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Public Perception of "Who is a Volunteer":
An Examination of the Net-cost Approach from a Cross-cultural Perspective

Introduction

Volunteers are the cornerstones on which the voluntary sector is predicated. We are accustomed to using this phrase in every aspect of our lives, yet too little systematic work has been carried out to define this term in a rigorous and precise manner. Volunteering is the essence of the scholarly work of numerous academicians around the world, however there are many issues that arise when people report their own volunteering or attempt to define the term volunteer. No clear-cut definition that encompasses all aspects of volunteering exists. Often too many different activities and situations are aggregated into this concept (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996; Scheier, 1980; Smith, 1995; Tremper, Seidman, & Tufts, 1994; Vineyard, 1993).

Cnaan and his colleagues (Cnaan & Amrofell, 1995; Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996) have advanced the field of studying volunteering by documenting the scope and variability of the concept. They showed that studies that report on volunteers without being specific on their characteristics cannot be generalized from one setting to another due to the ambiguity and variety of interpretations of "who is a volunteer." Furthermore, their conceptual and empirical analysis suggests that the public perception of the term volunteer is the outcome of people's conception of the net-cost of any volunteer situation, which they defined as total cost minus total benefits to the volunteer. Accordingly, the public can view two people performing the same task that equally benefits society and designate the individual who accrues more net-costs as being more of a volunteer.

For example, consider two individuals who each volunteer at a local library for 100 hours shelving books - resulting in equal benefits to the beneficiary organization (the library). One is a senior citizen who wants to enhance literacy, while the other is an accountant charged with embezzlement who accepts a sentence of 100 hours of community service in lieu of prosecution. We argue that the public will view the senior citizen as more of a volunteer than the accountant. Inasmuch as the two individuals provide an identical number of hours to the library, the accountant benefits more from the volunteer activity--escaping prosecution--which lowers his net costs as compared to the senior citizen; hence, he or she is perceived as less of a volunteer than the senior citizen.

Although the study by Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) suggested the net-cost theory as the key factor explaining public perception of who is a volunteer, it did not lend itself to hypotheses-testing and was quite tentative in its ability to support the concept of net cost. In this article we extend the work initiated by Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) and pose five key hypotheses to test the notion of net-cost as an explanatory model for public perception of volunteering. Based on previous work by McCurley and Vesuvio (1985) and Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996), we develop a new 50-item instrument. Furthermore, in order to compare the public perception of volunteering from a cross-cultural perspective, we administered this instrument to samples in Canada, India, Italy, the Netherlands, and two regions the United States. In each of the five regions we interviewed over 500 individuals to obtain a sufficiently large sample size to test hypotheses and draw conclusions.

We focus on the conceptual framework of net-cost as a means to account for public perception of volunteering and discuss our findings vis-a-vis the five hypotheses and variations

between the five regions studied. Our discussion also involves future research and implications for volunteer administrators as well as scholars in the field of volunteerism.

Background

The term volunteer is used too widely to incorporate countless situations. For example, a person who volunteers to help as a Big Brother for a year and a person who organizes a one-time ski trip are both legitimately termed as volunteers by most published definitions of the term volunteer (Adams, 1985; Ellis & Noyes, 1990; Fair Labor Standard Act, 1985; Scheier, 1980; Shure, 1991; The President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives, 1982; Van Til, 1982). Both individuals meet the required specifications of volunteers as they perform their tasks with free will, receive no remuneration, and their acts benefit others. However, these two volunteers perform tasks that are significantly distinct, hence, the term volunteer is too general and does not convey this specific information. Such lack of clarification makes it difficult to generalize from different studies on volunteers, measure with any accuracy the incidence of volunteering or make policy recommendations.

In the for-profit sector no one would consider paid employment as a monolithic activity. An employee can be a CEO, a manager, a clerk, or a janitor, and they are not all classified simply as “employees”. In studies dealing with various aspects of employment it is necessary to make classifications of employees into distinct categories to comprehend issues related to recruitment, compensation, contracts, management, etc. Similarly, volunteering is not a monolithic activity, and the study of volunteers needs to delineate different types of volunteers. Unfortunately, the literature on volunteers does not differentiate between the volunteer who sits on the board of the orchestra, the volunteer who delivers meals-on-wheels, and the volunteer who organizes a ski

trip.

Cnaan and Amrofell (1995) presented a framework for classifying the domain of volunteer activity. Their classification demonstrated the complexity of the volunteer world. They argued that in order to compare different volunteer activities the activities should be compared on a range of facets which include: length of commitment, benefitted target group, type of task performed, level and nature of supervision, and benefit to the volunteer. This classification, however, focused on the internal structure or management of the volunteer experience and did not address the question of what activity may be called a volunteer activity.

As the term volunteer is a social construct, it evades a formal definition. Therefore, it is important to understand what people *mean* by the term volunteer. Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) provided the first systematic attempt to define the term volunteer based on a survey designed to elicit people's perceptions of who is a volunteer. After a comprehensive review of the myriad definitions used in the published literature, they synthesized them into four key facets and used a 23-item questionnaire to ascertain individual perceptions of who is a volunteer. However, they did not predicate their study on hypotheses-testing and limited their work to one region of the United States. Our goal here is to go significantly beyond the Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) study by providing a theoretical framework that can explain who is a volunteer, draw specific hypotheses, and test them in five different regions on three continents.

Without replicating the work of Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) here, it is easy enough to demonstrate the importance of bringing clarity to the concept of "volunteer." Consider, first, the implications of a problematic definition(s) for research.

A panel session held at the 1998 annual meeting of the Association for Research on

Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action or ARNOVA (Seattle, Washington, USA, November 5-7, 1998) on "Age Differences In Volunteering" provides ample demonstration of the difficulties raised for research. One of the papers presented at the panel used as a definition of volunteering respondents' reports of "volunteering" for the past 12 months and the number of times they said they had volunteered over this period. The meaning of volunteering was left to respondents, as was the meaning of "times" (for example, if a person is a volunteer coach in a youth league, does that activity constitute volunteering one time, or does each practice, game, telephone call to a parent, etc. count as a time volunteering?).

A second paper presented at the ARNOVA panel did not mention the term volunteer to respondents, but asked them instead whether they had "given time, energies, or talents to an individual (other than a family member) or group for which you are not paid." Yet, the paper concentrated on volunteers from the workplace, where the issue of the voluntariness or "free choice" of the activity may be open to question. A third paper took a very different tack by defining volunteering as belonging to a long listing of groups or organizations, including fraternal groups, service clubs, political clubs, labor unions, youth groups, school service groups, hobby or garden clubs, fraternities or sororities, nationality groups, discussion or study groups, professional or academic societies, church-affiliated groups, and any others. Not only can one question whether belonging is equivalent to volunteering, but also whether belonging to some of these groups implies a greater level of "volunteer" activity (for example, service groups, school service groups) than belonging to others (professional or academic societies, labor unions).

In fact, the Independent Sector Organization (1996) takes direct aim at the issue of belonging. In its biennial surveys of giving and volunteering in the United States, Independent

Sector (1996, E192-193) explains to respondents, "By volunteer activity, I mean not just belonging to a service organization, but actually working in some way to help others for no monetary pay." The survey then probes for the particular areas in which respondents have engaged in volunteer activity. Even here, however, dispute occurs: Although Independent Sector asks about volunteering that is "informal or alone," it pays considerably more attention to volunteering for a group or organization. By contrast, in their research, Havens and Schervish (1996) defined volunteering as the giving of money, goods, assistance, and emotional support to relatives, friends, neighbors, and other people. Havens and Schervish emphasized the informal aspects of much volunteer activity, and contrary to one of the definitions above, include relatives explicitly as possible beneficiaries.

Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) uncovered four dimensions underlying common definitions of volunteering used in the literature: free choice, remuneration, structure, and intended beneficiaries. Depending upon how these dimensions are applied, a given study on "volunteering" will document highly discrepant profiles and magnitudes of this activity. Across the definitions briefly reviewed above, the extent of "volunteering" ranged from a low of about 50 percent to a high of 100 percent. From this example, the first implication of the conceptual uncertainty of determining who is a volunteer is evident: Scholars routinely encounter difficulty in interpreting and cumulating findings in the research literature.

Closely related, a second ramification is the problems created in attempting to estimate the scope of volunteer activity and assign a dollar value to it. These figures are important not only for informational purposes but also for public policy-making. They are essential to educate policy- makers and the general public regarding the vast amount of productive labor that fulfills

important societal purposes, yet is not captured by conventional employment, income, and other economic statistics. Derivation, dissemination, and use of such statistics has been influential in the U.S. in legislative campaigns, for instance, to enact liability protection for volunteers, authorize volunteer experience on job application forms, and raise the mileage deduction that can be claimed on income taxes for volunteer-related work.

