

**Motivations and Barriers to Volunteering by Seniors:
A Critical Review of the Literature**

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Abstract

Information about the motivations and barriers to volunteering by seniors is of vital importance to nonprofit agencies seeking to recruit and retain older volunteers. This paper presents a critical review of the social and behavioural literature in relation to volunteering by seniors. The focus in the literature is on what motivates seniors to volunteer, with less attention to barriers to volunteering. Whilst findings from these studies are relatively consistent and provide important general information, a critical review of this literature raises a number of conceptual and methodological concerns that could limit the applicability of findings to the field. For example, many studies fail to differentiate either by age of participants and/or by differences in volunteer activities. Overall, very few studies incorporate validated scales that can be assessed across activities and contexts. It is important that new researchers recognise these limitations and address them in future research, particularly if volunteer administrators are to build the best available evidence into their policies and practices.

Keywords:

volunteering, motivations, barriers, seniors, literature review

Introduction

In recent years, as a result of interest in the development of social capital and community capacity building, volunteering has become a vital part of discussions on the function of society (Baum et al., 1999; Cox, 1997; Kerr & Tedmanson, 2003; Dekker & van den Broek, 1998; Salamon & Anheier, 1998). A particular dimension of this is that relating to volunteering by seniors, particularly in light of the ageing of the population and the growing numbers of active retirees

(Warburton, Le Brocque & Rosenman, 1998; Gottlieb, 2002).

Volunteering has a significant impact on society on a number of levels, from economic value to community-level and individual benefits (Greenfield & Marks, 2004; Lum & Lightfoot, 2005; Ironmonger, 2000; Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 2002). In terms of economic value, the United Nations (2001) estimates suggest that volunteering is worth US\$225 billion a year in the United States, US\$11 billion a year in Canada, US\$13.65 billion in the Netherlands, and US\$57 billion in

the United Kingdom. These amounts are considerable, and in countries such as Australia, volunteering has been estimated at equivalent to between 7 and 8% of Gross Domestic Product (Ironmonger, 2000).

Whilst harder to measure, there are also important social benefits associated with volunteering. In general terms, volunteering offers opportunities for participation and results in more fulfilling lives, particularly for those otherwise marginalised in society (United Nations General Assembly, 2001). Volunteering contributes to the “reserves of trust and cohesion” (United Nations General Assembly, 2001, p. 4) within and between societies, a significant part of the creation of social capital.

Volunteering activity can also have important psychological and other health benefits for the volunteers themselves. A body of literature highlights the importance of volunteering and social participation on the well-being, quality of life, health and longevity of individuals, and particularly older individuals (Onyx & Warburton, 2003; Warburton, 2006). Indeed, studies of the benefits of volunteering across the life course suggest that there is a particularly strong relationship between good health and volunteering amongst older adults (van Willigen, 2000; Musick & Wilson, 2003). In particular, volunteering is said to provide a role identity and sense of purpose for those retired from paid work (Greenfield & Marks, 2004).

Thus, recent literature suggests that there are clear advantages of volunteering, particularly in later life. However, if individuals are to be encouraged to participate and to benefit from these advantages, attention needs

to be paid to recruitment and retention of volunteers (Culp et al., 2006; Bussell & Forbes, 2002; Callow, 2004). In particular, these recruitment and retention strategies need to be based on a thorough understanding of what people are seeking from their volunteer activities as well as what might be preventing them from volunteering. The large body of research that exists on the motivations, expectations and barriers experienced by volunteers and potential volunteers is thus vital. This is particularly the case in an ageing society, where new cohorts of seniors are ageing and retiring. This paper provides a critical review of the current literature on motivations and barriers associated with volunteering by seniors, in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of this body of literature.

