Understanding and Assessing the Motivations of Volunteers: A Functional Approach

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The authors applied functionalist theory to the question of the motivations underlying volunteerism, hypothesized 6 functions potentially served by volunteerism, and designed an instrument to assess these functions (Volunteer Functions Inventory; VFI). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on diverse samples yielded factor solutions consistent with functionalist theorizing; each VFI motivation, loaded on a single factor, possessed substantial internal consistency and temporal stability and correlated only modestly with other VFI motivations (Studies 1, 2, and 3). Evidence for predictive validity is provided by a laboratory study in which VFI motivations predicted the persuasive appeal of messages better when message and motivation were matched than mismatched (Study 4), and by field studies in which the extent to which volunteers' experiences matched their motivations predicted satisfaction (Study 5) and future intentions (Study 6). Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Every year, millions of people devote substantial amounts of their time and energy to helping others. One important manifestation of human helpfulness is volunteerism, whereby people provide, among other services, companionship to the lonely, tutoring to the illiterate, counseling to the troubled, and health care to the sick, and do so on a regular, ongoing, voluntary basis, with their voluntary helping often extending over long periods of time. According to one estimate, 89.2 million American adults engaged in some form of volunteerism in 1993, with 23.6 million of them giving 5 or more hours per week to their volunteer service (Independent Sector, 1994). Moreover, volunteerism is not simply an American phenomenon but rather is an activity that can be found in many other parts of the world (Curtis, Grabb, & Baer, 1992).

The idea that an individual would make significant personal sacrifices for another person, particularly when that person is a stranger, has long fascinated students of social behavior (e.g., Batson, 1991; Eisenberg, 1986; Latané & Darley, 1970; Piliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner, & Clark, 1981; Schroeder, Penner, Dovidio, & Piliavin, 1995; Staub, 1978). Although studies of helping have long been mainstays of psychological inquiry, the existing literature speaks largely to varieties of helping somewhat different from volunteerism, focusing on helping in contexts where a potential helper is faced with an unexpected need for help, calling for an immediate decision to act and an opportunity to provide one and only one relatively brief act of help (Bar-Tal, 1984; Benson et al., 1980; Piliavin & Charng, 1990).

To be sure, factors uncovered by research on the helping that occurs in these kinds of contexts, sometimes referred to as *spontaneous helping,* may be important influences in volun-

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teerism as well. Yet, volunteerism appears to be exemplary of a rather different kind of helping, a kind that is prototypic of *planned helping,* which often "calls for considerably more planning, sorting out of priorities, and matching of personal capabilities and interests with type of intervention" (Benson et al., 1980, p. 89). Thus, volunteers (a) often actively seek out opportunities to help others; (b) may deliberate for considerable amounts of time about whether to volunteer, the extent of their involvement, and the degree to which particular activities fit with their own personal needs; and (c) may make a commitment to an ongoing helping relationship that may extend over a considerable period of time and that may entail considerable personal costs of time, energy, and opportunity. Why, then, do people volunteer and what sustains voluntary helping?

The defining and characteristic features of volunteerism as voluntary, sustained, and ongoing helpfulness suggest that it may be productive to adopt a motivational perspective and to inquire about the motivations that may dispose individuals to seek out volunteer opportunities, to commit themselves to voluntary helping, and to sustain their involvement in volunteerism over extended periods of time. After all, the fundamental concerns of motivational inquiry with understanding the processes that move people to action—the processes that initiate, direct, and sustain action—are precisely the concerns engaged by the questions "why do people volunteer?" and "what sustains voluntary helping?" In addressing these questions, we have adopted the strategy of *functional analysis,* an approach that is explicitly concerned with the reasons and the purposes, the plans and the goals, that underlie and generate psychological phenomena—that is, the personal and social functions being served by an individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions (Snyder, 1993).

The Functional Approach to Motivation

In psychology, the themes of functionalism have a long and distinguished tradition and are reflected in diverse perspectives that emphasize the adaptive and purposeful strivings of individuals toward personal and social goals (Cantor, 1994; Snyder, 1993). A central tenet of functionalist theorizing is that people can and do perform the same actions in the service of different psychological functions. Arguably, the most familiar examples of functional theorizing in personality and social psychology are the classic accounts of attitudes and persuasion articulated by Smith, Bruner, and White (1956) and by Katz (1960). These theorists proposed that the same attitudes could serve different functions for different people and that attempts to change attitudes would succeed to the extent that they addressed the functions served by those attitudes. More recently, however, there has been a broadening of the scope of the application of functionalist theorizing. Functions with at least a family resemblance to those proposed for attitudes appear with some regularity in motivationally oriented analyses of diverse cognitive, affective, behavioral, and interpersonal phenomena (e.g., Cantor, 1994; Snyder, 1992, 1993).

In the tradition of such theorizing, we suggest that the key themes of functional analyses that have contributed to the understanding of phenomena and processes in the realms of attitudes and persuasion, social cognition, social relationships, and personality also hold the promise for unraveling the complex motivational foundations of volunteer activity (see also Clary & Snyder, 1991; Snyder & Omoto, 1992). The core propositions of a functional analysis of volunteerism are that acts of volunteerism that appear to be quite similar on the surface may reflect markedly different underlying motivational processes and that the functions served by volunteerism manifest themselves in the unfolding dynamics of this form of helpfulness, influencing critical events associated with the initiation and maintenance of voluntary helping behavior.

Functions Served by Volunteerism

What, then, are the functions served by volunteerism? To answer this question, we took previous functional theorizing, specifically the classic theories of attitudes offered by Katz (1960) and Smith et al. (1956), as a heuristic point of departure for considering the motivational foundations of volunteerism. Although the labels vary, several functions are common to both Katz's and Smith et al.'s taxonomies (in the following, Katz's labels are used and Smith et al.'s labels are in parentheses). Some attitudes are thought to serve a knowledge (object appraisal) function, bringing a sense of understanding to the world; other attitudes serve a value expressive (quality of expressiveness) function, helping people express deeply held values, dispositions, and convictions; and still other attitudes serve an ego defensive (externalization) function, buffering people against undesirable or threatening truths about the self. In addition to sharing these functions in common, Katz proposed a utilitarian function by which attitudes reflect experiences with rewarding and punishing events, and Smith et al. proposed a social adjustive function served when attitudes help people fit in with important reference groups.

Part of the appeal of these earlier functional theories was the diversity of motivations that they could embrace, a diversity reflecting to some extent the functional theorists' (e.g., Katz, 1960) invoking of the themes of the grand psychological theories of human nature in the functions they proposed (e.g., the defensive function captures elements of psychodynamic theory, the knowledge function is reminiscent of Gestalt psychology, the expressive function has the flavor of self-psychology about it, and the utilitarian and adjustive functions are reminiscent of the behaviorist perspective on human nature). In this same spirit of inclusive theorizing about the motivational foundations of action, we have proposed that the diverse functions identified in such functional theorizing have their counterparts in volunteers' motivations. However, further refinement and articulation of the role of ego-related functions have suggested an important distinction between eliminating negative aspects associated with the ego and promoting positive strivings associated with the ego. The result was a set of six motivational functions served by volunteerism. Also, in fact, previous research is readily interpretable within this functional framework.

Values

One function that may be served by involvement in volunteer service centers on the opportunities that volunteerism provides for individuals to express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others. Related to Katz's (1960) value ex-

pressive functions and Smith et al.'s (1956) quality of expressiveness functions, concern for others is often characteristic of those who volunteer (Anderson & Moore, 1978), distinguishes volunteers from nonvolunteers (Allen & Rushton, 1983), and predicts whether volunteers complete their expected period of service (Clary & Miller, 1986; Clary & Orenstein, 1991).