A third implication is that different conceptions of volunteering can entail different job descriptions, skills, and training for managers of volunteers, a point reaffirmed by Cnaan and Amrofell (1994). Indeed, a recent study conducted by Brudney and Stringer (1998, 95-96) found that those who manage and administer volunteers in organizations have a huge variety of job titles many of them with little or no apparent connection to volunteers. Estimates of the number of individuals with this job responsibility likewise display great variability, from as few as 50,000 to as many as 200,000. Uncertainty concerning who is a volunteer similarly creates problems for defining the field of volunteer administration.

Finally, we must consider the implications of the conceptual confusion for volunteers themselves. In most societies and cultures, the term "volunteer" carries positive connotations for the participant. The term is perceived positively and confers status on those who undertake the activity. Clarifying the meaning of volunteer is important not only to researchers, public policy-makers, and the field of volunteer administration, but also to the citizen volunteers who should rightfully enjoy the benefits of this status.

Theory and Hypotheses

We propose that the definition of who is a volunteer or what constitutes a volunteer activity be based on the public perception of volunteering. We hypothesize that the public

perception of volunteering will be based primarily on the net costs incurred by the individual--broadly defined as costs minus benefits (possibly normalized)--in the volunteering activity. The individual incurring higher net costs is likely to be perceived as "more" of a volunteer than someone with lower net costs, although the calculus of costs and benefits is complex. In the concept of net costs we include only costs and benefits to the volunteer and exclude the benefits of the volunteer work to the recipient (beneficiary).

The costs of volunteering include items such as the time spent volunteering, effort, and the income and social pleasures foregone. Benefits to the volunteer go beyond simple monetary remuneration (although in most cases we expect little or no monetary remuneration) and include items such as improvement in social status and social opportunities (reputation), enhancement in future earning capability (wealth), social interaction and leisure activity, a sense of satisfaction from working for a cause one supports and a good feeling about oneself (warm glow). Based on this conceptual framework, we hypothesize that when volunteering involves higher costs and relatively lower benefits to the volunteer it will be considered more of a volunteer activity than when the benefits are higher and the costs are lower. In other words, *the higher the net costs (costs minus benefits) to the volunteer the more likely the individual will be perceived as a volunteer*.

To illustrate some of these considerations, consider the following three individuals: a teenager who presents a program about youth leadership to an audience of peers at a religious youth conference; a trainer who conducts a free workshop for an organization as a marketing device; and a medical doctor who delivers a research paper at a conference held by the American Medical Association. In one sense, all three perform a similar activity, lecturing in front of an

audience of peers. Certain similar benefits and costs are incurred by each one: all may derive a sense of satisfaction (warm glow), enhance their reputations, and may be asked to do additional work; they all spend time and effort preparing the presentation and may miss other social or professional opportunities. Yet, there exist some important differences among them: the medical doctor may benefit as he or she may be recognized as an expert, and this may result in attracting more patients and research grants; the trainer may make professional contacts and increase the probability of getting contracts; and the teenager may make some personal contacts. While they may all get a warm glow from the volunteering activity, other individual benefits differ significantly. Furthermore, the opportunity cost of each of these three individuals is different. They may each lose income that may have been derived from doing other things during the time allocated to volunteering. The physician forgoes income from seeing patients, the trainer forgoes income from additional potential contracts; and the teenager forgoes income earned through babysitting or other activities.

In essence, the net-cost framework enables us to deduce several hypotheses and to test them empirically. To that end we provide in the following discussion some examples of variations in net-cost and will use them to formulate specific hypotheses for empirical test.

Hypothesis 1: Different opportunity costs of volunteering (with equal benefits).

Let us assess the volunteering situations represented by the doctor, the trainer and the teenager who each volunteer an hour of his/her time to a soup kitchen. The individual benefits of serving in a soup kitchen are limited, and we may assume that these accrue equally to the doctor, trainer and teenager. However, their individual opportunity costs differ as explained earlier. Thus, viewed through the filter of net-cost (forgone income), the ranking may be as follows: The

doctor whose time is expensive and who therefore foregoes most income, would be viewed as more of a volunteer than the trainer, who in turn is considered more of a volunteer than the teenager, whose time is least expensive.

Hypothesis 1: In volunteer situations where people have different opportunity costs while doing the identical volunteer work with relatively equal benefits, the person with the highest perceived opportunity cost will be considered more of a volunteer.

Hypothesis 2: Different implicit costs of volunteering (benefits relatively equal).

Similar volunteer activities may require more or less effort from the volunteers depending on where and how they are performed. The context of the volunteer activity, we suggest, may change the costs incurred to the volunteer. For example, we assume that working for a recognized and reputable charity organization may require greater effort and commitment on the part of the volunteer as compared to a volunteer who may work with a less well-known agency. To protect its own reputation, the reputable agency will be more demanding of the volunteer to meet certain codes of work and ethics, thereby increasing the costs to the volunteer. This may lead to the perception that a student volunteering on a community service project with an unknown agency will be subject to lesser demands than a student who is volunteering with the Special Olympics or Big Brothers/Big Sisters, which asks of its volunteers certain up-front commitments of time and effort. We hypothesise that the volunteer in more formal and reputable organizations will be rated more of a volunteer as s/he will be perceived to be held to higher standards than the volunteer working in an unspecified agency. Although the student volunteering with the Special Olympics may expect future rewards (in resume building or future employment contacts), similar benefits likely accrue to the student volunteering in an unknown agency as well. Thus, we assume that the benefits are *not* significantly different.

Hypothesis 2: An individual volunteering to a recognized charity will be considered more of a volunteer than an individual volunteering to an unspecified charity.

Hypothesis 3: Different explicit costs of volunteering (relatively equal benefits).

In order to be considered a volunteer, we argue, an individual needs to be engaged in and perform a somewhat demanding task him/herself. For example, if one volunteers to chair a committee or carry on a particular task and then delegates the work to an assistant, which one of them is the real volunteer? The former willingly volunteered but did no actual work while the latter did work but, most likely, unwillingly. In this situation, the cost to the assistant may be higher than the cost to the boss. The boss, we expect, will be regarded less of a volunteer than his/her assistant. Furthermore, in the case of different volunteer tasks, the time and effort involved can vary significantly, although the benefits to the volunteer may be relatively equal. Consider, for example, an individual who organizes a crime-watch group versus the individual who leads a group of joggers every week. The former task is more difficult as the individual must invest much more effort to arrange a daily (and rather inconvenient) neighborhood watch than the task performed by the individual who leads a group of willing joggers every week. Since, the work of organizing a neighborhood crime watch requires greater effort, it imposes greater costs on the volunteer engaging in this activity. As both tasks are neighborhood-oriented the benefits to both individuals will be relatively equal.

Hypothesis 3: The individual who engages in volunteer activity that is perceived to be more demanding will be considered more of a volunteer than the individual involved in a less demanding volunteer task .

Hypothesis 4: Different explicit benefits of volunteering (relatively equal costs).

Similar volunteering activities can be undertaken for different benefits to the volunteer.

Below we consider cases where the relative costs to the volunteer are kept constant and the benefits to the volunteer are allowed to vary in order to explore how net costs explain public perception of volunteers. For example, we consider a teacher who provides an hour of her/his time to help in a soup kitchen for no apparent benefit and contrast him/her with another teacher engaging in the same activity with an explicitly stated motive: in order to impress his/her date. According to the net-cost framework, the costs are the same for both cases, but in the latter case the net costs are lower (positive benefits), so that the teacher who works to impress his/her date should be perceived as less of a volunteer than the teacher who works for no explicit benefit.

Hypothesis 4: When an individual undertakes a certain volunteer activity presumably for no explicit personal benefit, s/he will be considered more of a volunteer than the individual who volunteers for an explicit personal benefit.

Hypothesis 5: Equal net costs of volunteering but social output is different

We have argued that the net costs to the individual in performing the volunteering activity is the key and primary factor in determining whether the person is perceived as more or less of a volunteer. However, we do not fully discount the value of the social outcome of the volunteer activity, but argue that net costs to the volunteer will far outweigh the output of the volunteering activity. In cases where net costs can be made relatively equal, the value of the social outcome produced in the act of volunteering will tip the scale in the ranking of the volunteer. In such cases we argue that the ranking of the volunteer is influenced by the perceived contribution to society of the volunteering activity. For example, if we assume that the net costs to the office manager are equal in two volunteering activities, whether he works overtime in the office or accompanies his wife to visit seniors in a nursing home, then we hypothesize that he will be ranked as more of a volunteer in the activity producing some social output - visiting with seniors in a nursing home,

even if it can be argued that he does not do it completely freely.

