Predictors of Enjoyment in Older and Middle-Aged Adults Engaged in Episodic Volunteer Work

by

Jennifer Elizabeth O’Hagan

B.A. (Psychology), University of British Columbia, 2004

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the
Department of Gerontology
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Jennifer Elizabeth O’Hagan 2012

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Fall 2012

All rights reserved.
However, in accordance with the Copyright Act of Canada, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for “Fair Dealing.” Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.
Approval

Name: Jennifer Elizabeth O’Hagan
Degree: Master of Arts (Gerontology)
Title of Thesis: *Predictors of enjoyment in older and middle-aged adults engaged in episodic volunteer work*

Examining Committee:

**Chair:** Habib Chaudhury, Associate Professor, Department of Gerontology, Simon Fraser University

Dr. Andrew Wister
Senior Supervisor
Professor & Chair, Department of Gerontology, Simon Fraser University

Dr. Barbara Mitchell
Supervisor
Professor, Department of Gerontology, Simon Fraser University

Dr. Andrew Sixsmith
Supervisor
Professor, Department of Gerontology, Simon Fraser University

Dr. Mark Skinner
External Examiner
Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Trent University

Date Defended/Approved: November 8, 2012
Partial Copyright Licence

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the “Institutional Repository” link of the SFU Library website (www.lib.sfu.ca) at http://summit/sfu.ca and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author’s written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

revised Fall 2011
The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics,

or

b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University;

or has conducted the research

c. as a co-investigator, collaborator or research assistant in a research project approved in advance,

or

d. as a member of a course approved in advance for minimal risk human research, by the Office of Research Ethics.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed at the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

update Spring 2010
Abstract

Background: As the baby boomer generation begins to exit the full-time workforce, the pool of older volunteers is expected to increase dramatically. There are also recent trends in research and practice towards episodic volunteering. Purpose: This study’s purpose is to determine factors associated with enjoyment in older and middle-aged episodic volunteers and to provide insight into their perceptions of this work. Methods: A mixed methods approach was used. Questionnaire data from the 2010 Olympics Older Volunteers Project was examined using quantitative analyses (n=255). Follow-up telephone interviews were subsequently administered with a sub-sample of participants (n=10). Results: For both age groups, perceived skill utilization predicted enjoyment, whereas individual factors had no effects. Qualitative interviews revealed how volunteering may be viewed as a generative act, and how episodic volunteerism can be connected to identity as one ages. Results provide information to organizations benefiting from the involvement of older and middle-aged episodic volunteers.

Keywords: Volunteering; episodic; older adult; middle-aged; Olympics; generativity
Dedication

This work is dedicated in loving memory to Ashley Anne Brear, my eternal inspiration.
Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my senior supervisor, Dr. Andrew Wister. I truly appreciate his support, guidance and encouragement not only during the development of this thesis, but also throughout my coursework in the MA program at SFU. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Barbara Mitchell and Dr. Andrew Sixsmith, for their valuable support and guidance. Thanks also to Dr. Mark Skinner, my external examiner, for his thoughtful feedback on this study.

I would also like to thank all the staff and faculty members of the Gerontology Department at SFU for your support during my time as a student in the MA program.

My thanks are extended to all participants of the 2010 Olympics Older Volunteers Project, and those who participated in the follow-up interviews. I couldn’t have completed this work without your willingness and enthusiasm to share your stories.

And a special thank you to all of my loving, encouraging and supportive family members and friends.
Table of Contents

Approval ............................................................................................................ ii
Partial Copyright Licence ................................................................................ iii
Abstract ........................................................................................................... iv
Dedication ........................................................................................................ v
Acknowledgements .......................................................................................... vi
Table of Contents ............................................................................................ vii
List of Tables ..................................................................................................... x

Chapter 1: Introduction .................................................................................... 1
1.1 Volunteering in later life ............................................................................. 1
1.2 Purpose of research ................................................................................... 3
1.3 Rationale and research questions .............................................................. 4

Chapter 2: Literature Review .......................................................................... 7
2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................ 7
2.2 Episodic volunteering .............................................................................. 7
2.3 Volunteering at major sporting events ..................................................... 10
2.4 Volunteer enjoyment .............................................................................. 12
2.4.1 Predictors of volunteer enjoyment .................................................... 13
2.5 Motivation and future volunteering ....................................................... 20
2.6 Age differences in volunteering ............................................................... 23

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses ....................................... 25
3.1 Functional theory .................................................................................... 26
3.2 Productive aging ..................................................................................... 28
3.3 Generativity theory .................................................................................. 29
3.4 Volunteering as serious leisure ............................................................... 32
3.5 Theoretical and conceptual framework .................................................. 34
3.6 Hypotheses ............................................................................................. 37

Chapter 4: Methodology ............................................................................... 39
4.1 Data source ............................................................................................ 39
4.2 Mixed-methods approach ....................................................................... 40
4.3 Participant recruitment, consent and correspondence .......................... 42
4.4 Quantitative methods ............................................................................ 43
4.4.1 Volunteer enjoyment ......................................................................... 43
4.4.2 Socio-demographic variables ............................................................ 44
4.4.3 Health status ..................................................................................... 46
4.4.4 Psychosocial variables ..................................................................... 47
4.4.5 Volunteer context variables .............................................................. 50
4.4.6 Future volunteering .......................................................................... 52
Chapter 5: Quantitative Results ..............................................68
5.1 Sample characteristics .....................................................68
5.2 Data on volunteering .......................................................71
5.3 Results of bivariate analyses ............................................73
  5.3.1 Volunteer enjoyment level and age group .......................73
  5.3.2 Volunteer enjoyment level and gender ................................74
  5.3.3 Future volunteering and enjoyment level .......................76
5.4 Results of logistic regression analysis ...............................78
  5.4.1 Model summary: All ages ........................................78
  5.4.2 Odds ratios: All ages ...............................................79
  5.4.3 Split file analysis ..................................................81
  5.4.4 Model summary: Middle-aged volunteers .......................81
  5.4.5 Odds ratios: Middle-aged volunteers ..........................82
  5.4.6 Model summary: Older volunteers .............................82
  5.4.7 Odds ratios: Older volunteers ...................................83
  5.4.8 Logistic regression: Age differences ..........................84

Chapter 6: Qualitative Findings .............................................86
6.1 Open-ended questionnaire items ......................................86
  6.1.1 Reasons for volunteering .........................................86
  6.1.2 Enjoyment ............................................................87
6.2 Qualitative sample characteristics .................................90
6.3 Responses to interview questions ......................................91
  6.3.1 Motivation and expectation fulfillment ..........................91
  6.3.2 Volunteer role and duties ..........................................95
  6.3.3 Productive aging ...................................................100
  6.3.4 Negative experiences .............................................101
  6.3.5 Contextual factors ................................................105
  6.3.6 Generativity concerns .............................................107
  6.3.7 Current and future episodic volunteering .....................111
6.4 Additional results of qualitative data analysis ..................113
  6.4.1 Positive social interaction and camaraderie ..................113
  6.4.2 Feedback and validation .........................................117
  6.4.3 Volunteer identity ................................................118
  6.4.4 Pride and prestige ...............................................120
  6.4.5 Age differences ..................................................122
  6.4.6 Gender differences ..............................................126
Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1 Research questions and hypotheses .......................................................... 128
  7.1.1 Hypothesis 1 ..................................................................................... 128
  7.1.2 Hypothesis 2 ..................................................................................... 130
  7.1.3 Hypothesis 3 ..................................................................................... 133
  7.1.4 Research questions ........................................................................... 135
7.2 Theoretical implications ........................................................................... 140
  7.2.1 Functional theory ............................................................................ 140
  7.2.2 Productive aging ............................................................................. 141
  7.2.3 Generativity theory ......................................................................... 142
  7.2.4 Volunteering as serious leisure ....................................................... 145
7.3 Study limitations ....................................................................................... 147
  7.3.1 Generalizability ............................................................................... 147
  7.3.2 Use of self-reports .......................................................................... 152
  7.3.3 Instruments used ............................................................................. 152
7.4 Practice implications ............................................................................... 156
7.5 Suggestions for future research ............................................................... 160
  7.5.1 Consideration of contextual factors ............................................... 160
  7.5.2 Male volunteers ............................................................................. 162
  7.5.3 Socioeconomic and cultural diversity ............................................. 163
  7.5.4 Inclusion of older subjects ............................................................... 164
  7.5.5 Longitudinal design ........................................................................ 165
  7.5.6 Data sources .................................................................................... 167
  7.5.7 Outcome selection ......................................................................... 168
7.6 Conclusion ............................................................................................... 169

Chapter 8: References................................................................................... 172

Chapter 9: Appendices.................................................................................... 185
Appendix A. Consent Form .......................................................................... 186
Appendix B. Pre-Olympics Questionnaire .................................................... 187
Appendix C. Post-Olympics Questionnaire ................................................... 198
Appendix D. Qualitative Interview Guide ....................................................... 208
List of Tables

Table 3.1 Application of theoretical and conceptual ideas .................................................. 35
Table 4.1 Summary of variables included in logistic regression ........................................ 54
Table 4.2 Follow-up interview topics .................................................................................. 63
Table 5.1 Sample characteristics ......................................................................................... 69
Table 5.2 Volunteering-related data .................................................................................... 71
Table 5.3 Volunteer enjoyment level and age group .............................................................. 74
Table 5.4 Volunteer enjoyment level and gender ................................................................. 75
Table 5.5 Desire to volunteer for the Olympics again and enjoyment .................................. 76
Table 5.6 Plans to volunteer for other organizations and enjoyment ................................... 77
Table 5.7 Model summary for logistic regression (all ages) ................................................. 79
Table 5.8 Logistic regression (all ages) .............................................................................. 80
Table 5.9 Model summary for logistic regression (middle-aged volunteers) ................. 82
Table 5.10 Model summary for logistic regression (older volunteers) .............................. 83
Table 5.11 Summary of age comparisons .......................................................................... 84
Table 6.1 Gender and age of follow-up interview participants .......................................... 90
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Volunteering in later life

Throughout the world, the population is aging. In Canada, people over 65 make up the fastest growing segment of the population. Notably, in 2010, 14.1 percent of the Canadian population was 65 years and older; by 2037, it is predicted that this will increase to approximately 23.7 percent (Statistics Canada, 2010). This population trend is largely due to the aging baby boomer generation, or people born between the years 1946 and 1964, of which the first wave has recently begun to turn 65 years of age (McDonald & Donohue, 2011).

The aging population has a variety of important implications for society, including an impact on the volunteer workforce. In North America, 40 to 50 percent of older adults are actively engaged in formal volunteering (Gottlieb & Gillespie, 2008). As the generation continues to age and starts to retire, a wave of baby boomers are expected to flood the volunteer workforce (Einolf, 2009; Tang, Morrow-Howell & Choi, 2010; Urban Institute, 2006), and non-profit organizations will have an unprecedented population of potential volunteers (Tang, Morrow-Howell, & Hong, 2009; Yan & Tang, 2003).

Volunteering in later life is a growing area of research in the field of gerontology (Morrow-Howell, 2010), with a variety of different aspects studied to date. Researchers have examined differences between volunteers and non-
volunteers, explored factors that motivate people to begin and maintain volunteer activities, and evaluated the benefits of volunteering in later life. Research has demonstrated positive effects of volunteering on the health and well-being of older adults (Gottlieb & Gillespie, 2008; Morrow-Howell, Hinterlong, Rozario, & Tang, 2003, Tan et al., 2009, 2010; Theurer & Wister, 2010), and has found lower mortality rates among older volunteers in comparison to non-volunteers (Musick, 1999). Even after controlling for the potential selection effects of variables such as socioeconomic status and health, volunteering has been shown to be beneficial later in life (Morrow-Howell et al., 2003).

Several authors describe participation in volunteer activities as a form of successful aging (Celdran & Villar, 2007; Greenfield & Marks, 2004; Morrow-Howell, 2007). As well, advocates for volunteerism are encouraging social engagement in later life due to the positive outcomes for older adults (Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008). As such, there is a need to extend gerontological and sociological literature that can contribute to the development of a deeper understanding of this topic area (Gottlieb & Gillespie, 2008; Lewig et al., 2007).

Furthermore, Nancy Morrow-Howell, a widely cited author of numerous publications on volunteering in later life, expects that delays in retirement will not significantly shrink the availability of older volunteers in the future. While baby boomers will likely continue working longer in comparison to previous generations, they will also probably volunteer in later life. This is because having ties to employment institutions can increase an individual’s exposure to volunteer
opportunities (Morrow-Howell, 2007). Other researchers have also found that adults who are employed part-time are more likely to volunteer in comparison to those who work full-time or are unemployed (Choi, 2003; Fischer, Mueller, & Cooper, 1991). Furthermore, today’s older adults have the potential to be more engaged in volunteering than previous generations because of increases in life expectancy and improved health status in later life (Einolf, 2008; Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008).

According to the 2007 Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, Canadians contribute 2.1 billion volunteer hours per year, which is the equivalent to 1.1 million full-time jobs (Statistics Canada, 2009). Coupled with the fact that the baby boomers are beginning to enter their retirement years, it is clear that volunteering in later life is an important and timely research topic.

1.2 Purpose of research

The main purpose of this study is to determine factors associated with volunteer enjoyment in middle-aged and older volunteers who are engaged in episodic, or time-limited volunteer work. This includes the examination of individual factors, including socio-demographic and psychosocial factors, as well as contextual factors of the volunteer role and experience. In addition, this study seeks to understand the perceptions of middle-aged and older adults after their volunteer roles have ended, in order to gain an understanding of their subjective experiences, perceptions of what contributes to enjoyment, and how past roles
may influence future volunteer behaviours. As the voluntary sector is expected to experience an influx in older volunteers, the results of this study will have significance for voluntary organizations that aim to promote positive experiences for middle-aged and older volunteers, particularly in regard to episodic roles.

To accomplish these objectives, this study uses secondary questionnaire data from the 2010 Olympics Older Volunteers Project (OVP), as well as additional data from follow-up telephone interviews. The OVP and the subsequent qualitative interviews are described in the Methodology chapter.

1.3 Rationale and research questions

Volunteerism research has focused heavily on predicting whether an individual becomes a volunteer, with few studies examining actual experiences of volunteers. This study focuses on answering the following research questions:

1. What factors are associated with role enjoyment in middle-aged and older volunteers?

2. Are there age differences (specifically between middle-aged and older adults) with regard to the factors associated with volunteer role enjoyment?

3. For middle-aged and older adults, does enjoyment of episodic volunteer roles affect actual or intended future participation as a volunteer?
Presented below is the general reasoning behind each research question and a brief summary of the methods administered to obtain the answers.

1. *What factors are associated with role enjoyment in middle-aged and older volunteers?*

Relatively little is known about satisfaction in volunteers and its predictors (Baum & Lockstone, 2007; Boezman & Ellmers, 2009). However, experiences of enjoyment may be particularly important to time-limited or episodic volunteers (Allison et al., 2002; Cnaan & Handy, 2005), as well as to baby boomers, who may be more selective in choosing volunteering roles (Morrow-Howell, 2007). This question is explored by conducting multivariate analysis using quantitative data from questionnaires administered to episodic volunteers. It is supplemented with findings gleaned from open-ended questionnaire items, as well as additional data obtained from follow-up telephone interviews.

2. *Are there age differences (specifically between middle-aged and older adults) with regard to the factors associated with volunteer role enjoyment?*

A small body of research explores age differences in why people volunteer and what they get out of their volunteer experiences. For instance, Okun and Schultz (2003) found that older adults were more likely than middle-aged adults to volunteer due to social motives as opposed to motives related to knowledge, career building and learning. However, there is minimal research knowledge on age differences in volunteer outcomes, warranting further investigation. Whereas
some authors have found a positive association between volunteer age and enjoyment (Kulik, 2010), others suggest a negative association (Hustinx & Handy, 2009). The present study addresses this knowledge gap by determining how enjoyment in older and middle-aged volunteers may be shaped by different factors. This research question is explored by measuring age differences as part of the quantitative analysis, as well as by the inclusion of subjects with a range of ages in follow-up interviews.

3. For middle-aged and older adults, does enjoyment of episodic volunteer roles affect actual or intended future participation as a volunteer?