Methods

The data collection and review process was conducted in a systematic fashion; that is, criteria were used and a systematic process followed for the inclusion and exclusion of studies, and for data extraction. A literature search was conducted using the following social and behavioural science databases:

- *Psychology: A SAGE Full-Text Collection; PsycINFO; Social Services Abstracts; Sociological Abstracts; Sociology: A SAGE Full-Text Collection* using the search terms KW=volunteer* and AB=(motiv* or barrier* or incentive*) and limiters year of publication 1996-2006.
- *Academic Research Library; ProQuest Social Science Journals* using the search terms volunteer* AND motiv* OR barrier* OR incentive* in citation and abstract, and limiters of year of publication after 1st January 1996.

- *Ageline* using the search terms volunteer* AND motiv* OR barrier* OR incentive*, and limiters of year of publication 1996-2006.

This search revealed 251 results. Articles were then included if they reported the results of primary research studies in either peer-reviewed journals or reports; explored the motivations and/or barriers to volunteering; and explored the motivations and/or barriers *specific* to seniors or those approaching their senior years (to be as broadly inclusive as possible, the sample was defined by the age range 45+). According to this process, the sample of articles was refined as shown in Figure 1.

Study details were systematically explored, and study populations, methods, and findings were compared and contrasted in order to determine common results, research designs including scales used, quality and limitations across studies. Similar methods of review have been employed in studies across a range of disciplines (Harding & Higginson, 2003; McQueen & Klein, 2006; Harden et al., 2004) although many of these studies provide deeper data extraction, including effect sizes, for their analysis. That was not required for this review, as the purpose of this paper is neither to provide a review of research findings nor to provide a meta-analysis. Rather, the information of interest for this review relates to comparison of findings and methodologies employed.

Results and Discussion

Motivations to Volunteer and Barriers to Volunteering

Results of the review of the literature revealed a number of common motivations and barriers to volunteering by older people. These are presented in Table 1 below. For the sake of

parsimony, studies were included in this table if they reported the motivator, or barrier/ cost as significant, as pertaining to 25% or more of the sample (some studies did not provide statistical analysis), or as being significantly associated with age, but excluded if the age differences were reported as pertaining to younger participants (that is, findings were not reported for *older* people). Specific motivations were included in the table if they were reported in three or more studies; however, given the small proportion of studies exploring the *barriers* to volunteering, all relevant studies were included in this section.

The review presented in Table 1 shows that seniors are most commonly motivated to volunteer by helping values, social aspects of volunteering, and opportunities to make a contribution to their community or society, to use their skills or share knowledge, to learn, develop new skills and be intellectually stimulated, or to feel good or feel needed. Potential older volunteers are hindered most commonly by health problems, work commitments, full schedule, and lack of time. These findings are potentially useful to volunteer administrators seeking to retain their volunteers or recruit new volunteers. In particular, information such as this is critical because recruitment and retention strategies need to be based on the best available evidence regarding what motivates an individual to begin and continue volunteering, as well as what barriers exist to stop people giving their time (Callow, 2004; Bussell & Forbes, 2002). This body of research can thus be used by volunteer administrators in marketing volunteer opportunities, recruitment

programs, and in developing training programs.

However, while these are important general findings, a deeper exploration of this body of literature suggests that there are some critical points that need to be noted by those seeking to use these findings. In particular, there are two main areas of concern raised by such a critical review. First, there are concerns around the conceptual development of these studies, including a tendency to neglect the potential diversity of volunteer activities, as well as differences in the motivations and needs of different age groups. Second, studies vary considerably in their methodology, and particularly in relation to measurement and analysis. Both of these issues are discussed in more detail below, including the implications of these findings for volunteer administrators seeking to utilise this body of knowledge, as well as researchers seeking to develop and implement new studies.

Conceptual Issues

A review of this literature reveals issues associated with the conceptual mix of factors presented in these studies. Most of the literature presented in Table 1 focuses on the motivations of individuals to volunteer. In fact, the studies on motivations for volunteering are quite numerous and cover a broad range of contexts and specific volunteering areas, offering a significant body of research evidence on which managers and administrators can draw. Such a large evidence base provides a wealth of knowledge for recruitment, training and retention strategies. However, far fewer studies investigating the barriers to volunteering (only 37% of studies reviewed). This is a concerning trend given the potential

importance of such information to volunteer recruitment and retention (Ellis, 1996; Callow, 2004). Directing a marketing program towards a particular target group which is based on evidence about their potential motivations will do little to promote sustained volunteering behaviour if there are significant barriers that have not been addressed. Studies looking at why people volunteer have tended to neglect to consider what acts to prevent people from volunteering, and future research should supplement a strong tradition of motivational research with research into the factors that may have the effect of minimising or negating those motivations.

