'business-like' structures and practices (Powell 1986). Furthermore, in an era in which 'everything is for sale,' for-profit corporations often insist that their charitable donations must benefit themselves as well as others, by practicing what has been called 'cause-related marketing.' Philanthropic giving is itself encouraged by tax-deductibility, and individual programs are often required to support themselves as 'profit centers' within specific nonprofit organizations.

In the climate of resource uncertainty that prevails among many paid-staff voluntary organizations, fund-raising (increasingly referred to as 'development' or 'advancement') often becomes a central staff activity, and a high emphasis is paid to the quality of 'nonprofit management' credentials and skills, often provided by the many university centers that have emerged since 1980.

The futurist J Rifkin (1995) has argued that the twenty-first century is likely to see a continuing decline in the amount of paid work made available to individuals by both governments and corporations. This restructuring of economy and society will provide increasing scope, he contends, for participation in voluntary activity. By providing shadow wages (e.g., tax deductions) to support voluntary action and a social wage to facilitate volunteering by under-employed people, the social economy provided by the third sector may play an important role in maintaining social peace and order in an age threatened by the divisiveness of increasing socioeconomic inequality.

In such a time of change and challenge, it is important to recall that it is voluntary action that powers the third sector, and that the third sector is relied upon by society as a crucial developer of its distinctive goals. Voluntary organizations resemble, in part, businesses, governments, and families—and interact directly with all three of these organizational forms.

Voluntary organizations receive their unique stamp, however, from their shared value of advancing the common good by means of reflective and significant voluntary group activity. The core values of voluntary organizations distinguish these organizations from firms that operate in the marketplace and from other kinds of social service organization. These values should be reflected both in the objectives of the organizations and in their operational policies. For example, a typical volunteer or paid practitioner within a voluntary organization would likely consider as of central importance values such as caring, social justice, fairness, and the involvement of users in planning and delivery of services. Similarly, voluntary organizations normally will prioritize marginalized and minority individuals, people in need, and those who feel excluded or disadvantaged.

A particular challenge for voluntary organizations is to interpret and apply their values and to ensure that in their day-to-day work, management and care practices, and personnel and other policies, they are consistent with the values they say they stand for. When voluntary organizations succeed in defining their goals and meeting needs responsively, they can contribute significantly to the quality of life in modern society.

See also: Civil Society, Concept and History of; Communitarianism: Political Theory; Communitarianism, Sociology of; Durkheim, Emile (1858–1917); Lobbying; Pluralism; Social Capital; Tocqueville, Alexis de (1805–59); Voluntary Associations, Sociology of

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Volunteerism, Psychology of

Every year, millions of people volunteer substantial amounts of time and energy to helping others. Among other services, volunteers provide companionship to the lonely, tutoring to the illiterate, counseling to the

troubled, and health care to the sick. According to one estimate, 93 million adults in the USA engaged in some form of volunteerism during 1995, with their combined length of service totaling 20.3 billion hours. These 93 million volunteers represented 49% of the adult population, a quarter of whom devoted five or more hours per week to volunteering (Independent Sector 1996). Moreover, volunteerism is not limited to the USA and can be found in many other parts of the world (Curtis et al. 1992).

From a scientific perspective, the study of volunteerism provides opportunities for inquiring into the nature of helping and of prosocial action more generally. Two distinct traditions of research and theorizing in psychology can be identified, each investigating a specific form of helping and each focusing on issues relevant to that form of helping.

1. Varieties of Helping and Prosocial Action

One research tradition focuses on situations in which potential helpers are confronted with unexpected opportunities to help strangers (the classical example being 'bystander intervention,' e.g., Latané and Darley 1970). The help that occurs here is typically unplanned and spontaneous, is usually confined to relatively brief encounters, and generally entails neither prior contact nor future contact between helper and recipient. To answer the question of why this spontaneous helping occurs, some researchers have proposed that it reflects purely altruistic motives to benefit others (e.g., Batson 1998). Other answers involve claims that such helping reflects selfish concerns, such as to feel good about oneself (e.g., Cialdini et al. 1987).

