.
19. I make myself volunteer.

Review of possible statements for scale
measuring feelings of obligation to volunteer

One of the goals of my research is to develop a measurement tool that examines volunteers' feelings of obligation to volunteer. Obligation is understood in this research as encompassing both feelings of attachment and commitment to a rewarding activity, as well as the burdensome, constraining feelings of duty associated with fulfilling the expectations of oneself or others. The following pages contain lists of statements that could be included as part of the measurement tool. Note that there are many more statements at this stage than will be included in the final survey tool. The goal of this stage of the research is to narrow down the list of items based on which items are most relevant and clear to volunteer respondents.

For the following list of statements related to different aspects of feelings of obligation to volunteer, I would like your feedback with respect to:

1. Relevance – Does the statement resonate with you and your experiences with volunteering and/or volunteers?

2. Clarity – Is the statement clear? Does it require rewording?

Please review the statements and consider how you would respond based on your own volunteer experience and/or your work with volunteers. Simply make notes beside the statements or on the statements themselves, noting words or statements that are unclear, irrelevant or confusing. If you can, please suggest modifications that you think would improve the wording/clarity of the statements.

Thanks so much for your help!

Note:
In the survey, respondents will be asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each of the statements on a 7-point scale that looks like this:

	Strongly disagree 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1. I get a lot out of volunteering.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
2. My volunteer activities are rewarding.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
3. I enjoy volunteering.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
4. Volunteering is a rewarding activity for me.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

Instructions for respondents:
When thinking about the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements below, please think about your volunteering with a particular organization, currently or in the past. If you have volunteer experience with more than one organization, please think of your primary volunteer activity (ie., where you spend the most time, have the highest level of responsibility).

Record the name of the organization with which you do your primary volunteering:

_____

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
1. I get a lot out of volunteering.	
2. My volunteer activities are rewarding.	
3. I enjoy volunteering.	
4. Volunteering is a rewarding activity for me.	
5. Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me.	
6. Volunteering is an enriching experience for me.	
7. Volunteering has helped me to reach my potential.	
8. When I volunteer I experience many benefits.	
9. Volunteering is its own reward for me.	
10. Many of my volunteer activities are not rewarding for me.	
11. Volunteering is satisfying for me.	
12. I feel satisfied with the things I accomplish as a volunteer.	
13. Volunteering gives me the opportunity to express who I am.	
14. Volunteering is an expression of who I am.	
15. Because of my volunteering, I feel I belong in this community.	
16. Volunteering has helped me to connect with my community.	
17. Volunteering has helped me to connect with people in my community.	
18. Volunteering has helped me to expand my social network.	
19. I value the social interactions I have when I volunteer.	
20. Volunteering helps me to feel like part of a community.	
21. When I volunteer I enjoy being part of a group.	
22. Volunteering helps me feel like part of my town/city.	

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
1. I am passionate about my volunteering.	
2. I am emotionally connected to my volunteer role.	
3. I have positive memories of my volunteer involvement.	
4. I feel a sense of loyalty to the other volunteers.	
5. I think of those I volunteer with as friends.	
6. I feel a sense of fellowship with other volunteers.	
7. I feel a close bond to the people in the organization where I volunteer.	
8. I feel a strong connection to the other volunteers in this organization.	
9. I feel a close bond to people with whom I volunteer.	
10. I feel a close bond to people who benefit from my volunteer activities.	
11. I feel passionate about my volunteer activities.	
12. I am very attached to my volunteer activities.	
13. I feel connected to my role as a volunteer.	
14. I feel a sense of loyalty to the organization where I volunteer.	
15. I feel a close connection to the organization where I volunteer.	
16. I feel a strong sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer.	
17. I am very attached to the organization where I volunteer.	
18. I am passionate about the cause for which I volunteer.	
19. I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer.	
20. My volunteer work means a lot to me.	
21. Volunteering is about doing something *for a cause that is* important to me.	

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
15. When I'm volunteering, I can do things my own way.	
16. I have some freedom in terms of how I carry out my volunteer activities.	
17. There is some flexibility in my role as a volunteer.	
18. I have flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering.	
19. I have flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering.	
20. I have flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering.	
21. I have flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering.	
22. I am able to change my responsibilities as a volunteer.	
23. I am able to change my volunteer activities.	
24. If I wanted, I could change how I do things where I volunteer.	
25. I feel restricted about how I do my volunteering.	
26. There is opportunity for spontaneity in my volunteer activities.	
27. I feel trapped in my volunteer role.	
28. I feel that, if I wanted to, I could walk away from my volunteer role.	

