

Programme: Master of Science Institution: Erasmus University

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Submitted: Sunday 15th of July, 2018

Global Business & Sustainability Rotterdam School of Management

**Business-Society Management** 

Organisation and Personnel Management

## Preface

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## Acknowledgements

Writing a thesis is never done alone. In the last eight months I have had legions of people around me who supported me in one way or another, and all these people deserve a thank you.

First of all, I want to thank my thesis coach Lucas Meijs for his indestructible positivism and inexhaustible source of good ideas that lead our meetings to cover a wide spectrum of topics. I also want to thank Alexander Maas, who has proven to be very resourceful in his constructive, punctual feedback and statistical knowledge.

Secondly, I want to thank Jord and Margriet from Utrecht Cares. I want to thank them for their willingness to help me in this research, to get my survey distributed among a large group of volunteers and arrange interviews with interesting volunteers. They encouraged and supported me throughout the entire trajectory, invited me to join them to meet other members of the overarching Nederland Cares organization, as well as meet other parties that have similar interests.

Thirdly, I want to thank all the volunteers who participated in this research either by filling in my survey or through the interviews. I want to give a special thanks to the volunteers who were willing to make time in their agendas and share their story in one of the interviews. I have enjoyed each and every of these interviewees, listening to all the things you had to say and inspiring lives all of you have.

Lastly, I want to thank all the other people that in one way or another have helped me on a more informal basis in the last eight months, which I all want to address and thank shortly. My brother, Idwer, has shared his impressive research knowledge and told me I was on the right track. My family has always been there for me, also on moments when I wouldn't think I was going to be able to write all these pages. My fellow students, with whom I could share my occasional frustration and spar about what decisions to make. My friends, at whom I also could fall back on moments when things did not work out the way I wanted. My flatmates, who cooked for me when coming home from the library, listened to me and shared similar sorrows. And finally, I want to thank Julian, Tom, Denise, Thecla, Tamara and Sander with whom I could share my happiness or troubled mind over the occasional coffee in the library.

## **Executive Summary**

Volunteers make decisions every day either to participate or not in volunteering activities. Platforms and intermediary organizations exist that facilitate this decision making. For these organizations it is essential to understand what is going on in the mind of their "customer": the volunteer. One of these organizations is Utrecht Cares, part of the overarching Nederland Cares foundation. Their unique concept facilitates frequent, repeated decision making for volunteers, subsequently allowing a high degree of episodic volunteering. Subsequently, this thesis is written in collaboration with Utrecht Cares. It attempts to provide practical implications for this volunteer organization, in order to strengthen their concept.

Yet, despite the importance of understanding the decision process of volunteers, academic literature fails to supply much research yet. Volunteering research has covered a wide array of aspects, but research on the decision process of volunteers seems to be non-existent. Accordingly, this research attempts to fill this gap in the academic literature. The following research question attempts to both address the academic gap and practically benefit Utrecht Cares:

How does a volunteer decide for a specific activity and what influences this decision?

To answer this broad research question, a mixed method research was designed. Data was gathered through a variety of research methods. First of all, a survey was distributed to the entire volunteer population of Utrecht Cares, in which volunteers had to decide for a fictional volunteering activity. Secondly, interviews were conducted with volunteers from the same database to gain in-depth insights in the decision process of the volunteer. Additionally, participant observations were conducted to complement the findings from these data sources. All gathered data was analysed to confirm and nuance the previously researched volunteerability framework. This framework explains the match between supply and demand for volunteer resources, and consists of three pillars: availability, capability and willingness.

Resulting from the survey, several inferences could be made considering the equal nature of willingness across different volunteers. These findings were backed up by the qualitative findings from the interviews, which showed to give more importance to the two other pil-

lars. Correspondingly, the interviewees indicated the importance of "availability", which was supported by data from the survey.

In sum, two theories are produced that are slightly different. The first theory brings a sequential structure in the volunteerability framework, posing first availability and then capability as preliminary barriers before willingness, which is relatively equal amongst volunteers. In other words, volunteers first need to find available time, then perceive themselves capable, before they let their willingness decide for an activity. The second theory is nuanced differently and argues that availability is still the primary condition. However, whereas willingness explains why people say yes to volunteering, capability explains why people say no to volunteering. This theory is largely based on the qualitative findings from the survey.

Next, from the gathered data, both practical and theoretical implications are made. To begin, the activities calendar presented by Utrecht Cares as of right now can be improved further with the data from the results. As availability has proven to be the biggest barrier, the calendar can be redesigned to respond to this desire, allowing for (even) shorter activities. Correspondingly, the desire of volunteers for a meaningful experience can help Utrecht Cares attract and retain volunteers. Concretely this involves carefully assessing the activities, listening to actual experiences from volunteers and making sure this meaningfulness is present. Results of this research apply to Utrecht Cares, yet other organizations that organize activities of a similar episodic nature might benefit from this research as well. However, policy makers are urged to critically assess the applicability of these results to their concepts before implementation.

More theoretically, this research can be seen as a springboard for future research. As this research is the first in its sort, a lot of arising research questions can be the start of follow-up research.

## Prologue

Every time I walked into another reception area, I was curious where I would end up this time. Would there be other volunteers like me, or was it going to be mostly the regulars. Would there be many people for who I was volunteering? Was I going to feel useful, or would I feel of a low added value? Questions, all unanswered in your head, until the moment you would grab the door handle, push down, and enter some new adventure.

Always would there be the warm, greeting smile of the coordinator. A group of people seated around a table, in mostly old-fashioned chairs, chatting away about the small things in their life, or the experiences of the day. Always would there be the two questions from the coordinator: "Utrecht Cares?" and "Coffee?". And after answering both questions with the affirmative, I would find myself an old-fashioned chair and mingle with the company. From then on, I would be part of the crew, and the following hours I would be busy playing table tennis with people with a disability, reading to children, preparing food packages or arrange flowers with elderly people.

Steered by my coach and my previous experiences, I was eager to collaborate with Utrecht Cares to write this thesis. To help them, and make sure other volunteers like me could enjoy the volunteering. As I participated in more and more activities, things started to fall in place. My theoretical perspective, obtained after hours of digging through online volunteering archives, theories and papers, was put into practice. Analysing what I was thinking, feeling, seeing, hearing and doing. Do I feel this "warm glow?"; what are this co-volunteer's motivations; "what barriers do I perceive?"; "why do I choose table-tennis and not cooking?".

When I performed a first analysis of the calendar and activities organized by Utrecht Cares in 2017, one activity somehow seemed not to attract any volunteers. It entailed an activity called "bike repair shops with kids". In other words, repairing bikes with kids. Of the 78 possible volunteer spots, none were actually taken by volunteers. Immediately, questions arose. "How is this possible?". "Why is it that none of the volunteers actually wants to do this?".

And then, at that moment, I simply knew what I wanted to research.

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## Introduction

"Yes, that was very rewarding, and we had a phenomenal day. Everyone enjoyed it and we had a good laugh. There I learned that it is not just good for society, but that you can also really enjoy it yourself."

Below, the research is introduced and its relevance as well as the context of the research are touched upon. Both the academic as well as practical relevance for the research is elaborated on. With respect to the context, a brief overview of the organization of Utrecht Cares is given.

## Relevance

The activity of helping others without getting paid for it already happened a long time ago, and this concept of volunteering is entirely integrated in today's society. Where the one sticks with his sports association to help out, the other embarks on other adventures in elderly homes or with homeless individuals. However, today's society seems to be busier than ever, and people's schedules sometimes seem to be too full to fit in regular volunteering. As a consequence, volunteering is increasingly of a more episodic nature compared to the more traditional, more structural volunteering. Instead of being tied to one single organization, individuals get to choose regularly where and when they want to volunteer. Sever-

al platforms and mediums have sprung to facilitate this trend in volunteer demands. In other words, more and more people, who are willing to volunteer, seem to face a repeated decision to schedule free some time.

When looking at the academic literature, it shows that in the past decades volunteering has been a popular topic for scholars. In the exploratory phase of this research, this conclusion was easily drawn. A lot of research has focused on why people volunteer and what their personal motivations are. Next to that, much research has covered barriers to volunteer, that prevent individuals from volunteering, as well as how these barriers can be overcome. Whereas all these topics are somehow relevant for this research, none of them really gives insights into the decision process of the volunteer when it comes down to episodic volunteering. No concrete literature exists regarding this decision process. Not yet.

Wilson (2012) thoroughly reviewed the literature on volunteering, and covered topics as personality traits, motivation theories, religion, individual assets, life courses, and more. Again, no words were dedicated in describing and/or explaining the decision process of the volunteer. Therefore, there seems to be a huge gap in the literature considering the decision for a specific volunteering activity. Few articles, if any, have investigated the decision why a certain individual decides to volunteer in activity A as opposed to activity B. This research aims to address this gap in the literature by answering the following research question: How does a volunteer decide for a specific activity and what influences this decision?

The research question is a composition of two smaller questions: 'How does a volunteer decide for a specific activity?' and 'what influences the decision for a specific activity?' Both questions are addressed in the below research and findings on both questions, at least partially, fill the gap that seems to be present in the academic literature.

However, this research is not written to merely fill this literary gap and subsequently end up on a dusty shelf or disappear in the immense online database of Google Scholar. Aside the clear contribution to the academic literature, this research also aims to have a more practical contribution. Therefore, this research is written in collaboration with Utrecht Cares, to impact this organization and other sub departments from the Nederland Cares foundation. Evidently, any organization dealing with volunteers might benefit from research like this. One of these issues is how to attract and retain volunteers, an issue which is very relevant to many organizations relying on volunteers. Yet, thanks to the unique concept of Utrecht Cares, which facilitates the decision making for volunteers, this research is specifically relevant. Answering this research question, and the two accompanying constituent

questions will help Utrecht Cares in facilitating the volunteer process even better. More broadly, with respect to the retention and attraction of volunteers, organizations with similar concepts to that of Utrecht Cares might also benefit from this research. Due to the specific collaboration, however, implications and findings should be carefully assessed by other parties before implementation (more on this in the discussion).

The goal of Utrecht Cares is to engage young professionals and students in volunteering. Gaining understanding in the considerations of volunteers when selecting a specific activity allows Utrecht Cares to adapt their concept. When more is known about this specific decision-process, a better fit can be made between the supply and demand side of volunteering. In other words, there is clear potential for the organization to benefit from this research. Therefore, in order to understand this research and the concept of Utrecht Cares well, the following pages provide insights on the context with respect to the organization.

## Context

Utrecht Cares is a sub department of the Nederland Cares foundation (in Dutch: *stichting*). The foundation has locations in four major cities in the Netherlands: Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht, which are subsequently called Utrecht Cares, Amsterdam Cares, etcetera. The organization has two core tasks. Relevant to this research is their first task, which is to promote episodic volunteering among the young population of the Netherlands. They do so by having installed an activities calendar in which the barrier to volunteer is relatively low. Their second core task is to involve companies into volunteering, who subsequently provide funding for the first core task.

#### **Activities Calendar**

The unique asset of the foundation is their activities calendar, which can be found online on the website of each sub department. For each city, there is a separate calendar that shows activities for each day of the week. For each activity a brief description is given of what is done during the activity, where the volunteer needs to go and what is expected. Registered volunteers can enrol for an activity as long as there are spots available. Number of spots differ, normally ranging from one to five spots available per activity.

In order to get an insight into the range of activities, a preliminary analysis is conducted. All the activities organized in 2017 are categorized per target group and summarized in Table 1. "Separate activities" refers to the number of separate activities organized in 2017, and accordingly "percentage of total activities" refers to the relative share of the specific

target group looking at all the activities. "Percentage popularity" signifies to what extent the activities were fully booked, and how much percent of the available spots were taken. In other words, what percentage of the number of potential volunteers did actually engage in these activities.

Target Group	Separate activities	% of total activities	% popularity
Children/Youth	363	21,4	31,8
Chronically ill, disabled	399	23,5	27,6
Homeless, Poor & Disadvantaged	310	18,3	34,3
Minority Groups	144	8,5	42,4
Neighbourhood/Community	234	13,8	20,8
Seniors/Elderly	246	14,5	34,0

Table 1 - Summary of activities categorized by target group (Source: Utrecht Cares).

As can be drawn from this overview, we can see that minority groups are relatively seen most popular; however, activities targeting this group are least frequently organized. "Elderly"-, "Homeless"-, "Poor"-, and "Disadvantaged" people are also relatively popular with respect to the percentage of these activities are filled with candidates. We also see that in total 30.9% of all the available spots for volunteers is taken, meaning less than 1 out of 3 possible spots are filled with volunteers.

Table 2 summarizes the number of activities and the duration of these activities. Over 70 percent of the activities has a duration of between 1 and 3 hours, with 44 percent of all the activities of a length between two and three hours. Thanks to this very short nature, the term episodic volunteering fits well (Cnaan & Handy, 2005).

Duration	Frequency	% of total	% popularity
1 or more hours	444	26,2	40,5
2 or more hours	746	44,0	29,2
3 or more hours	248	14,6	21,9
4 or more hours	258	15,2	29,4

Table 2 - Summary of activities and their duration (Source: Utrecht Cares)

On top of that, Figure 1 presents an interesting trend given the duration of activities and the popularity. As the duration of an activity increases, popularity of an activity will go down. Due to a partially inexplicable reason, attendance to the two foodbank activities is extraordinarily popular. They seem to be exceptional cases, with an attendance of 78 and

80 percent, compared to 31.1% on average. Therefore, in order to be able to draw meaningful insights, the graph below shows both data with and without the food bank included. Consequently, the trend line of the graphed popularity with respect to duration appears to be downward sloping. Where at a duration of one and a half hour there was a popularity of 40%, while at a duration of three or more hours only 20% of maximum attendance was attained.

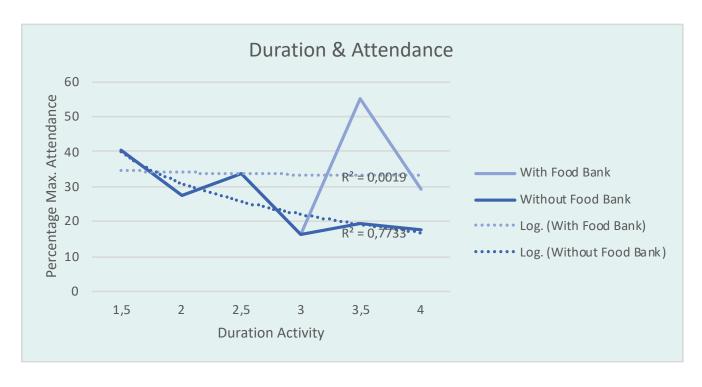


Figure 1 - Duration and popularity (Source: Utrecht Cares)

#### **Volunteers**

The volunteer population of Utrecht Cares exists of nearly 3000 volunteers, with an increase of 16.5% in the year 2017. However, only a total of around 3800 hours have been volunteered. Consequently, given the average duration of activities, there seems to be a significant share of the volunteer population inactive. Chances are volunteers subscribe for a one-time activity or have negative experiences with volunteering through Utrecht Cares. Provided the statistics from Utrecht Cares, conclusions can be drawn that the vast majority (63%) has only volunteered once in 2017, as opposed to 15% who have volunteered twice. Interestingly, 11% of the population has volunteered 5 or more times, signifying that a relatively small share of the population account for a relatively large share of the volunteering. Figure 3 in Appendix 1 depicts a volunteer Lorentz-curve for Utrecht Cares in 2017. From this figure we can deduce that around 20% of the volunteers account for more than half of the placements of all the activities.

On top of that, Utrecht Cares has provided some other statistics on volunteer behaviour as well (also see Appendix 1). With regards to the moment of registration, 54% of the population registers within a week before the activity, with 13% registering the day before. About one sixth of the population registers from one to two weeks in advance.

