Influences on Married Women's Volunteer Work Participation

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The determination of whether or not married women participate in volunteer work, and the degree to which they participate, was investigated. The homemaker's education and the husband's attitude about wives working outside the home were determinants of participation; homemaker's age, marital satisfaction, education, number of years lived in present home, length of residence in community, and amount of time worked since marriage were determinants of amount of participation.

Consumers can allocate their time to market and nonmarket activities differentially to alter their consumption levels. Usually, time spent in market activities results in money income, whereas time spent in nonmarket activities yields nonmoney returns. Volunteer work is one nonmarket activity that can influence levels of consumption and living by providing nonmoney returns to consumers now and in the future. Additionally, volunteers contribute significantly to the economy's welfare by providing services that are not available in the community or are available in insufficient amounts (U.S. Department of Labor 1969, p. 1).

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Women's Participation in Volunteer Work

Throughout the years, women have served in volunteer work. Even in recent years, when women were increasing their labor force participation, they were increasing their participation in volunteer work. During 1965, 21 percent of all women participated in volunteer work, whereas 26 percent volunteered during 1974 (ACTION 1975, p. 4).

Volunteers have usually been married women. A national survey in 1965 found that the typical volunteer was (1) a married woman, (2) aged 25–44, (3) a high-school graduate, (4) not employed in the labor force, and (5) in the $5,000–7,500 income range (U.S. Department of Labor 1969, p. 3). By 1974, this profile of the typical volunteer had changed in only two ways (ACTION 1975, pp. 3, 6). She now was a college graduate and was in the $15,000 and over income bracket.

Several studies have examined participation in volunteer work,[1] but none have explained adequately the participation of married women. Most studies have focused on the examination of socioeconomic rather than social-psychological variables (ACTION 1975; Angrist 1967; Finlayson 1969; Goldhammer 1967; Hausknecht 1962; Morgan, Sirageldin, and Baerwaldt 1966; Scott 1957; Searls 1966; Slater 1960; U.S. Department of Labor 1969). Only one study was found that included a social-psychological variable (Mueller 1975).

Methods of Measuring Participation in Volunteer Work

The studies reviewed varied in their methods of measuring participation in volunteer work or activities assumed to be volunteer work. Three of the studies grouped respondents as participants and nonparticipants (ACTION 1975; Finlayson 1969; U.S. Department of Labor 1969), based on whether they had participated in volunteer work during the past year.

[1]Not all of the studies found in the literature examined participation in volunteer work. Some investigated participation in community welfare activities, and others investigated participation in voluntary associations. All such studies were reviewed, and six were included in the review of literature based on the assumption that the participation studied could be characterized as volunteer-work participation.

Mueller (1975) and Morgan, Sirageldin, and Baerwaldt (1966) measured number of hours spent in volunteer work in an average week; more hours spent indicated greater participation. Angrist (1967) and Searls (1966) both used an inventory of community welfare activities, measuring extent of participation for each activity from "none" (1) to "high" (4). The sum of the separate activity scores yielded a community welfare index. Membership in voluntary associations was used as the measure of participation in studies by Goldhammer (1967), Hausknecht (1962), Scott (1957), and Slater (1960). No study was found that compared measurement techniques.

Present Objectives

Need for further research seemed to be indicated based on the importance of volunteer work, the increase in women's participation in volunteer work, and the lack of "adequate" research studies concerning volunteer work. Therefore, this study had two specific objectives: to determine factors influencing married women's participation in volunteer work, and to determine factors influencing extent of participation of those married women who do volunteer. Married women were selected for study because they represent the typical volunteer.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

Return/Cost Relationship in Volunteer Work

Assuming that consumers engage in a conscious problem-solving type of behavior, volunteer work participation can be examined in light of its associated costs and returns. The opportunity cost of volunteer work participation is the time given up that could have been allocated to alternative uses yielding an alternative return. Returns can be either economic or psychological, or both. The assumption made in this study is that, whether the return is economic or psychological, women allocate their time to volunteer work so that the return is proportionate to the cost of time spent for this activity and equal, at the margin, to other returns and costs.