A second conceptual issue is that, in terms of motivations, most studies find strong support for a helping motivation, which is not unexpected; however, few distinguish between helping and altruism. In many cases, a helping motivation, or the motive "I want to/like to help people" is equated with, or described as, an altruistic motivation. However, according to some theorists, the motivation for the act of helping is not always altruistic, or not entirely so (Maner et al., 2002); altruism is helping, but not all helping is altruistic. No distinction is made in the literature between altruistic and self-advancement motives for helping; rather, the assumption is often made that wanting to help others is necessarily an altruistic urge. Clearly this distinction needs to be made in future research, as these are two conceptually distinct motivations with important implications for both recruitment and volunteer outcomes.

The third area of concern is that studies often fail to acknowledge the importance of diversity amongst volunteers and differences between volunteer activities. Marketers and

volunteer managers are well aware that, in recruiting new volunteers, they must target and appeal to particular individuals or groups (Callow, 2004). For example, not all volunteers are interested in volunteering for social reasons or for service reasons, and some may volunteer in order to maintain their professional skills. It is important to know the motivations and needs of the target audience and also to ensure that the recruitment campaign promotes the tasks to the right candidates.

Motivations can also differ across activities (Clary, Snyder & Stukas, 1996). Most studies neglect to acknowledge diversity by failing to separate types of volunteer activities (Burr et al., 2005; Sauer et al., 2001; Sauer et al., 2002; Silberman et al., 2004; Narushima, 2005). Volunteering is generally treated as one normalised category of activity, without recognition of the wide variety of activities that could potentially comprise volunteering (McDonald & Warburton, 2001). If activities are separated, it is in order to explore one specific volunteering program. For example, trainee lay leaders on an arthritis self-management program reported task-specific motivations such as previous attendance at “Challenging Arthritis” (CA) course resulting in desire to share knowledge and information, and a desire to gain a greater understanding about arthritis and to increase the coping skills repertoire (Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001). Similarly, one of the motivations reported by hospice volunteers was to ease the pain of hospice patients (Black & Kovacs, 1999). In other words, motivation for these volunteers was in some cases a function of the type of volunteering they were engaged in. This suggests that there is a need to

distinguish between activities, perhaps in terms of volunteering categories, such as those used in many definitions of volunteering (Petriwskyj & Warburton, 2007; United Nations, 2001). While it can be useful to have generalised information about *volunteering* as a category of behaviour, some motivations and barriers may in fact be specific to a type of volunteering such as environmental, or philanthropic service. Volunteering is not one generic activity, and future studies should ensure that in order to provide the most useful and relevant information for volunteer administrators, they acknowledge the factors that might be specific to a given context, or identify more clearly the context in which the research is conducted.

Further, relatively few of the studies reviewed separate age groups, and instead treat volunteers as a homogeneous group. This is important to note, particularly as those studies that do compare by age group clearly demonstrate important broad differences between older and younger volunteers in the motivations, expectations, and barriers to volunteering reported (Clary et al., 1998; Omoto et al., 2000; Okun & Schultz, 2003; Hendricks & Cutler, 2004). For example, Omoto et al. (2000) found that while older volunteers were more likely to be motivated by service or community obligation concerns, younger volunteers tended to be motivated by concerns related to interpersonal relationships. Such distinctions are useful in understanding some of the broad age cohort differences, although relatively few studies consider this dimension. It must also be acknowledged that there are substantial differences between individual needs and motivations across

the same age cohort, and that there are multiple layers of diversity in the volunteer experience.