Understanding

A second function potentially served by volunteering involves the opportunity for volunteerism to permit new learning experiences and the chance to exercise knowledge, skills, and abilities that might otherwise go unpracticed. Related to the knowledge and object appraisal functions in theories of attitudes and persuasion, this understanding function is exemplified by the large number of Gidron's (1978) volunteers in health and mental health institutions who expected to receive benefits related to self-development, learning, and variety in life through their volunteer service.

Social

A third function that may be served by volunteering reflects motivations concerning relationships with others. Volunteering may offer opportunities to be with one's friends or to engage in an activity viewed favorably by important others. This social function is clearly related to Smith et al.'s (1956) social adjustive function and has figured prominently in several accounts of helpfulness, including Rosenhan's (1970) portrait of the partially committed civil rights activists whose helpfulness was guided by concerns over social rewards and punishments.

Career

A fourth function that may be served by volunteering is concerned with career-related benefits that may be obtained from participation in volunteer work. Related to the utilitarian function described by Katz (1960), this career function is exemplified by the Junior League volunteers studied by Jenner (1982), 15% of whom perceived volunteering to be a means of preparing for a new career or of maintaining career-relevant skills.

Protective

A fifth function traces its roots to functional theorizing's traditional concerns with motivations involving processes associated with the functioning of the ego. Related to ego defensive (Katz, 1960) or externalization (Smith et al., 1956) concerns, such motivations center on protecting the ego from negative features of the self and, in the case of volunteerism, may serve to reduce guilt over being more fortunate than others and to address one's own personal problems. This protective function offers an interpretation of Frisch and Gerard's (1981) finding that some Red Cross volunteers reported that they volunteer to escape from negative feelings.

Enhancement

Finally, a sixth proposed function of volunteering derives from indications that there may be more to the ego, and especially the ego's relation to affect, than protective processes. First, recent research on mood suggests that negative affect and positive affect are separate dimensions rather than endpoints on a bipolar scale (e.g., Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Second, research on mood and helping points to different mechanisms by which positive and negative moods influence helpfulness (Carlson, Charlin, & Miller, 1988; Carlson & Miller, 1987; Cunningham, Steinberg, & Grev, 1980); in the case of positive mood, people use helping as a means of maintaining or enhancing positive affect. Finally, research on volunteerism has found evidence of positive strivings, as when some respondents report that they volunteer for reasons of personal development (Anderson & Moore, 1978) or to obtain satisfactions related to personal growth and self-esteem (Jenner, 1982). Thus, in contrast to the protective function's concern with eliminating negative aspects surrounding the ego, the enhancement function involves a motivational process that centers on the ego's growth and development and involves positive strivings of the ego.

Previous research on volunteers' motivations, then, is clearly compatible with the motivations suggested by functional theorizing, even though none of the studies that we have reviewed was designed specifically to investigate the functional approach to motivation. We should note that, in proposing six functions for volunteering, we were well aware that the question of whether six is the optimal number of functions would quickly spring to readers' minds. We recognized that the theories of Katz (1960) and Smith et al. (1956), which served as launching pads for our analysis, each used only four functions, and we were mindful of the fact that our own preliminary considerations of the functional bases of volunteerism began with examinations of but four functions (Clary & Snyder, 1991). However, as we have attempted to convey here, our attempts to build on previous theorizing (our own included), to integrate the shared and distinct functions proposed in previous theorizing, and to further articulate such theorizing to incorporate important distinctions in self- and ego-related functioning clearly led to a conceptualization involving six motivational functions potentially served by volunteerism.

Whatever the final word on the number of motivations for volunteerism (a matter that is discussed further in the *General Discussion* section), the essential message of the functional perspective is that it encourages us to consider a wide range of personal and social motivations that promote this form of sustained helping behavior. Moreover, in doing so, the functional approach advances an interactionist position, as it argues that important consequences follow from matching the motivations characteristic of individuals to the opportunities afforded by their environments. For, as we examined in our empirical investigations, it follows from the functional account of volunteerism that people can be recruited into volunteer work by appealing to their own psychological functions, that they will come to be satisfied volunteers to the extent that they engage in volunteer work that serves their own psychological functions, and that they will plan to continue to serve as volunteers to the extent that their psychological functions are being served by their service.

In the present article, we report on the development of an instrument designed to measure the functions served by volunteerism, the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). During the

course of its development, we sampled from diverse populations of volunteers, as well as from the population of nonvolunteers, using diverse methodological tools to demonstrate the reliability and validity of the VFI and using both field and laboratory methods of investigation. More specifically, our first set of three studies is concerned with the construction of the VFI, investigations into its factor structure, and assessment of its reliability. The second set of three studies is devoted to validation, using the VFI to test functionally derived hypotheses in the context of each stage of the volunteer process—recruitment of volunteers, satisfaction with the experience of volunteering, and commitment to the role of volunteer.

Development of an Inventory of Volunteers' Motivations

Study 1: The VFI

The functional approach to volunteerism is predicated on the assumption that the motivations underlying volunteer activity can be identified and measured with some degree of precision. In this regard, it is important to emphasize that the need to identify and measure psychological functions underlying beliefs and behaviors has been a critical task in functional analyses in other domains, with the lack of measuring devices often impeding theoretical and empirical progress (Kiesler, Collins, & Miller, 1969; Snyder & DeBono, 1987). Moreover, several authors have noted that studies of volunteers' motivations have often been conducted so in ways that raise conceptual and methodological concerns, including using instruments without a conceptual foundation and of unknown reliability and validity (for elaboration, see Clary & Snyder, 1991; Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). Finally, although there exist reliable and valid measures of motivations for specific kinds of volunteer service (e.g., the measure of motivations for AIDS volunteerism developed by Omoto & Snyder, 1995), there remains a need for an inventory that reliably and validly taps a set of motivations of generic relevance to volunteerism.

To develop such an inventory, we generated a set of items to reflect the psychological and social functions of volunteerism identified by our conceptual analysis. In accord with an investigative strategy for personality and social behavior outlined by Snyder and Ickes (1985), we sought a population for whom motivations for volunteering would be salient, accessible, and meaningful. Thus, we administered the inventory to currently active volunteers engaged in diverse forms of volunteer service, individuals who, by virtue of having involved themselves in volunteer activity, could be presumed to possess motivations relevant to volunteerism.

Method

Participants. Participants were 321 female and 144 male (and 2 of unspecified gender) volunteers from five organizations in the Minneapolis and St. Paul metropolitan areas that used volunteers to provide a wide range of services to children, families of cancer patients, social service and public health clients, and the physically handicapped, as well as blood services and disaster relief. The mean age of these volunteers was 40.9 years (SD = 13.38); their mean length of volunteer service was 68.2 months (SD = 87.08); and 89% reported educational experiences beyond high school, with 60% reporting at least an undergraduate degree.

Procedure. The items of the VFI were rationally derived from conceptualizations of the six proposed psychological and social functions served by involvement in volunteer work (values, understanding, career, social, protective, and enhancement). Development of the VFI was also informed by previous research on volunteerism, which has used both quantitative and qualitative means for identifying motivations (see Clary & Snyder, 1991, for a fuller review of that literature). Preliminary studies with volunteers and nonvolunteers permitted us to identify and eliminate unreliable and ambiguous items, resulting in an instrument consisting of 30 items, with 5 items assessing each of the six functions. (The items of the VFI can be found in Table 1.)

Each participating organization's director of volunteer services administered the VFI to its volunteers. Respondents were asked to indicate "how important or accurate each of the 30 possible reasons for volunteering were for you in doing volunteer work," using a response scale ranging from 1 (*not at all important/accurate*) to 7 (*extremely important/accurate*). Scale scores resulted from averaging scores on the five items, such that individuals' scores on each scale could range from 1 to 7; the higher the score, the greater the importance of the motivation.