Human Capital Theory

The return/cost relationship in volunteer work can involve investments in human capital. It is this special type of utility theory that provides the most appropriate framework from which to study returns from volunteer work, given the available data. Becker (1964, p. 1) defines human capital investments as those "activities that influence future monetary and psychic income by increasing resources in people." Such ac-

tivities improve skills, knowledge, or health of individuals. Becker (1964, p. 51) indicates that women need to find human capital investments that will increase their productivity in several activities. Volunteer work can provide human capital investments needed in market production and household production, e.g., on-the-job training, information about jobs and the community, training in health and child care, organizational skills, and satisfactions leading to improved mental health.

Hypotheses

Two general hypotheses are tested. One is that participation in volunteer work is influenced by those socioeconomic and social-psychological variables that are indicative of the human capital returns associated with volunteering. Further, it is hypothesized that those factors influencing participation will have the same directional relationship with extent of participation, except that this relationship will be stronger for extent of participation than for participation. Past studies have shown the same relationships whether the dependent variable was participation or extent of participation in volunteer work.

Predicted Relationships for Socioeconomic Variables

Expected relationships for socioeconomic variables and the dependent variables are as follows:

Homemaker's age (AGE)	+
Homemaker's education (ED)	+
Number of children, under age 18, living at home (#CHILD)	+
Age of children, under age 18, living at home	
Only younger children, aged 12 or younger (YCHILD)	−
Some older and some younger children (OYCHILD)	−
Only older children, aged 13–17 (OCHILD)	+
No children under age 18 (omitted category)	
Family income (Y)	+
Social class (CLASS)	+
Number of years married (YRSMAR)	+
Amount of labor force participation	
Not employed (omitted category)	
Employed part time (PWORK)	−
Employed full time (FWORK)	−
Homemaker's occupation	
Not employed (omitted category)	
White-collar worker (WOC)	+
Blue-collar worker (BOC)	−
Service worker (SOC)	−
Amount of time worked since marriage	
Has never worked (omitted category)	
Has worked, but very little (LITW)	−
Has worked most of the time (MOSTW)	−
Has worked all of the time (ALLW)	−

Length of residence in community
  A few years; less than 11 years
    (COMFEW)   +
  Several years, but not native; 11 years or
    more (omitted category)
  Native; all her life (COMNA)   +
Number of years lived in present home   +
  (YRSHOM)
Home ownership (OWN).   +

Rationale

Older homemakers are more likely to have had an interrupted work experience and, thus, will be more likely to seek volunteer work for its human capital returns. A positive relationship between volunteer work participation and age was found by Angrist (1967), Hausknecht (1962), and Searls (1966). In other studies, participation in volunteer work was low in both early and late adulthood and high during the middle years of adulthood (ACTION 1975; Hausknecht 1962; U.S. Department of Labor 1969). Goldhammer (1967) found a U-shaped relationship. As the age range of the respondents in this study was 28 to 60, a positive relationship was expected.

The more educated homemaker will be more aware and capable of judging the return/cost relationship associated with volunteer work. Thus, she would be more likely to seek the returns from volunteer work. Others have reported a positive relationship (ACTION 1975; Goldhammer 1967; Hausknecht 1962; Morgan, Sirageldin, and Baerwaldt 1966; Scott 1957; U.S. Department of Labor 1969).

The homemaker with more children and the homemaker with older children are more likely to have had little or no continuous job experience, because they probably dropped out of the labor force to bear and raise children. Volunteer work could provide them with an opportunity to gain needed job skills for entry or reentry into the labor market. In addition, some types of volunteer work could provide a return for these homemakers in the form of child-care information gained by working with youth groups, etc. Finlayson (1969) found volunteer work participation to increase with number of children, but Scott (1957) did not find this same relationship. Angrist's (1967) findings indicate that participation increased if the homemaker had children rather than if she did not. Finlayson's (1969) findings support the expected relationship between age of children and participation in volunteer work. Angrist (1967) and Searls (1966) found that participation increased if the homemaker had school–age children rather than preschoolers.