However, in looking at this body of literature, it appears that the definition of seniors or older person is also problematic. When studies separate age groups, the age cut-off for 'senior' or 'older person' ranges considerably, from 45 (Chappell & Prince, 1997) to 65 (+- Warburton, Terry, Rosenman, Shapiro, 2001) years of age, however the reason for choosing that cut-off is rarely noted for the reader. For example, in one paper (Black & Kovacs, 1999), although the authors explain that age groupings were based on decade gaps (55-64, 65-74 etc), no explanation is given regarding the choice of 55 as the cut-off between "younger" and "older" volunteers. While this example is by no means unusual, it is indicative of a lack of transparency in research. In other words, diversity amongst seniors is rarely acknowledged in the research design. Consideration of such issues would enable researchers to tap into this diversity and the impact it can have on motivations and barriers.

Thus, in summary, there are important conceptual issues associated with this body of literature, which include a lack of rigorous attention to what stops people from volunteering, as well as what motivates them; a lack of conceptual clarity, particularly in terms of the boundaries between helping and altruism; and a lack of attention to diversity, particularly around volunteer activities, and potential differences by age and life stage. These concerns highlight opportunities for future research in this field to expand and explore new areas to contribute to the body of knowledge. In the next section,

we turn to some of the methodological issues associated with this literature.

Methodological Issues

The second major issue raised in the review relates to the methodologies incorporated into these studies. Generally, the literature includes a broad range of methodologies and measures (Table 2).

For example, there are studies that utilise closed-ended techniques (Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003; Sauer et al., 2002; Sauer et al., 2001; Silberman et al., 2004), as well as open-ended techniques, or a mixture of the two (Fisher et al., 1998) (although the vast majority were closed-ended). Studies incorporate methods such as interviews (Narushima, 2005; Fisher et al., 1998), questionnaires (Black & Kovacs, 1999) or use of census or national survey data (Chou et al., 2003; Chappell & Prince, 1997).

Such variation in methods, particularly the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods, can be seen as a strength for a research field, bringing richness through triangulation of the findings. However, to allow comparisons across age groups, volunteer activity and motivations, there is a need for validated measures and scales, and these are generally absent from the literature. One important exception is the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI; Clary & Snyder, 1991), which is incorporated into a number of studies (Okun et al., 1998; Ferrari et al., 1999; Okun & Schultz, 2003). However, the large majority of studies do not use a validated scale, do not report any form of evaluation process and do not discuss the reliability or validity of the measures used. This is a pattern which raises concern about the transparency of

research and the utility of the measures developed.

Further, different methods of analysis have been used, ranging from simple percentages (Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003; Sauer et al., 2002; Sauer et al., 2001; Silberman et al., 2004) to multivariate statistical analysis (Warburton, Terry, Rosenman, & Shapiro, 2001; Chappell & Prince, 1997). These variations in both method and analysis have resulted in a range of predictors and motivations being identified. Although some flexibility is vital given the variation in findings for different activities and target groups, as Clary and Snyder (1991) observed, "the widespread use of measures of unknown reliability and validity is troublesome" (p. 137). This presents concerns for transparency of research, interpretation, and replicability. It is also of major concern for those wishing to use these results to recruit new groups of volunteers, or market volunteering in a particular field of practice.

Conclusions

It is clear from the literature that there is a broad range of recent studies into motivations to volunteer (and, to a lesser extent, barriers to volunteering). The question of why people choose to volunteer has generated considerable research interest over the past three decades. However, a systematic review of this literature has revealed that relatively few studies focus specifically on seniors or include seniors as a specific group in their study, despite the importance of this information for volunteer administrators seeking to recruit and retain older volunteers. The review also reveals other conceptual and methodological concerns associated with this body of literature, which need

to be addressed in future research if practical outcomes are to be achieved from research endeavors.

It is clearly not appropriate simply to treat all volunteers as a homogeneous group. There are important potential differences between volunteers across activities, in why they volunteer and what they seek from their volunteering, as well as potential differences by age cohort. Age is a particularly important consideration – seniors vary considerably in their interests, capacity, and experience and it is important that such heterogeneity is recognised by potential recruiters. It also needs to be recognised that retirement offers an important opportunity for nonprofit organisations to bring experience and skills to their organisations, but more knowledge is needed in how best to attract those on the brink of retirement. These are important concerns both for researchers in this field, and for administrators using such research evidence as a basis for their recruitment, training and retention strategies.