## Literature

# Review

"I think I am a happy person. So I can share that happiness with the people who need it"

Research on volunteering started decades ago, and as of today a lot has been written about volunteers. There have been focal points in literature around motivations and barriers, personality traits, social context and more of the multifaceted nature of volunteering (for an extensive review: see Wilson, 2012).

However, literature seems to be minimal considering the individual decision-making process with respect to specific volunteer activities. This research tries to address this gap in the literature. Despite the lack of literature directly relevant for this research, a certain theoretical background knowledge is necessary in order to understand the context of this research. Therefore, general, yet relevant literature is reviewed in this chapter. The literature is categorized and grouped into general volunteer literature, literature dealing with the volunteerability framework, and separate literature on barriers to volunteer and the concept of episodic volunteering.

## 2.1 Volunteering

As stated above, volunteering is a multifaceted phenomenon, and due to this multifaceted nature, there is a range of different perspectives that can be taken when analysing volunteering. Hustinx, Cnaan and Handy (2010) analysed volunteering from four distinct perspectives and domains that have extensively researched the concept of volunteering: The economic perspective uses rational-choice theory and cost-benefit analyses to explain volunteer behaviour; the sociological perspective sees the behaviour as a phenomenon involving relationships and interaction in the cultural context; the psychological perspective entails the personal motivations and prosocial behaviour as a phenomenon; and the political science perspective sees volunteering as part of an active society and a requirement for democracy (Hustinx et al., 2010).

In order to understand the research done on volunteering and get a grasp of what is out there, the extensive volunteering literature is briefly reviewed. The literature is divided according to the same distinction made by Hustinx et al. (2010). On top of that a fifth perspective is added, which entails the organizational perspective. Thus, the literature is discussed from five different perspectives.

#### **Economic perspective**

Volunteering goes against the economic rationality model, given that the costs incurred by volunteering are likely to exceed the benefits (Handy & Mook, 2011), since it involves sacrificing time and/or money (Lee & Brudney, 2009) with little or no rewards. Callow (2004) argues that volunteers do take the costs and benefits of volunteering into consideration. This is in line with the utilitarian approach of volunteering, in which volunteers do a cost-benefit analysis and consequently decide to volunteer when benefits exceed costs (Zafirovski, 1999). Accordingly, from the economic perspective, there would be a great incentive to free-ride with the production of the public good, instead of incurring the costs of volunteering on oneself and contribute to the public good (Diekman, 1985). However, there are certainly benefits to volunteering. These benefits accrue both in the individual level, as well as on the public level (Lee & Brudney, 2009; Handy & Mook, 2011). Correspondingly, there are two main micro-economic models explaining volunteering.

First of all, private benefits models argue that the volunteer enjoys private benefits when volunteering. Such a private benefit model is the *investment model*, which sees volunteering as an exchange relationship. They perceive volunteering to be an investment in one-self, as the volunteer receives training and skills that enhance the individual's human capi-

tal (Hustinx et al., 2010). Additionally, it might increase future employability and broaden the social network (Prouteau & Wolff, 2008), as well as builds the resume (Meier & Stutzer, 2008). Similarly, the consumption model sees volunteering as an opportunity to enjoy benefits that are "consumed" by the volunteer (Handy & Mook, 2011). Prouteau and Wolff (2008) argue that volunteers search for private goods, such as "prestige, reputation, and a warm glow" (p. 317). Other private benefits that are "consumed" entail feelings of satisfaction and enhanced self-esteem (Phillips & Phillips, 2010) as well as social approval (Meier & Stutzer, 2008).

Secondly, the *public goods model* argues that volunteers are willing to sacrifice time in order to create public goods (Hustinx et al., 2010). Volunteers care about the recipients' and community well-being (Handy & Mook, 2011). In this model, volunteers work for the benefit of others and henceforth solely have altruistic motivations. However, much research has settled in the middle: volunteers care about individual benefits as well as public benefits (Andreoni, 1989, 1990). These individuals are called "impure altruists". Andreoni (1989) cleverly argues that when the public good is produced entirely through the government, the volunteer does not feel as satisfied as when s/he was involved in the production her/himself. Accordingly, he concludes that volunteers experience both private and public benefits.

Important for conducting an economic cost-benefit analysis, both costs and benefits are required. Therefore, next to the abovementioned benefits for volunteers, they are also likely to incur various costs. These costs of volunteering that apply to the individual arise in a variety of forms. This includes money spent directly on engaging in activities (i.e., travelling expenses), or foregone income in the form of opportunity costs (Handy & Mook, 2011). Lee and Brudney (2009) find that as opportunity cost for volunteering increase, the level of participation decreases. Aside the costs of time, academic literature also defines the stigma around volunteers and psychological difficulties as costs (Callow, 2004; Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

#### Sociological perspective

From a sociological point of view, volunteering is a social phenomenon involving "patterns of social relationships and interactions among individuals, groups, associations [and] organizations" (Hustinx et al., 2010, p. 417).

Einolf and Chambré (2011) define three major social theories that explain volunteering behaviour: social context, social roles and social integration. For the first theory, Einolf and

Chambré (2011) state that "social context theories study the influence of external events and regional acts" (p. 299) on the act of volunteering. External events can be epidemics and natural disasters, i.e., individuals with relatives affected by HIV are more likely to volunteer against this cause (Omoto & Snyder, 2002). Regional effects cover whether where a volunteer lives, in what country, state or neighbourhood, influences volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2007). For example, people who feel safe in their neighbourhood and trust their neighbours are more likely to volunteer and share the burden of the public housekeeping.

The second theory details social integration. Einolf and Chambré (2011) state that individuals who are highly involved in social activities are more likely to volunteer. Extensive social networks enhance the chance of being asked to volunteer, which has been found to subsequently increases the chance to volunteer (Freeman, 1997). Correspondingly, religious participation and attendees, rural citizens and educated people are groups with strong social ties and have therefore been identified as groups that are more likely to be asked to volunteer (Bekkers, 2004).

The third social theory entails social roles. Volunteering can compensate for people who lack certain fulfilment in other life roles or can bring back lost roles when transitioning through life, i.e., retirement (Einolf and Chambré, 2011). Some specific social roles are expected to volunteer, i.e., parents and professionals, who paradoxically are most likely to volunteer despite their limited free time (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017). This, however, is closely linked to social integration, given that individuals in these roles are more likely to be asked to volunteer.

Along similar lines, Smith (1994) defined five main streams of literature considering the determinants of volunteering, which explain an individual's decision to volunteer. Three of these are sociologically based and closely related to Einolf and Chambré (2011): context (social context), social background (social roles) and the immediate situation in which the volunteers find themselves (social integration). Accordingly, the influential role of sociological factors has been researched and confirmed by Bekkers (2004). In his dissertation, he concluded that volunteering is stronger related to social factors than psychological characteristics.

### Psychological perspective

The third point of view on volunteering considers a psychological perspective, and research tries to identify the personal characteristics in distinguishing volunteers and non-volunteers (Hustinx et al., 2010). From the "big five" personality traits agreeableness and ex-

traversion are strongly related to volunteering behaviour (Carlo, Okun, Knight & de Guzman, 2005). Accordingly, they define that "agreeable individuals are altruistic, straight-forward, trusting, soft-hearted, modest, and compliant" (Carlo et al., 2005, p.31). With respect to agreeableness, Bekkers (2004) argues that social-value orientation, empathic concern and perspective taking are all three more specific motives that make up agreeableness. These respectively entail the extent to which a volunteer cares about the joint outcome, the extent to which someone feels bad when someone is hurt, and the extent to which someone is able to take another's perspective (Bekkers, 2004). Similarly, the remaining two determinants of volunteering defined by Smith (1994), that are of psychological nature, are personality and attitude, which he respectively exemplifies with "more efficacy" and "group attractiveness". (Smith, 1994, p.1)

Finkelstein, Penner, and Brannick (2005) find that identity and perceived expectations are the strongest predictors for volunteering. They define identity as the driver that makes the individual identify himself as a prosocial being, while perceived expectation deals with the extent to which the volunteer feels that others expect her/him to volunteer again. Similarly, Gronlund (2010) defined and discerned five main identities for volunteers: the influencer wants to fight injustice and make the world a better place; the helper aims to help others and strives for benevolence; the faith-based volunteer expresses religiosity through volunteering; the community identity has strong values for and prioritizes communality; and success identity aims for accomplishments and advancement in life. Interestingly, Lee, Piliavin, & Call (1999) find a circular relationship of volunteer identity, as it can explain why someone decides to volunteer, as well as that it is reinforced when an individual actually volunteers.

#### Political perspective

From a political point of view, volunteering is seen as a basic requirement for an active civic society, because citizens can only better their community if they are allowed to do so themselves (Hustinx et al., 2010). Volunteering helps individuals acquire basic democratic values, of which one of the most important values is tolerance (Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005). Additionally, it has been researched that volunteering improves interpersonal trust as well. However, the effect of volunteering on the trust towards the government has been found to be ambiguous, with some stating it increases (Cigler & Joslyn, 2002), whereas others state that it decreases confidence in the government (Brehm & Rahm, 1997).

While voluntary associations are frequently labelled as *schools of democracy* (De Toqueville, 1889; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Hustinx et al., 2010), van der Meer and van In-

gen (2009) name voluntary associations *pools of democracy*: "[the association's] members were already more likely to participate politically" (p. 303). Moreover, people active in voluntary associations are consequently more likely to be politically active (Teorell, 2003). Similarly, Bekkers (2005) argues that "citizens with a greater interest in politics [...] were more likely to be members of voluntary associations and were more likely to volunteer for an association" (p. 447).

Martinson and Minkler (2006) discuss the role the government plays in promoting volunteering. Moreover, they argue that the role of elderly in volunteering should be stimulated by the government, given the health benefits and increases in their self- and society-perceived social significance. On the contrary, too much government involvement in the promotion of volunteering may also have a negative effect (Lie, Baines, & Wheelock, 2009).

#### Organizational perspective

A fifth perspective that needs to be addressed is the organizational perspective, which is related to the economic perspective. Organizations see voluntary human resources as cheap labour and an opportunity to cut budgets (Handy & Mook, 2011), yet still other costs aside wage are incurred (Hustinx et al, 2010). The decision to make use of voluntary labour should however not depend on these considerations. Handy and Brudney (2007) find in their organizational analysis that using volunteers does not only depend on the cost and productivity in comparison to paid labour, but that external benefits like indirect social and societal benefits should be considered.

Next to these reasons for the demand of volunteers, whether an organizational is "fit" for attracting volunteers has also been researched extensively. In a paper by Hong, Morrow-Howell, Tang & Hinterlong (2009) a measure of "institutional capacity" for volunteering was researched. They defined ten dimensions for a company to successfully attract volunteer resources, with dimensions being skill development, cash compensation, role recognition and more (see Hong et al., 2009, p.204-205, for more). Along similar lines, Meijs, ten Hoorn and Brudney (2006) defined three levers that increase the chances of a match between volunteer and organization (more on this "volunteerability" under the next header). These three are "persuade organizations to make assignments more flexible", "persuade organizations to lower the bar on assets" and "add rewards to volunteering/punish non-volunteering" (Meijs et al., 2006, p.44).

Similarly, Studer and von Schnurbrein (2013) systematically reviewed the literature considering organizational factors affecting volunteering. They cluster these factors in three

groups: "volunteer management practices and instruments", "organizational attitudes and values" and "organizational features" (Studer & van Schnurbrein, 2013). The first cluster is covered mostly by HRM literature, assuming that volunteers belong to the same organizational structure as paid staff and accordingly depends on the practices implemented by the specific organization. Similarly, the implicit behaviour like attitudes and expectations from members of the organization constitute the second cluster. The final cluster describes that "different organizations attract different volunteers" (Studer & van Schnurbrein, 2013, p.420) and accordingly that factors like goals, mission, sector, level of bureaucracy and other influence what volunteers are attracted to the specific organization.

## 2.2 Volunteerability

As briefly described above, Meijs et al. (2006) introduced the concept of "volunteerability". They adapted the term "employability" towards a volunteer perspective. Like employability, "volunteerability" seeks to find a balance between the supply (volunteers) and demand (volunteer organizations) side of volunteering (Meijs et al., 2006). It is a multi-level concept, offering insights in the mechanisms to overcome volunteer barriers on an organizational, individual and societal level (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, Lockstone-Binney, Holmes, & Oppenheimer, 2017). Most relevant for this research is the supply side of the framework. This supply side of volunteerability entails to what extent somebody wants to volunteer (willingness), has the right skills to do so (capability) as well as has time to volunteer (availability) (see: Meijs et al., 2006; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017). Throughout the rest of this research, these three concepts (willingness, capability and availability) are referred to as "the three pillars (of volunteerability)". The framework argues that when either one of these three pillars is enhanced, the likelihood that someone decides to volunteer increases.

### Willingness

Whether a volunteer is willing to volunteer is generally measured by the motivation to volunteer (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017). Numerous studies have been conducted to find out these motivations to volunteer, and literature makes a distinction between functional and symbolic motives (Hustinx et al., 2010). Symbolic motives are part of a larger cultural understanding and hence expresses certain values and beliefs (sociological). While from a functional point of view, motives are the expression of needs and dispositions (psychological).

The functional motives are most commonly researched, and a frequently used measurement for functional motivations to volunteer is the Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI) (Clary et al., 1998). They divide motivations into six functional motives: Protective, values, career,

social, understanding, and enhancement. Numerous studies following up on this show that values and understanding are seen as the most important motivations (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Phillips & Phillips, 2010; Gage III & Thapa, 2012).

Whereas these functional motivations focus on intrinsic and personal motivations, Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) argue that the willingness to volunteer also includes extrinsic motivations. These extrinsic motivations arise in some form of rewards (Meier & Stutzer, 2008). Correspondingly, these rewards can be grouped in five different categories of rewards: tangible rewards; internal rewards that make the volunteer feel better about himself; social interaction rewards; norms and social pressure; and avoidance rewards (Cnaan, & Amrofell, 1994).

#### Capability

The second element of the volunteerability concept is capability. This concerns to what extent a person is capable of volunteering and whether the volunteer has the required skills and knowledge (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2010). It does not solely include skills, but also the perception of skills (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017). When a person perceives himself capable of doing a specific volunteer activity, he or she is more likely to volunteer. Accordingly, this specific self-efficacy is an important factor in the decision to volunteer for a certain activity (Eden & Kinnar, 1991). Accordingly, Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001) designed a scale that tests the levels of self-efficacy in an individual and entails a list of eight questions. Research has found that assigning the right tasks that challenge and utilize the right skills of volunteers is of significant importance, since it proves to effectively increase volunteer retention (Eisner, Grimm Jr, Maynard, & Washburn, 2009).

Slightly different, Meijs and Brudney (2007) define the assets of a volunteer as a mix of "talents, capabilities, knowledge and expertise" (p. 69) that a volunteer wishes to apply in the activity. In their framework, a volunteer has either low or high "assets". Combined with episodic volunteering this results in two categories of volunteers. On the one hand, episodic volunteers with low assets are so-called "sweat" volunteers, often young volunteers or students. On the other hand, episodic volunteers with high assets are called "specialist" and usually engage episodically due to a low availability. Their model, that combines assets, availability and assignments aims to enhance long-run volunteerability (Meijs & Brudney, 2007).

Due to the short nature of episodic volunteering, these episodic activities usually do not require specific skills or training. However, Hustinx, Haski-Leventhal and Handy (2008) find that episodic volunteers expect some training that helps them to carry out the activity well.

#### **Availability**

The third and final element of the Volunteerability framework entails availability. This deals with the individuals' preparedness to devote time or reschedule in order to be able to attend to a certain volunteer activity (Meijs et al., 2006). Clearly, availability of time is essential in order to volunteer. Accordingly, amongst the barriers to volunteer, a lack of time is reported to be the biggest barrier (Sundeen, Raskoff, & Garcia, 2007). However, some studies have found that volunteering rates paradoxically increase when available time goes down. Wilson (2012) argues that having children and/or a job increases the opportunities to find a suitable volunteer activity or to be asked to volunteer, which brings us back to the "social integration" and "social roles" (Einolf and Chambré, 2011) as discussed above.

Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) argue that availability is influenced by the individual's perception of their availability, as objective measures between volunteers and non-volunteers do not differ significantly, while rates of volunteering do differ significantly. Subsequently, whether an individual perceives whether he or she has got time to volunteer seems to be more important than the actual availability of time. Increasing accessibility of the volunteer process, i.e., through episodic or online volunteering, therefore increases the perceived availability.

Similarly, aside time-related availability, emotional availability is argued to play a role in the availability to volunteer as well (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Emotional availability is needed for people to commit themselves to volunteering as participation in volunteering activities might show new perspectives or can be perceived as a shocking reality-check. This requires a certain emotional readiness or emotional availability. Accordingly, "volunteers are distinguished by high values in self-knowledge" (Schnell & Hoof, 2012, p. 48). They link this to strong religiosity and spirituality. Musick and Wilson (2003) argue that volunteering for religious causes proves to be better for mental health. Contrary to many health benefits gained by volunteering (i.e., Lum & Lightfoot, 2005) volunteering can also strain mental health, leading to mental health problems, i.e. depression (Ironson, 2007). However, with respect to episodic volunteering mental health problems like depression are unlikely, given the usually short-term nature of the activities and the few responsibilities involved.

## 2.3 Barriers to volunteer

Aside abundant research on motivations to volunteer, there exists quite some literature on barriers to volunteer. Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) researched a range of barriers with respect to the volunteerability framework. For each pillar a list of barriers was defined. They found that the mean values for the top three barriers for availability were highest, followed by willingness, while the lowest mean values were for capability. Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) found that objective measures of availability did not significantly differ between volunteers and non-volunteers, which subsequently suggests that perceived availability is more important than the actual availability. Similarly, Warburton, Paynter, and Petriwskyj (2007) found that non-volunteers rated barriers to volunteering as significantly more important than volunteers, again suggesting that "these views are more perceived than actual" (p. 351).

In more general volunteering research, other barriers have been discerned. Sundeen et al. (2007) find that, aside time, little or no interest in volunteering or (bad) health are reported as frequent barriers to volunteering. Whereas 43.4% of the respondents mentioned time as a barrier to volunteer, only 3.4% of their respondents noted that a better match between the activity and their skills would increase volunteering. This suggests, again, that capability is a significantly lower barrier as opposed to availability.

## 2.4 Episodic volunteering

MacDuff (1990) was the first to coin the term *episodic volunteer*. Cnaan and Handy (2005) state that episodic volunteers are often defined as "individuals who engage in one-time or short-term volunteer opportunities" (p.30). Plenty of literature states that this type of volunteering is increasing in popularity, and that more and more people decide to volunteer on an episodic basis (Hustinx, Haski-Leventhal & Handy, 2008), as well as that more people decide to volunteer sporadically (Hyde, Dunn, Scuffham, & Chambers, 2014). This "shift" in volunteering is due to a change in values, and volunteers want to volunteer quickly and on an uncommitted basis (Haski-Leventhal, 2010). However, it can also be argued that this sort of volunteering is "nothing new" (Bryen & Madden, 2006, p.8)

The distinction that the academic literature makes between traditional and episodic volunteers is often based on the frequency and regularity to volunteer (Hustinx et al., 2008), with episodic volunteers involved on a less regular basis. However, this distinction is arbitrary

due to ambiguity in defining the frequency of episodic volunteers (Cnaan & Handy, 2005). There is no exact number of activities that need to be engaged in to be called a traditional volunteer. Similarly, there is no set timeframe in which these activities need to be done.

Despite this ambiguity and the absence of a final definition of episodic volunteering, research has been done on the various forms of episodic volunteering. According to MacDuff, Graff, and Millgard (2004), there are three types of episodic volunteers when looking at the frequency of volunteering: temporary volunteers, who volunteer only once; occasional volunteers, who regularly volunteer for one specific organization, activity et cetera; and interim volunteers, who regularly volunteer but for a short period in time. Similarly, Handy, Brodeur, and Cnaan (2006) distinct between habitual episodic volunteers who regularly volunteer throughout the year, and the genuine episodic volunteers who volunteer two or fewer times a year.

# Methodology

"Sometimes they are things that you think are important to happen. And, if you think something is important, I think that you have to make sure that it happens."

The research approach and methodology are extensively discussed in this chapter. It elaborates on the choices made in answering the research question considering the research design, the research population, data collection, and data analysis. On top of that, it provides measures for the quality of this research, takes into account ethical considerations, and examines the methodological limitations.

## 3.1 Research design

The nature of a research depends on the nature of the research and research question. For the research at hand, a mixed-method approach was chosen. Some criticisms exist about mixed-method approaches, that state there are fundamental differences in epistemological and ontological orientation for either research design (Bryman, 2011). However, designing the research in either a qualitative or quantitative nature would not have allowed for the width of the posed research question. Accordingly, in order to be able to draw robust conclusions the research collected both qualitative and quantitative data. "Using mixed me-

thods is tempting when one wishes to innovate social science research and cross borders of preferred paradigms in certain scholarly networks" (Boeije, 2010, p.161). A mixed-method approach is not frequently deployed in the field of volunteering and can therefore be seen as a good contribution to the literature.

Rovers et al. (2016) argue that "[...] quantitative data allow for a convenient, reproducible way to measure subjects' motivations and barriers, while qualitative methods permit investigators to explore subjects' perceptions and lived experiences of their volunteering" (p. 3). Accordingly, this research used quantitative data to examine the volunteerability framework on their decision for a specific volunteer activity, while the qualitative data were used to gain in-depth insights and the volunteers' perspective towards their decision-making. The formulated research question forced the researcher to deploy different approaches in order to obtain interesting findings. Therefore, a combination of both methods was an appropriate way to answer my research question. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods added data of which neither is prioritized, subsequently allowing for concurrent triangulation (Hanson et al., 2005).

## 3.2 Population

The population of a research is the "universe of units from which a sample is to be selected" (Bryman, 2011, p. 714). This research aimed to explain and find reasons for volunteer decision-making for specific activities. The entire population entailed all the volunteers that on a frequent basis face the decision whether they want to volunteer. Accordingly, the first criterion for the population was that the respondents have volunteered at least once before. The second criterion was that the volunteers face the decision to volunteer on a frequent basis, and therefore that the decision to volunteer is a repeated decision. This criterion is incongruent with the definition of regular volunteers, who commit themselves to a certain organization or activity for a longer period of time and consequently do not repeatedly face this decision. Hence, regularly facing the possibility to volunteer is broadly in line with the common definition and understanding of what are "episodic volunteers" (Cnaan & Handy, 2005). Episodic volunteering is sometimes facilitated through intermediary organizations. These so-called "match-making" organizations ensure a match between the supply side of volunteering (volunteers) and the demand side of volunteering (organizations in need of volunteers) (Meijs et al., 2006). Accordingly, Utrecht Cares is one of such "match-making", intermediary organization. The nature of the volunteers of Utrecht Cares is, therefore, episodic. Whereas this research was focused on Utrecht Cares and their volunteers, the findings are broadly applicable to all episodic volunteers that face similar decisions. Generally, match-making organizations like Utrecht Cares, but also Stichting Present, NLDoet and others, require volunteers to make a choice what specific activity they want to do. Episodic volunteers that do not volunteer through organizations are likely to have found a "natural" match with their neighbour, association, etcetera, and accordingly do not require a separate match-making organization. Therefore, this research applies to some extent to all episodic volunteers who volunteer through organizations.

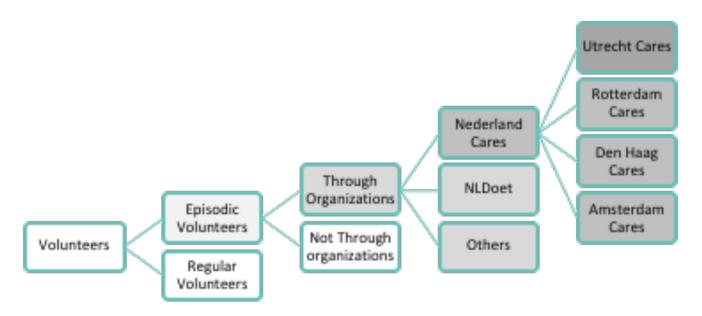


Figure 2 - Population overview (White means research is not-applicable. As gray becomes darker, the applicability of research becomes higher). (source: this research)

#### **Quantitative Sample Selection**

In Figure 2 can be seen that the research applies to a certain portion of the episodic volunteer population. Given the global volunteer population, the diagram above depicts what sample of the entire population was selected for the quantitative part, given that for the survey the sample approached was the entire population of Utrecht Cares. This sample was equal to the database of Utrecht Cares.

This database consists of a population with divergent demographic characteristics. Every individual aged eighteen or older with an email address is able to register as a volunteer. A registration is required in order to be able to volunteer, however, there is no requirement to volunteer once registered. Accordingly, people who have registered might have never actually volunteered. Generally, no prior proof or tests are required, except for international volunteers outside of the European Economic Area as well as volunteers from Croatia (Nederland Cares, 2018), who require proof of a working permit. Moreover, barriers to volunteer through Utrecht Cares are relatively low, hence a varied population can be expected.

#### **Qualitative Sample Selection**

For the interviews two different sampling methods were executed. The first sampling method approached respondents from the survey. Cases were selected based on the findings of the survey. The researcher made use of maximum variation purposive sampling (Boeije, 2010), looking at respondent's answers and preferences from the survey. Subsequently, these respondents were invited to participate in the interview in order to maximize variation and obtain as much insights as possible considering the decision process. On top of that, in order to control for biased data, and to obtain an objective perspective, some respondents were invited from the survey that did not show clear preference.

The second sampling method executed for the interviews approached participants through active participation of the researcher in volunteer activities during the participant observation. During activities, volunteers were asked to participate in the research by allowing the researcher to interview them at a set date in time. Accordingly, this was a combination of convenience sampling and random sampling. Activities were chosen in such a way that the researcher would meet different volunteers. This included activities with different target groups to meet volunteers with possibly different preferences.

Due to low response rates to the survey, sampling through the survey did not provide a sufficiently large sample size. Therefore, on top of the two described sampling methods, a pure convenience sampling method was deployed, as Utrecht Cares approached their most active volunteers with the question to be interviewed. This was solely due to necessity of a larger sample.

## 3.3 Data collection & analysis

Initially, this research collected survey data combined with experimental data on made-decisions. Then, it collected qualitative, semi-structured interview data in order to gain indepth insights and catch nuances from the volunteer's decision. In order to connect research and everyday life (Bryman, 2011), complementary qualitative participant observation data were gathered to improve the insights, gained throughout the entirety of this research-process. All methods of data collection were executed over a period of nearly two months, starting halfway through April towards the beginning of June.

#### Survey

In order to examine how a volunteer approaches the decision for a specific activity, a survey was distributed. A survey is an appropriate method to research the decision-making

process, because it allows for generalization (Bryman, 2011). The survey was made online in Qualtrics and also distributed in this way.

The participants of the research received an email from Utrecht Cares with the request to participate in the research. The survey consisted of two parts. The first part asked general questions on volunteering based on the volunteerability framework (Meijs et al., 2006), with questions covering each of the three components. Questions were adapted from Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017). The research coincided with an independent study by Utrecht Cares. Therefore, with respect to convenience, five questions were included in this part of the survey that did not contribute to this research.

The second part of the survey entailed a small experiment. Respondents were shown the activities calendar of Utrecht Cares, with activities that are repeated on a weekly basis. With respect to convenience and realism, the activities were real calendar activities. However, it was not possible to generate an exact copy of the actual calendar for a longer time period, as well as maintain order and overview. Logically, including all activities would have reduced clarity of the experiment and consequently reduce validity and response rate. Therefore, a fictional calendar was created to maintain clarity, as well as ensure maximized variety in the activities. The activities were chosen in a way that all six differentiated target groups posed by Utrecht Cares are covered equally often. Each target group was represented by two different activities, resulting in twelve distinct activities. Each of these activities were organized twice per week, with the same duration, but at a different starting time. Accordingly, activities were randomly distributed along the course of the week, making sure morning, afternoon and evening sessions were equally represented. On top of that, ensuring the measurement of locational availability, locations of the activities differed slightly, making sure each activity was organized once close to the centre, and once further away from the centre. In order to account for the little information availability, activity names included the target group and were adjusted in such a way that the activity itself would be clear straight away. Activities were listed below each other in chronological order, with an indication of time, location and day (see appendix 2 for the visual shown in the survey).

After being shown the calendar, respondents were asked to select one activity that they would like to do and actually were able to do, as well as select one activity that they would definitely not like to do. When having decided for an activity, a list of options for the coming seven weeks would appear, and respondents had to pick a specific day in one of these seven weeks. During a pre-test, the respondent automatically reached for her agenda in order to see whether the activity could match her schedule. This proved that the question was well positioned, given that the aim was that respondents must actually have been able

to engage in the activity. On top of that, for both chosen activities, they were requested to elaborate on their decision in their own words, with a maximum of 500 characters. Importantly, respondents were not required to elaborate on their decision in their own words. However, to stimulate this and increase number of comments, a visual notification was shown when respondents did not do so. After submitting this page, respondents were requested to rate a list of statements relevant to the activity that they had indicated that they were willing and able to participate in. These statements were rated on a seven-point Likert scale.

The decision to ask for only one activity was established on the executed pre-tests of the survey. Nulty (2008) argues that surveys should be kept brief in order to increase response rates. Individuals during the pre-tests made similar comments. On top of that, the added value of information on a second activity was questionable, given comments made during the pre-tests. Comments were made that motives and ideas between the activities did not differ substantially. Similarly, the decision for a specific activity is quite intuitive, hence asking to choose for more activities was likely to only confuse respondents. Therefore, the added value of information on the second activity was likely to be lower than the added value of a higher sample. Accordingly, the researcher decided to increase response rates through a shorter survey.

A few other measures have been undertaken to make the survey as accessible as possible and in order to ensure high response and completion rates. First, the relevance of the research was pointed out from the beginning, as well as a language was used that would match the target group. Second, the software used, Qualtrics, has a generally user-friendly interface. It also allowed to add "logic" in the questioning, with questions incorporating specifically chosen answers in previous questions. This was especially useful for questions regarding the chosen activities, given that follow-up questions are asked about this. Third, several pre-tests were conducted, in which peers were asked to think out loud what was going through their mind while answering the questions.

From the gathered data, only complete data was used. In other words, from the 52 respondents, 41 respondents filled in the complete dataset. Accordingly, for the factor analyses, a sample of 41 respondents was established.

In order to ensure reliability of the data, questions were asked in random order. Grouping questions according to topic, thus per pillar of the volunteerability framework, might artificially inflate the Cronbach's Alpha (Goodhue & Loiacono, 2002). Subsequently, randomizing the questions results in "a small but systematic improvement in actual reliability" (Goodhue & Loicacono, 2002, p. 3464).

The survey data was divided in two separate parts. The first part entailed the questions considering their volunteerability for the specifically chosen activity. This data was analysed with the use of SPSS software. To begin, it was worth to look at and compare the mean values of the data with multiple conditions. This was done for the second item list, containing the 14 questions regarding activity specific volunteerability. Regardless of the low response rate, significant differences were found between several conditions. Only items with a statistically significant difference are discussed, for which a 5% confidence level is set. Independent t-tests were conducted to look for significant difference between questions under several conditions. This was done to see whether specific questions from any of the three factors were different given demographic data from the sample. Secondly, factor-analyses were performed to look for underlying factors. As the questions in the survey were asked based on the volunteerability framework, underlying factors were expected to entail questions for each element of the framework. The second part of the survey entails the decision for a specific activity and their comments on this decision. These comments were textually analysed, coded and grouped according to the framework.

