

The Changing Face of Social Service Volunteering: A Literature Review

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Executive Summary

The former Ministry of Social Policy (now the Ministry of Social Development) undertook this literature review as part of its contribution to the International Year of the Volunteer 2001.

The objectives of the review were:

- to examine how the introduction of the 'contract culture' has influenced volunteering in voluntary social service organisations;
- to identify the changes that have occurred in voluntary social service organisations in terms of the *level* (number of volunteers) and *nature* (type of volunteering activities undertaken) of volunteering;
- to examine the possible reasons for – and potential consequences of – any changes in the level and nature of volunteering in the voluntary social service sector; and
- to consider the future role of volunteers within voluntary social service organisations.

The review focuses solely on volunteering that takes place within voluntary social service organisations.¹ The main focus of the review is on changes over the past two decades since the widespread introduction of contracting for social services. The review also considers how a number of the wider economic, demographic and social changes over the past 50 years (post World War II) have affected the level and nature of volunteering.

On account of the limited amount of New Zealand-focused material on volunteering and the voluntary social service sector, most of the literature in the review is from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Further research is needed to understand the level and nature of volunteering amongst Māori and Pacific peoples, which deserves greater prominence in any future descriptions of the sector.

Background

Voluntary social service organisations in New Zealand have traditionally played an innovative role in responding to community needs. Moore and Tennant (1997) describe the voluntary sector and the state as having complementary roles prior to the 1980s, with services delivered to a diverse range of groups through grant funding.

1 Voluntary social service organisations '...deliver social services, from self-help groups to large-scale organisations with broadly defined social and humanitarian goals aimed at helping others' (Kuhnle and Selle, 1992: 5). Table 1, Part II, provides examples of voluntary social service organisations in New Zealand, and volunteers' roles.



In the past two decades the sector has taken a more central role in the provision of social services to communities through the introduction of contracting. The voluntary social service sector can be seen as a key stakeholder in the New Zealand Government's efforts to mobilise communities and to further encourage community responsibility and participation.

As the voluntary social service sector continues to play a significant role in social services provision, it is important to have an understanding of the current trends and changes occurring within the sector. One potentially notable trend, suggested by a number of people working within voluntary social service organisations, is that it is getting harder to recruit and retain volunteers.

Definitions

For the purpose of this review, the following definition of 'volunteering' has been adopted: 'activities or work done of a person's free will for the benefit of others (beyond the immediate family) for no payment other than, in some cases, a small honorarium and/or expenses' (Gaskin and Davis Smith, 1997: 7).

The structural/operational definition of the voluntary sector is used to shape the focus of this review. In this definition, the 'third sector' is defined as a collection of organisations that are: formal; private; non-profit distributing; self-governing; and voluntary (Salamon and Anheier, 1992). Within Salamon and Anheier's structural/operational definition, the review will focus specifically on volunteering that takes place within voluntary social service organisations.

The term 'volunteering' appears to be a class and culturally-based concept. Clear correlations between formal² volunteers and earning a higher income, belonging to a dominant ethnic group and having high levels of education have been identified by many authors. The term 'volunteering' is frequently associated with formal social service volunteering and the 'middle-class, middle-aged' stereotype. However, people in lower socio-economic groups and the unemployed, for example, often volunteer outside the structures of traditional formal volunteering.

In addition, while there are high levels of volunteering amongst Māori, a literature review focusing on volunteering within voluntary social service organisations will not capture all the dynamics of, and changes in, Māori volunteering. Further research is needed to explore the extent and range of voluntary activities amongst Māori and Pacific peoples.

The 'Contract Culture' and Volunteering

The New Zealand Government's economic and social reforms of the 1980s and 1990s involved a shift to 'purchase-of-service contracting' for social services, with 'contracting-out' becoming the goal of successive restructurings in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The introduction of contracting has led to an expanded range of

2 For the purpose of this review, people who volunteer within an organisational context will be described as 'formal' volunteers.

social service provision by voluntary organisations and has caused a shift in the organisational structure and priorities of many voluntary organisations with the adoption of increasingly bureaucratic and professional practices.

The introduction of contracts in the voluntary sector has initiated the evolution of a professional culture within many voluntary organisations. A number of studies suggest that the increased professionalisation associated with contracting has, in some circumstances, added to the motivation and commitment of volunteers. There is also evidence, however, that not all volunteers have adapted or warmed to the new culture of volunteering, and that some organisations have experienced difficulties recruiting volunteers in a “more formal, controlled environment” (Davis Smith, 1997).

Governments have withdrawn from direct social service provision, with voluntary sector organisations contracted in to fill the gap. This has resulted in a build-up of expectations, demands and pressures on volunteers with regard to the type of work they undertake, the amount of time they commit to volunteering, and the longevity of their commitment. It is evident that volunteers involved in service delivery and those serving on management committees have experienced an increase in their workload and level of responsibility. A number of studies have reported that management committee volunteers are especially susceptible to increased demands and obligations in terms of their roles and responsibilities under a contracting framework.

Some studies suggest there has been an increase in demand for volunteers on account of these factors. It appears that the demand for volunteers in many organisations is increasingly targeted at volunteers with specialist skills. There are also reports that volunteers are becoming increasingly marginalised within voluntary organisations and, in some cases, are being replaced by paid workers.

Survey Findings

New Zealand does not have a national survey dedicated to volunteering. The Census does gather some information, and one-off surveys such as the Time Use Survey 1998-99 have also gathered information about volunteering.³ These surveys provide some insight into patterns of volunteering at various points in time, but not about changes in volunteering behaviour. There would be value in gathering regular data about changes in the level and nature of volunteering over time.

It is difficult to identify any clear trends in ‘social service volunteering’. Past surveys have differed in their definitions of ‘volunteering’ and in the measurement methods used. Few surveys have used the consistently worded repeated measures that are needed if changes in levels of volunteering activity are to be tracked over time. Among those that have, the findings about changes in levels of volunteering have been inconsistent. Few surveys collect data in such a way as to allow consideration of the social service sector specifically.

3 Note that neither the Census nor the Time Use Survey use the term ‘volunteering’, instead referring to ‘unpaid work’ outside the household.



Wider Influences on Volunteering

Worldwide, there are a number of social, economic, demographic, political and organisational factors that may have an influence on the level and nature of formal social service volunteering at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

New Zealand literature, and literature from the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Australia, identify factors that are thought to depress the level of formal social service volunteering. More women are now in the paid work-force and women are having fewer children; the number of people living in some rural areas is declining; people may now be more individualistic; people may believe they can not afford to volunteer (having other priorities for their time and/or income); and many people do not want to volunteer as part of the contract culture with its increased pressure and workload.

Factors that probably tend to boost volunteering include: an increase in the number of people with university degrees; the ageing of the 'baby-boom' population; the trend towards a shortened work life; the search for job skills amongst unemployed and young people looking to build skills; and a rise in 'corporate volunteering' schemes.

The nature of volunteering, in some areas, also appears to be changing: voluntary organisations are seeking skilled volunteers, and people may be more episodically involved in volunteering, or involved in fewer organisations.

Future of Volunteering

There appears to be a move away from the 'traditional' social service volunteers (typically women who are not engaged in paid work) to encompass other 'time-rich, work-poor' groups outside the paid work-force (such as older retired people and young people seeking work experience).

There is a sense that some parts of the voluntary social service sector are 'at the crossroads', as the traditional volunteer base declines and difficulties are encountered in recruiting new volunteers. In many cases, the difficulty is not just finding volunteers, but finding volunteers with the right skills.

On account of the multiplicity of views and complex nature of volunteering in the voluntary social service sector, it is difficult to provide answers to questions about the future of volunteering in the social service sector. Following consideration of the literature on the 'contract culture' and the wider economic, demographic and social context affecting volunteering, this review outlines a series of questions that are important to consider in any discussions on the future of formal social service volunteering in New Zealand.

Part I:

INTRODUCTION

Context and Outline

There have been a number of significant changes in the environment in which the voluntary social service sector operates, including the relationship with government (which has involved a shift from grants to contracts as the main funding mechanism), changes in labour force participation (especially by women) and in the nature of work, and wide-ranging changes in social attitudes and behaviour, including use of leisure time. Some commentators, including people in the voluntary social service sector, have expressed concern about the potential impact of these forces on patterns of volunteering. The review was commissioned to provide an in-depth examination of changes that have affected the voluntary social service sector and to consider the implications of these changes for patterns of volunteering.

The objectives of the review were:

- to examine how the introduction of the ‘contract culture’⁴ has influenced volunteering in voluntary social service organisations;
- to identify the changes that have occurred in voluntary social service organisations in terms of the *level* (number of volunteers) and *nature* (type of volunteering activities undertaken) of volunteering;
- to examine the possible reasons for – and potential consequences of – any changes in the level and nature of volunteering in the voluntary social service sector; and
- to consider the future role of volunteers within voluntary social service organisations.

The review focuses solely on volunteering that takes place within voluntary social service organisations. Debates over the nature of volunteering (and the meaning of the term itself) outside this context are acknowledged. In addition, this review has relied on literature focused predominantly on medium-to-large voluntary social service organisations and has therefore explored the trends in only a small part of the complex and diverse voluntary social service sector.

A supplementary data review (Smithies, 2001) was developed to outline and discuss the available data on volunteering in New Zealand, including demographic profiles of current volunteers, the work they undertake and the perspective of voluntary organisations. Smithies addresses the question of whether current data can give insights into changes in volunteering over time.

4 The ‘contract culture’ refers to the use of formalised contracts by the government to purchase social services from the voluntary sector.



The main focus of this literature review is on changes over the past two decades since the widespread introduction of contracting for social services. The review also considers how a number of the wider economic, demographic and social changes over the past 50 years (post World War II) have affected the level and nature of volunteering.

Due to the limited amount of New Zealand material on volunteering and the voluntary social service sector, most of the literature in the review is from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.⁵ There are a number of similarities in the changes experienced in these countries since the 1950s, which gives some confidence in the relevance of these findings to the New Zealand context. Further New Zealand-based research is recommended to determine the extent to which the overseas findings are relevant to New Zealand. In particular, further research is needed to understand the level and nature of volunteering amongst Māori and Pacific peoples, which deserves greater prominence in any future descriptions of the sector.

Background

Voluntary social service organisations in New Zealand have traditionally played an innovative role in responding to community needs. Moore and Tennant (1997) describe the voluntary sector and the state as having complementary roles prior to the 1980s, with services delivered to a diverse range of groups through grant funding.

In the past two decades the sector has taken a more central role in the provision of social services to communities through the introduction of contracting. The voluntary social service sector can be seen as a key stakeholder in the New Zealand Government's efforts to mobilise communities and to further encourage community responsibility and participation.

Suggate (1995: 1) looks at the main issues facing the voluntary sector in New Zealand and notes:

A key change in the past decade has been Government's increasing reliance on the voluntary sector for delivery of social assistance to communities. Alongside this has been the move by most departments from grant funding to contracting, which has dramatically affected Government/voluntary sector relationships.

Munford and Sanders (1999: 49) also allude to the change in the relationship between the voluntary sector and the state:

The change in the state funding from grants-in-aid to contract-based payments signifies a key change in the nature of the relationships between the state and the not-for-profit sector. In particular the development has changed not-for-profit organisations from an independent sector to a vehicle for the delivery and implementation of state policy.

5 In any further work, it would be useful to extend this focus to a number of other countries. Canada, for example, has carried out national research on volunteering (<http://www.nsgvp.org/>) [accessed 29/10/01].

The establishment of the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party by the Government in 2000 has also highlighted the importance of the voluntary sector and the need to establish a positive and effective working relationship between the Government and community partners. The Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party was established to consider “the scope of a proposed agreement between government and Iwi/Māori, community and voluntary organisations” (Ministry of Social Policy (MSP), 2001: 10).

As the voluntary social service sector continues to play a significant role in social services provision, it is important to have an understanding of the current trends and changes occurring within the sector. One potentially notable trend, suggested by a number of people working within voluntary social service organisations, is that it is getting harder to recruit and retain volunteers. A report by the Department of Internal Affairs (1997: 43) drew attention to the difficulty of finding people willing to serve on COGS⁶ committees:

In some areas – particularly in the cities, it is getting harder and harder to get people to agree to stand for nomination. Ten years ago there was stiff competition to get elected to a local committee; today in a society where voluntary work appears to be given less value and where independence is valued over interdependence, fewer people are prepared to put the long voluntary hours into administering COGS.

A report on the voluntary welfare sector in Palmerston North commented that “volunteers are hard to find. The organisations are generally run by trained professionals” (Ritchie, 1996: 1). Similarly, a New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFVWO) survey conducted in 1991 (Malcolm et al., 1993: 129) found that some agencies “noted that volunteers can be more difficult to recruit” which means that more time, effort, resources and money need to be devoted to recruitment.

Some respondents to a survey initiated by the Associate Minister of Social Welfare⁷ reported concerns about the “ever increasing burden that is falling on a smaller and smaller pool of volunteers in the community” (New Zealand Community Funding Agency Community Provider Survey: Executive Summary, 1998: 3).

A number of submissions to the New Zealand Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001) referred to the ageing of the volunteer base and the difficulty of recruiting new volunteers, for example:

There is a fear about the survival of organisations which depend on volunteers. Our base is so thin, young people are busy ... we see the same old faces, it is very difficult to attract volunteers.

6 Community Organisation Grants Scheme.

7 The survey was undertaken to elicit feedback from organisations funded by the New Zealand Community Funding Agency on the agency's processes and performance.



These views, however, may not be representative of the entire voluntary social service sector. Part of the impetus for this review arose from concern that more is being asked of voluntary organisations at the same time as their resources are shrinking. As this review will illustrate, there are many diverse and often conflicting trends in the level and nature of volunteering. The review will discuss a number of these trends and attempt to provide an explanation of changes in the level and nature of volunteering within the voluntary social service sector.

Review Outline

The review is divided into the following parts:

Part II: Scope of the Review defines the terms ‘volunteering’, ‘voluntary sector’, ‘voluntary social service organisations’ and ‘formal volunteering’.

Part III: Volunteering Within Voluntary Social Service Organisations: Who is Included and Excluded? describes the characteristics of people involved in formal volunteering and people who participate outside the boundaries of traditional formal volunteering.

Part IV: The Contract Culture and Changes in Volunteering identifies some of the key changes undergone by voluntary social service organisations following the introduction of contracting, and then explores the impact of these changes on patterns of volunteering.

Part V: Formal Social Service Volunteering and Survey Findings reviews the available evidence on changes in the level and nature of volunteering in voluntary social service organisations, based on survey findings.