Some studies indicate that factors associated with the volunteer role, such as motive or expectation fulfillment, may better predict future organizational involvement and longevity than the strength of an individual’s initial motivation to volunteer (Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003; Finkelstein; 2008a). However, there has been a general lack of attention given to this research question, and the majority of studies examining future volunteering focus on a narrow range of volunteer contexts. The final research question is examined using questionnaire data supplemented by interview questions on volunteer participation after an episodic role has ended.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature on several aspects of volunteering in order to corroborate the focus of the study and identify knowledge gaps. It begins by discussing current research on episodic volunteering and volunteering at major sporting events, which constitute the particular context examined. The chapter reviews previous research on volunteer enjoyment and its predictors, motivations for future volunteering and age differences among volunteers, highlighting the importance of considering the research questions as well as providing rationale for the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3.

2.2 Episodic volunteering

Individuals who participate in episodic volunteering are engaged in what Morrow-Howell (2010) identifies as time-intensive by time-limited volunteer opportunities. The specific timing of episodic volunteer roles can vary, with episodic volunteers generally being defined as volunteers who are involved with an organization ranging from every couple of months to a one-time event (Hustinx et al., 2008). This is in contrast to traditional or regular volunteers, who volunteer at regularly scheduled intervals on an ongoing basis, such as weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly.
Recent trends indicate that occasional or episodic volunteering is increasing in popularity as more and more, people are volunteering in greater numbers, but for a shorter term (Handy & Srinivasan, 2009; Rozario, 2006). Traditional, long-term volunteering is now being supplemented, and in some cases replaced, with episodic volunteering, including volunteering for one-time events (Hustinx et al., 2008; Meijs & Brudney, 2007). Even hospitals are seeing an increase in volunteers seeking episodic roles, and therefore having to adjust their programs to adapt to the new trend (Handy & Srinivasan, 2004). There is also growing interest among non-profit organizations to use more episodic volunteers (Bryen & Madden, 2006). Thus, it is not surprising that episodic volunteering has been called “one of the fastest growing trends in the field of volunteerism” (Cnaan & Handy, 2005, p. 29).

The growing prevalence of episodic volunteering is particularly applicable to aging cohorts. A recent survey conducted by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) found that 47 percent of volunteers between the ages of 50 and 59 volunteered mostly on an episodic basis for special projects (AARP, 2003). Traditional retirement patterns are changing, and as baby boomers age, they are working longer and are looking for alternative, flexible opportunities, such as episodic volunteer roles, as they gradually exit the workforce (Culp, 2009; Morrow-Howell, 2007).

The importance of conducting research on older episodic volunteers is not only warranted by increasing prevalence rates, but also by potential benefits of
this particular form of volunteer work in later life. Participating in a variety of episodic roles as opposed to acting as a long-term, traditional volunteer for one organization may be a way for older adults to maximize the benefits of volunteering. For example, Van Willigen (2000) found that volunteering for more than one type of organization resulted in a 26 percent greater increase in life satisfaction and a 63 percent greater increase in perceived health in comparison to volunteering for only one organization.

A study by Windsor and colleagues (2008) provides additional evidence for the benefit of episodic volunteering in later life. They discovered a curvilinear relationship between volunteering and psychological well-being in older adults, where non-volunteers and those volunteering at high levels reported lower psychological well-being than those who volunteered at moderate levels. Musick and colleagues (1999) also found a curvilinear relationship between volunteering and health outcomes (in this case mortality) and concluded that in order to gain a protective effect, one did not have to volunteer to a great extent. Although these studies did not consider episodic volunteering in particular, findings lend credence to the argument that volunteering on an irregular basis later in life, as suited to the individual, may provide more benefits than traditional volunteering characterized by long-term commitment and possibly high levels of burden.

While it is not necessarily a new phenomenon, episodic volunteering has only recently appeared in the research literature (Bryen & Madden, 2006). Although a small number of researchers have examined episodic volunteers
specifically (Allison, Okun, & Dutridge, 2002; Hustinx et al., 2008), previous studies have overwhelmingly focused on sustained or ongoing volunteering (Baum & Lockstone, 2007; Handy et al., 2006). One reason is because episodic volunteers have been described as “moving targets”, often difficult to study as many organizations rarely keep track of temporary or irregular volunteers (Hustinx et al., 2008). Therefore, even though they may differ significantly from regular volunteers when it comes to motivations, experiences and outcomes (Baum & Lockstone, 2007), episodic volunteers remain largely under-explored (Bryen & Madden, 2006; Hustinx et al., 2008). Studies which consider the experiences of episodic volunteers will help drive volunteer research forward.

### 2.3 Volunteering at major sporting events

It is important to recognize the wide range of potential volunteer activities and organizational contexts that older adults can participate in (Celedran & Villar, 2007; Tang et al., 2010) as different settings may provide different outcomes for participants, as well as require distinct methods of volunteer management (Meijs & Brudney, 2007). However, to date older volunteer research has focused almost exclusively on work within religious organizations, social and community service groups, and health organizations. Although sport organization volunteers have been included among subjects in some studies (e.g. Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008), volunteerism research has largely ignored this organizational context.
Mega sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, rely on the services of many volunteers working in a variety of function areas such as sport, medical services, technology, ceremonies, spectator services and administration (Bang & Ross, 2009). However, the context of mega sport event volunteering has only been examined by a limited number of researchers (i.e. Baum & Lockstone, 2008; Fairley, Kellett, & Green, 2007; McCartney et al., 2010). So far, findings support the need for further investigation. For instance, Fairley and colleagues (2007) studied volunteers of the 2000 Sydney Olympics as they prepared for the 2004 Athens Olympics. They found that nostalgic recollections of past Olympic volunteering played an important role in influencing decisions to volunteer again. As the concept of nostalgia has not been considered in previous volunteerism research, studies like that of Fairley and colleagues (2007) demonstrate the importance of considering different contexts.

Overall, literature on volunteering for time-bound mega events, such as the Olympics, is still very much in its infancy (Baum & Lockstone, 2007). In a recent review of future research directions, Morrow-Howell (2010) emphasized the need for studies that vary the conditions of the volunteer experience to determine the volunteer roles that will be most beneficial to older adults. This study can be considered a first step in exploring the experiences of middle-aged and older episodic volunteers at a mega sporting event.
2.4 Volunteer enjoyment

Given the increasing economic and social importance of volunteering in later life, the value of understanding the experiences of older volunteers has been recognized by recent literature (Hustinx & Handy, 2009; Lewig et al., 2007). Furthermore, experiencing enjoyment is important to episodic volunteers (Allison et al., 2002; Cnaan & Handy, 2005), and as baby boomers retire, they will likely be more selective about their volunteering choices (Morrow-Howell, 2007).

However, to date most of the information collected on older volunteers has been described largely in general terms, for instance whether or not a person volunteered and for what length of time (Morrow-Howell, 2010). The majority of studies focus primarily on predictors of volunteerism, comparing volunteers to non-volunteers in an attempt to identify factors, such as demographic characteristics, associated with the likelihood of being a volunteer (Greenslade & White, 2005; Tang et al., 2010). In light of these shortcomings, there has been a recent trend towards broadening the scope of volunteerism research by exploring the actual experiences of volunteers (Taylor, Mallison, & Bloch, 2008).

Analyzing the experiences of episodic volunteers, particularly factors that contribute to their enjoyment, is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, enjoyment has been shown to predict future volunteer participation (Tang et al., 2010). The way volunteers experience their roles can impact their quality of life as volunteers and ultimately their decision to remain involved (Moreno-Jiménez & Hidalgo, 2010). For example, Kerschner and Rousseau (2008) found that
enjoyment was an important reason for older people to continue to serve as volunteers, and described enjoyment as a form of compensation for individuals.

Not only is it desirable for volunteers themselves to enjoy their roles, it is advantageous for organizations to consider volunteer enjoyment. Unsatisfied volunteers are associated with less effective organizations (Sakires, 2009), and among episodic volunteers, commitment to an event is influenced by an individual's satisfaction with previous experiences at the event (Baum & Lockstone, 2007; Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998). Correspondingly, Hustinx and Handy (2009) recommend that organizations focus on enabling positive volunteer experiences.

However, organizations vary greatly in their efforts to create positive volunteer experiences (Tang et al., 2009). The present study provides information that can be used by voluntary organizations as they work towards increasing enjoyment among episodic volunteers, particularly those who are middle-aged and older.

2.4.1 Predictors of volunteer enjoyment

Despite the importance of volunteer perceptions regarding the quality of their experiences (Allison et al., 2002; Beale et al., 2007; Davis et al., 2003), there is still a need for more thorough research focused on determining what contributes to volunteers being satisfied with their assignments (Baum & Lockstone, 2007; O'Connor & Bennie, 2008).
Previous studies on volunteer enjoyment have recognized the importance of considering two different categories of potential predictors: individual factors and contextual factors. Examples of individual factors include personality traits, psychosocial factors and socio-demographic characteristics. Contextual factors, on the other hand, are those characterizing the volunteer experience itself, such as the role, specific duties, relationships among volunteers and staff, and characteristics of the organization (Morrow-Howell et al., 2009). The following sections outline existing research on individual and contextual factors and their potential associations with volunteer enjoyment.

2.4.1.1 Individual factors

Rather than considering contextual factors, most volunteer-related research has focused on individual characteristics when attempting to identify predictors of outcomes such as enjoyment and retention (Moreno-Jiménez & Hidalgo, 2010; Morrow-Howell et al., 2003, 2009). The individual factors studied to date have included demographic factors such as age, gender and martial status, socio-economic status, psychosocial factors and health. Research suggests that some factors may be associated with volunteer enjoyment, whereas others do not have sufficient evidence demonstrating a relationship.

Gender

Gender differences have been found in several aspects of volunteering. For example, within the general population, females are more likely to become volunteers than men (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2009; Tang et al., 2010; Wilson,
In addition, research shows that women and men have different perceptions of their volunteer roles, as men are more likely to view volunteering as complementary to their paid work (Wilson, 2000). In addition, younger women tend to volunteer more than younger men, however later in life the pattern is reversed (Gallagher, 1994).

Furthermore, Chevrier, Steuer and MacKenzie (1994) determined that men and women differ in factors influencing their satisfaction. They found that women were more satisfied with their experience when they felt that their work was important and needed. In comparison, men related satisfaction to support and recognition received from others. With regard to episodic volunteers, Bryen and Madden (2006) identify the need for future exploration into gender differences to better understand the experiences of this type of volunteer.

**Marital status**

Previous studies have established that in general, married people are more likely to volunteer than single people. Additionally, McNamara and Gonzales (2011) found that married older adults volunteered at higher intensities in comparison to their unmarried counterparts. However the reason for the association between marital status and volunteer activities is unclear (Choi, 2003). Further, current research provides contradictory evidence regarding the potential impact of a volunteer’s marital status on role enjoyment. Whereas Lin and colleagues (2007) concluded that married volunteers reported more satisfaction, Morrow-Howell, Hong and Tang (2009) found that unmarried
volunteers were more likely to report greater benefits from volunteering. Thus, the impact of marital status on volunteer enjoyment remains unclear.

**Health status**

Previous studies have found that volunteer satisfaction is high for all health status groups (Barron et al., 2009). Moreover, McNamara and Gonzales (2011) suggest that although poor health may prevent individuals from becoming volunteers and lead to volunteer attrition, it does not impact one’s intensity of volunteering. However, recent research demonstrates that poor health status may be associated with turnover among older volunteers (Tang et al., 2010). No studies assessing the influence of health status among episodic volunteers in particular were found in the literature review conducted.

**Psychosocial factors**

Other research on individual factors suggests several psychosocial characteristics which may predict volunteer outcomes. Multiple studies have found a positive association between volunteer enjoyment and psychosocial factors such as empowerment and self-efficacy (Kulik, 2007; Lin et al., 2007; Yang & Tang, 2003). Yang and Tang (2003) suggest that volunteers with low self-efficacy or empowerment may choose simpler, more repetitive tasks and thus deprive themselves of a sense of accomplishment.

Although primarily examined as an outcome of volunteer participation, life satisfaction is another psychosocial characteristic included in studies predicting the quality of volunteer experiences. For instance, in a recent study, Moreno-
Jimenez and Villodres (2010) determined that overall life satisfaction was negatively associated with reported volunteer burnout.

2.4.1.2 Contextual factors

Despite the finding that aspects of the volunteer experience, rather than individual factors, are more likely to predict volunteer outcomes (Morrow-Howell, Hong, & Tang, 2009; Tang et al., 2010), organizational or situation-related factors have been largely ignored in volunteerism research (Moreno-Jiménez & Hidalgo, 2010; Penner, 2002; Tidwell, 2005). The limited amount of research exploring contextual factors has identified skill use and interpersonal relationships as factors promoting positive volunteer experiences.

Skill utilization

Early research on hospice volunteers demonstrated that volunteer satisfaction is tied to the value that a volunteer places on his or her role (Silbert, 1985). Likewise, in a widely cited study, Okun (1994) found that frequency of volunteering was positively associated with the existence of motives related to feeling useful and productive. Other early research concluded that volunteers have good overall experiences when they feel that their skills have been properly utilized (Chevrier et al., 1994; Omoto & Snyder, 1995).

More recent research also demonstrates the importance of skill use and the perceived value of one’s role in influencing volunteer enjoyment. For example, Kulik (2007) found that volunteers who feel a sense of empowerment in their role are more likely to experience a high sense of satisfaction. Similarly,
Byron and Curtis (2002) concluded that low personal accomplishment was associated with burnout in community volunteers, but did not specifically look at enjoyment as an outcome.

Most of the above research focused on long-term, regular volunteering as opposed to episodic roles, and did not specifically consider the experiences of middle-aged and older adults. Nonetheless, recent studies have found similar results among episodic volunteers. For instance, Cnaan and Handy (2005) note that episodic volunteers may choose to participate in time-limited events in order to experience a sense of accomplishment from seeing a job from beginning to end. A recent study of Olympic volunteers concluded that sharing one’s skills and expertise was an important motivator for participants (Fairley et al., 2007).

**Interpersonal relationships**

The development of relationships among volunteers has also been studied as a contextual factor that may impact enjoyment. For instance, Yanagisawa and Sakakibara (2008) determined that general volunteer satisfaction was influenced by relationships among fellow volunteers, service users and staff. Sense of belonging has also been identified as an important aspect of positive volunteer experiences (Skoglund, 2006). Haski-Leventhal and Cnaan (2009) explored the role of group processes in community volunteering and found that social interactions can both positively and negatively impact volunteer enjoyment. Furthermore, studies examining Olympic volunteers have also found that
friendship and camaraderie among volunteers influences overall enjoyment and repeat participation (Elstad, 1996; Fairley et al., 2007).

2.4.1.3 Limitations of research knowledge

One limitation of volunteerism studies is that few consider the nature of the duties performed by volunteers and their association with enjoyment. In a recent study of older Spanish volunteers, Celdran and Villar (2007) found that individuals in volunteer roles that are related to their job before retirement may be less satisfied than those who volunteer in other domains. The authors suggest that this may be because these older adults view their volunteer role as an extension of their work and not as an opportunity for leisure. More studies examining the impact of the nature of the role and duties are needed.

Another shortcoming of current research is a lack of consideration of aspects of one’s life outside of the volunteer role that may affect the enjoyment of volunteer experiences. Although studies have considered the importance of social support for volunteers, for example support received from spouses (Lin et al., 2007), factors that could be considered competing demands for volunteers, such as family commitments, employment status, life transitions and financial resources, have not been thoroughly explored.

The present study focuses on contributing to research knowledge on contextual factors and volunteer enjoyment not only by examining volunteer experiences within the specific context of a mega sporting event, but also by
considering the volunteer role and duties. It also considers aspects of participants' lives outside of volunteering, including sources of stress and support, in order to gain a better understanding of various factors that may contribute to the quality of the volunteer experience.

2.5 Motivation and future volunteering

Due to an abundance of interest in identifying reasons for volunteering, research exploring motivations has dominated the study of volunteers (Wilson, 2000). Much of this research has focused on initial motives for volunteering, and often does not consider past volunteer experiences when predicting future involvement. In addition, there is currently controversy in the literature as to whether motivations that initiate volunteer work are the same reasons for continuing volunteer work (Van Vianen et al., 2008).

To date, a small amount of research shows the importance of past volunteer experiences on future volunteer behaviours. For instance, volunteer fulfillment has been found to be a better predictor of future organizational involvement and longevity than initial motive strength (Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003; Finkelstein; 2008a). Furthermore, for the baby boomer generation, volunteering activity is less likely than in previous generations to be predicted by religious affiliation. Instead, volunteering among boomers is predicted by past volunteering behaviours (Einolf, 2009). Therefore, understanding initial
motivations is not enough, and ensuring that baby boomer volunteers have positive experiences is important for organizations to consider.

