

Employer-Supported Volunteer Activity: How Do Women Employees and Women's Organizations Fare?

By

Fiona MacPhail and Paul Bowles

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ABSTRACT

Over one quarter of all formal volunteer work in Canada is undertaken by employed individuals with some form of support from their employers. We analyze gender differences in who receives this support, in what forms and for what purpose. We find, in general, that women receive less employer support than men. We also find that women's organizations are less satisfied than other organizations with levels of employer support. We argue that these outcomes could be addressed through greater information sharing and awareness as well as by gender-sensitive monitoring by employers.

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ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
BCHRMA	British Columbia Human Resources Management Association
CRA	Canada Revenue Agency
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NSGVP	National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNBC	University of Northern British Columbia

PREFACE

Good public policy depends on good policy research. In recognition of this, Status of Women Canada instituted the Policy Research Fund in 1996. It supports gender based policy research on public policy issues in need of gender-based analysis. Our objective is to enhance public debate on gender equality issues in order to enable individuals, organizations, policy makers and policy analysts to participate more effectively in the development of equitable policy.

The focus of the research may be on long-term, emerging policy issues or short-term policy issues that require an analysis of their gender implications. Funding is awarded through an open, competitive call for proposals. A non-governmental, external committee plays a key role in identifying policy research priorities, selecting research proposals for funding and evaluating the final reports.

This policy research paper was proposed and developed under a call for proposals in September 2003, entitled *Gender Dimensions of Canada's Social Capital*. Research projects funded by Status of Women Canada on this theme examine issues such as: the power of women's social networks; the relevance of social capital to the welfare of immigrant women; employer-supported volunteer activity; and public policy and social reproduction.

A complete list of the research projects funded under this call for proposals is included at the end of this report.

We thank all the researchers for their contribution to the public policy debate.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines how women employees and women's organizations fare with respect to employer-supported voluntary activity. The report uses four data sources: the 2000 National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP) and three researcher-designed instruments: an employer survey administered to 123 employers, in-depth employer interviews with 15 of those employers and a survey of 98 women's and other voluntary organizations.

Our findings include the following.

- Women have higher volunteer rates than men.
- Employed individuals have higher volunteer rates than non-employed individuals.
- Non-employed individuals spend more hours, on average, volunteering than employed individuals.
- Among volunteers, men, on average, spend more time volunteering than women.
- Those with employer support volunteer more time, on average, than those who are employed but do not receive employer support.

We also find that time constraints are important for explaining the decision not to volunteer but are more important for women than for men. Women volunteers who receive employer support spend, on average, 10 percent more time volunteering than women who do not receive employer support; the corresponding figure for men is 4.5 percent.

Despite the fact that women appear to face more binding time constraints than men in their volunteer activities, men receive more support from employers in the form of time off and changes to work hours than women. This result holds even when part- and full-time work status is taken into account. Women, in contrast, receive more employer support for their voluntary activities than men in the form of workplace recognition.

In general, women employees receive less employer support for their voluntary activities than men. This may be due to the fact that women are less likely to ask for such support, that such support is less likely to be offered by employers to women, and that women are employed in occupations which are less likely to be amenable to employer support. Although we find large variations in employer-supported voluntary work between occupational and industrial sectors, this does not provide a plausible explanation for gender differences in employer support.

With respect to voluntary organizations, both women's and other organizations generally place a high value on the potential help that employer support can offer. However, about one half of women's and other organizations have not actively sought to obtain employer support for their volunteers. Women's organizations are more likely to report that they do not believe employers

would be interested in supporting the types of services they provide and are less likely to be satisfied with levels of employer support than other organizations.

To the extent that women employees have lower levels of employer support in general, particularly time flexibility, and are less likely to request support, then it is clear that an education campaign is needed to ensure that women are aware of the extent and forms of employer support available to them.

For employers, there does not appear to be a high degree of monitoring of their overall employer-supported volunteer effort. While the majority of human resource directors did not consider that there were any gender effects of their policies, the results from the NSGVP indicate that employer support for women is more likely to take the form of recognition for women than men and more likely to take the form of time off and a change to work hours for men than women. Employers need to be made aware of this and to examine their practices in this light. Are they, for example, as amenable to requests from women for time flexibility as they are to the same request from men? Does the nature of work processes make it easier for men to make this request than women? If so, what changes to work processes might compensate? Is there a subtle but pervasive view within the organization that women employees are more likely to be satisfied by recognition than men? That is, a gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation process should be adopted by employers with respect to their support for employee voluntary activity.

Many women's organizations, in common with other organizations, have not been proactive in approaching employers to support their volunteers. There is a clear need for women's organizations to be made aware of the extent of employer-supported voluntary activity, the forms it can take and mechanisms for them to approach employers for support. That said, it should be realized that a sizeable minority of both women's and other organizations wish to maintain an arm's length relationship with employers and would prefer to act independently of them.

The implications for women employees, employers and women's organizations all revolve around the need for information, education and awareness of policies and opportunities, and monitoring of the outcomes. Information sharing and communication between the various participants are important.

The voluntary-private sector nexus cannot, however, be analyzed in isolation from what has been happening over time — the increasing marketization of social life and the decreasing support for voluntary organizations by the state at the same time as the need for their services increases. Recommendations for increased information sharing and collaboration between employees, employers and voluntary organizations are difficult to implement in this context. Some voluntary organizations are already weary and wary of increasing corporate linkages and the privatization of social service delivery. There is no inherent reason why employer support for the voluntary activities of their employees should not be of considerable benefit to voluntary organizations. But the wider context is still important and, for this reason, it is also necessary to pressure for changes that produce more complementary and collaborative relationships among state, private and voluntary sector organizations.

1. INTRODUCTION

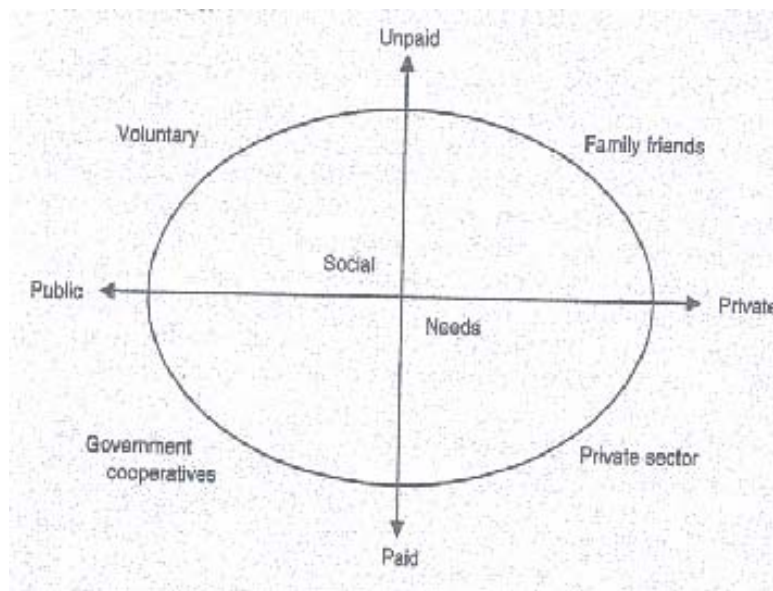
It has been estimated that one quarter of all formal voluntary activity in Canada is undertaken by employed individuals with some form of support from their employers (Luffman 2003). However, relatively little is known about who receives this support, what forms it takes and whether there are significant gender differences in its application. This report examines these issues. We also consider whether women's voluntary organizations are as satisfied as other voluntary organizations with employer support. These questions are important, because voluntary activity has the potential to enhance a society's social capital; if structures are in place that limit some voluntary activities, then that potential is not fully realized. Before examining employer-supported voluntary activity in detail, we first provide the context for the analysis by reviewing the complex relationships between voluntary activity and social capital. The research questions and methodology are outlined in chapters 3 and 4, respectively. The results are discussed in Chapter 5 followed by a conclusion.

2. THE CONTEXT: VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

It has been argued that social capital contributes to the nation's well-being through its contribution to personal satisfaction, social cohesion (Dekker and van den Broek 1998) and economic growth (Temple 2001).¹ Social capital here refers to “networks with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups.”² Networks are, in part, created and maintained through volunteering and involvement in voluntary organizations. Volunteer work reflects trust between individuals and commitment to social organizations, and it can potentially enhance social cohesion, co-operation and shared societal values, as well as providing services of direct benefit to society.

The relationships between voluntary activity and social cohesion are, however, complex. Woolley (2003) provided a useful summary of the possible relationships and suggested that the relationship between volunteerism and social cohesion may, in fact, have an inverted U shape. She argued (2003: 164) that “voluntary activity level may be low in both low-cohesion and high-cohesion societies.” (See Figure 1.) In the former would be societies “with such a paucity of common values that no voluntary activity is possible” whereas the latter would be “countries with very strong family, church, or other institutions, and possibly also those with great equality of incomes where voluntary activity is unnecessary.” In between these two extremes are countries where the degree of income inequality is sufficiently high to produce the need for assistance and where extended family structures have been eroded by “market-induced mobility” and yet “where there is a sufficiently strong social fabric that people can turn to voluntary associations and try to do something about poverty and form community networks that compensate for lack of family” (Woolley 2003: 164). Canada might best be thought of as fitting this intermediate category, one where voluntary activity has the potential to increase social cohesiveness.³

Figure 1: A Typology of Work



Source: Woolley (2003: 152).

The role of voluntary activities and voluntary organizations, has not, however, remained constant over time. In particular, Evans and Shields (2000) argued that the period 1945-70 saw the complementary expansion of state services and voluntary organizations. Since the mid-1970s, however, Canada in common with many other countries shifted to the policies associated with neoliberalism (i.e., to the policy framework associated with a reduced role for government in the economy generally and in the provision of services). This shift of emphasis on the appropriate (more limited) role for government led to an increased reliance on the voluntary sector. In these circumstances, Evans and Shields argued that increasing activity by voluntary organizations may not be an indicator of increasing social capital. Thus, neoliberal restructuring “is contributing to the deterioration of social cohesion and is hampering development of social capital” (Evans and Shields 2000: 18), a process that voluntary organizations are increasingly ill equipped to offset as a result of their “lost autonomy vis-a-vis the state” (Evans and Shields 2000: 16-17) and their own externally driven commercialization.

This discussion points to the need to contextualize the discussion of voluntary activity and ensure that national specificities are considered. This is reinforced by Woolley’s observation that voluntary activity depends on a range of institutional factors, such as religion and government capacity as well as on differing individual motivations. For example, individuals may volunteer because it is perceived that this will enhance their careers or because they have been personally affected by a particular circumstance.⁴

While a significant body of research analyzes voluntary activity and organizations, this report examines, in the Canadian context, one under-explored research area: how employers contribute to the voluntary activities of their employees. Given the dominance of paid work and the changes to work patterns associated with labour market restructuring, employers’ attitudes toward, and support for, their employees’ voluntary activities need to be examined. Employer behaviour is likely to be an important determinant of the quantity of voluntary activity performed in society and to influence the social composition of the volunteers.

The role of employers in the dynamics of the voluntary sector also needs examination, particularly as voluntary organizations seek to diversify funding sources in an era of cutbacks, at the same time as firms seek to increase their social corporate responsibility credentials (Foster and Meinhard 2002). While it may be conceptually useful to segment areas of work, as in Woolley’s diagrammatic exposition reproduced above, it is important to also study the interactions between the various segments. The state–voluntary nexus has received increasing attention⁵; the private–voluntary nexus has received less attention. This report aims to fill part of that gap.

In terms of the private–voluntary sector nexus, we do know that employers often provide support for employees’ volunteer activities in the form of time release, flexible work scheduling or other contributions (Erickson 2001). Luffman (2003) reported that employed Canadians provide more volunteer work than non-employed Canadians. Her study also indicated that about one quarter of all volunteer work in Canada receives some kind of employer support. As such, employers play a potentially important role in facilitating the building of social capital. However, the extent and types of volunteer activity that employers support may depend on the type of employer and the

specifics of the volunteer activity. Volunteer activity may be supported only if it is perceived that it will increase an individual's job-related skills or if it will enhance the employer's reputation.

From the volunteer's perspective, it appears that volunteer work can be used as a form of labour market advancement to secure employment and increase earnings when in work. This is suggested, for example, by Day and Devlin's (1998) finding that the wages of workers who volunteer are about seven percent higher on average than the wages of non-volunteering workers. If employers see volunteer work as building human capital, then employer-supported volunteer activity may best be seen as another form of "strategic philanthropy" rather than as building social capital.

Analysis of volunteer work and the relationships between the private sector and voluntary activity need to be informed by a gender perspective. The typology of work outlined in Figure 1 can be applied to individuals as well as societies. These individuals are gendered, that is, their participation in paid and unpaid work and in the private and public spheres are partly structured by social norms. As is well known, women typically perform more domestic unpaid labour than men and have different attachments to, and experiences in, the paid labour market. Given their different experiences in these two areas, and therefore in the realities of everyday life for men and women, gender differences in voluntary activity are also likely. Volunteer activity must be understood as taking place within the wider structures of social norms, which condition men and women's activities in many spheres. Analysis of volunteer activity, therefore, needs to take account of possible gender differences in the levels of, types of, motivations for and constraints upon voluntary activity.

The need for a gender perspective can be extended to the analysis of employer-supported voluntary activity. There has been little research on the topic of employer-supported voluntary activity, with Luffman (2003) an important exception. Her study indicated that employed women perform more volunteer work than employed men. However, gender differences in the levels of employer support for volunteering, gender differences in the form that employer support takes when offered and differences in the types of organizations that receive employer support, remain to be examined.

With respect to whether men and women employees receive equal amounts of employer support, it is interesting to note that Day and Devlin (1997: 707) found that "male volunteers earn, on average, about 11% higher incomes than their non-volunteering counterparts as a result of their volunteer experience, whereas comparable female volunteers and non-volunteers earn similar incomes." An interesting question arises, therefore, of whether the differential labour market returns to men and women from volunteering are paralleled by differential levels of employer support for volunteer activities by their male and female employees.

With respect to the types of organizations supported, Meinhard and Foster (1996: 5) argued that "women have special needs which often rank low in society's evaluation of what is important and their organizations are generally perceived to be less prestigious. As a result, corporations are not generous in funding women's causes." Whether employer support for voluntary activity by their employees follows this pattern remains to be investigated.

In addition, women's voluntary organizations may not view employer-supported voluntary activity in the same ways as other organizations do.⁶ Analyzing the relationships between women's organizations and the private sector is therefore important and may have implications for social capital. For example, organizations may co-operate with other organizations that share the same interests (a process known as bonding) or with organizations that have different interests (a process known as bridging). Foster and Meinhard (2005) found that women's organizations in Canada are more likely than other voluntary organizations to have bridging relationships. For Woolley (2003), it is the bridging activities that offer the greatest potential to build social capital. Building bridges between individuals and organizations with different interests and values has the greater potential to increase trust, tolerance and social cohesion.

Thus, examining the dynamics of employer-supported voluntary activity is important for understanding the broader relationships between voluntary activity and social capital, and for understanding the gender differences within those relationships. We need to investigate whether the private-voluntary work nexus treats men and women's voluntary activities equally and whether women's and other organizations are treated equally.

Our objectives in this report can therefore be summarized as:

- analyzing gender differences in volunteer work;
- assessing whether employers support equally the volunteer work of their male and female employees;
- evaluating whether women's organizations are as satisfied as other voluntary organizations, with the levels, and nature, of employer-supported volunteer activity; and
- identifying policy options that facilitate employer-supported volunteer efforts recognizing women's contributions to social capital and societal well-being.

To meet these objectives, we provide answers to four broad questions which are set out below.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This report provides an analysis of the following questions.