Part VI: Economic, Demographic and Social Influences on Volunteering considers the wider changes that may have influenced the level and nature of volunteering in the past 50 years and that may influence future trends.

Part VII: Future of Social Service Sector Volunteering considers the future role of volunteering within voluntary social service organisations and how the changing social, economic, demographic, political and organisational context will influence both future decisions to volunteer and the nature of volunteering activities.

Part VIII: Conclusions and Future Research provides a concluding discussion and identifies a range of issues on which further research is required.

Part II:

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Introduction

The review specifically focuses on changes in volunteering within voluntary social service organisations. The terms 'volunteering' and 'voluntary sector' are defined below in order to provide some background for the study and to help shape the boundaries and content of the review. The term 'formal social service volunteering' has been developed to describe the type of volunteering activities that are the focus of this review. This term is discussed below in further detail.

Volunteering

While the term 'volunteering' is widely recognised, there is no standard definition of this term. 'Volunteering' is usually associated with positive actions and 'doing something good' for the wider community on an unpaid basis. The term 'volunteer' is used to refer to a person who is engaged in a wide range of activities, such as working for Meals on Wheels, volunteer fire-fighting, sports coaching, working for Greenpeace, or looking after other people's children.

There is no consensus as to whether the term 'volunteering' refers only to unpaid work done for an organisation (for example, a non-profit organisation, profit organisation or government) or whether it also includes informal activities outside any organisational context (for example, babysitting, or gardening for a neighbour). In addition, questions arise as to whether particular types of activity (for example, religious or political activity) are included in, or excluded from, the concept (Chambré, 1993; Cnaan and Amroffell, 1994).⁸

According to Harris (1996: 55):

Some writers have argued that there is a conceptual difference between unpaid work done informally within the personal sphere and that done for the benefit of 'strangers' and by positive choice; they see only the latter as 'volunteering'. Others have cautioned against making such a firm distinction, since how people perceive their own and others' unpaid activities appears to be a function of cultural factors including race and class.

Table 1 provides examples of voluntary organisations and volunteering roles. It is important to note that this table is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to provide an indication of the wide range of activities and organisations

⁸ For further discussion on definitions of volunteering refer to Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth, 1996; Harris, 1996; Kuhnle and Selle, 1992; Sheard, 1995; Stebbins, 1996; Van Til, 1988; Wiedman Heidrich, 1990. The Constitution of the National Association of Volunteer Centres in Aotearoa New Zealand (2001) includes a definition of volunteering in the Preamble.



that make up the 'voluntary sector'. These categories are not mutually exclusive and there are other ways to arrange this taxonomy.

Table 1: Examples of voluntary organisations and volunteering roles

| Sector | Organisations | Roles |
|---|--|---|
| Social Services | Salvation Army, National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, Māori Women's Welfare League, Presbyterian Support Services, Wesley Wellington Mission, City Centre for the Elderly, Youthline Counselling | Meals on Wheels distributor, night shelter worker, counsellor, budgeting adviser, foodbank co-ordinator, prison visitor, op shop worker, soup kitchen worker, computer technician |
| Health | AIDS Foundation, IHC, Mercy Hospitals Auckland, marae-based women's health clinics | Hospital driver, nursing home visitor, crisis counsellor, accountant |
| Education NZ | Playcentre Federation, Adult Reading Literacy Association | Adult literacy tutor, Kohanga Reo parent help, school library assistant, children's play group co-ordinator, school board of trustees member |
| Sport & Recreation | New Zealand Tennis, Regional Sport Trust, Titahi Bay Athletics Club, Petone Baptist Youth Group, Pencarrow Girls' Brigade | Netball administrator, marathon support crew, rugby referee, soccer coach, Toastmasters' President, chess club co-ordinator, garden club organiser; Scout leader |
| International | Amnesty International, Red Cross, World Vision, VSA | Relief worker, teacher, street collector |
| Arts & Culture | Historic Places Trust, Porirua Community Theatre, ACCESS Radio | Kapa Haka group manager, community theatre usher, drama group treasurer, community radio announcer, art gallery guide, festival stage manager |
| Politics, Advocacy & Information | NZ Citizens Advice Bureaux, New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, Waterfront Watch, Federated Farmers | CAB worker, board member, self-help group co-ordinator |
| Community & Society | Rotary, Neighbourhood Watch, Lions | Marae committee member, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator |
| Environment & Animal Welfare | Greenpeace, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, Havelock North Environmental Home Group | 'Friends of the Zoo' member, SPCA volunteer, beach clean up participant, Department of Conservation track maintenance volunteer, Historic Places Trust volunteer |

Adapted from the Report of the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001)

As Lyons, Wijkstrom and Clary (1998: 51) note:

Different people will draw the line between what is volunteering and what is not at different points. Moreover, it is likely that this line might be drawn, on average, at different points by people in different societies.

An example of this in the New Zealand context is the proposition that Māori conceptualise 'volunteering' in a different manner than do Pakeha⁹; this issue is further explored in Part IV.

⁹ For the purpose of this review, Spoonley's (1988, 63-64) definition of 'Pakeha' has been adopted: 'New Zealanders of a European background, whose cultural values and behaviour have been primarily formed from the experience of being a member of the dominant group of New Zealand'.

For the purpose of this review, the following definition of 'volunteering' has been adopted:

Activities or work done of a person's free will for the benefit of others (beyond the immediate family) for no payment other than, in some cases, a small honorarium and/or expenses (Gaskin and Davis Smith, 1997: 7).

The three key elements in this definition are free will, benefit to others and lack of payment. Many writers regard motivation as crucial to the definition of a volunteer and argue that volunteering should be freely chosen and not compulsory or coerced (Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), 1996; Cnaan et al., 1996; Sheard, 1995). The second dimension of the term volunteer concerns who 'benefits'. Beneficiaries of 'voluntary work' may be people known or unknown to the volunteer. Lack of payment is one of the most common themes running through definitions of volunteering (Lynn, 1997). However, many definitions stress the need to cover out-of-pocket expenses (ACOSS, 1996; Gaskin and Davis Smith, 1997; Sheard, 1995).

Voluntary Sector

The 'voluntary sector' operates in a space outside of the public/state, private/market and household sectors and is variously referred to as the 'community sector', the 'third sector', the 'non-government sector', the 'charitable sector', the 'civil society sector' and the 'not-for-profit sector'.

According to Salamon and Anheier (1992: 126) there is no agreement "about the contours, let alone the precise contours, of a third complex of institutions, a definable 'third sector' occupying a distinctive social space outside of both the market and the state". As Table 1 illustrates, there is a great diversity of organisations within the voluntary sector (for example, Women's Refuges, the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, sports clubs and marae committees). These organisations vary in size and structure from large corporate national organisations with hundreds of (paid) staff and large budgets to small volunteer-based organisations operating as a collective and running on very small budgets (MSP, 2001).

The lack of clarity about the terminology, definitions and classifications regarding the collection of organisations that operate in this 'third space' has led Kendall and Knapp (1995: 66) to describe the voluntary sector as a "loose and baggy monster". They observe that "the voluntary sector contains a bewildering array of organisational forms, activities, motivations and ideologies".

Salamon and Anheier (1992) contend that one of the reasons for the lack of appreciation of the 'third sector' has been the absence of a sufficiently clear and workable definition of what the sector encompasses. They allude to "the weakness and limitation of the *concepts* that have so far been used to comprehend and define it".



A number of different approaches have been developed to define the voluntary sector and classify the organisations of which it is composed. Such definitions and classifications are based on the values and objectives of organisations, on the management systems they use, their methods of resourcing, or their functions (Brenton, 1985; Kendall and Knapp, 1995; Robinson, 1993; Salamon, 1995).

Salamon and Anheier (1992: 135) identify four types of definition: the legal definition, the economic/financial definition, the functional definition, and the structural/operational definition. They recommend using the structural/operational definition for comparative cross-national research. This definition is broad, but has enough structure to allow for national and international comparisons and consistency (MSP: 2001). The ‘third sector’ is thus defined as a collection of organisations that are:

- formal – the organisation has some institutional reality;
- private – institutionally separate from government;
- non-profit distributing – not returning profits generated to their owners or directors;
- self-governing – equipped to control their own activities; and
- voluntary – involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation, either in the actual conduct of the agency’s activities or in the management of its affairs.

The structural/operational definition of the voluntary sector shapes the focus of this review. However, it is acknowledged that, by adopting this definition, the review will exclude volunteering for government or private for-profit organisations, certain types of informal organisations, and some Māori and Pacific peoples’ organisations. The exclusion of these types of organisations is discussed further in Part III.

Voluntary Social Service Organisations and Formal Volunteering

Within Salamon and Anheier’s (1992) structural/operational definition, the review focuses specifically on volunteering that takes place within voluntary social service organisations. These organisations are a subset of what Salamon (1995) terms “public-benefit organisations”. Public-benefit organisations “exist primarily to serve others, to provide goods and services (including information and advocacy) to those in need or otherwise to contribute to the general welfare” (Salamon, 1995: 54).

Kuhnle and Selle (1992: 5) propose a similar definition:

Organisations which deliver social services, from self-help groups to large-scale organisations with broadly defined social and humanitarian goals aimed at helping others.

Table 1 provides some examples of voluntary social service organisations in the New Zealand context. These organisations vary in size and structure, as can be seen in the following examples:

- National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges: a large association with 51 member refuges with a 1999/2000 total of 658 advocates, 75% of whom are unpaid.
- Wesley Wellington Mission: a regional organisation linked to a national network, which employs 200 paid staff. Volunteers are involved at both board and service level.
- City Centre for the Elderly: a small stand-alone drop-in centre for older people, which employs a paid part-time administrator, but is otherwise primarily dependent on unpaid volunteers (MSP, 2001: 43).

It is important to note that voluntary social service organisations cannot be easily distinguished from education or health services (as might be suggested in Table 1). The AIDS Foundation ('health') and the Adult Reading Literacy Association ('education') can both be described as voluntary social service organisations. The definitions of voluntary social service organisations outlined above are therefore broad enough to incorporate a wide range of organisations and activities.

Volunteers within voluntary social service organisations will be involved in a range of volunteering activities including service provision, fundraising, advocacy and campaigning, and governance and management. For the purpose of this review, people who volunteer within an organisational context will be described as 'formal' volunteers. Those who are the central focus of this review are 'formal social service volunteers' – those who volunteer for organisations in the voluntary social services sector.

The focus of this review is on changes in the level and nature of volunteering within voluntary social service organisations. The focus on the formal voluntary social service sector reflects the visibility of the formal sector, the greater access to information about that sector, and the closer links between the formal sector and government.



Part III:

VOLUNTEERING WITHIN VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS: WHO IS INCLUDED AND EXCLUDED?

Introduction

The focus on volunteering within voluntary social service organisations excludes informal activities, volunteering for government or private organisations, and volunteering within other voluntary organisations that do not provide social services. Part III reviews the demographic profile of those people who volunteer for voluntary social service organisations and also reviews the groups of people who may be excluded from the boundaries of this study (for example, those who participate in informal volunteering). It is important that further research is carried out on trends in volunteering amongst the groups that are excluded from the focus of this review.

Formal Volunteering: The Dominant Status Model

In the public mind the concept of volunteering is frequently associated with volunteering for formal organisations, and the ‘middle-class, middle-aged’ stereotype. Traditional social service volunteering is often the public face of the voluntary sector, with stereotypes of the ‘typical’ volunteer ‘do-gooders’ commonly associated with formal volunteering. United Kingdom author Sheard (1995: 120) notes that “the typical stereotype of a volunteer is that of a middle-aged, middle-class, white female”, a “Lady Bountiful”.¹⁰ This stereotype is also applicable in the New Zealand context. New Zealand authors Bradford and Nowland-Foreman (1999: 11) comment that:

The concept of ‘voluntary work’ is primarily European in origin. Yet even within this context it is more likely to conjure up images of middle-class, middle-aged women undertaking charitable work, than the full range of people and activities currently covered by the term.

Although current literature and research suggest that a range of people do get involved in volunteering, this ‘outdated’ stereotype is still often adopted to describe a typical volunteer. In Australia it has been argued that the media has narrowly represented volunteers as being “dominated by retired women providing meals-on-wheels” (ACOSS, 1996: 103).

¹⁰ ‘Lady Bountiful’ is a character from a play by George Farquhar. “She is a rich country lady who devotes her time to helping her less fortunate neighbours. She has become a proverbial figure.” (Bloomsbury Dictionary of English Literature, 1997).



Lemon et al. (1972) developed a theoretical model that looked at the determinants of volunteer participation in the United States. They argue that people who participate in formal voluntary roles tend to occupy a 'dominant status' position. Smith et al. (1980: 470-471, in Smith, 1983: 86-87) drew on the work of Lemon et al. (1972) to describe a multitude of characteristics associated with 'dominant status', including:

[M]ale gender, middle age ... married, parent of several 'legitimate' children, parent of children who are mainly in the age range of about five to fifteen years ... member of several formal voluntary groups ... long-term resident ... high in income and wealth ... employed in paid work ... high in occupational prestige ... high in formal education level.

Since Lemon et al. (1972) articulated their 'dominant status model', clear correlations between formal volunteering and indicators of socio-economic status have been identified by many authors (Cnaan and Cwikel, 1992; Cox, 2000; Curtis et al., 1992; Davis Smith, 1992, 1998a; Gaskin and Davis Smith, 1997; Goss, 1999; Smith, 1983; Smith, 1994). Smith (1983: 86) contends that "participation is generally greater for individuals who are characterised by a more dominant ... set of social positions and roles". Sheard (1995: 120) expands on this point and notes that "higher rates of participation are associated with: higher income levels; being in paid employment; higher levels of skills and education; owner-occupiers; having access to a car and a telephone". Bales (1996: 210) observes that "higher levels of education, income, belonging to the dominant ethnic groups, [and] being able-bodied, are all positively related to volunteering".

National surveys in the United Kingdom and Europe have also identified a clear link between formal voluntary activity and socio-economic class, with people from the highest socio-economic group much more likely to volunteer in a formal capacity (Davis Smith, 1992, 1998a; Gaskin and Davis Smith 1997). The 1996 New Zealand Census (Zwart and Perez, 1999) and national surveys from the United Kingdom and the United States (Davis Smith, 1998a; Goss, 1999) have all identified a strong correlation between higher education and the probability of volunteering.