Hypothesis 5: When individuals do different volunteer activities at relatively equal net costs, the individual who volunteers in the activity with greater social benefits will be considered more of a volunteer.

Methods

To test the net-cost framework and its ability to explain variations in public perception of who is a volunteer, we adapted the 23 item-instrument used by Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996). These researchers based their work on the McCurley and Vesuvio (1985) inventory of "Who's a Volunteer." McCurley and Vesuvio (1985) used a 13-item instruments to which Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) added ten items. In this study we used 50 items, 27 of which were developed specifically for this study to make testing of the net-cost hypothesis possible. Each item ranged on a five-category Likert-type scale ranging from (1) not a volunteer to (5) definitely a volunteer. The questionnaires were self-administered and took 12-15 minutes to complete.

In each country the questionnaire had to be translated or at least transliterated to meet language requirements and to be relevant in each of the countries for the volunteering scenarios depicted. For example, in India the notion of volunteering “to impress a date” did not fit the cultural norms and was substituted by “to make personal connections.” Despite careful considerations of cultural nuances, we are not certain that the scenarios developed are identical, thus, we did not analyze the data as an aggregate but separately by region. Furthermore, the culture and local attitudes toward volunteering differ across regions studied. Analyzing the data separately allows us to accommodate for these differences in the responses.

Our samples in each of the study regions are not random samples but are samples of

convenience. We attempt to compensate for the lack of randomness in the sample by using a relatively large sample size of over 500 in each studied. All data were collected in 1998.

As can be seen from Table 1, with some exceptions the demographic characteristics of the samples are quite similar. The exceptions to this similarity include the following: In India and the Netherlands half the sample is composed of males, while in the three North American samples males constituted only about one-third of the sample. The Canadian sample is relatively younger (31.6% under the age of 24) and hence composed of more people who are single (49%). The Dutch sample has a relatively high rate of widowed (14.0%) and is less educated (only 16.1% are post graduate while 14.3% have some high school education). The Italian sample was also less educated (16.4% have only some high school education). This sample was also younger (56% under the age of 34) and mostly single (48.6%) or married (41%). The Italian sample reported the lowest rates of volunteering in the past. The Indian sample has the lowest rate of respondents who have volunteered ever or in the past 12 months, a finding which may be a reflection of the magnitude of volunteering in this country. This sample was also the most educated (55.5% are college graduates and additional 36.1% are post graduates), a result that may be an artifact of having the questionnaire in English, the language used mostly by the educated in India. The Georgia sample is the most affluent and composed of most volunteers (93.2% volunteered in the past). Finally, the Philadelphia sample has the highest rate of people living with a significant other (8.5%) while India had none, the latter being a reflection on cultural norms. Regardless of these variations, the samples are not significantly different.

*** Insert Table 1 about here***

In order to test most of our hypotheses, we compare means of items depicting different

scenarios as suggested by the particular hypotheses under test. We do so within each sample (region) and compare the differences of means of two items using the paired T-test. In the case of comparison of more than two means, we applied analysis of variance.

Findings

In this section we first review the rank-order of the 50 items in each region (see Table 2). We then discuss each hypotheses separately. Table 2 lists the distribution of means and provides the ranks for each item by all regions. We list regions alphabetically, Canada; is listed as the first region, and items are listed in descending rank as they were rated in Canada. Each cell in the table provides for the particular region the mean for the item and the rank in parentheses.

Insert Table 2 about here

Rank order analysis.

Cultural and local attitudes toward volunteering differ across the regions, and the scores of respondents on the questionnaire items (on a scale of 1-5) may therefore differ greatly in intensity. Of most interest in Table 2 is the rank of the means given to each item within the sample as compared to the other samples by region. For example, "An accountant charged with embezzling, who accepts a sentence of 250 hours of community service in lieu of prosecution" is ranked last as a volunteer in all regions save India. Community service is a relatively new concept in India, and embezzlement charges are not likely to be prosecuted. Even in the case of prosecution, trials are known to last for many years and are generally not successful. This fact reduces the benefits of doing community service to the accountant in India which may explain why he is ranked higher there than in any other region.

With 50 items, it is expected that there will be some variation in the rankings across the

regions. However, we will assume that if the ranking is different by 10 ranks or more (>20%) this difference is significant, and we examine the differences for cultural context. Where the rankings are different by less than 9 ranks (<20%) or less we will assume some similarity in the cultural context and examine underlying explanations for the similarities.

We look at whether there are any general trends inherent in the way respondents over all the regions ranked volunteers. More specifically, we examine whether there are similarities in who is perceived to be at the high end "Definitely a Volunteer" (means close to 5) and who is at the low end "Not a Volunteer" (means close to 1) for all the regions. We argue that if similarities exist despite the cultural differences it will enable us to better understand who is a volunteer based on a universal public perception.

Across the 50 items, we identify the five items ranked highest among all volunteer scenarios for all regions. The common items are: A teenager who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless; A teacher who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless; An adult who offers his/her time to be a Big Brother or Big Sister (with the exception of the latter in Italy). In the top 9 rankings for all regions, moreover, we find the scenarios wherein the volunteer is either serving at the soup kitchen, teaching English to new immigrants, serving in the Big Brothers/ Big Sisters program, or donating blood (with one minor exception: in the Netherlands donating blood is ranked 15, a rank which may be explained by the fact that the Dutch word for "volunteer" implies work done on a regular basis). Thus, there appears to be a consensus in the public perception of who is considered "definitely a volunteer." None of the scenarios indicate that the volunteer receives any implicit or explicit remuneration, and the volunteer activity takes considerable time and effort on the part of the volunteer for the

benefit of others. This finding supports the net-cost theory that the lower the benefits to the volunteer (therefore the greater the net costs) the more likely the person will be considered a volunteer.

At the other end of the scale, we examine the five items ranked lowest among all volunteer scenarios for all regions. There is less consensus across the regions for this end of the scale. In North America (Canada, Philadelphia, and Georgia) and Italy in the lowest five we find: The step-parenting spouse, the doctor who presents a paper at the AMA; the individuals who agree to offer services at the symphony concert in exchange for a free ticket to the concert; the paid staff person who serves on the board of a nonprofit group in a slot that is reserved for his/her agency; the six-month old baby who accompanies her parents to visit seniors at a nursing home; and the accountant charged with embezzling, who accepts community service in lieu of prosecution. In Italy and the Netherlands, contrary to the other regions, we find the trainer who does a free workshop for an organization as a marketing device included in the bottom five. Furthermore, the trainer who performs a similar service for the Breast Cancer Foundation is also ranked low.

The six-month old baby and the embezzling accountant were consistently ranked the lowest in North America and Italy (49/50 and 50/50 respectively). In addition, in the Netherlands, the embezzling accountant was ranked last but the baby was ranked 44/50. These findings indicate that respondents felt “free-will” and high net cost are important components in their decision making concerning who is not a volunteer. Step-parenting may also be considered a situation where the individual has less of a free choice whether or not to engage in parenting accrue from love and having a spouse. The remaining choices indicate that those who receive any

kind of remuneration (monetary or otherwise) are ranked lower as volunteers. This pattern is consistent with all the rankings found at the bottom third of the rankings for these three regions.

In India, the five items ranked lowest among all volunteer scenarios include the individual serving at the soup kitchen to impress his/her date and those working at the symphony in exchange for tickets. As the concept of dating in India is not the norm for adults, "to impress his/her date" was replaced by "to make personal connections," this change may have elicited a lower rating for these individuals in India as "personal connections" is tantamount to volunteering to further oneself socially and economically. If the scenarios involving "personal connections" are excluded, the bottom five ranks include all four individuals who agree to offer services at the symphony concert in exchange for a free ticket. A parent who becomes a scout leader because of his/her child desires to be a scout is also included in the bottom five rankings. It should be noted that, unlike the case in North America, in India scout leaders are school teachers who take on this obligation as part of their extra-curricular duties for the school. Furthermore, scouting meetings take place on school premises. Thus teachers are regarded as fulfilling their professional duties and not considered volunteers. The next three rankings include items ranked lowest in all other regions: the six-month old baby (39/50) and the accountant charged with embezzlement (38/50).

These findings from India suggests that although the cultural context does appear to affect the ranking of a volunteer scenario, it may be through artifacts: on closer examination, we may still be able to generalize a consensus exists on the definition of who is least likely to be regarded as a volunteer. The trend to rank individual who receives explicit monetary or non-monetary remuneration lower as a volunteer found in all regions also operates in India as well.