A second research tradition focuses on people providing long-term care and support to those suffering with serious illness or chronic conditions. This research examines 'obligated' caregivers who, because of marital bond or blood relationship, provide assistance to a spouse, parent, child, or sibling suffering from ailments, including Alzheimer's disease, arthritis, or the aftermath of a stroke or serious accident (e.g., Thompson and Pitts 1992, Folkman et al. 1994). In such relationships, the impetus for assistance may reasonably be seen to flow from the legal, ethical, or familial obligations that tie the helper to the recipient, thereby rendering questions of personality and motivation all but moot. These helpers help because they have to, doing so for reasons related to moral, legal, or personal obligation. This literature has focused on the nature of such caregiving: it is difficult, demanding, and stressful, and may exact considerable psychological and even physical tolls on those who provide such ongoing, long-term care.

Although it shares many features with other forms of prosocial action, several features of volunteerism mark it as a distinctive form of helping (Piliavin and Charng 1990, Clary and Snyder 1991, Omoto and Snyder 1995). Rather than happening upon situations in which they are pressed to help, volunteers typically seek out opportunities to help, and may deliberate long and hard about the precise nature of their involvement; these features distinguish volunteerism from spontaneous helping. Volunteerism often entails commitments that extend over long periods of time and entail sizable personal costs; this feature of volunteerism is shared with the long-term helping of obligated caregivers. However, unlike obligated caregivers, volunteers typically do not know those they help in advance and have no prior bonds of obligation to help them; instead, volunteers often are matched with the recipients of their help by service organizations.

As a hybrid strain of helping, volunteerism engages many of the questions associated with the spontaneous helping and obligated caregiving traditions of research on helping. Volunteerism raises questions of personality (is it enacted only by individuals with altruistic dispositions?), of motivation (why, in the absence of obligation, do people ever volunteer?), and of mechanisms for sustaining it (in what ways do personal and social resources promote long-term helping?). At a theoretical level, then, understanding volunteerism requires broaching questions that are also of fundamental concern in other forms of helping.

However, in spite of its potential to engage a wide range of theoretical questions, there has been (until relatively recently) remarkably little psychological research on volunteerism (see Piliavin and Charng 1990, Clary and Snyder 1991). Also, because of its defining and characteristic features, volunteerism is something of a curious phenomenon. For a variety of reasons, it simply should not occur. Unlike the helping that occurs in response to emergencies, there is no press of circumstances. Unlike the helping that occurs in families and in existing relationships, there are no bonds of obligations. Volunteerism is effortful, time consuming, and involves opportunity costs to volunteers—all features that should serve as barriers to volunteering. Yet people do seek out opportunities to volunteer, and they do sustain their volunteer efforts over extended periods of time. The question is, 'Why?' Why do some people get involved in helping others as volunteers and in participating in society? What is it that moves people to seek out opportunities to help? What is it that guides them toward some helping opportunities and away from others? And what is it that sustains their efforts over time and through adversity?

2. Motivational Foundations of Volunteerism

The questions of why people volunteer to help others are fundamentally questions about motivation. Answering these questions in terms of the forces that move people to action and that guide and sustain

action is, therefore, to provide answers in terms of the processes of motivation. Theories of motivation are, by definition, concerned with what moves people to action, what channels their action in some directions rather than others, and what sustains their actions. One approach to understanding the motivations behind volunteerism is a 'functional' approach concerned with the needs being met, the motives being fulfilled, and the functions being served by engaging in volunteer service (e.g., Omoto and Snyder 1995, Snyder et al. 2000).

Several considerations recommend functionalist theorizing (Snyder and Cantor 1998). First, the functional approach is a motivational perspective that directs us to inquire about the personal and social processes that initiate, direct, and sustain action. Second, a core proposition of functionalist inquiry is that people can and do perform the same actions in the service of different psychological functions, with different people engaging in the same volunteer activity but doing so to fulfill different motives. Third, the functional approach suggests that important psychological events, such as embarking on a course of volunteer activities and then maintaining those activities over extended periods of time, depend on a matching of the motivational concerns of individuals with situations that can satisfy those concerns. Finally, research stimulated by motivationally oriented analyses of a wide variety of cognitive, affective, behavioral, and interpersonal processes supports key functionalist themes.

Guided by the broad directive provided by functionalist theorizing, researchers have sought to identify the precise motivations that can be fulfilled through volunteer service. Based on findings from diverse empirical investigations of volunteers involved in a wide variety of helping activities, it has been possible to identify and operationalize a diversity of personal and social functions served by volunteering (e.g., Omoto and Snyder 1995, Clary et al. 1998, Okun et al. 1998), including the expression of personal values, the quest for understanding, the desire for enhanced esteem, the strengthening of social relationships, the building of community ties, and the search for career advancement.