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
28. There are many incentives to volunteering as well as its direct rewards.	
29. Volunteering is a big part of my life.	
30. The personal costs of leaving my volunteer role would be significant.	
31. Volunteering gives me access to other activities that are important to me.	
32. My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life.	
33. If I ended my volunteering, my social life would be adversely affected.	
34. I would lose friends I have made if I stopped volunteering.	
35. Discontinuing my volunteer involvement would disrupt friendships I have made.	
36. I value the network of people I have established through volunteering.	
37. I continue to volunteer to maintain the connections I have made.	
38. Volunteering shows others who I am as a person.	
39. My volunteering is key to how others see me.	
40. Others know me as a volunteer.	
41. Volunteering is a constant in my life.	
42. Volunteering is a central part in my life.	
43. I would feel a deep sense of loss if my volunteering ended.	
44. Ending my volunteering would leave a gap in my life.	
45. I would lose too much if I stopped volunteering.	
46. Other people hold my volunteer role in high esteem.	
47. There is prestige associated with my volunteer role.	
48. Volunteering gives me access to places that would not normally be accessible to me.	
49. Others see me in a more positive light because of my volunteering.	
50. I feel more accepted by others because of my volunteering.	
51. I appreciate that my volunteering has provided me with new skills and training.	

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
22. I would be disappointed in myself if I ended my volunteering.	
23. I have a duty to volunteer.	
24. Volunteering is something I feel I have to do.	
25. I would be upset with myself if I didn't volunteer.	
26. I volunteer because I know it's what I should do.	
27. I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer.	
28. The organization I volunteer with has come to depend on me.	
29. The organization I volunteer with expects me to continue to volunteer.	
30. I continue to volunteer because the organization has made an investment in me.	
31. I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me.	
32. If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down.	
33. Others expect me to volunteer.	
34. I feel pressure from others to volunteer.	
35. Others depend on me to volunteer.	
36. I would stop volunteering but others expect me to continue.	
37. I feel that volunteering is an important aspect of being a good citizen.	
38. I feel that volunteering is part of being a contributing member of society.	
39. Volunteering comes along with being a parent.	
40. People like me are expected to volunteer.	
41. As a member of this community, I am expected to volunteer.	
42. I volunteer to set an example for others.	
43. Volunteering is expected of me by my faith community.	

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
22. There are not enough other people to help where I volunteer.	
23. I wish there was someone else to help with my volunteer work.	
24. I have too much to handle where I volunteer.	
25. When I volunteer, there is too much to do.	
26. I feel overwhelmed by my volunteer activities.	
27. Volunteering exhausts me.	
28. I feel drained by my volunteering.	
29. I don't have enough resources to fulfill the demands of my volunteer role.	
30. There is just too much to do where I volunteer.	
31. I often feel stressed by my volunteer activities.	
32. My volunteer activities are very stressful for me.	
33. I often feel I don't have the capabilities to fulfill my volunteer responsibilities.	
34. I feel weighed down by my volunteer responsibilities.	
35. I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities.	
36. If I stopped volunteering, I would feel like a weight had been lifted from my shoulders.	
37. Volunteering places a large burden on me.	
38. There are a lot of demands on me as a volunteer.	
39. I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer.	
40. I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering.	
41. I often wonder if I can handle all the demands placed on me as a volunteer.	
42. My volunteer activities involve too much responsibility.	

Statement	Your notes on relevance/clarity
20. Volunteering prevents me from participating in other leisure activities I would like to do.	
21. I have little time left for leisure pursuits after volunteering.	
22. Volunteering prevents me from doing other things.	
23. Volunteering prevents me from getting involved in other things.	
24. My volunteer activities are restricting.	
25. I would like to pursue other interests, but I can't because of my volunteering.	
26. My family and friends resent the amount of time I spend volunteering.	
27. My volunteering responsibilities make it difficult for me to find time for my family and friends.	
28. I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer.	
29. I often miss out on other important events because I'm volunteering.	
30. I feel my life is controlled by my volunteer activities.	
31. I often resent how the amount of time I spend volunteering.	
32. I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer.	
33. It's hard to accommodate other activities with my volunteer schedule.	
34. I try not to let myself get distracted by activities other than my volunteering.	
35. I cannot relax when I know there is so much volunteer work to be done.	
36. I make myself volunteer.	

