



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK

**Aalborg Universitet**

## **Volunteering and Organizational Diversity**

Henriksen, Lars Skov; Rosdahl, David

*Published in:*  
ISTR 2008 abstracts

*Publication date:*  
2008

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Henriksen, L. S., & Rosdahl, D. (2008). Volunteering and Organizational Diversity. In ISTR 2008 abstracts

### **General rights**

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- ? Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- ? You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- ? You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

### **Take down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at [vbn@aub.aau.dk](mailto:vbn@aub.aau.dk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

## **Volunteering and Organizational Diversity**

*Lars Skov Henriksen and David Rosdahl*

*Department of Sociology, Social Work and Organization*

*Aalborg University*

*Denmark*

Communications: [larsskov@socsci.aau.dk](mailto:larsskov@socsci.aau.dk)

Paper presented at ISTR conference, Barcelona, July 9 – 12, 2008

### **Background and problem**

The voluntary sector consists of a multitude of organizations and associations. They have different purposes, different activities, and various target groups. They vary in size, membership base, ideology, and political orientation. Some take care of their own members' interests, while others act to help other people in need. Under the heading of 'voluntary' we include everything from the local church choir, Greenpeace, political parties, unions, hunters' association, nursing homes, to homeless shelters, football clubs and so on. In other words, we all have a good sense of the heterogeneity of the sector, and the sector itself often pay tribute to this fact.

It is quite obvious that there must be a variety of reasons why people volunteer for these different organizations. Still, it seems that we tend to think that different types of volunteering can be explained by the same set of mechanisms and social theories. Hence, few analyses of determinants of volunteering try to break down the dependent variable into different types (Janoski and Wilson 1995; Grønbjerg and Never 2004). In many cases this is probably also due to a lack of sufficient data and statistical power.

In this paper we rely on a comprehensive population survey carried out as part of the Danish Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project in 2004 (Koch-Nielsen, Henriksen, Fridberg & Rosdahl 2005), which will permit the kind of disaggregation we think, is needed to improve our understanding of why people donate some of their scarce time to different types of volunteering.

The survey was based upon a random sample of 4,200 persons aged 16-85, drawn from the Central Population Register. Interviews were obtained through phone interviewing. The response rate was 75 per cent resulting in a sample of 3,134 respondents. We use a smaller sample of 2,318 respondents who have valid answers on all the variables used in our analysis. A comparison of this sample with the characteristics of the Danish adult population, suggests that the sample is representative in terms of gender, but slightly underrepresented as regards respondents from the capital of Copenhagen and respondents in the age of 16-25. Respondents with non-western citizenship are under-represented in the sample.

### **Types of volunteering**

In the survey respondents were probed about formal volunteering within 14 different fields of volunteering (culture, sports, hobby, education, health, social services, environment, housing and community, unions and work organizations, advice and legal assistance, political parties, international organizations, religion, and other).

We propose a categorization of these 14 fields which is theoretically meaningful at the same time as it is empirically sensitive in the Danish (and Scandinavian) context. We distinguish between the following three types of volunteering: '*Activity oriented volunteering*' includes volunteering within the fields where we find most of the voluntary organizations and associations in Denmark (and Scandinavia), that is, sports, hobbies and other culture and leisure activities. Characteristic of this type of volunteering is the focus on the activity and that the membership itself is the prime beneficiary of the collective good being produced. '*Welfare oriented volunteering*' includes volunteering within the three major welfare fields: social service, health, and education. It could be argued that this is a more heterogeneous type of volunteering, because some volunteers work in 'service organizations' aiming at particular client groups (battered women, homeless, elderly people etc.) while others work for 'interest organizations' who try to influence policies and improve the conditions of their own membership. However, the common denominator is the effort to improve the welfare of others. Our third type called '*societal volunteering*' comprises the more ideological and political kind of volunteering, which links volunteering to the promotion and advocacy of ideas and interests in the public sphere. This is where we find volunteering for political parties, unions,

business and professional organizations, environmental protection, international solidarity and so on.

Such categorizations are, of course, always subject to discussion and empirical reality is far more complex and multi-dimensional than we are able to model. There is a certain element of contingency in the way we construct our research object. In this paper we will argue that there are substantial differences between these types of volunteering, and we will test our hypothesis that we need different explanations to determine why people engage in each type of volunteering.