#### **Interviews**

In order to gain understanding in the decision process for Utrecht Cares, volunteers were invited to participate in an interview. The interviews were of a semi-structured nature, with questions based on the literature, preliminary findings from the survey as well as gained intuition. These interviews were executed to gather more in-depth insights considering the volunteer decision and get "rich, detailed answers" (Bryman, 2011). Boeije (2010) argues that "[...] the goal of the interview is to see a slice of the social world from the informant's perspective and the interviewer is merely facilitating the process" (p. 63).

Interviews were semi-structured, for which a list of guiding questions and structure were adapted from Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017). This list can be found in Appendix 3. Open questions starting with "why" and "how" were formulated in order to stimulate storytelling in the interviewee. Questions in the beginning of the interview were of a broad nature in order not to steer the interviewee in a certain direction. During the interview, the researcher assessed whether prompts were required to be given when the end of the interview was nearing. Critical to conducting a successful interview is that the researcher uses understandable language, asks questions that are related to the introduced research and that the interviewee feels relevant to the research (Boeije, 2010). In total, 7 interviews were conducted when saturation was reached. Each interview was conducted in a face-to-face setting in order to be able to not miss out on any non-verbal messages, despite the fact that

telephone interviews are arguably useful for qualitative research (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004).

Interviews were recorded and transcribed, resulting in a large sum of data. These data were coded and analysed through NVIVO software. "The original coding convention" (Kenny & Fourie, 2015, p.1273) was applied to be able to draw conclusions and generate overarching themes and concepts. This process consists of two main phases, where initially "substantive coding" and thereafter "theoretical coding" is applied. In the first phase, both open and selective coding was applied (Kenny & Fourie, 2015; Holton, 2010) as this is a more inductive approach and accordingly leads to more creative findings (Boeije, 2010). A code tree of the first coding phase after theoretical division can be found in Appendix 3. Subsequently, in the second round of coding, theoretical concepts from the volunteerability framework were applied and used as a basis for the codes. As an additional benefit, through the many encounters with the data (interview, transcribing, coding phase one, coding phase two), the researcher became strongly familiar with the data.

#### **Participant Observation**

The third research method entailed participant observations during volunteer activities. In order to grasp a good understanding of the activities and the volunteering community, the researcher emerged in these activities. "Participation is considered essential in detecting meanings, feelings and experiences" (Boeije, 2010, p. 59). Participation in a wide variety of volunteer activities provided by Utrecht Cares therefore gave the researcher insight into the habits and behaviour of the volunteers. Meier and Stutzer (2008) stress the importance of field-research in the field of volunteering (p. 43), given the fact that many studies into volunteering entail self-reported data.

During the activities the researcher collected several types of information. First of all, the researcher engaged in informal conversations. On top of that, the researcher observed the behaviour of the volunteer in interaction with either the target group, organization members or co-volunteers. Over the course of the research, the researcher participated in a variety of activities and subsequently encountered many organizations facilitating the volunteer work. Correspondingly, the researcher also engaged in informal conversations with these organizations, as well as learned about personal feelings and experiences towards volunteering. Accordingly, the analysis of the researcher's own decision process contributed to the understanding of the researched sample.

Boeije (2010) argues that "every field worker has to log observations and take notes" (p.63). However, the researcher decided not to do so on the basis that already two sources of data were collected. Instead, engaging in the activities helped the researcher to get a better overall understanding of the motives behind the specifically made decision. In later phases of the research this additional knowledge and experience proved useful in engaging with the interviewees, as well as understanding the stories told. Similarly, in analysing the data of the interviewees, a clear familiarity had already been established within the researcher, which had an evident positive contribution to the analysis.

Below you find a schematic overview of the gathered data. For all three data collection methods the sample is given, as well as a brief description of gathered data.

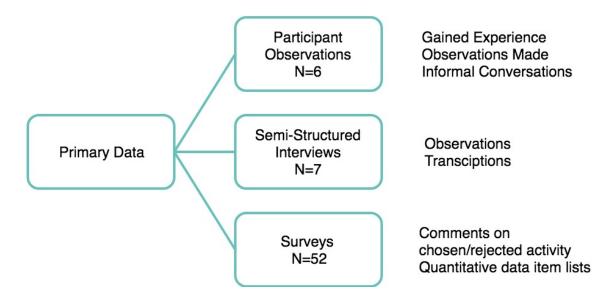


Figure 3 - Overview gathered data (Source: This research)

## 3.4 Research quality

## Reliability and validity of quantitative data

Reliability is concerned with the consistency of the measurements used in the research (Bryman, 2011), and consists of three different meanings: stability, internal reliability and interobserver consistency. Most applicable to this research is the internal reliability.

Internal reliability, or homogeneity, entails "[...] whether the indicators that make up the scale or index are consistent – in other words, whether respondents' scores on any one indicator tend to be related to their scores on the other indicators" (Bryman, 2011, p. 168). The most commonly used test to check for internal reliability is Cronbach's Alpha. The survey entailed different measures for each of the three elements of the volunteerability framework. Accordingly, internal reliability of these measures is tested with Cronbach's Alpha. There is no consistency of what is said to be an acceptable level of Alpha, whereas Bryman

(2011) suggests an Alpha of 0.8, other researchers work with lower Alphas (i.e., Heale & Twycoss, 2015).

Validity concerns whether a measure of a certain concept actually measures that concept (Bryman, 2011). Accordingly, three types of validity can be distinguished: content validity, construct validity and criterion validity (Heale & Twycross, 2015).

Based on the article by Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017), including all measures (which add up to over a 100 measures) of their proposed survey to ensure content validity was not realistic, given the unlikability of respondents completing the survey. Accordingly, measures were selected to maximize content validity and meanwhile maximizing likeliness of response.

Next, construct validity entails whether the measured construct actually reveals the construct in the respondent, and whether inferences can be drawn with regards to the respondent (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Accordingly, construct validity was ensured by creating homogeneous questions.

Finally, criterion validity details "the extent to which a research instrument is related to other instruments that measure the same variables" (Heale & Twycross, 2015, p.66). This can be measured by looking at correlations between measures, being either divergent when measuring a different construct, or convergent when measuring the same construct.

### Trustworthiness of qualitative data

In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data in this research the guiding principles by Shenton (2004) were adhered to as much as possible, as well as the knowledge obtained from Bryman (2011) and Boeije (2010). In his article, Shenton (2004) elaborates mostly on the credibility of a research, whereas transferability, dependability and confirmability are discussed to a smaller extent.

Credibility concerns whether the findings of a research resemble the true social world, and whether the research measures what is intended to be measured (Shenton, 2004). Bryman (2011) refers to credibility in mixed methods approaches that "employing both approaches enhances the integrity of findings" (p. 634). Shenton (2004) describes fourteen different measures that aim to ensure the credibility of a research project.

To begin, Shenton (2004) argues that to ensure credibility, one of the measures that need to be undertaken is that an early familiarity with *participant's culture* should be developed. Accordingly, the researcher has engaged in a variety of activities in order to grasp an understanding of the volunteering community, and especially the volunteering community

with Utrecht Cares. Over the course of the research, the researcher has engaged in six activities.

Another proposed measure entails *triangulation*. This research has adopted three distinct research methodologies: A survey, interviews, and participant observations. These methodologies were adopted in order to gain different insights and assure that the findings complement each other, as well as confirm the findings. Also, the variety in methodologies was used in order to grasp a good understanding of the volunteering community and see the answer to the research question from multiple perspectives.

Frequent *debriefing sessions* are suggested to ensure credibility. Throughout the entire research process, the researcher had on average two meetings per month. One of these meetings with thesis coach Lucas Meijs, and the other with Utrecht Cares' officers Margriet Ebbink and Jord Huffels. On top of that, other parties that were asked for advice are the co-reader of this thesis, Alexander Maas, as well as impact measurement company Sinzer. During the entirety of the research project, feedback was provided by other acquaintances with academic backgrounds from both within and outside the same master's programme, and from both Erasmus University Rotterdam and Utrecht University. This is also in line with another measure proposed by Shenton (2004), entailing *peer scrutiny*.

Finally, the researcher ensured *honesty* in its respondents due to the way some of the interviewees were sampled. By engaging in volunteering activities, and hence getting to know the respondents a little bit before the interview, a sense of trust was created. When at the end of the activity, the individual was asked to participate in the research, the researcher stated that s/he was allowed to refuse. On top of that, the independent status of the interviewer was established at the beginning of the interview, in order to ensure respondents freedom of speech with statements regarding the organization.

Transferability, or external validity, concerns whether the results from the research can be applied to different contexts (Bryman, 2011). Due to the fact that qualitative findings are generally focused on a smaller group with specific characteristics, generalizability and transferability are empirical issues. Transferability can be ensured when the researcher provides a thick description, sufficient contextual information and the boundaries of the research.

"Thick description of one's sample would entail describing fully the participants of the study without compromising anonymity" (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 546). A rich account of the details of the culture under scrutiny should be given (Bryman, 2011). This supports readers to assess whether the research findings are indeed transferable. Similarly, another way to sup-

port this assessment the researcher should provide sufficient contextual information about the research (Shenton, 2004). Finally, the boundaries of the research should be defined, for which Shenton (2004, p. 70) suggests providing information on several issues, like "time period", "employed data collection methods", "number and length of data collection".

Dependability is the qualitative counterpart of the quantitative "reliability" (Bryman, 2011). Shenton (2004) defines dependability as "if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained" (p. 71). However, due to the changing nature of the studied phenomena, exact reproducibility of results is problematic. Nevertheless, the researcher should provide an extensive account of methods used, enabling another researcher to repeat the study. The research text should cover topics that explain the research design and implementation, the operational detail of the gathering of data as well as reflective appraisal of the project (Shenton, 2004). It is suggested that researchers take on an auditing approach, entailing complete and thorough documentation of every phase of the research (Bryman, 2011).

Whether a researcher has acted in *good faith* and has attempted to obtain objective results, entails *confirmability* (Bryman, 2011). The researcher should not have allowed personal values to influence the way the research was conducted. Shenton (2004) argues that it is important that the research reflects the true ideas of the respondents and participants, and logically not the preferences of the researcher. Again, a thorough methodological description allows the reader to determine whether the research was conducted objectively. A "reflective commentary" should explain methodological decisions made as well as theories that do not show up in the results of the research.

On top of the four criteria of trustworthiness, Schwandt, Lincoln, and Guba (2007) describe criteria of authenticity. These criteria are: Fairness (does it fairly represent the viewpoints of the members of the social setting?), ontological authenticity (does it help members to better understand their social milieu?), educative authenticity (do members appreciation of other members increase), catalytic authenticity (the facilitation and stimulation of action) and tactical authenticity (whether members are empowered to take action) (Schwandt, Lincoln & Guba, 2007). These criteria were taken into account as additional guidelines throughout the conducting of the research.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations

The general principle of beneficence is translated into practical terms to three different elements: "informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and anonymity" (Boeije, 2010, p.

45). This research took all three elements into account. First of all, participants were able to decide to participate or not, in both the interviews as well as participant observation method. Secondly, this research ensured the privacy of the information and did not disclose this information to others. Thirdly, the data was handled carefully, and interviewees were anonymized. Similarly, Bryman (2011) divides ethical principles into four distinct categories: Harm to participants, lack of confirmed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception (Bryman, 2011). Both books form the basis for the ethical considerations in this research.

A direct measure that was taken in order to ensure consent and willingness to participate in this research was a consent form for the interview. Interviewees were asked to sign an informed consent form, which can be found in Appendix 5. Interviewees were told that any questions considering this consent, as well as privacy issues, were allowed to be addressed at any time during the interview as well as in later phases of the research.

### 3.6 Methodological limitations

Due to practicalities, some methodological limitations need to be touched upon before talking about the results. First of all, the calendar in the survey was not perfect in the sense that it did not depict a perfect variety of possibilities. Given the wide variety of activities Utrecht Cares offers, with different time frames and different target groups, the experiment in the survey would have become unnecessarily complex. Therefore, a proxy has been made that shows the most frequently organized activities, spread out over the week. Follow-up research could entail sending a survey after actual subscription for an activity, accordingly staying "closer" to the data and actual reality.

On top of that, thanks to the fact that Utrecht Cares wanted to do a research, there was the opportunity to send the survey to their entire database. This chance could not be missed out on. However, as a consequence, the survey might be completed by inactive volunteers who are less relevant, or maybe individuals that have never volunteered. This is controlled for as much as possible, however, it entails self-reported volunteering and accordingly might be slightly flawed.

Similarly, questions were adapted from Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) and aimed to cover the topic of volunteerability. Yet, this scale was not officially tested for reliability before distribution. Consequently, the scale is not known to be reliable or not.

# Results

"I am not religious. People who are not religious can struggle with the meaning of life, but I absolutely do not have that. I have a goal in life that gives life meaning, and that is that I make the world a better place."

The results and findings of the executed data collection methods are presented below. Results are discussed with a distinction made between quantitative data and qualitative data, which later are integrated to discuss the decision process of volunteers.

### 4.1 Quantitative data

Despite a large number of registered volunteers, response rates were low (more on this in the discussion), resulting in a total sample of 52 volunteers as respondents for the survey. The two parts of the survey are discussed separately. The statistical analyses from the item lists are described under this header, while the textual part of the survey is discussed in chapter 4.2. Descriptive statistics of the variables can be found in Appendix 6.

From these descriptive statistics we can conclude that on average, volunteers have scored highest on capability ( $\overline{x}$ =4.84) and lowest on willingness ( $\overline{x}$ =4.21), whereas the mean for availability was in the middle ( $\overline{x}$ =4.65). The item with the highest score was "entails some-

thing I think I can do well" ( $\overline{x}$ =5.35), measuring capability and more specifically self-efficacy. The item with the lowest score was "takes away my daily sorrows" ( $\overline{x}$ =3.05), measuring willingness, and more specifically protective motivations to volunteer.

#### **Comparing Means**

To begin, differences between items were assessed, followed by differences between the pillars from the volunteerability framework. Mean values for each of the conditions as well as results from the independent t-tests can be found respectively in Appendix 7 and 8.

Table 3 describes the different conditions set for the analyses. Each condition divides the sample in two groups. Thresholds were set in order to ensure the most equal division of the sample, resulting in two parts that are more or less equal. For two conditions this resulted in a division with sub-sample sizes far below twenty. As a consequence, reliability of results for these findings is questionable (Dhand & Khatkar, 2014), yet these items were still touched upon briefly.

Condition	Group <sup>1</sup>	Group <sup>2</sup>	N¹	N <sup>2</sup>
Hours spend on work/school	32 hours or more	31 hours or less	23	18
Level of education	University	Other education level	31	10
Age level	34 or younger	35 or older	24	17
Previous volunteering	No	Yes	11	30
Frequency 2017	1 or less	2 or more	21	20
General Willingness	>=4.90	<4.90	20	21
General Capability	>=5.10	<5.10	21	20

Table 3 - Overview conditions mean values

#### Items

The first condition was set given their response to the survey item about "hours spend per week on work/school". This resulted in two items being statistically different. First, respondents who work 32 hours or more (n=23) scored higher on the item "fits my agenda well" ( $\overline{x}$ =5.61, SE=0.20) than those who work 31 hours or less (n=18,  $\overline{x}$  =4.61, SE=0.44). This difference was significant (p=0.033), with a medium sized effect (d=0.67). This indicated that volunteers who have relatively less time available tend to look more whether the activity fits their agenda. The second item with a statistically significant difference entailed "is easi-

ly combined with other daily activities". The mean value for the respondents who works 32 hours or more ( $\bar{x}$  =5.57, SE=0.16) was higher than for the respondents who work 31 hours or less ( $\bar{x}$  =4.61, SE=0.33). This difference was significant on a 1% level (p=0.008), with a large effect (d=0.86). Both measures indicated that the role of availability is more important for people who spend more time on work/school compared.