Volunteerism research has also analysed relationships between different motives and satisfaction levels. For example, Moreno-Jimenez and Hidalgo (2010) determined that motivations associated with expressing values were positively associated with volunteer enjoyment. In a study looking specifically at sport event volunteers, Bang and Ross (2009) found that individuals who scored high on motives related to the expression of values, career benefits and a love of sport were more likely to report higher satisfaction.

Researchers have also examined how the actual fulfillment of motives or expectations contributes to enjoyment. Stukas and colleagues (2009) analyzed the impact of fulfilled motivations on positive emotions and satisfaction of volunteers. They found that the higher the count of fulfilled motivations, the greater the likelihood of role satisfaction, and that the strength of the association varied among different organizational contexts. In order to build on research linking specific motivations and motivation fulfillment to enjoyment, the present study includes analysis of volunteer motivations and expectation fulfillment.

It is important to note here that due to the short-term status of assignments, it may be assumed that retention is not an important goal in the context of episodic volunteering. However, several studies suggest that retention should be considered a priority of episodic volunteer management. Fairley and
colleagues (2007), in their study of Olympic volunteers, determined that repeat volunteers are an important asset to event managers. They argue that the skills and knowledge retained from year to year are a valuable resource, and that this is more efficient than recruiting new volunteers. The authors also found that many volunteers will travel internationally to participate in multiple Olympic Games.

Bryen and Madden (2006) note the importance of ensuring episodic volunteers have positive experiences to avoid early drop-out from assignments. These authors studied what makes episodic volunteers return, or “bounce back” for future assignments, and provide initial evidence for the influence of both individual and contextual factors. Their preliminary research shows that having a high degree of satisfaction with one’s role has more of an effect on repeat episodic volunteering than recognition or appreciation from the organization, which have traditionally been studied as factors associated with retention.

Overall, there is a need for further exploration of how the experiences of short-term volunteers impacts their future involvement, and what organizations can do to encourage episodic volunteers to return for future events (Baum & Lockstone, 2007; Bryen & Madden, 2006). As reflected in research question 3, the present study aims to contribute to research knowledge in this area.
2.6 Age differences in volunteering

A small body of research has explored age as a predictor of several facets of volunteering. In general, studies show that older and younger volunteers differ in their motivations, experiences and outcomes (Tang et al., 2009; Van Willigen, 2000). However, there is controversy concerning the extent of age differences.

Firstly, several studies have explored the role of demographic factors, including age, on determining a person’s likelihood of volunteering. In a qualitative study, Gallagher (1994) found that older adults were less likely than middle-aged adults to engage in helping behaviours. On the other hand, Penner and Finkelstein (1998) found that age was not associated with volunteering.

Secondly, there may be age differences when it comes to the benefits of volunteering. Van Willigen (2000) found that younger adults showed decreases in positive outcomes derived from volunteering after more than 100 hours per year, and actually experienced negative effects after 140 hours per year. Conversely, older adults experienced additional benefits with increasing volunteer hours. It is unclear if differences were due to the types of roles held by older versus younger adults, or due to other commitments of younger volunteers, such as families and employment that may compete for their time, potentially resulting in higher stress.

Age differences have also been measured in studies on volunteer motivations. Okun and Schultz (2003) found that older adults were more likely than middle-aged adults to volunteer due to social motives as opposed to
motives related to knowledge, career building, and learning. Likewise, Tan and colleagues (2009) found that social relationships that developed during the volunteer experience where strong motivators for older adults to continue their volunteer assignments. Volunteering in later life has also been associated with the specific motivations related to generativity and leaving a legacy (Morrow-Howell, 2010), a concept explored further in Chapter 3.

Controversy regarding the prevalence of age differences exists in volunteerism literature. Contrary to findings presented above, Black and Jirovic (1999) determined that volunteer motivations are similar across all age groups. Studies on how age influences volunteer enjoyment have also established disparate conclusions. Hustinx and Handy (2009) determined that due to the extensiveness of their life experiences, older volunteers are more likely to be skeptical or critical of their roles, and therefore less satisfied with them. In contrast, Kulik (2007, 2010) found that older volunteers reported higher satisfaction. These contrasting findings call attention to the importance of considering the particular volunteer context, role and duties when conducting research on enjoyment among volunteers of different ages.

As a whole, volunteerism research demonstrates that variation exists between older and younger volunteers. However, there is a need to further explore age differences. For example, some of the differences between older and younger volunteers outlined above may be due to generational or cohort distinctions, rather than age-related differences across the lifespan.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Previous research has used a variety of theoretical perspectives in an effort to predict and explain the motivations, experiences and behaviours of volunteers. However, no single theoretical approach has been agreed upon to date (Shye, 2010). Volunteer behaviour is very complex (Grube & Pilivan, 2000), and it is not effective to attempt to explain all volunteerism with one theory (Perry, Brudney, Coursey, & Littlepage, 2008; Wilson, 2000). Furthermore, previous conceptual frameworks used to study volunteers have been described as too narrow, and more recent literature recognizes the need for a definition of volunteerism that includes one-off activities, such as volunteering for special events (Baum & Lockstone, 2007).

The present study combines multiple theoretical perspectives and concepts previously used in the literature and empirical research on volunteerism and applies them to the context of episodic volunteering. Specifically, it combines elements of the functional theory of volunteering with the concept of productive aging, Erikson’s theory of generativity, as well as a serious leisure perspective on volunteerism. These theories and concepts were combined to create a general framework used in focusing and designing the study, and to inform the interpretation of results.
3.1 Functional theory

The functional theory of volunteering is rooted in structural functionalism (Clary & Snyder, 1999) and was originally developed by Clary and colleagues (1991). It has been widely cited and used as a framework in volunteer research over the last decade. According to functional theory, the same action (in this case, volunteering) serves different functions for different people (Allison et al., 2002). The functional approach assumes that the decision to volunteer is a rational process (Greenslade & White, 2005) and predicts that people will continue to volunteer to the extent that their experience matches their motivations for volunteering (Finkelstein, 2008a). The central premise of the functional theory of volunteering is that it “encourages us to consider a wide range of personal and social motivations that promote this form of sustained helping behaviour” (Clary et al., 1998, p.1518).

Previous volunteerism research adopting a functional approach has primarily examined volunteer motives, specifically the comparison of pro-social or altruistic versus self-oriented or egotistic motivations. Altruistic motivations include a desire to help others, self sacrifice, compassion for others and contributing to social justice. In contrast, egotistic reasons include self-serving goals such as wanting to learn new skills, to use leisure time constructively and to gain opportunities to socialize (Bryen & Madden, 2006).

Since the initial work by Clary and colleagues (1991), researchers have gone beyond simply differentiating between altruistic and self-serving motives,
and have aimed to identify specific volunteer motivations. Using a functionalist perspective, Clary and colleagues (1998), identified six broad motives underlying volunteer behaviour. The Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) was designed by Clary and colleagues (1998) to measure the relative strengths of each motive in individuals, and has been utilized by numerous researchers studying various types of volunteering (e.g. Allison et al., 2002; Greenslade & White, 2005).

Specific motivations identified by functional theory have been associated with volunteer outcomes. For example, Moreno-Jiménez and Hidalgo (2010) determined that volunteers who are motivated by opportunities to express their values, or chances to exercise their knowledge and skills, find more meaning in their role and are more likely to have lower burnout. Research has also found that having altruistic characteristics leads to positive outcomes such as volunteer commitment and longevity (Penner, 2002; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998).

In contrast, other researchers found a positive association between self-oriented goals, such as acquiring new knowledge or meeting new friends, and volunteer satisfaction (Cheung, Tang & Yan, 2006; Omoto & Snyder, 1995). These discrepancies indicate that initial motivations in and of themselves may not predict volunteer outcomes such as satisfaction, but rather it is the fulfillment of motives through volunteer work that is significant (Davis et al., 2003).

It is important to recognize that existing volunteerism research adopting a functional approach, although valuable, has focused on traditional volunteer
roles. It has not considered multiple contexts, such as episodic volunteering, and has not examined age differences, both which the current study aims to do.

3.2 Productive aging

Productive aging is defined as, “the promotion and organization of a lifestyle which enables seniors to participate actively in the economic and social advancement of the nation in a manner that will ensure they are contributors rather than dependants, while having the added benefit of enhancing their own health and well-being” (Productivity Commission Annual Report, 2004, as cited in Manning, 2010, p. 126). Recently, gerontological research has identified volunteerism as a form of productive aging, providing older adults with opportunities to continue to be engaged in their communities (Gottlieb & Gillespie, 2008; Manning, 2010; Morrow-Howell, 2007), use former job skills to remain productive (Choi, 2003; Samson et al., 2009), participate in meaningful roles (Barron et al., 2009), and be protected from decreased levels of purpose in life (Greenfield & Marks, 2004).

As discussed above, the opportunity to use one’s skills within an organization, an example of productive aging, can contribute to the quality of volunteer experiences. The concept also applies to the current study’s context. In a recent study on older volunteers working within sport organizations, Misener and colleagues (2010) found that most individuals who reported positive experiences felt that they were making a significant contribution to the
organization through the use of their skills and knowledge. Within the context of volunteering for a mega sporting event, the organization is likely to be valued by the volunteer, and thus if a volunteer perceives his or her role as contributing to the success of a valued organization, their commitment to their position may increase (Grube & Piliavin, 2000).

This study employs the concept of volunteering as productive aging by considering participant reports on the utilization of their skills during episodic volunteer assignments. It also explores the perceptions of volunteers regarding their role at a large-scale event, particularly how opportunities to contribute may influence their evaluation of their experience.

### 3.3 Generativity theory

As outlined above, the concept of productive aging contributes basic ideas to the conceptual framework of this study. Generativity theory expands on the concept of productive aging, providing a broader theoretical perspective that considers the meanings behind productive aging behaviours.

Erik Erikson, an influential psychoanalytic theorist, is best known for developing a theoretical model specifying eight stages of psychosocial development. During the seventh stage, typically beginning in mid-life, individuals either experience stagnation, a sense that one’s life has little or no meaning or positive impact on others, or generativity, which Erikson (1963) described as
“primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation” (p. 267). Generative concerns have been associated with positive outcomes in adulthood, such as life satisfaction (Morfei, Hooker, Carpenter, Mix, & Blakeley, 2004) and well-being (MacDermid, Franz, & De Reus, 1998), and generativity is acknowledged as a crucial component of identity development and psychosocial adaptation in later life (McAdams & Logan, 2004; Schoklitsch & Baumann, 2001; Scott, Reifman, Mulsow, & Feng, 2003; Warburton & Gooch, 2007).

Although individuals often express generativity through parenting, grandparenting and family life, Erikson articulated that generativity may extend to public domains. Most authors on the topic acknowledge that aspects of generativity related to parenthood precede what Snarey (1993) identifies as societal generativity, or, “serving as a mentor, providing leadership, and generally contributing to the strength and continuity of subsequent generations” (p. 22). Recent studies have determined that generativity is linked to a variety of behaviours related to fostering the development of wider social systems, including volunteer work (Hart et al., 2001; McAdams, 2000; Morfei et al., 2004; Rossi, 2001; Schoklitsch & Baumann, 2011; Scott et al., 2003).

The link between generativity and volunteering may relate to the tendency for individuals to view volunteering as a way to share wisdom with younger generations (Tan et al., 2010). For instance, in an evaluation of a volunteer grandparent program, Szendre and Jose (1996) determined that older volunteers felt their role was positive because they had helped younger generations.
However, Scott and colleagues (2003) found that older adults who engaged in a variety of volunteer roles had higher generativity in comparison to those with specifically intergenerational volunteer roles. Therefore, generativity may apply to a range of volunteer contexts.

Currently, a debate exists among the theoretical and empirical literature regarding when generative concerns emerge and how long individuals remain in this stage of psychosocial development. It is not clear when generative concerns begin to decline, or whether they decrease at all after midlife (McAdams, 2000). Furthermore, whereas some researchers describe generativity as specific to middle-age (Morfei et al., 2004), others suggest that certain aspects, societal generativity in particular, become more prominent in later life (Schoklitsch & Baumann, 2011; Vaillant, 2002).

In addition to differentiating between parental and societal generativity, the literature identifies two distinct motives driving generative actions. Agentic generativity is characterized by concerns of being remembered after one’s death, or the desire to leave a legacy, whereas communal generativity focuses on nurturing and promoting the welfare of future generations, and is not associated with self-oriented interests (Morfei et al., 2004; McAdams, de St. Aubin, & Logan, 1993; Warburton & Gooch, 2007). Narushima (2005) offers a slightly different approach to distinguishing motives, suggesting that some generative individuals want to give back, or recompensate for benefits received earlier in life, whereas other generative concerns focus solely on the future, and one’s desire to leave
the world a better place. This author found that volunteers in their 50s and 60s were more likely to have the former type of generative concerns, whereas those over 70 years of age expressed the latter.

Despite the studies presented above, there is only a small body of research on generativity in older adults (Schoklitsch & Baumann, 2011; Scott et al., 2003). Generativity provides a useful framework for studying how older volunteers view their roles and how volunteering can contribute to successful aging (Warburton & Gooch, 2007). The present study responds to the lack of research by examining how middle-aged and older volunteers may view their involvement in episodic roles as an expression of generative concerns.

3.4 Volunteering as serious leisure

Finally, the concept of volunteering as serious leisure was adopted to inform the perspective and focus of the study. Several authors have identified volunteering as part of the leisure portfolio of older adults, specifically designating volunteering as a form of ‘serious leisure’ (Allison et al., 2002; Baum & Lockstone, 2007; Misener, Doherty, & Hamm-Kerwin, 2010). Serious leisure is defined as, “systematic involvement in an activity that is sufficiently substantial and interesting for the individual to find extended involvement in the acquisition and/or expression of particular skills, knowledge and experience” (Misener et al., 2010, p. 268). Also described as career volunteering, serious leisure volunteering is differentiated from casual leisure volunteering, which is, “momentary, requires
little skill or knowledge but is nonetheless satisfying, perhaps even enjoyable” (Stebbins, 1996, p. 219).

A serious leisure perspective on volunteering assumes that individuals volunteer primarily for the purpose of having a fulfilling leisure experience (Bang & Ross, 2009). In comparison to earlier volunteerism studies applying occupational perspectives, more recent literature suggests that viewing late life volunteering through a serious leisure lens may be more appropriate (Misener et al., 2010). This is illustrated in research by Celdran and Villar (2007), which found that individuals who volunteer in a role similar to their current job (or previous job if retired) were less satisfied because they were less likely to perceive their involvement as a form of leisure.

Perhaps it is important to specify that the perspective of volunteering as serious leisure is not in contrast to productive aging or generativity theory. The literature acknowledges that generativity can be expressed in a variety of civic domains, including leisure pursuits (MacDermid, Franz, & De Reus, 1998; McAdams & Logan, 2004). Even if volunteer activities are fulfilling self-oriented goals, they may still be generative in nature (Freedman, 1997; Narushima, 2005).

In addition to informing the focus on enjoyment, adopting the concept of volunteering as serious leisure serves as a lens with which to view the present study’s results. Related to the concept of leisure, a market model of volunteering is being adopted by recent research, with volunteers being viewed as consumers
of an experience (Hustinx & Handy, 2009). Consumer behaviour literature specifies that satisfaction is derived from comparing expectations with the rewards and costs of an experience. Volunteerism researchers predict that similar to the behaviour of repeat consumers, if motivational needs are met, episodic volunteers will likely return for future events. (Bang & Ross, 2009). Therefore, the concept of serious leisure will be used to interpret results related to the present study’s third research question.

3.5 Theoretical and conceptual framework

The theoretical and conceptual framework adopted for this study combines ideas derived from the four conceptual/theoretical perspectives described above. As articulated by Miles and Huberman (1994), a conceptual framework is something that, “explains…the main things to be studied—the key factors, concepts, or variables—and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18). Functional theory, the concept of productive aging, generativity theory and the concept of volunteerism as serious leisure all inform the present study’s focus, design, research questions, hypotheses and interpretation of results.

The concept of volunteering as serious leisure contributes the idea that volunteers, especially baby boomers in episodic roles, should be viewed as consumers of an experience. Both functional theory and serious leisure provide the conceptual basis for the prediction that the quality of a volunteer’s experience impacts future desire to repeat volunteer activities. The concept of productive
aging suggests that middle-aged and older volunteers may be particularly interested in roles where they can contribute and make a difference. Generativity theory, which considers meanings behind productive aging actions, was used in the development of the follow-up interview and provided direction to the researcher in determining the potential reasons for age differences discovered.