While not all formal volunteers conform to the dominant status or 'middle-class, middle-aged and white' stereotype, as Gaskin and Davis Smith (1997: 111) note, "we cannot escape the conclusion that there is a bias in formal volunteering towards the higher socio-economic groups".

It is important to note the relationship between gender and the dominant status model. There is a tension between the dominant status model that identifies males as dominant in volunteering, and traditional stereotypes that associate volunteering with 'middle-aged, middle-class, white females'. This apparent conflict may be resolved by acknowledging that men have been dominant in high profile associations, boards and committees, while the stereotype of females dominant in volunteering derives from their significant role in the 'charitable' social services field. The 1996 New Zealand Census, for example, found that women volunteer disproportionately in areas such as childcare, teaching and fundraising (Zwart and Perez, 1999). Similarly, the Australian survey of volunteering (ACOSS, 1996) states that female volunteering patterns mirror patterns of women's involvement in paid work, and, more broadly, the roles traditionally accorded to women.

Moving Beyond The Boundaries of Formal Volunteering

Before examining changes in the level and nature of formal social service volunteering, it is important to highlight the limitations of this review. By adopting a narrow focus, the review is unable to capture the dynamics of the wide range of volunteering that takes place outside the boundaries of formal volunteering. People who do not fit within the 'dominant status' model (for example, those in other socio-economic and ethnic groups and the unemployed) do volunteer, but often outside the structures of traditional formal volunteering.

Socio-economic Status

The dominant status model suggests strong links between middle-class, socio-economic positioning and formal volunteering. Davis Smith (1992), however, cautions against 'over-stressing' the connection between volunteering and class and suggests that the findings of surveys may be skewed by the definitions of volunteering used. The dominant status model only includes formal volunteering and while volunteers in formal organisations are more likely to come from higher socio-economic groups, people involved in informal volunteering (for example, caring for an elderly neighbour) are more likely to come from lower socio-economic groups.

Gaskin and Davis Smith (1997: 110) insist that:

We must avoid drawing the conclusion that the less educated and well-off rarely volunteer. Their contribution to their communities may be more informal, but it is no less significant than that of formal volunteers.

The 1996 New Zealand Census data supports the argument that those in higher socio-economic groups (with higher income or in professional jobs) do not volunteer more in general, but instead have higher participation rates in more formalised types of voluntary work (for example, teaching, training and coaching, and administration and policy work) (Zwart and Perez, 1999).

In addition, the term 'volunteering' itself has middle-class connotations (Davis Smith, 1992; Gaskin and Davis Smith, 1997). Davis Smith (1992: 89) suggests that as a consequence "people from lower socio-economic groups are failing to recognise their activities in the community as volunteering, seeing them instead as examples of informal caring and neighbourliness". This point is echoed by Bradford and Nowland-Foreman (1999: 11) who contend that many Pakeha New Zealanders do not identify their "unpaid activities outside the home (coaching, committee work, running church activities and more informal helping out) as 'voluntary work'".

Employment Status

Unemployed people are also more likely to participate in informal voluntary activities. Data from the 1996 New Zealand Census (Zwart and Perez, 1999) shows that employed people were more likely to participate in formalised types of voluntary work (for example, administration or policy work). However, unemployed people had the highest participation rates in *informal* voluntary work (for example, household work outside of the immediate household and childcare).



The Australian Bureau of Statistics Time Use Survey (1995) produced similar results, revealing that when informal voluntary activity was also included, people who were not in the labour force had higher participation rates in voluntary work than others. The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS, 1996) survey of volunteering in Australia found that unemployed people also spent much more time engaged in voluntary work activities than other groups. A similar result was reported from the 1996 New Zealand Census (Zwart and Perez, 1999). This type of voluntary activity was defined as ‘hidden market activity’ as it occurred outside formal organisations (ACOSS, 1996).

Ethnicity

Belonging to a dominant ethnic group has been identified as a key indicator of the propensity to volunteer (Bales, 1996). Other ethnic groups do not feature significantly in many surveys of formal volunteering (Davis Smith, 1992). However, the term ‘volunteering’ appears to be a culturally-based as well as a class-based concept (Davis Smith, 1992). Volunteering and the voluntary sector are essentially Pakeha concepts. Figures on ‘race’ and volunteering need to be treated with caution and it would be wrong to conclude from survey results that other ethnic groups do not volunteer (Davis Smith, 1992).

As Suggate (1995: 10) notes, “one of the challenges in defining New Zealand’s voluntary sector arises from different concepts in Pakeha and Māori culture”. The ways in which Pakeha and Māori conceptualise ‘volunteering’ must be taken into account. The following quote is a useful example:

When I get up as a Pakeha and mow my lawns, I mow my lawns... When I go down the road to the disabled children's home and mow their lawns I volunteer to do something for the other ... When my friend Huhana gets up and mows her lawns, she mows her lawns, when she goes down to the Kohanga Reo and mows lawns, she mows her lawns. When she moves across and mows the lawns at the Marae and the Hauora, she mows her lawns – because there is no sense of ‘other’ (Stansfield, 2001).

While there are high levels of volunteering amongst Māori, a literature review focusing on volunteering within voluntary social service organisations will not capture the dynamics and changes in Māori volunteering. As Bradford and Nowland-Foreman (1999: 11) observe:

There is ... no direct equivalent to the term ‘volunteering’ in Te Reo Māori, and it has been suggested that this is probably a reason for serious under-reporting of voluntary work by Māori – especially prior to the 1996 Census.¹¹

¹¹ Variations in Census questions relating to voluntary activities have resulted in markedly differing estimates of the number of people involved in voluntary work; in 1996 the wording of the question was rephrased to capture ‘unpaid work outside the household’ (see Part V, re survey findings).

This analysis is supported by Dobson-Smith's comments (in Suggate, 1995: 47):

For the past ten years I have lived in Ahipara, a predominantly Māori, rurally isolated community in the Far North. The numbers of people reported by the [1991] Census to be involved in unpaid voluntary work in the area do not represent the number I know to be actively involved. Hence it seems many residents in that community do not see themselves as 'volunteering'.

Dobson-Smith describes how the Ahipara region has six Marae, each with a number of trustees, Marae komiti officers, representatives and delegates from runanga and district council, Māori wardens and trust boards, as well as operational staff and 30-40 occasional workers needed to run an average hui. Despite the obviously high level of involvement in voluntary work, the 1991 Census reported only 12 people in the region doing voluntary work of a cultural nature. In a similar way, the 1991 Census figures reported only 27 people in voluntary sports coaching or administration, and 3 in voluntary work for youth activities. The Ahipara region, however, has two league clubs, two football clubs, two touch clubs, and two basketball clubs, all fielding several teams, as well as surf, tennis, pony, athletics, boxing, canoe and karate clubs, and two organisations providing school holiday programmes.

The New Zealand Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001: 36) also observed similar issues in relation to Pacific peoples:

While discussion about use of the term 'voluntary' has been highlighted by concerns about its inappropriateness in the Māori context, it should be noted that the distinction between personal caring for family members and contributing to the wider society is similarly blurred in other cultural groups. For Pacific peoples and other ethnic groups where the extended family forms the primary focus of social interaction, many areas of caring activity, community participation and advocacy on behalf of family members would not be perceived as 'voluntary'.

While Pakeha do identify actions that help members of their own family as 'volunteering' (for example, family-centred school and sports activities) this volunteering typically takes place within an organisational context.

The concept of formal volunteering that only includes work done for the benefit of others *outside* the family and within an *organisational* context, does not fit comfortably within a Māori or Pacific peoples' framework. Within Māori and Pacific peoples' communities there is a strong commitment to the extended family and it may not be possible to distinguish the whānau/family from the wider hapu/iwi/community (MSP, 2001).

Similarly, a study of volunteering found evidence of "extensive voluntary activity within [London's] black community, particularly of the mutual-aid and self-help type" (Davis Smith, 1992: 89). Sheard (1995: 121) contends that "the level of volunteering by people from black and ethnic minority communities appears to be similar to that for the general population". She explains that "black and ethnic minority people are more likely to be involved in informal voluntary activity, and are under-represented in formal 'white' voluntary organisations" (Sheard, 1995: 121).



Both the 1996 New Zealand Census and the Time Use Survey 1998-99 found that Māori men and women have higher rates of volunteering than Pakeha, and spend more time (on average) volunteering than Pakeha (Zwart and Perez, 1999; Statistics New Zealand, 1999a; Statistics New Zealand (2001).

As the New Zealand Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party report noted (MSP, 2001: 36):

Internationally researchers and analysts have suggested a number of methods for defining or describing the characteristics of community and voluntary organisations as a 'sector'. All offer some insights, but none provides the complete picture.

It is therefore not possible to offer one term or definition that captures the complex, diverse and dynamic nature of the community and volunteering involvement of Māori and Pacific peoples, as well as that of other ethnic groups, within the traditional Pakeha framework of formal volunteering.

Due to the complex and dynamic nature of the voluntary sector, the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party decided not to develop terminology to describe the sector, as it might have arbitrarily included certain elements and excluded others. Instead, the Working Party adopted the broad and inclusive phrase "Iwi/Māori, community and voluntary organisations" (MSP, 2001).

It is evident that the terms 'volunteering' and particularly 'social service sector volunteering' are entrenched in class and cultural assumptions and stereotypes. It is acknowledged that, by using these terms, this review may only capture a small part of the total volume of volunteering activity in New Zealand as it may be more widely envisioned.

Part IV:

THE 'CONTRACT CULTURE' AND CHANGES IN VOLUNTEERING

Introduction

There have been significant shifts in the roles played by the government and the voluntary sector in social service provision in New Zealand since the introduction of the 'contract culture' in the 1980s.

This section briefly identifies some of the key changes undergone by voluntary social service organisations following the introduction of the contract culture and the impact of these changes on the level and nature of volunteering.

Similar patterns of change in the role of government and the voluntary sector in the provision of social services are evident across a number of other countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. A review of the dynamics of government, voluntary sector and volunteer relations in these countries provides a useful benchmark and sets New Zealand in an international context of transformation and change. The New Zealand author Cull (1993: 6), however, cautions against taking a rigid approach to comparative analysis and notes:

While there are many useful parallels between American, British and New Zealand voluntary organisations operating within an environment of scarcity of resources and government cutbacks, there are also difficulties with assuming commonality.

In particular, New Zealand has a significant indigenous Māori population and a large Pacific community. New Zealand has also experienced a period of social and economic reform over the past two decades that is regarded by many as being more far-reaching than that experienced by any other country (MSP, 2001).

Cull (1993: 6), however, also notes:

There are definite similarities to be found between the organisations themselves in the voluntary sector and the environments from which they emerge and in which they operate, whether North American or Antipodean.

It is widely acknowledged in the literature that the adoption of a contracting framework has had a significant impact on the voluntary social service sector, both in New Zealand and internationally. A number of authors, however, stress the importance of not attributing recent changes in the voluntary sector-government relationship solely to the introduction of contracting, but instead situate those changes within the broader context of political, economic and social transformation.



According to 6 and Kendall (1997: 7):

It is extremely hard to understand the extent to which change in the voluntary sector can be attributed to 'contracting' ... and to distinguish its effects from those of a huge array of other facts that impinge upon the voluntary sector and its relationship with government.

The impact of contracting on volunteering cannot be considered independently of the broader context of change stemming from the social and economic restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s, and the wider changes since the 1950s. These economic, demographic and social changes are explored further in Part VI.

The 'Contract Culture' and Voluntary Organisations

A significant part of the New Zealand Government's economic and social reforms of the 1980s and 1990s was the move to 'purchase-of-service contracting' for social services, with 'contracting-out' becoming the goal of successive restructurings in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Malcolm et al., 1993; Nowland-Foreman, 1997; Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994; Suggate, 1995). A number of government reports and reviews at the time advocated or signalled the need to devolve state functions to the voluntary sector (Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994).

The change from funding social services through the provision of grants and subsidies to the use of contracts was formalised by the then Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in 1991 (see DSW Circular Memorandum, 1991). The DSW stated that the new contracting regime represented a major change in the way the government was to relate to voluntary organisations. Its key feature was the shift from organisation grant funding to project contract funding. As part of this change there was increased formalisation of the relationship between service providers (voluntary organisations) and purchasers (government) for the purchase of increasingly government-defined outputs (Malcolm et al., 1993; McKinlay Douglas, 1998; MSP, 2001; Smith, 1995).

The responses to those changes, on the part of both voluntary organisations and volunteers themselves, have been multiple and complex. This section discusses the nature of these responses, both in terms of organisational adaptations and changes in patterns of volunteering behaviour.

The voluntary social service sector changes outlined in this section over-simplify the 'real' picture. The degree or intensity of change has varied across locations, between organisations, and even within individual organisations. Any study of the relationship between government and the voluntary sector in New Zealand needs to take account of these spatial and organisational differences. It would be valuable to undertake research within the New Zealand voluntary social service sector to add further depth and clarification to this picture.

Much of the literature reviewed in this section is speculative and may over-simplify the impact that contracting has had on the voluntary sector. However, it appears that the contracting process is closely identified with characteristics of uniformity, standardisation and bureaucracy. Voluntary organisations that enter into the 'contract culture', for example, are often subjected to a substantial number

of additional, and often complex, requirements by state agencies. There is an expectation that voluntary organisations involved in formal government service delivery under contract to the state will regularly report on specified outputs, performance, accountability and auditing (Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994).

The 'contract culture' has placed additional pressure on some voluntary organisations to mirror the management and organisational structures of the state funder in order to optimise opportunities for securing contracts and to meet reporting requirements. In response, some organisations have sought to reinvent their identity and have moved to adopt a strategic focus in line with government policy in order to expand their activities through contracts and take advantage of contracting opportunities (MSP, 2001). Submissions from the voluntary sector to the New Zealand Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party mentioned that the contracting model of funding has meant that there is a sense in which narrowly defined contracts for services had turned many aspects of social service and other community activity into " 'commodities' or commercial transactions" (MSP, 2001: 91).

There have been suggestions that organisations have moved to change their values, structures and processes in order to adopt a more 'professional' approach when attempting to secure government funding (Clark, 1997; Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994). Submissions to the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001) described the move to a "corporate style of governance" by many of the larger organisations. The McKinlay Douglas report (1998: 39) notes that "some providers have adapted or are adapting their services to more of a business model geared to providing the services government wants to purchase in line with government priorities". O'Brien et al.'s (1997: 125) report on the voluntary social service sector in Auckland concluded that:

Provision of services through the voluntary sector, funded by the state, results in the voluntary sector becoming inappropriately dependent on the state.

The dependency means that the voluntary sector can find itself providing services on the basis of what it can obtain funds for, rather than on the basis of its assessment of the needs of community, families and individuals.