1. What are the gender differences in volunteer activities?
 - How do men and women's voluntary activities differ in terms of whether they work through formal voluntary organizations or through informal mechanisms?
 - How do the types of voluntary organizations to which men and women contribute differ?
 - Do men and women report the same constraints on their involvement in voluntary activities?
 - Are there differences between men and women in their reasons for belonging to voluntary organizations? In particular, are there gender differences in the degree to which "enhancing job prospects" is seen as an important reason for volunteer activity through organizations?
2. What are the gender differences in employers' valuations of workers' volunteer efforts?
 - What types of voluntary work by employees do employers support? How do these types differ from non-employer supported voluntary work?
 - Do employers support men's voluntary activities more than women's?
 - Do employers value equally voluntary work, which enhances employees' job-related skills, enhances the employer's reputation and makes a contribution to the wider community, regardless of its impact on the employer?
 - Do the voluntary activities of some women (such as higher paid women) receive greater support from their employers?
3. Do women's organizations view employer-supported employee voluntary activity in the same ways as other voluntary organizations?
 - What types of employer-supported employee voluntary activity would be most useful to women's organizations?
 - Do women's organizations report similar degrees of support from, and satisfaction with, employer-supported voluntary activity as other organizations?
4. What policies could potentially facilitate employer support of women's volunteer work?
 - What policies guide the decisions of employers to support the volunteer work of their employees? Do private sector firms, and public sector agencies, have policies and if so, how do the policies affect employee volunteer work, especially that performed by women?
 - What types of employer-supported "voluntary activity regimes" can be found in different provincial jurisdictions within Canada, as reflected in employment standards, and across countries such as Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom and Sweden? What implications do they have for women?

4. METHODOLOGY

The data used to investigate the above questions have been gathered from four sources. These sources are discussed below.

National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating

The NSGVP was first administered in 1997 as a special survey and was repeated in October 2000 as a supplement to that month's Labour Force Survey (LFS).⁷ The 2000 NSGVP is used in this report. The NSGVP contains responses from a sample of 14,724 individuals aged 15 and over from across the country. This sample is representative of 24.38 million Canadians aged over 15 in the 10 provinces. However, since the NSGVP was administered in conjunction with the LFS, it does not include the estimated two percent of the over 15 years of age population who are residents of Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, persons living on Indian reserves, full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces and inmates of institutions. A revised survey, the Canada Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating was administered in 2004 as a stand-alone survey and will be repeated every three years.

Data collected by the NSGVP include:

- types of voluntary activities undertaken;
- organizations for which voluntary activity was undertaken;
- time spent on voluntary activities;
- reasons for undertaking voluntary activity;
- whether employer support was given for voluntary activity;
- the form in which employer support was given;
- why (more) volunteer work was not performed; and
- personal and household income levels.

Demographic and labour force variables (such as occupation and hours worked) are also available. All data refer to activities undertaken between October 1, 1999 and September 30, 2000. Data on giving and participating, also collected by the NSGVP, are not analyzed here.

The NSGVP provides responses to each question for each individual in the survey. The survey responses make it possible to generate estimates representative of the country using the survey weight variable in the survey data set. All the estimates presented in this report are generated using the sample survey weights provided and SPSS software. Many of the questions are addressed by using the survey data to generate the percentages of people engaged in volunteering in general, or by types of volunteering activity and reasons for volunteering. For other questions, we are interested in knowing how several different factors affect the variable in question and thus, we undertake multivariate analysis. For example, whether an individual volunteers is the

dependent variable and is likely to be determined by various factors such as age, education, presence of children and employment status, the *independent* variables. In this report, we use a binary logistic regression, because the dependent variables in which we are interested are all dichotomous. For example, the dependent variable “volunteer,” which we want to explain, can only take two values: the person volunteers in which case the variable takes the value equal to 1, or the person does not volunteer in which case the variable takes the value 0.

The factors used to explain the phenomenon of interest are the independent variables, and all of them are also categorical variables, rather than continuous variables. Thus, in estimating the logistic regression model with categorical variables, it is necessary to drop out one of the categories. The results of the logistic regression are then interpreted with reference to the one category that is removed from the regression model (the benchmark category). For example, age is included as an independent variable in the model and it has four categories (25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years and 55-64 years); if 25-34 years is the benchmark, then the results for other age groups are interpreted relative to the 25-34 year age group which takes the value of 1.

The actual regression estimates for the independent variables are derived from the logistic regression and presented in the logistic regression tables as the “odds ratio.” The “odds” in everyday language captures the chances of something happening relative to the chances of it not happening. Applied to the phenomenon of interest here, we can calculate the volunteering odds using the numbers of people (aged 25-64 years) who volunteer as shown below, without controlling for other determinants as in the logistic regression analysis conducted in later parts of the report.

Table 1: Number of Volunteers

	Volunteer (numbers of people)		Total (numbers of people)
	Yes	No	
Male	2,098,018	6,217,523	8,315,541
Female	2,565,959	5,804,126	8,370,085
Total	4,663,977	12,021,649	16,685,626

Source: Authors’ calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, applying sample survey weights, for all individuals aged 25-64 years of age.

The odds of being a volunteer for men is $2,098,018 / 6,217,523 = 0.3374$. The odds of being a volunteer for women is $2,565,959 / 5,804,126 = 0.4421$. Therefore, the odds ratio of female to male volunteering is the ratio of the above two odds which is $0.4421 / 0.3374 = 1.3103$. This means that women have a 31.03 percent higher odds of volunteering than men, not taking account of any differences between the two groups in terms of demographic or employment characteristics. In the binary logistic regression analysis, we examine the odds of volunteering, controlling for demographic and employment characteristics.

The issue of whether the odds ratio is statistically significant is evaluated by comparing the p-value associated with the odds ratio estimate with a pre-selected level of significance represented by the alpha value. We choose an alpha level of 0.001 and thus, p-values less than 0.001 indicate that the odds ratio coefficient is statistically significant.

Employer Survey

The Employer Survey was designed by the researchers to answer questions relating to how employers value volunteer work and whether they have formal policies governing employer-supported volunteer work. The Survey includes responses from a sample of 123 employers.

The Survey consists of boxes to be checked, which allow frequency distributions to be calculated, as well as written answers, which permit qualitative analysis of employer behaviour. The survey questionnaire was submitted to, and approved by, the University of Northern British Columbia's Research Ethics Board. The survey is attached as Appendix A.

Initially, a list of 180 firms and organizations was compiled using business directories. These firms and organizations were all large in terms of the number of employees and the value of sales. The firms and organizations were concentrated geographically in Toronto/Ottawa, Vancouver and Montréal. Sectorally, the firms and organizations were in the private (manufacturing, retail, hotel, finance and banking) and public (municipal, provincial and federal) sectors. The sectoral and geographical restrictions were used so there would be sufficient numbers in each group to judge whether regional and sectoral variations were of importance. Of course, other Canadian cities act as regional headquarters (such as Calgary, Winnipeg and Halifax), but extending the survey to these cities would have required a substantial increase in the total sample size if each of the sub-samples was to be meaningful.

We contacted human resource directors from 110 of the 180 firms by telephone or e-mail prior to the mail out of the 180 surveys in January 2005. Unfortunately, the response rate was disappointing with only 20 surveys being returned in the prepaid envelopes. Follow-up reminders were sent in early March 2005. Human resource directors are one of the most frequently surveyed groups in organizations and the low response rate, while disappointing, is not particularly surprising. Other sample methods were therefore devised.

First, we worked with a representative of the British Columbia Human Resources Management Association (BCHRMA) on obtaining further responses to the survey. The BCHRMA representative e-mailed the Association's members a message from us describing our project and asking for their participation in the survey, which was made available in an on-line web-based format. This data collection method elicited 52 responses.

Second, we purchased a specially designed version of Scott's Human Resource Professional List which provides the mailing addresses of human resource directors across Canada. The list we purchased contained the names and addresses of human resource directors in three provinces (Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia) and for the same industries described above (banks and credit unions, insurance and finance, hotels, retail and selected manufacturing). Using the list, 500 letters were mailed in April to human resource directors in organizations based in Toronto/Ottawa and Montréal inviting their participation in the survey (which was made available in both print and electronic formats). This resulted in an additional 51 responses giving us a total sample size of 123. The sample cannot, therefore, be said to be random. Rather it was drawn from a number of sources and represents the best efforts of the researchers to obtain a reasonably sized sample.

In-Depth Employer Interviews

In-depth, structured telephone interviews were held with 15 human resource directors who participated in the Employer Survey (five from each of the three locations) to obtain information on employer policies for supporting employees' voluntary activities. Specifically, we sought data to address issues relating to gender differences in employers' valuations of workers' volunteer efforts, and policies which might potentially facilitate employer support of women's volunteer work. Our interview guide was approved by the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) Ethics Review Board. The interview questions are included in Appendix B.

The sample of 15 was drawn from a sub-group of 52 completed questionnaires in which the respondent indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview, and the respondent's organization supported employees who undertake voluntary activities. From this sub-group, 15 organizations were selected to obtain some representation from the different industrial sectors and the three provinces.

Voluntary Organization Survey

A survey questionnaire was designed and approved by the UNBC Research Ethics Board. Our original proposal called for 300 voluntary organizations to be surveyed, half of which were to be women's voluntary organizations and the other half other types of voluntary organizations. However, given the low response rate (10 percent) to the mail-out survey of employers, this would potentially yield only 30 responses. The researchers therefore decided that a phone survey would be administered instead. This led to close to 100 organizations responding consisting of 62 women's organizations and 36 other organizations. The questionnaire is attached as Appendix C.

Defining which organizations are "women's organizations" and which are not requires some methodological choices. For example, Meinhard and Foster (2003) defined the former as organizations with a female executive director and where at least two thirds of the board members are female. As a result, many of the organizations which they include as women's organizations do not, in their words, "specifically deal with women's needs and issues." Other researchers have restricted women's organizations to those deemed to be feminist in orientation, usually taken to mean concerned with the status of women and their rights (see Meinhard and Foster 2003). In this report, we use organization self-identification as the criteria for deciding which are women's organizations.

The database used for organizations is Canada Revenue Agency's on-line Charities Directorate which consists of over 80,000 organizations.⁸ Voluntary organizations were classified into two groups using the keyword search engine at this site: the keyword "women" was used to identify women's organizations; 790 organizations were reported in this category. Various keywords such as "sport," "recreation," "health," "arts" and "culture" were used to identify the other organizations. Within each group, organizations were selected that had provided detailed contact information. In addition, the women's organizations contacted were based on the researcher's selection to ensure a range of activities (in health, education and welfare for example), a geographical spread of organizations, as well as an exclusion of some organizations (such as YWCAs) which may not be strictly focussed on the provision of services to women.

The other organizations were reviewed by the researchers to ensure they were not women's organizations (and were not, for example, listed under "health" but dealt primarily with women's health). Again, the sample cannot be said to be random, but was subject to restrictions imposed by the researchers.

5. ANALYSIS

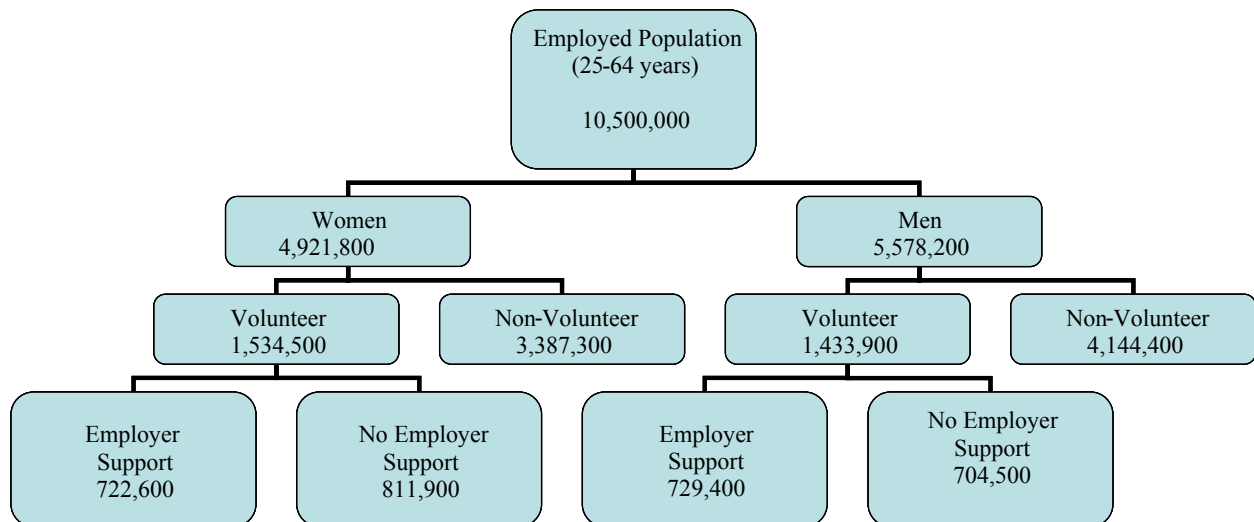
In this section, we provide answers to each of the questions posed in Chapter 3 above using the data sources discussed in Chapter 4.

What are the gender differences in volunteer activities?

We consider four different population groups derived from the NSGVP.

- Those aged 15 and over. This corresponds to the complete population (24,383,200) for the NSGVP.
- Those aged 25-64. Given our interest in employer-supported voluntary work, this population corresponds most closely to that which is commonly referred to as being within the labour force age range. It includes people who are employed, self-employed or unemployed, and people who are not in the labour force. The population size is 16, 685,626.
- Those aged 25-64 who are employed (excluding the self-employed) (population size 10,500,000). See Figure 2.
- Those aged 25-64 who are employed (excluding the self-employed) and have received employer support for the voluntary activities (population size 1,452,000, which is the sum of 722,600 women and 729,400 men). See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Volunteers with Employer Support



Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, applying the sample survey weights.

We are therefore able to examine gender differences across a number of population groups and to highlight the interaction of gender with labour force participation. We now turn to an analysis of four specific questions pertaining to gender differences in voluntary work.

How do men and women's voluntary activities differ in terms of whether they work through formal voluntary organizations or through informal mechanisms?

Volunteer rates in formal and informal activities for three population groups are presented below in Table 2. In this context, formal voluntary work is defined as that which is undertaken through a formal organization; informal voluntary activities are not mediated through a formal organization.⁹

The following conclusions can be drawn from Table 2.

- Volunteer rates in informal volunteer activities are two to three times higher than volunteer rates in formal volunteer activities for all population groups.
- In general, women have higher volunteer rates than men in both the formal and informal voluntary sectors.
- For both men and women, those in employment have higher volunteer rates than the over 15 and 25-64 aged populations.

Table 2: Volunteer Rates

Population Groups	Volunteering (%) ^b	
	Formal	Informal
Men and Women		
age 15 and above	26.7	76.9
age 25 ~ 64	28.0	78.2
age 25 ~ 64, employed ^a	28.3	79.2
Men		
age 15 and above	25.2	75.6
age 25 ~ 64	25.2	77.2
age 25 ~ 64, employed ^a	25.7	77.4
Women		
age 15 and above	28.1	78.1
age 25 ~ 64	30.7	79.2
age 25 ~ 64, employed ^a	31.2	81.3

Notes:

^a The group of employed people excludes those who are self-employed.

^b The number of people who volunteer divided by the number of people in the particular age and employment group.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

We are interested in examining how volunteer rates of men and women vary with certain demographic factors, such as age, education, marital status and the presence of children. A model of volunteering is estimated using a logistic regression technique in which the demographic factors are entered as independent variables, for the population of individuals aged 25-64 years.