In the Netherlands individuals receiving any paid remuneration were ranked least likely to be considered a volunteer. In the bottom five rankings are: the embezzling accountant, the paid staff on the boards of nonprofit organizations, the IBM executive on a year of social service leave with pay; and the lawyer receiving half his regular fee. This listing suggests that receiving any kind of monetary remuneration is the determining factor on who is least likely to be considered a volunteer in the Netherlands. This trend holds true for the bottom third of the rankings for the Netherlands. In comparison, volunteers receiving remuneration in North America also ranked lower on the scale but higher than those receiving symphony tickets.

In the scenarios depicting a volunteer who receives an explicitly stated personal benefit for the volunteering activity such as tickets to a symphony, all regions (with the exception of the Netherlands) ranked these volunteers, irrespective of their status, in the bottom 20 percent of the rankings. This suggests that individuals who receive explicit personal benefits for their volunteering are considered less likely to be volunteers than those who do not. In the Netherlands, the norm is that if an individual volunteers for any association, the services of that association are freely available to the volunteer, and membership dues are exempted. As a result, free symphony tickets are not considered exceptional personal benefits to the volunteer in the Netherlands.

Given the cultural proximity of Georgia and Philadelphia (both in the USA) we expect to find little difference in the rankings in general. In fact, we find that no significant differences in the rankings in the top and bottom ranks of "definitely a volunteer' or "definitely not a volunteer." However, some differences worth noting appear in the middle ranks. The individual who serves a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless to impress his date ranks significantly

lower in Georgia than in Philadelphia. This finding may reflect the conservative nature of the Southern U.S.A. versus the more liberal attitudes of the Northeast.

Hypothesis 1

To test the first hypothesis which stated that: *In volunteer situations where people have different opportunity costs while doing the identical volunteer work with relatively equal benefits, the person with the highest perceived opportunity cost will be considered more of a volunteer,* we used four individuals (a student, a teacher, a doctor, and an IBM executive) performing the same voluntary activity in *three* different situations. We compared a student, a teacher, a doctor, and an IBM executive each volunteering to serve a meal at a soup kitchen for the homeless, to serve on the board of a local library, and to provide a status-appropriate service (ushering for the teenager all the way to board membership for the IBM executive) to the symphony orchestra in exchange for free tickets. In each of the three situations, based on the notion of opportunity cost we would expect the IBM executive to be considered more of a volunteer, followed by the medical doctor, the teacher, and the student in descending order.

As shown in Table 3, in Canada there were no significant differences among the four individuals regarding the symphony probably due to the explicit interest in free tickets. Regarding the soup kitchen, the F-test was significant but the post-hoc analysis (Scheffe test at the .05 level) revealed no two groups that differ significantly. Regarding the library scenario, the difference was significant, however, not in the anticipated direction. The teacher was rated significantly less of a volunteer than all of the three other individuals, probably because people viewed library service more related to teacher work and, thus, as more rewarding to the teacher. With regard to all other individuals, no significant differences were found. Thus, the Canadian

sample does not support the first hypothesis. In the Netherlands, no significant differences were encountered in the scenarios of the public library and the symphony orchestra. However, regarding the soup kitchen, the F-test was significant and the post-hoc analysis (Scheffe test at the .05 level) revealed that teachers were significantly rated "more" volunteers than medical doctors. Even this single difference is contrary to our hypothesis. In Georgia and Philadelphia, too, contrary to the hypothesis no significant differences were found among these individuals with respect to the three activities.

Insert Table 3 about here

The hypothesis was also supported in India and Italy. With regard to the library, no significant differences were found in Italy and India. However, in India with regard to the soup kitchen, the teenager and the teacher were considered significantly more of a volunteer than the medical doctor and the IBM executive. In Italy, with regard to the symphony, the IBM executive was ranked significantly lower than all three other individuals. In other words the "underdog" approach (a reverse status) took precedence in India and Italy: Those who are viewed as least socially strong were considered more of a volunteer. In essence, people expected the rich and socially strong to volunteer but appreciated it even more when those who have less contributed to others who are even less fortunate than themselves.

In India, regarding the symphony, the teacher was considered significantly less of a volunteer than the IBM executive, while all other differences were not statistically significant. This difference can be viewed as a manifestation of the opportunity cost hypothesis, although, we cannot make this case given findings to the contrary in India and the other regions.

Hypothesis 2

To test the second hypothesis, which stated that *An individual volunteering to a recognized charity will be considered more of a volunteer than an individual volunteering to an unspecified charity,* we compared volunteers in three different situations where the same volunteer engaged in similar volunteer activities at recognized charities versus unspecified charities. In other words, each comparison has the same activity by the same individual, however, the activity takes place under the aegis of an unspecified agency in one case and a specific agency (a brand name) in the other case. To test this hypothesis, we used paired t-tests for each region.

Insert Table 4 about here

As can be seen in Table 4, our hypothesis is supported in the volunteer scenarios involving the Breast Cancer Foundation and the United Way, but not supported for the Special Olympics in all of the regions with the exception of Italy. The trainer who does a workshop for the Breast Cancer Foundation is ranked significantly higher as a volunteer than the trainer who does the workshop for an unspecified organization. This finding was also true for the individual who sat on board of the United Way versus an unspecified nonprofit organization.

In the case of the Netherlands, our hypothesis was supported for the scenario involving the Breast Cancer Foundation but not supported in the case of the United Way. Interestingly, the data from the Netherlands and Italy also differed from the other regions: The findings supported the hypothesis in the case of a student doing a generic community service project as part of high school graduation versus participation in Special Olympics.

In general, our findings support the hypothesis for two out of the three volunteer scenarios: the United Way and Breast Cancer Foundation examples for all of the regions in our study save the Netherlands. In Italy we found support for our hypothesis in all three scenarios.

One explanation for support of the Special Olympics scenario in Europe may be that this organization, which provides sporting opportunities for individuals with mental developmental disabilities, was substituted by the term Paraolympics in the questionnaire.

Hypothesis 3

To test the third hypothesis which states that *The individual who engages in volunteer activity that is perceived to be more demanding will be considered more of a volunteer than the individual involved in a less demanding volunteer task,* we compared two pairs of questions in each region. We compared a CEO of a local corporation who is volunteer chairperson of the United Way campaign and who delegates all the work to his assistant, with the assistant who is delegated this task. We also compared an individual who organizes a crime-watch group with a member of a community sport club who leads a group of joggers every week.

Before we report the results of these comparisons we should emphasize one item from Table 2: the "six-month old baby who accompanies her parents to visit seniors at a nursing home." This baby was rated very low in all regions (with the exception of India where the baby was ranked 39/50). We suggest that this low ranking is the result of the fact that this baby does not perform any work but simply accompanies her parents; hence, there is no cost nor benefit to the baby. The baby also does not exercise any free choice in whether to join the mother or not, and thus may not be considered a volunteer.

As can be seen in Table 5, the assistant to the CEO also did not exercise a free choice in carrying out the task delegated to him by his boss (the CEO), however, he is perceived as more of a volunteer than the CEO who willingly accepted the task but did not do the work himself. This was the case in all regions. This comparison examined the case in which all of the

"volunteer" work is done by one individual, and little or no work is done by the others. The findings suggest that the individual who does the work is considered more of a volunteer.

In the next comparison, we vary the amount of work done by two individuals. We compare the individual who has a relatively easier task--to organize a local group of joggers every week--to an individual who daily has to coordinate the difficult task of arranging nightly watch shifts in the neighborhood. We hypothesized that the net costs to the homeowner are higher and consequently he or she will be perceived as more of a volunteer than the organizer of the joggers group. This hypothesis was supported only in North America. In the Netherlands and Italy, no significant difference was detected, while in India the leader of the joggers was significantly rated more of a volunteer than the crime watch coordinator. The latter findings may be due to the fact that in these countries (the Netherlands, India and Italy) crime watch groups are not prevalent, and the description of this activity was not self- explanatory as it was in North America.

Insert Table 5 about here

Hypothesis 4

To test the fourth hypothesis, which states *When an individual undertakes a certain volunteer activity presumably for no explicit personal benefit, s/he will be considered more of a volunteer than the individual who volunteers for an explicit personal benefit,* we compared four individuals (a student, a teacher, a doctor, and an IBM executive) each engaging in the same activity twice, once without an explicit personal benefit and once with a benefit. In the first instance we presented them as providing time and effort to a soup kitchen, while in the latter we presented them doing the same work to impress a date. It was our hypothesis that if the benefits

of the volunteer service increase (i.e., impressing a date) the net costs are lowered, and hence the individual who undertakes the volunteer service to impress a date will be perceived as less of a volunteer than the individual who does it for no explicit personal benefit. As can be seen in Table 6, in all comparisons in all regions the hypothesis was strongly supported.