The second condition detailed the level of education. On average, volunteers with a university background (n=30) perceived an activity as less challenging ( $\bar{x}$  =4.53, SE=0.19) than volunteers without a university background (n=10,  $\bar{x}$  =5.4, SE=0.31). This difference was significant on a 5% level, with a large effect (d=0.87). This item, measuring capability, shows that the university sample chooses activities not for its challenge, which might stem from their perceived self-efficacy or higher level of education.

The third condition was set at the age level, with the group divided across the mean value of 35. Two items proved to be significantly different. First, volunteers aged below 35 (n=24) attributed a higher value on "allows me to develop myself" ( $\overline{x}$  =5, SE=0.23) than volunteers aged 35 or above (n=17,  $\overline{x}$ =4.18, SE=0.36). The effect was medium sized (d=0.62). The other item, on the boundary of significance (p=0.051), entailed "is easy to do". On this item, volunteers aged below 35 scored on average higher ( $\overline{x}$  =4.96, SE=0.20) than volunteers aged 35 or above ( $\overline{x}$  =4.24, SE=0.32). Accordingly, Cohen's d equalled 0.63, representing a medium effect.

The fourth condition detailed whether a volunteer has volunteered previously to Utrecht Cares. On average, the volunteers who indicated they had previous volunteering experience (n=30) scored lower on "is easy to do" ( $\overline{x}$  =4.43, SE=0.20) than volunteers without previous volunteering experience (n=11,  $\overline{x}$  =5.27, SE=0.38). This effect was medium (d=0.71).

The fifth condition was set at the frequency of times a volunteer had engaged in a volunteering activity in 2017. The mean value for the entire sample equalled 5.32 volunteering activities (when controlled for two extremes, the mean value was 3.09), yet due to a high standard deviation (s=12.7) the threshold was set at 2 or more. For the item "is easily combined with other daily activities", volunteers who volunteered more than once in 2017 (n=20) scored on average higher ( $\overline{x}$  =5.55, SE=0.17) than volunteers who volunteered once or not at all (n=21,  $\overline{x}$  =4.76, SE=0.3). It represented a medium-sized effect (d=0.71)

The sixth condition was set at the level of general willingness, obtained from the first item list. The mean value for the sample equalled 4.9, which was consequently used as the threshold. Accordingly, people with an average willingness higher than 4.9 scored higher

on four items in the second item list. These items were: "allows me to develop myself" ( $\overline{x}$  =5.2, SE=0.225); "makes me a better human" ( $\overline{x}$  =5.15, SE=0.209); "helps me deal with different types of people" ( $\mu$ =5.5, SE=0.246); and "makes me think about my career" ( $\overline{x}$  =4.05, SE=2.62). For these items, effect sizes were respectively d=0.87, d=1.29, d=0.81. Slightly altering this condition, using a measure of general willingness with a higher Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ( $\alpha$ =.528 opposed to  $\alpha$ =.434) by deleting one item resulted in one extra item that was significantly different. This item entailed "is challenging" and was higher for people with a higher general level of capability ( $\mu$ =5.11, SE=.228) compared to people with a lower general level of capability ( $\overline{x}$  =4.43, SE=0.235). This effect was strong (d=0.85).

The final condition was set at the level of general capability, again obtained from the first item list. The mean value for the sample equalled 5.03, for which a threshold was set at 5.1 to obtain two equally divided sample sizes. Comparing the mean values resulted in two items that are significantly different, for which the group with a higher average capability scored higher. These items are "fits my agenda well" ( $\overline{x}$  =5.67, SE=0.261) and "deals with a target group I feel attracted to" ( $\overline{x}$  =5.71, SE=0.156). This difference represented a medium-sized effect (d=0.71).

#### **Pillars**

Aside assessing the differences for each single item, differences for combined pillars were also assessed. Given the relatively low amount of significant differences per item, even fewer differences were expected with respect for the pillars. Yet, one pillar proved statistically different. Volunteers aged below 35 scored on average higher ( $\overline{x}$  =5.04, SE=0.13) for the capability pillar, than volunteers aged 35 or above ( $\overline{x}$  =4.57, SE=0.21).

#### **Implications**

Despite the fact that the response rate for the survey was low, differences between conditions were still found. In other words, some items on the list must be significantly different. Interestingly, throughout all the items no significant differences between mean values for different demographic conditions with respect to items that measured the willingness are found. This indicates that regardless of age, education, availability, previous volunteering experiences and the number of times volunteered in the previous year, that willingness among all groups is not significantly different. In other words, all volunteers have a similar degree of willingness to volunteer. Consequently, this implies that to successfully attract or retain volunteers, availability and capability issues should be addressed relatively more specific than willingness issues.

Condition	Item	Value	Mean		
	Availability - Fits my agenda well				
I la coma la construcción de c	Availability - Fits my agenda well	>32 hours	5.61		
Hours busy with work	Availability Is agaily combined with my other daily activities	<32 hours	4.61		
	Availability - Is easily combined with my other daily activities	>32 hours	5.57		
Linivaraity			5.4		
University	Capability - Is challenging	Yes	4.53		
	Canability la secuta de	<35	4.96		
	Capability - Is easy to do	35 or more	4.24		
A = 0	Canability Allows made develop myself	<35	5		
Age	Capability - Allows me to develop myself	35 or more	4.18		
	On all like Dillan	<35	5.04		
	Capability - Pillar	35 or more	4.57		
Volunteer work before	Open als like a language de	Yes	4.43		
Utrecht Cares	Capability - Is easy to do	No	5.27		
T	A college little of the control of t	>2	4.76		
Two activities or more	Availability - Is easily combined with my other daily activities	2 or more	5.55		
	One shill the Allege was to develop govern	>=4.9	5.2		
	Capability - Allows me to develop myself	<4.9	4.14		
	NACILI:	>=4.9	5.15		
O LANGUE	Willingness - Makes me a better human	<4.9	3.86		
General Willingness	NACH:	>=4.9	5.5		
	Willingness - Helps me deal with different types of people	<4.9	4.48		
	VA/III in the control of the control	>=4.9	4.05		
	Willingness - Makes me think about my career	<4.9	2.62		
	Aveilebility Fite and a seed over U	>= 5.10	5.67		
0	Availability - Fits my agenda well	< 5.10	4.65		
General Capability	Williams Deale with a terret many 15 1 11 11 11	>= 5.10	5.71		
	Willingness - Deals with a target group I feel attracted to	< 5.10	4.9		

Table 4 – Overview statistically significant different items and mean values per condition

#### **Factor Analyses**

Factor analyses were performed in order to analyse whether the underlying factors match the researched volunteerability framework. A principal component analysis was conducted on the 14 items with varimax rotation. This method of orthogonal rotation was used to "maximize the dispersion of loadings within factors" (Field, 2013, p.681), giving results that are more interpretable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure indicated a mediocre level of sampling adequacy, KMO=0.64. All but one KMO values for individual items were greater than the acceptable threshold of 0.5 (Field, 2013). The factor analysis resulted in five factors with an eigenvalue exceeding Kaiser's criterion of 1 (Field, 2013). Appendix 9 shows

the factor loadings after rotation for this analysis and in Appendix 10 the correlation matrix can be found. A factor loadings threshold of 0,5 was used to select items for each factor. Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , as the reliability check, shows that the first two discovered factors have an  $\alpha$  exceeding .7, which is an acceptable threshold value for reliability (Field, 2013). The first factor ( $\alpha$ =.806) includes most of the items with respect to measuring "capability", however, the results reveal that the factor also includes three items that measure "willingness". The second factor ( $\alpha$ =.777) includes three of the four items that measure "availability", however, also includes another item that measures "willingness". The Cronbach's alpha of this specific factor could be increased when deleting the item measuring willingness, raising the  $\alpha$  to .806. Thanks to this improved  $\alpha$  and the better suitability with literature, this factor is discussed. The factors and the loadings are presented in table 5.

The items that cluster on the first factor are three items measuring "willingness" and three items measuring "capability" ( $\overline{x}$  =4.51, SD=0.96), which is subsequently not in line with literature (see table 5 for the factor loadings). Independent t-tests were performed, with the same conditions set as displayed in table 3. This resulted in a statistically significant difference only for the general willingness component. Volunteers with a general willingness higher than 4.9 scored higher on this factor ( $\overline{x}$  =4.95, SE=0.18) than volunteers with a general willingness lower than 4.9 ( $\overline{x}$  =4.07, SE=0.20). This, however, is not surprising, given that measures from the first item list are similar to questions from the second item list. In other words, volunteers who scored high on general willingness in the first item list are likely to score high on questions measuring willingness in the second item list.

Accordingly, the only factor in line with literature is the second discovered factor measuring availability ( $\overline{x}$  =4.93, SD=1.14). Again, independent t-tests were performed to look at whether differences existed within the sample with respect to this factor. This resulted in no statistically significant differences between subgroups, except for the "general capability" condition. People with an average capability higher than 5.1 scored higher on the availability factor ( $\overline{x}$  =5.27, SE=0.20) compared to volunteers with an average capability lower than 5.1 ( $\overline{x}$  =4.57, SE=0.28). In other words, people who perceive themselves more capable seem to have higher levels of availability.

Items	1	2
Availability - Fits my agenda well	-	0,837
Availability - Is easy to reach location wise	-	0,625
Availability - Is easily combined with my other daily activities	-	0,903
Capability - Is challenging	0,556	-
Capability - Entails something I think I can do well	0,572	-
Capability - Allows me to develop myself	0,875	-
Willingness - Develops and enriches my social network	0,702	-
Willingness - Helps me deal with different types of people	0,647	0,536*
Willingness - Makes me think about my career	0,736	-
Eigenvalues	4.51	2.30
% of variance	32.21	16.25
Cronbach's	0,806	0,777/0,806*

<sup>\*</sup>when item is deleted, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  increases.

Table 5 – Factor loadings reliable factors

#### Conclusion

From the quantitative data we see that volunteers value capability and availability higher than willingness, given their mean values in the survey. Similarly, whereas various items measuring availability and capability significantly differed among demographic conditions, no differences for items measuring willingness were found. Accordingly, this implies that levels of willingness are relatively similar irrespective of demographic differences. Similarly, from the factor analyses we can conclude that difference between perceived factors by respondents did not prove to have significant differences across different demographic conditions.

### 4.2 Qualitative data

Below the results from the qualitative part of the survey and the interviews can be found.

#### Qualitative data from survey

Respondents were asked to pick an activity in a specific time slot that they want to do, and on the contrary pick an activity in a specific time slot that they do not want to do. For the sake of simplicity, these activities are now respectively referred to as 'chosen activity' and 'rejected activity'. Accordingly, respondents were asked to comment on their decision. Comments describing the decision why they did want to participate or not in a specific acti-

vity were coded according to the volunteer activity. This gave the following results with respect to number of arguments grouped per pillar of the volunteerability framework:

	Availability	Willingness	Capability
Chosen activity	20	21	3
Rejected activity	12	10	18

Table 6 - Frequency pillar mentions in survey

#### Chosen activity

Comments with respect to the decision for a chosen activity were highly dominated by comments of availability and willingness. Of the 32 comments made, only one respondent mentioned a comment that did not match with availability or willingness, and therefore solely matched with capability.

On the one side, considering availability, 9 of the 20 comments indicated that they decided for this activity as it is "easy to combine with other daily activities", of which "other daily activities" were often specified to work or school. Another closely related and regularly returning response entailed statements similar to "fits my schedule", as 4 of the 20 matched this. Other comments with respect to their availability entailed comments similar to "convenient time", "preference for morning" and "from all activities this one was most fitting".

On the other side, comments considering the willingness to volunteer were highly specified to explanations regarding specific target groups or nature of the activity. 7 of the 21 respondents indicated that teaching and assisting to read was valued important. In total, 13 mentions of 'leuk' were found in the comments, indicating that personal preference is important in the decision for a specific activity.

Interestingly, when addressing whether availability or willingness plays a more important role in the decision process, one respondent wrote "Bingo with elderly is nicer [...] but the time of table tennis fits better". A clear priority was given to availability compared to willingness, indicating that when both are considered, availability might rule over willingness with respect to the made decision.

#### Rejected activity

Comments with respect to the rejected activity were mostly dominated by comments addressing personal (in)capability. However, there was not an as significantly clear pattern compared to the preferred activity when we look at the two other pillars.

Most comments with regards to capability entailed self-perceived barriers like "I consider myself not capable of doing this", and "physically too difficult". 4 of 18 comments indicated to have doubts with respect to their added value for the specific activity. A same number of comments mentioned that the activity would be "too scary". Some other indicated that they were looking for a challenge or contrarily missed a challenge in the specific activity, while others were looking for variety with respect to their daily work.

Comments on availability mentioned that the specific activity was not an option due to a certain time barrier. Of the 12 comments, 5 mentioned this was the case due to work/study ("need to work", "working hours"). Also, frequently mentioned was the starting time of the activity (3 out of 12), because some "do not want to work in the evening", or "too late in the day". Finally, some respondents indicated that specific days were no options, because "Sunday/weekend is my time off". This was the case for 3 of the 12 respondents.

Comments on willingness to engage in a specific activity were focused around the target group and what needed to be done during the activity itself. For 5 out of 10 comments on willingness focused on a low appeal to the specific target group, while on the other side 4 out of 10 mentioned a low appeal to the specific activity.

#### **Semi-Structured Interviews**

Throughout the interviews, interviewees have told stories and provided information regarding their decision process and volunteering experiences. The interviews were designed in a way that interviewees were given time to address this framework on an unprompted basis. An overview of all the interviews with additional, anonymized information is provided in appendix 11.

The personal stories and conversations about decision processes and volunteer experiences proved to have overarching themes. These themes were categorized according to the framework, grouping the most vital components of each pillar. This resulted in a framework as presented in figure 4, for which each of the specified dimensions is discussed separately in the remaining of this chapter.

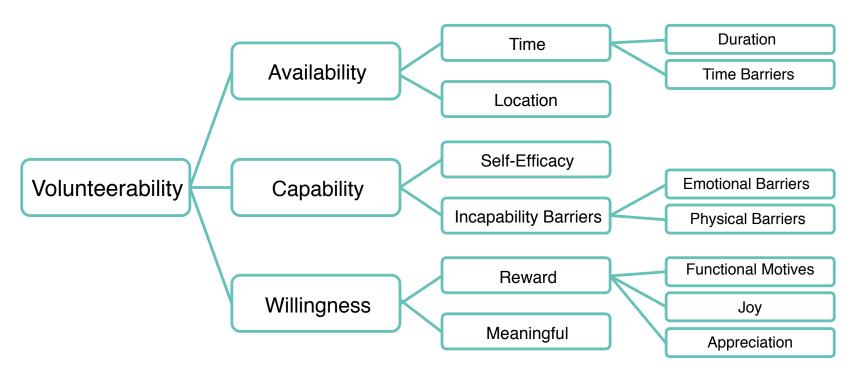


Figure 4: Overview volunteerability

#### Availability – Time

Volunteering is an activity that requires an individual to devote time towards an activity with no direct benefits to him or herself. As volunteering, especially through Utrecht Cares, usually is done besides other daily activities like work or study, finding a timeslot in the personal agenda is highly relevant. All respondents (R1-R7) explained that in deciding for a specific activity they considered aspects related to time. Having time available is seen as a primary condition to engage in a volunteer activity (R1-R3, R5-R7), someone even calling it a "point of departure" (R3). The same interviewee stated that "It depends on what else I need to do. That is my first priority. My agenda is of course directive, as I am not going to reschedule other activities. It needs to fit in" (R3).