These results indicate, as shown in Table 3, that women have a higher rate of volunteering after controlling for age, education, marital status, presence of children, region and labour force status. Note that in the regression model for men and women combined (column 1), the odds ratio for the female variable is 1.364; this indicates that the odds of volunteering among women is 36.4 percent higher than for men, after controlling for differences in the two populations in terms of age, education, marital status and presence of children. Further, the results show that for both men and women combined, formal volunteer activity increases with age. For example, the

Table 3: Logistic Regression of the Determinants of Volunteering, 25-64 Years

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables: Volunteer or Not		
	Both	Women	Men
Constant	0.204 (0.000)	0.296 (0.000)	0.190 (0.000)
Female	1.364 (0.000)	---	---
Age			
35-44	1.309 (0.000)	1.270 (0.000)	1.335 (0.000)
45-54	1.598 (0.000)	1.658 (0.000)	1.550 (0.000)
55-64	1.992 (0.000)	2.092 (0.000)	1.937 (0.000)
Education			
High school	1.701 (0.000)	1.636 (0.000)	1.778 (0.000)
Some post-secondary	2.927 (0.000)	2.325 (0.000)	3.897 (0.000)
Post-secondary diploma	2.360 (0.000)	2.400 (0.000)	2.349 (0.000)
University degree	4.349 (0.000)	4.157 (0.000)	4.630 (0.000)
Marital Status			
Single	0.759 (0.000)	0.824 (0.000)	0.698 (0.000)
Widow/er	0.771 (0.000)	0.693 (0.000)	0.994 (0.594)
Separated/divorced	0.830 (0.000)	0.676 (0.000)	1.264 (0.000)
No Children	0.664 (0.000)	0.633 (0.000)	0.672 (0.000)
Region			
Quebec	0.467 (0.000)	0.402 (0.000)	0.571 (0.000)
Ontario	0.620 (0.000)	0.631 (0.000)	0.624 (0.000)
Prairies	1.272 (0.000)	1.312 (0.000)	1.253 (0.000)
British Columbia	0.670 (0.000)	0.795 (0.000)	0.562 (0.000)
Labour Force Status			
Unemployed	0.821 (0.000)	0.953 (0.000)	0.682 (0.000)
Not in the labour force	0.923 (0.000)	0.898 (0.000)	0.943 (0.000)
N (unweighted)	10,325	5,666	4,659
Chi-square	1,345,479	679,396	677,340

Notes:

Benchmark independent variables (i.e. the category removed) are Age - 25-34 years; Education - Less than High School; Marital Status - Married; No Children - Children; Region - Atlantic; Labour Force Status - Employed. Estimated for individuals aged 25-64 years.

P-values are in parentheses. P-values less than 0.001 are significant.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

odds ratio for the age group 35-44 years compared to the age group 25-34 years is 1.309. This indicates that the odds of volunteering among individuals (aged 25-64 years) aged 35-44 years

are 30.9 percent higher than the odds of volunteering among individuals aged 25-34 years. The odds ratios for each education group, compared to the benchmark education group of less than a high school diploma, are greater than 1. For example, the odds ratio for individuals with a high school diploma, compared to an individuals without a high school diploma is 1.701. This indicates that the odds of volunteering for individuals with a high school diploma is 70.1 percent higher, than that for individuals with less than a high school diploma. For both men and women, the presence of children significantly raises voluntary activity. Examining the regional variables, only in the Prairies is the volunteering rate greater than in Atlantic Canada. Finally, employed individuals have higher rates of volunteering compared to both the unemployed and individuals not in the labour force. Similar results are shown in the regression models for men and women estimated separately.

These results are broadly consistent with those provided by Vaillancourt (1994) who used the 1987 Survey of Voluntary Work in Canada. For example, Vaillancourt found, as do we, that women volunteer more than men, volunteer work increases with age, and there are regional differences with Quebec having the lowest volunteer rate and the Prairies the highest. The 1987 Survey contains greater detail on some concepts compared to the 2000 Survey, so Vaillancourt was able to examine the relationship between volunteer activity and the number and age of children, and first language (as a proxy for ethnicity). The 2000 Survey contains only the presence of children under the age of 18 in the household and whether the respondent was born outside of Canada. Our results are therefore less detailed in this area but are nevertheless consistent with the earlier study.

Examining the results for employed men and women separately, married women perform more formal voluntary activity than women who may, for whatever reason, be single. In contrast, while married men do more formal volunteer activity than single men, they do less than separated/divorced men.

Since the objective of this study is to examine the interaction of employer support and volunteering, we first examine the volunteer rates of individuals who are employed. Thus, the logistic regression model discussed above is re-estimated for those individuals aged 25-64 years who are employed and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Logistic Regression, Determinants of Volunteering, 25-64 Years Employed Persons

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Volunteer or Not			
	Women	Women	Men	Men
Constant	0.290(0.000)	0.126(0.000)	0.196(0.000)	0.223(0.000)
Age				
35-44	1.172(0.000)	1.231(0.000)	1.277(0.000)	1.250(0.000)
45-54	1.643(0.000)	1.573(0.000)	1.467(0.000)	1.428(0.000)
55-64	1.471(0.000)	1.367(0.000)	1.407(0.000)	1.326(0.000)
Education				
High school	1.539(0.000)	1.333(0.000)	1.700(0.000)	1.581(0.000)
Some post-secondary	2.689(0.000)	2.208(0.000)	3.453(0.000)	3.102(0.000)
Post-secondary diploma	2.166(0.000)	1.668(0.000)	2.094(0.000)	2.009(0.000)
University degree	3.785(0.000)	2.691(0.000)	3.566(0.000)	2.573(0.000)
Marital Status				
Single	0.841(0.000)	0.825(0.000)	0.652(0.000)	0.626(0.000)
Widow/er	0.981(0.031)	1.013(0.155)	0.854(0.000)	0.905(0.000)
Separated/ divorced	0.725(0.000)	0.722(0.000)	1.113(0.000)	1.118(0.000)
No Children	0.627(0.000)	0.652(0.000)	0.663(0.000)	0.680(0.000)
Regional				
Quebec	0.380(0.000)	0.410(0.000)	0.563(0.000)	0.542(0.000)
Ontario	0.571(0.000)	0.609(0.000)	0.635(0.000)	0.635(0.000)
Prairies	1.190(0.000)	1.173(0.000)	1.286(0.000)	1.328(0.000)
British Columbia	0.755(0.000)	0.788(0.000)	0.653(0.000)	0.647(0.000)
Part Time	1.410(0.000)	1.301(0.000)	1.246(0.000)	1.121(0.000)
Income (\$)				
20,000-40,000	1.028(0.000)	0.894(0.000)	0.875(0.000)	0.877(0.000)
40,001-60,000	1.322(0.000)	1.132(0.000)	1.177(0.000)	1.201(0.000)
>60,001	1.218(0.000)	1.019(0.000)	1.553(0.000)	1.546(0.000)
Occupation				
Management	---	3.638(0.000)	---	1.227(0.000)
Business, finance and administration	---	3.415(0.000)	---	1.232(0.000)
Natural and applied science	---	1.805(0.000)	---	0.771(0.000)
Health occupations	---	4.051(0.000)	---	1.544(0.000)
Social, education and religion	---	4.881(0.000)	---	2.150(0.000)
Art, culture and recreation	---	2.360(0.000)	---	1.591(0.000)
Sales and service	---	2.564(0.000)	---	1.102(0.000)
Trades and transportation	---	3.228(0.000)	---	0.705(0.000)
Primary industry	---	7.708(0.000)	---	0.742(0.000)
N (unweighted)	3,273	3,273	3,060	3,273

Notes:

Benchmark independent variables (i.e., the category removed) are Age - 25-34 years; Education - Less than High School; Marital Status - Married; No Children - Children; Region - Atlantic; Part-time - Full-time; Income - <\$20,000; Occupation - Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities.

Estimated for individuals aged 25-64 years.

P-values are in parentheses. P-values less than 0.001 are significant.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, with the sample survey weights applied.

Examining the results for employed men and women separately, married women perform more formal voluntary activity than women who may, for whatever reason, be single. In contrast, while married men do more formal volunteer activity than single men, they do less than separated/divorced men. Voluntary activity also increases with part-time employment status, a result that is especially strong for women. High earning men are much more likely to be involved in voluntary activity but the income–voluntary activity relationship for women shows no such strong relationship. In terms of occupation, for women, the odds ratio for all occupations compared to the benchmark occupation (Processing, manufacturing and utilities) is greater than 1, and in most cases substantially greater than 1. For example, the odds ratio for volunteering for individuals in the management occupation, compared to the benchmark occupation, is 3.638. For men, comparison of a specific occupation to the benchmark occupation shows greater variation. The odds ratio for the natural and applied science occupation, the trades and transportation occupation, and the primary industry occupation are all less than 1. This indicates that workers in these occupations have a lower odds of volunteering compared to workers in the processing, manufacturing and utilities occupations. In the other occupations, the odds ratios are greater than 1. For example, for men, the odds ratio of volunteering for workers in the social, education and religious occupations, compared to the benchmark occupation, is 2.150.

For employed women, therefore, the decision to volunteer is strongly influenced positively by being married, by having children and by working part time. For employed men, being married does not dominate all other marital states and part-time work does not lead to such a large impact on voluntary activity. For employed men, however, high income is strongly associated with greater voluntary activity.

How do the types of voluntary organizations to which men and women contribute differ?

As indicated above, over a quarter of each of the identified population groups volunteer through formal organizations. In Table 5, we examine, for each of the four population groups, the number of organizations and hours of volunteer work contributed, disaggregated by gender. For the population aged 15 years and older, on average, women volunteer with slightly more organizations than men (1.73 compared to 1.62 for the entire population, for example).

In Table 2, it was noted that volunteer *rates* increased as we moved from the over 15 population group to the 25-64 aged population and to the 25-64 employed population. Furthermore, Table 3 indicated that women were more likely to volunteer than men. However, when it comes to the number of *hours* that those who volunteer actually spend volunteering, it is men who volunteer more time. Moreover, for both men and women, it is individuals in the over 15 population who contribute, on average, the most hours to formal volunteering and employed individuals the least.

Across all the population groups, men contribute more hours on average than women do to voluntary organizations (169.5 hours per year compared to 155.0 hours per year for the entire population 15 years and older for men and women, for example). Employed women in the 25-64 age category contribute the least number of hours to formal voluntary organizations. Possible reasons for this are discussed below when we analyze the constraints on volunteering.

Table 5: Formal Voluntary Activities: Number of Organizations and Hours Volunteered, Annually

Population Groups	For People Who Are Volunteers	
	Number of Organizations	Number of Hours
Men and Women		
Age 15 and above	1.7	161.7
Age 25 ~ 64	1.7	154.3
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	1.7	138.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	1.9	147.8
Men		
Age 15 and above	1.6	169.5
Age 25 ~ 64	1.7	164.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	1.6	155.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	1.8	162.2
Women		
Age 15 and above	1.7	155.0
Age 25 ~ 64	1.8	146.3
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	1.7	121.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	1.9	133.4

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

Table 6 presents estimates of the percentage of volunteers who contribute to various types of voluntary organizations. The estimates indicate the presence of noticeable differences between men and women. For example, women are more involved than men in:

- canvassing, campaigning and fundraising;
- providing care or support;
- providing health care in a hospital or senior's home; and
- collecting, serving or delivering food or goods.

In contrast, men are more involved than women in:

- teaching or coaching for an organization;
- helping to maintain, repair or build facilities;
- helping with first aid, firefighting or search and rescue; and
- protecting the environment or wildlife.

In other activities, there are small differences between men and women. For the most part, the above differences are not surprising with women's voluntary activities being more noticeable in the "care economy" (i.e., in those activities such as providing health care, which are associated with caring for others) while men are more prominent in volunteer activities with close associations to male-dominated paid-employment sectors. In many ways, therefore, volunteer activity mirrors the gendered division of work within the household and paid employment sectors. It is for this reason and because of the wider influence of gendered social norms

discussed in Chapter 2 that we refer to the differences between male and female voluntary activity in the rest of the report as gender differences.

Table 6: Types of Formal Voluntary Activities

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Type				
	Canvas Campaign Fundraise	Unpaid Member of Board	Info to Educate /Influence Public Opinion	Help Organize Activity	Consulting Executive Office or Admin Work
Men and Women					
Age 15 and above	40.3	41.2	28.7	57.1	29.9
Age 25 ~ 64	41.8	45.0	30.2	59.5	32.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	43.2	44.4	28.9	59.3	31.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	47.2	50.0	35.7	65.5	37.0
Men					
Age 15 and above	37.1	41.6	28.8	58.1	30.4
Age 25 ~ 64	38.6	46.9	31.1	62.1	34.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	39.8	46.1	29.7	61.7	32.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	42.1	51.9	36.3	67.6	38.7
Women					
Age 15 and above	43.1	40.8	28.6	56.2	29.5
Age 25 ~ 64	44.4	43.5	29.4	57.5	31.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	46.5	42.8	28.2	57.2	30.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	52.3	47.9	35.1	63.4	35.3

Table 6: Types of Formal Voluntary Activities (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Type				
	Teach, Coach for an Organization	Provide Care or Support (include counselling, visiting)	Provide Health Care in Hospital or Seniors' Home	Provide Assistance to Member of a Self-Help Mutual Aid Group (single/bereaved parent, or AA)	Collect, Serve or Deliver Food or Goods
Men and Women					
Age 15 and above	26.9	26.5	7.4	8.1	24.5
Age 25 ~ 64	27.3	24.4	5.8	8.5	23.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	28.7	22.5	5.1	7.1	22.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	32.6	25.2	5.6	6.9	26.1
Men					
Age 15 and above	30.2	25.0	5.9	8.8	22.8
Age 25 ~ 64	31.8	23.5	4.0	8.6	21.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	34.5	21.6	3.6	8.6	20.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	38.8	23.3	3.7	5.7	23.1
Women					
Age 15 and above	24.0	27.7	8.7	7.6	26.1
Age 25 ~ 64	23.6	25.1	7.1	8.3	25.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	23.4	23.3	6.5	7.5	23.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	26.2	27.2	7.4	8.1	29.1

Table 6: Types of Formal Voluntary Activities (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Type				
	Help to Maintain, Repair or Build Facilities	Volunteer Driving	First Aid, Firefighting or Search and Rescue	Protect Environment or Wildlife	Other
Men and Women					
Age 15 and above	15.6	19.6	6.3	15.6	19.9
Age 25 ~ 64	16.0	21.1	6.8	15.4	20.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	15.9	20.1	8.0	14.6	19.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	17.4	23.3	11.1	17.3	20.7
Men					
Age 15 and above	22.8	22.0	9.3	18.0	17.4
Age 25 ~ 64	24.7	22.9	10.3	18.7	17.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	23.5	21.7	11.6	18.4	16.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	24.6	23.8	15.5	20.3	19.1
Women					
Age 15 and above	9.4	17.6	3.8	13.5	22.1
Age 25 ~ 64	8.9	19.5	3.9	12.7	22.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	8.8	18.6	4.6	11.1	21.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	10.1	22.8	6.7	14.3	22.3

Note:

Individuals may report more than one activity.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

Gender differences are also evident in the types of events that volunteers help with as demonstrated in Table 6. The estimates in Table 6 indicate that, for example, higher percentages of women than men contribute to voluntary events in the areas of:

- education and research;
- health;
- social services; and
- religion.

In contrast, higher percentages of men contribute to, for example, voluntary events in the areas of:

- culture and recreation;
- environment;
- law, advocacy and politics; and

- business and professional associations and unions.

Again, women’s participation is higher in events that may be thought of as part of the wider “care economy,” including voluntary work with religious groups, whereas men’s participation is higher in events connected with political and work-related events as well as with recreational/environmental events.