Results and Discussion

A primary reason for this first investigation was to examine the structure of volunteers' motivations for volunteering and to evaluate the psychometric properties of the VFI as a measure of these motivations. To do so, we conducted a factor analysis of participants' responses to the VFI. Beginning with a principal-components analysis, we identified 6 components with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, suggesting 6 factors underlying responses to the VFI (Kim & Mueller, 1988). For the first 12 factors resulting from this analysis, the eigenvalues (with percent variance accounted for presented in parentheses) were 8.26 (28%), 3.29 (39%), 2.47 (47%), 2.14 (54%), 1.40 (59%), 1.20 (63%), 0.88 (65%), 0.84 (68%), 0.77 (71%), 0.70 (73%), 0.65 (75%), and 0.58 (77%). In addition, the resulting scree plot of the eigenvalues revealed that the leveling off to a straight horizontal line occurred after the sixth eigenvalue, further suggesting 6 factors (Cattell, 1966). With this evidence indicating a 6-factor solution, we then performed a principal-axis factor analysis with oblique rotation to a preselected 6-factor solution.

The factors that emerged from this analysis clearly reflect each of the functions that we proposed were served by volunteering. Almost without exception, items from each scale loaded on their intended factor and did not load with items from different scales. (The only exception is one item from the enhancement scale, Item 29, which loaded with the understanding items on the fifth factor; generally, however, the enhancement items loaded together on one factor.) Thus, this factor analysis resulted in a nearly perfectly clean structure, providing evidence that our theoretically derived motivations were distinct and evident in the responses of actual volunteers.

Although these exploratory analyses clearly point to a six-factor solution, the question of whether there are more or fewer factors did arise. To answer this question, we conducted two additional principal-axis factor analyses with oblique rotations, one to a preselected five-factor solution and one to a preselected seven-factor solution. For the five-factor solution, the pattern of loadings for the Values, Career, Social, and Understanding items was consistent with the results of the six-factor solution, and

Table 1
Volunteer Sample Factor Pattern Matrix (Principal-Axis Factor Analysis, Oblique Rotation, Six Factors Specified) for VFI Items, Study 1

VFI scale and items	Factor 1	2	3	4	5	6
Protective						
7. No matter how bad I've been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it.	.53					
9. By volunteering I feel less lonely.	.63					
11. Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others.	.43					
20. Volunteering helps me work through by own personal problems.	.72					
24. Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles.	.78					
Values						
3. I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.		.63				
8. I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.		.64				
16. I feel compassion toward people in need.		.72				
19. I feel it is important to help others.		.70				
22. I can do something for a cause that is important to me.		.62				
Career						
1. Volunteering can help me to get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work.			.83			
10. I can make new contacts that might help my business or career.			.85			
15. Volunteering allows me to explore different career options.			.68			
21. Volunteering will help me to succeed in my chosen profession.			.73			
28. Volunteering experience will look good on my résumé.			.68			
Social						
2. My friends volunteer.				.58		
4. People I'm close to want me to volunteer.				.59		
6. People I know share an interest in community service.				.70		
17. Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.				.79		
23. Volunteering is an important activity to the people I know best.				.80		
Understanding						
12. I can learn more about the cause for which I am working.					−.43	
14. Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things.					−.56	
18. Volunteering lets me learn things through direct, hands on experience.					−.64	
25. I can learn how to deal with a variety of people.					−.65	
30. I can explore my own strengths.					−.82	
Enhancement						
5. Volunteering makes me feel important.						−.62
13. Volunteering increases my self-esteem.						−.75
26. Volunteering makes me feel needed.						−.64
27. Volunteering makes me feel better about myself.						−.77
29. Volunteering is a way to make new friends.					−.42	

Note. Only factor loadings greater than ±.30 are shown. n = 427. VFI = Volunteer Functions Inventory.

the Protective and Enhancement items loaded together on one factor (with Item 29 again loading with Understanding). For the seven-factor solution, the pattern of loadings was fully identical to that for the six-factor solution, as no items loaded on Factor 5. We also examined the number of factors issue with confirmatory factor analytic techniques, using LISREL to test each of the five-, six-, and seven-factor solutions with an oblique model using item pair indicators and a pattern of loadings specified such that items were constrained to load on their specified factor from the exploratory analyses. The test of the six-factor solution provided confirmatory support for the six-factor model; LISREL's goodness-of-fit index (GFI) was .91, the normed fit index (NFI; Bentler & Bonett, 1980) was .90, and the root mean squared residual index (RMS_{res}) of goodness of fit was .057. For the five-factor solution, the GFI was .88, NFI was .87, and RMS_{res} was .064. For the seven-factor solution, GFI was .91, NFI was .90, and RMS_{res} was .054. A similar pattern of support for the six-factor model is provided by considering chi-squares: For the five-factor solution, $\chi^2(125, N = 434) = 519.19$; for the six-factor solution, $\chi^2(120, N = 434) = 412.69$; and for the seven-factor solution, $\chi^2(115, N = 434) = 399.49$, $ps < .001$. To assess the degree of improvement as we moved from one solution to the next, we treated these solutions as nested models. In moving from a five- to a six-factor model, we found a substantial reduction in chi-square, the difference in chi-square of 106.50 represents a reduction of 20%, which far exceeds the criterion value of 15.1 associated with five degrees of freedom and an alpha of .01. Thus, moving from a five- to a six-factor model did produce significant improvement in model fit, enough improvement to offset the degrees of freedom lost. However, moving from a six- to a seven-factor model, the difference in chi-square of 13.2 failed to exceed the criterion value, which suggests that the seven-factor solution offers no significant improvement in model fit relative to the degrees of freedom lost

over the six-factor solution. Thus, taken together, the various indexes of goodness of fit suggest that the six-factor oblique model fits the data well and is preferred on statistical grounds to either a five- or seven-factor solution.

In addition, we assessed internal consistency by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each of the VFI scales: career, .89; enhancement, .84; social, .83; understanding; .81; protective, .81; and values, .80. We also computed correlations among the scales and found the average interscale correlation to be .34. Finally, for this sample, we observed generally higher scores on the values (M = 5.82, SD = 1.00), understanding (M = 4.91, SD = 1.32), and enhancement (M = 4.27, SD = 1.43) functions and lower scores on career (M = 2.74, SD = 1.64), protective (M = 2.61, SD = 1.37), and social (M = 2.59, SD = 1.30) functions.

Thus, the findings from the first investigation offered support for the functional approach to volunteers' motivations and for the VFI as a measure of those motivations. The results of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses indicated that volunteers' motivations, as assessed by the VFI, would group themselves according to functions identified by our conceptual analysis of volunteerism. Because the participants used for developing this inventory were currently active as volunteers, and thus were presumably motivated to be volunteers, and were engaged in a variety of volunteer activities at different volunteer service organizations, our confidence that the VFI taps motivations of generic relevance to volunteerism was increased.

Study 2: Cross Validation of the VFI

As much as Study 1 documents the psychometric properties of the VFI, it is important to recognize that its findings are based on respondents for whom motivations for volunteering are especially salient, namely people actively involved as volunteers. At the same time, it is also important to examine the motivations for volunteerism, and the VFI, in an even more diverse sample. Recall that in addition to being active volunteers, the respondents in Study 1 were adults (an average age of 40.9 years) who were, in all likelihood, well established in their social and occupational lives (e.g., their education was probably complete, given that a majority reported having at least an undergraduate degree). In Study 2, we sought to examine the motivations to volunteer under conditions in which these motivations are less salient and with a sample of respondents that adds diversity with respect to age and experiences as a volunteer.

In Study 2, we administered the VFI to a sample of university students. We expected this sample to be younger than that of Study 1 and to include people with and without volunteer experience. Moreover, we administered the VFI as part of a large battery of questionnaires completed in mass testing sessions, a situation in which motivations for volunteering would be less salient than in Study 1, in which volunteers participated in our research through organizations for which they were volunteers. The question, then, was whether the same six-factor solution would emerge in a situation where motivations are less salient and the sample is more diverse with respect to experience than that of Study 1.