Thanks for your help!

Appendix C: Student Recruitment Script

Hello, my name is Karen Gallant and I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Waterloo I am currently working on my dissertation research, studying feelings about volunteering and their impact on the community.

I am here today with the permission of your instructor, Prof. <insert name> to provide you with information about a study I am conducting and to request your participation. Participation involves completing a questionnaire that would take approximately 20 minutes of your time.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, is not part of your course requirements, and has no impact on your grade in this course. If you choose to participate, you will be asked about your feelings related to obligation to volunteer. Note that you do not need to be a current volunteer in order to participate. If you are not currently a volunteer, you may respond to the survey based on previous volunteer experience, contributions made through excurricular involvement such as with a club on campus, or help provided informally to others. In addition to a series of questions related to volunteerism, the survey includes a few questions related to demographic characteristics such as gender, age and current involvement in volunteering. If you choose to participate in my study, you may stop your involvement at any time or leave any question unanswered that you do not wish to answer. You may also choose not to hand in a survey or to hand in a blank survey.

All information collected in this study will be combined with the information provided by all other participants. Your answers will remain entirely anonymous because you do not have to write your name or any identifying information on the questionnaire. Thus, your name will not appear on any report, publication, or presentation resulting from this study. All data will be kept for a period of two years in a secure place in a locked office and then confidentially destroyed.

There are no known or anticipated risks of participation in the study. I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics. However, the final decision to participate in this research is yours.

If you have any questions about participating in the study, please raise your hand and I will speak to you privately. If you require any further information, please feel free to contact me by e-mail. I have included contact information on the cover of the questionnaire.

I will now have the questionnaire made available to you. If you choose to participate in the study, you may complete the questionnaire now. Blank and completed questionnaires can be placed in the box provided in the classroom.

Thank you for your time!

University of
Waterloo

Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo

PERCEPTIONS OF VOLUNTEERING

Student Investigator:
Karen Gallant, <kagallan@uwaterloo.ca>
Faculty Supervisors:
Dr. Susan Arai, ext. 33758, <sarai@uwaterloo.ca>
Dr. Bryan Smale, ext. 35664, <smale@uwaterloo.ca>

Please note:
- Your participation is *completely voluntary,* is not part of your course requirements, and has no impact on your grade in this course.
- You may choose to decline to answer any question if you wish, and/or can stop your participation at any time.
- The answers you provide will remain *completely anonymous*. You do not have to provide identifying information on the questionnaire. The data gathered in the study will be kept confidential and securely stored for two years and then confidentially destroyed.
- There are no known or anticipated risks from your participation in the study.
- If you have any further questions about the study or wish to obtain a copy of the results, feel free to contact me, Karen.
- This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics (ORE file #15821). Any questions or concerns may be directed to Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, ORE, at 519-888-4567, ext. 36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.
- If you would like a brief summary of the study results, please email me at kagallan@uwaterloo.ca and I will send it to you when I have completed the study.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in our study!
We appreciate your input into our research!

In this study, we are developing a survey tool that examines the feelings people have towards volunteering and the impact of volunteering for the community. *Even if you are not currently a volunteer* or have not volunteered in the past, your responses will be very helpful!

Q1. Thinking about the past year, how many hours in an average month did/do you volunteer?

❑ I have not volunteered in the past year
❑ Less than one hour per month
❑ 1 to 4 hours per month
❑ 5 to 15 hours per month
❑ Over 15 hours per month

Q2. Think back to any volunteering you have done over the past five years. During your most active period of volunteering in the past five years, how often did you volunteer in a typical month?

❑ I have not volunteered in the past five years
❑ Less than one hour per month
❑ 1 to 4 hours per month
❑ 5 to 15 hours per month
❑ Over 15 hours per month

Q3. When indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements below, please think about your volunteering with *one organization*, currently or in the past. If you have volunteer experience with more than one organization, please think of your *primary volunteer activity* (e.g., where you spend the most time, have the most responsibility).

If you do not have any formal volunteer experience, please think of a time when you informally acted as a volunteer (e.g., provided leadership within a group or organization, helped a friend or neighbour).