The homemaker with a higher family income has a lesser need for the monetary return from labor force participation. She may obtain job-related returns, such as information and training or other returns to increase household productivity, from volunteer work. It is possible that volunteer work is a more prestigious al-ternative than market work, depending on the types of jobs for which she qualifies. The expected positive relationship is consistent with the findings of Hausknecht (1962), Morgan, Sirageldin, and Baerwaldt (1966), and U.S. Department of Labor (1969).

The homemaker with a higher social class may volunteer because it is expected of someone in her social position. It is possible that she may be unable to find a paid job that is compatible with her social class. Volunteer work would enable her to take a lesser skilled job, without suffering a loss of prestige, and still maintain her personal skills. The work done by Finlayson (1969) and Scott (1957) corroborates the relationship between social class and volunteer work. Additional support is provided by Slater (1960) who found a tendency for a positive relationship between participation and husband's occupational status. Duncan's Socioeconomic Status index, which is based on occupational status, was used in our study.

The longer a woman has been married, the more likely it is that she has had an interrupted job experience and, therefore, would seek that experience through volunteer work. Searls (1966) found a positive relationship between number of years married and participation in volunteer work.

The homemaker who is not working might volunteer to acquire or to maintain job-related skills. For the homemaker who is working, the more hours she is working in paid employment, the less need she has to volunteer to acquire job skills, as she is getting them on the job. A negative relationship between amount of labor force participation and volunteer work participation has been found by Angrist (1967). Findings by Finlayson (1969) and U.S. Department of Labor (1969) only partially support this expected relationship, as they found that participation was higher for women employed part-time than for both those not in the labor force and those employed full-time.

The U.S. Department of Labor (1969) and Scott (1957) found that participation in volunteer work was higher for white-collar workers than for blue-collar and service workers. As the majority of volunteer jobs are classified as white-collar (U.S. Department of Labor 1969), it is assumed that white-collar workers would be more likely to serve as volunteers in these jobs to utilize or increase their job skills.

The homemaker who has not worked or who has worked sporadically since marriage is more likely to volunteer, because she has not had as great an opportunity to gain needed job skills for entry or reentry into the labor market as the homemaker who has worked continuously. The homemaker who has never worked would have a need for the human-capital-building opportunities found in volunteer work, whereas the homemaker with some or a great deal of work experience would need to do volunteer work to maintain her skills.

The native and newcomer to the community would

be more likely to volunteer than those who are not natives and have lived there several years. Information about jobs and community resources would be the return to the newcomer, whereas the native might have a greater need for job-related human capital. The lack of mobility in this latter case could result in little or no opportunity for the homemaker to obtain a job utilizing her skills and education. Volunteer work, however, could provide this opportunity. Additionally, the native may have a greater interest in maintaining and improving the community than those who have lived in the community for a shorter period of time.

The longer the homemaker has lived in her present home, the more likely she may be to take an interest in maintaining and improving the neighborhood. She may engage directly or indirectly in activities affecting the neighborhood, leaving fewer hours available for paid employment. Volunteer work then could furnish job-related skills in a more flexible schedule.

Scott (1957) found participation higher for homeowners than for renters. The homeowner may spend more hours in household production than the renter, because homeownership would tend to increase the amount of chores to be done (e.g., painting and yardwork). Thus, fewer hours would be available for paid employment. Volunteer work could furnish job-related human capital investments in a more flexible time schedule. Homeowners, rather than renters, would be more aware of the benefits from the acquisition of knowledge about the community's economic and political system that could be obtained through volunteer work.

Further, it is hypothesized that homemaker's education will be the most important socioeconomic variable in explaining participation in volunteer work. As the more educated homemaker is better able to perceive human capital returns from volunteer work, she would be more likely to seek them. Thus, the homemaker's education is expected to be the best socioeconomic predictor.

Predicted Relationships for Social-Psychological Variables

Expected relationships for social-psychological variables and the dependent variables are as follows:

Expects to work in one year (WORK1)	+
Expects to work in five years (WORK5)	+
Perception of leisure time	
Too little (omitted category)	
About right (LEIOK)	−
Too much (TMLEI)	+
Feels underemployed or overtrained in job	
Not employed (omitted category)	
No (NOUNDE)	−
Undecided (?UNDE)	−
Yes (YUNDE)	+
Satisfaction with present job (JOBSAT)	−
Satisfaction with marriage (MARRSAT)	−
Husband's attitude about wives working outside the home (HFEEL)	−

Rationale

The homemaker who expects to enter the labor force in one or five years will be more likely to participate in volunteer work for the job experience and opportunity to gain job information than the homemaker who does not. Mueller (1975) found that participation in volunteer work was higher for women who expected to work in the immediate future.