Method

Participants. Participants were 269 female and 265 male (and 1 of unspecified gender) students at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus, who were recruited from introductory psychology courses. Their average age was 21.25 years (SD = 4.99). Moreover, 320 students reported experience as volunteers, and 213 reported that they had never volunteered (2 students did not provide this information).

Procedure. We administered the VFI to groups of students in mass testing sessions. We first requested information about participants' experiences as volunteers, asking those with experience to indicate the name of their organization and length of service. These instructions then followed: "Now if you have done volunteer work before or are currently doing volunteer work, then using the 7-point scale below, please indicate how important or accurate each of the following possible reasons for volunteering is for you. If you have not been a volunteer before, then using the 7-point scale below, please indicate how important or accurate each of the following reasons for volunteering would be for you."

Results and Discussion

The critical question addressed here concerns the factor structure of students' motivations for volunteering. As in Study 1, we began with a principal-components analysis and again found that six factors emerged, although the order in which the factors were extracted differed from that of Study 1. The eigenvalues for the first 12 factors (and percent variance accounted for) were 9.42 (31%), 3.16 (42%), 2.68 (51%), 1.72 (57%), 1.16 (61%), 1.01 (64%), 0.90 (67%), 0.79 (70%), 0.69 (72%), 0.65 (74%), 0.63 (76%), and 0.59 (78%). A principal-axis factor analysis with oblique rotation to the six-factor solution was then performed (see Table 2). Generally, items from the individual scales loaded together and most highly on the predicted factor; however, Item 29 (enhancement) loaded on Understanding, and item 15 (career) had a similar loading on Career and Understanding. Thus, on the whole, the results of the factor analysis of the students' responses to the VFI were highly consistent with those of the volunteers' responses.

As with Study 1, we conducted confirmatory factor analyses by using LISREL. Testing the six-factor solution with an oblique model using item pair indicators, with the pattern of loadings specified such that items were constrained to load on their specified factor, we obtained support for the six-factor solution: GFI = .89, NFI = .88, RMS_{res} = .065, and $\chi^2(120, N = 535)$ = 630.37. Applying similar procedures to a five-factor solution (with item groupings based on the results of an exploratory analysis), GFI = .86, NFI = .85, RMS_{res} = .070, and $\chi^2(125, N = 535)$ = 770.89. Finally, for the seven-factor solution, GFI = .89, NFI = .89, RMS_{res} = .062, and $\chi^2(115, N = 535)$ = 594.93, all $ps < .001$. Thus, confirmatory factor analyses of the students' responses to the VFI pointed to the presence of six factors and also suggested that the six-factor solution is the optimal one.

For this sample, we found the following mean scores on reported importance for each scale: values, M = 5.37, SD = 1.17; understanding, M = 5.13, SD = 1.20; enhancement, M = 4.64, SD = 1.36; career, M = 4.54, SD = 1.50; protective, M = 3.25, SD = 1.36; and social, M = 2.95, SD = 1.28. Furthermore, each scale was internally consistent: For career and enhancement, α = .85; for understanding, α = .84; for social, α

Table 2
Student Sample Factor Pattern Matrix (Principal-Axis Factor Analysis, Oblique Rotation, Six Factors Specified) for VFI Items, Study 2

	Factor					
VFI scale and item number	1	2	3	4	5	6
Enhancement						
5.	.40					
13.	.43					
26.	.43				.34	
27.	.55					
29.						.35
Career						
1.		.86				
10.		.84				
15.		.43				.43
21.		.64				
28.		.59				
Social						
2.			.65			
4.			.66			
6.			.69			
17.			.78			
23.			.73			
Values						
3.				.86		
8.				.50		
16.				.73		
19.				.64		
22.				.56		
Protective						
7.					.54	
9.					.61	
11.					.42	
20.					.75	
24.					.89	
Understanding						
12.				.33		−.42
14.						−.55
18.						−.53
25.						−.59
30.						−.69

Note. Only factor loadings greater than ±.30 are shown. n = 532. VFI = Volunteer Functions Inventory.

= .83; and for values and protective, α = .82. Finally, the average intercorrelation among the six scales was .41.

Thus, the results of Study 2 indicated that it is possible to capture the set of motivations for volunteering derived from functionalist theorizing by using a sample that was younger and of more diverse experience than that of Study 1 and in circumstances that do not themselves make volunteerism salient.

Studies 1 and 2: Congruence of Factor Solutions

Taking the results of Studies 1 and 2 together, we found considerable apparent overlap between the factor solutions derived from the volunteer and student samples. In both cases, exploratory and confirmatory analyses converged on six-factor solutions, consistent with the hypothesized functional motivations for volunteerism. To more directly evaluate the relations between the solutions, we computed coefficients of congruence (Tucker, 1951), which provide a statistical "measure of coincidence or agreement of factors obtained in one sample with those of another" (Harmon, 1976, p. 343). The coefficients of congruence (1.0 indicates perfect agreement) computed between the same-named factors across the samples—Career = .98, Protective = .98, Social = .98, Understanding = .97, Values = .94, and Enhancement = .93—clearly indicated that the factors obtained from the samples are congruent and that there is a high degree of relation between their simple structures.

Finally, we calculated coefficients of congruence for two subgroups within our student sample, those who had experience as volunteers (n = 320) and those reporting no prior experience (n = 213). The issue here was the similarity of the factor solutions for each of these subgroups to that of the adult volunteer sample. For the students who had experience as volunteers, the coefficients of congruence were as follows: Career = .97, Protective = .96, Understanding = .96, Values = .93, Social = .97, and Enhancement = .93. For the students who reported no volunteer experiences, the coefficients of congruence were as follows: Career = .95, Protective = .93, Understanding = .93, Values = .92, Social = .97, and Enhancement = .74. Thus, we found that the factor structures are similar regardless of whether one looks at people with or without experience as a volunteer, suggesting that the same motivational concerns are present in different phases of the volunteer process (i.e., initiating volunteer activity and sustaining volunteer service).

Study 3: Temporal Stability of the VFI

In the next phase of the development of the VFI, we examined its temporal stability by having respondents complete the inventory at two points in time, thereby permitting an assessment of the test–retest reliability of the VFI scales.

Method

A sample of 65 students (41 women and 24 men) enrolled in psychology courses at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus, completed the VFI early in the academic quarter and a second time 4 weeks later. This sample had a mean age of 25.34 years (SD = 7.16) and included 13 current volunteers, 27 previous volunteers, and 25 students who had never volunteered.

Results and Discussion

The test–retest correlation for the values scale was .78; for understanding and enhancement, .77; for social and career, .68; and for protective, .64 (all ps < .001), indicating that the individual VFI scales are stable over a 1-month interval.

Validation of the VFI

Having constructed the VFI and documented its psychometric properties, in a second set of studies, we used it to investigate three critical aspects of volunteerism. Specifically, volunteer service organizations are faced with the tasks of recruiting volunteers, promoting satisfying experiences for their volunteers, and fostering longer term commitments to volunteer service. Each aspect engages the motivations underlying volunteerism

and permits empirical tests of hypotheses derived from the functional account of volunteerism.

Study 4: Matching Motivations With Persuasive Communications

In Study 4, we examined a fundamental aspect of functional theorizing, namely the importance of matching the motivations of the individual and the opportunities afforded by the environment. The functional approach offers a clear interactionist prediction: Persuasive messages will be effective to the extent that they speak to, or are matched with, the specific motivations important to individual recipients of the message. Thus, this matching hypothesis permits an evaluation of the usefulness of attending to the psychological functions served by volunteerism, the inventory that we have developed to measure these functions, and, by extension, the functional approach to motivation itself.