Thinking of your primary volunteer activity…	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Volunteering helps me to reach my potential..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a bond to the people I help through volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There are many incentives to volunteering...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My volunteer activities are rewarding	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering.................................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel passionate about my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am able to change my responsibilities as a	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

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Thinking of your primary volunteer activity…	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
volunteer							
Volunteering gives me access to other opportunities that are important to me........	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a connection with the other volunteers in this organization...................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I volunteer because I know it's what I should do..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There are not enough other people to help where I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering prevents me from participating in other activities I would like to do	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My volunteer work means a lot to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I enjoy volunteering......................................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I wish there was someone else to help with my volunteer work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering prevents me from doing other things...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If I stopped volunteering, my social life would be negatively affected	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering is rewarding for me..................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel overwhelmed by my volunteering.......	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Thinking of your primary volunteer activity…	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
My volunteer activities restrict me from doing other things	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If I see an opportunity to do something differently, I have the flexibility to do it	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering is about doing something for a cause that is important to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organization I volunteer with expects me to continue to volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would lose friends I have made if I stopped volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am very attached to my volunteer activities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel drained by my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel trapped in my volunteer role	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would like to pursue other interests, but I can't because of my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I continue to volunteer because the organization has made an investment in me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There is just too much to do where I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel that, if I wanted to, I could walk away from my volunteer role	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I experience many benefits when I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My volunteer responsibilities make it difficult for me to spend time with family and friends	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Thinking of your primary volunteer activity…	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
I am very attached to the organization where I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel stressed about my volunteer activities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I value the network of people I have established through volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel satisfied with the things I accomplish as a volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I recognize that my volunteering provides me with new skills and training	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel I am unable to fulfill my volunteer responsibilities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel pressure from others to volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel weighed down by my volunteer responsibilities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering gives me the opportunity to express who I am	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel my life revolves around my volunteer activities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering demonstrates who I am as a person	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others depend on me to volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel close to the people in the organization where I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often resent the amount of time I spend volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There are a lot of demands on me as a volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others see me in a more positive light because of my volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others know me as a volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Thinking of your primary volunteer activity…	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Volunteering helps me to connect with people in my community	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen..............................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There are a lot of demands placed on me as a volunteer..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
As a member of this community, I am expected to volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering helps me to feel like part of a community	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I think of those I volunteer with as friends ...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Ending my volunteering would leave a gap in my life..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I volunteer to set an example for others........	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
It's hard to accommodate other activities with my volunteer schedule	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I enjoy being part of a group when I volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others think highly of my role as a volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I cannot relax when I know there is so much volunteer work to be done................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering gives me access to places that would not normally be accessible to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have positive memories of my volunteer involvement..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Q4. The following statements ask about your feelings about the organization through which you do your primary volunteering. Thinking about this organization, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Thinking of the organization through which you do your primary volunteering…	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me..........................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one ...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it................................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my volunteer career with this organization	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.............................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Please provide the following information about yourself:

Q5. How old are you? I am _____ years old

Q6. Gender:　　　　❑ Female　　❑ Male　　❑ Transgendered

Q7. In which *one* of the six University of Waterloo Faculties are you a student?

❑　Applied Health Sciences　　　❑　Environment

❑　Arts　　　　　　　　　　　　❑　Mathematics

❑　Engineering　　　　　　　　　❑　Science

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix E: Script Used by Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington to Introduce Survey

Hello, I am calling to let you know about a research project being conducted by Karen Gallant, a graduate student in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo. The study examines how feelings about community influence and are influenced by volunteerism. Karen is interested in volunteers' feelings of obligation to volunteer, and how these feelings influence community-wide benefits of volunteerism.

Karen is looking for local organizations to support this research by sharing the survey with their volunteers, and I thought your organization might be interested in participating. All materials will be supplied by Karen, and you would not need to share personal information about your volunteers in order to participate. What you would need to do is to address envelopes containing the survey and then forward the surveys to your volunteers by mail. Your volunteers would simply need to complete a survey and return it in an addressed, stamped envelope that will be provided to them.

Are you interested in learning more? If so, I will let Karen know and she will contact you to set up a meeting so that you can learn more about the project.