The review reveals some conceptual confusion in the literature which limits both the applicability of the results as well as comparisons across age groups and across contexts. Limitations of the methodologies employed in these studies are also concerning. In particular, the failure to separate age cohorts and activities means that results are quite general and of less use to volunteer administrators than if the research was clearly targeted and identified. It is important that researchers attempt to strike a balance between flexibility of methodology and the use of validated and reliable measures. At the very least, researchers need to demonstrate an awareness of the nature of the scale they are using, and its

properties, even if pilot-testing is not viable or appropriate to their methodology. Researchers need to ensure that the research design process is transparent and clearly articulated. Such clarity is important not simply for other researchers, but also to ensure that the research is of maximum practical use to those developing volunteer practice and policy.

Thus, both conceptual and methodological issues affect the generalizability, analysability, and utility of the body of research into seniors' motivations to volunteer and the barriers they report. Clearly, researchers need to be aware of their methodology and carefully consider their research design. Choice of scale, analysis and method, as well as the activity under investigation, can have an impact on findings. There are clearly opportunities for the type of clear and targeted information useful to recruiters and managers to be gleaned from this type of research, if methodologies are carefully designed and presented. Although a number of findings are common across studies, the implications for researchers are clear: temper flexibility with empirical caution.

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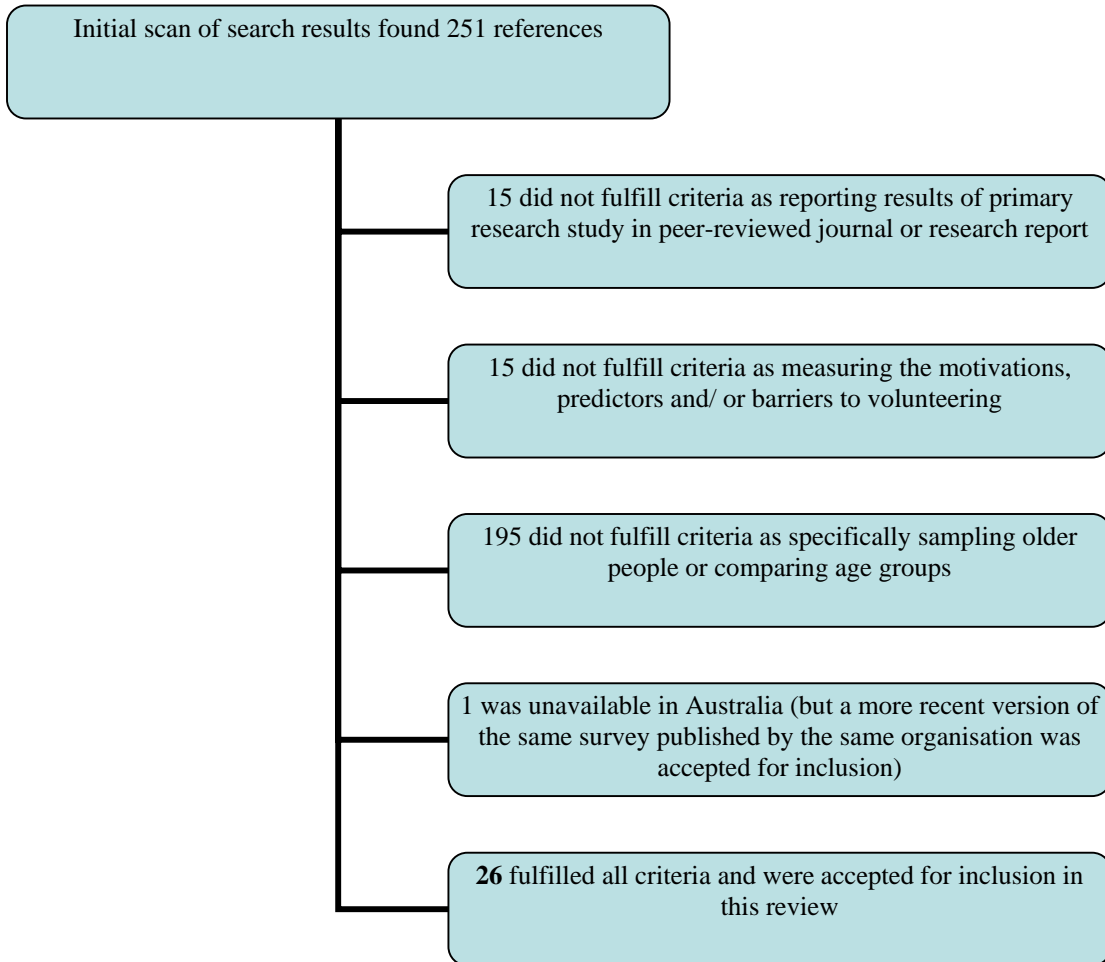