Table 7: Types of Formal Voluntary Events

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Event					
	Culture and Recreation		Education and Research		Health	
	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)
Men and Women						
Age 15 and above	30.4	41.9	19.0	17.7	17.0	14.8
Age 25 ~ 64	31.4	42.8	18.3	17.0	17.8	12.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	31.9	41.7	17.7	16.5	17.6	11.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, with employer support	30.1	42.5	19.8	21.6	21.2	9.5
Men						
Age 15 and above	38.2	54.0	15.1	12.4	12.5	14.7
Age 25 ~ 64	41.0	59.6	12.8	10.8	13.1	13.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	41.2	58.2	13.4	12.9	12.5	13.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	38.2	59.1	15.4	18.6	15.8	9.8
Women						
Age 15 and above	23.6	31.3	22.4	21.3	20.8	14.9
Age 25 ~ 64	23.5	29.1	22.8	22.1	21.7	11.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	23.2	26.3	21.7	19.8	22.4	8.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	21.9	25.7	24.2	24.7	26.7	9.3

Table 7: Types of Formal Voluntary Events (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Event					
	Social Services		Environment		Development and Housing	
	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)
Men and Women						
Age 15 and above	27.3	32.9	3.9	4.2	7.4	7.9
Age 25 ~ 64	27.1	29.7	4.1	4.6	7.6	7.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	25.8	25.8	4.0	3.2	7.4	7.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	26.4	27.8	4.2	3.5	8.0	8.6
Men						
Age 15 and above	25.0	33.7	4.2	4.1	8.0	8.6
Age 25 ~ 64	25.1	30.9	4.7	4.8	8.2	8.8
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	23.6	29.2	4.8	2.9	7.6	7.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	23.7	32.8	5.1	3.0	8.7	7.3
Women						
Age 15 and above	29.4	32.3	3.6	4.2	6.9	7.3
Age 25 ~ 64	28.8	28.6	3.6	4.4	7.0	6.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	27.8	22.6	3.3	3.5	7.1	6.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	29.1	22.7	3.3	4.0	7.3	9.9

Table 7: Types of Formal Voluntary Events (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Event					
	Law, Advocacy and Politics		Philanthropic Intermediaries and Volunteerism Promotion		International	
	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)
Men and Women						
Age 15 and above	4.8	6.2	3.4	1.9	1.3	1.5
Age 25 ~ 64	4.9	5.1	3.9	1.8	0.9	1.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	4.9	4.2	5.3	1.7	0.8	0.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	5.0	4.6	9.4	3.2	0.7	0.7
Men						
Age 15 and above	5.5	7.8	3.3	1.8	0.9	1.1
Age 25 ~ 64	5.4	5.2	3.7	1.4	0.7	0.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	5.5	4.9	5.0	1.8	0.6	0.3
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	5.6	5.5	9.3	3.3	0.9	0.48
Women						
Age 15 and above	4.3	4.9	3.5	2.0	1.6	1.9
Age 25 ~ 64	4.6	5.1	4.0	2.1	1.1	1.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	4.3	3.5	5.6	1.7	1.0	1.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	4.4	3.7	9.6	3.1	0.6	0.9

Table 7: Types of Formal Voluntary Events (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Event					
	Religion		Business and Professional Associations and Unions		Not Elsewhere Classified	
	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)	Attend events (%)	Hours spent (hrs)
Men and Women						
Age 15 and above	20.7	26.1	3.3	3.4	1.6	1.9
Age 25 ~ 64	20.4	24.6	4.0	4.1	1.6	1.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	19.4	19.5	4.2	3.9	1.8	1.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	17.5	17.0	6.3	5.8	2.2	0.8
Men						
Age 15 and above	17.4	24.4	4.0	3.9	1.6	1.2
Age 25 ~ 64	17.1	20.7	5.2	5.0	1.4	1.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	15.9	16.4	5.2	4.9	1.4	0.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	13.7	12.1	7.7	7.2	2.2	1.1
Women						
Age 15 and above	23.5	27.5	2.6	3.0	1.6	2.5
Age 25 ~ 64	23.1	27.7	3.0	3.4	1.8	1.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	22.6	22.4	3.3	3.0	2.2	1.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	21.5	22.0	4.8	4.4	2.3	0.6

Note:

Individuals may report more than one event.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

Not surprisingly, these gender differences in voluntary activities and events are also reflected in gender differences in memberships or participation of formal voluntary organizations. This is documented in Table 8. The data presented in Table 8 indicate that, for example, a higher percentage of women than men belong to organizations based on:

- a cultural education or hobby association;
- a religious affiliated group;
- a school group, or a neighbourhood, civic or community association;
- a cancer group, diabetes, lung, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, etc.; and

- a self-help group.

A higher percentage of men than women are members of formal voluntary activities based on:

- a service club or fraternal association;
- a union of professional association;
- a sports or recreation organization; and
- a health spa or exercise club.

Table 8: Types of Formal Voluntary Memberships

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Membership				
	Service Club or Fraternal Association	Union or Professional Association	Political Organization	Cultural Education or Hobby Association	Sports or Recreation Organization
Men and Women					
Age 15 and above	15.9	38.7	8.1	23.2	43.0
Age 25 ~ 64	15.0	46.2	7.6	22.5	41.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	14.0	54.9	6.1	20.9	43.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	14.4	57.3	6.7	23.4	44.1
Men					
Age 15 and above	20.4	41.2	10.2	19.5	49.3
Age 25 ~ 64	19.8	51.0	9.2	18.7	47.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	18.3	55.6	7.6	16.5	49.3
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	18.5	61.8	8.0	19.4	52.6
Women					
Age 15 and above	11.8	36.5	6.3	26.6	37.3
Age 25 ~ 64	10.8	42.1	6.3	25.9	35.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	9.9	54.2	4.7	25.1	37.8
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	10.2	52.6	5.4	27.4	35.3

Table 8: Types of Formal Voluntary Memberships (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting Each Membership		
	Religiously Affiliated Group	School Group, Civic Organization	Other Organization
Men and Women			
Age 15 and above	3.3	26.4	4.0
Age 25 ~ 64	31.3	27.5	3.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	27.7	26.0	3.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	26.4	29.1	3.3
Men			
Age 15 and above	26.7	21.3	4.0
Age 25 ~ 64	25.2	21.4	3.8
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	22.7	20.9	3.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	20.8	25.0	3.4
Women			
Age 15 and above	38.8	31.1	4.0
Age 25 ~ 64	36.6	32.7	3.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	32.5	30.9	2.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	32.2	33.3	3.2

Notes:

Calculated for individuals who participate as members in at least one organization.

Individuals may report more than one membership.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

Tables 2 and 5 through 8 indicate the presence of discernible gender differences in voluntary activity, participation in events and membership of organizations in Canada. From this analysis, two questions arise. The first is whether the constraints on voluntary activity are viewed similarly by men and women, and whether this might explain the gender differences in the number of hours men and women contribute to voluntary organizations. The second is whether, given the gender differences in the types of organizations to which men and women belong, the motives for participating in voluntary work differ and whether women and men feel they acquire the same skills through voluntary work.

Do men and women report the same constraints on their involvement in voluntary activities?

The gender difference in the number of hours contributed to formal voluntary activities is largest among the employed population sub-groups. On average, employed men contribute 34 more hours per year, or 28 percent more, than employed women (see Table 5). This raises the question whether women, particularly employed women, are subject to greater time constraints in their ability to pursue voluntary activity than men. This may arise because of women's generally higher performance of unpaid labour, and it is possible that this, when added to their participation in the paid labour market, may act as a constraint on their involvement in volunteer activities. This possibility is suggested by the fact that where employer support is reported, women's voluntary

activity increases by 10 percent (in terms of hours contributed) whereas men's voluntary activity is only 4.5 percent higher (see Table 5).

Corroborating evidence for this hypothesis is provided by an examination of the answers provided on the constraints to voluntary activities by the non-volunteer population. These results are reported in Table 9. Of the 11 possible constraints identified in the NSGVP, in only two cases do women report that the constraint is more binding than men do — health and time. That is, women's reasons for not volunteering are more likely to be for reasons associated with health status and time constraints. In the other nine categories, women report lower constraints than men.

The estimates presented in Table 9 indicate that the largest single reason why people do not volunteer is because of a lack of time. This is true for men and women in all population groups. However, it is highest for employed women. Here, 84 percent of respondents indicated that the time constraint was a contributing factor to not volunteering. The higher time spent by women, on average, on household work has been well documented in Canada and other countries and this, combined with employment commitments, makes women's time constraints somewhat more binding than men's. This is also likely to explain the result, described above, that women who receive support from their employer are able to increase their voluntary hours by 10 percent.

Table 9: Reasons for Not Volunteering

Population Groups	Percentage of Non-Volunteers Reporting					
	Have Already Made Contribution	Do Not Have Any Extra Time	Have Health Problems or Physically Unable	No One You Know Has Personally Asked You	Do Not Know How to Become Involved	Financial Cost to Volunteer
Men and Women						
Age 15 and above	21.8	69.4	24.0	36.5	19.7	18.6
Age 25 ~ 64	19.6	74.8	18.3	35.6	18.5	18.8
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	19.6	81.0	11.6	36.3	17.9	16.6
Men						
Age 15 and above	22.6	68.6	19.5	39.3	21.3	20.0
Age 25 ~ 64	20.7	73.2	14.9	37.6	19.2	19.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	21.1	78.5	9.0	38.6	19.4	17.1
Women						
Age 15 and above	20.9	70.2	28.4	33.7	18.1	17.3
Age 25 ~ 64	18.4	76.4	21.7	33.5	17.7	18.2
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	17.8	84.0	14.7	33.6	16.0	16.0

Table 9: Reasons for Not Volunteering (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Non-Volunteers Reporting ^a				
	Concerns Could Be Sued/Taken to Court	Have No Interest	Give Money Instead of Time	Unwilling to Make Year-Round Commitment	Dissatisfied with Previous Volunteer Experience
Men and Women					
Age 15 and above	7.2	24.5	37.7	46.2	8.1
Age 25 ~ 64	7.6	23.9	39.3	47.7	7.3
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	6.8	23.7	41.6	49.1	6.5
Men					
Age 15 and above	9.1	28.5	38.7	50.8	9.4
Age 25 ~ 64	10.3	27.2	39.8	51.1	8.2
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	9.6	26.6	41.1	51.6	7.3
Women					
Age 15 and above	5.2	20.6	36.8	41.5	6.8
Age 25 ~ 64	4.7	20.3	38.9	44.1	6.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	3.5	20.3	42.2	46.2	5.4

Notes:

Calculated for individuals who do not volunteer.

Individuals may report more than one reason.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

The question of time constraints was also taken up in the in-depth interviews with employers. While many of the respondents indicated that employees can take time away from work to undertake the volunteer activity, there was an understanding that the paid tasks must still be completed. The employee volunteers must receive permission from their supervisors and the timing of the volunteer activity must be co-ordinated so the underlying work does not suffer either by having it undertaken by other employees or by the employee volunteer at another time (which depends on the nature of the work). Since women already work under a more binding time constraint, the latter option — of making up for time spent volunteering at some other time — may be less feasible for them.

Are there differences between men and women in their reasons for belonging to voluntary organizations? In particular, are there gender differences in the degree to which enhancing job prospects is seen as an important reason for volunteer activity through organizations?

The NSGVP contains information on respondents' reasons for volunteering. The categories used are different from, and in some ways more restrictive than, those used in other surveys, such as the World Values Survey. In particular, the NSGVP questions include fewer categories that might be termed to represent "altruism."¹⁰

The estimates generated from the NSGVP are presented in Table 10. The overwhelming majority of all volunteers cite "cause in which they believe" as a reason for volunteering. A large majority are "personally affected" by the cause the organization supports (although this is cited by a slightly higher percentage of women than men as a reason for volunteering).

Other reasons cited provide some interesting gender differences. A higher percentage of men than women cite the example/influence of friends volunteering as a reason for their own involvement. Women are more likely than men to cite the following as reasons for volunteering:

- improving job opportunities;
- exploring own strengths;
- fulfill religious obligations and beliefs; and
- required to do so by school.

The third reason, fulfilling religious obligations and beliefs, confirms the greater role played by religion in the voluntary activity of women than men as documented in previous tables 7 and 8.

Women also report being “required to volunteer” to support school activities more than men do.

Volunteering to improve job opportunities and explore their own strengths are perhaps surprising reasons and point to ways in which voluntary work provides different avenues for personal advancement and growth for women and men. The higher importance attributed to volunteer work by women for enhancing their job opportunities and exploring their own strengths suggests their experiences in the paid labour market are less able to provide these avenues for self-advancement and they look to volunteer work more than men do to meet this need.

Table 10: Reasons for Volunteering

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting			
	Cause in which You Personally Believe	Personally Affected by Cause Org. Supports	Because Your Friends Volunteer	Improve Your Job Opportunities
Men and Women				
Age 15 and above	94.8	68.8	30.2	22.7
Age 25 ~ 64	95.6	71.8	26.9	17.1
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	95.3	71.1	27.7	16.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	96.1	73.9	29.1	21.4
Men				
Age 15 and above	94.1	66.9	32.8	21.3
Age 25 ~ 64	95.0	69.7	29.7	15.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	94.7	69.1	30.6	14.8
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	95.5	72.1	32.0	18.3
Women				
Age 15 and above	95.4	70.4	28.0	23.9
Age 25 ~ 64	96.1	73.5	24.6	18.3
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	95.9	72.9	24.9	18.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	96.6	75.7	26.1	24.5

Table 10: Reasons for Volunteering (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting			
	Fulfill Religious Obligations or Beliefs	Explore Your Own Strengths	Use Your Skills and Experiences	Required to Volunteer by Your School
Men and Women				
Age 15 and above	26.4	57.3	80.9	7.6
Age 25 ~ 64	25.1	55.3	80.0	5.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	24.2	56.5	80.0	5.9
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	22.4	58.7	84.2	9.3
Men				
Age 15 and above	22.5	52.3	81.0	6.5
Age 25 ~ 64	20.7	50.1	80.5	4.2
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	19.9	52.3	80.4	4.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	18.4	53.7	84.7	6.2
Women				
Age 15 and above	29.8	61.6	80.9	8.6
Age 25 ~ 64	28.7	59.5	79.6	7.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	28.1	60.4	79.7	7.8
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	26.4	63.7	83.6	12.5

Note:

Individuals may report more than one reason.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

To consider this hypothesis further, a logistic regression was estimated for employed volunteers who cited improving job opportunities as a motivation for volunteering. The results of this regression, reported in Table 11, show that women are 21.6 percent more likely than men to cite this as a reason for volunteering. This is a particularly strong result since the sample population is the group of people who are already in employment. Volunteer work seems to play a significant role for women in their careers in the paid labour market.

The importance of volunteer work for women for labour market advancement is confirmed by the results presented in Table 11 which reports on the skills volunteers identified as being acquired through their voluntary activities.

Table 11: Logistic Regression of the Determinants of the Reason for Volunteering — Improve Job Opportunities

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Improve Job Opportunities or Not
Constant	0.410 (0.000)
Female	1.216 (0.000)
Age	
35-44	0.628 (0.000)
45-54	0.377 (0.000)
55-64	0.349 (0.000)
Education	
High school	0.462 (0.000)
Some post-secondary	0.560 (0.000)
Post-secondary diploma	0.548 (0.000)
University degree	0.485 (0.000)
Marital Status	
Single	1.388 (0.000)
Widow/er	0.533 (0.000)
Separated/divorced	0.982 (0.006)
No Children	1.323 (0.000)
Region	
Quebec	0.685 (0.000)
Ontario	1.165 (0.000)
Prairies	1.284 (0.000)
British Columbia	0.879 (0.000)
Part Time	1.506 (0.000)
N (unweighted)	3,751

Notes:

^a Benchmark independent variables (i.e., reference category removed) are Age - 25-34 years; Education - Less than High School; Martial Status - Married; No Children - Children; Region - Atlantic; Part time – Full time.

Estimated for individuals aged 25-64 years, employed excluding self-employed, who are volunteers.