Frequently-asked questions

What is the purpose of this research?
This research focuses on community volunteering. It explores how feelings of community influence volunteerism, and how volunteerism influences feelings of community. The research will involve a sample of volunteers within the City of Guelph. This research will help us to understand the link between volunteering and community health, and the information may have important implications for the design of volunteer resources and policies.

Who is conducting this research?
Karen is conducting this research as part of her Ph.D. at the University of Waterloo. She has lived in Guelph for most of her life and has volunteered (and continues to volunteer) with several local organizations.

What does my organization need to do to participate?
Your organizations can participate in the study by sharing a survey with your volunteers and encouraging them to complete and return the survey. Surveys can be provided in postage-paid envelopes for easy mailing. All materials will be supplied by the researcher.

If we participate, does my organization need to provide names and addresses of our volunteers?
Your organization does not need to share personal information about your volunteers (names, addresses, etc.) in order to participate. You would need to forward surveys to your volunteers by mail, with all materials provided by the researcher.

What will your volunteers be asked to do?
Volunteers will be asked to complete a survey that will require about 15 minutes of their time. The survey includes questions about their volunteer activities and how they feel about their volunteering and their community, in addition to demographic questions. Participation in the study is voluntary, and respondents can stop responding to questions at any time or skip any questions they wish to leave unanswered. Surveys will be anonymous and respondents will not be asked to name the organization they volunteer with or provide any other identifying information.

In appreciation of the time volunteer respondents give to this study, they will be invited to enter a draw for one of two $50 gift certificates to the Bookshelf in Guelph.

Why should your organization participate?
This research will provide insight about local volunteers and may reveal information that will have implications for local policy and the design of volunteer programs, including recruitment, role definition, and volunteer management.

How will participants find out about the research results?
Once this study is completed in Summer 2010, a report summarizing the research findings and its implications will be sent to all organizations who participate in this project. A PDF version of this report will be available to all organizations regardless of whether have participated in this study.

How can your organization get involved?
Contact Karen Gallant, at 519-829-3835, or email kagallan@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix F: Introductory Letter for Volunteer Organizations

University of Waterloo

Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies	University of Waterloo 200 University Avenue West Waterloo, Ontario, Canada	519-888-4567 Fax: 519-886-2440 N2L 3G1

Dear name,

I am writing to provide information about a study I am conducting with volunteers in the City of Guelph, and to invite <organization> and your volunteers to be involved. This research project, which is part of my work on a PhD at the University of Waterloo, explores how community influences and is influenced by volunteerism. In particular, I am interested in volunteers' feelings of obligation to volunteer, and how these feelings influence community-wide benefits of volunteerism. I am supported in this project by my faculty supervisors, Dr. Bryan Smale and Dr. Susan Arai.

This study will be instrumental in helping us to better understand the link between volunteering and community health and well-being. In addition, this work may have important, local policy implications for the design of volunteer programs, including recruitment, role definition and volunteer management. This study is focused on volunteerism within the City of Guelph because of the city's strong reputation as a leader in volunteerism and because of my own interest and commitment to this community. (I grew up in Guelph and continue to live and volunteer here.)

Through this research, I am surveying individuals involved as volunteers in a variety of community organizations in Guelph. I hope that <organization> will support this research by sharing the survey with your volunteers and encouraging them to participate. Volunteers would simply need to complete a survey and return it in an addressed, stamped envelope that will be provided to them. (A copy of the survey is attached for your reference.) I am able to supply survey materials in a variety of formats (i.e., in large print, in envelopes that simply need an address label) depending on your needs. Please note that you do not need to share personal information about your volunteers (names, addresses, etc.) in order to participate.

If <organization> is able to participate, your volunteers' participation is completely voluntary. All research projects conducted by students and faculty at the University of Waterloo are required to undergo ethical review by the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Details about the ethical considerations of this research are outlined on the back of this letter.

Thank you for your time and for considering participation in my research study. note that you can contact me at kagallan@uwaterloo.ca or by phone (at home) at 519-829-3835.

Sincerely,

Karen Gallant

Ethical considerations and guidelines:

All research projects conducted by students and faculty at the University of Waterloo are required to undergo ethical review by the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Accordingly, I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics, University of Waterloo (file #15821). However, the final decision to participate in this research is yours. There are no known or anticipated risks of participation in the study. Questions or concerns related to ethics may be directed to Dr. Susan Sykes, Director of the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo (519-888-4567, ext. 36005, email: ssykes@uwaterloo.ca).