The more leisure time the homemaker feels she has, the more time she would have for volunteer work. This would give her a greater opportunity to increase her human capital investments from volunteer work.

If the homemaker feels overtrained or underemployed in her job, it is assumed that she will participate in volunteer work to maintain her potentiality. Both satisfaction with her job and feelings of being underemployed or overtrained for her job can be motivations for volunteering. Assuming that dissatisfaction stems from lack of opportunity to develop and use human capital, the homemaker would turn to volunteer work as a means of increasing and using her job-related skills. Volunteer work also would give her an opportunity to obtain information about other job possibilities.

The more dissatisfied the homemaker is with her marriage, the more likely she will be to volunteer. Volunteer work can increase emotional health by giving the volunteer compensatory feelings of satisfaction. Possibly, the homemaker who is dissatisfied with her marriage will seek satisfaction from volunteer work. Alternatively, it could be argued that the homemaker who is satisfied with her marriage will seek even more satisfaction from other areas of her life. It is assumed here, however, that dissatisfaction with marriage will lead to volunteering.

The more negative her husband's attitude is about wives working outside the home, the less likely the homemaker will be to volunteer. It is assumed that the more negative the husband's attitude is about wives working outside the home, the more negative her attitude will be, as well. Thus, she would be expected to judge returns from volunteer work to be lower than returns from more traditional activities inside the home. The relationship could be opposite to that expected, though, which might indicate that it is alright for the homemaker to work outside the home in volunteer work, but not outside the home for pay.

Further, it is hypothesized that expecting to work in one year will be the most important social-psychological variable in determining participation in volunteer work and in determining extent of participation in volunteer work. Using human capital theory, one could argue that the expectation to work in one year has the greatest return of all the social-psychological

variables under study. Job experience and information gained in volunteer work would be useful in obtaining a job yielding a certain level of income as well as satisfaction.

SAMPLE AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Data

Data for this study are part of the Quality of Life Survey 1976–77, comprised of homemakers in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.[2] The data represent the second wave of interviews of "typical" families that had participated in the 1970–71 Survey of Life Styles of Families (Wave 1). In the original survey, a random sample of households, stratified by the head's occupation, was obtained. Only those households with a mother, or mother-substitute under age 65, and at least one child under age 18 were included. Student households were excluded from the study. Of the 718 eligible families, approximately 79 percent provided usable data. Nonresponse bias was not explored at that time.

Of the original 564 families surveyed, only 288 households could be located for reinterview. Of these, 238 provided usable data (Wave 2). Characteristics of the respondents and nonrespondents in Wave 2 were compared. Nonrespondents and their husbands were four years younger than were respondents and their husbands. Respondents were more likely to have husbands in white-collar occupations, whereas nonrespondents had husbands in blue-collar occupations. There were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of family size, homemaker's education, number of years married, income before taxes, or whether the wife was working.
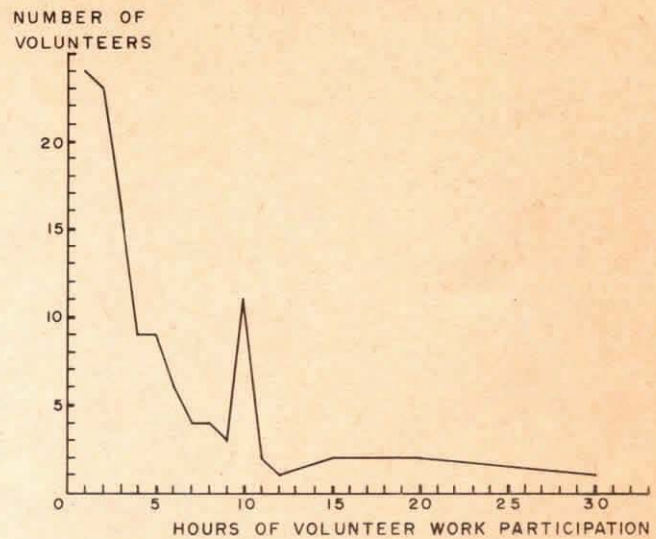
As in Wave 1, all households had a mother or mother-substitute under age 65. Twenty-eight percent of the families no longer had at least one child under age 18. The sample remained stratified by the head's occupation. Of the 238 homemakers interviewed in Wave 2, only those with the husband present were eligible for inclusion in this study; 231 met this criterion.