Table 3.1 below summarizes the elements of each theory or concept that were used to inform the focus, methods and hypotheses of the current study, as well as some assumptions that it adopts.

**Table 3.1 Application of theoretical and conceptual ideas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory/concept</th>
<th>Aspects informing theoretical framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional theory</td>
<td>Different volunteer functions are important to different people, and specific functions of volunteering may vary in importance across the lifespan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previous volunteering experiences have an influence on future decisions to participate as a volunteer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals will consider fulfillment of their motives for volunteering when deciding future volunteer behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The decision to volunteer in the future is a rational process, and as such can be predicted and studied systematically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive aging</td>
<td>The opportunity to engage in productive roles and make a positive contribution to one’s community is an important function of volunteering for older adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Older volunteers who are given assignments that adequately utilize their skills are more likely to enjoy their role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generativity theory</td>
<td>Generativity is important to consider as a motivator of pro-social behaviours and may be related to role satisfaction and enjoyment among middle-aged and older volunteers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individuals vary with regard to the strength of their generative inclinations, and how they express generative concerns.

Differences in generativity concerns across the lifespan may be responsible for differences between middle-aged and older volunteers in perceptions and enjoyment of episodic volunteer roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteering as serious leisure</th>
<th>Enjoyment is a critical outcome to consider when attempting to understand the experiences of older volunteers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteers are consumers of an experience, and the quality of their roles will impact their future involvement in volunteering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viewing volunteering as a form of leisure is especially pertinent to the baby boomer generation and to episodic volunteering contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that these theoretical perspectives and concepts are not mutually exclusive. For example, generativity theory and the concept of productive aging overlap, as societal generativity concerns may motivate older adults to contribute to their communities in retirement and later life. Also, the functionalist perspective can be considered a more macro or umbrella theory, with generativity theory and the concepts of productive aging and volunteering as serious leisure predicting specific functions of volunteering that may vary in importance between individuals.
3.6 Hypotheses

In consideration of previous research findings, as well as the theories and concepts that form the adopted framework described above, this study tests the following hypotheses and sub-hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1:** Enjoyment among older and middle-aged adults engaged in episodic volunteer work will be positively associated with volunteers feeling that their position adequately utilized their skills.

**Hypothesis 2:** Based on the empirical and theoretical literature on age differences discussed above, it is likely that middle-aged and older volunteers differ in regard to the factors associated with enjoyment of their episodic volunteer role. In particular, the following sub-hypotheses will be tested:

**Sub-hypothesis 2a:** A stronger positive association will be demonstrated between volunteer enjoyment and weekly volunteer hours for older adults in comparison to middle-aged adults.

**Sub-hypothesis 2b:** Enjoyment will be more positively associated with altruism (used here as a proxy for generativity) among older volunteers in comparison to middle-aged volunteers.

**Hypothesis 3:** Evaluations of episodic volunteer experiences will predict future volunteering behaviours. Specifically, the following two sub-hypotheses will be tested:
**Sub-hypothesis 3a:** Participants who indicate they enjoyed the duties they performed will be more likely to report that they would volunteer in a similar context (i.e. the Olympics) again, if the chance arose.

**Sub-hypothesis 3b:** Participants who indicate they enjoyed the duties they performed will be more likely to report that they plan to continue volunteer work for other organizations in the future.
Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Data source

The British Columbia Network for Aging Research (BCNAR) selected “Older Volunteers of the 2010 Olympics” as a topic for its annual conference: *Promoting Active Aging by Connecting BC Researchers and Communities: Towards 2010 and Beyond*, held April 3, 2008 at the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Wosk Dialogue Centre. As a result of the conference, the 2010 Olympics Older Volunteers Project (OVP), led by Dr. Andrew Wister at the Department of Gerontology at SFU, began in October of 2008.

I worked as a research assistant for the OVP, and was involved in participant recruitment, consent and correspondence throughout the study. I was also responsible for data collection, entry and analysis, as well as other administrative tasks related to the project. The follow-up telephone interviews outlined below were developed and conducted as part of this thesis in order to supplement OVP data. Ethics approval was received from the University Research Ethics Board at SFU for the OVP, and gave approval for both the quantitative methods administered as part of the OVP and the follow-up interviews conducted for this thesis.

The OVP is a quasi-experimental study with the purpose of examining the experiences of individuals who participated as volunteers for the 2010 Olympic
Games and related activities held in Vancouver, B.C. from February 12 to 28, 2010 under the direction of the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC). The OVP collected responses from two mailed questionnaires: a pre-Olympics questionnaire completed by participants before the 2010 Olympics, and a post-Olympics questionnaire completed approximately 2 to 6 weeks after the Games. The pre-Olympics questionnaire measured demographic information and a variety of variables assessing health and well-being, social participation, volunteer experience, altruism and patriotism, burn-out, self-esteem, positive affect and meaning of life. The post-Olympics questionnaire had some overlap with the pre-Olympics questionnaire, but also asked participants about their enjoyment and future volunteering. See Appendices B and C for complete samples of the pre-Olympics and post-Olympics questionnaires used in the OVP.

The project only recruited volunteers who were aged 45 and over, in order to compare older volunteers (65 and over) to those who were middle-aged (45 to 64). A total of 255 participants completed both the pre-Olympics and post-Olympics questionnaires for the OVP study. Of these participants, 185 were between the ages of 45 and 64 (termed 'middle-aged' volunteers), and 70 were 65 years of age or older ('older' volunteers) in 2010.

4.2 Mixed-methods approach

The present study employed a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative and qualitative data collected as part of the OVP, in addition to qualitative data
obtained through follow-up telephone interviews, were used to answer research questions. Using mixed-methods is considered an alternate to relying on either quantitative or qualitative methods (Doyle, Brady, & Byrne, 2009). It has been defined as “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p.4). By using a mixed-method approach, biases inherent in one method can be cancelled out by those of the other method (Creswell, 2009).

Mixed-methods research is becoming more common in health-related fields (Doyle et al., 2009), with gerontological researchers recognized as being at the forefront of mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches (Happ, 2009). A trend towards mixed-methods approaches is also demonstrated by recent studies on volunteerism in later life (e.g. Beale, Wilkes, Power, & Beale, 2007; Brennan, 2005; Perry et al., 2008; Tang et al., 2010).

Mixed methods approaches may be particularly effective for volunteerism research. Allison and colleagues (2002), in a study assessing volunteer motives, comment that questionnaires failed to capture variability in responses, which might be rendered using open-ended questions. Lin and colleagues (2007) suggest that quantitative analysis alone may not allow researchers to discover contextual factors which may be important predictors of volunteer outcomes. Given the limited amount of research on episodic volunteering in later life, a mixed-methods approach is an appropriate research technique (Lin et al., 2007).
The methodology outlined in the proceeding sections includes the use of quantitative and qualitative data collected as part of the OVP, as well as additional qualitative follow-up telephone interviews with a small sample of OVP participants. The quantitative methods focused on providing useful information on predictors of volunteer enjoyment and age differences, helping to test the study’s hypotheses, whereas the qualitative component focused on providing more detailed data and insight into the experiences and perceptions of a selection of middle-aged and older VANOC volunteers.

4.3 Participant recruitment, consent and correspondence

Participant recruitment and consent were completed as part of the OVP. Olympic and Paralympic volunteers were contacted by VANOC volunteer team leaders and asked to participate in the project. Interested volunteers emailed the research assistant to obtain a consent form. A standardized consent form (see Appendix A) was sent to all participants to be signed. The form included an optional section to indicate willingness to participate in a follow-up phone call. Individuals who provided consent were subsequently issued an identification number and mailed a pre-Olympics questionnaire. For convenience, some participants chose to receive and complete consent forms and questionnaires electronically and submit via email or fax.

The OVP research team piloted the questionnaire with 37 middle-aged and older pre-event volunteers, and a qualitative interview was also piloted with
five older volunteers. It should be noted that the follow-up interview administered in the current study was not based on the OVP pilot phone interview.

4.4 Quantitative methods

Data from the pre-Olympics and post-Olympics questionnaires were entered by research assistants into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Once verifications were conducted to determine accuracy, data was imported into SPSS software (Version 19). Logistic regression was administered in order to determine the individual and contextual factors associated with volunteer role enjoyment, and to test differences between middle-aged and older volunteers. In addition, bivariate analysis was conducted to test associations between enjoyment and future volunteering desires. Only subjects who completed both questionnaires were included in the analyses. The sections below describe the particular variables used, and provide details on how some variables were manipulated in SPSS in preparation for quantitative analyses.

4.4.1 Volunteer enjoyment

The variable of volunteer enjoyment was used as a dependent variable to test hypotheses 1, 2a and 2b as well as an independent variable to test hypotheses 3a and 3b. Data for the variable was obtained by asking subjects a single question on the post-Olympics questionnaire: While you were volunteering for VANOC, did you enjoy the duties that you performed? Response choices included very much, somewhat, not very much and not at all. Previous studies
have also assessed overall enjoyment or satisfaction with volunteer work using a single-item measure (e.g. Kulik, 2010; Stukus et al., 2009; Tang et al., 2010; Van Vianen, 2008; Yan & Tang, 2003; Yanagisawa & Sakakibara, 2008). Additionally, Hustinx and colleagues (2008) determined through factor analysis that the multiple aspects of volunteer satisfaction can be reduced to one factor.

For the purposes of logistic regression, as well as bivariate analysis, the dependent variable of enjoyment was dichotomized into ‘enjoyed’ or ‘did not enjoy’. Subjects who reported enjoying their duties ‘very much’ were coded as ‘enjoyed’. Those who reported enjoying their duties ‘somewhat’, ‘not very much’ or ‘not at all’ were coded as ‘did not enjoy’. Several volunteerism studies have identified the potential bias towards socially desirable responding on self-reports (Sakires et al., 2009). Therefore, after factoring in potential tendencies towards positive reporting, it is reasonable to categorize subjects who reported enjoying their duties ‘somewhat’ as ‘did not enjoy’.

4.4.2 Socio-demographic variables

4.4.2.1 Age

Participants were asked for their date of birth on the pre-Olympics questionnaire, and age was computed by subtracting year of birth from year of questionnaire completion (2010). Including age as a variable allowed the study to answer the second research question (Are there age differences with regard to the factors associated with volunteer role enjoyment?). To examine age differences, a secondary logistic regression was performed with the sample split
at age 60 to produce two relatively equal groups. Subjects between the ages of 45 and 59 were categorized as 'middle-aged' and those above 60 were categorized as 'older'. This is consistent with previous research on volunteering in later life that has defined older volunteers as subjects 60 years and older (Barron et al., 2009).

4.4.2.2 Gender

Chevrier et al. (1994) determined that men and women differ in factors influencing satisfaction with volunteer experiences. Therefore, gender was included in the analysis not only as a control variable, but also to determine how gender and enjoyment are related among the volunteers being examined.

4.4.2.3 Marital status

Based on current research knowledge, the relationship between marital status and volunteer outcomes such as role enjoyment remains unclear. Therefore, marital status was also included as a demographic variable in the regression analysis. The pre-Olympics questionnaire asked participants to indicate whether they were married, common law, living with a partner, widowed, separated, divorced or single. Martial status was dichotomized as 'attached' or 'unattached'. As in other studies on volunteerism, marital status is used as a proxy for social support and encouragement to volunteer (Choi, 2003; Lin, 2007; McNamara & Gonzales, 2011), and the presence of a partner is tested as a possible factor influencing volunteer role enjoyment.
4.4.2.4 Work status

Questionnaires asked participants to report their current employment status. A variety of response choices were available, including full-time, part-time, semi-retired, unemployed and retired (see Appendix B, question 6 for a full list). Responses were dichotomized into ‘working’ and ‘not working’, with missing values (n = 1) recoded as the mode (‘working’). Previous studies on older volunteers have also dichotomized employment status to examine the relationship between paid workforce involvement and volunteering (Tang, 2008).

4.4.3 Health status

Based on previous research, it would normally be predicted that the presence of chronic conditions would not be associated with volunteer enjoyment (Barron et al., 2009; McNamara & Gonzales, 2011). However, poor health has been associated with volunteer turnover among older volunteers (Tang et al., 2010), and because the volunteer context of the present study diverges from previous contexts in that it was a mega sporting event and roles were time-intensive, a health-related variable was included in the analysis. On the pre-Olympics questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate whether or not they are currently living with a chronic health condition (see Appendix B, question 10). From the question, a dichotomous variable was created to indicate the presence of one or more chronic health conditions. Missing values (n = 7) were recoded into the mode (no chronic health conditions).
4.4.4 Psychosocial variables

Several psychosocial variables were considered as possible predictors of volunteer enjoyment in the quantitative analysis. Previous studies found that individuals who score lower on a variety of psychosocial variables, such as social capital and psychological well-being, are more likely to experience positive outcomes of their volunteer activities (Morrow-Howell, 2007; Morrow-Howell, Hong, & Tang, 2009). In addition, it is important to consider psychosocial factors as possible covariates influencing reported enjoyment. The following psychosocial variables were included in the study: change in stress level, patriotism, altruism and life satisfaction.

4.4.4.1 Change in stress level

There is an abundance of research on the potential for individuals to experience negative outcomes such as stress and burnout as a result of their involvement in voluntary organizations (Byron & Curtis, 2002; Dein & Abbas, 2005). Furthermore, ensuring that volunteer activities do not produce stress may be particularly important for baby boomers, who are more likely to choose roles that are enjoyable and fit into their busy lifestyles (Culp, 2009).

For many OVP participants, volunteer roles were both time and labour intensive, often involving hours equivalent to a full-time job. As such, it reasonable to assume that volunteering may have been associated with increased stress, which could impact reported enjoyment. In addition, measuring change in stress can also assist with controlling for external factors (i.e. other life
circumstances or events) that occurred during the Olympics that may have impacted a volunteer's ability to enjoy their role.

Stress was measured using a single-item question with Likert scale on both the pre-Olympics and post-Olympics questionnaires (see Appendix B, question 13 and Appendix C, question 7). Previous psychological research has demonstrated satisfactory validity of a single-item measure of self-reported stress (Elo, Leppanen, & Jahkola, 2003). Change in stress was computed by subtracting the stress level reported on the pre-Olympics questionnaire from that reported on the post-Olympics questionnaire to produce an interval variable. Missing values (n = 1) were recoded as 'no change', which was the mode.

4.4.4.2 Patriotism

Although previous research on volunteerism has not included evaluations of patriotism, a recent study on the 2008 Beijing Olympics found a correlation between patriotism and volunteering at the Games (Yang et al., 2010). As the 2010 Olympics can likely be considered an expression of Canadian patriotism, having a high level of patriotism may have made the Games more meaningful to some individuals, and therefore may have influenced their level of enjoyment.

Patriotism was measured on both questionnaires by asking participants to indicate their level of patriotism (the love for or devotion towards one’s country) for Canada using a four-point Likert scale. Response choices were ‘weak’, ‘moderate’, ‘somewhat strong’ and ‘very strong’. Baseline patriotism scores from
the first questionnaire was used for analysis. The ordinal variable was recoded into three levels: ‘weak or moderate’, ‘somewhat strong’ and ‘very strong’, due to only one participant indicating that their level of patriotism was weak.

4.4.4.3 Altruism

Not surprisingly, the characteristic of altruism has received a great deal of attention in volunteerism research, and is identified as an important motive for participation in volunteer work (Clary & Snyder, 1991; Finkelstein, 2008a). However, there is also research demonstrating that in addition to altruism, self-oriented motives can contribute to volunteer satisfaction and intention to continue volunteering (Cheung et al., 2006).

Baseline altruism is used as a proxy for societal generativity in the logistic regression in order to test sub-hypotheses 2b. Altruism was measured on both questionnaires using two questions. The first question asked subjects to rate their current motivation to help others on a four-point Likert scale, whereas the second asked participants to rate the level of satisfaction they get from helping others, also on a four-point Likert scale (see Appendix B, questions 28 and 29, and Appendix C, questions 23 and 24). Scores for the first measure, as indicated on pre-Olympics questionnaires, were included in the analysis. As all participants responded that they were either ‘somewhat’ or ‘highly’ motivated to help others, the ordinal variable was recoded as a dichotomous variable. The second measure of altruism was not included as the two measures were highly
correlated and as altruism is used here as a proxy for generativity, the focus is on motivation or concern with helping others, rather than outcomes.