When interviewees were asked about the duration of an activity, mixed responses were given. Whereas some respondents indicated not to care about the duration of the activity as long as there was a feeling of added value (R1,R3,R4,R6), others indicated limits to the time they were willing to invest (R2,R5-R7). "If it fits my agenda, I do not care if it lasts an hour, five or the entire day, as long as it fits" (R2).

Some interviewees specified clear preferences for specific times in the day that they were willing or unwilling to engage in a volunteering activity (R3-R5, R7). Similarly, some also stated specific days of the weeks that they were willing or unwilling to engage in an activity (R3,R5).

#### Availability – Location

The question "where" an activity takes place is a question that needs answering before able to decide to engage in a volunteering activity. Availability also entails whether a specific activity is easily reachable, therefore location of the activity plays a definite role in the decision process. Interviewees did not necessarily consider location of vital importance in their decision process. Even if the activity was located far out, some indicated that they were willing to travel far out to do an activity if they actually really liked it (R5, R6). In deciding for an activity, however, people indicated that having the activity "around the corner" was slightly favourable (R4,R6,R7).

#### Capability – Self-Efficacy

Volunteers engage in activities that frequently require different skills and knowledge than they are used to in their daily life. To what extent a volunteer perceives him/herself capable of successfully fulfilling the activity is coined the term self-efficacy. A feeling of "no-one was able to do that as well as I was" (R2) lowers barriers when engaging in a volunteering activity. A feeling of confidence considering participation in the activity was expressed by most interviewees. (R2-R4, R6, R7). "I would not do anything that I think I cannot do, but then, I think I can do quite a lot, so that is the other side." (R3).

Despite the fact that Utrecht Cares generally does not offer highly challenging activities, all but two respondents talked about past or hypothetical experiences with Utrecht Cares in which they indicated that they would not be able to do it due to personally perceived lacks in skills or knowledge (R2-R6). One interviewee would "serve off activities of which I think I cannot do it" (R3), while another would not go to an activity "because I cannot add anything there" (R6).

#### Capability – Incapability Barriers

Despite the easy-to-do activities for Utrecht Cares, interviewees mentioned various reasons why they are or perceived themselves as incapable.

First of all, four interviewees mentioned that to a certain extent they experienced emotional barriers towards anticipated experiences during the volunteering (R2, R3, R5, R7). Activities with homeless people are generally perceived as emotionally challenging, and some of the interviewees indicated they were unwilling to engage in these activities, as they perceived it should not become "too sad" (R5). Statements similar to "it would not make me

happy", "it should not look like work", "I prefer to stay away from the real problems" were made with a certain frequency throughout the interviews.

Secondly, two interviewees indicated physical barriers towards engaging in volunteer work. Whereas one stated to have limits on her levels of energy and other health problems (R2), another said to avoid physical work due to an insufficient physical fitness (R3).

Thirdly, and unsurprisingly, one volunteer indicated to encounter a language barrier (R1). The interviewee felt not comfortable to engage in a lot of activities offered by Utrecht Cares. Given that "volunteering sometimes just entails chatting with the target group" (R7), insufficient language skills are likely to be perceived as a barrier to engage in certain activities.

#### Willingness – Rewarding Experience

Volunteers' willingness to engage in an activity largely stems from the individual's perception whether the volunteering was a rewarding experience. This reward arises as a consequence of the engagement and results in a benefit, one way or the other, to the individual. All interviewees indicated unprompted certain perceived rewarding experiences. These rewards can be categorized in three groups, with the first group being rewards similar to the functional motives as described Clary et al. (1998). The second group is a feeling of joy when engaged in certain activities, while the third group entails external rewards in the form of appreciation.

Functional motivations to volunteer are in essence motivations aimed at personal benefit, and all interviewees were told and asked about them. The most frequently mentioned functional motivations were values and understanding, which is in line with previous research (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Phillips & Phillips, 2010; Gage III & Thapa, 2012). Motivations of understanding were found in words like "increasing bubble", "discover other 'islands'", "broaden perspective", "see what happens there" (R1,R3,R5-R7). Aside the broadening of perspective, volunteers also frequently mentioned to have a certain set of values (R1-R4,R7): "if you find it important that something happens, then I think you should make sure that it happens" (R4). The other four functional motives seemed to be less generic and more dependent on individual life situations. However, clearly all six functional motivations were stated more than once by different people. Examples for career, social, enhancement and protective motivation statements are respectively: One volunteer indicated to engage in an activity to see whether a certain field of volunteering would be an option for her career path (R7); another indicated enjoying being "close to the people", and being able to

talk with them (R1); another mentioned "to give life meaning it is essential [...] that I volunteer" (R2); and another mentioned the importance of "rolling up your sleeves", i.e. to get out of the dull office job (R3).

Next to the abundant mentioning of functional motivations as a reason to volunteer, all interviewees addressed the significance of joy and enjoyability for a certain activity. The word "leuk", or it's English equivalent "nice" has been mentioned 206 times throughout the seven interviews, controlled for statements similar to "minder leuk/less nice". The significant importance that an activity is perceived as enjoyable was explicitly mentioned verbally by most respondents, with statements similar to "I find it important that I enjoy the volunteer work" (R2,R4-R7). Another notable finding was the implicitly showed joy experienced through volunteering. Telling about their volunteer experiences translated in all cases into glimmering eyes, laughs and smiles, clearly saying more than the spoken words.

To a far lesser extent, however still covered by reward, is external rewarding. External rewarding was usually mentioned in the form of appreciation. Some interviewees indicated that they found it valuable that explicit compliments were made (R2,R4,R6) whereas others also mentioned to notice and value appreciation in the implicit behaviour of others (R2-R5): "it is nice that you get the feeling that people are happy you are there" (R4). One interviewee mentioned that a small monetary reward was "welcome" (R2).

#### Willingness – Meaningful Experience

Aside the desire for having a rewarding experience, all interviewees indicated that the experience needed to be meaningful. This can be further defined with feelings of usefulness and the perception of having an added value. In a sense, a meaningful experience is strongly linked to the abovementioned rewarding experience, given that rewards described above are all attributed to the volunteer, and not necessarily rewards for the target group.

Along these lines, interviewees indicated the significance of having the feeling of being of added value to the organisation or target group (R1,R3,R4,R6,R7). "To me it is important to have the feeling that you add something" (R4). Doubts with respect to the added value in their past experiences were frequently expressed by interviewees (R1,R3,R4,R6,R7). For one of the interviewees it was the primary reason for the decision to stop, "because I felt I did not add enough" (R3), whereas others asked questions about what the real impact of the volunteer work is (R7).

Another noteworthy remark is the extent to which volunteers seem to have personal preferences. Throughout the interviews, it became evident that individuals have personal preferences for certain characteristics of a specific activity. Whereas one is challenge-seeking, another might be challenge-avoiding; one might be looking for an activity closely related to his/her working experiences, while the other might just be looking for variety; one looks for new experiences, but another might prefer playing "safe" and return to the same activity. Similarly, the reason why individuals once started to volunteer at one point in their lives, as well as other personal motivations and drivers to volunteer were all personal. All these examples prove the unique nature of the volunteer. Each volunteer has a personal life-story that for each is the underlying foundation to volunteer.

# 4.3 Integration quantitative and qualitative data

When we integrate both quantitative and qualitative data sources we are able to draw inferences for the decision process regarding the decision to volunteer. First of all, a nuance can be created in the volunteerability framework, with respect to the hierarchy and sequence of the decision making. Secondly, there is an evident difference between the initial decision to volunteer and the decision to return to a certain activity. Finally, evidence is presented on whether the theory of the "match-making" behaviour of the volunteerability framework is actually deployed by volunteers.

#### Sequential structure

First of all, a nuance in the framework regarding the decision process can be created. Both sources of qualitative data prove that there is a certain sequence in which the decision is made, a sequence that prioritizes one pillar over the other. In the interviews, all interviewees indicated to look at their schedule and agenda first when deciding for an activity. Three of the interviewees even called it a "condition" to be able to volunteer (R2,R3,R6), and one clearly indicated that she values "availability higher as a filter criterion than whether she likes the activity" (R3). Similarly, the comments in the survey included plenty comments regarding availability. Again, this indicates that availability is perceived relatively more important than willingness and capability when deciding for a specific activity to engage in.

Whereas establishing and defining this first step in the decision process was relatively straightforward, given the abundant evidence of its significance, defining the second step

in the decision process seemed to be less generic. The roles of willingness and capability in the decision process have not proven to be as universal as the role of availability. Despite that, two possible theories arose.

The first of these two theories defined capability as another filter for deciding to engage in a specific activity or not. Accordingly, this theory is visualized in figure 5. Interviewees clearly indicated several physical (R2,R3) and emotional barriers (R2,R3,R5,R7) in deciding to volunteer: "Time and being fit are important preconditions" (R2). Simultaneously, interviewees who did not mention any of these capability barriers generally perceived themselves well-capable of engaging in any activity. For these interviewees, capability somehow seemed not to be playing a significant role. Consequently, capability only seemed to play a significant role when an interviewee perceives him/herself as uncapable. This, however, would therefore still allow capability to be a filter, given that time is significant for everyone, while capability is not, in which case it would not affect the chosen activity. Considering the comparison of the means in chapter 4.1, we saw that willingness is not statistically different for different conditions. This supports the argument that capability can be seen as a filtering mechanism, given the equal levels of willingness amongst all volunteers.

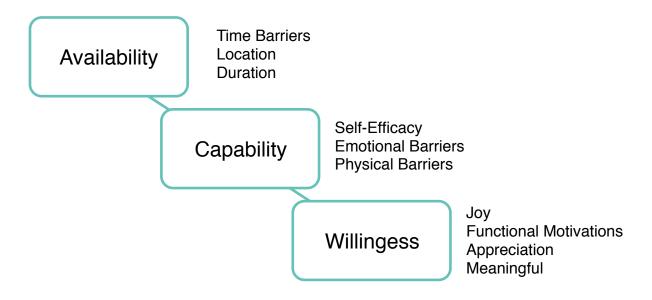


Figure 5: Theory I – Filtering pillars

Secondly, to some extent similar, yet still substantially different, the qualitative data from the survey indicates that capability plays a role when rejecting an activity, while willingness plays a significant role when deciding for an activity. In other words, given we have a sufficient availability and amount of time, capability explains the "no" and rejection of a certain activity, while willingness explains the "yes" and decision for an activity. A visual representation of this theory is given in figure 6. From the survey, capability arguments were dominant in explaining why they rejected an activity, whereas for the chosen activity, arguments on willingness were much more dominating. These findings are to some extent also sup-

ported by the findings in the interviews. It entails mere logical reasoning to understand that if someone is incapable of engaging in a certain activity, this individual is unlikely to choose this activity. Similarly, when someone is motivated and likes a certain activity, this individual is likely to choose this activity.

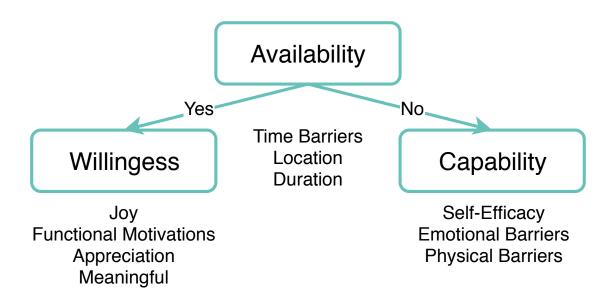


Figure 6: Theory II – Decision bound pillars

Whichever of these two theories is most fitting is hard to tell given the collected evidence. More data should be collected through both methods to be able to draw more definite conclusions. Both theories can be seen as a starting point for further research.

#### Initial and returning decisions

Regarding this research, it became evident that volunteers merely make two distinct decisions: the initial decision to go to an activity, and the decision to return to an activity. Despite the fact that availability still remains a primary condition for both decisions, the volunteerability framework can be further specified and nuanced, especially considering the returning decision.

To begin, the sequential structure described above applies very well to the initial decision process. Another confirmation of the primary role of availability for their volunteering decision entails that some interviewees indicated that for their initial decision they might have chosen "randomly" (R3,R4,R6), for the reason that the activity simply matched their personal schedule and agenda. In other words, when they desired to do something "useful for the world" (R3), they simply looked at their availability. Furthermore, location, self-efficacy, emotional and physical barriers and willingness play the role as described above.

However, for the returning decision, the volunteer takes into account the experience it gained through the previous time he/she engaged in the activity. The interviews proved that a positive experience means that the experience is both "rewarding" and "meaning-

ful". Several interviewees indicated unwilling to return to an activity, due to the perception that they had a low added value (R3,R4,R6,R7), i.e. it was not meaningful. On top of that, volunteers who did return to specific activities indicated a certain extent of joy and/or appreciation (R2,R4,R6,R7). With respect to availability, one interviewee indicated that they would be willing to "take into account future activities" in planning their personal schedule (R3), thus increasing their availability, as long as the activity was perceived joyful. This indicates the existence of looped feedback with rewarding and meaningful experiences reinforcing the volunteerability, whereas negative experiences diminish the volunteerability.

#### Match-making Behaviour

The volunteerability framework states that a match is made between the volunteer and the volunteering organization. Through the interviews, an assessment was made whether the volunteer actually converts this theoretical match-making behaviour into practical match-making behaviour. Some explicitly mentioned that they made a "match" between their capabilities and the activity (R1,R2). Both stated that they match their skills and capabilities with the activities that they decide to do, as "[I] match with my capacity to help"(R1) and "I really look at whether it fits my capacities and interest" (R2). Most of the others made a "fit" with their schedule (R1,R3,R5-R7): "I just look whether it fits my schedule" (R7).

Next to the explicit mentions of "fit" and "match", volunteers used words that implicitly confirm that a certain activity is matched to the individual. Examples of these similar words are "filter" (R4,R6), "iterative process"(R5), and "omitting of activities" (R4,R6). Accordingly, volunteers seem to match their capabilities, agenda, and personal preferences with the possibilities of volunteer activities.

# Conclusion

"That has given me insights in what happens next to your own 'island'. What happens in society. Well, I find that important with volunteering, that you are not alone in your own cocoon, but can see broader. To have that realization, to educate your kids, and put things in new perspectives."

This thesis explores the decision process of the volunteer when he/she is deciding for an episodic volunteering activity. The mixed method research design attempts to answer the question 'How does a volunteer decide for a specific activity and what influences this decision?'. This research question constitutes of two smaller sub questions, and thus requires a two-fold answer, which is provided below.

The first part of the research question that needs answering entails 'what influences this decision?'. This question aimed to gain insights in what various aspects are taken into account from the perspective of the volunteer, when a decision considering a volunteering activity is made. Accordingly, through the collected data, it became evident that a volunteer takes into account a variety of factors, of which on the one hand some seem to be generic, while on the other some seem to be more personally bound. Generic influencing aspects seem to be the availability of time, perception of reward, perception of meaningfulness, self-efficacy, emotional and physical barriers, as well as a joyful experience. More personally bound factors entail location and duration of the activity, challenge seeking as well as significance of appreciation.

Establishing relationships between the above discovered and distinguished factors provides insights into the second part of the research question: 'how does a volunteer decide for a specific activity?'. Through both data collection methods, the gathered data clearly shows a sequential/hierarchical relationship between the overarching pillars of the volunteerability framework. Whereas the first step clearly shows that personal availability is predominant and "a point of departure", the two other pillars are less obviously sequenced. Accordingly, two theories are proposed that attempt to place both "capability" and "willingness" within the sequential structure. The first theorizes that aside "availability", "capability" can also be seen as a filtering mechanism. Arguments considering capability are predominantly mentioned solely by volunteers who encountered capability barriers, while volunteers who did perceive themselves sufficiently capable did not mention arguments considering capability. A filtering function would therefore apply, as the group who encounter such barriers provided supporting evidence that capability is perceived as a filter. The second theory is strongly based on the qualitative findings from the survey and theorizes that "capability" explains why people reject an activity, whilst "willingness" explains why people choose an activity. Confirmation of either theory needs to be done in further research.