P-values are in parantheses. P-values less than 0.001 are significant.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

In general, there is little difference in the percentages of women and men's reporting of the skills they feel volunteering gives them. An important exception to this is that higher percentages of women report that volunteering either increases their chances of finding a job or has already helped them secure employment as indicated in the final two columns of Table 12. For example, among those aged between 25 and 64, 51.7 percent of women reported that volunteering improved their chances of finding a job whereas this was the case for only 35.1 percent of men. Volunteering as a job search/advancement strategy appears to be more important for women than men. Women may lack the social networks men may have and therefore rely more on volunteer work to make the contacts that will enhance their job search and advancement. That is, in the transition between unpaid domestic work and the paid labour market, the use of the voluntary sphere as a facilitator of this transition may be more important for women than for men.

The data presented here are from the point of view of the volunteer and consider who volunteers and in what ways. The results were disaggregated by four different population groups and by gender. This was done since we are interested particularly in the employed group of volunteers and in gender differences within this group. We focus on the employed group only in the next section as we turn our lens from the volunteer to that of the employer and examine how employers support the volunteer activity of their employees.

Table 12: Skills Gained from Volunteering

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting					
	New Skills Can Apply Directly to Job	Fund-raising Skills	Tech. Skills (e.g., first aid)	Org./ Manag. Skills	Increased Knowledge (i.e., health)	Communications Skills
Men and Women						
Age 15 and above	37.4	45.1	32.9	57.2	63.4	67.6
Age 25 ~ 64	35.1	44.2	31.4	56.5	64.3	66.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	34.8	45.0	30.3	56.3	63.2	65.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	43.0	53.2	35.2	62.2	69.2	70.7
Men						
Age 15 and above	37.6	42.4	35.0	57.2	62.9	68.3
Age 25 ~ 64	35.7	41.4	34.2	56.8	64.6	67.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	35.5	43.4	34.9	57.3	63.5	68.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	43.8	51.3	38.9	62.7	70.3	74.2
Women						
Age 15 and above	37.2	47.3	31.0	57.2	63.8	67.1
Age 25 ~ 64	34.5	46.5	29.1	56.3	64.1	65.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	34.2	46.5	25.9	55.5	62.9	63.5
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	42.1	55.1	31.3	61.7	68.1	67.6

Table 12: Skills Gained from Volunteering (cont'd)

Population Groups	Percentage of Volunteers Reporting				
	Interpersonal Skills	Some Other Skill or Knowledge	Improve Chances of Success	Improve Chances of Finding a Job	Helped to Obtain Employment
Men and Women					
Age 15 and above	78.6	0.1	32.2	61.6	14.3
Age 25 ~ 64	78.4	0.1	29.9	51.7	13.2
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	78.5	0.2	29.2	0	13.7
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	84.8	0.1	38.2	0	17.2
Men					
Age 15 and above	77.0	0.1	32.3	50.9	11.9
Age 25 ~ 64	77.8	0.1	30.5	35.1	10.6
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	77.8	0.2	29.8	0	11.2
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	83.7	0	37.9	0	12.8
Women					
Age 15 and above	80.0	0.1	32.1	67.8	16.4
Age 25 ~ 64	78.8	0.1	29.3	60.0	15.4
Age 25 ~ 64, employed	79.2	0.1	28.6	0	16.0
Age 25 ~ 64, employed, employer support	85.9	0.3	38.6	0	21.7

Note:

Individuals may report more than one skill.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

What are the gender differences in employers' valuations of workers' volunteer efforts?

What types of voluntary work by employees do employers support? How do these types differ from non-employer supported voluntary work?

Data from our Employer Survey indicate that 20 of the 123 organizations surveyed did not support the voluntary activities of their employees. Fourteen of these 20 organizations indicated that the reason for this was that they had not received any requests from employees for support. Two organizations reported that their organizations had been asked by employees, but that they did not wish to support any volunteer activities. Three organizations responded that they had been asked by employees but declined to support the particular requests although they might be willing to consider other requests deemed to be more suitable. One organization responded that it would support voluntary activities if governments also contributed.

The results indicate that a substantial majority of organizations, which have not supported employee volunteer activity have not done so because they have not been approached to do so. There would appear to be a low level of opposition to voluntary activity per se by employers.

Results from the Employer Survey indicate that, for organizations providing support for voluntary activities, first, they provide a range of forms of support and, second, they often provide several different forms of support. The five most common forms, in rank order, were:

- donated financially to the organization (69 percent);
- approval to take time off or to use work time for volunteer activities (67 percent);
- approval for use of facilities or equipment (66 percent);
- approval of change of work hours (63 percent); and
- donated prizes etc. (62 percent).

The percentage of organizations indicating use of each form of support is given in parenthesis.

Apart from contributions to the voluntary organization (either financially or in-kind), the most common forms of support are in the form of time reductions and time flexibility for employees. Given the time constraints on volunteering identified above, the popularity of these latter forms of employee support is not surprising and meets a clear need. This result may also explain why the hours of volunteering by employees with employer support approaches that of the population as a whole and is significantly higher than those employed volunteers who do not receive employer support.

We are able to examine gender differences in the forms in which support is given through the NSGVP. The percentage of volunteers receiving different types of employer support is shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Percentage of Volunteers Who Receive Employer Support by Type of Employer Support

Type of Employer Support Received	Women (%)	Men (%)
Use facilities	58.5	60.5
Time off	51.0	61.2
Change work hours	47.3	55.0
Recognition	47.1	39.2
Other support:	15.6	12.4
Prizes	37.2	37.5
Company goods	12.9	13.5
Financially	27.7	33.6
Transport	2.4	7.7
Entry fees	38.0	31.0
Other	0.4	100.0
Employed volunteers receiving employer support	722,600	729,400
Employed volunteers	1,534,500	1,433,900

Notes:

For volunteers who are employed, aged 25-64 years, and receiving employer support for volunteer activities. Individuals may report more than one type of support.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

These estimates show that the use of facilities is similar between men and women volunteers. However, there is a 10 percentage point difference in the number of men and women receiving employer support in the form of time off and a change in work hours. Here, men receive more employer support in these forms than women do. As pointed out above, time constraints are important for both men and women in voluntary activity, but are reported to be more binding by women than by men; however, it is men who are more likely to receive time off from their employers to support their voluntary activities. Women, in contrast, are more likely to receive employer support through recognition than men.

One possible explanation for this surprising result is that women are more likely to be part-time employees and are not in need of the time flexibility, which appears to be more readily extended by employers to men. To examine this possibility further, we disaggregate the forms of employer support by part- and full-time employees. These results are shown in Table 14. Once the disaggregation by employment hours is done, the main result still stands: men are more likely to receive employer support in the form of time flexibility (time off and change of hours) whereas women are more likely to receive recognition. In terms of time off, both men and women full-time employees are more likely to receive employer support in this form than part-time employees. However, for both full- and part-time employees men are more likely to receive time off than women. Full-time men employees are more likely to receive employer support in terms of changes to work hours than women full-time employees. Part-time women employees are marginally less likely to receive support in the form of changes to work hours than part-time men. Recognition continues to be a much more common form of employer support for women, whether part- or full-time, than for men.

Table 14: Percentage of Volunteers Who Receive Employer Support, by Type of Employer Support and Employed Status

Type of Employer Support	Women (%)		Men (%)	
	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time
Use facilities	42.5	62.7	70.1	60.2
Time off	42.0	53.4	50.4	61.5
Change work hours	47.9	47.2	48.3	55.2
Recognition	45.5	47.5	28.8	39.2
Other support:	11.9	16.6	17.1	12.3
Prizes	27.1	39.1	100.0	39.2
Company goods	1.3	15.1	100.0	14.1
Financially	41.4	25.1	29.0	33.8
Transportation	2.6	2.4	100.0	8.0
Entry fees	31.5	39.2	71.0	29.1
Other	97.8	0.5	100.0	100.0
Volunteers receiving employer support	151,700	570,900	24,400	704,900

Notes:

For volunteers who are employed, aged 25-64 years, and receiving employer support for volunteer activities. Individuals may report more than one type of support.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

We can compare the types of voluntary activity that are employer supported with those undertaken by employees without employer support from the NSGVP. These estimates are presented in tables 15 and 16.

The estimates are obtained by comparing the volunteer rates across a broad range of activities for those employees, who reported that they received employer support and those who reported that they did not. As such, we do not have direct data on the types of activity that are employer supported. Nevertheless, we are able to look for patterns that may provide some indication of this.

For women, as shown in Table 15, there is a consistent pattern in columns 3 and 4. In all 15 volunteer activity categories, women employees with employer support have higher volunteer rates than employees without employer support. Women employees who report receiving employer support have higher volunteer rates across the full range of activities.

Table 15: Volunteer Rates by Type of Volunteer Activity, by Employment and Employer Support Status, Women

Type of Volunteer Activity	Women Volunteers			
	All Women (25-64)	Employed		
		Both ES and No ES	No ES	With ES
Canvassing, campaigning, fundraising	44.4	46.5	41.3	52.3
Board member	43.5	42.8	38.3	47.9
Information for education	29.4	28.2	22.0	35.1
Organize activity	57.5	57.2	51.6	63.4
Consulting, executive, administrative work	31.6	30.6	26.4	35.3
Teach, coach	23.6	23.4	20.8	26.2
Care, support, counselling	25.1	23.3	19.9	27.2
Health care	7.1	6.5	5.6	7.4
Self-help group	8.3	7.5	6.9	8.1
Collect, serve food	25.1	23.9	19.2	29.1
Maintain, repair building	8.9	8.8	7.7	10.1
Driving	19.5	18.6	14.8	22.8
First aid, firefighting	3.9	4.6	2.8	6.7
Protect environment	12.7	11.1	8.3	14.3
Other	22.5	21.4	20.5	22.3

Note:

ES refers to employer support.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

A similar pattern exists for men. As shown in Table 16, in 14 of the 15 categories, men's volunteer rates are higher for employees who receive employer support. The single exception is the self-help group. These two tables confirm the importance of employer support for men and women's volunteer work across a broad range of activities. Taking tables 13 to 16 together, it would seem that the main differences occur not in the *range* of activities for which men and women receive employer support for their volunteer activities but in the *form* that this support takes.

Table 16: Volunteer Rates by Type of Volunteer Activity, by Employment and Employer Support Status, Men

Type of Volunteer Activity	Men Volunteers			
	All Men 25-64	Employed		
		Both ES and No ES	No ES	With ES
Canvassing campaigning, fundraising	38.6	39.8	37.4	42.1
Board member	46.9	46.1	40.2	51.9
Information for education	31.1	29.7	22.8	36.3
Organize activity	62.1	61.7	55.5	67.6
Consulting, executive, administrative work	34.0	32.6	26.3	38.7
Teach, coach	31.8	34.5	30.0	38.8
Care, support, counselling	23.5	21.6	19.8	23.3
Health care	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7
Self-help group	8.6	6.6	7.6	5.7
Collect, serve food	21.9	20.1	17.0	23.1
Maintain, repair building	24.7	23.5	22.4	24.6
Driving	22.9	21.7	19.4	23.8
First aid, firefighting	10.3	11.6	7.5	15.5
Protect environment	18.7	18.4	16.3	20.3
Other	17.0	16.5	13.8	19.1

Note: ES refers to employer support.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

Finally, returning to results from the Employer Survey, employees' informal voluntary activity was also supported by employers. In fact, 55 percent of employers reported that they had been asked to support these types of activities. Many employers have policies allowing for time to be taken for family and care reasons.

Do employers support men's voluntary activities more than women's?

Data from the NSGVP indicate that 51 percent of employed male volunteers receive support from their employers in some form. For employed women volunteers, 47 percent report support from their employers. (See Figure 2 and Table 13.) This suggests that men and women receive roughly equal degrees of support from their employers.

In the Employer Survey, 77 percent of employers reported that there were no gender differences in employees supported by their organization and 18 percent reported that women were more likely to be supported than men. Forty-two percent reported that full-time employees were more likely to be supported with 58 percent reporting no difference between full-time and part-time employees. About three quarters of employers reported no age difference in their employee volunteers and 78 percent reported that volunteers were likely to be found equally throughout their income ranges.

This suggests that, from the employers' points of view, there are no differences between male and female participation in volunteer activity. From the Employer Survey, the majority of respondents indicated that there were no differences in male and female participation. This point was followed up in the telephone interviews, and again, respondents indicated that there was no apparent difference, although they also indicated that it was not formally measured. Likewise, respondents in the in-depth employer interviews could not identify ways in which their policies

might contribute to different behavioural responses of men and women to the volunteer activities. On questions relating to the benefits accruing to the workplace and business as a result of the employee volunteer effort, respondents did not identify any gender differences. Thus, these findings indicate there are no policies in place that deliberately discriminate in the allocation of employer support for volunteer work on the basis of age, income or gender.

To examine whether this outcome of gender neutrality in employer support for volunteer work is confirmed in a larger sample, we turn to the NSGVP. To assess this issue, we examine the determinants of employer support by estimating a binary logistic model where the dependent variable is whether the employee receives employer support, and independent variables include part-time work status, occupation and industry. We also include as independent variables age, education, marital status, presence of children and region as these demographic characteristics may also affect employees' decisions to seek employer support, as well as, employers' decisions to provide employer support for the employee's volunteer activity.¹¹

We first examine whether employer support for volunteer work is received equally by men and women. The results show that women are less likely than men to receive employer support, even after controlling for a set of demographic and employment factors, as indicated by an odds ratio of 0.830 on the female variable in Table 17, Model 1. Thus, while employers may not have policies that explicitly discriminate against women, it is nevertheless the case that women are typically supported less in their voluntary activities by their employers than men. This may be because they make fewer requests or because employers are less favourably disposed to extend support to women. The results from the Employer Survey and interviews suggest that the latter is unlikely to be a major reason. A further possibility is that women are more likely to be employed in occupations or industries where the scope for employer support is more limited. That is, if women are employed in industries where employers are less likely to offer donations or prizes (such as the public sector, for example) or where time flexibility is less possible because of the job process, then occupational segregation may also be a factor in explaining women's lower level of employer support. However, even after controlling for occupation and industry of employment, women still have lower odds of receiving employer support.

To examine the effects of industrial and occupational segregation further, we follow a two-step process. The first step examines whether men and women in some occupations and industries report systematically lower levels of employer support than others. This would be evidence that the work process in some occupations and industries makes employer support for employee voluntary activity more difficult to implement. If some occupations and industries are found systematically to report less employer support than others then a second step is needed. This involves estimating whether those low reporting occupations and industries contain a disproportionate number of women employees. If this is the case, then this would provide evidence that the lower levels of employer support for employee voluntary activity reported by women is the result of women being disproportionately employed in those occupations and industries where employer support is more difficult to extend.

There exists considerable variation in the provision of employer support across industries and occupations for both women and men (see Table 17). For women, the odds ratio for the provision of employer support across industries, compared to the benchmark industry (public

administration), varies from 0.272 to 1.552; further, eight industries out of 17 have an odds ratio less than the benchmark industry (public administration) and two industries being different from the benchmark is not statistically significant. For example, for women in retail trade, the odds ratio of receiving employer support, compared to the benchmark industry (public administration) is 0.663, whereas, the odds ratio in the finance, insurance and real estate industry is 1.366. Industries in which women have higher odds of receiving employer support compared to the benchmark industry, however, are not the same industries in which men have a higher odds ratio of receiving employer support. This finding points to the fact that industrial and occupational characteristics do play a role in determining the provision of employer support. However, there is no systematic pattern, that is, the occupation and industry effects are not common to both men and women. In fact, in only five of the nine occupational categories do men and women report the same ranking (higher or lower) with respect to the (same) benchmark category. For industry, only three of the 17 categories show the same ranking relative to the benchmark case for men and women. These results clearly demonstrate that there are not sets of occupations and industries with systematically lower levels of employer support for all employees; there are considerable variations between levels of employer support for men and women *within* the same occupation and industry. Thus, we conclude that while the occupational and industrial sector does influence levels of employer support, it does not do so in a systematic way that would support the hypothesis that the lower levels of employer support reported by women could be explained by the fact that they disproportionately work in occupations or industries where the work process limits the opportunity for employer support.¹²

As a further comment, the benchmark group for the industry variables is public administration. This allows us to examine whether there are any systematic differences between levels of employer support in the public and private sectors. As the odds ratios for both men and women indicate, examples can readily be found of private sector industries that offer both more and less employer support than the benchmark group. This suggests that levels of employer support are not systematically related to whether employees are in the public or private sectors.