### **Theoretical framework and independent variables**

Many studies and reviews of theories of volunteering (see e.g. Smith, 1994; Wilson, 2000) have demonstrated the positive relation between personal and social resources and individuals' involvement in volunteering. At the most general level it is well documented that the more resources individuals' possess, the more integrated into social networks they are, and the more civic skills they have acquired, the greater are their odds of volunteering. Volunteering, thus, seems to depend on a surplus of resources. Building on prior sociological research and theory this paper argues that three different forms of personal and social resources are crucial in understanding the mechanisms that promote and enforce peoples' engagement in voluntary work.

The first set of factors focuses the attention on the individual's current socioeconomic position and resources which both qualifies the person for volunteer work and also makes her more attractive to voluntary organizations (Janoski & Wilson, 1995, p. 273; Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 698). John Wilson and Marc Musick have termed such resources 'human capital' by which they mean 'those resources attached to individuals that make productive activity possible' (Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 698). Education, income, and occupational status are often identified as the main sources from which human capital can flow. Basically there are three ways to think about how such personal resources support and promote volunteering. First, it is plausible that the more skills and qualifications one possesses the easier it will be to 'face the demands of volunteering' (Wilson 2000, p. 219) and, consequently, to step forward and donate of one's time. Second, one can also imagine that people in higher status positions are more attractive to voluntary organizations, and therefore also more likely to be asked to volunteer. Third, people in higher positions may tend to

have more interests at stake which drives them towards voluntary organizations that can increase or protect their political or occupational interests (Janoski & Wilson, 1995, p. 275).

Following this latter argument we hypothesize those variables that are indicators of 'human capital resources' to be more important for 'societal volunteering' since this type aims at promoting particular interests.

As indicators we use individual gross income and education because these two measures in combination indicate a dominant status in society (Smith, 1994, p. 247; Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 698). In this category we also include a measure of the respondent's weekly work hours because this has been found to be an indicator of job importance (Wilson, 2000, p. 221).

The second set of factors explains volunteering by the influence of social ties, networks and connections that "link an individual to other members of society" (Sokolowski, 1996, p. 263). Rather than individual resources, this strand of theory stresses 'social resources' which are acquired through the relationships in which peoples' lives are embedded. Social relations and networks are resources which can promote collective action by providing support, making contacts, fostering trust and obligations, and supplying information (Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 695). Thus, people with more extensive social networks and people who are well integrated into the labour market and who hold multiple associational memberships tend to increase their odds of volunteering (Wilson, 2000, p. 223; Wilson & Musick, 1998, p. 800). Often discussed under the general heading of 'social capital', such social participation variables (Smith, 1994, p. 253) help explain volunteering in different ways. One idea is that social ties and networks 'foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust' (Putnam, 1995, p. 67) which, in turn, facilitate collective action. Another idea is that social ties and organizational memberships expose people to volunteering opportunities (Wilson, 2000, p. 224).

We expect social resources to be more important for the type of volunteering we termed 'activity oriented volunteering' since this often takes place in local communities and builds on networks.

As indicators of social resources we use the number of years the respondent has lived in the same community. This is taken as an indicator of the respondent's attachment to the community (Smith, 1994, p. 250) and strength of community ties (Sokolowski, 1996, p. 262). In the same vein, we also include family members who are volunteers and whether respondents have children still living in the household, and, if so, their age. Parents with children might have more social contacts

because their children draw them into leisure activities (Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 699). This might be especially important in the Danish context because the voluntary sector is the principal arena for organizing sports and leisure activities. In other words, children can work as a medium through which parents are pulled into volunteering. Especially small children, however, could also restrain parents from volunteering. This might be particularly true in countries like Denmark where many families depend on a double bread winner model. Finally, we include general social trust measured by the standard question: ‘Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?’ in this set of variables. We do so because one might expect that people who hold trust in others will find it easier to step forward and donate their time (Putnam, 1995, p. 67; Wilson, 2000, p. 224).

The third model links volunteering to a broad set of civic values and norms which have been learned ‘informally through family and friends, and formally through schools, churches, and the workplace’ (Janoski & Wilson, 1995, p. 272), and which tend to manifest themselves in motivations to volunteer. Altruism, solidarity or injustice may be examples of values that can guide peoples’ behaviour and that may be reflected in a feeling of concern for others (Dekker & Halman, 2003, p. 6). Volunteering, thus, may be an expression of an obligation or willingness to help people in need or fight injustice, in other words, to act on behalf of value-rational motives (Sokolowski 1996, p. 260). Many studies have demonstrated the positive relationship between volunteering and motives such as ‘doing something for a cause that is important’ or ‘helping people in need’ (Habermann, 2001; Wollebæk, Selle & Lorentzen, 2000; Dekker & Halman, 2003). Although it is often difficult to predict actual behaviour from highly generalized value questions, it makes sense to say that broader cultural frameworks influence the decision to volunteer (Wilson 2000, p. 219; Dekker & Halman, 2003, p. 7) because they function as a collective frame of reference, which guide individual behaviour.