For this study, we created six advertisements that asked readers to become volunteers, with each advertisement corresponding to one of the psychological functions of volunteerism identified by the VFI; that is, each advertisement advocated volunteerism as a means toward a set of ends relevant to one of these six motivations. Participants, who had earlier completed the VFI, viewed all six advertisements and were asked to evaluate the messages in terms of their persuasive appeal. The critical prediction here was that, when predicting how persuaded participants would be by a particular advertisement, scores on each VFI scale would be predictive of ratings of its corresponding advertisement, but the other VFI scale scores would not.

Method

Participants. Fifty-nine University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus, undergraduates in psychology (25 men and 34 women) participated in this study for extra course credit.

Procedure. Participating individually in an "Advertising Study," students first completed a battery of questionnaires, which contained the VFI and several other questionnaires as filler material. They then evaluated advertising brochures that had been created to help promote an upcoming university volunteer fair. Their task involved examining each of the brochures, presented in a random order, and placing each brochure on a rating scale to indicate their overall evaluation of it. The experimenter then debriefed and excused the participants.

Experimental materials. Each brochure was constructed by using an 8 ½″ × 11″ (21.6 cm × 27.9 cm) sheet of paper folded in half, creating a four-page brochure with 5 ½″ × 8 ½″ (13.8 cm × 21.6 cm) panels. On the front panel were three statements corresponding to a single motivation's functionally based reasons for volunteering, which were followed by an invitation to open the brochure and read further. The second panel (inside front) contained a functionally relevant message that advocated volunteerism as a way to satisfy one of the six motivations for volunteering identified by the VFI. The third and fourth panels of the brochure were constant across the six advertisements and contained information about the location of a volunteer fair and some examples of volunteer activities.

Using the career brochure as an example, the front panel of the career brochure contained these statements: Explore career options, develop a strong résumé, and make new career contacts. The second panel began with the following standard statement: "You're probably thinking that if you become a volunteer, you'll have to give and give and give. But guess what? While you're helping others, volunteering can be doing important things for you. You'll be surprised at how much you can GET out of volunteering. As a volunteer, you can. . . ." This was followed by "Explore Career Options—Most of the time we don't have an opportunity to see what jobs are really like. By volunteering, you can explore a variety of career options you might wish to pursue," "Develop a Strong Résumé—College students' résumés tend to look all the same. Volunteer work looks good on your résumé and employers are often impressed by it," and "Make New Career Contacts—It's difficult to meet people involved in various careers when so much time is spent in school activities. Through volunteering, you can meet important contacts who can help you in getting a good job." This panel then finished with the summary statement "So volunteer and get a headstart on a career."

The rating scale on which participants evaluated the brochures was 1 m long and was placed on a table in the laboratory room. Participants' placed the advertising brochures along the rating scale (anchored by 0, representing the worst possible brochure, and 100, representing the best possible brochure) so that the brochures' positions indicated the participants' overall answers to the question "How effective is this brochure in getting you motivated to volunteer? That is, how appealing, persuasive, and influential is this brochure in getting you motivated to volunteer?"

Results

Predicting persuasive appeal: Regression analyses. Our primary hypothesis was that participants' scores on each VFI scale would best predict evaluations of the persuasiveness of its corresponding brochure. To assess this predictive ability, we conducted six separate hierarchical regressions in which we regressed the evaluations of one of the brochures onto the six VFI scale scores. For each regression, we first entered the motivationally relevant VFI scale score into the equation and then entered the remaining five VFI scores to determine if any of them would be significant predictors of that brochure's rated persuasiveness.

The findings from four of the six analyses conformed exactly to our expectations. With the enhancement brochure, only the VFI enhancement score significantly predicted participants' evaluations, multiple $R = .51$, $F(1, 56) = 19.87$, $p < .001$; no other VFI scale significantly improved the prediction of the enhancement brochure evaluations. For the protective brochure, only the VFI protective scale significantly predicted evaluations, multiple $R = .39$, $F(1, 56) = 9.76$, $p < .005$, with no other VFI scale entering the regression equation to help the prediction of protective brochure evaluations. For the understanding brochure, only the VFI understanding scale significantly predicted participants' ratings, multiple $R = .48$, $F(1, 56) = 16.84$, $p < .001$; no other VFI scale significantly improved the prediction of understanding brochure evaluations. In addition, for the values brochure, only VFI values scores significantly predicted respondents' evaluations, multiple $R = .35$, $F(1, 56) = 8.04$, $p < .01$; here too, the other five VFI scales did not enter the regression equation to enhance prediction of this brochure's evaluations. For the career brochure, however, two VFI scales contributed to the prediction of its perceived persuasiveness. As expected, the VFI career score was a significant predictor, $F(1, 56) = 18.49$, $p < .001$; in addition, the VFI understanding score was a significant predictor, $F(1, 56) = 8.76$, $p < .005$; and together, the two scales produced a significant multiple $R = .52$, $F(2, 55) = 10.27$, $p < .005$. Finally, for the social brochure, no VFI scale significantly predicted participants' evaluations.[1]

[1] As a complement to these hierarchical regression analyses, we also conducted a series of regressions in which all six VFI motivations were entered simultaneously on a single step as potential predictors of each

Predicting persuasive appeal: Within-person relations. We also considered the predictive ability of the VFI scales at the level of individual recipients of persuasive appeals. Specifically, we computed correlations between all VFI scale scores and all corresponding brochures for each participant individually, producing for each recipient a within-person correlation that represented how well that recipient's VFI scale scores predict his or her evaluations of the motivationally based advertisements. Averaging all of the within-person correlations resulted in a strong and statistically significant within-person correlation for the entire sample, $r = .712$, $t(57) = 7.55$, $p < .001$, indicating a strong individual-level match between the pattern of VFI scale scores and the pattern of advertisement evaluations.

Discussion

The findings from Study 4 offer support for the validity of the VFI as a functionally oriented measure of motivations for volunteerism. Drawing on functionalist approaches to persuasion, we found that, by and large, the best predictor of each advertisement's evaluation was that advertisement's corresponding VFI scale score; that is, participants judged each advertisement as effective and persuasive to the extent that it matched their personal motivations.

In Study 5, we searched for further evidence of the validity of the VFI, testing a hypothesis about a different aspect of the volunteer process (the satisfaction that volunteers experience), using a different investigative strategy (a field study with currently active volunteers), and sampling from a different population of volunteers (older persons who were serving in a hospital volunteer program).

Study 5: Predicting Volunteers' Satisfaction

As an ongoing and sustained activity, volunteerism affords an opportunity to study an important implication of functionalist theorizing, namely that individuals whose motivational concerns are served by a particular activity should derive greater satisfaction from that activity than those whose concerns are not met. In a field study designed to examine this proposition, older volunteers at a local hospital identified (with the VFI) the functions important to them in their volunteer service. Several months later, these volunteers indicated the extent to which they received function-specific benefits during their service. They also indicated the degree to which they found their volunteerism personally satisfying and rewarding.

Building on the logic of the functionalist hypothesis about the matching of benefits to motives, we predicted that, for each of the six VFI functions, those volunteers who reported receiving relatively greater amounts of functionally relevant benefits (i.e., the benefits that they received were related to functions important to them) would report relatively greater satisfaction with their volunteerism than those volunteers who received fewer functionally relevant benefits or those volunteers who received functionally irrelevant benefits (i.e., the benefits that they received were related to a functional dimension that was not important to them).

Method

Participants. Sixty-one older volunteers (25 men, 36 women; mean age = 70 years) at a community hospital in western central Indiana agreed to participate in this study. These volunteers reported participating in the hospital program an average of 4.5 hr per week, with a 12-week median length of service.

Procedure. Participants first completed the VFI, along with other demographic and personality measures. Approximately 16 weeks later, participants received a follow-up questionnaire that included measurement of functionally relevant benefits and satisfaction with the volunteer experience, along with questions regarding the nature and duration of the volunteer activities.