Findings from the quantitative data support the argument that the willingness of a volunteer seems to be inherent. Given that no differences among various conditions are found, on top of the stories from the interviewees, we can draw the conclusion that all volunteers have similar levels of willingness. Accordingly, both suggested theories take this into account, as one solely prioritizes capability as a filter, while the other makes a distinction between both pillars and the accompanying decision.

The findings described above can be nuanced further when we look at what sort of decision the volunteer is making, as we can further specify the decision made towards the initial decision and returning decision. For both decisions, the describing volunteerability framework, with its specified components is relevant, yet for the returning decision, extra weight is put on the value of the experience. Again, we can specify this further towards an experience being rewarding and meaningful. A rewarding experience entails a benefit for the volunteer in the form of joy, appreciation or functional motivations. A meaningful experience is to a large part defined by having added value during the volunteering, which is highlighted by many interviewees as a critical part of their volunteering. When both experiences are positive, the level of volunteerability is likely to be enhanced, whereas on the contrary a negative experience diminishes the level of volunteerability.

# Discussion

"I speak people who I wouldn't speak normally. Refugees from Syria, which is beautiful to see, as in the contrast with the news that we have been shown for the last four years. And that now you see a person, and think: 'yes, you are actually exactly like me, but I have had the fortune that I am born here, but we are exactly the same'."



The results of this research are critically discussed in the following section. First of all, what remarkable points can be raised when looking at this research? On top of that, as this thesis is written in cooperation with the Utrecht Cares organization, a brief section is dedicated to discussing the implications for this organization. Then, theoretical implications are touched upon, including suggestions for further research, before the section is concluded by briefly mentioning the limitations of this research.

#### Points of discussion

A first point of discussion is whether a generic conclusion that applies to all volunteer is either feasible and/or desirable. The researcher has had the privilege of talking with many different volunteers, of who all one by one proved to be interesting people. There are many resemblances across individuals and people do tend to have similar motivations and desires. However, it became evident that each volunteer has his/her own life story. Each individual's life story is different, how people got where they are and valuable lessons they

were taught are all personal. In other words, generalising the decision process and fitting all volunteers in a generic framework would do these stories injustice. However, much volunteering research has attempted to do so, and has consequently been of a quantitative research design (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017; Sundeen et al., 2007; Handy et al., 2006; and more), for which generalisation is seen as a quality standard (Polit & Beck, 2010). Therefore, even though the results are based on strong triangulated data, due to the varied nature of the volunteer one can argue that one generic conclusion seems unfeasible; and due to the interesting stories, which should not be nullified, you can argue whether a generic solution is desirable.

Another interesting point of discussion entails the added value of the volunteer. Throughout most of the interviews, it became evident that the topic of added value is one to be taken seriously and needs to be addressed. "The question is how much impact you honestly have on the other, [...] or does it have more impact on your own life?" (R7). Volunteering can be seen as an activity "on behalf of causes or individuals who require assistance" (Wilson, 2012, p.177). In other words, a volunteer sets aside his or her own interests in favour of someone else's interest. However, as the above quote depicts, some concerns and doubts can be raised to what extent this "other" actually benefits from the volunteering. Contrary to Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017), who attributes "positive outcomes for the individuals volunteer, organisations, governments and society at large" (p.8), questions may be raised at these "positive outcomes". Accordingly, future research could focus on where the true added value as well as true impact is. This includes repeating measures, establishing a baseline and measuring progress. The created panel data can give insights in who benefits most: the volunteer, the organization, local government or society. A similar research design as or the used scale by Morrow-Howell, Hong & Tang (2009) could be the base for further research, targeted at an episodically volunteer population.

Third, findings from this research should be carefully assessed before implementation at other organizations. This research aims to give insights into the volunteers' decision process for organizations that promote episodic volunteering (see figure 2, chapter 3.2). Given the concept of Utrecht Cares, findings are most definitely relevant and applicable for all sub-departments of the Nederland Cares organization. However, the extent of generalizability towards other organizations depends on several factors. For example, the extent of similarity between the concepts of other organizations. In other words, whereas availability dominates the decision process for Utrecht Cares, it is uncertain whether this is exactly the same for other organizations. Nevertheless, sufficient evidence is presented to assume similarities among volunteers from different organizations.

This brings us straight away to a similar point of discussion. Questions can be posed to what extent the concept of the organization has steered the findings of this research. The activities calendar by Utrecht Cares is characterised by the flexibility of the volunteering activity. Subsequently, they are likely to mainly attract a population that seeks short nature volunteering and base their decision consistently on their availability of time. Nevertheless, sufficient unprompted indications were given that entailed both volunteering through Utrecht Cares as well as other organizations to have found reliable results. Future research could compare various organizations and their volunteer database to see to what extent decision processes differ across these organizations. Similarly, it would be interesting to see to what extent the concept of an organization "steers" the decision process of the volunteer.

Accordingly, using Utrecht Cares as an organization for the decision process is considered to be a good and suitable choice for this research given the multitude and frequency of decisions available for volunteers. However, assessing it through the volunteerability framework does pose some issues with respect to the extent that "capability" is applicable and relevant to the activities offered by Utrecht Cares. The activities volunteers are able to engage in generally are not perceived as difficult or challenging. This is even explicitly stated on their website: "No specific knowledge or skills are required. Common sense suffices." (Nederland Cares, 2018). This is partially thanks to its short nature and the fact that the activity cannot be too dependent on the volunteer who registers through Utrecht Cares. Subsequently, virtually everyone is capable of engaging with Utrecht Cares. Research done at a similar organization, but with more challenging activities might shed different light on the findings from this research. On the other hand, episodic volunteering is by definition characterized by its approachable nature. Accordingly, it is questionable whether organizations exist that provide a similar short nature of volunteering, but with an enhanced challenging nature. Therefore, this partially debounces the previous doubts about generalizability.

A final interesting point of discussion is the reason why the response rate of Utrecht Cares was so low. As their database supposedly consists of a rough 2800 volunteers, a response of 52 (<2%) on a survey sent to the entire database is shockingly low. It forces the organization to critically think about their volunteer database. A possible explanation with respect to the low response rate might be that the database contains many volunteers who are not active anymore. This level of inactivity was already implied from the preliminary analysis in the first chapter. Follow-up research could investigate this gap between the established database and the low response rate. The research could address questions why the response

rate is low; why volunteers feel disengaged with the organization; why volunteers decide to step away from Utrecht Cares; what effective ways are to re-engage volunteers.

#### **Practical Implications**

Results of this research definitely have some to-the-point implications for the organization of Utrecht Cares. Leaving these unaddressed would not do justice to their efforts and in essence strong vision and concept.

The main findings of this research entail how volunteers make their decisions. The influential role of time, next to the urge for a meaningful and rewarding experience can be the basis for a redesign of their calendar. Activities can be redesigned for an even more consistent short nature of an hour and half to three hours at most, in combination with activities critically selected to ensure meaningfulness and reward. Concretely, this means critically assessing the organizations present in the calendar as it is today, as well as redesign activities to a maximum duration, of which respondents indicated a maximum and optimal duration of around two to three hours.

As mentioned before, volunteers indicated that they find their added value to the organization as well as target group relatively low. This might be due to the inherent characteristics of their concept, as depicted by the following quote, upon which researcher and interviewee arrived together:

"I can still subscribe for something this afternoon. That is the power of their concept, but because of that... an activity cannot always be cancelled if there is no one from Utrecht Cares. To put it simply, you are less important, because of the flexibility. This flexibility is simply contradictory with your personal importance. And that is what people miss with Utrecht Cares, and then, if you do not have an added value to such an organization, then the added value must be with you, as a volunteer. It has to be, otherwise there is no logical reason to volunteer."

Accordingly, Utrecht Cares should take the volunteers' desire for a meaningful experience into account and have a critical look at the added value and meaningfulness of their organized activities. Adaptations to their concept might be necessary in order to successfully retain and attract volunteers. Along similar lines, a strategy to deliver this "public value" can be based on the strategic triangle by Moore (1995). The framework can be a starting point for redesigning their strategy and concept, and to analyse their impact.

Similarly, this research has proven that speaking with volunteers is highly valuable. Aside the information applicable and relevant for this research, plenty of data was gathered that fell beyond the scope of this research but is still valuable for the organization. Subsequently, Utrecht Cares, as well as other volunteering organizations, are advised to regularly make time available to talk with their volunteers, in order to keep improving their organizations.

In the end, these implications all make or break with the vision Utrecht Cares sets. Currently they aim to facilitate the encounter between volunteers and organizations (Nederland Cares, 2018) and the accompanying broadening of perspectives. Interviews have proven this has been done successfully (R1,R3,R5-R7), yet with respect to volunteer retention Utrecht Cares should look carefully at the volunteers' considerations for returning to activities.

#### Theoretical Implications

To begin, various findings from previous research have been confirmed throughout this research. First of all, as mentioned before, the functional motivations that were mentioned most frequently are in line with what previous research has found (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Phillips & Phillips, 2010; Gage III & Thapa, 2012). Secondly, the fact that time is the most frequent perceived barriers to volunteer (Sundeen et al., 2007) has been confirmed by the importance of availability found in this research. On top of that, the match-making behaviour as implied by the volunteerability framework (Meijs et al., 2006) has also been confirmed by this research's findings. Similarly, as academic research has already found, volunteers search for certain "private benefits" in the form of warm glow (Prouteau & Wolff, 2008), satisfaction (Phillips and Phillips, 2010) and human capital (Hustinx et al., 2010).

Secondly, the main theoretical implication of this research is that it nuances the previously researched volunteerability framework. Several aspects of this framework are confirmed through the triangulated data. This research does however present a different structure which adds a prioritization between pillars. Future research could examine this nuance further, and research aimed at policy making should take this prioritization into account to effectively formulate policies.

Another clear theoretical implication of this research is the nature of the research design. As Rovers et al. (2016) argued, qualitative research gives clear insights into the perceptions and experiences of the volunteer. This research has proven the added value of gathering qualitative data with respect to volunteering research. Thus, as it seems that few research.

ches actually interview volunteers, this research can stimulate researches to use qualitative approaches, given the richness of the gathered data.

Finally, given that this research is the first to research the decision process for specific activities, it opens up an array of possibilities for further lines of research. This research gives spring to many possible research questions. Aside the suggestions for further research already presented at each point of discussion and practical implication, there are even more suggestions future researchers can build upon. To begin, with respect to the findings, further research should investigate which of the two posed theories fits reality best. Future research should gather additional data, test both theories and accordingly assess which of both theories explains the relationship between the volunteerability pillars the best. Next, the used survey should be adapted in order to test whether the underlying pillars of the framework can be found. This involves more extensive research and pretesting item lists.

#### Limitations

First of all, the mixed method research design might have enjoyed some benefits when executed sequentially. Building a survey or interviews based on the findings in the previously deployed data collection method would have allowed for more specific confirmation of findings through both methods. Nevertheless, findings between both methods provide data that are in line with each other. As a consequence, the findings reinforce each other and are highly, knowing that collection methods were not biased and/or influenced through the researcher.

The second limitation of the research entails the low response rates. Despite the fact that the sample size was large enough for robust factor analyses, comparing the means as well as the research quality would have significantly improved when a larger sample would have responded to the survey (Dhand & Khatkar, 2014). In general, increasing sample size improves significance of the findings. However, given the strong triangulated data gathered through this research findings are still considered to be highly robust.

Noteworthy is the drop-out rate for the survey, as a total of 52 respondents commenced the survey, of which 47 completed the first part. However, the two consecutive parts were only completed by 41 people. Clearly, respondents perceived barriers to open their agendas to fulfil the survey. Thus, despite the considerations in designing a short survey, quite a few respondents failed to complete the survey.

A final methodological limitation needs to be addressed with respect to the used survey. Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) provided a list of over 100 items to assess volunteerability,

which was not feasible due to realistic expectations considering the response rate. Yet it is questionable whether the survey used sufficient items to measure the three pillars correctly. Similarly, even though questions were used from validated measures, no preliminary validation test has been executed to check the internal validity of the test.

### Epilogue

The coordinator would say it was about time, we could go home if we wanted. I thanked him, he thanked me, saying I was welcome to come again whenever I wanted to. After a little chit-chat with the kind woman, with whom I had just been playing table-tennis for the last twenty minutes, I would grab my coat. Again, I would push the door handle, press it down, and walk towards my bike. Manoeuvring through the Utrecht traffic, I'd cycle home, or in many other cases to the libraries.

While I was on the bike, I would gather my thoughts. I would think about the things I had just done, the fun I had had, or the boredom I had just been through. But most of all, after cycling home that one last time, I would smile about the experience this all has brought along.

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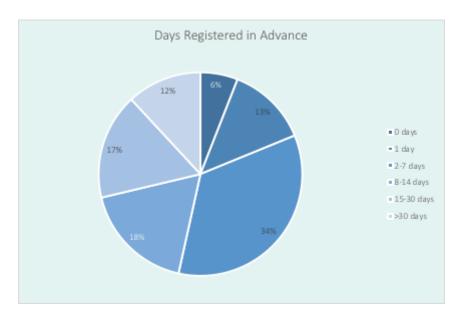
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# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Utrecht Cares statistics activities



Activities Attended

11%

1 time

2 times

3 times

4 times

Other

Figure 1: Days registered in advance for an activity

Figure 2: Number of activities attended in 2017.

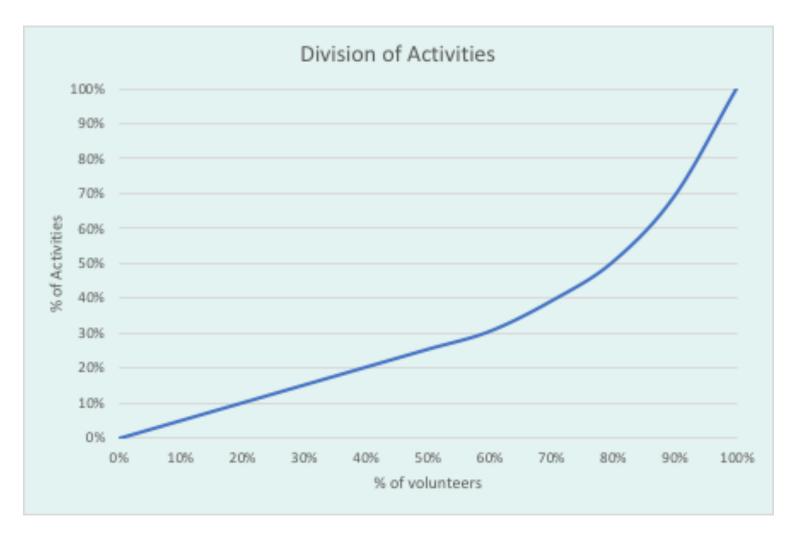


Figure 3: Percentage volunteers and percentage of activities (source: Utrecht Cares)

# Appendix 2 Visual of calender shown in survey

<b>©</b>	9333	<b>(</b>	0
Lezen met groep 3 en 4	Maandag	08.45 - 10.45	Overvecht
Bingo met ouderen	Maandag	14.00 - 16.00	Wilhelmina Park
Nachtopvang: dak-thuislozen	Maandag	20.00 - 23.00	Centrum
Einstein in de dop! Knutselen met groep 6	Dinsdag	09.00 - 11.00	Centrum
Voedselbank: inpakken en uitdelen	Dinsdag	11.00 - 16.00	Lunetten
Fietslessen voor mensen met een migranten ach	Dinsdag	15.30 - 17.00	Zuilen
Computer helpdesk met ouderen	Dinsdag	17.00 - 21.00	Zuilen
Apenkooien met mensen met een beperking	Woensdag	08.30 - 11.00	Overvecht
Taalcafé met vluchtelingen	Woensdag	13.00 - 15.30	Lunetten
Tafeltennis met mensen met een beperking	Woensdag	18.00 - 19.30	Tuindorp
Meet your locals: met dak en thuislozen	Donderdag	09.30 - 13.30	Centrum
Lezen met groep 3 en 4	Donderdag	13.30 - 15.00	Kanaleneiland
Tuinieren	Donderdag	14.00 - 16.00	Leidsche Rijn
Nachtopvang: dak-thuislozen	Donderdag	19.00 - 22.00	Overvecht
Computer helpdesk met ouderen	Vrijdag	09.00 - 13.00	Lunetten
Voedselbank: inpakken en uitdelen	Vrijdag	11.00 - 15.00	Kanaleneiland
Einstein in de dop! Knutselen met groep 6	Vrijdag	13.30 - 15.30	Overvecht
Taalcafé met vluchtelingen	Vrijdag	19.00 - 21.30	Transwijk
Fietslessen voor mensen met een migranten ach	Zaterdag	09.30 - 11.00	Lunetten
Tafeltennis met mensen met een beperking	Zaterdag	15.00 - 16.30	Tuindorp
Bingo met ouderen	Zaterdag	20.00 - 22.00	Hoograven
Tuinieren	Zondag	10.00 - 12.00	Zuilen
Meet your locals: met dak en thuislozen	Zondag	13.30 - 17.30	Kanaleneiland
Apenkooien met mensen met een beperking	Zondag	17.00 - 19.00	Centrum

### Appendix 3

### Interview Structure

#### 1. Introduction research

- Tell about myself
- Tell about research
- Structure Interview

#### 2. Introduction Interviewee

- Can you tell me something about yourself?
- Age, occupation, etc.
- Why volunteer?
- Why Utrecht Cares?
  - How often?
  - What do you think?