The need for an accounting and reporting infrastructure to support organisations engaged in the 'contract culture', and the associated need for skilled staff to perform these functions, have led to an expansion, both in New Zealand and internationally, in the size and scale of many organisations (Kramer, 1994; Nowland-Foreman, 1997).

Compared with small agencies, large organisations are likely to have the internal infrastructure and resources to cope with additional demands from funders. Larger organisations can develop economies of scale, recruit people with the requisite managerial skills and expertise, and implement formal reporting procedures (Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994). These are all attributes that can make organisations attractive to funders who may favour organisations with professional expertise, a high profile, an established reputation, and organisational procedures and structures similar to their own (Gronbjerg, 1997; Gutch, 1992; Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994; Taylor and Lewis, 1997).



As voluntary organisations become professional and standardised in their operation, and their accountability requirements to government increase, Nowland-Foreman (1997: 25) contends that they are cajoled into:

[B]ecoming more like government – in their recruitment practices, in their accountability procedures, in their record-keeping, in their service eligibility criteria, in a standardisation of the way in which they operate, and so on.

Hedley and Davis Smith (1994: 5) note that voluntary organisations in the United Kingdom are increasingly expected to act as “the agents of the funders who purchase their services”. The McKinlay Douglas report (1998: 38) also cautions that “funding ‘with strings attached’ does risk the provider becoming an extension of the central government agency’s or the local authority’s own service delivery”. Munford and Sanders (1999: 73) also discuss the impact on the voluntary sector of the shift from funding through subsidies and grants to funding through contracts:

This change involves a redefinition of the nature of the relationship between the state and not-for-profit providers, wherein these providers become agents delivering core services on behalf of the Crown, rather than independent providers who receive financial support for the delivery of services identified as being of importance.

Government has therefore moved from investment in voluntary organisations to purchase of core government services, with voluntary organisations becoming alternative rather than complementary service providers (Lewis, 1996; Taylor and Lewis, 1997). As voluntary organisations shift to adopt the mantle of ‘state service provider’, the boundaries between voluntary organisations and government have become blurred. Nowland-Foreman (1997: 8), for example, draws on the work of Australian commentator Nyland (1993) and suggests that some voluntary organisations have shifted from being regarded as autonomous representatives of the community towards being treated merely as convenient conduits for public services – “little fingers of the state”. Similarly, Wolch (1990) coins the phrase “the shadow state” to refer to voluntary organisations receiving governmental funds which are situated outside the formal state infrastructure, but are nevertheless subject to state control.

The introduction of contracting has therefore signalled a shift in the organisational structure and priorities of many voluntary organisations with the adoption of increasingly bureaucratic and professional practices. Kelsey (1995: 293) notes that many larger, well-resourced voluntary organisations and charities have become “quasi-state agencies” accountable to and dependent on state funding. As one submission to the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001) noted, “most voluntary organisations did not start out as providers to capture government contracts but the sector is now seen primarily as a deliverer of services with whom government contracts”.

The Impact of the “Contract Culture” on Volunteering

A number of authors, in New Zealand and elsewhere, have sought to investigate how the shift towards a more professional/commercial management of service delivery associated with the contracting process has affected people’s willingness to engage in voluntary activity (Hedley and Davis Smith, 1994; McKinlay Douglas, 1998; Russell and Scott, 1997; Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994).

The lack of information on the impact of contracting on volunteering has often been noted in the wider literature, together with calls for further research on the topic (Davis Smith, 1997; Russell and Scott, 1997). There have been, however, a number of recent empirical studies carried out in other countries that have begun to explore the impact of contracting on volunteering in more detail (ACOSS, 1996; Hedley and Davis Smith, 1994; Lewis, 1996; Russell and Scott, 1997; Taylor and Lewis, 1997).

There have also been a number of New Zealand studies that have considered changes in the voluntary sector in the past two decades, including research by the NZFVWO (Malcolm et al., 1993; Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994), a review by Ernst and Young (1996) of the viability of organisations contracted to the New Zealand Community Funding Agency, and four local studies that surveyed organisations in particular cities (Fitzgerald and Cameron, 1989; Cull, 1993; Isaacs, 1993; Johns, 1998).

Literature examining the impact of the ‘contract culture’ on the level and nature of volunteering suggests that the nature of the relationship between contracting and volunteering is both complex and diverse. There does not appear to be a simple connection between the increasing use of contracts and trends in the level and nature of volunteering. Instead there appear to be multiple and often conflicting dynamics operating within and across the voluntary social service sector. According to the literature (both speculative and empirical), the contract culture has initiated a number of diverse and often contradictory trends in both the number of people who volunteer and the level of demand for volunteers.

The diverse nature of the discussion around changes in volunteering in the voluntary social service sector is illustrated in the findings from the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS, 1996) survey. Two different conclusions were identified by community service organisations concerning the availability of volunteers. Some respondents said that the supply of volunteers was ‘drying up’ and organisations were competing for the reduced pool of volunteers who were available. Other respondents considered that more volunteers were now available, and that their profile was becoming increasingly diverse. The survey found that 59% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “volunteers these days are harder to find than they used to be”; while 24% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.



Professionalisation – Advantages and Disadvantages

The introduction of contracts in the voluntary sector has initiated the evolution of a professional culture within many voluntary organisations in New Zealand and in other countries. As a consequence, there is evidence that the role of some volunteers has become progressively formalised with the introduction of job descriptions, supervision, and performance reviews (Russell and Scott, 1997).

Suggate (1995: 64) notes that:

Increasing workloads and skill requirements are resulting in demands for volunteer job descriptions, adequate support and training, grievance procedures and recognition for training undertaken.

A number of studies suggest that the increased professionalisation associated with contracting has, in some circumstances, added to the motivation and commitment of volunteers. The increased formalisation of the volunteer role and tighter individual volunteering contracts and job descriptions can potentially make volunteers feel more valued and therefore more motivated. Russell and Scott (1997: 53) suggest this formalisation can bring “increased clarity to the task at hand, greater confidence by volunteers in their ability to do the job, [and] the security of closer supervision by paid workers”.

From their survey of 275 volunteers in organisations providing services for older people, children and families, Russell and Scott (1997: 8) conclude that:

Two-fifths of all respondents felt that the status and value of their work had increased in the past three years; just over half reported that their satisfaction had increased ... there is a direct relationship between the proportion of respondents reporting increased workload, formalisation or training and the proportion reporting increased status and satisfaction.

In many cases, there has been an associated increase in the training and skill development opportunities available to volunteers. In a study of volunteering in Australia, Baldock (1991) noted an increase in volunteer training, payment of out-of-pocket expenses and volunteer insurance. A report on volunteering in the United States by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations observed that, in some cases, “contracts had been used as an opportunity to write in funding for volunteer expenses, training and a volunteer co-ordinator” (Richardson, 1993: iv). The findings from these studies therefore suggest that the demands for quality control and output specification associated with contracting have encouraged some organisations to take seriously the role of volunteers and the associated needs for training and support with a corresponding rise in the motivation of volunteers (Davis Smith, 1997).

There is also evidence, however, that not all volunteers have adapted or warmed to the new culture of volunteering, and that some organisations have experienced difficulties recruiting volunteers in a “more formal, controlled environment” (Davis Smith, 1997). People volunteer for a wide number of reasons and will have vastly different expectations of the volunteering experience. A significant change to the voluntary sector, such as the introduction of contracting, will impact on volunteers in markedly different ways. As Russell and Scott (1997: 53) observe:

While some volunteers might appreciate the benefits of formalisation and professionalisation, there are certainly those who feel that the parameters of volunteering are, and should remain, very different from paid work.

Lewis (1996: 105-6) echoes this comment:

The contract imposed ‘professional’ standards of assessment, management and evaluation, which met with some resistance from some, but not all, voluntary staff; inevitably volunteers have very different agendas when volunteering, some welcome the chance to train and absorb new ideas, some do not.

The same factors that have previously been identified as contributing to an increase in the motivation of some volunteers (such as increased status associated with providing a ‘statutory service’ and enhanced training opportunities for volunteers) may also contribute to a decrease in motivation amongst other volunteers (Russell and Scott, 1997). In their findings, Russell and Scott (1997: 46) state that “there was recognition even by purchasers that the formalisation of volunteers’ roles arising as a result of contracts may be the antithesis of why people volunteer”. Some volunteers have reportedly become “demotivated” by fundamental changes in their roles and others have expressed concern that the essential characteristics of voluntary activity should not change (Russell and Scott, 1997).

Volunteer Workload – Expectations and Demands

As governments have progressively withdrawn from direct social service provision with voluntary sector agencies contracted to fill the gap, this has resulted in a build-up of expectations, demands and pressures on volunteers with regard to the type of work they undertake, the amount of time they commit to volunteering, and the longevity of their commitment. Billis and Harris (1992: 219) note that volunteers “have been expected to undertake more and more training, to submit to various forms of monitoring, to commit more time more frequently, and to extend the range of tasks they will perform”. A study by Hedley and Rochester (1992) noted that some volunteers found the increased responsibilities and pressures brought about in part by contracting to be a heavy burden.

The following comments from various members of the New Zealand voluntary social service sector also add to the picture of increasing workloads and expectations (North Shore Community and Social Service Council, 1999):

Volunteers are becoming tired and often disillusioned with the burden of increased accountability, lack of recognition and diminishing resources to sustain the services they endeavour to deliver to their communities.
(‘Suggested Letter to Your MPs and Prospective MPs’)



A dwindling pool of experienced, willing and able people who have traditionally given their time to assist the community, are expected to 'work' in a professional manner which usually requires certain skills and qualifications. Under these circumstances this could lead to an expectation of long-term commitment, which negates the meaning of being a volunteer. Perhaps too much of a professional approach and the expectation of a long-term commitment may be viewed as a deterrent by those who wish to volunteer ('The "Voluntary Sector Under Attack" ').

The following quote comes from a submission made by the Gisborne Stroke Support Group Inc. to the New Zealand Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001):

From our experience, we believe that the voluntary sector is in danger of collapsing because of the increasing workload they are expected to undertake with ageing volunteers and difficulty recruiting new volunteers, along with diminishing levels of government funding.

A study of voluntary 'helping' organisations in Palmerston North, on the effects of funding requirements, found that heavier workloads were being placed on volunteers and that volunteers were being asked to pay more of their own expenses for travelling and training and were "opting out of jobs" (Cull, 1993).

Similarly, another study of voluntary welfare agencies in Palmerston North (Johns, 1998) found that one of the effects of the 'professionalisation' of the voluntary sector, had been to place higher time and training expectations on volunteers.

According to Suggate (1995: 64):

Increased poverty and unemployment, resulting in a greater complexity of client problems, has led to increased workloads and demand for higher skill levels of volunteers ... The tighter contract environment has resulted in less money available for reimbursement for volunteer expenses which have grown in line with workload increases.

The nature of the volunteers' workload has also changed in some cases, with volunteers now expected to undertake the 'paper work' associated with contracting rather than the 'real work' they had volunteered for. One submission to the New Zealand Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (MSP, 2001: 165) noted :

I am sick of being a volunteer and having to spend most of my time chasing small bits of funding from here, there and everywhere instead of being able to do the 'real' work which I love.

Another submission noted that the uncertainty of the contracting environment and the detailed accountability requirements can be a 'turn-off' for volunteers "who simply want to do the job and do not want all the hassles of being part of some government contract" (MSP, 2001, New Zealand Prisoners' Aid & Rehabilitation Society Inc. submission). The short-term nature of many contracts and the need to regularly apply for funding can provide a level of uncertainty within organisations and add to the workload and stress level of volunteers.

Volunteers have also had to cope with pressures of increased accountability and responsibility. As one submission stated:

Some people have come along just wanting to 'make a cup of tea' and found themselves in the executive and becoming legally liable for contracts. This is just too complicated and worrying for them (MSP, 2001: 166).

In addition, the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party noted a submission that "the struggle to obtain adequate ongoing funding and the lack of administrative and other support on the job lead to stress and burnout amongst both unpaid volunteers and paid staff" (MSP, 2001: 104).

It is evident that volunteers involved in service delivery and those serving on management committees have experienced an increase in their workload and level of responsibility. A number of studies have reported that management committee volunteers are especially susceptible to increased demands and obligations in terms of their roles and responsibilities under a contracting framework (Darvill, 1990; Davis Smith, 1997; Russell and Scott, 1997). This is particularly so for those who hold honorary positions such as chairperson, treasurer and secretary.

Lewis (1996) has examined the impacts of contracting on voluntary agencies belonging to the same national organisation in four London boroughs. From her study she concluded that volunteers in management positions:

... often found the formalisation of procedures demanded by the contract oppressive and in particular they resented the time required to fill in the performance indicator returns, which they felt diminished the time they could spend with clients (1996: 105).

Hedley and Davis Smith (1994), on the basis of their research on the implications of contracting for volunteering on 190 organisations operating in the fields of health and social services, concluded that the motivation of volunteer members of management committees, in particular, has been affected by increasing pressures and demands. Volunteers on management committees "were found to be intimidated by the legalistic nature of the contracting process, and by having for the first time to 'sign an agreement' stating what the organisation was going to achieve" (Hedley and Davis Smith, 1994: 10).

Russell et al.'s (1995) study, of the funding experiences of 17 voluntary agencies in the United Kingdom, found that an issue for many of the organisations has been "the demands which the contract process places on management committee members". The following quotes are from two voluntary agencies involved in the study:

The management committee is made up predominantly of local elderly people who do not come from the professional classes. They are controlling budgets, and are responsible for health and safety policies – things of which they have no experience. They probably have more responsibility as management committee members than when they were working.



In the past we recruited people onto the management committee who were interested in the work we did. Now I have a list of skills I am looking out for – legal knowledge, fundraising skills, experience of strategic thinking, a representative of a major statutory stakeholder. However I do not know where to begin to look for suitable people (Russell et al., 1995: 46).

Russell and Scott (1997: 6) found that “the workload, level of responsibility and skills required of voluntary members of management committees have increased significantly as a result of the development of contracts”. They concluded that the recruitment of management committee members has become increasingly difficult, as a distinct consequence of the increased levels of commitment and responsibility demanded by contracts. Over half the organisations in the United Kingdom National Survey reported increasing difficulty recruiting volunteers to management committees.

Some commentators have warned that the level of responsibility involved has increased to such an extent that there will be an exodus of committee members. Others anticipate that the role of management boards may be diminished (Russell and Scott, 1997: 25).