4.4.4.4 Life satisfaction

Previous studies demonstrate that life satisfaction is an important control variable to consider, as it explains some of the variance in volunteer outcomes, such as burnout (Moreno-Jiménez & Villodres, 2010). Overall life satisfaction was measured on both questionnaires using a single-item question with a 5-point Likert scale (see Appendix B, question 15). Baseline scores from the first questionnaire were recoded into three levels: ‘dissatisfied’, ‘satisfied’ and ‘very satisfied’, with the minimal number of ‘dissatisfied’ (n = 6) and ‘very dissatisfied’ (n = 2) responses coded together as ‘dissatisfied’. Missing values (n = 4) were recoded as the mode (‘very satisfied’). Life satisfaction is included as a control variable. However, a significant, positive relationship between life satisfaction and enjoyment may indicate that individuals with high life satisfaction are generally more likely to seek and find enjoyment in their role.

4.4.5 Volunteer context variables

Research on volunteering recognizes the need to consider both individual factors as well as characteristics of the volunteering context (Moreno-Jiménez & Hidalgo, 2010; Morrow-Howell et al., 2003; 2009). Therefore, the quantitative analyses incorporated two variables from the post-Olympics questionnaire that captured aspects associated with the volunteering context, specifically weekly
volunteer hours and perceived skill utilization, in order to study their association with volunteer enjoyment and to test hypotheses.

4.4.5.1 Weekly volunteer hours during Olympics

Windsor and colleagues (2008) found a curvilinear relationship between time spent volunteering and psychological well-being in older adults. However, the relationship has not been analysed in the context of episodic volunteering assignments. Moreover, the relationship between volunteer hours and role enjoyment as a specific outcome has not been assessed in previous studies.

On the post-Olympic questionnaire, participants indicated the approximate number of hours per week they worked as VANOC volunteers. The number of weekly volunteer hours reported by respondents is included as an independent interval variable, with missing values (n = 8) recoded as the mode (40 hours).

4.4.5.2 Perceived skill utilization

Perceived skill utilization is included as an independent variable in the analysis in order to test hypothesis 1. The post-Olympics questionnaire asked participants: In retrospect, do you think that your volunteer position at VANOC adequately utilized your skills? Previous research has also measured perceived skill use with a single item question, such as Kim and colleagues (2009), who assessed volunteer agreement with the statement, “There is a good match between the requirements of my volunteer work and my skills.”
The question used in the present study also included space to elaborate on one’s response (see Appendix C, question 19). However, 41 subjects (approximately 16%) indicated both ‘yes’ and ‘no,’ providing examples of how their skills were utilized, as well as how they were not. Therefore, skill utilization was transformed into an ordinal variable, with possible outcomes of ‘yes’, ‘somewhat’ and ‘no’. Missing values (n = 2) were recoded into the mode (‘yes’).

4.4.6 Future volunteering

In order to answer the third research question, and to test hypotheses 3a and 3b, variables related to future volunteering activities were also included in the study. On the first questionnaire, participants were asked whether they would volunteer for the Olympics again, if the chance arose (see Appendix C, question 20). Responses formed an ordinal variable with outcomes of ‘no’, ‘unsure’ and ‘yes’. The post-Olympics questionnaire also asked subjects to indicate whether they planned to volunteer for other organizations, besides VANOC, in the future (see Appendix C, question 22). Again, responses included ‘no’, ‘unsure’ and ‘yes’. Both variables measuring plans for future volunteering activities were utilized for the bivariate analyses described in the proceeding section.

4.4.7 Bivariate analysis

Hypothesis 3a and 3b, which predict that volunteer enjoyment will be associated with future volunteering, was tested by conducting two bivariate analyses. To test hypothesis 3a, the first analysis used volunteer enjoyment as
the independent variable and question 20 on the post-Olympics questionnaire (which asks whether the participant would volunteer for the Olympics again, if the chance arose) as the dependent variable. A second bivariate analysis was done to test hypothesis 3b, assessing the relationship between the same independent variable of volunteer enjoyment and responses to question 22 on the post-Olympics questionnaire (which asked participants whether they planned to volunteer for other organizations, besides VANOC, in the future).

4.4.8 Logistic regression

Logistic regression was conducted in order to test hypotheses 1, as well as sub-hypotheses 2a and 2b. By conducting multivariate analysis, the study was able to determine factors associated with the dependent variable of volunteer enjoyment, as reported by study participants on the post-Olympics questionnaire, and to determine whether age differences are present in these associations when middle-aged and older volunteers are compared.

Using data from both questionnaires allows for the study of pre-existing characteristics (such as life satisfaction, altruism and patriotism), elements of the volunteer role (skill utilization and weekly volunteer hours), and perceptions after the event is over (reported enjoyment of duties). Table 4.1 below provides a summary of variables included in each block of the logistic regression, including details on variable types and reference categories assigned.
**Table 4.1 Summary of variables included in logistic regression**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description of measurement and variable type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variable:</strong> Enjoyment of volunteer duties</td>
<td>post-Olympics questionnaire, single item question, dichotomized as ‘enjoyed’ or ‘did not enjoy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 1: Socio-demographic variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, calculated based on date of birth provided, interval variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, single item question, dichotomous variable, male as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, dichotomized as attached or unattached, unattached as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work (employment) status</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, dichotomized as working or not working, not working as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 2: Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of chronic health conditions</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, single-item question, dichotomous variable, no chronic health conditions as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 3: Psychosocial variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in stress level</td>
<td>difference between pre and post-Olympics questionnaire stress scores, interval variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline patriotism</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, single-item question, Likert scale, trichotomized, ordinal variable, ‘weak or moderate’ as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline altruism (motivation)</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, dichotomous variable, ‘somewhat’ as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline life satisfaction</td>
<td>pre-Olympics questionnaire, single-item question, Likert scale, trichotomized, ordinal variable, ‘dissatisfied’ as reference category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 4: Volunteer context variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly volunteer hours during Olympics</td>
<td>post-Olympics questionnaire, single item question, interval variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Description of measurement and variable type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived skill utilization</td>
<td>post-Olympics questionnaire, single-item open-ended question, trichotomous ordinal variable, ‘no’ as reference category</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to test hypotheses 2a and 2b, logistic regression was conducted for a second time using the split-file function in SPSS, removing the variable of age from the first block. As with the first analysis, only subjects who completed both questionnaires were included in the split-file analysis. Subjects were split into two groups: middle-aged volunteers (aged 45 to 59) and older volunteers (aged 60 and older). Previous volunteerism studies have split subjects at age 60 in order to analyse age differences (Barron et al., 2009), or have studied older volunteers using a sample of participants 60 years of age and older (Morrow-Howell et al., 2003). Splitting the sample at age 60 also ensured that there were an almost identical number of subjects in both age groups (n = 127 for the middle-aged group, and n = 128 for the older group).

### 4.5 Qualitative methods

Qualitative methods allow for the recognition of the subjectivity of the lived experience (Lyons & Dionigi, 2007), or how people experience events (Willig, 2008). After a review of volunteerism research, Wilson (2000) determined a need to supplement survey data with richer, in-depth understandings of volunteering. Also, qualitative studies have primarily focused on variables associated with
initial intentions to volunteer, such as motivations, barriers and incentives (e.g. Daoud et al., 2010; Fairley et al., 2007; Warburton et al., 2007), rather than the perspectives of individuals after experiencing volunteer roles. Furthermore, past research has not considered the range of themes and issues pertaining to volunteering at major sporting events (Baum & Lockstone, 2007).

Although the OVP includes longitudinal information as the two questionnaires were administered several months apart, follow-up interviews provide more valid data. For example, the post-Olympics questionnaire asked participants whether they are planning on volunteering in the future. However, follow-up interviews allowed participants to specify the roles they are involved in. Interviewees were also asked to describe how their VANOC experience impacted their choices regarding the types of volunteering they are currently engaged in.

Another shortcoming of the OVP questionnaires was that they did not include an ample number of questions assessing contextual factors. For example, they did not ask subjects to indicate their volunteer position title, nor to describe the main duties they were responsible for. Moreover, although the questionnaires asked about motivations for volunteering, participants were not asked to report whether these motives were matched by their experiences. The follow-up interviews aimed to fill these gaps in the quantitative data by encouraging participants to share details about their experiences, including how they perceived their participation and what contributed to their enjoyment.
4.5.1 Qualitative participant selection

Purposeful sampling was administered as a selection process for the qualitative component of the study. Purposeful sampling is common in qualitative research, and involves the selection of cases from which one can learn a great deal about issues that are of central importance to the purpose of the study (Patton, 1990). As the main focus of the study was the examination of volunteer enjoyment, as well as age differences, the goal of sampling for qualitative analysis was to include volunteers of various ages and enjoyment levels.

As with the quantitative analyses, only participants who had completed both questionnaires were considered for inclusion in the qualitative stage of the study. Furthermore, volunteers who participated in the OVP pilot were excluded from participation in follow-up interviews. A cross-section of ten participants were selected. While it is common to sample using saturation methods, it was decided to limit the qualitative study to ten participants who varied on key attributes. As a multi-method study, the qualitative research focused on specific areas identified in the quantitative results, as well as gaps in the survey instrument that required further exploration. It was ensured that qualitative participants included five males and five females, and varied in age group. In particular, two of the male participants represented in the ‘middle-aged’ category (45 to 59 years of age), and the other three males were ‘older’ volunteers (60 years of age and older). Three of the female participants were ‘middle-aged’ and two were ‘older’.
Furthermore, selected interview participants had varying levels of enjoyment as indicated on the post-Olympics questionnaire (Appendix C, question 16), ranging from ‘not at all’ to ‘very much’. This was done in order to have representation in the follow-up interviews from both those volunteers who had enjoyed their duties very much, and those individuals who reported lower enjoyment. The ten selected participants were telephoned and interviews were conducted in October and November of 2011. All participants who were successfully reached by telephone agreed to participate in, and fully completed, the follow-up interview.

4.5.2 Qualitative interview

Semi-structured interviews of approximately 20 to 30 minutes were conducted with the sample of 10 volunteers. Semi-structured interviews use predetermined questions based on selected topics. Although questions are asked in a systematic order, interviewers have the freedom to digress (Berg, 2004). Interviews were directed by an interview guide (see Appendix D), which allows for flexibility during data collection while ensuring that all questions are covered (Bryen & Madden, 2006). Previous studies on the experiences of older volunteers have identified closed-ended questions as introducing potential biases that may influence findings (Morrow-Howell et al., 2009). Therefore, open-ended questions were used as much as possible.

Interview questions are meant to generate the data needed to answer research questions (Maxwell, 2009). The following sections outline the topics
used as a basis for creating the standard interview guide, and explain how each topic area was incorporated into the interview to help answer research questions (see Appendix D for complete interview guide).

4.5.2.1 Volunteer role and duties

A limitation of previous research is the lack of information collected on the actual role or tasks that volunteers are responsible for, as different factors may contribute to enjoyment within different volunteer jobs (Manning, 2010; Yan & Tang, 2003). Therefore, interviews included questions relating to the specific roles held by participants during the Olympics, particularly questions about tasks performed on a daily basis, and discussions on other aspects of volunteering assignments that were central to their VANOC experiences. Interviewees were also asked about the training required for their role, as previous research demonstrates a positive correlation between participation in training sessions and overall volunteer satisfaction (Lin et al., 2007).

Role ambiguity was also explored in the interviews. Role ambiguity essentially means a “lack of clear understanding about the actions required to fill one’s role” (Sakires et al., 2009, p. 616). Research suggests that role ambiguity is likely to occur within voluntary sport organizations, and is associated with negative outcomes for both the volunteer and the organization (Merrell, 2000). For example, Sakires and colleagues (2009), in a study of voluntary sport organizations, found that volunteers who experienced high role ambiguity also had low levels of satisfaction, organizational commitment and effort. Therefore,
role ambiguity was an important aspect of the experience to consider when designing the qualitative interview.

**4.5.2.2 Motivation and expectation fulfillment**

As discussed in Chapter 2, research on volunteers has recently recognized the matching of motivations and expectations with actual experiences as an important contributor to the quality of the volunteer experience (Einolf, 2003; Finkelstein, 2008a). The fulfillment of motives through volunteer work, rather than initial motivations, are important in predicting volunteer outcomes (Davis et al., 2003). Therefore, asking volunteers open-ended questions about whether their expectations were met is an example of supplemental information that the qualitative interview was designed to provide. Specifically, interviews included questions about reasons for participating as an Olympic volunteer, also asking participants to discuss how well their experiences matched their initial motivations and expectations, as well as how reported discrepancies or matches impacted their evaluation of the experience.

**4.5.2.3 Productive aging**

Many studies on late life volunteering have examined productive aging, either explicitly (e.g. Carr, 2009; Manning, 2010) or implicitly (e.g. Greenfield & Marks, 2004), by concluding that older adults experience positive outcomes from volunteer roles in which their skills have been properly utilized. In order to explore productive aging and skill use in more detail, the qualitative interview
included questions prompting participants to discuss skill utilization and perceived contribution to the event.

4.5.2.4 Generativity

Qualitative interviews included questions about generative inclinations. Firstly, interviewees were asked a general question about their thoughts on the importance of guiding future generations. Responses were used to provide a crude indication of generative concern that the OVP questionnaires lacked, and served to prompt discussions around the psychological construct.

Secondly, determining whether volunteer roles provide opportunities for older adults to express their generativity concerns, and to what degree, is recognized in recent literature as being worthy of exploration (Hegeman, Roodin, Gilliland & O'Flathabhain, 2010). Therefore, interviews also aimed to determine whether and how participants viewed episodic volunteering at the Olympics as an opportunity to express generative concerns.

4.5.2.5 Negative experiences

Studies on volunteering yield useful results when participants are asked about negative experiences. Misener and colleagues (2010) explored negative volunteer experiences and found that issues with interpersonal relations, organizational processes, time and effort required, and problems around credentials emerged as common themes. The post-Olympics questionnaire included an open-ended question asking subjects to describe what they enjoyed the least about their VANOC experience. Although the question provided some
initial information, it did not explore negative experiences in depth nor measure the impact on participants. In order to supplement questionnaire data, the current study asked interviewees to describe negative aspects of their role, and the impact on their volunteer experience.

4.5.2.6 Contextual factors

Volunteering does not happen in isolation of other activities, family or work roles, or other life events (Kulik, 2007; Morrow-Howell, 2010; Wilson, 2000). The influence of one’s social network has also received attention in previous studies on episodic volunteerism. For example, Harrison (1995) determined that perceived expectations of others, such as family members or other volunteers, were associated with volunteer attendance. In order to build on research knowledge, qualitative interviews included questions on the support participants received from individuals in their networks regarding their VANOC position. During the interview, participants were also prompted to discuss any events that may have occurred in their personal lives (e.g. retirement, health concerns, other family transitions, etc.) during the Olympics in order to develop an understanding of how external factors may have affected enjoyment.

4.5.2.7 Current/future episodic volunteering

As one of the research questions focuses on future volunteering, the qualitative interview also asked participants about their current volunteer activities. Although the post-Olympics questionnaire included a general question about future volunteering, as well as a specific question about being involved as
an Olympic volunteer again, it did not collect details on the types of future volunteer roles. Therefore, follow-up interviews asked participants about their current volunteer work, as well as the impact of the Olympic experience on future volunteering preferences, behaviours and plans.

Table 4.2 below provides a summary of topics the follow-up interview was designed to explore. Also included below are specific questions targeting each topic, as well as sub-questions to prompt interviewees to explore the topics in further detail. Although questions were used to direct the telephone interviews, the interview guide was not followed strictly, allowing participants to focus on the aspects of volunteering that they determined to be most important. See Appendix D for the complete qualitative interview guide.