Insert Table 6 about here

Hypothesis 5

To test the fifth hypothesis which states that *When individuals do different volunteer activities at relatively equal net costs, the individual who volunteers in the activity with greater social benefits will be considered more of a volunteer*, we compared six situations. First, we compare an office manager who accompanies his wife to visit seniors in a nursing home and an office manager who, by his/her own choice, works overtime without pay. We assume the net costs (time and effort required, and benefits by pleasing his spouse and boss) are relatively equal in both scenarios, but the visit to the nursing home has more pro social components. The hypothesis will be supported if the office manager who accompanies his wife in visiting the nursing home is perceived to be more of a volunteer than the office manager who willingly works overtime without pay. Similarly, we posit that an adult who offers his/her time to be a Big Brother or Big Sister will be perceived to be more of a volunteer than an adult who volunteers to teach English as a second language to new immigrants. We also compare the four individuals (IBM executive, the medical doctor, the teacher, and the teenager) in two acts that may be perceived to have significantly different pro-social components: serving meals to the homeless in a soup kitchen versus serving on the board of the local library. We may readily assume that the former activity is more pro-socially oriented, and our hypothesis will be supported if the

individual working in the soup kitchen will be perceived to be more of a volunteer.

Tables-7 and 8 show the results of these comparisons. In Table 7 we test the hypothesis regarding the office manager and the adult who volunteer in two different situations. In all studied regions, except India, the office manager visiting the nursing home was rated more of a volunteer than the office manager who worked overtime without pay. In the case of India the finding may reflect India's cultural perception of valuing unpaid labor which is unique and unparalleled in the other counties studied.

Insert Table 7 about here

In the case of the adult volunteer the emerging trend is slightly less supportive. As expected, in the Netherlands, India, Georgia, and Philadelphia, the volunteer to Big Brothers/Big Sisters was rated more of a volunteer than the adult who teaches English as a Second language to new immigrants. However, in Canada and Italy the differences were not statistically significant (Table 7.)

In Table 8 we report results for comparisons of the four individuals (IBM executive, the medical doctor, the teacher, and the teenager) serving meals to the homeless at a soup kitchen versus serving on the board of a library. In all regions, all four individuals were rated more highly as volunteers when they served meals to the homeless at a soup kitchen than when they served on the board of a local library. This finding strongly supports our hypothesis that in the case when net costs are relatively equal, the ranking of the volunteer is influenced by the perceived contribution to society of the volunteering activity.

Insert Table 8 about here

Discussion and Implications

The findings from Table 2 suggest that across all regions in the study, a broad consensus exists regarding who is *most* definitely a volunteer. Although some variation surfaced regarding who is *least* likely to be considered a volunteer the findings show that remuneration (monetary or otherwise) to the individual has a definite negative impact on people's perception of who is a volunteer across all regions. Whether monetary or non monetary remuneration is of greater importance in the ranking varies with the region and the cultural context. Nevertheless, remuneration of either kind reduces the net costs to the volunteer and, accordingly, plays a significant role in the public perception of who is a volunteer. When people observe an individual personally benefiting (monetary or socially) from volunteering, they rank the individual as less of a volunteer than those who receive no such benefits.

With the exception of opportunity costs, many of our hypotheses were supported in all the studied regions. As can be seen from the results for Hypothesis 4, an individual can perform the same service to society with or without a personal benefit: in general, people will regard the individual as less of a volunteer if the personal benefit is explicit. In addition, when the costs to the individual of volunteering are higher (demanding agency--see Hypothesis 2 or demanding work--see Hypothesis 3) he or she is rated more of a volunteer.

Interestingly, the hypothesis concerning opportunity costs was not fully supported in any of the studied regions. The opportunity costs of volunteering do not seem to enter the calculus of net costs of this activity. We suggest that it is likely that volunteering has a "class equalizing" effect: that is, people do not rank the volunteer according to where he or she comes from or what he or she has foregone to volunteer. Instead, they look at all volunteers as equals and rate them by the (volunteer) tasks they do. Another possibility is that the people who answered our

questionnaires are not economists and do not consider opportunity cost as a real cost. For example, it is not clear that the medical doctor would have used the time allocated to volunteering to see more patients and earn additional income (income forgone). It is more likely that the medical doctor takes time to volunteer from the time allocated to his or her leisure activities as do other people; hence, opportunity costs may be "normalized" for all volunteers (Stebbins, 1996). This issue needs further research before conclusive arguments can be made.

The finding that prosocial volunteering is rated higher than other volunteering when net-cost is kept relatively constant (see Hypothesis 5) needs further discussion as well. Our findings suggest that the greater the perceived value to society from a volunteer activity, the higher the individual undertaking that activity will be ranked. As it is difficult to assign monetary or social values to a volunteer activity, we suggest that respondents are likely assessing the perceived importance of the causes that are supported by the volunteer activity once the volunteer's personal costs and benefits are equalized. For example, in 1988 in most countries homelessness was perceived to be a "greater" social problem than literacy. In this time frame, homelessness clearly is a more visible problem than literacy; it is heavily featured in the media and has become a celebrated problem. Thus, it is likely that respondents did not value the volunteer's contribution to society, rather they may have ranked the perceived societal need or the social acceptance of the particular activity at the time. As social problems vary over time and between regions the preference for certain volunteer activities may shift. It is possible that the same questions if asked in the late 1960's--when homelessness was not a prominent social problem and whereas literacy was--would have elicited reversed results.

As we noted above, the "six-month old baby who accompanies her parents to visit seniors

at a nursing home" was rated very low in most regions (with the exception of India where it was ranked 39/50). We suggested that this low ranking results from the fact that the baby does not perform any work (hence, no cost incurred) and accrues no benefits. This case raises an important issue in understanding the net-cost framework: When the baby's benefits are deducted from her costs the net result is zero. This reading may serve as a benchmark point for public perceptions regarding who is a volunteer. When the benefits of volunteering outweigh costs to an individual (even with no remuneration), the individual is no longer considered a volunteer. This deduction may explain why the accountant who embezzled and was required to provide 250 hours of community service in lieu of prosecution was ranked lowest 50/50 in all regions (except India). The accountant in this scenario is viewed as having far more benefits (not losing his professional license, no discomfort and danger of jail, keeping his practice afloat, staying with his family) than the cost he is to incur (250 hours of community service that can be performed at his convenience). In India, as we noted earlier, the benefits are perceived to be far less than in other regions because the probability of successful prosecution leading to a jail sentence is quite unlikely.

The data strongly suggest that the theory of net costs can explain very well public perceptions of who is "more" a volunteer. However, what constitutes benefits and costs to the volunteer is a complex calculus requiring further research. Nevertheless, the data show that the higher the net costs to the volunteer of a certain volunteer activity the higher the individual is ranked as a volunteer. This trend is prevalent for all the regions, and without exception it is significant at the two polar ends of who is "definitely" a volunteer and who is not.

We also note that the public perception of a volunteer is much more sensitive to the

benefits the individual receives from the volunteering activity than to the costs incurred. This is specially true in the case of opportunity costs to the individual of volunteering, which do not seem to enter the cost calculus. The data showed the absence of any effect of opportunity costs on the ranking of the volunteers for all regions studied and for all scenarios. By contrast, the monetary and non monetary benefits received from the volunteering activity did play a crucial role in how the individual was perceived as a volunteer.

We are not able to say much about other motives for volunteering that are not explicit. We do assume that most volunteers are not altruistic, and accept the fact that they should benefit from the volunteer experience (or else they would soon quit). However, for an individual to be perceived as a volunteer the perceived costs should clearly outweigh the benefits.

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Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents in Percentages by Region.