As the expectations and demands associated with volunteering change, volunteers may question or re-evaluate their role within an organisation, the costs and benefits associated with volunteering, and whether they are prepared to continue to contribute their time and effort to that organisation (Russell and Scott, 1997; Taylor and Lewis, 1997).

Demand for Volunteers

The key question about volunteering behaviour is not whether the absolute numbers of volunteers have risen or fallen, but whether these numbers have kept pace with the level of demand for volunteers by voluntary organisations. A number of studies suggest that the demand for volunteers has increased with the expansion of voluntary organisations into social service delivery. In a study of volunteering in Australia, Baldock (1991: 7) concluded that “the sheer volume of tasks to be performed has led many community welfare organisations to an ever-increasing search for more volunteers”. A report on a membership survey by NZFVWO also found that “one-third of the agencies said they were seeking additional volunteer help” (Malcolm et al., 1993: 129). O’Brien et al. (1997) report increased reliance on voluntary labour as a common response to cuts in government funding. This is illustrated by the following comment from one agency:

It is true that because levels of funding are never adequate we are more and more looking to volunteers. ... More and more we are saying we cannot afford to employ a staff [member] to do that and so we call on a volunteer (O’Brien et al., 1997: 122).

Likewise, a 1993 study of voluntary welfare agencies in Napier found that “groups reported that they made reductions in paid staff in the areas of service provision and administration. There has been an increased use of volunteers to fill the gap” (Isaacs, 1993: 5).

Some studies suggest there has been an increase in demand for volunteers on account of the increased workload and responsibilities associated with contracting (Baldock, 1991). However, it appears that the demand for volunteers in many organisations is increasingly targeted at volunteers with specialist skills. The requirements and demands on voluntary organisations associated with contracting (for example, negotiating contracts, monitoring and performance reporting) lead to a need for people who have relevant experience in these areas and who can perform specialist tasks, such as accountants and lawyers. Suggate's (1995) review of the New Zealand voluntary sector concluded that the increased workloads have led to demands for volunteers with higher skill levels.

One submission to the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party stated that there was not a shortage of volunteers *per se*, but rather a shortage of volunteers with business and management experience. Another submission noted that there were willing volunteers, but that they were often insufficiently skilled. It was observed that voluntary organisations need people with computer skills and that older volunteers frequently lack these skills (MSP, 2001).

Taylor and Lewis (1997) carried out four qualitative research studies in the United Kingdom (two with voluntary organisations and two with local authorities) to look at the impact of the move from grants to contracts. When discussing the findings from one of their studies of volunteering, the authors noted that the tasks traditionally carried out by volunteers now needed to be carried out by more qualified individuals.

One tactic that has been adopted by organisations to meet the challenges associated with contracting has been to target potential volunteers who have these specialist skills (for example, accountants, managers or people with computer skills) (Billis and Harris, 1992). Russell and Scott (1997: 31) note that "by far the greater emphasis is on the recruitment of people with appropriate professional skills. In some cases, people without those skills are turned away". However, moves to 'professionalise' volunteering through the selective recruitment of skilled volunteers have not always been successful. Skilled volunteers appear to be increasingly difficult to recruit on account of the pressures, demands and responsibilities placed on them. As mentioned by Russell and Scott (1997: 28):

Recruitment has become more difficult as a result of both supply and demand factors – either because volunteers are more apprehensive, or organisations are becoming more selective and skilled volunteers are scarce.

Billis and Harris (1992) have drawn together the findings from research on the voluntary sector undertaken in the United Kingdom during the "Thatcher period" (1980-1990). Findings from their data analysis reveal "increasing difficulties in recruiting and retaining members for local boards, particularly leaders, those willing to take the chair or become the secretary or treasurer" (1992: 218). The authors observe that:

The very changes that have increased the demand for voluntary leaders and specialist representatives have also made it more difficult to recruit and retain members of local governing bodies. Those whom voluntary agencies most wish to attract tend to be deterred by the amount of work, the extent of the



responsibilities, and the major commitment entailed in being a board member of a local voluntary agency (Billis and Harris, 1992: 218).

The move by voluntary organisations to recruit more professional volunteers also signals a shift in the social and demographic composition of volunteers. The previous broad-based approach to volunteer recruitment has moved to become narrower, focusing instead on a particular set of skills. In their study, Russell and Scott (1997) look at the effect of these shifts on the composition of voluntary sector management committees. Over half of all organisations that had contracts with government for community care services anticipated that certain social groups would invariably be under-represented on their management committee. Russell and Scott (1997: 32) note:

The demands of the contract culture appear to marginalise the life experience of volunteers and to suggest that volunteers will be drawn from a narrower constituency than in the past.

There is evidence that volunteers who do not possess the requisite level of skills have become marginalised within some organisations (Russell and Scott, 1997). Thus, 'head hunting' of volunteers with particular skills "raises questions about future patterns of volunteering and a changing ethos within the voluntary sector" (Russell and Scott, 1997: 27).

The expectation that voluntary organisations will provide detailed information to funders on the performance of their organisation has had a further significant impact on the level and nature of the work undertaken by voluntary organisations as well as the type of staff needed to do this work. More resources have been needed in order to cope with the increased workload associated with contracts. In addition, it has become important to have access to skilled and competent personnel in the fields of contract negotiations and performance reporting, as well as those who are willing to commit their time to service provision (Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994). The need to better accommodate the demands of government funders and the requirements for reporting have, in many cases, initiated an increased growth in the demand for paid staff and professional skills (Billis, 1993).

Demand for Paid Staff

Although many reports point towards an increased demand for volunteers as a result of contracting, there are also reports that volunteers are, in some cases, becoming increasingly redundant to voluntary organisations and are being replaced by paid workers (Hedley and Davis Smith, 1994). In some instances the shift towards employing paid staff may be because volunteers cannot be recruited. Lyons (1994) for example, states that in some areas of Australia, traditional volunteer services such as meals-on-wheels are being delivered by paid staff because volunteers cannot be recruited. However, much of the rhetoric in the literature refers to organisations making an active choice to replace volunteers with paid staff as part of the 'professionalisation' of the sector.

Along with the rise in demand for skilled volunteers, contracting has also initiated a move towards the increased use of paid staff in some organisations.

The 'unknown' or 'unreliable' volunteer is increasingly being overlooked in favour of the more 'dependable' paid worker, in order to ensure certainty in meeting contractual commitments. Paid workers are regarded as performing a better standard of work, bringing higher qualifications to the job, and offering greater continuity and stability – characteristics often identified as crucial when entering into government contracts (Blacksell and Phillips 1994; Davis Smith, 1997: 6 and Kendall, 1997).

A study of the viability of the organisations contracted to the New Zealand Community Funding Agency found that the reliance on volunteers had decreased somewhat over the mid-1990s:

More emphasis is put on staff training, recruitment of professional staff rather than use of volunteers, and service and programme development. The sector is becoming increasingly quality-oriented and professional (Ernst and Young, 1996: 72).

Ernst and Young (1996: 93) concluded that, in relation to staffing issues:

Being able to retain skilled and experienced staff paid closer to commercial market rates is appearing as a key viability factor for service providers ... Other issues are, to be able to get funding to meet staff and volunteer training requirements, to maintain a high level of commitment and drive among staff, and to be able to not rely so much on volunteers. This is highlighted by the responses to the survey of providers who reported a strong increase in paid staff numbers and much more modest increases in volunteers'.

The 1993/94 survey of NZFVWO members also reported results suggestive of an increased reliance on paid staff; 93% of organisations reported stable or increasing numbers of paid staff (36% increasing), while 77% reported stable or increasing numbers of unpaid staff (31% increasing) (cited in Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994).

Respondents in Hedley and Davis Smith's (1994: 20) study described paid staff as a 'safer' option than volunteers. These respondents predicted that "paid staff would eventually force out volunteers". Billis and Harris (1992: 219) have also observed that "in many local agencies the trend has been toward replacing volunteer workers – service providers, supervisory staff, clerical support, and fundraisers – with paid staff". In their survey of the impact of contracting on volunteering, Russell and Scott (1997: 7) observed a growing reliance on paid workers in a large number of organisations.

Almost half the chief officers replied that the effect of contracts has also been to make services increasingly dependent on paid workers. Two-fifths report that there has been some replacement of volunteers by paid workers. The majority of qualitative comments indicated that this had arisen in order to be able to guarantee service levels.

In this survey, one volunteer manager commented that a contract would be considered only if it was with paid workers rather than volunteers. These types of comments constitute a recurring theme throughout the literature.



The increased demand for paid workers is part of the wider shift toward 'professionalisation' and 'bureaucratisation'. Billis and Harris (1992: 220) cite research indicating that some agencies "have rapidly moved from being a volunteer association to one to which services are provided and policy is set by paid staff, frequently professionals". The results from Russell and Scott's (1997) survey also indicated that many organisations are increasingly led by their paid workers, with the consequence of marginalising or excluding volunteers. The authors concluded:

Even in those organisations where the demands on volunteers are increasing, and where the overall need for volunteers has grown, there is a real sense in which they remain, or have become, peripheral (Russell and Scott, 1997: 45).

The move towards employing paid workers in voluntary organisations (and, in some cases, the corresponding decrease in demand for volunteers) has sometimes also served as a catalyst for reducing the available supply of volunteers. A number of authors have observed a correlation between the introduction of paid staff within voluntary organisations and the subsequent fall in volunteer commitment (Billis, 1993). Billis and Harris (1992) refer to a number of case studies where it was found that the arrival of paid staff further reduced enthusiasm and created tension and disaffection among volunteers, with volunteers feeling 'devalued' by the arrival of paid staff.

Part V:

FORMAL SOCIAL SERVICE VOLUNTEERING AND SURVEY FINDINGS

Introduction

Surveys conducted at different periods in time can be a useful way to gain an understanding of what changes might have occurred in the level and nature of volunteering. New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States have all undertaken various surveys of volunteering. This section outlines some of the limitations of using these survey findings to further develop a picture of the changes within the voluntary social service sector that have occurred. It also reviews the value of available survey findings for providing evidence of changes in the level and nature of volunteering in voluntary social service organisations.

Survey Limitations

Surveys of the level and nature of volunteering have used varying definitions, methodologies, and time periods making comparison difficult. For example, a definition of volunteering that considers only formal volunteering will fail to record the contributions made by people whose work tends to be on an informal level.

As Lynn (1997: 10) notes regarding the situation in the United Kingdom:

There is so much interest in voluntary activity, and many efforts have been made to measure and describe the nature and extent of it, by sample survey methods. However, to date these efforts have been somewhat uncoordinated, leading to many differences in the definitions and methodologies used.

Comparison between surveys is hampered because different definitions and measurements have been used. There are many variations in the way survey questions are worded and in the terminology employed, and these inevitably elicit different responses. Key terms used include: 'work', 'assistance', 'activities', 'time freely given', 'volunteering', 'voluntary work', 'voluntary activity' and 'voluntary help' (Lynn, 1997; Lyons et al., 1998). Not only do these different terms have different meanings; the same term may also mean different things to different people. Some survey results may underestimate the amount of time respondents spend on voluntary activity, because respondents might not define themselves as volunteers or identify their actions as 'voluntary work'.



Stereotypes and connotations associated with different terms also mean that the key words adopted in a survey can lead to markedly different estimates of levels of volunteer activity being reported. As Lyons et al. (1998: 50) observe:

The researchers all purport to have researched and to have reported on voluntary work or voluntary activity or volunteering, but underneath the use of the term volunteer or one of its derivatives as a dependent variable are some quite different assumptions and, conceivably, different preoccupations.

The extent of prompting in surveys can also affect the results. Lynn (1997) found that each of the eleven surveys of voluntary activity in the United Kingdom carried out since the mid-1970s resulted in markedly differing estimates of the extent of annual voluntary participation amongst the adult population – ranging from 15% to 51%. Lynn (1997) explains that this variation arose out of variations in questioning techniques: surveys that used more extensive questioning recorded the highest estimates. It appears that the more prompts provided to respondents, the higher the recorded level of volunteering.

Statistics New Zealand (1993) has acknowledged the difficulty of obtaining consistent data on volunteering from surveys of individuals, because of differing conceptions of unpaid activities:

It is possible that people differ in their likelihood to report involvement in voluntary work. Some may see their unpaid activities as simply a part of social life and do not measure them in terms of time or monetary value. Others may be more inclined to take account of any time not spent in paid employment or leisure. These matters should be taken into account when making comparisons between different age, gender and ethnic groups who have reported having done some voluntary work (cited in Zwart and Perez, 1999: 8).

Another limitation on attempts to gauge changes in volunteering over time is that surveys are often conducted at different times of the year and seasonal differences may influence the level of volunteering recorded (Chambré, 1993). For example, data captured from a survey conducted during Easter may suggest that more respondents are involved in voluntary church work than would be the case if the survey were to be carried out at other times of the year. Conversely, studies conducted during the summer months – when potential respondents are more likely to be on holiday – might under-record the volume of volunteering activity.

Studying changes in volunteering activity over time is also hampered by the lack of compatibility between existing data sets, either within New Zealand, or elsewhere in the world. To record changes in the level and nature of volunteering over time accurately, it would be necessary to have a series of studies that consistently used the same definitions, terms and methodology.

Survey Findings

New Zealand

New Zealand does not have a national survey dedicated to volunteering. The New Zealand Census does, however, contain some information on unpaid work. The Census occurs every five years and all recent Censuses have included questions on the types and levels of unpaid work. However, each Census has used different definitions of volunteering, meaning that survey data tracking changes in the level and nature of volunteering are not available.

Variations in the Census questions over time have resulted in considerable differences in estimates of the level of volunteering. The 1991 Census question asked about ‘unpaid voluntary work’ in the past week and 19% of respondents reported that they had undertaken voluntary work (Department of Statistics, 1993). The 1996 Census rephrased the question to ask about “unpaid work outside the household” in the past four weeks and the figure more than doubled to 41% reporting that they had done such work (Zwart and Perez, 1999). Aside from the variations in the time period (one week compared with four weeks), another reason for this significant leap may be the impact of removing the word ‘voluntary’ from the question, which may have led respondents to record a wider range of informal unpaid activities.

Woods (1998: 23) contends that:

... [this change] does not represent a major shift in the number of people volunteering. It is far more likely that the 1991 figures represented those who view themselves formally as volunteers, while the 1996 figures include a large number who identified more clearly with doing specific work for other people rather than working through an institution or agency.