Figure 1. *Flowchart of sample selection*

Table 1. *Common Motivations and Perceived Barriers Reported in the Literature*

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
Motivations		
<i>Helping motivation/ helping values/ VFI values scale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mjelde-Mossey, Chi & Chow, 2002 ▪ Tschirhart, 1998 ▪ Fisher, Day & Collier, 1998 ▪ Bowen, Andersen & Urban, 2000 ▪ Burr, Choi, Mutchler & Caro, 2005 ▪ Warburton, Terry, Rosenman & Shapiro, 2001 ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth 2001 ▪ Black & Kovacs 1999 ▪ Chou, Chow & Chi, 2003 ▪ Sauer, AARP Knowledge Management and FGI Inc, 2002 ▪ Sauer, FGI Inc & AARP Knowledge Management, 2001 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Silberman, Burton & AARP Knowledge Management, 2004 	<p>Questionnaire</p> <p>Questionnaire</p> <p>Interview using closed-and open-ended questions</p> <p>Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI</p> <p>Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House 1995)</p> <p>Questionnaire and telephone survey</p> <p>Semi-structured telephone interviews</p> <p>Survey adapted from a rape crisis volunteer survey (Black & DiNitto, 1994)</p> <p>Survey run by Department of census, face-to-face interview</p> <p>AARP volunteerism survey</p> <p>AARP volunteerism survey</p> <p>AARP volunteerism survey</p> <p>AARP volunteerism survey</p>
<i>Social motivation/ VFI social scale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warburton & Dyer, 2004 ▪ Fisher et al., 1998 ▪ Bowen et al., 2000 ▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002 ▪ Warburton et al., 2001 	<p>Questionnaire developed from qualitative phase</p> <p>Interview using closed-and open-ended questions</p> <p>Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI</p> <p>Questionnaire</p>

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
<i>Generativity/ Contribution to community or society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001 ▪ Okun & Schultz, 2003 ▪ Sauer et al., 2002 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Warburton & Dyer, 2004 	<p>Questionnaire and telephone survey Semi-structured telephone interviews Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) (Clary & Snyder, 1991) AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey Questionnaire developed from qualitative phase</p>
<i>Use or contribute skills or knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keith, 2003 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Sauer et al., 2002 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Narushima, 2005 ▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002 ▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002 ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001 ▪ Black & Kovacs, 1999 ▪ Sauer et al., 2002 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Narushima, 2005 ▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002 	<p>Volunteer application form and mail questionnaire AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey Face-to-face interviews Interview survey</p> <p>Questionnaire Semi-structured telephone interviews Survey adapted from a rape crisis volunteer survey (Black & DiNitto, 1994) AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey Face-to-face interviews Interview survey</p>