Volunteers responding to the survey may stop their involvement at any time or skip any questions they wish to leave unanswered. All information collected in this study will be combined with the information of other participants. Respondents' answers will be entirely anonymous because at no time will they be asked to write their name or any other identifying information on the survey. Once the study is complete, all data will be kept for a period of two years and will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet.

Appendix G: Phase II Volunteer Cover Letter

University of Waterloo

Department of	University of Waterloo	519-888-4567
Recreation and	200 University Avenue West	Fax: 519-886-2440
Leisure Studies	Waterloo, Ontario, Canada	
	N2L 3G1	

February 5, 2010

Dear volunteer,

I am writing to invite you to participate in a study with volunteers in the City of Guelph by completing the enclosed survey. I have discussed my research with [organization], and they have forwarded this survey to you on my behalf.

This research project, titled "Obligation and volunteering in a communitarian context", is part of my work on a PhD at the University of Waterloo. I am supported in this project by my faculty supervisors, Dr. Bryan Smale and Dr. Susan Arai. This research explores how community influences and is influenced by volunteerism. In particular, I am interested in volunteers' feelings of obligation to volunteer, and how these feelings influence the community-wide benefits of volunteerism. If you choose to participate, you will be asked about your feelings related to volunteering and community, in addition a few questions related to demographic characteristics such as gender, age and current involvement in volunteering.

This study will be instrumental in helping us to better understand the link between volunteering and community health and well-being. In addition, this work may have important, local policy implications for the design of volunteer programs, including recruitment, role definition and volunteer management.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and will take approximately 20 minutes. After completing the survey, you may simply return it using the enclosed addressed, stamped envelope.

All research projects conducted by students and faculty at the University of Waterloo are required to undergo ethical review by the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Details about the ethical considerations of this research are outlined on the back of this letter.

Thank you for your time and for participating in my research study. Whether or not you are able to participate, please let me know if you would like to receive a summary of my findings. I can be contacted at kagallan@uwaterloo.ca.

Sincerely,

Karen Gallant

Ethical considerations and guidelines:

All research projects conducted by students and faculty at the University of Waterloo are required to undergo ethical review by the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Accordingly, I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics, University of Waterloo (file #15821). However, the final decision to participate in this research is yours. There are no known or anticipated risks of participation in the study. Questions or concerns may be directed to Dr. Susan Sykes, Director of the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo (519-888-4567, ext. 36005 or email: ssykes@uwaterloo.ca).

When completing the survey, you may stop responding to survey questions at any time or may skip any questions you wish to leave unanswered. All information collected in this study will be combined with the information of other participants. Your answers will be entirely anonymous because at no time will you be asked to write your name or any other identifying information on the survey. Once the study is complete, all data will be kept for a period of two years and will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo.

If you have any questions about participating in the study, I can be reached at 519-829-3835 or by email at kagallan@uwaterloo.ca. You may also contact my supervisors, Dr. Bryan Smale (519-888-4567, ext. 35664, email: smale@uwaterloo.ca) and Dr. Susan Arai (519-888-4567, ext. 33758, email: sarai@uwaterloo.ca) in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo.

University of Waterloo

VOLUNTEERS' FEELINGS OF OBLIGATION AND COMMUNITY

SECTION 1: YOUR CURRENT VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

When answering the questions below, please refer to **your primary volunteer involvement at the current time**. If you currently volunteer with more than one organization, please think of the organization **where you participate the most** (i.e., where you spend the most time or have the highest level of responsibility).

1a. **How long have you been involved as a volunteer with this organization?** _____ years _____ months

1b. **In the last year, how many weeks did you volunteer with this organization?** _____ weeks

1c. **In the last year, how many hours each week did you volunteer with this organization in a typical week?**

_____ hours in a typical week

2. **To which sector does this organization belong?** *Please check the name of the one sector that best describes the work of the organization (check only **one** sector).*

❑ Arts and culture
❑ Business and professional associations
❑ Development, housing and neighbourhood groups
❑ Education and research
❑ Environment
❑ Grant-making, fundraising, and volunteerism promotion

❑ Health
❑ Hospitals
❑ Law, advocacy and politics
❑ Religion
❑ Sport and recreation
❑ Social services
❑ Other: _____