The figures discussed above refer to the overall rate of volunteering. It is difficult, from the structure of the volunteering questions in the Censuses, to track changes in the nature of volunteering. Different Censuses use different classifications of voluntary work by type, and different approaches to recording this. For example, it is not possible to determine what changes there might have been in the proportion of overall volunteers that fall into the ‘social services volunteering’ grouping that is the focus of this review. The category of ‘welfare and support services’ was used only in the 1991 Census; at that time, it was the most popular type of voluntary work (29% of all volunteers) (Department of Statistics, 1993).

The Time Use Survey 1998-99 gathered data on “unpaid work done for people living outside the household”. This unpaid work was divided into two further categories: formal unpaid work (work done via an organisation such as Meals on Wheels), and informal unpaid work (activities carried out for friends, neighbours or relatives on an informal basis, not through any organisation). Within this review, these two categories of unpaid work for people outside the home have been added together to approximate ‘volunteering’. In the Time Use Survey initial interview, 59% of New Zealanders said they had done unpaid work for people outside the home in the four weeks prior to being surveyed (Statistics New Zealand and



Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2001). Analysis of the time use diaries kept by respondents showed that the average weekly time spent volunteering was 1.9 hours for informal volunteering and 1.7 hours for formal volunteering (Statistics New Zealand, 2001¹²). Averaged across all respondents, this is 48 minutes per day (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2001). This is 13% of all the unpaid work¹³ done by New Zealanders (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).

Where volunteering was formal in nature, the survey recorded the type of organisation for which the work was undertaken. This gives some indication of the proportion of overall volunteer time that is spent on 'social services volunteering'. It was found that, averaged across all respondents to the survey, volunteering for 'social support and assistance' groups amounted to only 6 hours per year of people's time.

To put this in context, the organisation types which received most time were 'leisure and recreation' organisations (28 hours per year), followed by 'member benefit groups' (19 hours), and 'education' organisations (13 hours). Noticeably less time was spent volunteering for 'community safety and protection' groups (7 hours); 'social support and assistance groups' (as mentioned above, 6 hours), and 'disability and health services' (4 hours) (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2001). Māori-based organisations came through as one of the two main groups for which voluntary work was done by Māori respondents, together with leisure and recreation organisations (Statistics New Zealand, 1999b).

As a point-in-time survey, the Time Use Survey does not offer information on changes over time in volunteering. It is possible to compare the findings of the Time Use Survey with the 1990 Pilot Time Use Survey to give some indication of changes over time. However, it must be noted that data from the Pilot Time Use Survey need to be treated "with considerable caution" as the statistics "are derived from a sample which was designed to evaluate the methodology [of the Time Use Survey], not produce reliable statistics" (Department of Statistics, 1991). That said, the Pilot Time Use Survey findings are very similar to those of the Time Use Survey: 62.6% of the respondents had done some volunteering in the past four weeks, and respondents had engaged slightly more in informal than formal volunteering (Department of Statistics, 1991).

There have been a number of smaller-scale studies that have focused on particular aspects of volunteering in New Zealand (for example, Cull, 1993; Johns, 1998; Isaacs, 1993; Fitzgerald and Cameron, 1989; Malcolm et al., 1993; Saville-Smith and Bray, 1994; Ernst and Young, 1996). The findings from these studies were discussed in Part IV.

12 This includes time spent on travel associated with formal and informal volunteering.

13 This publication discusses unpaid work in four categories – household work, caregiving for household members, purchasing goods and services for own household, and unpaid work outside the home (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).

Malcolm et al. (1993: 131-132) highlight some of the difficulties in carrying out local research which serve to indicate why more of this research is not undertaken:

For agencies, recording data and keeping records is often an added burden – especially for volunteers who wish to give their time in a more personal way. The organisational-type research being undertaken ... tends to be specific to the client base, small-scale and anecdotal. We do not have the resources (funding, research skills) to contract for large-scale research and longitudinal studies ...

It is clear that the available surveys of volunteering do not provide a great deal of information on changes in the level and nature of volunteering in the social service sector. Surveys differ in both their definitions of 'volunteering' and the methods they use to measure volunteering. Few surveys collect data in such a way as to allow consideration of the social service sector specifically.¹⁴

International

To supplement gaps in the New Zealand data, information about trends in other Western countries (Australia, United Kingdom, United States) was sought. As outlined in Part IV, due to cultural, political, economic and demographic variations, such information can only ever be indicative.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics undertook a national survey of voluntary work in 1995 (ABS, 1995). However, this survey has not been repeated and Australia does not have any reliable and consistent time-series data to track changes over time. There have, however, been a number of smaller one-off surveys of volunteering in Australia, in particular, the ACOSS (1996) survey of volunteering and the Australian Bureau of Statistics Time Use (1995) Survey, both referred to in Part III.

The United Kingdom and the United States both have time-series data on volunteering. The National Survey of Volunteering in the United Kingdom (Davis Smith, 1998a) has used the same definition of volunteering in three surveys between 1981 and 1997 and it is therefore possible to track trends in the nature and level of volunteering over this period. The findings from the 1997 survey show that there has been a slight decline in the percentage of respondents taking part in formal voluntary activity. There has also been a drop in the percentage of 'health and social welfare' volunteers (24% in 1991; 19% in 1997).

The Independent Sector (1996) survey *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*¹⁵ has repeated the same questions in five national surveys. This allows the levels of formal and informal volunteering to be compared over time. The Independent Sector survey identified a slight (4%) increase in levels of volunteering from 1993 "reversing the gradual decline in the rate of the adult population that volunteered since 1989" (Independent Sector, 1996: 3). The percentage of volunteers in the 'human services' field in the United States declined between 1987 (25%) and 1991 (23%) and then rose in 1995 (27%) (Independent Sector, 1996).

14 Refer to the supplementary data review (Smithies, 2001) on www.msd.govt.nz/publications/online.

15 This is a biennial national survey on the giving and volunteering behaviour of adults 18 years of age and older in the United States.



From these data it is difficult to identify any clear trends in 'social service volunteering'. The United Kingdom survey does not define the category of 'health and social welfare' volunteers, and the United States 'human services' category encompasses a wide range of spheres of activity, including housing/shelter, the Red Cross, Catholic charities, and recreation and sports.

The available data, therefore, do not offer a clear picture of current shifts in the level and nature of volunteering. As the ACOSS (1996: 6) survey notes:

[T]here is much speculation and anecdote, but few hard facts, that the supply, expectation and use of volunteers are undergoing significant change.

Part VI:

ECONOMIC, DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON VOLUNTEERING

Introduction

One of the main focuses of this review has been to describe changes that have occurred in the level and nature of volunteering over the past two decades since the introduction of contracting in New Zealand. However, it is also important to consider the impact of wider economic, demographic and social changes over the past 50 years in New Zealand and elsewhere on the level and nature of volunteering, and how these broad shifts may influence future trends.

According to Australian authors Warburton and Mutch (2000: 33):

It has been suggested that social and economic change may impact on the available supply of volunteers for the delivery of human services. Changes in employment, workforce participation, retirement, family and caring responsibilities, and changes in the non-profit sector are all said to impact on the profile, supply and use of volunteers.

Wiedman Heidrich (1990: 21), describing the situation in the United States, states that “while the demand for volunteers has been increasing, societal changes have left many organisations with a reduced supply of volunteers”. The following sections review the body of literature that explores the wider ‘societal’ changes that may have impacted on the level and nature of volunteering.

Women in the Paid Work-Force

A key change frequently referred to in the literature is the impact on levels of volunteering of increasing numbers of women participating in the paid workforce. A number of writers have identified the move by married women into the paid workforce as an important reason for a decline in volunteering (Freedman, 1996; Warburton, 1997). This ‘social revolution’ has taken place across a number of Western industrialised countries including New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Prior to the 1960s, it was relatively unusual for women in these countries to combine paid work with marriage and raising a family. Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 129) explain that in the United States “married women were expected to quit working when their first child was born and care for their families while also serving their communities”. Women have served as the ‘glue’ in American communities for most of the last century, undertaking unpaid and undervalued tasks (Freedman, 1996).



Since the 1960s, however, women – traditionally a primary source of volunteer labour – have been entering the labour force in greater numbers, thus reducing the pool of women available for unpaid work (Putnam, 1995; Warburton, 1997). The ACOSS (1996) survey of volunteering in Australia has attributed the rise in women’s work-force participation to the following factors:

[W]omen having greater control over their fertility through contraception; improved educational opportunities; economic pressures brought about through increased costs of living; increased separation and divorce rates, resulting in the need for women to be economically independent; and changing expectations and aspirations (ACOSS, 1996: 79).

According to Warburton (1997: 17) there is a ‘crisis in the supply of volunteers’ in Western countries, with the decline in volunteering attributable to the return of married women to the workforce. This view is echoed by many of the people interviewed for the ACOSS (1996: 85) survey who said “the ‘pool of volunteers’ (read, women) is drying up because younger women were not replacing the older women volunteers when they became too frail to continue”. In addition, a number of Australian authors also flag the trend toward women having fewer children, and growth in the number of women having no children at all, which has had a further impact, since much of women’s voluntary activity has typically focused around children. (Lyons and Hocking, 2000; Zappalà, 2000).

Changes in Work-Force Participation Rates

Wider changes in work-force participation over the past thirty years may also have influenced the level and nature of volunteering. Across Western countries there have been significant shifts in the standard working week with an increase in hours for many full-time workers, and an increase in the number of part-time, casual and temporary jobs. These changes have inevitably led to “a growing division between the over-worked and the under-employed” (ACOSS, 1996: 6).

With labour force participation falling among older men and young people, “the trend is for people to be increasingly excluded from employment early and late in the life cycle, but work very long hours (both paid and unpaid) in the middle” (ACOSS, 1994, 4; in ACOSS, 1996: 22). Australian author Pusey (2000: 28) raises similar issues:

The restructuring of the labour market is concentrating paid work in an ever-shortening middle span of the life cycle. Restructuring of the labour market has delayed entry into full-time paid work by something like five years in a single generation – and as we know, an increasing proportion of people will never find a full-time job.

There are a number of potential implications as a result of these changes in the labour market. Pusey (2000) contends that the concentration of paid work into the middle years has put pressure on people who have traditionally been a source of volunteers. Middle-aged people are less likely to have the time or the incentive to volunteer. They have to work longer hours to save for their retirement and pay off their mortgage. They are likely to have dependent children and may also be providing care for their parents.

The introduction of flexible labour markets and the associated growth in casual work often involving non-standard hours (for example, shift work, evening work, night work), means that volunteering will not be a priority for many people. “[I]f workers, and especially those with partners and children, are constantly ‘juggling time’, and unable to co-ordinate their rest and shared time with their partners, volunteering will be low in their priorities” (Pusey, 2000: 29). However, Hedley and Davis Smith (1992: 3) suggest “the long-term trends towards a shorter working week, more part-time work and job-sharing initiatives ... will give people more time to undertake voluntary work”.

The concentration of work into the middle years has also provided a potential pool of volunteers amongst those who fall outside the ‘middle’ age range. There is a growing divide between those working long hours with little free time and ‘time-rich, work-poor’ individuals with a lot of spare time.

Young people in particular have been identified as relatively ‘time-rich’ and a potential source of volunteers. In Australia the young people interviewed for the ACOSS (1996: 48) study believed “volunteering was becoming a far more common practice in their age group as the economic situation made it increasingly difficult to secure employment without some work experience”. However, Pusey (2000: 28) raises concerns about this development:

One downside of this is that young people in many occupations (social workers, teachers, solicitors and others, especially in the private sector) are under enormous pressure to contribute unpaid volunteer hours – sometimes for years – in the name of ‘work experience’.

Across a number of Western countries, a new rhetoric has emerged about the need for unemployed people to undertake voluntary work, thereby ‘doing something for the community’ while increasing their work skills at the same time. Gaskin and Davis Smith’s (1997: ix) study of volunteering in Europe, for example, found that, “the continuing high levels of unemployment across much of the continent have raised the issue of the role of volunteering in providing ‘skills-training’ or ‘useful work’ for those outside the labour market”. Since the early 1980s, the United Kingdom has introduced a range of programmes and initiatives designed to encourage unemployed people to volunteer (Gaskin and Davis Smith, 1997). Gaskin and Davis Smith (1997: 11) note that volunteering was:

... seen as having a role to play in job creation and a succession of special employment measures during the eighties and nineties stressed the part volunteering could play in training unemployed people for work.

Similar strategies have been adopted in New Zealand at different times, with government initiatives such as Taskforce Green and the Community Wage scheme. However, there are also important questions to ask regarding whether ‘work for the dole’ initiatives are examples of volunteering, as the individual may not be volunteering of his or her own ‘free will’ and there is not an element of choice. A number of authors have raised concerns that volunteering is now being associated with other types of unpaid work that conflate ‘free choice’ and ‘obligation’ and are essentially examples of ‘compulsory volunteering’ (Cordingley, 2000; Garnham, 1999; Oppenheimer and Warburton, 2000).



In the New Zealand context, Adams (1997) noted that ‘workfare’ policies (policies requiring unemployed people to work in exchange for welfare payment) may have profound implications for voluntary work and the not-for-profit sector.

These include the costs associated with placements for sponsoring agencies, the possibility that workfare would undermine existing voluntary contributions, and the potential for changes in the relationship between agencies and clients due to a requirement for agencies to police clients’ welfare eligibility.

While research recognises and supports the importance of voluntary work for unemployed people, it must be voluntary and supported by training and supervision if it is to be beneficial to the agency and the volunteer (Adams, 1997: 26).

Overall, unemployed people are traditionally less likely to get involved in formal volunteering than people in the paid work-force (Hedley and Davis Smith, 1992; Zwart and Perez, 1999). As Nowland-Foreman (2001) notes “unemployed youth and retrenched older workers may be the very last candidates to take up volunteering. Social alienation may be a bigger barrier to volunteering than busyness”.

Ageing Population

Ageing population trends are evident across the developed world.

Population ageing brings with it both an increased demand for volunteers to address the needs of frail or disabled older people, and an ‘untapped resource’ of potential future volunteers in a population of retired people who are better educated, healthier and longer-living than previous generations. Chambré (1987) describes the increased number of older people as the new “leisure class”.

A link is frequently made in the literature between the ageing population and a potential pool of new volunteers. In Europe, Gaskin and Davis Smith (1997) note that attention has turned to ‘third-age volunteering’ in response to the ageing population, and debates have emerged regarding the role of volunteering in contributing to an ‘active retirement’. Chambré (1993: 227) observes that in the United States “the overall supply of older volunteers is likely to increase in the future because there will be more older persons and their average age will continue to rise”.