We expect those variables that tap into this kind of resources to be important for the type of volunteering we termed ‘welfare oriented volunteering’ since this type aims at improving the welfare of others.

As variables that might be seen as expressions of the kind of civic values or activism we are interested in we have included, first, the respondent’s interest in politics, since this could be an indicator of the value put on sustaining an active public sphere and adherence to democratic ideals. The second variable measures the respondent’s church attendance, since this could be an indicator

of the adherence to a moral codex expressing solidarity with the least fortunate. We do so though we are aware that another important aspect of church attendance could be its social network character. Finally, we include a measure about the respondent's trust in voluntary organizations, since this could be an indicator of how much respondents value the civic or voluntary sector as an institutional mechanism through which important societal functions and social problems are being addressed

As demographic background variables we include age, gender and citizenship.

### **Methods and analytical strategy**

As *dependent variables* we use our three types of formal volunteering, and as *independent variables* we use the indicators of the three different forms of personal and social resources listed in the previous section.

We test this general model in a multivariate analysis using logistic regression. If our hypothesis is correct we should expect our independent variables to have different impact on the different types of volunteering. In general we expect indicators of 'human capital' resources to be more important for 'societal volunteering' since this type aims at promoting particular interests. We expect indicators of network and social resources to be more important for 'activity oriented volunteering' since this often takes place in local communities. Finally, we expect indicators of civic values and norms to be more important for 'welfare oriented volunteering' since this type aims at improving the welfare of others.

Three logistic regression analyses were conducted to compare the three types of volunteering. Because the forms of volunteering are not mutually exclusive the analysis was conducted as three separate binomial logistic regression analysis. Logistic regression is well suited for estimating the probability of a certain event occurring (Kreiner, 1999; Garsons, 2007). In this case, the event is whether or not the respondent has volunteered for one of our three types of volunteering. Our independent variables were selected by first introducing the following variables: income, income squared, education, trust in other people, whether family members volunteer, +5 years residence in local area, political interest, church attendance, trust in voluntary organizations, children, work and

work time, sex, age, age squared and citizenship. A backward stepwise model selection procedure was followed where the most insignificant variable was excluded first and the logistic regression run again. This procedure was followed until all variables in the model were significant at a 0.05 level. However, variables that were close to being significant (that is, in the range of 0.05 – 0.10) were kept in the model, so the reader may evaluate their importance herself. The actual significance test during model selection is a likelihood-ratio test, where the overall significance of a set of dummy variables, constituting a given empirical variable (education, for instance) can be evaluated simultaneously. As our primary theoretical frameworks are related to testing the main effects of variables we do not analyse specific interactions between variables. As a consequence only main effects are included. The majority of independent variables are qualitative so they are included as dummy variables with reference categories as indicated in the tables of regression output. Only income, income squared, age and aged squared are incorporated as proper continuous variables.

#### *A word of caution*

Some of the independent variables are not necessarily prior to the actual volunteering activity. Trust in voluntary organizations, trust in other people and political interest are examples of independent variables that are possibly as much a result of volunteering, as they are causes. Being part of a wider class of endogeneity problems, this lack of definite direction, makes *ceteris paribus* interpretations problematic.

#### **Three types of volunteering?**

As indicated in the introductory discussion, we know from previous Danish as well as international surveys that the likelihood of volunteering is related to a number of factors, and that these factors interrelate in rather complex ways. The question we intend to investigate in the analysis below is to what extent and how our theoretically based explanatory variables covariate with the three types, or areas, of volunteering identified, once we control for the interrelation of the variables.

Table 1 below shows the final regression analysis for the three types, listed in separate columns. At first glance, the result that stands out is the fact only two variables show the same pattern of behaviour across the three columns: general social trust, which is not significant for any of the three



areas, and whether any of the respondent's family members volunteer, which shows a consistent positive correlation with volunteering across the three areas.

This raises the question whether it is possible to identify any patterns that link certain personal and social resources with certain types of volunteering. Theory leads us to expect that to be the case.