Table 17: Logistic Regression of Employer Support

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Employer Support or Not		
	Men and Women (1)	Men (2)	Women (3)
Constant	0.917 (0.000)	1.088 (0.000)	0.491 (0.000)
Female	0.830 (0.000)	--	--
Age			
35-44	0.953 (0.000)	0.778 (0.000)	1.101 (0.000)
45-54	0.827 (0.000)	0.712 (0.000)	0.976 (0.000)
55-64	0.716 (0.000)	0.592 (0.000)	0.914 (0.000)
Education			
High school	1.067 (0.000)	1.128 (0.000)	1.039 (0.000)
Some post-secondary	0.971 (0.000)	1.073 (0.000)	0.934 (0.000)
Post-secondary diploma	1.112 (0.000)	1.317 (0.000)	1.004 (0.602)
University degree	1.017 (0.002)	1.100 (0.000)	0.992 (0.333)
Marital Status			
Single	1.079 (0.000)	0.909 (0.000)	1.175 (0.000)
Widow/er	1.737 (0.000)	0.817 (0.000)	1.839 (0.000)
Separated/divorced	1.134 (0.000)	1.487 (0.000)	1.019 (0.001)
No Children	0.897 (0.000)	0.795 (0.000)	0.909 (0.000)
Region			
Quebec	0.692 (0.000)	0.781 (0.000)	0.584 (0.000)
Ontario	0.847 (0.000)	0.753 (0.000)	0.941 (0.000)
Prairies	1.181 (0.000)	1.088(0.000)	1.325 (0.000)
British Columbia	0.854 (0.000)	0.976 (0.002)	0.803 (0.000)
Part Time	0.704 (0.000)	0.708 (0.000)	0.654 (0.000)
Occupation			
Management	2.068 (0.000)	2.212 (0.000)	2.320 (0.000)
Business, finance and administration	1.356 (0.000)	1.550 (0.000)	1.820 (0.000)
Natural and applied science	1.103 (0.000)	1.148 (0.000)	0.986 (0.404)
Health occupations	1.177 (0.000)	1.416 (0.000)	1.715 (0.000)
Social, education, religion	2.094 (0.000)	2.036 (0.000)	2.987 (0.000)
Art, culture and recreation	1.903 (0.000)	0.455 (0.000)	5.859 (0.000)
Sales and service	1.569 (0.000)	1.194 (0.000)	2.786 (0.000)
Trades, transportation	1.030 (0.000)	0.850 (0.000)	3.711 (0.000)
Primary industry	0.597 (0.000)	0.491 (0.000)	2.559 (0.000)

Table 17: Logistic Regression of Employer Support (cont'd)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Employer Support or Not		
	Men and Women (1)	Men (2)	Women (3)
Industry			
Agriculture	0.800 (0.000)	1.049(0.046)	0.378 (0.000)
Forestry, fishing, mining	1.214 (0.000)	1.409 (0.000)	0.515 (0.000)
Utilities	0.886 (0.000)	0.815 (0.000)	1.241 (0.000)
Construction	1.107 (0.000)	1.477 (0.000)	0.272 (0.000)
Manufacturing — durables	1.089 (0.000)	1.094 (0.000)	1.044 (0.001)
Manufacturing — non-durables	1.267 (0.000)	1.195 (0.000)	1.536 (0.000)
Wholesale trade	0.856 (0.000)	0.817 (0.000)	1.308 (0.000)
Retail trade	0.818 (0.000)	1.011 (0.285)	0.663 (0.000)
Transport and warehousing	0.845 (0.000)	0.750 (0.000)	1.099 (0.000)
Finance, insurance, real estate	1.169 (0.000)	0.978 (0.014)	1.366 (0.000)
Professional, scientific, technical	1.028 (0.000)	1.203 (0.000)	0.939 (0.000)
Management, administration	0.833 (0.000)	0.485 (0.000)	1.552 (0.000)
Educational services	0.880 (0.000)	0.875 (0.000)	0.842 (0.000)
Health care, social assistance	1.076 (0.000)	1.247 (0.000)	1.011 (0.160)
Information, culture, recreation	0.908 (0.000)	1.249 (0.000)	0.768 (0.000)
Accommodation, food services	1.085 (0.000)	1.127 (0.000)	0.957 (0.000)
Other services	1.417 (0.000)	1.247 (0.000)	1.386 (0.000)
N (unweighted)	3,751	1,707	2,044

Notes:

Benchmark independent variables (i.e., the reference category removed) are Female – Male; Age - 25-34 Years; Education - Less than High School; Martial Status – Married; No Children - Children; Region - Atlantic; Part Time – Full Time; Occupation - Processing Manufacturing and Utilities; Industry - Public Administration.

Estimated for employed individuals (excluding self-employed) aged 25-64 years, who are volunteers, using cross-section weights.

P-values are in parantheses. P-values less than 0.001 are significant.

Source: Authors' calculations using data from the NSGVP, 2000, with the sample survey weights applied.

Do employers value equally voluntary work that enhances employees' job-related skills, enhances the employer's reputation and makes a contribution to the wider community, regardless of its impact on the employer?

Fifty percent of employers in the Employer Survey indicated that they actively encouraged volunteer activity among their employees. When examining their motivations for doing this, it appears that organizations believe employee volunteer activity brings particular benefits to the organization. Almost 70 percent of organizations agreed or strongly agreed that volunteer activity enhances the skills of their work force. As one employer respondent indicated:

We believe it expands their skill set beyond the day to day role they have.

This result is of interest in that, as seen above, employees, especially women employees, see volunteer work as a way of enhancing their job skills and employment possibilities. As one female human resources director said:

Most of my colleagues in my service clubs are professional women who feel that volunteering is a way of acquiring new skills and experience as well as a way of networking and giving back to the community.

Fifty-six percent and 85 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that employee volunteer activities enhance employee loyalty to the organization and improves the organizations' reputation.

Many employers, therefore, see substantial benefits to employee volunteer activity, and this helps explain why so many actively encourage volunteer activity. The scale of this encouragement varies. Some employers, such as credit unions for example, have community involvement and support as part of their corporate vision. Employers, such as this, have therefore developed extensive mechanisms to support employee voluntary activity, such as forming volunteer teams, electronically distributing monthly activity bulletins and having a draw among volunteers who contribute a certain minimum number of volunteer hours for an extra week of paid vacation time. One employer held information sessions on how to include family members in volunteer activity so employees were not forced to choose between volunteer time and family time.

Many employers offer matching financial support for employee-supported charities and some of the larger employers had established their own foundations to which employees could apply for support. Some large employers either officially sponsored campaigns (such as the United Way) or had their own charities. One employer reported having one day per year when all employees would undertake a community project from a list supplied by the employer. In some of these latter cases, the "voluntary" nature of the activity might be open to debate.

Employers indicated that corporate social responsibility and pressures from shareholders for "triple bottom line" reporting had led them to seek more ways of increasing and supporting voluntary activities by their employees. In some instances, senior managers were expected to set an example. Other employer respondents asked us for ways in which they could encourage employee volunteer activity and identified the need for a best practices manual.

All of these responses indicate that employers are aware of the benefits which employee volunteer activity can bring to employees, to their organizations and to the communities. In general, there is a high level of support by employers for employee voluntary activity.

Do the voluntary activities of some women receive greater support from their employers?

Expectations for voluntary work may differ by job function within the organization. That is, while 50 percent of employers in the Employer Survey indicated they actively encouraged voluntary activity by their employees, this encouragement may be experienced differently at various levels within the organizational hierarchy.

To examine this, we asked questions concerning the expectations placed on senior managers. Twenty-seven percent of employers in the Employer Survey reported that senior managers were expected to undertake certain types of voluntary work, such as being a member of a board. However, only eight percent of employers reported that women in senior managerial positions

typically undertook more voluntary work, because of the smaller number of women typically found at this level in the organization; 47 percent reported that this was not the case. A further 46 percent reported that they did not know whether this was the case. The large “unknown” response indicates that employers typically do not monitor the volunteer activities and commitments undertaken by their senior managers and are unaware of, or unconcerned by, any possible gender imbalances which such commitments may involve. As one employer respondent said:

We do not track by gender (nor do we really care which gender does more volunteering). Our policy is designed to assist those people who want to volunteer.

Do women’s organizations view employer-supported employee voluntary activity in the same ways as other voluntary organizations?

The NSGVP provides data on the types of voluntary activities that receive support from individuals. These data are summarized in Table 6. While this is useful for analyzing gender differences in individual volunteer activity, it does not shed light on how women’s organizations may differ from other organizations. The level of abstraction, and categories used in the NSGVP do not permit this. For this reason, we designed our own Voluntary Organization Survey as explained in Chapter 4. The results presented in this chapter draw on this survey instrument.

What types of employer-supported employee voluntary activity would be most useful to women’s organizations?

The NSGVP identifies a number of forms in which employer support is given to employee volunteers. The extent to which these forms of support are viewed as valuable by voluntary organizations, however, has not been examined. One part of the Voluntary Organization Survey was therefore geared to answering this question and to analyzing whether there are any differences in responses by women’s and other organizations.

The question asked took the form of “how much do you think it would help volunteers with your organization if support in the form of [approval for use of employer’s facilities or equipment/change work hours to accommodate volunteer activity/provide other forms of support such as prizes, company goods, make donations or offer transportation] was available?” The results are presented in Table 18.

The first point to note is that all three forms of employer support are seen as valuable by voluntary organizations. Second, the responses for use of facilities and change of work hours are very similar for women’s and other organizations. For example, just over a half of both sets of organizations thought that changes in work hours for their volunteers would “help a lot.” Women’s and other organizations also reported similar levels of valuation of use of facilities (45 and 42 percent respectively for the help a lot category).

Third, there does appear to be a difference in the valuation of employer support in the form of prizes, company goods and donations. While just over half of other organizations indicated that this would help a lot, 82 percent of women’s organizations thought that it would help a lot. Only

two percent of women’s organizations thought this form of employer support would help “not much at all” whereas 17 percent of other organizations responded this way.

Table 18: Voluntary Organizations’ Assessment of the Value of Different Forms of Employer Support

Value of Different Forms of Employer Support	Women’s Organizations %	Other Organizations %
Use of Facilities and Equipment		
Help a lot	45	42
Help a little	32	33
Not much help	15	25
Don’t know	8	3
	n=62	n=36
Change in Work Hours		
Help a lot	53	53
Help a little	33	25
Not much help	10	19
Don’t know	5	3
	n=61	n=36
Prizes, Donations, Company Goods		
Help a lot	82	53
Help a little	11	19
Not much help	2	17
Don’t know	5	11
	n=61	n=36

Note:

The number of women’s organizations (n) varies as all organizations did not answer all questions.

Source: Authors’ calculations from the Voluntary Organization Survey.

Respondents from women’s organizations were particularly keen to stress the help that employer support in the form of donations would provide. It seems that women’s organizations face greater pressures around fundraising than other organizations do and, hence, four out of five women’s organizations identified financial support as being a great benefit to them. Indeed, for women’s organizations, financial support was seen as being the most helpful of any of three forms of employer support identified in our survey.

Given the high valuation levels for employer support for volunteers given by both women’s and other organizations, we also wanted to investigate whether voluntary organizations approached employers directly for support for their employees.

To consider this, we asked women’s and other organizations which of four possible approaches to employer support best described their own organization. The distribution between the four possible responses is shown in Table 19.

From Table 19, it can be seen that the most common approach for both types of organization is that they have not actively sought out employer support for their volunteers, although this seems to be more prevalent among other organizations. Both sets of organizations are also similar in the percentage that report they have actively sought out employer support. The results do indicate, however, that women’s organizations are more likely to report that they would like employer

support for their volunteers, but do not feel it would be forthcoming because employers would not be interested in supporting the types of services they provide. Thus, the results indicate there is also a small but still important number of women's organizations that feel the work they do would not be valued by the corporate sector. Women's organizations are also marginally more likely to wish to remain at arms' length from employers.

Table 19: Organizational Approaches to Employer Support for Volunteers

View on Employer Support	Percentage in Agreement with Statements	
	Women's Organizations %	Other Organizations %
We haven't given much thought to it and have not been proactive in this area.	44	52
We have thought about it and have sought to help our volunteers get assistance from their employers.	21	23
We have thought about it and would like employers' support but don't think they would be interested in supporting the sorts of services that we provide.	15	3
We have thought about it but have decided that we should act independently of employers and so have not approached them.	20	16
	n=61	n=31

Source: Authors' calculations from the Voluntary Organization Survey.

The most common response for both sets of organizations, however, was that they had not thought of approaching employers. In fact, many respondents commented that participating in our survey had brought issues to their attention that had not previously been considered. Typical of responses here are comments made by one executive director of a women's organization.

Thanks for making us think about it. We just try to be very flexible and work with the volunteers to find times when they can help out — around their schedule. We've never thought about the reverse aspect before.

Do women's organizations report similar degrees of support and satisfaction with employer-supported voluntary activity as other organizations?

Despite relatively similar approaches, there is a difference in the degree to which the two sets of organizations are satisfied with the support they receive from employers. As noted above, there is a greater perception among women's organizations that employers would not be willing to support the types of activities in which they engage. This perception is also borne out by the lower levels of satisfaction with employer support reported by women's organizations. The data are presented in Table 20.

Table 20: Organizational Satisfaction Levels with Employer Support for Their Volunteers

Satisfaction Level	Women's Organizations	Other Organizations
Satisfied	29 (36)	36 (50)
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	40 (50)	33 (46)
Dissatisfied	11 (14)	3 (4)
No opinion	19	28
	n=62	n=36

Note:

Percentage of those with an opinion in parentheses.

Source: Authors' calculations from the Voluntary Organization Survey.

The results in Table 20 suggest that other organizations are more likely to be satisfied with the level of support employers provide for their volunteers. A significant percentage of organizations did not have an opinion on levels of employer support, and if these organizations are omitted, it can be seen (from the percentages in parentheses) that women's organizations are less likely to be satisfied with the employer support their volunteers receive and more likely to be dissatisfied than other organizations. With the "no opinion" group omitted, the sample sizes are small but the results are consistent with the findings reported in Table 19.

What policies could potentially facilitate employer support of women's volunteer work?

What policies guide the decisions of employers to support volunteer work of their employees? Do private sector firms and public sector agencies have policies and, if so, how do the policies affect employee volunteer work, especially that performed by women?

There appears to be significant differences between employers in the levels at which decisions concerning employee requests for voluntary activity support are made. The majority of employers reported considerable local autonomy with employees making requests to their immediate supervisor in the first instance for employer support. The following responses were obtained in this respect:

- decisions made at the local level (50 percent);
- follow company-wide policies but with considerable local discretion (22 percent);
- referred to head office (20 percent); and
- follow detailed company-wide policy manual (seven percent).

About one third of the respondents indicated their organization had a formal policy to support volunteer activity. Formal policies are more common among the larger organizations in our survey and in those that include clearly identified "community values" as part of their vision. The nature of the policies varies considerably. Some examples include offering one or two days of paid work time/year to volunteer with specific opportunities identified, establishing a paid position to co-ordinate volunteer activities, and recognizing volunteer activities of employees and providing prizes for volunteers who contribute more than 40 hours per year of volunteer

activity on their own time. In unionized workplaces, these policies are included in collective agreements. For example, some collective agreements include provision for one day of paid leave to undertake voluntary activity per year. However, while this provides employees with rights to engage in voluntary activity, it often sets the maximum time that can be used for this purpose and reduces flexibility in this respect. That is, several human resources directors indicated they would support requests for time off for volunteer work up to the (typically) 7.5 hours per year stipulated in the collective agreement but could not sanction more even if they wanted. This amounts to about five or six percent of the average total number of hours employed volunteers contribute to voluntary activity each year.