3. **What are your main roles as a volunteer at this organization?** *Please check all of those activities that **apply specifically to you**.*

❑ Canvassing
❑ Coaching, refereeing, or officiating
❑ Conservation or environmental protection
❑ Counselling or providing advice
❑ Driving
❑ First aid, fire-fighting, or search and rescue
❑ Fundraising

❑ Maintenance or repair
❑ Office work
❑ Organizing or supervising events
❑ Providing health care or support
❑ Sitting on a committee or board
❑ Teaching, educating or mentoring
❑ Other: _____

4a. I would describe my volunteer activity as (please check *one*):

    ❑ leisure

    ❑ work

    ❑ both leisure and work

    ❑ something else (what would you call it? _____
)

4b. Please explain why you feel this way about your volunteering:

_____

_____

_____

SECTION 2: YOUR CONNECTION TO OTHERS

The following statements describe feelings about how you are connected to others. How do you see your relationship to others? *For each statement, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.*

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
I discuss job or study-related problems with my family.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I consult my family before making an important decision.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Before taking a major trip, I consult with members of my family and friends.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making a decision.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
In a group situation, even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
In a group situation, I hate to disagree with others in my group.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
In interacting with superiors, I am always polite.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
In a group situation, I sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I define myself as a competitive person.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Without competition, it is not possible to have a good society.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Competition is the law of nature.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I consider myself as a unique person separate from others.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I enjoy being unique and different from others.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I see myself as "my own person."	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I take responsibility for my own actions.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
It is important for me to act as an independent person.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I consult with my superior on work-related matters.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I prefer to be self-reliant rather than depend on others.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

SECTION 3: YOUR VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

The statements below ask about the effort or emphasis you place on your primary volunteer activities. *For each statement, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.*

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
If I encounter obstacles in my volunteer activities, I persist until I overcome them.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
By persevering, I have overcome adversity while volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
I overcome difficulties in my volunteer activities by being persistent.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I try hard to become more competent in my volunteer activities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I practice to improve my skills related to my volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am willing to exert considerable effort to be more proficient at my volunteer activities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have improved at my volunteer activity since I began participating.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Since I began volunteering, I have improved.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel that I have made progress through my volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
For me, there are certain volunteer-related events that have influenced my volunteer involvement.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There are defining moments within my volunteer career that have significantly shaped my involvement in it.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
There have been certain high or low points for me in my time volunteering that have defined how involved I am in volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I share many of the sentiments of my fellow volunteer devotees.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Other volunteer enthusiasts and I share many of the same ideals.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I shared many of my volunteer group's ideals.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others who know me understand that volunteering is part of who I am.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am often recognized as one devoted to volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others recognize that I identify with volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

SECTION 4: YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT VOLUNTEERING

The statements below ask about how you feel about your primary volunteer activity. *For each*

item, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
Volunteering is rewarding for me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My volunteer work means a lot to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would be disappointed in myself if I stopped volunteering	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others depend on me to volunteer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering gives me access to other opportunities that are important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel passionate about my volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often resent the amount of time I spend volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel pressure from others to volunteer.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *how* I do my volunteering…	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *where* I do my volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *when* I do my volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have flexibility to decide *what* I do when volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a lot of pressure while volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering prevents me from doing other things.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If I didn't volunteer, I would let others down.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering is a satisfying experience for me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering prevents me from participating in other activities I would like to do.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel overwhelmed by my volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a strong connection to the cause for which I volunteer.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I volunteer to fulfill others' expectations of me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often have to say no to other things so that I can volunteer.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I enjoy volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
My volunteering benefits other aspects of my life.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I'd feel guilty if I didn't volunteer..................................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have too much responsibility placed on me as a volunteer..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel that volunteering is an important part of being a good citizen.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am very attached to my volunteer activities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My volunteer activities restrict me from doing other things..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel stressed about my volunteer activities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I experience many benefits when I volunteer..............	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel burned out from my volunteer activities. ...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a sense of belonging to the organization where I volunteer..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I recognize that my volunteering provides me with new skills and training.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering helps me to reach my potential..............	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often feel resentful when I think of what I have given up in order to volunteer...............................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel close to the people in the organization where I volunteer..	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