**Table 1: Binomial logistic regression of ‘Activity oriented volunteering’, ‘Welfare oriented volunteering’, and ‘Societal oriented volunteering’. Odds ratios.**

Variables	Activity oriented vol.			Welfare oriented vol.			Societal oriented vol.		
	Est.	p	Odds-ratio	Est.	p	Odds-ratio	Est.	p	Odds-ratio
Constant	-2,95	-	-	-4,22	-	-	-6,33		
Gross income (10.000 Danish crones)							0,135	0,010	1,14
Gross income, square							-,0028	0,064	0,997
Higher education	0,485	0,0024	1,62	-0,237	0,19	0,789	0,412	0,042	1,51
Vocational training	0,388	0,016	1,47	-0,442	0,021	0,643	0,453	0,024	1,57
No further educ.	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-
Weekly work hours: More than 40	0,358	0,051	1,43						
Less than 40	0,133	0,37	1,14						
Unemployed	Ref.	-	-						
Trust in others Some trust/don't know									
No trust in others (ref.)									
Family members vol.	0,537	<0,001	1,71	0,504	<0,001	1,66	0,448	0,0010	1,56
No family members vol.	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-
+ 5 years in local comm.	0,304	0,076	1,36						
Less than 5 years in local comm.	Ref.	-	-						
Children - both 0-6 and 7-17 years	0,581	0,0035	1,79	0,899	<0,001	2,46	-0,121	0,65	0,886
Children - only 7-17 years	0,604	<0,001	1,83	0,345	0,078	1,41	-0,375	0,048	0,688
Children - only 0-6 years	-0,125	0,52	0,88	0,419	0,086	1,52	-0,600	0,023	0,549
No children	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-
Very interested in politics				0,276	0,12	1,32	0,679	<0,001	1,97
Some or no interest in politics				Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-
Church attendance – once or more a month				1,87	<0,001	6,48	0,516	0,023	1,68
– less than once a month				0,610	0,0013	1,84	0,507	0,0056	1,66
– seldom/never				Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-
Trust in vol. organizations	0,637	<0,001	1,89	0,400	0,045	1,49			
No trust (or don't know) in vol. org.	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-			
Male	0,508	<0,001	1,66	-0,303	0,037	0,739	0,397	0,0058	1,49
Female	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-	-

Age	-0,010	0,023	0,99	0,0591	0,043	1,06	0,143	<0,001	1,15
Age, square				-,0006	0,047	0,999	-,0015	<0,001	0,998
Non western citizen	-1,44	0,16	0,23	-1,38	0,19	0,253			
Western citizen	Ref.	-	-	Ref.	-				

1) N=2318

2) R<sup>2</sup> respectively: 0,064, 0,064 and 0,0570.

3) Hosmer-Lemeshow tests p-values, respectively: 0,089, 0,056 and 0,85.

4) Level of significance: p <0,05

5) Blanks represent excluded (insignificant) variables

### *Indicators of personal 'human capital' resources*

Among our indicators of personal 'human capital' resources, income turns out to have some effect on societal volunteering, as we see the likelihood of volunteering rise up to a monthly gross income of DKK 24,000 (approx EUR 3,200), at which point it starts to fall again. A possible explanation is that we have included in this type of volunteering voluntary work in trade unions and other professional associations, which can be expected to appeal to especially middle-income groups. As this type of volunteering typically requires labour market attachment, it also explains why we find no effect for low-income groups. Some effect for high-income groups might have been expected, as they could have an interest in volunteering in business/professional and political activities; but that turns out not to be the case. As we expected, income shows no significance for activity-oriented volunteering, nor for welfare-oriented volunteering.

The length of a person's working week has no impact on welfare-oriented nor on societal volunteering. But when it comes to activity-oriented volunteering, a working week of more than 40 hours turns out to have an (almost significantly) positive impact on the likelihood of volunteering. If we interpret length of working week as an indicator of job status, it would seem that there is a certain selection of high-status groups for this type of volunteering. The hypothesis that long working hours would act as a barrier to volunteering thus seems to have been disproved for all three types of volunteering, as expected.