Background variables	Canada N=646	Nether-lands N=456	India N=502	Italy N=500	GA. / US N=679	Phila / US N=505
Gender: Male	35.5%	46.1%	55.1%	39.2%	32.7%	36.9%
Female	64.5%	52.8%	44.9%	60.8%	67.3%	63.1%
Age: Under 24	31.6%	22.5%	18.1%	31.2%	15.8%	13.6%
25-34	17.7%	21.4%	18.9%	24.8%	18.9%	19.3%
35-44	20.6%	20.7%	18.7%	17.0%	22.0%	19.3%
45-54	20.4%	19.6%	23.3%	19.0%	29.8%	29.8%
55-64	5.0%	12.8%	12.5%	7.2%	7.7%	13.0%
65+	4.0%	2.9%	8.4%	.8%	5.8%	5.1%
Marital status:						
Single	49.0%	29.1%	29.3%	48.6%	24.7%	36.4%
Married	36.2%	50.7%	59.3%	41.0%	59.6%	39.4%
Widowed	5.4%	14.0%	8.4%	1.8%	4.0%	5.8%
Divorced	3.8%	1.1%	2.6%	2.0%	7.2%	7.0%
Separated	2.0%	1.1%	.4	2.0%	.4%	2.8%
Living with significant other	3.6%	4.1%	-----	4.6%	4.0%	8.5%
Education:						
Elementary school	.6%	1.3%	-----	9.7%	.4%	.8%
Some high school	6.8%	13.0%	.6%	6.7%	1.0%	4.4%
High school graduate	16.3%	32.0%	3.0%	34.3%	9.6%	11.7%
Some college	16.1%	16.6%	4.8%	17.8%	26.4%	17.7%
College graduate	33.6%	21.0%	55.5%	27.3%	25.6%	32.9%
Post graduate	26.5%	16.1%	36.1%	4.2%	36.9%	32.5%
Income: Lower class	33.0%	46.3%	29.0%	29.0%	23.0%	33.2%
Middle class	24.7%	40.5%	51.5%	48.3%	31.1%	43.3%
Upper class	42.2%	13.2%	19.4%	22.6%	45.9%	24.6%
Volunteered ever: Yes	85.8%	78.8%	64.8%	47.6%	93.2%	85.5%
No	14.2%	21.3%	35.2%	52.4%	6.8%	14.5%
Volunteered in past 12 months: Yes	64.5%	61.1%	39.0%	26.6%	74.9%	63.9%
No	35.5%	38.9%	61.0%	73.4%	25.1%	36.1%

Table 2: Distribution of Means and (Ranks) for Each Item by All Region

Items	Canada N=646	Nether-lands N=456	India N=502	Italy N=500	GA /US N=679	Phila / US N=505
A teenager who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless	4.7748 (1)	4.7802 (4)	4.5643 (3)	4.6980 (1)	4.8481 (3)	4.7629 (2)
A teacher who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless	4.7601 (2)	4.8264 (1)	4.4850 (4)	4.6860 (2)	4.8659 (2)	4.7715 (1)
An adult who volunteers to teach English as a second language to new immigrants	4.7562 (3)	4.6903 (7)	4.2636 (6)	4.4880 (8)	4.8198 (6)	4.7205 (7)
An adult who offers his/her time to be a Big Brother or Big Sister	4.7345 (4)	4.7951 (2)	4.5720 (2)	4.5620 (7)	4.8982 (1)	4.7088 (5)
An IBM executive who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless	4.6734 (5)	4.7373 (5)	3.9235 (10)	4.6500 (4)	4.8319 (5)	4.7157 (4)
The medical doctor who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless	4.6682 (6)	4.6908 (6)	4.0524 (9)	4.6380 (5)	4.8398 (4)	4.6845 (7)
An unemployed person who volunteers to teach English as a second language to new immigrants	4.6543 (7)	4.5796 (8)	4.2260 (7)	4.3860 (9)	4.7434 (7)	4.6978 (6)
A person who donates blood to a local hospital	4.5670 (8)	4.3067 (16)	4.7302 (1)	4.6800 (3)	4.6869 (9)	4.5382 (9)
A childless adult who wants to engage with children offers his/her time to be a Big Brother or Big Sister	4.5302 (9)	4.7942 (3)	4.2912 (5)	4.5340 (6)	4.7430 (8)	4.5884 (8)
A teenager who serves on the board of a local library as a student representative	4.1446 (10)	4.5033 (12)	3.6533 (17)	3.4040 (16)	4.2982 (12)	4.0397 (12)
An IBM executive who serves on the board of a local library	4.1324 (11)	4.5487 (10)	3.6519 (18)	3.5980 (12)	4.3392 (10)	4.0620 (11)
The medical doctor who serves on the board of a local library	4.0901 (12)	4.5451 (11)	3.7636 (16)	3.5520 (13)	4.3205 (11)	4.0119 (13)
The home owner who helps create a crime watch group to safeguard his own neighborhood	4.0666 (13)	4.4758 (14)	2.5495 (32)	3.0040 (21)	4.0517 (15)	4.1268 (10)

The teenager who presents a program on youth leadership to an audience of peers at a religious youth conference	3.9486 (14)	4.1195 (18)	3.5602 (21)	3.4680 (15)	3.9246 (17)	3.9782 (15)
A member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) who leads an AA meeting every week	3.9332 (15)	4.3157 (15)	3.8632 (12)	4.0640 (10)	3.9349 (16)	3.9899 (14)
A teacher who serves on the board of a local library	3.9017 (16)	4.5560 (9)	3.6386 (19)	3.4780 (14)	4.2352 (13)	3.9303 (16)
The person who participates in a pharmaceutical study, to determine the effectiveness of a new drug	3.8951 (17)	4.1564 (17)	3.6290 (20)	3.8180 (11)	4.0695 (14)	3.8216 (17)
A member of a community sport club who leads a group of joggers every week	3.6651 (18)	4.4898 (13)	3.2222 (13)	3.1240 (18)	3.4207 (22)	3.6821 (19)
The person who is ill with Cystic Fibrosis, who participates in a pharmaceutical study, to determine the effectiveness of a new drug in treating the disease	3.6512 (19)	3.0933 (28)	3.8089 (14)	3.3360 (17)	3.7814 (19)	3.7289 (18)
An office manager who accompanies his wife to visit seniors in a nursing home	3.6006 (20)	3.2844 (26)	3.7692 (15)	2.6580 (22)	3.9217 (18)	2.9639 (25)
A teenager who offers to program the computer at a nonprofit agency, without pay, in order to establish "resume experience." After three months the teenager plans to quit and apply for a paying job	3.4208 (21)	3.3186 (24)	2.2328 (37)	1.9360 (42)	3.2939 (23)	3.0794 (24)
A child who assists in setting up booths at the volunteer fair because one of his parents is a volunteer administrator and asks her/him to help	3.4140 (22)	3.1311 (27)	2.5660 (30)	3.0520 (19)	3.4948 (21)	3.4297 (21)
A parent who becomes a scout leader because of his/her child desires to be a scout. No one else will lead the troop, so the parent agrees, but only as long as his/her child is involved	3.3638 (23)	4.0267 (19)	1.8514 (43)	3.0500 (20)	3.6588 (20)	3.2656 (22)
A teenager who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless in order to impress his date	2.7705 (24)	3.5978 (21)	1.9438 (41)	2.3740 (25)	2.8544 (25)	2.4652 (33)
A teacher who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the	2.7512 (25)	3.5429 (22)	1.7661 (48)	2.0040 (35)	2.8726 (24)	2.4919 (35)

homeless in order to impress his date						
The hourly wage worker who, by his/her own choice, works overtime without pay	2.7484 (26)	2.0733 (38)	4.1835 (8)	2.3720 (26)	2.7947 (29)	3.1446 (23)
The assistant to the CEO of a local corporation who is volunteer chairperson of the United Way campaign who does the job for his boss	2.7386 (27)	2.9956 (29)	2.5423 (33)	2.3880 (24)	2.8044 (28)	2.8592 (27)
An IBM executive who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless in order to impress his date	2.7003 (28)	3.6150 (20)	1.7460 (49)	2.0200 (33)	2.8348 (26)	2.4374 (34)
An office manager who, by his/her own choice, works overtime without pay	2.6875 (29)	1.7295 (44)	3.9006 (11)	2.2640 (29)	2.7322 (30)	2.7644 (29)
The medical doctor who volunteers to serve a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless in order to impress his date	2.6495 (30)	3.4535 (23)	1.8072 (44)	2.0040 (36)	2.8048 (27)	2.4124 (37)
The student who is helping Special Olympics as part of a high school graduation requirement	2.6454 (31)	2.2098 (36)	2.7228 (27)	1.9640 (40)	2.5835 (33)	2.8889 (26)
The student who is doing a community service project as part of a high school graduation requirement	2.6396 (32)	2.2772 (35)	2.6848 (28)	1.9140 (43)	2.5982 (31)	2.8569 (28)
The teenager who presents a program about youth leadership to an audience of peers at a religious youth conference hoping to find a suitable date	2.6277 (33)	3.2982 (25)	1.7939 (46)	2.2820 (28)	2.5716 (34)	2.3678 (39)
The trainer who does a free workshop for the Breast Cancer Foundation as a marketing device	2.5969 (34)	1.8692 (42)	2.7762 (25)	1.8060 (45)	2.5959 (32)	2.8317 (29)
The CEO of a local corporation who is volunteer chairperson of the United Way campaign and who delegates all the work to his assistant	2.4632 (35)	2.7660 (30)	2.0281 (40)	2.0960 (31)	2.1822 (43)	2.2480 (48)
The trainer who does a free workshop for an organization as a marketing device	2.4530 (36)	1.7906 (43)	2.5776 (29)	1.6680 (47)	2.4660 (37)	2.7020 (30)
A college student enrolled in the	2.4432	1.8989	2.5030	2.0880	2.4106	2.5259