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
<i>Learn or develop skills/ intellectual stimulation/ VFI understanding scale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warburton & Dyer, 2004 ▪ Okun et al., 1998 ▪ Bowen et al., 2000 ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001 ▪ Sauer et al., 2002 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Narushima, 2005 ▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002 	<p>Questionnaire developed from qualitative phase VFI Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI Semi-structured telephone interviews AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey Face-to-face interviews Interview survey</p>
<i>Feel good/ Feel needed/ VFI Enhancement/ Esteem scale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bowen et al., 2000 ▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002 ▪ Tschirhart, 1998 ▪ Okun et al., 1998 	<p>Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI Interview survey Questionnaire VFI</p>
Barriers/ costs <i>Health problems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Li & Ferraro, 2005 ▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Sauer et al., 2002 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 	<p>Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House 1995) Interview survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey</p>

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
<i>Age</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Li & Ferraro, 2005 	Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House 1995)
<i>Perceived lack of ability/ lack of confidence/ feelings of vulnerability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warburton et al., 2001 ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001 	Questionnaire and telephone survey Semi-structured telephone interviews
<i>Communication difficulties</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001 	Semi-structured telephone interviews
<i>Unwillingness to be tied down</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warburton et al., 2001 	Questionnaire and telephone survey
<i>Prefer other activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warburton et al., 2001 	Questionnaire and telephone survey
<i>Lack of time</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002 ▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002 	Questionnaire Interview survey
<i>Family obligations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001 	Semi-structured telephone interviews
<i>Full schedule</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Sauer et al., 2002 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 	Questionnaire AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey
<i>Work commitments/ preference for paid work/ commitment to 'more important' work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002 ▪ Chou et al., 2003 ▪ Silberman et al., 2004 ▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003 ▪ Sauer et al., 2001 	Questionnaire Survey run by Department of census, face-to-face interview AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey AARP volunteerism survey

Table 2. *Methodologies Reported in the Literature*

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Burr et al., 2005	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 1,615 ▪ Mean age 64.3 ▪ 56.7% female; 87.2% white; 66.8% married ▪ 38.4% volunteers for a religious or secular organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House, 1995)
Li & Ferraro, 2005	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 959 ▪ Age range 60-96 <p>For complete data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mean age = 67.57 ▪ 71% female; 24% black; 60% married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House, 1995)
Warburton & Dyer, 2004	▪ Membership of a research registry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 260 ▪ 63% female; 37% male ▪ Age range 50 to 90, mean age 65 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose-built closed-ended questionnaire developed from and in-depth qualitative phase
Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hong Kong sample ▪ N = 438 ▪ 36.3% retired; 78% married ▪ 51.6% with university degree or above ▪ 68.7% over 50; 50.2% female ▪ For this section of the survey, N = 190 experienced volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended, multiple-choice questionnaire
Warburton et al., 2001	▪ General (formal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 238 ▪ Australian ▪ Age range 65-74 ▪ 52% female; 76% married/cohabiting ▪ 47% volunteered in past month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questionnaires and telephone survey

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trainee lay leaders on an arthritis self-management program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 22 ▪ Arthritis sufferers ▪ Mean age = 57.9 ▪ Members of the ‘Challenging Arthritis’ course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-structured telephone interviews
Okun et al., 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RSVP = Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, heterogeneous settings; ▪ SMHSI Scottsdale Memorial Health Systems Incorporated, health care settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two samples ▪ N = 409 over 50s ▪ Scottsdale Memorial Health Systems Incorporated (SMHSI) ▪ 70% female; 98% white ▪ 40% aged 69 or younger ▪ N = 372 over 55s ▪ Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) ▪ 75% female; 98% white ▪ 49% aged 69 or younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VFI (Clary & Snyder, 1991)
Ferrari et al., 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animal and human homeless shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 34 younger (mean age = 18.5 years) ▪ N = 70 older (mean age 54.9 years) ▪ 71.2% Caucasian ▪ 79.8% female 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VFI (Clary et al., 1992) ▪ Caregiver scale (Ferrari et al., 1993) ▪ Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960)
Omoto et al., 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 144 ▪ Age range 19-76 ▪ Mean age = 49.86 ▪ Grouped into 3 categories: younger (aged 19-39); middle (aged 40-54); older (aged 55-76) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended questionnaire adapted from the AIDS volunteer scale (Omoto & Snyder, 1995)
Okun & Schultz, 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat for Humanity International (Christian housing ministry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 523 ▪ 53% aged 50 and over ▪ 46% female; 92% white ▪ 64% married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VFI