Education increases the likelihood of two types of volunteering: activity-oriented and societal volunteering, as the respondent group with further education as well as the respondent group with a trade, industrial or technical educational background show significantly higher odds of volunteering

compared to the group with no educational qualifications. This might be explained by the skills and competences acquired by these groups through education and training, which might also act as a boost to their self-confidence (Wilson and Musick 1997:710), or that education and training as such raise awareness of problems and enhance empathic abilities (Wilson 2000:219). If that is the case, then education would also be expected to have a positive effect on welfare-oriented volunteering. But in that area, high educational attainment shows no effect on the likelihood of volunteering; and for respondents with a trade, industrial or technical background there is actually a significantly negative effect. This seems to indicate that, in general, the skills and competences acquired through education and training are important for some types of volunteering and certain areas only. Education and training may for instance be important for some kinds of managerial or administrative tasks or for jobs like instructor or team-leader in the membership-based organisations found in the activity-oriented area. And it seems plausible that educational attainment is important for some of the educational and debate-related activities in the political area, just as specific competences could be relevant for volunteering in a housing or a landowners' association. That education has no impact on welfare-oriented volunteering seems to indicate that these volunteers are recruited from a broader base than is generally the case. An explanation could be that we find a number of organisations here whose work and activities are directed towards social and personal problems, and that volunteers attracted to this type of volunteering may tend to be people with personal experience with such problems.

Individual resources seem to be relevant especially in the area of activity-oriented volunteering (where education, training and to a certain extent working hours correlate positively with volunteering), and in the area of societal volunteering (where income and educational attainment correlate positively with volunteering). To sum up, it seems safe to conclude that in these two areas, resourceful groups have a higher likelihood of volunteering, which is, however, not the case in the area of welfare-oriented volunteering.

### *Indicators of networks and social resources*

Our indicators of social networks and social resources can only be said to meet our theoretical expectations partially. We had expected to find a strong relationship between activity-oriented

volunteering and length of residence in a community, based on the assumption that the longer a person lives in a community, the more attached they become, which then again increases their likelihood of volunteering in local cultural and leisure activities. A slight positive effect was found, but it only increases the odds ratio to a level not significant at the 0.05 level, which means that we have to reject this hypothesis on the basis of the present data. It does make us wonder if, as eg Bjarne Ibsen (2006) has pointed out, this is an indication that cultural and leisure activities are not as closely linked to the local community as is often assumed. We do not find any relationship between a respondents' length of residence in a community and likelihood of volunteering in any of the other areas either.

The same goes for general social trust, which many surveys have emphasised as a central resource or characteristic of the voluntary sector; in our analyses it shows no significance in any of the areas. Here you would have expected trust to be above all positively related to activity-oriented volunteering, since the activity itself is the pivotal element. The fact that we find no relationship at all perhaps points in the same direction as a good deal of recent research in trust and social capital (Delhey and Newton 2003; Rothstein and Uslaner 2005; Wollebæk and Selle 2007). According to their findings, there is no causal link between trust and volunteering at the level of the individual. Trust is not generated in face-to-face situations such as voluntary organisations; trust, according to them, is instead related to a society's institutional framework.

As for having children, we did find the expected positive relationship between activity-oriented volunteering and having especially older children. Both the category children aged 7-17 and the category children aged both 0-6 and 7-17 increase the likelihood of volunteering. But parents of children aged 0-6 show no increased likelihood. This seems to indicate that especially school-age children are an important factor, pulling parents into volunteering in cultural and leisure activities. This positive effect is also seen in welfare-oriented volunteering, where having children aged both 0-6 and 7-17 is positively related to volunteering. We interpret this as an expression of the parents' involvement in their children's schools and childcare institutions. Contrary to this finding, there is a clear negative effect of having children on societal volunteering, as respondents with children aged either 0-6 or 7-17 have a marked and significantly reduced likelihood of volunteering. So, whereas having children seems to be a factor that pulls parents into volunteering in the two other areas, having children seems to have a negative impact on their parents' societal volunteering.

The question whether the respondent had family members who volunteered turns up in all three areas as having a positive and highly predictive association with the respondent's own likelihood to volunteer. Seeing that the effect is strong across the three areas, we are inclined to interpret this variable as an indicator of social network. That is, family members pull each other into voluntary work. If that is true, you would expect the strength of the effect to vary with community attachment. We are, however, more inclined to interpret it as an indicator of socialisation, something that instils a fundamentally positive attitude towards volunteering (Wilson 2000:218,219; Bekkers 2007). In other words, the "taste" or preference for volunteering, or rather the importance of doing so or even duty to do so, is something that is learned and internalised as part of the volunteer's habitus.<sup>1</sup> It is, at least, something that seems to be essential for all our three types of volunteering.