SECTION 5: VOLUNTEERING AND THE COMMUNITY

Volunteering has an impact on the wider community as well as the way we think about the organization where we volunteer. Thinking again about your primary volunteer involvement, how does your volunteering influence your experiences of community? *For each statement below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.*

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
Most members of my organization lose their feelings of connection to the organization when they are not volunteering.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
No one at the organization where I volunteer responds to what I think is important.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Everyone at the organization where I volunteer is pushing in different directions.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organization where I volunteer gets overlooked in Guelph.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organization where I volunteer gets very little done in Guelph.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Volunteering with this organization allows me to be part of other groups in Guelph.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Being a volunteer at this organization allows me to be around important people.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Because of the organization where I volunteer, I am connected to other groups in Guelph.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would really rather live in a different city. Guelph is just not the place for me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Guelph is a good place for me to live.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Living in Guelph gives me a sense of community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Overall, I am very attracted to living in this community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel like I belong to this community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I visit with other community members in their homes	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The friendships and associations I have with other people in this community mean a lot to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Given the opportunity, I would like to move out of this community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If the people in my community were planning something I'd think of it as something "we" were doing rather than "they" were doing.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If I needed advice about something I could go to someone in my community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Very strongly disagree ↓	Strongly disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neutral ↓	Agree ↓	Strongly agree ↓	Very strongly agree ↓
I think I agree with most people in my community about what is important in life.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I believe my community members would help me in an emergency.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel loyal to the people in my community.................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I borrow things and exchange favours with members of my community.................................	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I plan to remain a resident of this community for a number of years.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I like to think of myself as similar to the other people who live in this community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I rarely have other community members over to my house to visit.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
A feeling of fellowship runs deep between me and the other people in this community.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I regularly stop and talk with people in my community...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Living in this community gives me a sense of community...	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

SECTION 6: SOME CHARACTERISTICS ABOUT YOU

Please provide the following information about yourself.

This survey has focused on your experience volunteering with just one organization. The next few questions ask about volunteering you might have done in the previous year *with any other organizations*.

1a. Not including your *primary* volunteering activities, how many *other* organizations did you volunteer with in the past year?

_____ other organizations (if *none*, skip to question 2)

1b. In the last year, how many weeks did you volunteer with <u>*other*</u> organizations? _____ weeks

1c. In the last year, how many hours did you volunteer with _other_ organizations in a typical week?
_____ hours

The following questions ask a bit about you and your household.

2. Age: _____ years

3. Sex:
    - ❑ Female
    - ❑ Male
    - ❑ Transgendered

4. Which _one_ of the following options best describes your highest level of education?

    - ❑ Less than high school
    - ❑ Some or graduated from high school
    - ❑ Some post-secondary
    - ❑ Post-secondary diploma
    - ❑ University degree
    - ❑ Post-graduate (e.g., MA, Ph.D.)

5. What was your total household income from all sources last year?

    - ❑ Less than $20,000
    - ❑ $20,000 to $39,999
    - ❑ $40,000 to $59,999
    - ❑ $60,000 to $79,999
    - ❑ $80,000 to $99,999
    - ❑ $100,000 or more

6. Please describe the people living in your household (for example, "me, husband, son, two daughters", or "me, partner, mother, grandfather, son, aunt", or "me, daughter, friend")

Me _____

Others: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. In the past year, about how often have you attended religious services?

Once a week or more	Once a month or more	Less than once a month	Once or twice a year	Never
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

8. How important is religion in your life?

Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

9. How has the amount of time you devote to volunteering changed over the past couple years?

Increased a lot	Increased a bit	Stayed about the same	Decreased a bit	Decreased a lot
❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

10. How long have you lived in your community? _____ years _____ months

Please share any further comments about your volunteer experiences in the space below.

Thank you for participating in this survey!

Appendix I: Respondent Appreciation Draw Ballot

University of
Waterloo

RESPONDENT APPRECIATION DRAW
RESEARCH PROJECT: VOLUNTEERS' FEELINGS OF OBLIGATION AND COMMUNITY

In appreciation of your time, I invite you to enter a draw to win one of two $50 gift certificates to the Bookshelf. Please send your completed ballot with your survey in the provided envelope.

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Alternate phone number or email address: _____

Names and contact information collected to draw for the prizes will not be linked to the study data in any way, and this identifying information will be stored separately, then destroyed after the prizes have been provided.