Dependent Variables

The two dependent variables used in this study, participation in volunteer work (P) and extent of participation in volunteer work (HRSP), were based on the following questions from the Quality of Life Survey 1976–77: "We know that sometimes people spend part of their time doing volunteer work of some kind—church, hospital auxiliary, community, etc. Do you spend time doing volunteer work of any type?" If the answer was "yes," the respondent was asked, "Would you give us some idea of how many hours, on the average, you spend doing volunteer work each week?"

[2]For further details, see Hafstrom and Dunsing (1978).

FIGURE

DISTRIBUTION OF EXTENT OF VOLUNTEER WORK PARTICIPATION

Participation was coded as (0) no participation, zero hours per week, and (1) some participation, one to 30 hours per week. For extent of participation, number of hours volunteered was coded in the following manner: (0) little participation, one to two hours per week, and (1) a lot of participation, three to 30 hours per week. Although this variable was continuous, it was treated as a dichotomous variable. As the distribution of this variable exhibited a large variance and the sample size was relatively small ($n = 117$), it was much better to carry out the analysis with a binary coding (Figure).

An interval scale was used to code most of the independent variables. Nominal scale variables and continuous variables with a nonlinear relationship to the dependent variables were treated as dummy variables.

Statistical Methods

Multiple regression was the statistical method employed. For each dependent variable, the regression model was built up by first running the socioeconomic and social-psychological variables in separate regressions. Additional separate regressions were used to avoid placing variables correlated at 0.7 or higher in the same regression. All variables with a t–ratio less than 1.0 were dropped before a combined regression was computed on the socioeconomic and social-psychological variables. Variables with a t–ratio less than 1.0 were omitted again, and a final regression was computed. The F–test was used to determine if a set of dummy variables added significantly to the explained variance. If an F–ratio of 1.0 or greater was found, the set of dummy variables was included in the next regression.

Validation Procedures

Validation of the results for the dependent variable, participation in volunteer work, was based on the split–sample method to deal with possible search bias (Frank, Massy, and Morrison 1965). Prior to statistical analyses, the total sample was divided into two groups by first stratifying the total sample by husband's occupation and then randomly assigning the strata members to two groups. One group, the A half, was used to construct the regression model. The validation subsample, V half, was used to validate the results found with the A half. The regression equation from the analysis subsample was used to estimate values for the dependent variable in the validation subsample (Kerlinger and Pedhazur 1973). A classification procedure was followed to determine if the percent correctly classified in the analysis subsample differed significantly from the percent correctly classified in the validation subsample. (Probit analysis was also applied and yielded the same results as the regression model.)

For the dependent variable, extent of participation, a different validation procedure was followed. As the sample size in this instance was small ($n = 117$), a split-sample method was not advisable. Again, the sample was stratified by husband's occupation, but this time the strata members were assigned randomly to three groups, A, B, and C, with 39 cases in each group. A regression model was constructed on combined Group AB, with validation on Group C. Regression models also were obtained for combined Groups BC and AC, with validation on the omitted group. This procedure for splitting and recombining the sample follows the jackknife method as described by Crask and Perreault (1977). Three separate validations were performed following the procedure used earlier for the other dependent variable.

FINDINGS

Sample Characteristics

No significant difference was found between the two subsamples, A and V, in terms of selected socioeconomic characteristics and participation in volunteer work. Therefore, the total sample of 231 respondents is used to describe the sample. The total sample was divided almost equally between volunteers and nonvolunteers. The average respondent was 44 years of age with 1.4 children, median family income (1975–6) in the range of $15,000 to $25,000, median education in the range of some college, and a mean value of 60 (range 1–96) for social class as measured with Duncan's Socioeconomic Status index.