While the remaining two thirds of the organizations reported not having formal policies, several of these organizations have quite detailed procedures for supporting volunteer activities. Some mechanisms include a social committee and newsletters. In other organizations, volunteer activity is encouraged, and individual employees are empowered to take on organizational roles for the company. A number of employers reported that spontaneous initiatives, such as those in response to the South Asian Tsunami relief appeal, had been supported by their organizations.

Respondents indicated that the strengths of having a policy are that it makes a statement about values of the organization and helps human resources directors and employees know which activities will potentially be supported. It may also reduce any perception of bias toward certain employees (i.e., supporting some employees but not others).

In terms of the types of non-profit organizations that firms are willing to support financially or through employee volunteer time, most employers indicated that a wide variety of non-profit organizations are considered eligible as long as they are charities. Large non-profit organizations, such as the United Way, Cancer Society and Red Cross, are included by most employers; however, many employers also indicated they are involved in assisting specific local non-profit organizations, such as food banks, women's shelters, conservation projects and societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals. The smaller non-profit organizations are often identified by employees.

What types of employer-supported “voluntary activity regimes” can be found in different provincial jurisdictions within Canada, as reflected in employment standards, and across countries, such as Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom and Sweden? What implications do they have for women?

At present, employee voluntary work in Canada is conditioned by an ad hoc set of arrangements. Some organizations have written policies with respect to how much volunteer time may be taken on company time (with pay) as part of their collective agreements. Typically, this is specified as one day per year. As noted in our earlier discussion, this provides information for employees on their entitlement and provides a mechanism for equitable treatment of all employees. The disadvantage of this approach is that by formalizing the procedures it may limit voluntary work by removing the ability of supervisors to use their discretion if employees request to undertake volunteer work in excess of the stated limit. Other organizations do not have formal policies, but respond on a case by case basis to requests for support for employee voluntary work.

Given that our findings indicate that women employees receive less time off to engage in voluntary activity than male employees, then it may be the case that wider use of more formal policies would benefit women as it would provide guarantees of their time entitlement, which they may not be currently receiving. At present, the national non-profit organization, Volunteer Canada, provides a variety of services and information to private sector and government organizations wishing to formalize their employee volunteer policies. Private sector management consulting firms also offer some of these services. Extending the use of formal policies may, however, prove to be a long process if it is left to individual organizations.

This raises the question of whether a better approach might be to include employee volunteer time provisions in the Canada Labour Code and in provincial employment standards legislation. These provide the legal framework within which all employers operate and are designed to regulate the rights of employees for time off for various purposes, such as statutory holidays. Over time, these pieces of legislation have changed to include provisions for vacation pay and maternity, parental and adoption leave entitlement. Indeed, legislation is continually being amended in this area with emergency leave (in Ontario), family responsibility leave (in British Columbia, New Brunswick and Quebec) and compassionate care leave (Canada Labour Code) being some examples of recent changes.¹³ Thus, provisions for employee time off (both paid and unpaid) are continually being considered and result in legislative changes to reflect changing attitudes and conditions in society. To date, no provision has been made for employee voluntary activity; however, a case can be made for further extending the legislation to include employee volunteer work. Employee volunteer work can be seen as an extension of the principle of giving employees time off for family-related causes to include wider social causes. It might also be thought of as akin to the paid leave given to employees for jury duty (in provincial employment standards legislation) or to vote in federal elections under the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*; participation in civic duties, such as voting and jury duty, is supported by employers through legislated employee entitlements. Participation in social capital building volunteer activities could be supported on similar grounds.

In general, a comparative approach would also be useful in assessing whether there are policies in other countries to support employee volunteer activity and whether any such policies might be applicable to Canada. This is an area, however, where further policy research is needed. There is a gap in the existing literature on voluntary work as it pertains to comparative approaches to employer-supported voluntary activities. Studies of, for example, Australia, the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries, might be useful for suggesting alternative legislation and organizations' policies to support employee voluntary activity.

This is likely to require specialized research, however, as existing statistical data do not include information on employer-supported voluntary activity. For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released in 2001 a report entitled *Voluntary Work Australia 2000*, based on survey work undertaken in 2000. The report provides information on the gender distribution of voluntary work and the gender distribution of participation in voluntary activities. Similar to the findings for Canada reported here, they indicate that women have higher participation rates in voluntary activity (33 percent for women versus 31 percent for men). However, among full-time employees, the participation rate is higher for men than women (34 percent versus 31 percent). The largest difference comes when considering the gender differences in hours contributed to

volunteer work. In this case, the ABS (2001: 4) reported that “among males the largest contribution (58% of male hours) came from those employed full-time while among females the largest contribution (44% of female hours) was made by those not in the labour force.” It would appear, therefore, that as in Canada, employed women in Australia operate under a greater time constraint than employed men, and this results in fewer volunteer hours being undertaken. Unfortunately, the ABS survey does not include information on any possible employer support and so it is not possible to make comparisons with Canada in this respect.

In Sweden, researchers analyzing data on voluntary activity concluded (similar to our conclusion for Canada) that “both women and men choose associations in accordance with traditional gender roles” (Vogel et al. 2003: 29). Using U.S. evidence, gender differences in volunteering and work status are also evident.¹⁴ However, while there is great interest in social capital in member countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and while data on gender differences in volunteer activity are now available, there is no comparable statistical data available specifically on employer-supported employee voluntary work.

The provision of data on employer-supported employee voluntary work would be a necessary first step in enabling cross-country comparative analysis. Also important would be developing a theoretical framework for analyzing international experiences of employer-supported voluntary work from which policy implications could then be drawn. Academic interest in volunteer work and social capital is relatively new, and comprehensive international comparisons are rare. A study by Salamon and Sokolowski (2001) of The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project provides a good starting point. The study analyzed volunteer activity in 24 countries and concluded that international variations are best explained by considering the institutional context within which volunteer activity takes place. They distinguished between four types of path-dependent institutional regimes to explain both the level and type of volunteer activity undertaken as shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Relations between Regime Types and the Amount and Roles of Volunteers

Regime Type	Volunteer Amount	Dominant Volunteer Type
Social-democratic	High	Expressive
Liberal	High	Service
Corporatist	Moderate	Service
Statist	Low	Service

Source: Salaman and Sokolwski (2001: 16).

The liberal regime is one in which there is a preference for limited government with many services being left to the voluntary sector. In the social-democratic regime, in contrast, government provision of welfare services is high. However, this is still associated with high levels of volunteer mobilization, although this time not to provide services but to provide vehicles for advocacy of political, social and recreational interests. In corporatist states, the voluntary sector is preserved and supported by the state in order to provide legitimacy with social elites, provide for the provision of some services and contain demands for more extensive welfare services. The statist regime organizes society for the benefit of economic and corporate elites and is able to act with some autonomy in this respect as a result of weak and deferential

societal forces. In this latter regime therefore, voluntary activity is low (Salaman and Sokolwski 2001).

Unfortunately, Canada was not one of the 24 countries included in the study. It would, however, most likely be classified as a “liberal” regime type (along with Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States). The authors point out how the role of volunteers differs between these types of regimes and, therefore, policies are also likely to differ as they reflect these variations.

The specification of these regime types is, however, still at an aggregate level and resonates with the literature on social welfare regime types pioneered by Esping-Anderson (1990). This body of work is largely silent on gender relations, and recent feminist scholarship has sought to make comparative work on welfare states sensitive to the gender relations on which they are based.¹⁵ Since volunteer work cannot be analyzed in isolation from the three other sectors (private, family and government), as indicated in Chapter 2 of this report, the gender dimensions of volunteer regimes also need to be explicitly incorporated into the typology developed by Salaman and Sokolwski (2001). From this, policy implications could then be directly analyzed including those concerning employer-supported voluntary activity.

This indicates the need for data collection at the international level and more theoretical work in conceptualizing the gender dimensions of comparative volunteer regimes. The policy implications arising from this are twofold. First, it is clear that the incorporation of questions into the Canadian NSGVP, which enables a gendered analysis of employer-supported employee activity, was worthwhile and has highlighted some important issues with respect to gender equality. It is important that Status of Women Canada liaise with Statistics Canada to stress the importance of continuing to include these questions in subsequent surveys. Furthermore, inclusion of these questions in the NSGVP appears to be unique to Canada; it is therefore important for both agencies (Status of Women and Statistics Canada) to liaise with their counterpart ministries and bureaus in other countries to advocate for the inclusion of similar questions in their surveys. There are a significant number of surveys being undertaken in other countries collecting data on volunteer activity (in Australia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, for example), but the newness of this field for survey work has meant that there has not been the same degree of standardization of data collection in this as in other areas (such as paid economic activity and production). Canada can play an important role in assuring that such standardization occurs and gender indicators and employer support for employee voluntary activity measures are included in international surveys. Of course, further refinement of the Canadian survey, now renamed the Canadian Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating, to collect more information on employer-supported voluntary activity, such as how much of a volunteer’s activity is undertaken with employer support, would also be highly beneficial to further research in this area.

Second, it is evident that more theoretical work on types of volunteer regimes is needed to include gender dimensions and enhance cross-national comparative studies in this respect. The secondary literature in this area is very sparse. Research programs to support this area of research would be warranted.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One quarter of all volunteer work in Canada is undertaken by employed persons with some form of support from their employer (Luffman 2003). This report has examined how women employees and women's organization fare with respect to this support. To this end we have analyzed the 2000 NSGVP and designed three additional data gathering instruments: the Employer Survey, in-depth employer interviews and the Voluntary Organization Survey.

Summary of Findings

Our main findings can be summarized as follows.

Volunteer Rates and Hours

- Women have higher volunteer rates than men.
- Employed individuals have higher volunteer rates than non-employed individuals.
- Non-employed individuals spend more hours, on average, volunteering than employed individuals.
- Men, on average, spend more time volunteering than women.
- Workers with employer support volunteer more time, on average, than those who are employed but do not receive employer support.

Types of Volunteer Activities/Events/Organizations

- Women's voluntary activities are more likely than men's to be found in the "care economy" and in religious organizations.
- Men are more likely to volunteer for organizations in the business, law, political, union and service clubs categories than women.

Constraints on Voluntary Activity

- Time constraints are important for explaining the decision not to volunteer in general, but are more important for women than for men.
- Women volunteers who receive employer support spend, on average, 10 percent more time volunteering than women who do not receive employer support; the corresponding figure for men is 4.5 percent.

Reasons for Volunteering

- Major reasons for volunteering for men and women are a "cause in which they believe" and having been "personally affected."

- Women are more likely than men to view voluntary activity as potentially advancing employment opportunities.
- Men are more likely than women to undertake a voluntary activity as a result of the influence of friends.

Forms of Employer Support for Volunteers

- Men receive more support from employers in the form of time off and changes to work hours than women. This is true even when part- and full-time work status is taken into account.
- Women receive more employer support for their voluntary activities than men in the form of workplace recognition.

Voluntary Organization Evaluations of Employer Support for the Volunteers

- Voluntary organizations generally place a high value on the potential help employer support can offer.
- Women's organizations value donations more highly than other types of voluntary organizations, perhaps reflecting their greater difficulty in fundraising.
- About one half of women's and other organizations have not actively sought to obtain employer support for their volunteers.
- Women's organizations are more likely to report that they do not believe employers would be interested in supporting the types of services they provide and are less likely to be satisfied with levels of employer support than other organizations.

Recommendations

The main recommendations which follow from these findings are as follows.

For Women Employees

In general, women's volunteer rates are higher than men's. However, when it comes to volunteer hours, women contribute, on average, fewer hours than men. This is despite the fact that women view volunteer work more positively than men as a vehicle for employment advancement and personal satisfaction. One main reason for this is probably the greater time constraints that women face. Certainly, 84 percent of women who do not volunteer cited time constraints as the reason why. And employer support increases employed women's volunteer time contributions by a greater percentage than it does for men. Women's time commitments to household labour and to the paid labour market are therefore plausible explanations why employed women contribute fewer hours, on average, of volunteer time than men.

Despite the importance of the time constraint, it is nevertheless the case that employed women receive less employer support for their voluntary activities in the form of time off work or a change of work hours than do men. This outcome may be the result of two factors: women may be less likely to request time off or changes to work hours, and employers may be less likely to

agree to women taking time off or changing work hours. The data do not allow us to know the extent to which each of these factors is important. To the extent that it is the former reason (i.e., women are less likely to request this form of employer support), then it is clear that an education campaign is needed to ensure that women are aware that this form of employer support is available to them.

For Employers

Many employers report that they encourage the voluntary activities of their employees. They also report that the main reasons for doing so are that they increase their organization's image in the community and benefit from increased employee loyalty. Organizations, therefore, seem to have largely taken on board the need to support voluntary activity as part of their corporate strategy. Convincing employers of this does not appear to be needed.

Employers differ in the channels through which employee requests for employer support are addressed with the largest firms tending to rely more on company-wide policies and delegated authority for many others. In all cases, however, there does not appear to be a high degree of monitoring of employers' overall employer-supported volunteer effort. Thus, while the majority of human resources directors did not feel there were any gender effects of their policies, results from the NSGVP analyzed here indicate that employer support for women is more likely to take the form of recognition for women than men and more likely to take the form of time off and a change to work hours for men than women. Employers need to be made aware of this and examine their own practices in this light. Are they, for example, as amenable to requests from women for time flexibility as they are to the same request from men? Does the nature of the work processes make it easier for men to make this request than women? If so, what changes to work processes might compensate? Is there a subtle but pervasive view within the organization that women employees are more likely to be satisfied by recognition than men? That is, a gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation process should be adopted by employers with respect to their support for employee voluntary activity.

Employers also need to be made aware that some organizations, such as women's organizations, do not feel their activities are as valued as others by employers. Employers need to ask themselves whether they have excluded or overlooked some organizations and whether they might be more proactive in approaching organizations in their communities which have hitherto been marginalized from corporate support.

For Women's Organizations

Many women's organizations, in common with other organizations, have not been proactive in approaching employers to support their volunteers. This was shown in the data collected and in the responses our survey elicited. The fact of conducting the survey led to new questions and opportunities respondents had not previously considered. Clearly, there is a need for women's organizations to be made aware of the extent of employer-supported voluntary activity, the forms that it can take and mechanisms for them to approach employers for support. That said, a sizeable minority of both women's and other organizations wish to maintain an arm's length relationship with employers and would prefer to act independently from them.

These findings point to the importance of the context for policy initiatives. The implications we have outlined above all revolve around the need for informing and educating employees, employers and organizations about the needs they each have and the opportunities available. Information sharing and communication between the various participants are key. This is perhaps not surprising given, as indicated in Chapter 1, that relatively little attention has been paid to the voluntary–private sector nexus (certainly in comparison to the attention that has been given to the state–voluntary sector nexus).

The voluntary–private sector nexus cannot however be analyzed in isolation from what has been happening over time: the increasing marketization of social life and the decreasing support for voluntary organizations by the state at the same time as the need for their services increases. Recommendations for increased information sharing and collaboration among employees, employers and voluntary organizations are difficult to implement in an era of neoliberal restructuring. In this context, as pointed out in Chapter 1, some voluntary organizations are already weary and wary of increasing corporate linkages and the privatization of social service delivery. There is no inherent reason why employer support for the voluntary activities of their employees should not be of considerable benefit to voluntary organizations. Indeed, many in our Voluntary Organization Survey endorsed this. But the wider context is still important and for this reason, it is also necessary to pressure for changes that produce more complementary and collaborative relationships between the state, private and voluntary sectors.