**Table 4.2 Follow-up interview topics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Associated Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Volunteer role and duties    | *What was your role during the Olympic Games?*  
*Can you describe your main duties you were responsible for during the Olympic Games?*  
*What skills or training were required for you to do your role?*  
*At any time was there confusion as to what you were supposed to be doing?* |
| Motivation and expectation fulfillment | *If you could choose the most important reason why you decided to volunteer during the Olympic Games, what would it be? Why?*  
*How did your volunteer role at the Olympics compare to previous volunteer work you have been involved in?*  
*Do you feel you had the experience that you had hoped to get by volunteering for the Olympics? Why or why not?* |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Associated Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Productive aging</td>
<td>Did you feel that the duties you performed as a volunteer made a significant difference? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generativity concerns</td>
<td>How important is it for you to support and guide future generations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you think that your experience at the Olympics was an opportunity for you to contribute to the future of your city/province/country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative experiences</td>
<td>Were there any negative aspects of your volunteering experience that have really stuck in your mind? Please describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did these negative experiences impact your overall evaluation of your experience as an Olympic volunteer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual factors</td>
<td>Did your family members and/or friends support your involvement in the Olympics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did this impact your feelings about your involvement in the Olympics as a volunteer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Was there anything else happening in your life outside of your volunteer role during the Olympics that affected your experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current/future episodic volunteering</td>
<td>Since the Olympics, have you volunteered for any other special events?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Would you consider volunteering on a short-term basis for other special events, such as the Olympics, again in the future? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do you think your experience at the Olympics affected your desire to participate as a volunteer for time-limited events?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, the interview guide was followed during all interviews, and for the majority of respondents, all questions and sub-questions were asked, and answers were provided. According to Maxwell (2009), “A researcher may need to reconsider or modify any design decision during the study in response to new
developments or to changes in some other aspect of the design” (p. 70).

Additional questions were incorporated into some interviews as appropriate, and in some cases the wording was adjusted to clarify questions for participants.

4.5.3 Qualitative data analysis

Once participants had agreed to the interview, the researcher asked for their permission to be recorded. All participants consented to the recording. When recording was complete, all ten interviews were transcribed verbatim. The transcription process allowed the researcher to develop a strong familiarization with the data, and with each interviewee, and to begin considering how the data helps answer the research questions.

Thematic analysis was chosen as a technique for the interpretation of follow-up interviews. Thematic analysis is the identification of major themes found within qualitative data (Howitt, 2010). This method of qualitative analysis often provides research findings that are readily understood by the general public and policy makers (Howitt, 2010). Therefore, it was appropriate technique for the current study as findings may have the potential to be shared with voluntary organizations for practical purposes, and perhaps even policy makers.

Thematic analysis was conducted for all interview transcripts, beginning with line-by-line open coding. Codes identified in the transcripts were based on topics and concepts found in the data, and in some cases on key words used by interviewees. Open coding is a procedure whereby the researcher determines
concepts and categories that fit the data, coding the data in an unstructured way (Strauss, 1990). Open coding was done by keeping track of possible categories and patterns within the data, without attempting to interpret the data through any particular theory or framework. After coding, the next step was the identification of themes and sub-themes. Themes identify major patterns in the initial codings and can be described as interpreting the text at a secondary level (Howitt, 2010).

In addition, journaling was done immediately after each interview to record overall impressions and observations that may have been lost once audio recordings had been converted into transcripts and coded. Journals are recommended in qualitative research to make notes about emerging themes and interpretations (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). For example, after each interview the researcher noted observations such as participant enthusiasm or indifference around particular topics. Furthermore, memos were also made during the processes of transcribing and throughout coding, in order to note additional observations. Once participant responses were coded, individuals were compared across gender, age and volunteer roles. Overall, the analysis of qualitative data was an ongoing, dynamic process.

In order to ensure reliability, researchers must document their procedure and demonstrate that categories are used consistently (Silverman, 2005). Several steps were taken through qualitative data analysis to ensure the reliability of the findings. For example, a coding guide of themes and sub-themes was developed and revised throughout the analysis process until the final coding
categories were established. Inconsistencies in coding can develop when a researcher’s understanding of the categories and codes change subtly over time (Weber, 1990). To ensure that interviews were coded consistently between participants, the exercise of coding responses was performed multiple times for each participant before the final coding scheme was established and finalized codes were assigned to the data.
Chapter 5: Quantitative Results

This chapter presents findings obtained from questionnaires administered as part of the OVP. Firstly, sample characteristics are presented to give an overview of the selection of individuals included in the quantitative component of the study. General data related to volunteering is also summarized. Secondly, the results of multiple bivariate analyses are included. These analyses provide initial information to help answer research questions, and also serve to test hypotheses 3a and 3b. Finally, results of logistic regression analyses are reported, which were primarily administered to test hypotheses 1, 2a and 2b.

5.1 Sample characteristics

A total of 285 VANOC volunteers completed the pre-Olympics questionnaire. The majority (89.4%) also completed the post-Olympics questionnaire, which had a total of 255 respondents. The sub-sample of volunteers who completed both questionnaires did not vary significantly from the total OVP sample in terms of demographic characteristics. In particular, gender and age composition remained consistent when subjects who did not complete the second questionnaire were removed from the sample. Table 5.1 provides a summary of sample characteristics (n = 255).
### Table 5.1 Sample characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-aged (45-59)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older (60+)</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma (or equivalent)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some trade, technical or vocational school</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some community college</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some university</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma or certificate from trade, technical or vocational school</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma or certificate from community college</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor or undergraduate degree</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-retired</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed - Not looking for employment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Disability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid labour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-rated health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean age of OVP participants was 60 years. Ages ranged from 45 to 80. For the purpose of analyzing age differences, participants were split at age 60 into two groups of approximately equal size. In particular, 127 or 49.8 percent of subjects were ‘middle-aged’ volunteers (ages 45 to 59) and 128 or 50.2 percent were ‘older’ volunteers (age 60 and older). The majority of OVP participants were female (60.4%) in comparison to male (39.6%), which is consistent with previous volunteerism studies (e.g. Lin et al., 2007; Morrow-Howell et al., 2009), and with research specifically examining episodic volunteers at sporting events (e.g. Farrell et al., 1998; Bang & Ross, 2009).

As table 5.1 shows, subjects generally had high levels of education, with most having either a bachelor or undergraduate degree, a professional degree, a masters degree or doctorate. The two most common work statuses reported were full-time employment (38.4%) and retired (36.1%). Only a minimal number of subjects were unemployed or on long-term disability.

Furthermore, overall self-rated health status was high, with approximately 75 percent of subjects indicating that their health was either very good or excellent. Although the majority of subjects did not report having a chronic health condition, approximately 39 percent indicated that they did. However, only 5 percent reported that a long-term physical or mental condition impacted their activities often. Therefore, overall the sample was relatively healthy. Subjects also had high baseline life satisfaction, with over 90 percent indicating that overall, they were either satisfied (39.9%) or very satisfied (51%) with their life.
Overall, the sample characteristics summarized above indicate that OVP participants were not a disadvantaged group. High education levels and high scores on measures related to health and psychological well-being demonstrate that the group was generally homogenous with regard to these types of factors.

### 5.2 Data on volunteering

Table 5.2 below summarizes the characteristics of the sample on variables related to volunteering, including their VANOC volunteer role.

**Table 5.2 Volunteering-related data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other volunteer work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer enjoyment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>While volunteering at VANOC, did you enjoy the duties you performed?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skill utilization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Do you think that your volunteer position at VANOC adequately utilized your skills?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future Volunteering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Would you volunteer for the Olympics again, if the chance arose?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Would you volunteer for other organizations, other than VANOC, in the future?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Not surprisingly, the majority of OVP participants (80.2%) were volunteers for other organizations. This corresponds with previous research demonstrating that regular volunteers also tend to participate simultaneously as episodic volunteers (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Hustinx et al., 2008).

Because it is used as an independent variable to test hypothesis 2a, weekly VANOC volunteer hours should be noted here. The mean number of hours per week worked by participants during the Olympic Games was 38.46. Furthermore, the majority of volunteers (74.6%) had assignments lasting five weeks or less. Therefore, overall, most volunteers included in the study were indeed episodic and their VANOC roles, although time-intensive, were time-limited and did not involve a long-term commitment.

Although the majority of respondents reported that they enjoyed their volunteer role very much, the remaining subjects (approximately 34%) reported enjoying their duties only somewhat, not very much, or not at all. The finding that most participants enjoyed their duties is consistent with previous studies on episodic volunteers. Due to the short-term nature of their positions, episodic volunteers may report higher enjoyment than regular volunteers because their role is less likely to become mundane or repetitive, and they are more likely to see immediate results of their work. (Hustinx et al., 2008).

In order to test hypothesis 1, an open-ended question assessing perceived skill use on the post-Olympics questionnaire was transformed into a
quantitative variable. The data presented in table 5.2 above demonstrate that OVP participants varied in their perceptions regarding skill utilization. In particular, 33.5 percent provided responses indicating that their skills were not used, 50 percent thought that their position adequately used their skills, and 16.5 percent provided examples of how their skills were and were not used, and thus were coded as ‘somewhat’.

On the post-Olympics questionnaire, participants were asked a series of questions pertaining to future volunteer work. When asked whether they would volunteer for the Olympics again if the chance arose, the majority of participants (86.7%) indicated ‘yes’. Subjects were also asked whether they plan to volunteer for other organizations, other than VANOC, in the future. Almost all subjects (97.8%) answered ‘yes’ to this question.

5.3 Results of bivariate analyses

5.3.1 Volunteer enjoyment level and age group

The first bivariate analysis was conducted to test the relationship between age group (independent variable) and enjoyment level (dependent variable). This analysis was done not to test a particular hypothesis, but to gain an initial understanding of whether middle-aged and older volunteers differed in level of enjoyment. Both variables were dichotomized (enjoyed versus did not enjoy, and 45 to 59 years of age versus over 60 years). As both variables are dichotomous,
the statistic used to test the significance of the relationship was Chi Square with Fisher’s exact test of significance.

**Table 5.3 Volunteer enjoyment level and age group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</th>
<th>Senior 60 Split File Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not enjoy</td>
<td>45-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Senior 60 Split File Variable</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Senior 60 Split File Variable</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chi Square test showed no statistically significant difference in level of enjoyment between middle-aged and older adults (Chi Square = 0.235, p = 0.692). There was no statistically significant correlation between the variables of enjoyment and age (r = -0.03, p = 0.629). Null findings are consistent with the findings of Yanagisawa and Sakakibara (2008), who concluded that age was not related to sense of satisfaction among groups of older volunteers. However, null findings do not correspond to other researchers’ suggestions that older adults are more likely (Kulik, 2007, 2010; Van Willigen, 2000) or less likely (Hustinx & Handy, 2009) to have positive volunteering experiences.

**5.3.2 Volunteer enjoyment level and gender**

The second bivariate analysis assessed the relationship between gender (independent variable) and enjoyment level (dependent variable). Similar to the
above, the analysis was done not to test a particular hypothesis, but rather to gain a general understanding of whether either gender was more likely to enjoy their VANOC experience. As both variables are dichotomous, a Chi Square with Fisher’s exact test of significance was again used to test the association.

**Table 5.4 Volunteer enjoyment level and gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Enjoy</th>
<th>Did not enjoy</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dichotomized</td>
<td>% within What is your sex?</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within What is your sex?</td>
<td></td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within What is your sex?</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 5.4 demonstrates, male and female participants did not vary greatly on enjoyment level. The Chi Square test showed no statistically significant difference in enjoyment between males and females (Chi Square = 0.633, p = 0.498). There was no statistically significant correlation between the variables of enjoyment and gender (r = 0.05, p = 0.428). The finding that there was no association between gender and enjoyment level is in contrast to research by Hustinx and colleagues (2008), which found that female episodic volunteers were more likely than males to report positive volunteer experiences.
5.3.3 Future volunteering and enjoyment level

To test hypothesis 3a, bivariate analysis was conducted assessing the relationship between enjoyment level, used here as an independent variable, and the dependent variable of reported desire to volunteer at future Olympic Games. The independent variable is dichotomous, where as the dependent variable is ordinal with three possible responses (yes, no and unsure). Results of the analysis are displayed in table 5.5 below.

**Table 5.5 Desire to volunteer for the Olympics again and enjoyment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you volunteer for the Olympics again, if the chance arose? (recoded)</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As both variables are ordinal and have differing numbers of categories, the Kendall’s Tau C statistic was used to test the statistical significance of the association. As indicated in the table above, results demonstrate a significant, weak, positive association between the two variables (Tau C = 0.154, p < 0.01). Participants who enjoyed their duties were more likely than those who did not enjoy to indicate that they would volunteer for the Olympics again. The findings
substantiate hypothesis 3a, and are in line with suggestions of other researchers (e.g. Tang et al., 2010), who have found that a volunteer’s level of enjoyment can predict their future participation.

In addition, a fourth and final bivariate analysis was conducted to test hypothesis 3b, which predicted a positive association between volunteer enjoyment and general plans to volunteer for other organizations, besides VANOC, in the future. Similar to the previous analysis, the independent variable (enjoyment) in this analysis is dichotomous whereas the dependent variable (future volunteering plans) is ordinal with three outcomes (yes, no and unsure). Results are shown in table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6 Plans to volunteer for other organizations and enjoyment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you plan to volunteer for other organizations, other than VANOC, in the future? (recoded)</th>
<th>Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Did not enjoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Volunteer Enjoy Dichotomized</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the previous analysis, no association was demonstrated, and therefore hypothesis 3b was not supported. However, it is important to note that a very minimal number of participants indicated that they would not volunteer for
other organizations or were unsure, which therefore made the number of subjects in some of the crosstabulation categories very small. Nonetheless, one important finding demonstrated in table 5.6 is that 89.5 percent of volunteers who did not enjoy their duties at the Olympics indicated that they planned to volunteer for other organizations in the future.

To summarize, the results of the final two bivariate analyses testing hypotheses 3a and 3b suggest that although volunteer evaluations of an episodic experience may slightly impact willingness to participate in a similar organizational context in the future, there is no impact on future plans to volunteer for other organizations.

5.4 Results of logistic regression analysis

This section presents results of two logistic regression analyses administered for the study. For both analyses, only participants who had completed both questionnaires (n = 255) were included. First, results are presented from the initial analysis which included subjects of all ages, followed by results of a split-file analysis separating middle-aged and older volunteers.

5.4.1 Model summary: All ages

As demonstrated in the model summary below, model 1 was not statistically significant. Therefore, there was no relationship between volunteer enjoyment and demographic factors, specifically age, gender, martial status and
employment status. Model 2, which included the addition of chronic health conditions, was also not statistically significant. Similarly, model 3, which added psychosocial variables, specifically change in stress level, patriotism, altruism and life satisfaction, was not statistically significant.

The only model that was statistically significant in the first logistic regression was model 4, which included the volunteer context variables of weekly volunteer hours and skill utilization. The Chi Square value for this model was 73.563 ($p < 0.001$).

**Table 5.7 Model summary for logistic regression (all ages)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model #</th>
<th>Model Chi Square</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.708</td>
<td>$p = 0.608$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.801</td>
<td>$p = 0.731$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.766</td>
<td>$p = 0.462$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>72.563</td>
<td>$p &lt; 0.001$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.4.2 Odds ratios: All ages**

Table 5.8 below shows the beta values and odds ratios for independent variables that were found to have statistically significant associations with the dependent variable of enjoyment in the logistic regression analysis which included participants of all ages.
Table 5.8 Logistic regression (all ages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block #</th>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender (ref. = male)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marital status (ref. = unattached)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work status (ref. = not working)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chronic health conditions (ref. = none)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change in stress level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat strong patriotism (ref. = weak/moderate)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Very strong patriotism (ref. = weak/moderate)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Altruism (ref. = somewhat)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life satisfaction: satisfied (ref. = dissatisfied)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.040</td>
<td>2.830*</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life satisfaction: very satisfied (ref. = dissatisfied)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.619</td>
<td>13.725***</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Weekly VANOC volunteer hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived skill utilization: somewhat (ref. = no)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived skill utilization: yes (ref. = no)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.406</td>
<td>4.080***</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Chi Square

|        | 2.708 | 2.801 | 10.766 | 72.563*** |

*p<0.05, ***p<0.001
In model 4, statistically significant associations were found between enjoyment and both independent variables added in the fourth block. First, the likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 1.022 for each unit (hour) change in weekly volunteer hours \((b = 0.022, p < 0.05)\). Second, the likelihood of enjoying duties versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 13.725 for subjects reporting that their skills were utilized in comparison to the reference of not utilized \((b = 2.619, p < 0.001)\). Additionally, the likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 4.08 for subjects reporting that their skills were somewhat utilized in comparison to not utilized \((b = 1.406, p < 0.001)\).

### 5.4.3 Split file analysis

The second logistic regression also included only subjects who had completed both questionnaires, however the sample was split at 60 years of age in order to test for differences in predictors of enjoyment between age groups. Firstly, model summaries and odds ratios are presented for volunteers aged 45 to 59, followed by those above age 60.