Participants' perceptions of the type and quantity of functionally relevant benefits that they received from their volunteer service were assessed with three 7-point Likert-type items relevant to each of the six VFI functions. The items for the social function benefits were "People close to me learned that I did volunteer work," "People that I know best saw that I volunteered," and "My friends found out that I did volunteer work." For the career function benefits, the items were "I made new contacts that might help my business or career," "I was able to explore possible career options," and "I was able to add important experience to my résumé." For the values function benefits, the items were "I am genuinely concerned about the people who were helped," "I did something for a cause I believe in," and "I performed a service for an important group." The enhancement function benefits items were "My self-esteem was enhanced," "I felt important," and "I felt better about myself." The items for the protective function benefits were "I was able to escape some of my troubles," "I was able to work through some of my own personal problems," and "I felt less lonely." Finally, for the understanding function benefits, the items were "I learned more about the cause for which I worked," "I learned how to deal with a greater variety of people," and "I was able to explore my own personal strengths."

Responses to the functional benefits items were summed for each of the six functions; scores for each scale could range from 3 to 21, with higher scores reflecting a greater amount of a particular type of functional benefit. Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alphas) for the benefits scales ranged from .75 to .89.

Additionally, on six 7-point Likert-type items, respondents indicated their level of satisfaction and personal fulfillment gained from serving in the program: "How much did you enjoy your volunteer experience?" "How personally fulfilling was your volunteer experience?" "How worthwhile was your volunteer experience?" "How important was your contribution to the program?" "To what extent did you accomplish

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of the brochures. The overall pattern of results of these regressions corroborate those of the hierarchical regressions. For the career, enhancement, understanding, and value brochures, not only was the largest beta associated with the VFI motivation matched to the brochure but also that beta was the only one that was statistically significant. For the regression in which the VFI Career motivation emerged as a significant predictor of the career brochure, $\beta = .482$, $t(57) = 3.66$, $p < .0006$; for all other βs, ts < 1.31, *ns*. For the VFI Enhancement motivation as a predictor of the enhancement brochure, $\beta = .631$, $t(57) = 3.22$, $p < .002$; for all other βs, ts < 1.56, *ns*. For the VFI Understanding motivation as a predictor of the understanding brochure, $\beta = .421$, $t(57) = 2.09$, $p < .05$; for all other βs, ts < 1.28, *ns*. For the VFI Values motivation as a predictor of the values brochure, $\beta = .502$, $t(57) = 2.52$, $p < .015$; for all other βs, ts < 1.27, *ns*. For the protective brochure, the best predictor, albeit nonsignificant, was the VFI Protective motivation, $\beta = .242$, $t(57) = 1.2$, *ns;* for all other βs, ts $< .90$, *ns*. In addition, for the social brochure, none of the VFI motivations emerged as significant predictors.

some 'good' through your work?" and "Based on your experience, how likely are you to volunteer for this program in the future?" Responses to these items were summed, producing an internally consistent scale (Cronbach's α = .85) on which scores could range from 6 to 42, with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction.

Results

To test the hypothesis that volunteers who received greater amounts of functionally relevant benefits would find the activity more satisfying, we analyzed satisfaction scores as a function of volunteers' scores on each VFI scale (coded as above or below the scale mean) and their scores on each of the functional benefits scales (coded as above or below the scale mean). For each of the six resulting 2 × 2 between-subjects factorial designs (one for each VFI function), we performed a contrast analysis, comparing the satisfaction scores of volunteers who scored above the mean on both the VFI scale and the functional benefits scale with the satisfaction scores of volunteers in the other three cells in the design (see Table 3).

For each of the VFI functions, the results are in the predicted direction, with statistically significant effects for the values and enhancement functions and marginally significant effects for the understanding and social functions. It is interesting to note that the strongest effects occurred for the two functions that were of greatest importance for this sample and, of the three functions next in importance, two revealed marginally significant effects; in descending order of importance as rated by this sample, values (M = 6.04, SD = 0.86), enhancement (M = 4.98, SD = 1.22), understanding (M = 4.36, SD = 1.46), protective (M = 3.92, SD = 1.66), social (M = 3.90, SD = 1.78), and career (M = 1.42, SD = 0.98). Thus, volunteers for whom a particular function was important and who perceived relatively greater benefits related to that function were more satisfied with their volunteerism than those who did not receive as much in the way of relevant benefits and for whom that functional dimension was not important.

Discussion

Results from this field study support the hypothesis that functionally relevant benefits are directly related to the quality of the experiences of volunteers. Volunteers' satisfaction with and fulfillment from their volunteer service was more likely to be associated with receiving functionally relevant benefits than with failing to receive such benefits or receiving functionally irrelevant benefits; furthermore, this pattern held most strongly for the motivations that were of greatest importance to this sample of volunteers. These results therefore provide support for the functionalist proposition that life outcomes, such as satisfaction with volunteer activity, depend on the match between an individual's motivational goals and the fulfillment of those goals.

Study 6: Predicting Commitment to Volunteerism

In our final validation study, we examined, from a functional perspective, the role of individuals' motivations for volunteering and the benefits they receive for volunteering in influencing their intentions to continue their involvement in and commitment to volunteerism. Specifically, in Study 6, we sought to replicate, build on, and extend the results of Study 5. First, in accord with our functionalist theorizing about the matching of the motivations that bring people to volunteerism and the benefits that they derive from their experiences as volunteers, we expected that volunteers who received functionally relevant benefits in the course of their service would be more satisfied with their volunteer activity than other volunteers, thereby replicating the findings of Study 5. Second, in an extension of this same functionalist logic, we expected that volunteers who received functionally relevant benefits would also reveal greater intentions to continue as volunteers, both in the short-term and in the long-term future, than would volunteers who did not receive functionally relevant benefits or who received functionally irrelevant benefits. We examined these expectations prospectively with a sample of university students who were required to engage in community service to obtain their degrees.

Method

Participants. Undergraduate business students (177 women and 192 men) at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, participated in this research as part of the requirements of a mandatory community

Table 3
Elderly Volunteers' Satisfaction Scale Scores as a Function of VFI and Functionally Relevant Benefits: Study 5. Means, Standard Deviations, and Contrast Effects

VFI score and functionally relevant benefits	VFI scale											
	Value		Enhancement		Understanding		Protective		Social		Career	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
High VFI score												
High	40.0	2.4	40.0	2.5	39.8	2.3	39.3	2.8	39.5	2.4	39.4	2.6
Low	38.2	2.2	38.0	3.9	37.8	4.0	38.8	3.8	37.7	3.4	38.8	2.6
Low VFI score												
High	39.1	2.4	36.9	3.6	39.8	1.7	38.6	3.9	37.2	4.2	38.3	4.5
Low	35.2	3.5	37.9	3.3	36.4	3.8	37.5	3.3	38.0	3.5	38.2	3.2
Contrast $F(1, 55)$	6.874*		5.004*		3.158†		0.917		2.865†		0.521	

Note. VFI = Volunteer Functions Inventory.
† $p < .10$ (marginally significant). * $p < .05$.

service course, in which they were required to engage in 40 hr of service at a site of their choice over the course of a 12-week semester. They engaged in a variety of activities ranging from providing day care for children to working at homeless shelters.

Procedure. Participants completed the 30-item VFI and several demographic and attitudinal measures at the first meeting of their community service course. Approximately 12 weeks later, they completed a follow-up survey that asked them for their perceptions of the benefits they received from their service, how satisfied they were with the activity they chose, and whether they intended to continue as a volunteer.

Benefits relevant to each VFI motivation were tapped by a single item assessing whether motivation-specific benefits were received. Specifically, for values function benefits, the item was "I was able to express my personal values through my work at the site"; for enhancement function benefits, "I gained a sense of accomplishment from my work at the site"; for understanding function benefits, "I learned something new about the world by working at my site"; for protective function benefits, "Working at the site allowed me to think about others instead of myself"; for social function benefits, "The work I performed at the site was appreciated"; and for career function benefits, "I learned some skills that will be useful in my future career by working at the site." Participants used 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = *not at all accurate,* 7 = *extremely accurate*) to respond to each functionally relevant benefits item.