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Black & Kovacs, 1999	▪ Hospice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 222 ▪ 78% aged 55 or over ▪ 75% female; 47% married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended survey adapted from a rape crisis volunteer survey (Black & DiNitto, 1994)
Sauer et al., 2001	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delaware ▪ AARP members ▪ 50+ ▪ 40% volunteered in last 12 months ▪ 46% female; 59% married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended survey
Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maryland ▪ AARP members ▪ N = 978 ▪ Age 50+ ▪ 49% female; 53% married ▪ 78% white 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed ended survey
Warburton & Terry, 2000	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age range 65-74 ▪ Australian sample <p>Time 1 respondents (<i>N</i> = 296), 151 women/145 men; 75% married</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 52% volunteered in last year <p>Time 2 sample (<i>N</i> = 240) comprised 126 women and 114 men.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended survey and telephone survey
Sauer et al., 2002	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New York AARP members ▪ N = 953 ▪ 50+ ▪ 86% white; 47% female ▪ 56% married ▪ 38% volunteered in last 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended survey
Silberman et al., 2004	▪ General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Dakota AARP members ▪ Aged 50+ ▪ 49% female; 63% married; 97% white ▪ 49% volunteered in last 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-ended survey

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Narushima, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General ▪ Nonprofit organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Canadian ▪ N = 15 ▪ 9 women/6 men ▪ Age range 55 to 93 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Face-to face interviews
Chou et al., 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 1,866 ▪ Age range 45-59 ▪ 54.8% female; 86.3% married ▪ Mean age = 51.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey run by Department of Census, face-to-face interview
Clary et al., 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2,671 Americans aged 18 or older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National survey of American adults for Independent Sector (including qs from VFI)
Peters-Davis et al., 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 356 ▪ Age range 63-95 ▪ Mean age = 74 ▪ 38% volunteers ▪ 49% female; 49.4% married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephone interview ▪ One section of the NEO-PI ▪ Self-report Altruism Scale ▪ Other self-report items
Bowen et al., 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 1,113 ▪ Mean age 63.5 years ▪ 98% white ▪ 22% lived alone ▪ 73% volunteered at some time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Computer-assisted telephone interviews ▪ VFI
Keith, 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ombudsman program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All female ▪ N = 778 ▪ Applicants for resident advocate for nursing facilities ▪ Age range 32-91 ▪ Mean age = 69 ▪ 72% did not work outside the home ▪ 76% female ▪ Grouped into younger (under 70) and older (70 and above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application form and mail questionnaire designed by the researcher

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General ▪ At least 5 hours per week ▪ Organised community activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 84% white; 57% married ▪ 45% aged 50-59, 55% 60-75 ▪ N = 600 ▪ 50% volunteers, 50% non-volunteers ▪ 52% female 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interview survey
Fisher et al., 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior Ambassador and Medicare Assistance Programs for St Johns Regional Health Centre in Springfield, MO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 24 ▪ Age range 56-82 ▪ Mean age = 71.29 ▪ All white; 13 married ▪ 79% retired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interview using closed- and open-ended questions in a quantitative study using a survey
Chappell & Prince, 1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General ▪ Formal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 7,132 ▪ All aged 45+ ▪ Demographic characteristics reported in Prince & Chappell (1994) ▪ 45.9% of 65+ were formal volunteers ▪ 48.2% of 45-64 were formal volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from the National Survey of Volunteer Activity (NSVA) ▪ Mail questionnaires, interview
Tschirhart, 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AmeriCorps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N = 1157 People entering AmeriCorps in 1995 ,6 & 7 and 866 respondents to survey after 1 year in Americorps ▪ 5% aged 50 and over 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey questionnaire ▪ Hackman & Oldham's (1980) instrument for measuring critical psychological states ▪ Perry's (1996) public service motivation scale