Future Policy Research

As indicated throughout our report, the findings presented here should be treated as exploratory rather than conclusive. The NSGVP provides important data but does not include all the key variables necessary in the analysis of employer-supported volunteer work. For example, the NSGVP does not link the questions about employer support with specific types of voluntary activity or voluntary organizations. Our own surveys, of employers and voluntary organizations, were designed to provide more direct information. However, the surveys were small and the sample unlikely to be representative. For the employer survey, the response rate was quite low and the sample was restricted to firms in urban areas. For the organization survey, we used a fairly blunt instrument — the term “women” in the Canada Revenue Agency’s Charities Directorate — to derive our list of women’s organizations. This may miss important women’s organizations that do not use “women” in their title as well as Francophone organizations. As a first step, we believe our methods were appropriate, but they could be improved upon in future research. Our findings could be seen as a set of hypotheses to stimulate further research.

Our report has also been focussed at an aggregate level. It is likely that some groups of women — immigrant women and Aboriginal women, for example — may have different experiences of voluntary work than other women perhaps partly arising from their different labour market experiences. There may also be differences in the experiences of the various women’s organizations. Analyzing the experiences of different groups of women and different women’s organizations would be an important extension to the work presented here.

In terms of other extensions, notable gaps in the policy research have been identified, and these may be fruitful areas for future policy research. The first area for future research is provincial employment standards, given that leave to undertake volunteer activity is not covered by

provincial employment standards acts. Should volunteer activity be included as part of leave entitlements of a personal or civic nature? What would be the benefits and costs from the perspectives of employers and employees?

Second, international comparisons on employer-supported volunteer work would be useful to undertake, but are limited by survey data. The inclusion of questions on employer-supported volunteer activity in the Canadian NSGVP has contributed to the understanding of gender equality issues, and future surveys should continue to include these questions. Canada appears to be on the leading edge in this respect and it would be very useful if other countries included similar questions on employer-supported volunteer activity in their surveys on volunteer work. Canada could play an important role in assuring that such standardization occurs and that gender indicators and employer support for employee voluntary activity measures are included in international surveys.

Third, research on policy for institutional volunteer regimes is needed to include gender dimensions and enhance cross-national comparative studies in this respect. The secondary literature in this area is very sparse and therefore, research programs to support this area of research would be warranted.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS

Introduction to the Survey

The survey, funded by Status of Women Canada, is designed to help us collect information about employers' support for volunteer work of their employees. No individual employer information will be revealed.

Background information

Name of organization: _____

Name of respondent (or please attach business card) _____

Position: _____

Number of employees: _____

Main products or services: _____

Questions on Voluntary Activity by Employees

1. **Does your organization support employees who undertake voluntary activities?**

The types of support include giving employees time off to pursue voluntary activities, adjusting their work schedules, providing the use of company facilities, making donations (of company goods, money, or transportation, for example) to the organizations in which employees are involved, among others.

Yes

No

If No, which statement below best reflects the organization's reasons for this (please tick one)

No employees have ever asked for our support.

We have been asked but do not think that it is in the best interests of the organization to support these activities.

We have been asked but the activities were not ones which we would like to support; we would support other more suitable activities.

We would support volunteer activities if governments contributed as well.

Please add any additional comments or explanations that you would like:

If your answer to Question 1 was No, please now go to Question 14.

If your answer to Question 1 was Yes, please answer the rest of the questionnaire.

2. Which of the following mechanisms has your organization used to support the voluntary activities of employees? (tick as many as are applicable)

- Approval for use of facilities or equipment
- Approval to take off or the opportunity to spend some time doing volunteer work while on the job
- Approval to change work hours to spend time volunteering
- Recognition or a letter of thanks for volunteer activities
- Other types of formal support such as
 - donated prizes, gift certificates etc.
 - donated t-shirts, company goods etc.
 - donated financially to the organization
 - provided transportation
- Other (please specify) _____

3. How often does your organization support employee voluntary activities? (tick one)

- Several times a year
- Annually
- Once every two or three years
- Less than once every two or three years

4. Below is a list of voluntary organizations. Please tick those for which your organization has provided support for employees to participate in:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Big Brothers/Sisters, scouts/guides, YMCA/YWCA etc.
- Cancer Society
- Church, synagogue, mosque etc
- Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Kidney Foundation
- Meals on Wheels
- Rotary, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Legion etc
- Parent Teacher Association
- Red Cross Society
- Salvation Army

- School, school boards etc.
- Sports - amateur, minor, fitness etc.
- United Way
- Other - please specify: _____

5. Which statement best represents your organization's position (tick one)

- "The organization actively encourages voluntary work by its employees."
Please describe the ways in which this encouragement is given:

- "The organization neither actively encourages nor discourages voluntary work by its employees but responds to requests by employees."
Please describe how employee requests are considered (e.g., to whom a request would be made, who would decide whether the request would be supported, whether there are any formal policies and procedures in place guiding such requests).

6. Please evaluate your agreement with each of the following statements:

"The organization supports employee voluntary activity because the skills of the work force are enhanced by voluntary activity."

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

“The organization supports employee voluntary activity because by supporting employees’ voluntary work it keeps them loyal to our organization.”

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

“The organization supports employee voluntary activity because it gives our organization a good reputation in the community.”

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

“The organization supports employee voluntary activity but it does not provide much benefit to the organization.”

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7. Does your organization have a policies and procedures manual covering support for employee voluntary work?

- Yes
- No

8. Which process best describes how decisions with respect to supporting employee volunteer activity are made?

- Referred to head office
- Follow a detailed company-wide human resources policy manual
- Follow general company-wide policies but which allow for considerable local discretion
- Decided at the local level

9. Who is the 'typical' employee volunteer supported by your organization?

(Please select one from each section)

- Male Female No gender difference
- Under 35 years Over 35 years No age difference
- Low on salary scale Mid-range salary High salary No income difference
- Full time employee Part-time employee No difference

10. Are some types of voluntary work (e.g., membership on boards) expected for senior managers?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is the main reason?

What types of voluntary work are senior managers expected to undertake?

11. Because there are usually fewer women than men at the senior managerial level, do women senior managers tend to do more of this type of voluntary work than their male counterparts?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain.

12. Are there expectations for voluntary work for more junior employees? Yes No

If yes, please explain.

13. Employees are often involved in informal voluntary work. Sometimes this is family related, sometimes not. Examples of this type of work are: helping someone else with cooking or cleaning, yard and maintenance work, gardening, painting:, snow shovelling, shopping, driving someone to appointments, and providing care for the sick or elderly.

Have you been asked by employees for any forms of support (for example, time off or flexible work schedules) to support these informal types of activity?

 Yes No

If yes, how has the organization responded? Has the organization, for example, dealt with this on a case by case basis, developed rules governing how much time can be taken for family reasons, introduced flexible work hours, or some combination of all of them?

14. If yes, who is the ‘typical’ employee requesting support for their informal voluntary activities: (please select one from each section) Male Female No gender difference Under 35 years Over 35 years No age difference Low on salary scale Mid-range salary High salary No income difference Full time employee Part-time employee No difference

15. In your organization, have you addressed more requests for support for informal volunteer work than formal volunteer work?

Yes

No

16. Thank you for participating in our survey. If we wish to clarify any of your answers, could we phone you?

Yes (Please give phone number) _____

No

17. We will also be doing a small number of in-person follow-up interviews to supplement this questionnaire. If we wished to include your organization in the follow-up interviews, would you be willing to participate?

Yes

No

18. May we include the name of your organization in the list of organizations which assisted in this survey?

Yes

No

Thank you for taking your time to complete this questionnaire. Please provide any additional comments below or on additional pages.

PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE PREPAID ENVELOPE.

Fiona MacPhail

Associate Professor of Economics

University of Northern British Columbia

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APPENDIX B: EMPLOYER IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE



Questions for the Telephone Survey on Employer-Supported Voluntary Activity in Canada

Name	
Telephone	
Position	
Organization	
Interview Date	

Preamble

You were very kind in completing the survey on Employers' Support of Volunteer Activity. In the questionnaire you indicated that you would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview, and I am contacting you now to see if you are still willing to participate. I will fax you an Informed Consent Form. Would you kindly fax me back the Informed Consent Form after you have had a chance to review the statements.

I have a few questions about your organization's support for employee volunteer activity, which are intended to help us further understand how organizations respond to employee volunteer activity, and the benefits and constraints encountered.

For firms with a policy manual

1. In the previously conducted survey, you noted that your organization does have a policy and procedures manual covering support for employee voluntary work. I would like to ask several questions about the policy.
 - a) What are the strengths of having a manual?
 - b) What are some of the problems with having a manual?
 - c) What are some of the particular strengths of your manual?
 - d) What are some of the particular weaknesses of your manual?
 - e) Would you be willing to send us a copy of the manual?

2. If an employee would like to undertake volunteer activity with the assistance of your organization:
 - a) To whom would the employee make the request?
 - b) What are the strengths of this process?
 - c) What are the weaknesses of this process?
 - d) Do you think this process affects men and women differently? If so, in what ways?
3. How are requests for assistance to undertake volunteer activities judged?
4. In the survey, you indicated that your organization supports employee voluntary activity even though it provides no great benefit (or improves the organization's reputation, skills of the work force, loyalty of the work force). Would you indicate your main motivation for supporting the requests?
5. In general, do you prefer to support voluntary organizations which have wide-based support, rather than more narrow organizations, such as women's organizations, faith-based organizations? Or do you not make this distinction?
6. In your organization, is the process for considering requests to undertake formal and informal types of volunteer work considered in the same way or in different ways? Please elaborate on why.

For firms without a policy manual

In the previously conducted survey, you noted that your organization does NOT have a policy and procedures manual covering support for employee voluntary work. I would like to ask several questions about this.

1. Why does your organization not have a manual?
2. If an employee would like to undertake volunteer activity with the assistance of your organization:
 - a) To whom would the employee make the request?
 - b) What are the strengths of this process?
 - c) What are the weaknesses of this process?
 - d) Do you think this process affects men and women differently? If so, in what ways?
3. How are requests for assistance to undertake volunteer activities judged?
4. In the survey, you indicated that your organization supports employee voluntary activity even though it provides no great benefit (or improves the organization's reputation, skills of the work force, loyalty of the work force). Would you indicate your main motivation for supporting the requests?
5. In general, do you prefer to support voluntary organizations which have wide-based support, rather than more narrow organizations, such as women's organizations, faith-based organizations? Or do you not make this distinction?

6. In your organization, is the process for considering requests to undertake formal and informal types of volunteer work considered in the same way or in different ways? Please elaborate on why.

For firms indicating that some women (e.g., higher paid women) receive greater support

7. Why do you provide greater support for higher paid women in undertake volunteer activity?

Thank-you for participating in this survey.

*Dr. Fiona MacPhail, Associate Professor, Economics Program,
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way, Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9*

APPENDIX C: VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION SURVEY

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from the University of Northern British Columbia. I am engaged in a research project with two professors at the university and would like to invite you to participate in a telephone survey. The survey will take approximately five minutes. Is now a good time for you or would you prefer that I phone back at another time?

The research is on volunteer work focussing on ways in which employers can support the volunteer activities of their employees. We are asking organizations like yours for their input on what you would like to see from employers in terms of support for volunteers who work for your organization.

Just for your information, the research is funded by the federal agency, Status of Women Canada. All of your answers will be regarded as confidential, and no answers will be attributed to you or your organization in the research report. Your organization's name will only appear among the list of organizations that participated in our survey. The survey has been approved by UNBC's Research Ethics Board.

I will now start on the questions. There are seven in total.

- 1) Does your organization make use of volunteers?
- 2) If so, approximately what percentage of volunteers are also employed?
- 3) For those that are employed, are you aware of any steps that employers take to help your volunteers? For example, do they:
 - i) give approval for use of employers' facilities or equipment?
 - ii) change work hours to accommodate volunteer activity?
 - iii) provide other forms of support such as prizes, company goods, make donations or offer transportation?
- 4) When you think of the three possible forms of support which I have mentioned, how much do you think would help volunteers with your organization if they were available? 1= A lot, 2 = A little, 3= Not much at all
 - i) give approval for use of employers' facilities or equipment?
 - ii) change work hours to accommodate volunteer activity?
 - iii) provide other forms of support such as prizes, company goods, make donations or offer transportation?
- 5) Are there any other ways that you think employers could help their employees in their volunteer work with you?

- 6) In general, how satisfied are you with the level of employer support for volunteers with your organization? 1= Satisfied, 2 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 = Dissatisfied, 4 = No opinion.
- 7) Which statement best describes your organization's approach to employer support for your volunteers:
- i) We haven't given much thought to it and have been not proactive in this area.
 - ii) We have thought about it and have sought to help our volunteers get assistance from their employers.
 - iii) We have thought about it and would like employers' support but don't think that they would be interested in supporting the sorts of services that we provide.
 - iv) We have thought about it but have decided that we should act independently of employers and so have not approached them.

Thank you for participating in our survey. Are there any other points that you would like to make on this topic?

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ENDNOTES

¹ For a discussion of the meanings of the terms “social capital,” “social cohesion” and “social economy” see Jenson (1998).

² OECD (2001), cited in the Call for Proposals.

³ The complexity of the relationship between voluntary activity and social capital makes international comparisons a problematic exercise. That is, drawing inferences by comparing levels of voluntary activity between countries is not at all straightforward since the implications of voluntary activity cannot be analyzed without knowledge of the country-specific context. For this reason, our analysis here focusses on Canada.

⁴ For a discussion of the determinants of volunteering in Canada see, for example, Vaillancourt (1994).

⁵ See, for example, Phillips (2001) for Canada and Lewis (1999) for Britain.

⁶ See Meinhard and Foster (2003) for analysis of how women’s organizations have responded differently to policy shifts.

⁷ See Hall (2001) for methodological issues.

⁸ The list is available at <www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tax/charities/online_listings/Canreg_interim-e.html>. Accessed October 2006.

⁹ In the NSGVP, the questions for formal volunteering take the form: “In the past 12 months, as an unpaid volunteer for an organization did you ...?” and then specify potential volunteer activities, such as “canvassing, campaigning or fundraising,” serving as an “unpaid member of a board or committee.” The complete list of potential formal activities are presented in Table 6. The questions for informal volunteering take the form: “In the past 12 months did you help anyone on your own ...?” and then specify 11 potential activities including “housework such as cooking and cleaning,” “yard maintenance work, such as gardening, painting or snow shovelling” and “providing care or support to the sick or elderly.” The survey therefore requires respondents to identify the volunteer activities in which they participated. As such, it is possible that the same activity, for example, unpaid care of a child in the family, may be seen as an informal voluntary activity by some respondents but as a part of family life which is not regarded as “volunteering” by another.

¹⁰ See Woolley (2003: 166) for a discussion.

¹¹ There is, of course, the possibility, that unobserved characteristics, such as abilities, preferences and interests of the employees may affect whether the individual receives employer support in which case, the estimates are expected to be inconsistent.

¹² One objection to this conclusion might be that the levels of aggregation in the occupation and industry categories are so high that it is still entirely possible that men and women are engaged in completely different work processes within each occupational and industrial category. We recognize this possibility, but are unable to test at a more disaggregated level given the form in which the data have been collected. We leave it the judgment of readers to assess how much weight to place on this objection. While we believe there are likely to be considerable intra-occupation and intra-industry variations in job task by gender, we do not believe this is likely to be sufficient to overturn completely the above results based on the more aggregated data.

¹³ Details of the changes to employment standards legislation are available on the HRSDC web site <www.hrsdc.gc.ca>.

¹⁴ See, for example, Taniguchi (2006).

¹⁵ See, for example, Lewis (2001); Daly and Lewis (2000); O'Connor et al. (1999).

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