Satisfaction with the volunteer activity was measured by three items, to which participants responded on 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = *not at all accurate,* 7 = *extremely accurate*): "On the whole, the volunteer experience was very positive for me," "I was personally very satisfied with the responsibilities given to me at the site," and "I don't think I got anything out of the volunteer experience program" (last item reverse scored). The three items were averaged together and the scale had an internal consistency of $\alpha = .74$.

Short-term intentions to volunteer were measured by two items. Participants were asked to indicate the probability that "I will work at the same site next semester" and "I will volunteer somewhere else next semester" on 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = *extremely unlikely,* 7 = *extremely likely*). We expected that participants who intended to continue volunteering would score highly on at least one of these items but, in general, not on both items. An average response to both items was used as the index of short-term intentions.

Long-term intentions were measured by three items: Participants were asked to indicate the probability that "I will be a volunteer 1 year from now," "I will be a volunteer 3 years from now," and "I will be a volunteer 5 years from now," again using the same 7-point Likert-type scales. The three items were averaged together and the resultant internal consistency of the scale was $\alpha = .88$.

Results

Participants were grouped to test the hypothesis that motivations to volunteer and receipt of relevant benefits combine to produce more satisfaction and greater intentions to volunteer in the future than either motivation or benefits alone. Each VFI scale and its associated benefit item were dichotomized at the median, and a 2 (high vs. low motivation) × 2 (high vs. low received benefit) between-subjects factorial design was produced for each VFI motivation. Three sets of six planned comparisons (one for each motivation) were computed from these 2 × 2 factorials to determine whether volunteers who were high on a given VFI scale and received benefits relevant to that functional scale reported higher scores on the satisfaction, short-term intentions to volunteer, and long-term intentions to volunteer scales than other volunteers (see Table 4).

The first set of planned comparisons examined whether individuals who were high on a given VFI scale and received functionally relevant benefits were more satisfied with their volunteer experience than other volunteers. All six of the contrasts were statistically significant, all $Fs(1, 365) > 23.50$, $ps < .001$; thus, as compared with other participants, those who perceived that their initial functional motivations had been met through their volunteer activity were more likely to report being satisfied with their experience. The second set of planned comparisons examined short-term intentions to volunteer as the outcome measure. Again, all six of the contrasts were statistically significant, all $Fs(1, 365) > 10.40$, $ps < .001$; thus, participants who perceived that their initial functional concerns had been met through their volunteer activity were more likely to intend to volunteer at a new location or to continue volunteering at the same location in the immediate future than other volunteers. The third set of planned comparisons used long-term intentions to volunteer as the outcome measure. Once again, all six of the comparisons were statistically significant, all $Fs(1, 365) > 5.12$, $ps < .05$; that is, participants who were high in motivation to volunteer and who received relevant benefits were more likely than other participants to indicate that they would be active as volunteers as far as 5 years into the future.

Discussion

The results of Study 6 informed us that volunteers who received benefits relevant to their primary functional motivations were not only satisfied with their service (replicating the results of Study 5) but also intended to continue to volunteer in both the short- and long-term future. Volunteers in this study provided a wide array of services under the auspices of many different organizations; however, those who found service opportunities that provided benefits matching their initial motivations more strongly believed that they would make volunteerism a continuing part of their lives than individuals who chose opportunities that did not provide functionally relevant benefits or that provided functionally irrelevant benefits. Thus, the results of this study represent an important extension of the functional analysis of volunteerism, with the matching of the plans and goals of individuals to achieving those plans and goals predicting their intentions concerning future behavior. As with our previous studies, we again see that an outcome crucial to volunteerism can be connected to the planfulness and agenda-setting aspects of the functional approach to motivation.

General Discussion

In this set of six investigations, we explored the motivational foundations of one important, but relatively understudied, form of prosocial behavior—the sustained, ongoing helping characteristic of involvement in volunteerism. Taken together, these investigations provide empirical support for a functional approach, one that focuses on the psychological purposes served by participation in volunteer activities. Moreover, our studies are congruent with approaches to motivation that emphasize the active role of individuals in setting and pursuing agendas that reflect important features of self and identity (e.g., Cantor, 1994; Snyder, 1993; Snyder & Cantor, 1998). In the context of our

Table 4
Business Students' Satisfaction With Volunteer Activities, Short-Term Intentions to Volunteer, and Long-Term Intentions to Volunteer as a Function of VFI and Functionally Relevant Benefits Scores, Study 6: Means, Standard Deviations, and Contrast Effects

	VFI score								
	High				Low				
	High benefits		Low benefits		High benefits		Low benefits		
VFI scale and outcomes	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Contrast $F(1, 365)$
Values									
Satisfaction	6.57	0.57	5.65	0.95	6.17	0.85	5.16	1.27	62.73***
Short intent	3.64	1.77	3.12	1.43	3.14	1.45	2.67	1.31	13.36***
Long intent	5.02	1.55	4.64	1.52	4.50	1.36	3.92	1.57	13.86***
Enhancement									
Satisfaction	6.62	0.50	5.65	0.98	6.32	0.81	5.15	1.23	58.37***
Short intent	3.83	1.52	3.13	1.50	3.26	1.40	2.50	1.42	22.07***
Long intent	4.86	1.54	4.45	1.46	4.81	1.57	4.00	1.55	5.12*
Understanding									
Satisfaction	6.32	0.81	5.56	1.25	6.09	0.83	5.21	1.28	35.52***
Short intent	3.67	1.62	2.94	1.51	2.95	1.35	2.75	1.49	20.98***
Long intent	4.84	1.56	4.44	1.50	4.48	1.47	4.06	1.61	8.48**
Protective									
Satisfaction	6.37	0.80	5.72	0.95	6.41	0.75	5.25	1.27	23.52***
Short intent	3.71	1.54	3.11	1.59	3.06	1.45	2.67	1.39	18.47***
Long intent	5.00	1.40	4.39	1.53	4.69	1.55	4.01	1.58	12.82***
Social									
Satisfaction	6.45	0.69	5.43	1.11	5.94	1.12	5.32	1.20	55.35***
Short intent	3.51	1.53	3.07	1.49	3.03	1.47	2.72	1.59	10.43***
Long intent	4.89	1.43	4.34	1.47	4.47	1.66	4.03	1.58	11.72***
Career									
Satisfaction	6.29	0.81	5.37	1.26	6.08	0.85	5.35	1.30	35.76***
Short intent	3.60	1.53	2.75	1.33	3.15	1.64	2.68	1.40	19.69***
Long intent	4.77	1.43	4.15	1.62	4.68	1.51	4.10	1.65	7.30**

Note. VFI = Volunteer Functions Inventory.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

concerns with volunteerism, these motivations can be conceptualized and investigated in terms of their role in guiding people toward volunteer activities (as suggested by our study of the recruitment of volunteers with persuasive messages), influencing the unfolding dynamics over the course of their service as volunteers (as indicated by our studies of the determinants of the satisfaction of volunteers), and sustaining their involvement in volunteer activities that have the potential to fulfill their own motivations (as implied by our study of the predictions of volunteers' intentions to commit themselves to further service in both the short-term and long-term future). Even more generally, our findings and our conceptualization of volunteers' motivations are compatible with psychological theorizing and research that point to the fit or match of the person and the situation, rather than the person or the situation alone, as the determinant of behavior (Cantor, 1994; Lewin, 1946; Snyder, 1993; Snyder & Ickes, 1985), including prosocial action (see Carlo, Eisenberg, Troyer, Switzer, & Speer, 1991; Knight, Johnson, Carlo, & Eisenberg, 1994).