To sum up, the importance of social network resources varies across the three areas, but not in a particularly marked way and not as expected. Actually, it is only having children that seems to make a decisive difference. In the two areas of activity-oriented and welfare-oriented volunteering, where it is the children's activities that act as the pivot (sports, leisure; school and childcare), parents seem to be pulled into volunteering. In other words, the parents volunteer because of their children. The opposite is true of societal volunteering; here having children seems to constitute a barrier to their parents' volunteering. The other three variables demonstrate a remarkably similar pattern across the areas. Neither general social trust nor community attachment has any significant impact in any of the areas. This would seem to indicate that the importance of these factors is habitually overestimated. By contrast, the effect of having family members who volunteer is highly noticeable across the three areas of volunteering. This indicates that in general the family is a resource of crucial importance.

### *Indicators of civic values*

Finally, we are going to have a look at the impact of our three indicators on civic values; that is, political interest, church attendance and trust in voluntary organisations. Overall, we expect to find a particularly strong association with welfare-oriented volunteering, since the value of doing

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept (1995).

something for a good cause or other human beings is particularly pronounced in this area. However, we did not find the unambiguous pattern we had anticipated, although there are considerable differences between the areas.

Political interest turns out to be important only in connection with societal volunteering, where the effect is indeed positive and highly significant. This is hardly surprising as this is the area where we find the type of volunteering most directly related to politics as interest articulation. By contrast, we find no significant association with political interest in neither activity-oriented nor welfare-oriented volunteering. In other words, volunteering in these areas seems to be fairly independent of the volunteer's involvement in political issues.

Frequent church attendance shows a very strong and significantly positive association with welfare-oriented volunteering. Since we know that voluntary social work is often carried out in connection with church organisations, this is understandable. Integration in church activities probably makes a person strongly disposed to voluntary work involving care and support. It is in line with expectations that church attendance does not increase the likelihood of activity-oriented volunteering. This type of volunteering seems to recruit volunteers from a very broad value base and does not attract very specific groups.

Given the fact that close to 80% of volunteers are also members of the organisation they volunteer for (Koch-Nielsen, Henriksen, Fridberg og Rosdahl 2005:53), it would be remarkable if the people volunteering for these organisations did not have trust in them. You could argue that it would be very surprising to find people volunteering for an organisation they did not trust. When we disaggregate the material, there is particularly strong and highly significant effect for the activity-oriented area, and for the welfare-oriented area as well. But people involved in societal volunteering do not express the same high degree of trust in their organisation. Interpreting this result is not easy. One possibility, which seems obvious, is that institutional trust is particularly strong in organisations people have personal knowledge of and perceive to be doing worthy work, such as the local sports club or a patient support group. The trouble lies in explaining why this type of trust is less prevalent in relation to landowners' associations, political parties or trade unions. Another possible interpretation is that the pattern found is an indication that volunteering in cultural and leisure activities, and to some extent also welfare-oriented volunteering, is an indication of the

importance of a having a voluntary sector doing voluntary work in connection with specific tasks. There seems, especially in the sports but to some extent other areas as well, to be a discourse attributing value and importance to voluntary organisations and volunteering *per se*. That we do not find this pattern for societal volunteering may be an indication that here volunteering does not carry any value in itself. In this area, voluntary organisations are to a greater extent perceived to be pivotal or instrumental in realising political interests.

As can be seen, the impact of our three indicators shows considerable variation across the three areas. Interpreting the differences is, however, difficult. Perhaps because it is generally harder to pinpoint here what our variables are indicators of. Nevertheless, it seems obvious that societal volunteering is primarily driven by political interest. That can be interpreted in a broad sense as an expression of 'civic values', or in a narrow sense as an expression of a more 'self-oriented' interest in influencing decision-making. Welfare-oriented volunteering shows a marked and positive association with church attendance, while trust in voluntary organisations is particularly pronounced in the activity-oriented area.

### *Control variables*

As socio-demographic control variables we have chosen gender, age and citizenship. Gender turned out to demonstrate the expected variation, as men had a clear and significantly higher likelihood of volunteering in the activity-oriented area such as sports and leisure activities, whereas women were far more likely to volunteer in the welfare-oriented area. Men also showed a significantly higher likelihood of engaging in societal volunteering. In other words, we see a tendency of the stereotypical gender roles being reproduced in the voluntary sector: men are relatively more active in expressive and activity-oriented as well as political and instrumental voluntary work, and women volunteer predominantly in the welfare and care-giving areas. However, it should be born in mind that volunteering in the welfare area also includes serving as a member of the boards of school and childcare institutions, or special interest organisations in the healthcare sector – work with a distinctly political profile.