To examine the extent of volunteer work, only those 117 homemakers who had volunteered were used. As no significant differences existed in selected socioeconomic characteristics and extent of volunteering, the total ABC sample is used to describe the respondents. For the total sample, two-fifths of the respondents had participated a little, and three-fifths had participated a lot. For the total sample, the average respondent was 44.5 years of age, had 1.5 children, and had a social class value of 67.5. Typically, the respondent had a median education of some college, and a median family income within the $25,000 to $35,000 range.

Participation in Volunteer Work

Based on the results of the combined regression, labor force participation was treated as a dichotomous variable in the final regression—homemaker employed full-time or not employed full-time. In the final regression, R^{*2} was 0.26, significant at the 0.001 level. The regression model was:

$$P = 0.30ED + 0.27HFEEL + 0.18CLASS - 0.16FWORK - 0.15AGE.$$

As hypothesized, both a socioeconomic (ED) and a social-psychological (HFEEL) variable influenced participation in volunteer work; both significant at the 0.01 level. Thus, the more highly educated the homemaker and the more negative the husband's attitude about wives working outside the home, the more likely the homemaker was to do volunteer work.

Accuracy of the regression model based on the analysis subsample was tested on the validation subsample. In the analysis subsample, 78 percent of the cases were correctly classified; 69 percent were correctly classified in the validation subsample. No significant difference existed between the percentages correctly classified in the two subsamples (0.05 level). This indicated that the regression model was a good predictor of the homemaker's participation in volunteer work. Probit analysis was also used; again, no significant difference was found.

Extent of Participation in Volunteer Work

A final regression equation was obtained for each subsample, A, B, and C, and tested for accuracy by the classification procedure. As no biases were detected, regression equations were run on the total ABC sample. If a variable was included in all three regression equations, it was selected for inclusion in a preliminary regression on the ABC sample. If a variable was in only one or two of the regression equations, but was significant at the 0.10 level, it was chosen for inclusion in the preliminary regression, as well.

Based on the combined regression, length of residence in the community was recoded to indicate that the homemaker had lived in the community all her life or she had not. In the final regression model, R^{*2} was 0.21, significant at the 0.001 level. The final regression model was:

$$HRSP = 0.48MOSTW + 0.37LITW - 0.29AGE$$
$$+ 0.27MARRSAT + 0.25ED$$
$$+ 0.23YRSHOM - 0.23FWORK$$
$$- 0.23COMNA - 0.22PWORK$$
$$+ 0.21ALLW + 0.18LEIOK$$
$$+ 0.13HFEEL - 0.11CLASS.$$

Two nondummy variables, homemaker's age (AGE) and satisfaction with marriage (MARRSAT), and two of the dummy variables, homemaker had worked most of the time (MOSTW) and homemaker had worked, but very little (LITW), were significant at the 0.01 level. Three nondummy variables, homemaker's education (ED), number of years lived in present home (YRSHOM), and length of residence in the community (COMNA),[3] were significant at the 0.05 level. Based on these findings, the homemaker was more likely to volunteer a lot if she (1) was more highly educated, (2) was younger, (3) had lived in her present home a longer period of time, (4) was more satisfied with her marriage, (5) had worked some or most of the time since marriage, and (6) had not lived in the community all her life.

Evaluation of Hypotheses

The results supported the first general hypothesis that participation in volunteer work is influenced by those socioeconomic and social-psychological variables indicative of the human capital returns associated with volunteering. However, only one socioeconomic variable and one social-psychological variable were significant.

The second general hypothesis—that those factors influencing participation have a greater influence on the extent of participation in volunteer work—was not supported, although both socioeconomic and social-psychological variables did influence extent of participation. The socioeconomic variable that was significant in the regression equation for participation in volunteer work was significant also in the regression equation for extent of participation, but at a lower level. The social-psychological variable significant in the participation regression equation did not appear in the final regression equation for extent of participation. The results suggest that variables influencing extent of participation may not influence participation in volunteer work. This finding is not entirely unexpected after inspection of the wide variance in the former variable, as depicted in the Figure.