3. The Processes of Volunteerism

In their efforts to understand volunteerism as a form of sustained, ongoing prosocial action, researchers have examined the ways in which people construct agendas for voluntary action, identify their own motivations for volunteering, seek out and pursue service opportunities that they believe have the potential to fulfill their motivations, and sustain and maintain their involvement in these volunteer activities. Much of this research concerns helping and prosocial action as they occur in the real world, focusing on 'real' individuals involved in 'real' acts of volunteerism in 'real' world settings.

A guiding theme of research on volunteerism is that critical events in the 'life history' of a volunteer over the course of his or her volunteer service depend importantly on the match of that volunteer's motivations to the opportunities afforded by the environment in which volunteering occurs. Relevant to the conditions under which volunteerism is initiated, it has been found that persuasive messages motivate people to initiate volunteer service to the extent that the messages are tailored to the specific motivations important to individual recipients of the message (e.g., Clary et al. 1998). The importance of matching an individual's motivations to events in the situation does not end with recruitment. As participants in an ongoing and sustained activity, volunteers whose motivational concerns are served by their participation appear to derive greater satisfaction than those whose concerns are not met (e.g., Clary et al. 1998). Moreover, actual intentions to continue serving as volunteer helpers can also be linked to the matching of experiences with motivations such that volunteers who receive functionally-relevant benefits also express greater intentions to continue as volunteers, both in the short-term and in the long-term, than do volunteers who do not receive functionally relevant benefits or who receive functionally-irrelevant benefits (Clary et al. 1998). Finally, longitudinal investigations have found that fulfilling important motivations predicts actual commitment to volunteering (Omoto and Snyder 1995).

4. Promoting Volunteerism

Many societies view participation in volunteer activities as highly desirable, and people are encouraged to become volunteers. In fact, some American schools actually require students to participate in community service. However, requiring people to engage in community service may prove counterproductive in the long run, as there is considerable evidence that applying extrinsic pressures to perform an activity may actually undermine the motivation to continue to perform the activity once the pressure is removed (e.g., Lepper et al. 1973).

Stukas et al. (1999) examined this process in a 'mandatory volunteerism' program in which university students were required to perform community service. Of particular concern were students' intentions to continue to volunteer after the conclusion of the program, and the relation of these intentions to the students' preservice perceptions of control and prior volunteering experience. For those students who felt that their participation was under their own control (and thus perceived less external control to volunteer), greater future intentions were associated with greater previous experiences as a volunteer. However, for

those who felt external pressure to volunteer, their future intentions to volunteer were less than those who felt that they had retained personal control, and a slightly negative relationship between prior experience and intentions was observed.

Thus, volunteerism provides an opportunity to explore the empirical debate over the immediate and long-term impact of compelling people to act. Certainly, immediate volunteering can be induced by requiring students to serve, but it seems that future choices to volunteer may become less likely if the initial experience is accompanied by perceptions of external control.

5. *Theoretical and Practical Implications*

The study of volunteerism delivers potential messages, both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, the study of volunteerism is informative about the nature of helping. As exemplified by volunteerism, it informs us about forms of helping and prosocial action that are planful, sustained, and that occur in the absence of bonds of obligation. Also, from a theoretical perspective, it illustrates the benefits of conceptualizing motivation as the planful pursuit of agendas for action.

Practically, it teaches lessons about the practice of volunteerism, specifically about the ways that organizations dependent on the services of volunteers can enhance the recruitment, placement, and retention of volunteers by systematic attention to the experiences and the motivations of individual volunteers. As suggested by the functional approach, matching of recruitment appeals, volunteer tasks, and volunteer experiences to volunteers' motivations can influence the satisfaction, effectiveness, and longevity of service of volunteers.

Further, at an even broader level, studying volunteerism is also likely to yield valuable information of societal significance. It has the potential to inform about the actual and potential roles of volunteers and volunteer organizations in confronting and surmounting many of the problems that confront and challenge society.

See also: Architecture; Community Environmental Psychology; Environmental Psychology: Overview; Residential Environmental Psychology

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Voting: Class

The idea of class voting appears straightforward: it refers to the tendency for voters in a particular class to vote for a particular party, political candidate, or