### 5.4.4 Model summary: Middle-aged volunteers

As outlined in the model summary below, similar to the first analysis of both age groups, the first three models were not statistically significant. Among middle-age volunteers, no associations were found between enjoyment and demographic characteristics, chronic health conditions, and psychosocial factors.
Like the previous analysis, model 4 was statistically significant. The Chi Square value for model 4 was 45.111 (p < 0.001).

Table 5.9 Model summary for logistic regression (middle-aged volunteers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model #1</th>
<th>Model Chi Square</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.021</td>
<td>p = 0.259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.637</td>
<td>p = 0.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.425</td>
<td>p = 0.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>45.111</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.5 Odds ratios: Middle-aged volunteers

In model 4, statistically significant relationships were found between enjoyment and both variables added in block 4. The likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 16.692 for middle-aged volunteers who reported their skills were utilized in comparison to the reference category of not utilized (b = 2.815, p < 0.001). In addition, the likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 8.738 for volunteers who reported their skills were utilized somewhat versus not utilized (b = 2.168, p < 0.01). The likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 1.042 for each unit (hour) change in weekly volunteer hours (b = 0.41, p < 0.05).

5.4.6 Model summary: Older volunteers

As with the previous two analyses, the only model which was significant for the logistic regression performed for older volunteers was model 4. Therefore, no association was found between enjoyment and demographic, health and psychosocial factors for older volunteers. However, as with the previous
analyses, model 4 was statistically significant for older volunteers. The Chi Square value for model 4 was 44.949 (p < 0.001).

**Table 5.10 Model summary for logistic regression (older volunteers)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model #1</th>
<th>Model Chi Square</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>p = 0.924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.096</td>
<td>p = 0.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.101</td>
<td>p = 0.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.949</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.4.7 Odds ratios: Older volunteers**

For older volunteers, the likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 13.536 for subjects who indicated that their skills were utilized versus not utilized (b = 2.605, p < 0.001). However, the positive relationship between likelihood of enjoyment and reporting skills were ‘somewhat’ utilized (versus the reference category of not utilized) was only approaching statistical significance (ExpB = 3.623, b = 1.287, p = 0.062). Unlike the previous two analyses, no statistically significant association was found between enjoyment and weekly volunteer hours.

In addition, a statistically significant association between enjoyment and baseline life satisfaction was found in the final model. Older volunteers’ likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 9.439 for subjects who indicated they were very satisfied with life in comparison to the reference of dissatisfied (b = 2.245, p < 0.05). Also, likelihood of enjoying versus not enjoying duties increased by a factor of 6.175 for older adults indicating that they were
satisfied with life in comparison to dissatisfied \((b = 1.820, p = 0.056)\), however the latter association was borderline.

### 5.4.8 Logistic regression: Age differences

Although results for both age groups were similar in that models 1, 2 and 3 were not statistically significant whereas model 4 was, differences were found between middle-aged and older volunteers for specific variables. Table 5.11 compares older versus middle-aged subjects on variables having statistically significant associations with enjoyment in model 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Middle-aged</th>
<th>Older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work status</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic health conditions</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in stress level</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriotism</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied (ref. = dissatisfied)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>p = 0.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied (ref = dissatisfied)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly VANOC volunteer hours</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.05</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived skill utilization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat (ref. = no)</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.01</td>
<td>p = 0.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (ref. = no)</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Split-file results have implications for hypotheses that concern age differences. Firstly, enjoyment of duties was positively associated with weekly hours among middle-aged volunteers, whereas this association was not replicated among older volunteers. This finding is opposite to hypothesis 2a, which predicted a stronger positive association between volunteer enjoyment and
weekly volunteer hours for older adults. Results also do not support hypothesis 2b, which predicted a stronger association between enjoyment and altruism (a proxy for generativity) among older volunteers in comparison to middle-aged volunteers. Instead, no statistically significant association was demonstrated between enjoyment and altruism in either age group.

An interesting finding to note is that enjoyment of duties was associated with baseline life satisfaction for older volunteers, however the same was not found among middle-aged volunteers. One explanation may be that older individuals with high life satisfaction may be more likely to seek and find enjoyment in volunteer roles, and may have more experience doing so.
Chapter 6: Qualitative Findings

This chapter reviews findings from qualitative components of the thesis. Firstly, it reviews responses to open-ended questions related to volunteer enjoyment that were included on the post-Olympics questionnaire. Secondly, characteristics of the sample of interview participants are reviewed. Next, participant responses to the standardized follow-up interview questions are presented and finally, the chapter presents additional themes identified in the interview data that help answer research questions.

6.1 Open-ended questionnaire items

As mentioned above, both OVP questionnaires included several open-ended questions. Of particular interest to the current study is a question on the pre-Olympics questionnaire asking participants to state their reason for deciding to volunteer for VANOC. Also of interest, the post-Olympics questionnaire asked participants two open-ended questions on what they enjoyed the most about their episodic volunteering experience, and what they enjoyed the least. Responses to these questions provide some initial data related to motivations, expectations, enjoyment and negative experiences among the sample.

6.1.1 Reasons for volunteering

The pre-Olympics questionnaire included an open-ended question asking participants why they decided to volunteer for the Olympic Games. In particular, it
asked, “Why did you decide to volunteer for VANOC?” (see Appendix B, question 27). The number of reasons provided by each subject varied; some individuals provided only one reason, whereas many others listed up to four or more reasons for their choice to participate.

Responses were coded into 14 different reasons for volunteering, which included both altruistic and self-orientated motivations. These included themes such as: feeling that the role was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, meeting new people, patriotism, giving back to one’s community, fun and excitement, and interest in sport or the Olympic Games. Among all participants who completed the pre-Olympics questionnaire, the most frequently stated reasons for becoming a VANOC volunteer were to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity (55% indicated this) and to be part of the fun and excitement of the Olympic Games (expressed by approximately 30% of participants).

6.1.2 Enjoyment

As outlined in the Methodology chapter, the post-Olympics questionnaire asked participants what they enjoyed the most about their VANOC experience, and what they enjoyed the least. Questions were presented in an open-ended format (see Appendix C, questions 17 and 18). Participants were asked, “While you were volunteering at VANOC, what did you enjoy the most?” followed by, “While you were volunteering at VANOC, what did you enjoy the least?”. Responses were coded by OVP research assistants based on common themes. Results are based on the 255 subjects who completed both questionnaires.
With regard to what they enjoyed the most, 71.2 percent of subjects provided responses that were coded as ‘positive social interaction’. Other responses were coded as ‘contributing to the event’ (12.8%), ‘being included in a large-scale, meaningful event’ (6.8%), and ‘excitement and stimulation’ (5.6%). A minimal number of responses to the question were coded as ‘other’ (n = 7). When responses were analysed separately for middle-aged (45 to 59 years) and older (60 and older) volunteers, the findings were similar across age groups.

When asked what aspect of their VANOC experience they enjoyed the least, a greater variety of responses was provided. The most frequent response was ‘idle work time’, indicated by 27.8 percent of subjects. The finding corresponds with research by Culp (2009), who reported that many baby boomer volunteers expressed concerns about not having enough to do during their shifts. Likewise, Kulik (2010) found that over 15 percent of variance in volunteer satisfaction was associated with inefficient time use. The concern of idle work time is also consistent with the concepts of productive aging and generativity, and warranted further investigation in the subsequent follow-up interviews.

Other common responses included standing for long periods of time (10.9%), low quality of meals provided to volunteers (6.5%), early start times for shifts (5.6%), disorganization of the event (5.6%) and issues with commuting to the job (5.2%). A large number of responses were coded as ‘other’ (21%), as several volunteers provided examples that were unique to their particular experience or assignment.
When responses of middle-aged and older volunteers were analysed separately, similarities as well as differences were found in terms of what aspects were enjoyed the least. For both age groups, the most common response was ‘idle work time’, followed by ‘other’ and ‘standing for long periods’. However, older volunteers were twice as likely to mention ‘standing for long periods’ as something they enjoyed the least. Another notable age difference was the finding that 8.1 percent of older volunteers reported ‘difficulty with supervisor’, whereas only 1.6 of middle-aged volunteers provided that response.

Although responses to open-ended questionnaire items provided some initial information on motivation and enjoyment among older and middle-aged episodic volunteers, overall the data were relatively superficial or cursory. For example, a common response to the question, “While you were volunteering for VANOC, what did you enjoy the most?” coded by research assistants as ‘positive social interaction’ was “meeting new people”. The response does not include details about the types of people or social interactions the volunteers enjoyed. A respondent could be referring to fellow volunteers, VANOC staff, athletes, spectators, other individuals they met at the event, or a combination. The lack of detailed information collected from open-ended questions is consistent with Patton (2002) who states, “Open-ended responses on questionnaires represent the most elementary form of qualitative data. There are severe limitations to open-ended data collected in writing on questionnaires.” (p. 21). One of the main limitations identified by Patton (2002) is the inability to probe participants or
extend responses. Due to the limits of qualitative questionnaire data, the more in-depth interviews that followed were warranted.

6.2 Qualitative sample characteristics

Follow-up interview participants ranged in age from 49 to 76 years. The table below shows the distribution of age across males and females for the sub-group. Age reported is age as calculated at the time of the 2010 Olympic Games.

**Table 6.1 Gender and age of follow-up interview participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant #</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An effort was made to ensure that the sample included volunteers who had travelled to the Vancouver or Whistler areas for the event, as well as those who resided locally. The final sample of interviewees included participants from various locations across the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, as well as other locations in Canada, particularly Ontario and Quebec. Purposeful sampling also ensured that volunteers with a range of reported enjoyment levels were included.
6.3 Responses to interview questions

Responses to standardized interview guide questions provided general information on VANOC volunteer experiences, as well as more in-depth data on participant perceptions, factors associated with enjoyment and future volunteering activities. This section reviews responses to questions asked as per the interview guide. The next section presents additional themes that emerged throughout the interviews related to volunteer enjoyment and future volunteering. Finally, age and gender differences found among interview responses are reviewed to help answer research questions.

6.3.1 Motivation and expectation fulfillment

When asked why they decided to volunteer for VANOC, a variety of motivations were expressed by interviewees. Consistent with previous research, some responses could be classified as self-oriented motives, whereas others were altruistic. Similar to what was found through the open-ended questionnaire item, common reasons included an interest in a specific sport or Olympic sports in general, desire to meet new people, and wanting to contribute to a large-scale event. The idea that being an Olympic volunteer was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was articulated by multiple interviewees. One individual said, “Probably because it’s one of the largest events, most watched events, most prestigious events in the world. And those opportunities, unless you pursue them around the world, those opportunities don’t come to you but once in a lifetime.”
Additionally, several interviewees reported that they chose to participate as a volunteer for VANOC because volunteering in general was something that they did on a regular basis, and the Olympic Games was one of many opportunities in which they chose to participate. For example, one older male participant explained, “I’m kind of a professional volunteer, that’s all I do is volunteer,” and another older male stated, “I mean, it’s not the only place I’ve volunteered.” Similarly, another participant explained, “Well, I volunteer for so many other things and it’s the Olympics of volunteering!”

When asked about how their VANOC role compared to previous volunteer positions, the majority expressed that overall, it was a superior experience. One volunteer explained, “Well, it’s hard to compare because it was so, you know, so kind of amazing. I’ve volunteered doing lots of different things, but this was probably the highlight.” Another volunteer expressed that “this was a dream job.” Furthermore, similarities were found among the reasons provided for comparisons favouring the Olympic volunteer role. One common reason was the professionalism of VANOC in comparison to other voluntary organizations subjects had worked with. An interviewee explained,

“A lot of other events are done by smaller, provincial organizations or just area organizations and a lot of times…the volunteer coordinator ends up [being] the person who missed the meeting. So, they get appointed to being the volunteer coordinator and sometimes it gets pretty bad, frankly.”

Also crediting the effective organization demonstrated by VANOC, a female participant said,
“When we were down to zero-hour, I felt that I was well-prepared because of the training. You know, they did a lot of training with us and we knew what was expected of us. And...everything was very clear and so it was a very good experience for me.”

Middle-aged volunteers who were still working mentioned that it was a superior experience because it was out of the ordinary. For instance, a volunteer explained, “Just doing something absolutely different than what your normal job is.” Likewise, another middle-aged volunteer still in the workforce said, “I was a team leader and dealing a lot with security and computers, which I don’t normally do. That’s not my normal job...So it was just quite a contrast and I feel like that was kind of neat. And meeting people that you normally wouldn’t meet.” Older interviewees also expressed how the novelty of the experience made it superior to other volunteer roles they had held. For example, an older male participant explained “It was different because...most of my volunteer work is in relation to my job I had. So...the Olympics was nothing in comparison...it’s quite different.” These findings add support to research by Celdran and Villar (2007) which determined that older people who are assigned volunteer roles that are similar to their job before retirement may feel less satisfied with their experiences in comparison to when volunteering is done in other domains.

On the other hand, a small number of interviewees did not favour their VANOC role in comparison to other volunteer positions they held. Some explained that their VANOC role was very simple, and therefore not as challenging as other assignments. For example, one participant said, “I would say that my role as a volunteer at the Olympics was probably not as challenging
as other volunteer roles I’ve held for other things. Because I’m usually more of an organizer for events and with the Olympics I was just doing one task.”

The next standard interview question asked volunteers whether they had the experience they had hoped to get during the Olympics, and provided insight into their expectations for the specific duties, role and overall experience. A total of four subjects indicated that their expectations were exceeded, another four felt that their expectations were met and the remaining two interviewees expressed that they did not get the experience they had hoped for.

Multiple volunteers explained that they were easy-going, and because they were willing to take on any tasks in order to be part of the event, they did not enter into the role with expectations that could not be met. For example, one participant said, “I wasn’t expecting a lot so…whatever happened, I was just pleased.” Likewise, another volunteer explained, “You know, of course myself and 30,000 other people wanted to be at all the prime events and stuff, but I knew better. I knew that that was not going to happen. So the job that I got was satisfactory. I contributed and I was quite pleased. Met all my expectations.”

Interviewees stating that their expectations were exceeded commonly reported that having positive interactions with others gave them an experience that was better than anticipated. These interactions included socializing with athletes, fellow volunteers, spectators and other event officials. For one interviewee, those around him made the experience more pleasant than
expected. He said, “I expected, you know, very long hours, very tired…a lot of very hard work. Well it was hard work, but the time went very quickly and it was enjoyable. The area that I worked in, the people were great. The participants that I dealt with were great…a 10 hour shift was just poof, gone.” Another volunteer explained that she felt the experience was “amazing” and attributed that to “meeting people from all over the world…meeting people in your city…working at the airport was quite amazing because you met everybody as they’d come off [the flights].” A volunteer who worked directly with athletes said, “I was with the athletes all the time. So I could see the international athletes’ lifestyles. How they train, how they live…I thought that maybe, you know, they would ask me to do ticket selling or something but I never expected that I would be with athletes.”

The remaining two subjects who expressed that their experiences did not match their expectations provided specific reasons for their disappointment. In particular, one volunteer felt that her role did not provide ample opportunities to socialize and build relationships with other volunteers. The other individual was dissatisfied with the abundance of idle work time experienced in his role. He said, “We spent a lot more time sitting around that I thought we would. I thought we’d be like, you know, going from one call to another, or being busy all day long…We weren’t nearly as busy as I had envisioned we would be.”

6.3.2 Volunteer role and duties

When subjects were asked to indicate their volunteer job title and describe the main duties they performed, it was evident that volunteers with a variety of
different roles had been selected for the interviews. Below is a list of the different roles held by volunteers who participated in follow-up interviews.

- Assistant/Language Interpreter
- First Responder
- Photo Runner
- Team Leader (uniform distribution)
- Team Leader (medals ceremonies)
- Team Leader (accreditation)
- Volunteer Recruiter
- Driver
- Load Zone Assistant
- Accreditation Operator

The roles and duties ranged from very basic and repetitive, to complex and multifaceted. For example, the roles of Driver and Load Zone Assistant primarily involved the same tasks at each shift, and did not require the volunteer to actively engage in duties such as problem-solving. In comparison, a few interviewees were team leaders, and were responsible for managing and directing the activities of a group of other volunteers. As such, their tasks were much more diverse and required more problem-solving activities. However, even those who were team leaders indicated that they were under the supervision of paid staff members, and did not have any definitive decision-making powers.