There is frequent mention in the literature of older people filling the gap vacated by women. Chambré (1993: 224) describes the potential effects of demographic and social changes:

Cultural and demographic changes have increased the supply of elders interested in volunteer work and also the demand for their services. Starting in the mid-1960s, the decline in full-time homemakers as more women entered the paid labour force was expected to create a shortage in the supply of daytime volunteers. Older volunteers could take the place of these women.

Cnaan and Amroffell (1994: 340) also note that "elderly people, healthier and with greater financial independence than in the past, are expected to engage in more volunteer work due to the decline in volunteerism among women".

Freedman (1996: 2) puts forward a similar view:

America's burgeoning older population could come to succeed women as the new trustees of civic life, provided we create institutions and opportunities for service enabling seniors to make a genuine contribution while benefiting themselves in the process. America now possesses not only the largest, but also the healthiest, best-educated, and most vigorous group of seniors in history ... And older adults have what the working-age population lacks: time.

Goss (1999: 389) describes older people as "the new torchbearers for voluntary activity", with older women in particular becoming "the vanguard of voluntary action" (Goss, 1999: 380). In the United States, a number of state and private sector programmes have been initiated aimed at encouraging older people to volunteer (Chambré, 1993; Freedman, 1996). This is seen as having an additional potential benefit as older people tend to volunteer more hours per week than other age groups (Zwart and Perez, 1999).

A rise in the number of older people may not automatically translate into a rise in the number of older volunteers, however. There are counter-indications that the anticipated pool of older volunteers acting as the "torchbearer for voluntary activity" (Goss, 1999) may not materialise. Instead, other factors may intervene to affect the propensity to volunteer amongst older people. Individual characteristics, for example, can determine whether some people have a greater drive to volunteer than others. People who have never volunteered may have no desire to start volunteering once they retire. Older people who do volunteer may generally be continuing patterns of behaviour established over a lifetime. As Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 137) conclude:

Volunteering in older age is strongly associated with volunteering earlier in life ... A strong commitment to service in adulthood would be expected to carry over into retirement and older age.

Chambré (1993: 225) draws similar conclusions and questions the assumption that "retirement, widowhood, and/or reduction of parental responsibilities motivates elders to become involved or to expand their participation". Instead, retirement may be "a welcome relief from an unrewarding job".

Retirees do not appear to reallocate the time spent working to social or communal activities; a good deal of it is used for solitary and passive pursuits like watching television, especially for men. The tendency to join and to participate in voluntary associations might not change substantially over a person's lifetime (Chambré, 1993: 226).

Marketing campaigns and programmes by voluntary organisations to recruit older people may therefore not capture people who have no inner propensity to volunteer and may instead simply "reinforce participation by people with past involvement rather than attract new volunteers" (Chambré, 1993: 226).



As the population ages and the number of healthy older people grows, there may also be a rise in the number of older people who choose to stay in paid employment, so that there is no net increase, and maybe even a *decrease*, in the pool of available volunteers. Changes in human rights legislation (as in New Zealand) that debar age discrimination or make retirement at a certain age unenforceable will also have an impact. According to Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 135) “people who retire at the age of 60 may realise a few years later that their medical and living expenses have gone up faster than their income and thus will seek additional means of income”. Their return to the job market may preclude any ‘additional’ involvement in volunteering.

Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 135) conclude that:

A significant portion of the elderly, therefore, may prefer to work as long as possible and to volunteer only when gainful employment is ruled out. If this trend can be extrapolated to new cohorts of healthier retirees, then in the future employment will be preferred over volunteerism by the productive elderly.

Coupled with the fact that many older people may need to keep working, the reality is that many older people believe that they cannot afford to volunteer. One of the reasons traditional formal volunteering has middle-class connotations is that often it is only middle-class people who can afford to volunteer. The associated expenses of volunteering, such as travel costs, mean it is not a viable choice for many. Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 130) contend that:

The expectation of the elderly to volunteer can be viewed as an extension of the expectation of women to volunteer, projected onto an older cohort. This expectation, however, primarily fits women of the upper-middle class who have the economic resources that allow them to engage in volunteer work ... elderly women, especially widows, may not possess this kind of economic security, and thus the expectation may be inappropriate.

It is often argued that because future cohorts of older people will have higher levels of education and better health standards, levels of volunteering will rise. Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 141), however, contend that these better-educated, healthier older people will “begin to question tacit assumptions about the suitability of retired, older persons for volunteer positions”. Cnaan and Cwikel (1992: 141) go on to note that:

It is likely that productive elderly may find innovative ways of contributing to society, keeping active, and engaging in interesting pursuits that may not necessarily be through volunteerism. It is our contention that the elderly cannot simply become the ‘cure-all’ for the financial crisis in human services.

The Time Use Survey 1998-99 reports that one of the peaks in volunteer participation rates is at age 55-64, where 65% of respondents indicate having volunteered in the past four weeks. After this, volunteer participation rates decline, to 55% of respondents indicating they have volunteered in the past four weeks (Statistics New Zealand, 1999a). However, examination of Time Use Survey diary data indicates that those who do engage in formal volunteering at ages 65-74 spend more time on their volunteering than any other age group (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Women’s Affairs, 2001).

Community

A number of authors suggest there has been a decline in societal ties and a 'sense of community' which may have reduced the desire of people to volunteer (O'Brien, 1997; Putnam, 1995; Riddell, 1997).

The network of community-based societal ties in Western industrial societies is often described as 'social capital' (Putnam, 1995). Social capital refers to "features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995: 67).

Robinson (1997: 35) similarly describes social capital as "the networks of voluntary association, reciprocity and social trust that enable people to act together to effectively meet their shared objectives" and contends that voluntary community associations assist to develop "networks of positive social interaction".

The level of participation in voluntary work is an important indicator of social ties and social capital and conversely, social capital is a strong predictor of the propensity to volunteer (Goss, 1999, Rotolo, 1999). According to Lyons and Fabiansson (1998: 15) "most writers acknowledge that volunteering for organisations both depends on and reproduces social capital and is therefore a good indicator of the level of social capital in society".

Concerns have been raised that people are now less community-focused or no longer identify themselves as part of a community (Putnam, 1993). Commentators have suggested that people have become more selfish and self-centred (Lyons and Hocking, 2000). With increased mobility, more women in the workforce and economic policies stressing individualism, there is less time and less importance placed on developing community links. Putnam (1993: 6) contends that "our generation is less engaged with one another outside the marketplace and thus less prepared to co-operate for shared goals".

Hedley and Davis Smith (1992) have also considered the consequences of changing communities on volunteering. They state:

The break-up of traditional 'close-knit' communities also has its impact on volunteering. The increase in personal and occupational mobility over the last 25 years has resulted in a decline of traditional communities. People are spending more time outside their neighbourhoods, both for work and leisure. Consequently, there is less opportunity for community bonding and less opportunity for neighbourhood activity (Hedley and Davis Smith, 1992: 3).

Similarly Cox (2000: 146) suggests:

[O]ne possible reason for falling volunteer rates is that new generations do not have the same sense of duty, which is in key with the current paradigms of self-interest. There may be what I would call a changing social ethos which is less likely to commit to long term organisational loyalty in a range of areas.

Schudson (1996) also suggests that people may now be more episodically involved in volunteering and civic activity, coming together for brief but intense periods of civic activity. He also suggests that people may now be involved in fewer organisations, but be more deeply involved.



New Zealand writers have also engaged in the debate over declining social capital. Riddell (1997: 25) notes that “there has been serious erosion of social capital within New Zealand society over the previous decade”. Blakely and Suggate (1997: 95) suggest that “the notion of social capital has struck a chord with a wide range of New Zealanders, perhaps reflecting some concern about fragmentation within society and loss of community spirit”.

Rural communities, in particular, are often associated with high levels of trust and ‘community spirit’, and higher levels of volunteering than urban areas (Zwart and Perez, 1999; Statistics New Zealand, 1999a). O’Brien (1997) describes rural New Zealand communities as “communit[ies] of joiners”. However, there are some reports that the ‘social gel’ that held these communities together is disappearing (Gilling, 1999; O’Brien, 1997). In addition, a number of Australian authors have reported that the decline in people living in the regions is likely to reduce the numbers of volunteers (Lyons and Hocking, 2000; Zappalà, 2000).¹⁶

Television viewing is also cited as strongly and negatively related to social trust and group membership. Putnam (1995: 75) describes television as responsible for the “technological transformation of leisure”. Television has ‘privatised’ or ‘individualised’ our leisure time and undermined connections with one another and with communities, and has significantly disrupted opportunities for social-capital formation.

Broader ideological currents are also likely to have had some influence on changes at a societal level. Some commentators have pointed to the ascendancy of neo-liberal policies in government thinking through the 1980s, that have “enhanced the status of the individual” and “diminished the concept of shared community”, as a factor in the decline of community co-operation and connectedness (Putnam 1993; Randerson 1992; Riddell, 1997).

It is possible that the wider economic, demographic and social changes of the past 50 years in New Zealand and other countries have had an impact on the level and nature of volunteering. However, the detail of how many of these ‘societal’ trends have influenced volunteering is a contested and debated area in the literature. The following section will consider how these trends and the ‘contract culture’ may potentially influence patterns of volunteering within voluntary social service organisations in the future.

¹⁶ Within New Zealand, however, the 1996 Census data indicated that the balance between urban and rural communities had not changed since the early 1980s.

Part VII:

FUTURE OF SOCIAL SERVICE SECTOR VOLUNTEERING

Introduction

This section considers the future role of volunteering in voluntary social service organisations. While it is not possible to accurately predict how the voluntary sector and volunteering will develop over the next ten years, it is important that the analysis takes into account how the wider social, economic, demographic, political and organisational context may influence future decisions to volunteer and the nature of future volunteering activity.

Key Influences on Future Volunteering

As was noted earlier in Part III, formal volunteering is often associated with stereotypical images of middle-class and middle-aged volunteers. In the area of social services, volunteers have traditionally been female. Women are still a major force in volunteering; they have higher volunteering rates and spend more time on volunteering than men (Statistics New Zealand, 1999a; Zwart and Perez, 1999). The availability of these traditional types of volunteers, however, appears to be declining and it is important to consider the future nature of volunteering.

There are a number of wider social, economic, demographic, political and organisational factors that may have an influence on future patterns of formal social service volunteering. Many of these have been discussed in Parts V and VI. This section will summarise the key factors that may influence the level and the nature of social service volunteering at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

A number of factors point towards a *decline* in the level of formal social service volunteering:

- More women are now in the paid work-force and consequently have less time available for voluntary activity. In addition, there has been a trend toward women having fewer children, and growth in the number of women having no children at all. This may have a further impact since much of women's voluntary activity has typically been focused around children.
- There have been suggestions that there has been a major change in social attitudes: people are now more individualistic and more reluctant to engage in the community. Leisure time has been 'individualised' and 'privatised', with television having played a key role in this change.



- Many people believe that they can not afford to volunteer (for example, due to petrol and transport costs), particularly those who are 'time-rich' and 'work-and cash-poor'.
- Many people do not want to deal with the increasing demands and pressures associated with volunteering under the 'contract culture'.

There are also a number of trends that point towards a potential *increase* in volunteering:

- There has been an increase in the number of people with university degrees and people who are undertaking higher education and training. Education is positively correlated with volunteering under the 'dominant status' model.
- The ageing of the 'baby-boom' population will potentially yield an increasingly large pool of potential volunteers. This may have a dual effect on volunteering, since there will be a larger population of older people, and additionally older people tend to volunteer for more hours (Zwart and Perez, 1999; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2001).
- There has been a trend towards a shortened work life, with people exiting from the paid workforce at a relatively low age providing a potential pool of 'time-rich, work-poor' volunteers that could be targeted for recruitment.
- Unemployed people, particularly young people, are being encouraged to undertake volunteering to build up their work skills in order to make the transition to paid work.
- There has been an increase in the number of 'corporate volunteering' schemes in which businesses support and encourage staff involvement in the community. This initiative is discussed further in this section.
- There have also been suggestions that in recent years migrants have increasingly become a source of volunteers (Auckland Volunteer Centre, 1999). However, there is a lack of data on migrants and volunteering and this is an area requiring further research.

The *nature* of volunteering, in some areas, also appears to be changing:

- Some voluntary organisations appear to be seeking skilled volunteers to help complete the 'paperwork', management and administration, rather than undertake the 'hands-on' service delivery.
- People may now be more episodically involved in volunteering and civic activity. There are also suggestions that people may now be involved in fewer organisations, but be more deeply involved.
- Rather than an overall decline in volunteering, it may be that the main trend has been a shift in the type of activity undertaken by volunteers. For example, the introduction of school boards of trustees as governing authorities has placed a heavy demand on parents (MSP, 2001).

Gazing into the Crystal Ball – Volunteering in the Future

The previous sections have suggested that there are multiple patterns of change in the level and nature of volunteering across the voluntary social service sector. In some areas, there appears to have been a move away from the recruitment of 'traditional' social service volunteers (often characterised as women who are not engaged in paid work) to targeting other 'time-rich, work-poor' groups outside the paid workforce (such as older retired people and young people seeking work experience). However, while there is talk of a shift in the source of volunteers, it is uncertain whether the older 'baby-boomers' and the younger unemployed will replace the traditional volunteer base. The generation that is currently ageing, for example, may be less civic-orientated and choose not to volunteer.

One respondent in Warburton and Mutch's (2000: 33) Brisbane study commented:

The traditional [volunteer] data base is dying, so to get the new, the next generation, which is the baby boomers, to donate and be part of the community, it's going to take a whole new approach to marketing and how you interact with them ... everybody has such a busy lifestyle.

According to Warburton and Mutch (2000: 33):

There is evidence of, if not a crisis, then certainly a growing distance between the demand for, and supply of, volunteers. There is also evidence of change in the profile and use of volunteers.

Lyons and Hocking (2000: 54) describe demographic changes (such as the ageing of the population) and changes in social attitudes (e.g. an observation that the Australian population has become more selfish and self-centred during the past decade). They reflect on the impact of these changes on the voluntary sector:

Overall these attitudinal and institutional changes at the end of the last century suggest that the prospect for volunteering in this new century is not positive ... The consequence will be that civil society will be increasingly carried out on the backs of a small troupe of dedicated, well-educated and older Australians.

There appears to be a sense that some parts of the voluntary social service sector are 'at the crossroads', as the traditional volunteer base declines and as difficulties are encountered in recruiting new volunteers. In some cases, the difficulty is not just finding *any* volunteers, but finding volunteers with the right skills to assist the organisation in the new professional 'corporate' framework of the contract culture. Some organisations appear to be increasingly looking for a 'new' type of volunteer as opposed to the traditional 'charity' volunteer. The following section explores possible future models of volunteering that have been identified by a number of authors.