Age shows an effect in all three areas. For activity-oriented volunteering, age has a negative linear effect, meaning that the likelihood of volunteering declines with age. So, it is the young who volunteer most and older people least. This result is the product of a large group of 20 to 30-year-olds being particularly active volunteers, whereas volunteering among the older age groups is rare. This pattern is in stark contrast to the situation in the welfare-oriented and societal areas. In both these areas, the likelihood of volunteering increases with age until the late 40s, after which it starts to fall. These are very interesting results because many previous analyses of volunteering have shown that the likelihood of volunteering increases until the age of about 40, and then it drops. But such figures may mask internal variations between different types of volunteering. Welfare-oriented and societal volunteering tend to be dominated by middle-aged and slightly older people, but in the far larger and broader-embracing cultural and leisure area we find many volunteers in the younger age groups.

Due to the very low number of respondents with non-western citizenship in our sample, our analysis of the effect of citizenship is not certain. The variable is not significant in any of the three areas, and we have therefore had to conclude that there is not enough information in our material to justify any evaluation of the effect of citizenship.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper was to examine whether there are any systematic differences between the personal and social resources that have an impact on volunteering in various areas. Our analyses have shown that it is important to distinguish between different types of volunteering. There are substantial internal differences and variations in the factors determining whether people volunteer or not. In other words, different types of volunteering call for different types of explanations.

We suggested a three-way division of voluntary work into activity-oriented, welfare-oriented and societal volunteering. As for *activity-oriented volunteering*, we had expected that indicators of network and social resources would have an effect. This was, however, only partially proved correct. Neither general social trust nor the number of years a respondent had lived in a community had a significant effect. However, activity-oriented volunteering turned out to be different from the

other two types on a number of characteristics. Firstly, volunteering is here less related to political interest and church attendance. This is an area of volunteering that is not to any significant degree dependent on or influenced by political or religious ideas, and therefore, it might be assumed, an area characterised by a higher degree of inclusion and diversity. It would seem that it is the activity in its own right, and the community supporting it, that is meaningful for this type of volunteering. Secondly, there is a certain tendency towards a selection of resourceful people; that is, people with higher educational attainment and longer working hours. And finally, having children and gender both play a role here, just as age does – the volunteers tend to belong to the younger age groups. Having children (especially school-age children) is associated with a high likelihood of parents volunteering in cultural and leisure activities; and it is particularly fathers who volunteer.

*Welfare-oriented volunteering* includes two, to some extent diverging, types of activities in our categorisation: providing care, support and counselling on the one hand, and serving on committees and boards of schools and childcare institutions on the other. We had expected that indicators of values and cultural capital would prove especially important here, which turned out to be at least partially justified, as church attendance showed a strong positive association with volunteering in this area. Another interesting finding was that educational attainment had no impact (we even saw that a trade, industrial or technical educational background had a negative effect). Both results are probably attributable to the social, health and care related activities of this area where volunteers tend to be recruited from groups characterised by having strong values and beliefs but not necessarily formal qualifications and competences. In this type of volunteering, and only here, women outnumber men, which indicates – not least when contrasted with the other two types of volunteering – that the way the voluntary sector is structured has an impact on whether men or women are attracted as volunteers.

As expected, it is characteristic of *societal volunteering* that our indicators of personal, ‘human capital’ resources, income and education, do in fact play a role. Combined with the effect of political interest, this indicates that societal volunteering is an area where voluntary organisations play a crucial role as a pivot for realisation of political interests. Our analyses also indicate that it is especially men who are attracted to this type of volunteering and the opportunities of power and influence implied in volunteering in this area.

The analyses show that it is not sufficient to consider volunteering as one all-embracing category. It is necessary to distinguish between different areas or types of volunteering to get an understanding of the personal and social resources that facilitate volunteering. Once that happens, overall tendencies dissolve into far more specific interrelations, which is evident from the fact that the majority of variables included point in different directions and show different impact when broken down into the three categories we have constructed. Only one single factor maintained a positive association across all areas, and that was whether the respondent had family members who volunteered. At the overall level, this means that the importance of socialisation into volunteering should not be underestimated, irrespective of type of voluntary activity. And only general social trust shows no effect across the three areas. The implication of this is that trust and volunteering are not as closely related as generally assumed. All other variables turn out to have varying effects and pull in different directions in the three areas. We were not able to confirm our theoretical expectations about the effect of various personal and social resources in all cases in any unambiguous way. This may be due to our choice of relatively broad categories, which may have ended up making the picture too 'murky'. It may also be because there is a considerable distance between the theories and the empirical variables available. But all in all, we think that we have found patterns that are sufficiently different in the three areas to establish the empirical relevance of our categories.