National and Community Service program, who gives his time to Big Brother/Big Sister and receives a stipend and partial forgiveness of tuition	(37)	(40)	(34)	(32)	(38)	(34)
A lawyer who provides legal services to a nonprofit organization at half his/her regular rate	2.4396 (38)	1.6726 (45)	2.7460 (26)	2.2980 (27)	2.5229 (35)	2.5884 (31)
An IBM executive who is granted a year of social service leave with pay, to become a temporary staff person with a nonprofit organization	2.4184 (39)	1.9407 (39)	2.5535 (31)	1.9140 (44)	2.5059 (36)	2.4225 (35)
A college student doing community service who is enrolled in the National and Community Service program and receives a stipend and partial forgiveness of tuition	2.3588 (40)	1.5022 (48)	2.4829 (35)	2.0020 (37)	2.3545 (39)	2.4200 (36)
The paid staff person who serves on the board of United way in a slot that is reserved for his/her agency	2.1749 (41)	1.5419 (47)	2.9718 (23)	2.6060 (23)	2.2840 (40)	2.3554 (40)
A teenager who agrees to offer his/her services as an usher at the symphony concert in exchange for a free ticket to the concert	2.1617 (42)	2.5254 (33)	1.8024 (45)	1.9760 (39)	2.2375 (41)	2.2798 (42)
A person who takes care of a spouse's children from a previous marriage (step-parenting)	2.1540 (43)	2.1425 (37)	3.2069 (22)	1.9900 (38)	2.1182 (46)	2.2631 (45)
The medical doctor who delivers a research paper at a conference held by the American Medical Association (AMA)	2.1500 (44)	1.8739 (41)	2.8394 (24)	1.5980 (48)	1.8759 (48)	2.2709 (44)
An IBM executive who agrees to offer his services on the fund raising committee of the symphony orchestra in exchange for free tickets	2.0762 (45)	2.4089 (34)	1.8770 (42)	1.7320 (46)	2.1062 (47)	2.2530 (46)
The medical doctor who agrees to offer his/her services in case of an emergency at the symphony concert in exchange for a free ticket to the concert	2.0761 (46)	2.5275 (32)	1.7876 (47)	1.9620 (41)	2.1513 (44)	2.2500 (47)
A teacher who agrees to offer his/her services to the symphony orchestra (for three hours) in exchange for a	2.0590 (47)	2.5604 (31)	1.6747 (50)	2.0040 (34)	2.2047 (42)	2.3075 (41)

ticket to the concert						
The paid staff person who serves on the board of a nonprofit group in a slot that is reserved for his/her agency	1.9515 (48) ****	1.4515 (49)	2.3374 (36)	2.2520 (30)	2.1341 (45)	2.3352 (43)
A six-month old baby who accompanies her parents to visit seniors at a nursing home	1.4266 (49)	1.6147 (45)	2.1270 (39)	1.5820 (49)	1.4695 (49)	1.7767 (49)
An accountant charged with embezzling, who accepts a sentence of 250 hours of community service in lieu of prosecution	1.3287 (50)	1.3326 (50)	2.1426 (38)	1.3120 (50)	1.2456 (50)	1.3501 (50)

Table 3: Comparison of Means of Items depicting Different Opportunity Costs for Similar Activities by Four individuals (an IBM executive, a medical doctor, a teacher, and a student) by All Regions (using One-Way ANOVA Tests)

	Serving on the board of a local library	Serving a meal at the soup kitchen for the homeless	Helping the symphony orchestra in exchange for free tickets
Canada	IBM executive 4.1310 Medical doctor 4.0901 Teacher 3.9017 Student 4.1446 F-value 6.277 Significance .000 ***	IBM executive 4.6729 Medical doctor 4.6682 Teacher 4.7601 Student 4.7745 F-value 3.494 Significance .015 *	IBM executive 2.0779 Medical doctor 2.0761 Teacher 2.0590 Student 2.1636 F-value 1.068 Significance N.S.
Nether-lands	IBM executive 4.5467 Medical doctor 4.5430 Teacher 4.5541 Student 4.5011 F-value .330 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 4.7361 Medical doctor 4.6844 Teacher 4.8256 Student 4.7792 F-value 3.647 Significance .012 *	IBM executive 2.4063 Medical doctor 2.5210 Teacher 2.5519 Student 2.5211 F-value 1.119 Significance N.S.
India	IBM executive 3.6519 Medical doctor 3.7636 Teacher 3.6386 Student 3.6533 F-value 1.212 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 3.9235 Medical doctor 4.0524 Teacher 4.4850 Student 4.5643 F-value 44.587 Significance .000 ***	IBM executive 1.8770 Medical doctor 1.7876 Teacher 1.6747 Student 1.8024 F-value 2.911 Significance .033 *
Italy	IBM executive 3.5980 Medical doctor 3.5520 Teacher 3.4780 Student 3.4040 F-value 2.314 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 4.6500 Medical doctor 4.6380 Teacher 4.6860 Student 4.6980 F-value .730 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 1.7320 Medical doctor 1.9620 Teacher 2.0040 Student 1.9760 F-value 6.560 Significance .000 ***
Georgia/ USA	IBM executive 4.3392 Medical doctor 4.3205 Teacher 4.2351 Student 4.2982 F-value 1.406 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 4.8319 Medical doctor 4.8398 Teacher 4.8659 Student 4.8481 F-value .502 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 2.1062 Medical doctor 2.1513 Teacher 2.2047 Student 2.2375 F-value 1.446 Significance N.S.
Phila/ USA	IBM executive 4.0639 Medical doctor 4.0099 Teacher 3.9304 Student 4.0114 F-value 1.771 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 4.7163 Medical doctor 4.6851 Teacher 4.7700 Student 4.7336 F-value 1.766 Significance N.S.	IBM executive 2.2525 Medical doctor 2.2495 Teacher 2.3096 Student 2.2832 F-value .255 Significance N.S.

Table 4: Comparison of Means of Items Depicting the Same Volunteer Activity to Unspecified and Specified Charities by All Regions (Using Paired T-Test)

	The student who is doing a community service project as part of a high school graduation requirement **vs**. The student who is helping Special Olympics as part of a high school graduation requirement	The trainer who does a free workshop for an organization as a marketing device **vs**. The trainer who does a free workshop for the Breast Cancer Foundation as a marketing device	The paid staff person who serves on the board of a nonprofit group in a slot that is reserved for his/her agency **vs.** The paid staff person who serves on the board of United Way in a slot that is reserved for his/her agency
Canada	Mean no charity 2.6375 Mean w/charity 2.6500 T-value -.534 Significance N.S.	Mean no charity 2.4553 Mean w/charity 2.5950 T-value -3.697 Significance .000***	Mean no charity 1.9496 Mean w/charity 2.1732 T-value -5.073 Significance .000***
Nether-lands	Mean no charity 2.2735 Mean w/charity 2.2152 T-value 2.449 Significance .015 *	Mean no charity 1.7835 Mean w/charity 1.8750 T-value -3.076 Significance .002 **	Mean no charity 1.5408 Mean w/charity 1.4525 T-value -.705 Significance N.S.
India	Mean no charity 2.6680 Mean w/charity 2.7196 T-value -1.538 Significance N.S.	Mean no charity 2.5776 Mean w/charity 2.7673 T-value -4.649 Significance .000***	Mean no charity 2.3354 Mean w/charity 2.9736 T-value -9.636 Significance .000***
Italy	Mean no charity 1.9140 Mean w/charity 1.9640 T-value -2.458 Significance .015 *	Mean no charity 1.6680 Mean w/charity 1.8060 T-value -4.881 Significance .000 ***	Mean no charity 2.2520 Mean w/charity 2.6060 T-value -5.297 Significance .000 ***
Georgia/ USA	Mean no charity 2.5843 Mean w/charity 2.5991 T-value -.729 Significance N.S.	Mean no charity 2.4660 Mean w/charity 2.5888 T-value -4.122 Significance .000***	Mean no charity 2.1345 Mean w/charity 2.2870 T-value -3.389 Significance .001***
Phila/ USA	Mean no charity 2.8569 Mean w/charity 2.8887 T-value -1.044 Significance N.S.	Mean no charity 2.7054 Mean w/charity 2.8354 T-value -3.350 Significance .001***	Mean no charity 2.2742 Mean w/charity 2.3528 T-value -1.402 Significance N.S.