Social Enterprise and Charity Volunteers

Australian authors Zappalà et al. (2001) have developed two models of volunteering. They describe these models as the 'charity' and 'social enterprise' types of volunteering. The characteristics of these models are outlined in Table 2. Other authors have also developed similar models of 'traditional' and 'new' volunteers to describe current changes (McDonald and Mutch, 2000; McDonald and Warburton, 2000; Warburton and Mutch, 2000). These models are useful for beginning to explore potential future trends in the level and nature of social service volunteering, and for initiating further discussion.

Table 2: The 'Charity' and 'Social Enterprise' Models of Volunteering

| Volunteering Dimension | Charity Model | Social Enterprise Model |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Recruitment Base | general community | community & corporates |
| Demographic Characteristics | usually older, not in workforce, female | usually younger, employed – 'cash-rich, time-poor' |
| Location | on-site | on-site plus off-site and 'virtual volunteering' |
| Mode of Engagement | 'fit volunteer to job' (through selection and training) | 'fit job to person' (through creating appropriate volunteer opportunities) |
| Type of Volunteer Activity | specialised/fixed tasks | diverse/project-based; also some release activities |
| Skills | varied: from basic to high | tendency to be more highly skilled |
| Training | traditionally little, or extensive role-specific [training] provided in-house by organisation | volunteers may train in-house staff |
| Retention | need to be ongoing/loyalty important | fixed term: ongoing nature not as important; fickle |
| Recognition | 'gold watch' approach to individuals | recognise corporate involvement through 'high-profile' marketing; outcomes-focused feedback to individuals |
| Commitment | seen in terms of regular hours/week (usually core hours) | bundles of time without set parameters; outside of core hours/depends on volunteer's preference |
| Motivations | focus on altruism | altruism plus personal/corporate gains |
| Paid Staff/Volunteer Relations | paid staff may feel erosion of standards | volunteers may often be more qualified/experienced than paid staff |

(Zappalà et al., 2001, 6)

'Charity volunteers' are traditional types of volunteers who perform tasks on a regular basis. They have typically been married women (with children) outside the paid workforce or older retired people. With the decline in the number of women available for volunteer work, younger and older people who are outside of the paid workforce have increasingly been targeted as potential volunteers.

As discussed in the previous sections of this review, however, there has been a shift in the types of skills required by some voluntary social service organisations. Organisations engaged in the 'contract culture' frequently want people with professional skills, for example, accounting, information technology and management. These organisations may no longer need the traditional 'charity' volunteers and instead may prefer to target and recruit the new 'social enterprise' volunteers.

'Social enterprise' volunteers do not fit within the framework of traditional social service volunteering. Social enterprise volunteers tend to be "younger, highly skilled professionals employed fulltime" (Zappalà et al., 2001: 5).

The nature of the work undertaken by 'social enterprise' volunteers is also different from traditional charity volunteering. For example, volunteers may work on a particular project at home for an intense period of a week or a month, once a year. An Australian study by McDonald and Mutch (2000: 135) also found that 'new' volunteers were "happy to deliver their time and their service but don't want to be part of that more formalised structure".

'Social enterprise' volunteers are also likely to be highly skilled, and may be used as outside 'experts' to train in-house staff.

While in the 'charity' model the issue was often that paid staff felt that the use of volunteers may erode standards, in the 'social enterprise' model the situation is often reversed, whereby an outside 'volunteer' expert has better qualifications than internal staff (Zappalà et al., 2001: 14).

The demand for 'social enterprise' volunteers is related to the changing environment for voluntary organisations. As was noted earlier in Part IV, many traditional 'charity' volunteers find it difficult to keep up with the demands of accountability and the 'paper work' associated with the 'contract culture'. There is an increasing demand for professional volunteers who have business or computer skills, for example, to help organisations become professional service providers and to meet the demands of government funders. However, it is often difficult to recruit these volunteers.

The increasingly complex nature of the voluntary sector has increased the need for volunteers with greater skills and resources. One key informant in the study by McDonald and Mutch (2000: 135) suggested that "in the future ... the services we deliver, I suspect, will be more and more delivered by well-trained and current-in-their-training volunteers rather than simply by well-meaning and enthusiastic people". According to one informant in the study "the older volunteers essentially complemented a regime or environment which ... is disappearing. The new volunteers complement the emerging regime" (McDonald and Mutch, 2000: 136).



McDonald and Warburton (2000) describe the changes in some voluntary social organisations as a shift from a 'family-like' to a 'business-like' culture. Some respondents in McDonald and Warburton's study were less than positive about the traditional volunteers. One respondent, for example, stated:

This is an organisation that is asking for money ... you've got to be accountable and you've got to be credible and you can't be either of those if you're holding tea parties over every professional meeting. It just doesn't work that way.

Findings from Culp and Nolan's (2000) survey of future trends in volunteerism complement the above discussion of the 'new' or 'social enterprise' volunteer. Culp and Nolan (2000) surveyed volunteer administrators in the United States. The findings reflect the shift away from traditional volunteers in many organisations with the most frequently mentioned trends including 'virtual volunteering' through the internet, corporate volunteering, short-term episodic volunteering, and the need for volunteer opportunities that reflect volunteers' skills and abilities.

Zappalà et al. (2001) describe how some traditional 'charity' organisations are shifting closer to the market model in order to meet the demands of the changing external environment. They term these organisations 'social enterprise' organisations. As large voluntary organisations move towards a business or 'social enterprise' model of business, they are looking to develop long-term relationships with business and to recruit volunteers from the corporate sector.

Corporate volunteering practices have been in place in various forms in New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States for a number of years (for example, 'Businesses in the Community' in the United Kingdom). Some of these initiatives have often involved 'one-off' labour-intensive team-building exercises such as painting a building for a community group or undertaking a beach clean-up. There have also been questions whether this type of volunteering is 'real' volunteering as participants often undertake this work in paid time as part of their 'work' (Noble, 2000; Quirk, 1998). However, many 'corporate volunteering' or 'social enterprise' volunteering schemes are now attempting to build long-term partnerships with the business sector and to use the professional skills of the volunteers within the organisation (Quirk, 1998).

These developments are a reflection not only of changes within voluntary agencies, but also of shifts in corporate business practice. The increasing demand from community groups for volunteers with business skills is matched by a desire on the part of some businesses to move towards "socially responsible business practice" and to make a difference in their communities. According to Zappalà et al. (2001: 1), business "has discovered the benefits of volunteering as another tool to increase their competitive advantage as well as illustrate their commitment to the community". Similarly Warburton and Mutch (2000: 40) make reference to a "new paradigm in business", where businesses are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of social and community responsibility and its relationship with profits.

While a number of authors suggest that there have been movements towards 'social enterprise' volunteers and corporate volunteering initiatives within some organisations, it is unclear how widespread this trend is, and how relevant and significant this development is in the New Zealand context. As Stansfield (2001) argues:

We are not a nation of large corporates but a nation of small business people and it is small, often family, businesses which have been the major traditional source of project assistance to the voluntary sector within the field of business and volunteering.

Only a small number of businesses in New Zealand have formal volunteering programmes and often these programmes are focused on 'one-off' events (MSP, 2001). It is evident that further research is needed on the extent and benefits of corporate volunteering programmes in New Zealand.

A number of voluntary social service organisations have reported that professionals with business skills who have become involved in voluntary organisations (often at a board level) have had difficulty adapting to a culture where clients may be members and are definitely not customers (Stansfield, 2001). Stansfield also stresses the need to recognise that the voluntary sector is not just about the provision of services, but is about 'belonging' (i.e. connectedness and engagement in some greater purpose):

Boards of voluntary organisations are a crucible of democracy where ordinary people are able to negotiate their way forward in developing an organisation. As such they are a significant training ground for the community as a whole and an opportunity to build social capital (Stansfield, 2001).

Starting Points for Discussion

The complex nature of volunteering in the voluntary social service sector and the paucity of research make any analysis of the future of volunteering in the social service sector largely speculative. As Australian authors Warburton and Mutch (2000: 42) note, "the future for volunteers in human service delivery is uncertain, but what is certain is that it is changing". A wide range of volunteering trends will be present in different organisations, reflecting the size, age, ethnicity, class, culture and activity of the make-up of the organisations.

While there are some 'social enterprise' or corporate volunteering initiatives emerging within New Zealand, it is important to note that this is a very small area in the field of social service volunteering. There is currently a lack of information on other emerging models of volunteering and at this stage it is only possible to raise questions for discussion and speculation.



'Social Enterprise' and 'Charity' Models

- Is there a shift towards the 'social enterprise' model of volunteering within large voluntary social service organisations in New Zealand?
- If there is a shift towards the 'social enterprise' model of volunteering within large voluntary social service organisations, will there still be a place for 'charity' volunteers?
- Can 'social enterprise' and 'charity' volunteers coexist within voluntary social service organisations?
- Will the work traditionally carried out by charity volunteers be done by paid staff in the future?
- Where do the ageing 'baby-boomers' fit within the 'social enterprise' model of volunteering? They will have many of the characteristics associated with charity volunteers, but many will also be highly educated and have management and business skills.
- Does the 'social enterprise' model create volunteering 'A' teams (social enterprise volunteers) and 'B' teams (charity volunteers)?
- Is the voluntary social service sector mirroring the practices and reproducing the power structures of the private sector?

Other Models

- What models of volunteering are operating within voluntary social service organisations of different sizes and structures? In particular, are there different models of volunteering operating in large national organisations compared with small local and 'grass-roots' organisations?
- What models of volunteering are operating within voluntary social service organisations that are not part of the 'contract culture'?
- What will be the future composition of the formal voluntary social service sector? Will a formal voluntary social service sector continue to exist or will its distinctiveness be eroded as some organisations position themselves closer to the private sector?

Part VIII:

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The objectives of this review were:

- to examine how the introduction of the 'contract culture' has influenced volunteering in voluntary social service organisations;
- to identify the changes that have occurred in voluntary social service organisations in terms of the *level* (number of volunteers) and *nature* (type of volunteering activities undertaken) of volunteering;
- to examine the possible reasons for – and potential consequences of – any changes in the level and nature of volunteering in the voluntary social service sector; and
- to consider the future role of volunteers within voluntary social service organisations.

There have been reports from within the voluntary social services sector that it is becoming more difficult to recruit and retain volunteers. This review has attempted to explore the level and nature of volunteering within the voluntary social service sector and the potential reasons for any changes. This review has relied on literature that has focused predominantly on medium-to-large voluntary social service organisations and has therefore explored the trends in only a small part of the complex and diverse voluntary social service sector. Historically, volunteers within these organisations have been commonly viewed in terms of the 'Lady Bountiful' stereotype, or the 'dominant-status' model – that is, middle-aged and middle-class.

It is clear from the literature that the introduction of a 'contract culture' has influenced the level and nature of volunteering within many organisations. There have been demands and pressures on volunteers to adapt to the new 'corporate' environment. These changes in expectations of volunteers have met with varying responses from the current pool of volunteers. Some people have felt motivated by the more professional approach, even if they are not being paid. Other 'traditional' volunteers are reported to be having difficulty adapting to the pressures and demands associated with the new 'business-like' environment.

A range of economic and social changes may have also influenced the availability of people for voluntary work. An important factor has been change in patterns of workforce participation of women, which reduces the availability of the traditional pool of volunteers in the voluntary social service sector. Other changes in the labour market have also had implications for the supply of volunteers. One trend has been the concentration of paid work in the middle years of life. This has produced a pool of younger and older people who are 'time-rich' and



'work-poor', who may potentially be available for voluntary work. There is some uncertainty, however, as to whether people in these groups can be recruited as volunteers in sufficient numbers to replace the depleted pool of traditional volunteers – the middle-class, middle-aged women who are now increasingly moving into paid employment. There is also speculation that there has been a decline in 'social capital', with people now more 'individualised' and 'privatised', and less prepared to engage in their community.

Some organisations are attempting to shift away from traditional volunteers by recruiting paid staff or 'new' types of volunteers with business skills and knowledge, who can – help organisations to adapt to the new environment. In some instances, these volunteers are drawn increasingly from 'corporate volunteering' partnerships between the private sector and voluntary organisations. As corporate business begins to see commercial advantages in being associated with community service activities, there arises a range of opportunities for voluntary agencies to build partnerships with business and gain leverage from the increased access to skills and expertise that business has to offer.

Although the literature offers some insights – there is a clear need for further research and discussion on the future of volunteering within voluntary social service organisations and within the wider context. As well as the points for discussion outlined in Part VII, the following questions deserve further attention:

- What type of framework and discourse is appropriate to adopt when considering the level and nature of 'volunteering' within Māori and Pacific people's communities?
- What are the levels and nature of volunteering within Māori and Pacific people's communities and how might they be changing?
- What are the volunteering issues facing voluntary social service organisations of various sizes and structures (for example, large national organisations and small 'grass-roots' organisations)?
- What effect has the increase in other types of volunteering, such as school boards of trustees, had on social service volunteering?
- What is the nature of volunteering activities within different voluntary social service organisations, and how might this be changing (for example, management, administration, service delivery)?
- What is the composition of volunteers in voluntary social service organisations (for example, 'charity' and 'social enterprise' volunteers)?
- What are the relationships between, and roles of, paid staff and volunteers within voluntary social service organisations and how might these be changing?
- What are the implications for voluntary social service organisations adopting business models and practices and recruiting 'professional' business volunteers who may not 'belong' to the organisation or subscribe to its values?

- What 'volunteering paradigms' are evident within voluntary organisations in New Zealand: volunteering as an efficient means of extending the service or programme, or volunteering as a space for participation and community engagement (Lyons, 1996)?
- What are the different types of voluntary organisations that exist in New Zealand, and how are they changing (for example, 'social enterprise' organisations, 'grass-roots' organisations, Māori organisations)?
- What is the current nature of any partnerships between the voluntary sector and private sector in New Zealand, and how are these partnerships likely to develop?
- What are the levels and nature of volunteering within the state and private sectors and how might they be changing?
- What are the level, nature, and motivations of volunteering for new migrants, and how might these be changing?
- What is the relationship between informal volunteering and formal volunteering? Does an increase in informal volunteering reduce the supply of formal volunteers, or vice versa?

Exploration of these and related issues may lead to greater knowledge about the world of social service volunteering, which is changing in complex and diverse ways that are not currently well understood.



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