For participation in volunteer work, the hypothesis that homemaker's education was expected to be the most important socioeconomic variable was supported. The hypothesis that the expectation of the homemaker to work in one year is the most important social-psychological variable was not supported; it did not appear in the final regression. Instead, husband's attitude about wives working outside the home was the most important social-psychological variable. The importance of this variable deserves more exploration, especially because the opposite relationship to that expected was found.

For extent of participation in volunteer work, the hypothesis that homemaker's education would be the most important socioeconomic variable in determining extent of participation in volunteer work was not supported. Instead, homemaker's age was the most important determinant. It is possible that younger homemakers volunteer frequently to obtain job experience. Being younger, they have not had as much time to acquire job experience as older homemakers. Frequent participation in volunteer work enables them to gain this job experience.[4]

The hypothesis that the expectation of the homemaker to work in one year would be the most important social-psychological variable was not supported. Instead, satisfaction with marriage was found to be the most important variable. This finding was not expected. The homemaker who is satisfied with her marriage may wish to share her good feelings with others. Through volunteer work, she can give to others in a meaningful way. This, in turn, might bring her increased satisfaction that contributes to her emotional health. Alternatively, the woman who is satisfied with her marriage may be a more traditional homemaker and feel that volunteering is one of her roles. She may volunteer frequently because she feels it is her duty. Satisfaction of her sense of obligation also could bring increased emotional health.[5]

FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings from this study indicate that (1) both socioeconomic and social-psychological variables influence participation and extent of participation in volunteer work, (2) the significant selected independent variables that influence the dependent variables are not necessarily the same, and (3) the selected variables explain only a portion of the variance in the dependent variables. Consequently, many unanswered questions remain for investigation.

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[3]Although a positive correlation between length of residence in the community and number of years lived in present home might be expected, a correlation of −0.03 was found. A cross-tabulation of these two variables shows that of those respondents who had been in the community all their lives, 22 percent had moved in the last five years; of those who were not natives of the community, 26 percent had moved in the last five years.

[4]This study was limited because the respondents ranged in age from 28 to 60 years. Examination of a broader age range might show a curvilinear relationship like that found by others, rather than the linear relationship found here.

[5]Also, as suggested by a reviewer, it is possible that there is a causal relationship here. The homemaker might be "personally effective" in organizing her life. This characteristic could lead to a satisfying marriage as well as satisfying participation in activities outside marriage, such as volunteer work.

Definition and Measurement of Variables

One question concerns how participation in volunteer work, and extent of participation in volunteer work, are defined and measured. As evidenced by this study, counting only participation or counting number of hours volunteered seems to produce different results. How volunteer work is defined may produce different results, as well. One limitation of this study was the inability to use extent of participation as a continuous variable because of sample size.

Another question concerns the measurement of the independent variables. Perhaps the results could be improved by changes in some of the measurements. For example, homemaker's amount of work experience since marriage was measured in years rather than as a qualitative assessment of her experience. A qualitative measure of her experience might be a better indication of the relationship between this variable and her volunteer work participation.

Theoretical Framework

An additional area for investigation is the theoretical basis for studying volunteer work. A combination of economic, sociological, and psychological theories may be more useful in understanding volunteer work participation than an individual theory from each of these fields. Certainly, human capital returns are associated with volunteering and are influential in the volunteering choice, as evidenced by the findings. Other theories may indicate different motivations for volunteer work and additional independent variables for study.

Patterns of Volunteer Work

Yet another unanswered question concerns the homemaker's pattern of volunteer work over time. For this, longitudinal studies would be needed. The volunteer participation of other family members is of interest and could be studied with a cross-sectional, as well as a longitudinal approach.

Implications of Present Study

The findings of this study have implications for individuals who are concerned with how consumers use their time. Time is a limited resource available to families. If time is spent in volunteer work, for instance, that same time is not available for another activity, such as household production. The family might engage in household production to a lesser extent and purchase convenience foods instead, thus influencing their consumption level of market goods and services.

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