## References

- Bekkers, René (2007): Intergenerational Transmission of Volunteering. *Acta Sociologica* 50(2):99-114.
- Boje, Thomas P. og Bjarne Ibsen (2006): *Frivillighed og nonprofit i Danmark – Omfang, organisation, økonomi og beskæftigelse*. København: Socialforskningsinstituttet. Rapport 06:18.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1995): *Distinksjonen. En sosiologisk kritikk av dømmekraften*. Oslo: Pax Forlag A/S
- Clark, Peter and James Q. Wilson (1961): Incentive Systems: A Theory of Organizations, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 6(2):129-166.
- Dekker, P. and L. Halman (2003): Volunteering and Values: An Introduction. In Dekker, P. and L. Halman (eds.): *The values of Volunteering. Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. N.Y.: Kluwer Academic.
- Delhey, Jand and Kenneth Newton (2003): Who Trusts? The origins of social trust in seven societies. *European Societies* 5(2):93-137.
- Garsons, G. David (2007): "Logistic Regression", from *Statnotes: Topics in Multivariate Analyses*. Retrieved 08/15/2007 from <http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/statnote.htm>.
- Gronbjerg, Kirsten A. And Brent Never (2004): The Role of Religious Networks and Other Factors in Types of Volunteer Work. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, Vol. 14, No. 3:263-289
- Gundelach, P. (2002): Værdier på dagsordenen. I Gundelach, P. (red.): *Danskernes værdier 1981-1999*. Gylling: Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- Habermann, U. (2001): En nordisk frivillighed? Om motiver til frivillighed i fem nordiske lande. I Henriksen, L. S. og B. Ibsen (red.): *Frivillighedens udfordringer – nordisk forskning om frivilligt arbejde og frivillige organisationer*. Gylling: Odense Universitetsforlag
- Ibsen, B. (2006) 'Foreningerne og de frivillige organisationer', in T. P Boje, T. Fridberg & B. Ibsen (eds) *Den frivillige sektor i Danmark – Omfang og Betydning*, pp. 71-117. København: Socialforskningsinstituttet.
- Janoski, T. and Wilson, J. (1995) 'Pathways to Voluntarism: Family Socialization and Status Transmission Models', *Social Forces* 74(1): 271-292.
- Koch-Nielsen, I., Henriksen, L. S., Fridberg, T. og Rosdahl, D. (2005) *Frivilligt arbejde. Den frivillige indsats i Danmark*. København: Socialforskningsinstituttet.
- Kreiner, Svend (1999): *Statistisk Problemløsning*. Jurist- og Økonomforbundets Forlag.
- Putnam, R. (1995): Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1):65-78.

- Rothstein, Bo & Eric M. Uslaner (2005): All for All: Equality, Corruption and Social Trust. *World Politics*, 58(1):41-72.
- Salamon, L. M., Sokolowski, W. and Associates (2004) *Global Civil Society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector. Volume Two*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Selle, P. og B. Øymyr (1995): *Frivillig organisering og demokrati*. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- Smith, David Horton (1994) 'Determinants of Voluntary Association Participation and Volunteering: A Literature Review', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 23(3): 243-63.
- Sokolowski, S. W. (1996): Show me the Way to the Next Worthy Deed: Towards a Microstructural Theory of Volunteering and Giving, *Voluntas*, 7(3):259-278.
- Wilson, J. (2000) 'Volunteering', *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 215-40.
- Wilson, J. and Musick, M. (1997) 'Who Cares? Toward an Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work', *American Sociological Review* 62 (October): 694-713.
- Wilson, J. and Musick, M. (1998) 'The Contribution of Social Resources to Volunteering', *Social Science Quarterly* 79(4): 799-814.
- Wilson, J. and Musick, M. (1999): Attachment to Volunteering, *Sociological Forum*, 14(2):243-272.
- Wollebæk, D. and Selle, P. (2007) 'Origins of Social Capital: Socialization and Institutionalization Approaches Compared', *Journal of Civil Society* 3(1):1-24.
- Wollebæk, D. et al. (2000): *Frivillig innsats. Sosial integrasjon, demokrati og økonomi*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.