For these reasons, we believe that our studies of volunteerism can and do contribute to understanding helping behavior and prosocial activity, that they speak meaningfully to the nature and processes of human motivation, and that they have the potential to suggest theoretically informed solutions to socially important issues associated with citizen participation in meeting the needs of society. It is in these contexts that we discuss the findings of our investigations.

Motivational Foundations of Volunteerism

A primary concern of the functionalist strategy of inquiry is identifying the motivational foundations of action and then developing sound means of assessing these motivations, a concern made all the more critical by the fact that measurement issues have often been barriers to progress in functionally oriented research and theorizing (e.g., Kiesler, Collins, & Miller, 1969). Accordingly, we sought to develop a reliable and valid measure of the functions served by volunteer activity. The present findings attest to the psychometric soundness of the VFI. Exploratory and confirmatory analyses conducted on different and diverse samples consistently revealed remarkably congruent factor solutions, suggesting a reliable and replicable six-factor structure, one that was preferable to two reasonable alternative solutions. As well, the individual scales of the VFI demonstrated

substantial internal consistency and temporal stability. These results therefore offer evidence that each of the VFI scales measures a single, stable, nonoverlapping construct that coincides with a theoretically derived motivation for volunteering.

The VFI also performed as expected in tests of functionally derived hypotheses. As predicted by the functional approach, people's responsiveness to persuasive appeals was greatest when the appeals addressed motivational concerns of importance to them (Study 4). Moreover, the findings that volunteers who received benefits congruent with personally important functions had greater satisfaction with their volunteer activity (Studies 5 and 6) and greater intentions to continue to volunteer in the future (Study 6) may teach a particularly telling lesson about the nature of the motivations implicated in the functional approach. That is, motivations may guide the agendas that people pursue as volunteers, not only by moving people to volunteer but also by defining what features of volunteer experience will constitute fulfillment of those motivations, with consequences for the satisfaction that volunteers derive from their service and their intentions to remain committed to their roles as volunteers (although it must remain for further research to document that these intentions will actually be translated from the realm of self-reported statements of intention into behavioral manifestations of sustained helping over extended periods of time).

Overall, our laboratory and field studies underscore the role of motivational processes in volunteerism. Nevertheless, as much as our findings are highly supportive of the six-motive conceptualization that we developed by building on previous functional theorizing, we must emphasize that we have sought to identify motivations of generic relevance to volunteerism. Thus, the items in the VFI never speak of particular kinds of volunteering; moreover, our sampling strategy has included both volunteers and nonvolunteers, has emphasized demographic diversity within the samples, and, among volunteers, has deliberately included volunteers engaged in a wide range of tasks. However, we fully expect that there will be circumstances where either fewer functions, or more functions for that matter, will emerge, such as in cases where considerations relevant to specific forms of volunteerism are highly prominent (as, e.g., in the case of AIDS volunteers, where research has identified five motivations that, although measured with some items that make specific reference to the AIDS context, nonetheless bear a family resemblance to the motivations of the VFI; Omoto & Snyder, 1995).

One reading of our efforts is that, at the same time as we may be converging on a core set of functions underlying volunteering in general, there very well may be meaningful variations in the ways in which these core functions are manifested depending on the specific volunteer activity that an individual contemplates or actually performs. This state of affairs, of course, is to be expected when one considers that motivations, from a functional perspective, concern the agentic pursuit of ends and goals important to the individual, and that the precise ends and goals can and will vary with the specific activity. Stated otherwise, we see the "take home message" of our research as being less a matter of just how many motivations promote volunteerism (in this regard, future research very well may indicate systematic domain to domain variation in the number of motivations that are salient to volunteers and prospective volunteers), and more a matter of there being a diversity of motivations that, in the lives of the individuals who harbor those motivations, set the stage for the events that will determine what will draw people into volunteering, whether their experiences as volunteers will be satisfying ones, and whether the benefits they accrue from volunteering will be translated into intentions to continue to be active as volunteers, and ultimately (as we hope longitudinal research will demonstrate) sustained helping over time.

Implications for the Practice of Volunteerism

In accord with Lewinian dictum that there is nothing so practical as a good theory, let us comment on some of the practical implications of our research. First, the functional approach suggests that underlying the decision to volunteer is a process by which individuals come to see volunteerism in terms of their personal motivations; one way that they can come to view volunteering this way is through exposure to persuasive messages. Study 4 testified to the potential efficacy of this approach; as such, it replicates previous confirmations of the functional hypothesis that matching messages to motivations enhances persuasive impact (e.g., Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Miene, & Haugen, 1994; DeBono, 1987; Snyder & DeBono, 1989). Our findings have direct implications for organizations dependent on the services of volunteers; such organizations could use (and applied research potentially could demonstrate the utility of using) the VFI to assess the motivations of potential volunteers, or groups of potential volunteers, and then use this information to strategically promote their organizations in ways that speak to the abiding concerns of the volunteers they seek to recruit.

A second practical application focuses on the ongoing nature of volunteerism. The functional approach proposes that continued participation depends on the person–situation fit, such that volunteers who serve in roles that match their own motivations will derive more satisfaction and more enjoyment from their service and be more likely to intend to continue to serve than those whose motivations are not being addressed by their activities. Support for these propositions comes from Studies 5 and 6, whose clear practical implication is that coordinators of volunteer service organizations may find it useful (and again, applied research could evaluate the utility of doing so) to work to maximize the extent to which they provide volunteer opportunities that afford benefits matched to their volunteers' motivations and, in so doing, perhaps lessen the rate of turnover in their volunteer labor force.

Implications for the Nature of Helping

In our program of studies, we have tested hypotheses about critical events in the volunteer process, including the recruitment, placement, and retention of volunteer helpers. With the understanding of sustained, planned helping derived from these and related investigations (e.g., Benson et al., 1980; Clary & Miller, 1986; Eisenberg & Okun, 1996; Grube & Piliavin, 1996; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Ouellette, Cassel, Maslanka, & Wong, 1995; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998; Stark & Deaux, 1996), we are gaining a fuller picture of the diverse forms of prosocial action. Whereas research on prosocial behavior has most often focused on questions about whether a potential helper in a spon-

taneous helping situation will engage in a brief intervention (the prototypic example being research on bystander intervention in emergencies; e.g., Latané & Darley, 1970), attention to planned, sustained helping encourages us to consider other often neglected questions about helping (questions that are readily amenable to empirical investigation) about the voluntary initiation of helping, the selection of a helping activity, and continued investment in and commitment to service as a voluntary helper.

Considerations of ongoing, planned helping behavior also point to the influence of person-based processes on helping, an influence that has often been found lacking relative to the situational determinants of prosocial action typically studied in spontaneous helping situations (e.g., Clary & Snyder, 1991). Planned helpfulness represents a phenomenon in which the salient cues for action are less demanding, at least in comparison to emergency situations; instead it engages processes that encourage individuals to look inward to their own dispositions, motivations, and other personal attributes for guidance in deciding whether to get involved in helping, in the selection of a helping opportunity, and in the maintenance of helping over an extended course of involvement. Yet, at the same time as volunteerism as a form of sustained, ongoing helping directs us to consider person-based processes, the functional perspective reminds us that behavior (in this case planned, sustained helpfulness) is not simply a matter of being influenced by dispositions or by situational forces, but rather is jointly determined. Also, although the precise nature of this joint determination remains to be fully specified by further theoretical and empirical inquiry, the outlines of this specification are provided by the functionalist framework that has guided the present inquiries. That is, people come with needs and motives important to them and volunteer service tasks do or do not afford opportunities to fulfill those needs and motives. Together, these features of persons and of situations are integrated in the agendas that individuals construct and enact as they seek out, become involved in, and continue to be involved in the sustained helpfulness of volunteerism.

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