#### 3. Past Experiences

- What activities have you done, and can you tell me about these experiences?
- How do you decide?
- Why did you choose for this particular activity?
- Would you decide to come back to the same activities you have done already? And why yes or no?

#### 4. Abstract Experiences

- Can you take me with you through your decision process to volunteer for Utrecht Cares?
- In deciding for a certain activity, what do you take in consideration?
  - Availability
    - o Length of activity
    - o Location?
    - o Emotional Availability?
  - Willingness
    - o Motivation? (Protective, values, career, social, understanding and enhancement.)
    - o Extrinsic/Intrinsic motivation?
    - o Target Groups
  - Capability
    - o Difficult to engage in?
    - o Challenging to engage in?
    - o Self-perceived capability

- o Target Groups
- Introduce Framework?

#### 5. Wrapping up

- Do you think there is anything else I should know?

# Appendix 4 Initial Code Tree

- Availability
  - Available Time
  - Location
  - · Time Barriers
- Barriers
  - · Doubts episodic volunteering
  - Emotional Barrier
  - · Fear Activity
  - · Fear to commit
  - · Health Barrier
  - Language Barrier
  - Negative Past experiences
  - · Physical Barrier
  - · Refusing volunteer work
  - Volunteering as work
- Capability
  - · Easy to do
  - · Not enough experience
  - · Perception of added value
  - Self-Efficacy
  - Training
  - · Uncertainty capability
- Decision Process
  - Indecisiveness
  - Looking at calendar
  - Match Making
  - Positive past experiences
  - Prioritizing
  - Returning to the same decision
  - Specific Decision process
- Other
  - Defining a volunteer
  - Hobbies
  - · Imperfect volunteer activities
  - Volunteering desires
- Utrecht Cares
  - Deviating from Utrecht Cares

- · Disliking Activities
- Encounter UC
- · Opinion UC
- Willingness
  - Altruism
    - Helping Others
    - Perception of Urgency
    - · Working with people
  - Functional Motives
    - Career
      - Career
      - · Gain experience
    - Enhancement
      - · Giving life meaning
      - Happiness
      - Life Enhancement
      - Seeking Challenges
    - Protective
      - · Being Active
      - · Healing effect
      - Life back on track
      - · Protecting yourself
    - Social
      - Enhancing Social Status
      - · Increase social network
    - Understanding
      - · Broad interests
      - Gain Insights
      - Seeking new Experiences
      - Variety
    - Values
    - · Choosing what I like
    - Dream
    - Liking Activity
    - Target Groups
    - Values
- · Personal rewards
  - Appreciation
  - · Financial Reward
  - · Psychological benefit
  - Recognition

## Appendix 5 Interview Consent

#### **INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS**

Master Thesis Project Olmo Doosje

I,, agree to be interviewed for the master thesis
project which is being produced by Olmo Doosje of Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University.
I certify that I have been told of the confidentiality of information collected for this project and the anonymity of my participation; that I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning project procedures and other matters; and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without prejudice.
I agree to the fact that the interview is electronically recorded for this project. I understand that such interviews and related materials will be kept completely anonymous, and that the results of this study may be published in an academic journal or book.
I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for this study.
Signature of Interviewee Date

# Appendix 6 Descriptive results

Descriptive Statistics									
		Items	Pillars						
	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.				
AA - Is of a short duration	3.88	1.522	41						
AA - Fits my agenda well	5.15	1.511	41	4.65	4.045				
AA - Is easy to reach location wise	4.5	1.34	41	4.65	1.065				
AA - Is easily combined with my other daily activities	5.15	1.189	41						
AC - Is challenging	4.75	1.08	41		755				
AC - Is easy to do	4.65	1.189	41						
AC - Entails something I think I can do well	5.35	1.075	41	4.84	755				
AC - Allows me to develop myself	4.63	1.314	41						
AW - Develops and enriches my social network	4.03	1.349	41						
AW - Deals with a target group I feel attracted to	5.33	944	41						
AW - Makes me a better human	4.55	1.131	41	4.21	834				
AW - Takes away my daily sorrows	3.05	1.584	41	1.21	034				
AW - Helps me deal with different types of people	4.95	1.358	41						
AW - Makes me think about my career	3.35	1.805	41						

# Appendix 7 Mean Values Conditions

Hours busy with work	A - Fits my agenda					Std. Error Mean
		<32 hours	18	4,61	1,883	0,444
Hours busy with work	well	>32 hours	23	5,61	0,941	0,196
	AA - Is easily	<32 hours	18	4,61	1,378	0,325
0	combined with my other daily activites	>32 hours	23	5,57	0,788	0,164
University A	AC - Is challenging	No	10	5,4	0,966	0,306
		Yes	30	4,53	1,042	0,19
		<35	24	4,96	0,999	0,204
/	AC - Is easy to do	35 or more	17	4,24	1,3	0,315
	AC - Allows me to	<35	24	5	1,103	0,225
Age '	develop myself	35 or more	17	4,18	1,468	0,356
	A.C. D.III	<35	24	5,0435	0,61076	0,12735
	AC - Pillar	35 or more	17	4,5735	0,86044	0,20869
Volunteerwork before	AC - Is easy to do	Yes	30	4,43	1,073	0,196
UC ,	·	No	11	5,27	1,272	0,384
	AA - Is easily	>2	21	4,76	1,375	0,3
2 activities or more o	combined with my other daily activites	2 or more	20	5,55	0,759	0,17
	,					
	AC - Allows me to	>=4,9	20	5,2	1,005	0,225
	develop myself	<4,9	21	4,14	1,389	0,303
	AW - Makes me a	>=4,9	20	5,15	0,933	0,209
General Willingness	better human	<4,9	21	3,86	1,062	0,232
A	W - Helps me deal	>=4,9	20	5,5	1,1	0,246
Wi	ith different types of people	<4,9	21	4,48	1,401	0,306
Al	W - Makes me think	>=4,9	20	4,05	1,849	0,413
	about my career	<4,9	21	2,62	1,465	0,32
		>= 5,10	21	5,67	1,197	0,261
	A - Fits my agenda well	< 5,10	20	4,65	1,631	0,365
General Capability	AW - Deals with a	>= 5,10	21	5,71	0,717	0,156
I I	target group I feel attracted to	< 5,10	20	4,9	0,968	0,216

# Appendix 8 Independent t-test & mean values

		Levene's Tes		uality of	f t-test for Equality of Means							
Condition	Item	Var	iances							95% Con	fidence	
			F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-	Mean	Std.	Lower	Upper	
	AA - Fits my	Assumed	9,119	0,004	-2,217	39	0,033	-0,998	0,45	-1,908	-0,087	
l	agenda well	Not assumed			-2,056	23,597	0,051	-0,998	0,485	-2	0,005	
Hours busy with work	AA - Is easily	Assumed	2,489	0,123	-2,794	39	0,008	-0,954	0,342	-1,645	-0,263	
	combined with my other daily activites	Not assumed			-2,621	25,519	0,015	-0,954	0,364	-1,703	-0,205	
	AC - Is	Assumed	0,293	0,591	2,317	38	0,026	0,867	0,374	0,11	1,624	
University	challenging	Not assumed	,	,	2,408	16,555	0,028	0,867	0,36	0,106	1,627	
	AC - Is easy to	Assumed	3,708	0,061	2,014	39	0,051	0,723	0,359	-0,003	1,449	
	do	Not assumed			1,925	28,687	0,064	0,723	0,376	-0,046	1,492	
Age	AC - Allows me to	Assumed	1,167	0,287	2,053	39	0,047	0,824	0,401	0,012	1,635	
1.90	develop myself	Not assumed			1,955	28,226	0,061	0,824	0,421	-0,039	1,686	
	AC - Pillar	Assumed	1,267	0,267	2,023	38	0,05	0,46995	0,23234	-0,00041	0,9403	
	, , , , , , , , , , , ,	Not assumed			1,922	27,375	0,065	0,46995	0,24448	-0,03135	0,97125	
Valuata a mua uk	AC 15 5551145	Assumed	0,055	0,815	-2,113	39	0,041	-0,839	0,397	-1,643	-0,036	
Volunteerwork before UC	AC - Is easy to do	Not assumed	0,000	0,010	-1,949	15,53	· ·	-0,839	0,431	-1,755	0,076	
		Trot documen			1,010	10,00	3,51	0,000	3,101	1,100	3,010	
2 activities or	AA - Is easily combined with	Assumed	1,468	0,233	-2,256	39	0,03	-0,788	0,349	-1,495	-0,081	
more	my other daily activites	Not assumed			-2,286	31,46	0,029	-0,788	0,345	-1,491	-0,085	
	AC - Allows me to	Assumed	1,48	0,231	2,78	39	0,008	1,057	0,38	0,288	1,826	
	develop myself	Not assumed			2,802	36,448	0,008	1,057	0,377	0,292	1,822	
	AW - Makes me a	Assumed	0,505	0,481	4,132	39	0	1,293	0,313	0,66	1,926	
General	better human	Not assumed			4,145	38,757	0	1,293	0,312	0,662	1,924	
Willingness	AW - Helps me	Assumed	0,304	0,584	2,594	39	0,013	1,024	0,395	0,225	1,822	
	deal with different types of people	Not assumed			2,609	37,667	0,013	1,024	0,392	0,229	1,818	
	AW - Makes me	Assumed	0,547	0,464	2,753	39	0,009	1,431	0,52	0,38	2,482	
	think about my career	Not assumed			2,738	36,22	0,01	1,431	0,523	0,371	2,491	
	AA - Fits my	Assumed	0,985	0,327	2,283	39	0,028	1,017	0,445	0,116	1,917	
General	agenda well	Not assumed			2,266	34,797	0,03	1,017	0,449	0,106	1,928	
Capability	AW - Deals with a	Assumed	0,95	0,336	3,071	39	0,004	0,814	0,265	0,278	1,351	
	target group I feel attracted to	Not assumed			3,049	34,978	0,004	0,814	0,267	0,272	1,356	

# Appendix 9

## Rotated Factor Matrix

	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5				
Availability - Is of a short duration	0,047	0,285	0.68	0,082	0,059				
Availability - Fits my agenda well	-0,007	0,837	0,179	0.14	0,159				
Availability - Is easy to reach location wise	0,071	0,625	0,406	0,145	-0,333				
Availability - Is easily combined with my other daily activities	0,155	0,903	0.13	-0,094	0,002				
Capability - Is challenging	0,556	-0,037	-0.25	0,462	0,396				
Capability - Is easy to do	-0.05	0,439	0,725	0,065	0,013				
Capability - Entails something I think I can do well	0,572	0.41	0,278	-0,003	-0.5				
Capability - Allows me to develop myself	0,875	0,163	0,074	-0,183	0,118				
Willingness - Develops and enriches my social network	0,702	0,005	0.08	0,198	0,124				
Willingness - Deals with a target group I feel attracted to	0,008	0,067	0,058	0,916	-0,079				
Willingness - Makes me a better human	0,324	0,114	0,272	-0,077	0,805				
Willingness - Takes away my daily sorrows	0,301	-0,058	0,724	-0,129	0,068				
Willingness - Helps me deal with different types of people	0,647	0.536*	-0,064	-0,159	0,026				
Willingness - Makes me think about my career	0,736	-0.08	0.44	0,085	0,011				
Eigenvalues	4.51	2.30	1.30	1.22	1.08				
% of variance	32.21	16.25	9.31	8.72	7.71				
Cronbach's $\alpha$	0,806	0.777/ 0.806*	0,628	0,375	0,514				

# Appendix 10 Correlation Matrix

	AA1	AA2	AA3	AA4	AC1	AC2	AC3	AC4	AW1	AW2	AW3	AW4	AW5	AW6
AA1	1													
AA2	0,354	1												
AA3	0,358	0,456	1											
AA4	0,28	0,772	0,596	1										
AC1	-0,066	0,055	-0,071	-0,01	1									
AC2	0,485	0,444	0,531	0,419	-0,19	1								
AC3	0,309	0,314	0,498	0,459	0,099	0,399	1							
AC4	0,168	0,068	0,124	0,332	0,402	0,094	0,512	1						
AW1	0,064	0,199	0,021	0,11	0,374	0,006	0,259	0,483	1					
AW2	0,118	0,109	0,172	0,001	0,233	0,127	0,062	-0,085	0,154	1				
AW3	0,22	0,175	0,017	0,185	0,346	0,299	-0,015	0,453	0,226	-0,052	1			
AW4	0,353	0,168	0,242	0,214	-0,037	0,323	0,245	0,292	0,407	-0,063	0,256	1		
AW5	0,245	0,316	0,296	0,497	0,166	0,164	0,504	0,665	0,449	-0,007	0,336	0,097	1	
AW6	0,259	0,065	0,212	0,106	0,375	0,286	0,503	0,629	0,439	0,052	0,368	0,397	0,311	1

Item	Abbreviation
AA - Is of a short duration	AA1
AA - Fits my agenda well	AA2
AA - Is easy to reach location wise	AA3
AA - Is easily combined with my other daily activities	AA4
AC - Is challenging	AC1
AC - Is easy to do	AC2
AC - Entails something I think I can do well	AC3
AC - Allows me to develop myself	AC4
AW - Develops and enriches my social network	AW1
AW - Deals with a target group I feel attracted to	AW2
AW - Makes me a better human	AW3
AW - Takes away my daily sorrows	AW4
AW - Helps me deal with different types of people	AW5
AW - Makes me think about my career	AW6

## Appendix 11

### Overview conducted interviews

Reference	Gender	Working status	Age group	<b>Duration Interview</b>	Date
R1	Male	Employed	30-40	22:03	25-4-18
R2	Female	Unemployed	50-60	32:54	4-5-18
R3	Female	Self-Employed	40-50	1:01:08	14-5-18
R4	Female	Employed	20-30	34:59	17-5-18
R5	Male	Retired	60-70	39:10	23-5-18
R6	Female	Employed	20-30	40:39	1-6-18
R7	Female	Employed	20-30	50:54	4-6-18