Table 5: Comparison of Means of Items Depicting Volunteer Activities with Different Costs to the Volunteers by All Regions (Using Paired T-test)

	The CEO of a local corporation who is volunteer chairperson of the United Way campaign and who delegates all the work to his assistant vs. the assistant to this CEO who does the job for his boss	A member of a community sport club who leads a group of joggers every week vs. the home owner who helps create a crime watch group to safeguard his own neighborhood
Canada	Mean CEO 2.4699 Mean assistant 2.7342 T-value -3.373 Significance .000 ***	Mean joggers leader 3.6651 Mean crime watch 4.0654 T-value -6.958 Significance .000 ***
Nether-lands	Mean CEO 2.7617 Mean assistant 3.0022 T-value -2.654 Significance .008 **	Mean joggers leader 4.4989 Mean crime watch 4.4812 T-value .328 Significance N.S.
India	Mean CEO 2.0222 Mean assistant 2.5423 T-value -7.902 Significance .000 ***	Mean joggers leader 3.8150 Mean crime watch 2.5427 T-value 15.695 Significance .000 ***
Italy	Mean CEO 2.0960 Mean assistant 2.3880 T-value -4.184 Significance .000 ***	Mean joggers leader 3.1240 Mean crime watch 3.0040 T-value 1.542 Significance N.S.
Georgia/ USA	Mean CEO 2.3471 Mean assistant 2.8375 T-value -5.372 Significance .000 ***	Mean joggers leader 3.6566 Mean crime watch 4.2198 T-value -8.159 Significance .000 ***
Phila/ USA	Mean CEO 2.2465 Mean assistant 2.8566 T-value -7.838 Significance .000 ***	Mean joggers leader 3.6821 Mean crime watch 4.1268 T-value -7.043 Significance .000 ***

Table 6: Comparison of Means of Items Depicting the Same Volunteer Activity Performed With and Without Explicit Personal Benefits by All Regions (using paired t-test)

	An IBM executive	The medical doctor	The teacher	The teenager
Canada	Mean With 2.7056 Mean W/O 4.6729 T-value -30.916 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.6573 Mean W/O 4.6667 T-value -32.694 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.7579 Mean W/O 4.7659 T-value -31.831 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.7714 Mean W/O 4.7745 T-value -32.775 Sig. .000 ***
Nether-lands	Mean With 3.6150 Mean W/O 4.7367 T-value -15.642 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 3.4535 Mean W/O 4.6991 T-value -17.194 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 3.5396 Mean W/O 4.8260 T-value -18.762 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 3.6035 Mean W/O 4.7863 T-value -16.930 Sig. .000 ***
India	Mean With 1.2405 Mean W/O 3.9229 T-value -33.926 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 1.8053 Mean W/O 4.0548 T-value -29.928 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 1.7661 Mean W/O 4.4859 T-value -39.033 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 1.9434 Mean W/O 4.5636 T-value -35.574 Sig. .000 ***
Italy	Mean With 2.0200 Mean W/O 4.6500 T-value -40.301 Sig.. .000 ***	Mean With 2.0040 Mean W/O 4.6380 T-value -39.741 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.0040 Mean W/O 4.6860 T-value -42.312 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.3740 Mean W/O 4.6980 T-value -34.632 Sig. .000 ***
Georgia/ USA	Mean With 2.8319 Mean W/O 4.8348 T-value -33.430 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.8075 Mean W/O 4.8448 T-value -34.430 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.8689 Mean W/O 4.8689 T-value -33.686 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.8512 Mean W/O 4.8467 T-value -33.324 Sig. .000 ***
Phila/ USA	Mean With 2.4377 Mean W/O 4.7157 T-value -32.498 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.4124 Mean W/O 4.6833 T-value -31.144 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.4016 Mean W/O 4.7711 T-value -34.115 Sig. .000 ***	Mean With 2.4611 Mean W/O 4.7625 T-value -32.823 Sig. .000 ***

Table 7: Comparison of Means for Items Depicting Volunteer Activities with Equal Net Costs but with Different Perceived Contribution to Society by Regions (Using Paired T-test)

	An office manager who accompanies his wife to visit seniors in a nursing home vs. an office manager who, by his/her own choice, works overtime without pay	An adult who offers his/her time to be a Big Brother or Big Sister vs. an adult who volunteer to teach English as a second language to new immigrants
Canada	Mean overtime 2.6918 Mean nursing home 3.6053 T-value -11.752 Significance .000 ***	Mean Teacher of ESL 4.7570 Mean Big Brother 4.7336 T-value .859 Significance N.S.
Nether-lands	Mean overtime 1.7327 Mean nursing home 3.2806 T-value -18.415 Significance .000 ***	Mean Teacher of ESL 4.6882 Mean Big Brother 4.7951 T-value -2.992 Significance .003 **
India	Mean overtime 3.9002 Mean nursing home 3.7699 T-value 2.146 Significance .032 *	Mean Teacher of ESL 4.2636 Mean Big Brother 4.5734 T-value -6.523 Significance .000 ***
Italy	Mean overtime 2.2640 Mean nursing home 2.6580 T-value -5.528 Significance .000 ***	Mean Teacher of ESL 4.4880 Mean Big Brother 4.5260 T-value -.852 Significance N.S.
Georgia/ USA	Mean overtime 2.7348 Mean nursing home 3.9185 T-value -16.389 Significance .000 ***	Mean Teacher of ESL 4.8198 Mean Big Brother 4.8981 T-value -4.052 Significance .000 ***
Phila/ USA	Mean overtime 2.9639 Mean nursing home 3.5683 T-value -7.334 Significance .000 ***	Mean Teacher of ESL 4.6968 Mean Big Brother 4.7570 T-value -1.975 Significance .05*

Table 8: Comparison of Means for Items Depicting Volunteer Activities with Equal Net Costs but with Different Perceived Contribution to Society by Regions (Using Paired T-test)

	An IBM executive	The medical doctor	The teacher	The teenager
Canada	Mean soup 4.6781 Mean libr. 4.1297 T-value 12.335 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.6739 Mean libr. 4.0905 T-value 11.807 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.7590 Mean libr. 3.9014 T-value 17.111 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.7738 Mean libr. 4.1451 T-value 14.117 Sig. .000 ***
Nether-lands	Mean soup 4.7384 Mean libr. 4.5487 T-value 4.835 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.6901 Mean libr. 4.5451 T-value 3.594 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.8260 Mean libr. 4.5551 T-value 7.005 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.7863 Mean libr. 4.5066 T-value 6.107 Sig. .000 ***
India	Mean soup 3.9251 Mean libr. 3.6559 T-value 5.446 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.0510 Mean libr. 3.7612 T-value 4.939 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.4819 Mean libr. 3.6386 T-value 14.818 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.5643 Mean libr. 3.6506 T-value 18.034 Sig. .000 ***
Italy	Mean soup 4.6500 Mean libr. 3.5980 T-value 18.030 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.6380 Mean libr. 3.5520 T-value 17.930 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.6860 Mean libr. 3.4780 T-value 20.990 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.6980 Mean libr. 3.4040 T-value 21.596 Sig. .000 ***
Georgia/ USA	Mean soup 4.8316 Mean libr. 4.3442 T-value 13.003 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.8425 Mean libr. 4.3224 T-value 13.655 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.8653 Mean libr. 4.3016 T-value 15.818 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.8470 Mean libr. 4.3470 T-value 14.818 Sig. .000 ***
Phila/ USA	Mean soup 4.7140 Mean libr. 4.0620 T-value 12.297 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.6839 Mean libr. 4.0119 T-value 11.932 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.7706 Mean libr. 3.9276 T-value 15.756 Sig. .000 ***	Mean soup 4.7629 Mean libr. 4.0498 T-value 13.769 Sig. .000 ***

Some interesting findings include the following: in India and Italy donating blood was ranked significantly higher than in all other regions, first and third, respectively **.** Similarly in these two countries the homeowner who helps create a crime watch group and the teenager who offers to program a computer to build a resume, were ranked significantly lower than most other regions. In Italy the student who volunteers as part of a high school graduation requirement is ranked significantly lower than all other regions. In India, the step parent, the medical doctor delivering a paper at the AMA, and hourly wage worker and office manager who work overtime without pay are ranked higher than all other regions.

It should be noted that the lack of support for the United way versus a generic nonprofit scenario, may be an artifact of our need to provide the respondents with a description of such an agency (United Way) which does not exist in these regions. Hence, the respondents could not appreciate the rigor and demand involved in such act of volunteering and equated it with a regular board membership in any unspecified nonprofit.