Some volunteers worked alone, whereas others were assigned to a team and worked closely with others. For example, those who were Drivers and Load Zone Assistants primarily worked alone, although they reported interacting with
service users (e.g. event spectators and dignitaries) and the general public during their shifts. Volunteers in other roles (e.g. photo runner, first responder, uniform department, accreditation operator) worked with a team of volunteers and staff. These volunteers reported that interacting with others and developing relationships were significant aspects of their VANOC experiences.

Locations where participants were stationed during the Games also varied depending on the role. Some volunteers, such as drivers and assistants, moved between different locations throughout their shifts. Others, such as those working in accreditation and uniform distribution, remained in one specific location. In addition, some volunteers worked at the actual Olympic events (e.g. sporting events, medal presentations and ceremonies), whereas others worked in more behind-the-scenes capacities.

As the quotations in the section on expectation fulfillment demonstrate, those who were hoping to be closer to the action of the Games, yet were assigned roles which were more removed from the events, expressed that this did not impact their overall evaluation of the experience. On the other hand, volunteers stationed at prime locations indicated that where they were located had a positive influence on the experience. One volunteer who was involved in ski events and stationed on a mountain explained, “I was very lucky… I was right at the finish line of most of the events. So it was the coolest thing ever… I hope I wasn’t the exception to the rule, but I particularly had a good time.”
Roles also varied in terms of the skills and training required. Some required technical skills previously held by the volunteer (such as first aid certification or language fluency), whereas others required minimal skills and training, and therefore a basic job orientation and in some cases a small amount of training on administrative processes was all that was necessary. When directly asked about skills required to do their job, the majority of subjects expressed the importance of “people skills”. For example, one volunteer said, “I think just [being] people-people. And I think nurses are... I can talk to anybody. I've worked with many, many people, done lots of travelling, and I just think that helped.” Volunteers who had more complex positions stated that problem-solving skills were needed in order to fulfill their roles. In addition, the selection of interviewees who were team leaders explained how supervisory and leadership skills, which they had developed through previous work and volunteering, were required.

Although literature identifies training as an important factor contributing to satisfaction and retention of traditional volunteers, this may not be the case for episodic volunteers (Bryen & Madden, 2006). Findings of the current study correspond to this suggestion, as most participants indicated that although there was some initial orientation, training was not a substantial component of their VANOC experience. Only one interviewee expressed that the thorough training she received had contributed to her positive evaluation of her role.

Furthermore, role ambiguity was not expressed as a main concern for most interviewees. A few individuals said there was some initial confusion at the
beginning of their assignment, but explained that overall, VANOC was well organized, their roles were clearly defined, and staff members were often available for assistance. One volunteer explained, “On the first day, of course you’re always a little bit apprehensive – am I going to remember everything, how is this going to look? But once the first guest arrived, that was it. I felt totally comfortable.” This is consistent with a study by Sakires and colleagues (2009) which found that overall, role ambiguity was low among sport organization volunteers. However, the authors also reported that older volunteers experienced less role ambiguity, and suggest that this may be due to knowledge obtained through various life experiences or due to length of voluntary service.

In the present study, the finding that no participants felt that role ambiguity was a significant concern may be indicative of organizational factors, such as effective volunteer management practices and clearly defined job descriptions. Several volunteers explained how they were impressed by the high level of organization that VANOC demonstrated throughout the event, both in general and specifically in terms of the volunteer program. The lack of role ambiguity may have also been associated with the finding that the majority of interviewees were experienced volunteers, and many had previously been involved in special events. Therefore, they may have had high self-efficacy for their role, and were familiar with activities of special event volunteering, such as interacting directly with staff members and working with other volunteers.
6.3.3 Productive aging

When asked whether they felt they made a significant difference at the Games, three general themes emerged. Firstly, some volunteers expressed that they had made a difference, but from their perspective, their contribution was on a small scale. For example, feeling that they made a difference just within their department, or by helping in small ways, such as giving directions to spectators.

Others expressed that as a whole, the department or team they worked within had made an important difference at the event, but did not feel that they contributed significantly as an individual. As one volunteer explained, “Not, I don’t think as individually as much, you know? But as a team, it was amazing. Yeah, we were vital. I mean, everybody had to get in and security was huge at the Games. And we were the first stop at the security.” Another volunteer said, “I’m not sure I have that view. No, I think that if I wasn’t there, the other people would have filled in…it’s like, you know, many hands make light work.”

Finally, some participants, particularly those in leadership positions or who had more complex roles, felt they had made a significant difference at the event. For example, a team leader said, “I have been quite comfortable with my role and what I accomplished, and I still felt very good about it.” Another team leader explained, “It was very satisfying to be able to come home each night and tell [my family] what I had done. I felt really good about myself every night, even the first night when it was so chaotic!” In addition, one volunteer who worked closely with
media personnel explained how he had personally contributed by supporting media in meeting their strict deadlines each day.

6.3.4 Negative experiences

Although several interviewees expressed that they had nothing negative to report about their experience, some individuals gave specific examples of negative events or circumstances they encountered during their role. Responses fell into three main themes: negative interpersonal interactions, generally having a mediocre experience, and issues around event logistics.

In terms of negative interpersonal interactions, some of these instances were individual personality conflicts among volunteers. For example, one interviewee who lived in a dormitory-style setting with other volunteers during the Olympics gave a specific example of an individual conflict he had with a fellow volunteer. He attributed the conflict to different personalities living in close quarters. In addition, a few older volunteers reported negative experiences due to intergenerational issues. As one older volunteer explained,

“I guess it was a little bit awkward. Volunteers sort of fell into two categories, basically: college students or retired people. And I guess the way things were structured, the college students were in charge of the retired people. And that didn’t go over so well with some of them, because I suppose after you’ve worked for 40 years and you have a clear picture of how things should be run, there’s somebody there in charge.”

Intergenerational conflict has been found in other research on older volunteers. For example, in a Toronto-based study conducted by Narushima
(2005), volunteer coordinators reported that due to their enthusiasm, older volunteers sometimes went beyond the scope of their assigned roles. Gottlieb and Gillespie (2008) predict that as they enter their retirement years, baby boomers will expect voluntary organizations to offer them choices regarding how to perform their duties. However, there hasn’t been substantial research examining intergenerational issues from the perspectives of older volunteers. The intergenerational issues expressed by participants in the current study suggest the need for future research examining relations among older and younger volunteers (and younger staff) in episodic volunteering contexts.

Although not explicitly stated, when asked if they had any negative experiences to report, a few volunteers indicated that they felt their role was mediocre, or not particularly exciting. Some volunteers explained how there wasn’t a great deal of work to be completed during their shift, while others made general statements such as, “I was just a driver”, “It was a very simple job” and “not a big deal,” suggesting that their roles or duties where relatively mediocre in comparison to what they had hoped for.

Finally, a few interviewees commented on specific logistical issues that were negative. For example, a volunteer who worked in uniform distribution explained that the supplier did not estimate sizes correctly, which presented specific challenges and caused frustration. He said, “That made the job that much more difficult and strained – for everybody.” Other volunteers explained
how VANOC had mistakenly hired too many volunteers for their particular job, therefore leading to unexpected periods of inactivity due to overstaffing.

Interviewees were also asked whether they felt at any time that they were being taken advantage of or exploited in any way. Especially because many volunteers had intensive schedules, this was an important concern. For the most part, interviewees expressed that they never felt they were exploited or taken advantage of. The two common explanations offered were the idea that it was their choice to volunteer, and that they felt they were treated well throughout their experience. For example, one older male volunteer said, “I knew what I was getting into, I knew it was a volunteer position.” Likewise, another interviewee stated, “I knew exactly what I was getting into.”

The theme of being treated well was expressed by a middle-aged volunteer who said, “They [staff] motivated people really well, they treated you well.” Likewise, an interviewee said, “I found staff to be wonderful. I thought that they were well trained and that they appreciated – they know that volunteers were integral to the success of the Games.” In addition, multiple volunteers used the wording “treated us like family” when describing relationships with staff. Some volunteers provided both types of explanations (i.e. that it was their choice, and they were treated well), whereas others provided one or the other.

Two volunteers expressed concerns when asked whether they felt exploited at any time. One volunteer provided a specific example of a situation
that required him to unexpectedly complete several hours of overtime at the end of his shift. Another volunteer shared some more general thoughts on being a volunteer for the Olympic organization, saying,

“Sometimes you’d think about it. And not in a straightforward way. But, you know, the Olympics is a big business…it runs really on the backs of volunteers, which is kind of odd…You sort of, wasn’t so happy to volunteer for an organization where the people on the top led the lifestyle like a king… that part, kind of, I though about it.”

Despite the issues presented above, it is important to highlight the finding that negative experiences did not seem to impact overall evaluations of the Olympic experience. Often, subjects expressed that although negative aspects affected other volunteers, they weren’t bothered by them. One volunteer explicitly stated, “I don’t want to give the impression that it affected me.”

Several volunteers who did not receive the volunteer assignments they had hoped for also expressed that it did not impact their overall experience. For example, one interviewee said, “I was a bit disappointed in the beginning, cause I wanted to be kind of where the sports were…It didn’t matter after a while. Well, even the first day. It didn’t matter.” Another volunteer who was assigned to be a driver said, “I thought I wanted to be on the ski hill, but I ended up getting this. And I was a bit disappointed at the beginning, cause I wanted to be kind of like where the sports were. But it turned out to be just the ultimate experience.” Likewise, another person explained,

“I was hoping to do a skiing assignment, but I realized very soon that you had to [live] close to Vancouver, because they needed you
there for training ahead of time. So I took a secondary assignment. It wasn’t exactly what I was hoping for, but really the secondary assignment worked out to be more than my expectations.”

Subjects offered explanations as to why they weren’t affected, for example one volunteer stated, “I don’t know, I shrugged it off.” Other volunteers explained, “I guess I’m more easy-going” and, “It was really small…a really small quiver in the big picture.” Overall, although most volunteers were able to provide at least one example of a negative aspect of their experience, most were adamant about the fact that it was not something that significantly affected them.

6.3.5 Contextual factors

All interviewees felt that overall, they had received support from individuals in their social network with regard to volunteering at the Olympics. A few common themes were identified in participant explanations of how and why they felt supported. Firstly, volunteers who were employed expressed how their employers had accommodated, and in some cases encouraged, their participation at the event. Secondly, some volunteers explained how they felt supported because family members where envious of the opportunity, or were proud of their involvement. One middle-aged volunteer said, “My mom couldn’t have been prouder, she was emailing my job description to all of her friends!” Finally, for volunteers who were stationed in another city, being able to visit family minimized the impact of the time-intensive role on close relationships, such as spouses and younger children.
When asked how the support they received impacted their feelings about being a volunteer, interviewees expressed that it generally made their experience easier, and provided some positive reinforcement. One volunteer, whose role required her to be absent from her job for a total of 5 weeks, explained the impact of the support she received from her workplace, saying, “My office…they even gave me a send-off party. And yeah, I think they were all excited. It made me want to make sure I did a really good job.”

The final standardized interview question on contextual factors asked participants to describe how events occurring in their personal life may have impacted their VANOC experience. Some explained that their home life was very stable, others said that they had some concurrent stress, and two participants had major life events (in particular, the death of a family member and personal medical problems) occurring during their time as a volunteer. However, almost all felt that life events did not impact their evaluation of the role. “I did have some added stress in my life at that particular point in time, but I don’t think it affected my opportunity at volunteering and I don’t think it affected me in doing my volunteer role,” said one interviewee. Another participant explained,

“When you have family problems that’s always stressful. But it would have been the same stress had I not been at the Olympics…the Olympics and my obligation did not increase that stress level. It maybe even mediated it because I had something to do.”

Another common theme evident in this part of the interview was the commitment of participants to their role, and the Olympic experience as a whole,
during the period of time they volunteered. Several volunteers explained that they had expected the role to consume the majority of their time for a designated period, and had planned their personal lives accordingly. For example, one volunteer described how he had rearranged plans for a major surgery in order to accommodate his role and to ensure he was in good condition to perform the assigned duties. Along the same lines, an older volunteer said,

“In my own mind I was kind of totally committed. You know, this was going to be the 3 weeks...that this was going to be my full-time. Actually, the way it worked, I didn’t have time for anybody during that period. Because I had to catch the bus at 6 o’clock in the morning and I got back at 8 o’clock in the evening. But I was prepared for that. I knew that was going to happen. Like I said, I knew that I wasn’t going to be around.”

Commitment to the role was also expressed by a middle-aged volunteer who said, “I basically just ‘lived’ the Olympics. I just came home, slept, and was back out the door. It was fantastic. I had a really great time.” Overall, participants were aware of the time commitment required for their role, and were prepared for it. Only one interviewee, a middle-aged female volunteer, explained that the stress of being away from her teenage child for an extended period of time was a particularly difficult aspect of the role.

6.3.6 Generativity concerns

The first interview question on the topic of generativity was a general, crude measure of generative concern, asking participants whether they considered it important to support and guide future generations. All respondents
indicated that generativity was generally an important concept, giving statements such as, “I think everybody has an obligation to pass on to the next generation what our experiences were” and, “The next generation, they just need guidance...young people don’t raise themselves.”

However, age differences emerged when analyzing how participants interpreted the concept of supporting and guiding future generations. Consistent with existing literature, a pattern emerged in which middle-aged volunteers tended to give examples of parental generativity concerns and actions, whereas older volunteers primarily discussed societal generativity. In particular, the question prompted middle-aged volunteers to speak about providing guidance to their own children. A middle-aged volunteer said, “Well, I have three young men in my house, they are my sons. So I am one hundred percent active in that.” On the other hand, older subjects tended to offer ideas on guiding future generations in a more widespread, general sense. One older male volunteer said, “You find yourself teaching. So, now I am retired and actually teaching skiing.”

Some volunteers were asked to describe if and how they viewed their VANOC position as a way to guide future generations, whereas others discussed the topic without probing. Moreover, individuals differed in how they viewed their role as generative. When responses were analyzed, two main themes emerged.

Firstly, some interviewees explained how they saw their participation as a way of contributing to the community because in general, the event was good for
it's future. An older male interviewee said, “In my small, little way I felt I was contributing to certainly Vancouver, the province and the country.” An older female volunteer said, “I think that the Olympics, for the city, the province, our country, was a positive thing.” Furthermore, a few interviewees discussed the idea of “giving back” to the community. As one older volunteer explained,

“I think I’ve been very lucky in my life, to be able to work at [a] university and to really have a very good position there…very little stress. And in some ways I always thought it’s good to give back a little bit. And I think volunteering at VANOC… and other things like that are a way of giving back.”

Similarly, another older interviewee explained, “I have always been kind of active in sport. Basically, the beneficiary of the work of a lot of volunteers. And now I’m older and I think, well it’s about time I do something too.”

Secondly, some volunteers expressed how they saw their involvement at the Olympics as contributing to the future of volunteering in their community. These individuals saw their participation as a way of setting an example, or acting as a role model, for younger generations of potential volunteers. For example, an older volunteer explained, “I hope that I am able to, you know, show people that [volunteering] is a worthwhile thing to do and you get much more than you give. So I hope I do something.” Likewise, when asked whether she thought her VANOC role was a way of contributing to the future, a middle-aged volunteer explained,

“I think even for the future of volunteering…that alone was worth bringing the Olympics here. To get some other people to think
outside themselves, of ‘what else could I be doing?’ And I don’t know how you could monitor that, but I would love to see a statistics of what’s been the increase in volunteerism.”

The second theme, and the specific examples given above, are congruent with a broadened definition of generativity that the empirical and theoretical literature is currently moving towards. There is now a recognition that generative actions can include behaviours which aim to preserve valued institutions and practices (Son & Wilson, 2011), such as the practice of volunteering and being an active participant in one’s community. Furthermore, the desire to positively impact the future of volunteering could be considered an example supporting Narushima’s (2005) suggestion that certain generative actions may be driven by an individual’s desire to leave the world a better place.

In comparison, a small number of volunteers expressed that they did not see volunteering at the Olympic as something that impacted future generations, or did not see the event as having a positive influence on the community’s future. One middle-aged volunteer said, “No…it never occurred to me.” Similarly, an older volunteer said, “I mean, I was happy that the Olympics were here, but my own personal contribution, no I don’t think it made one bit of difference.”

In summary, the majority of participants expressed that generative acts were important to them, and most saw volunteering for VANOC as a way to benefit future generations. However, differences emerged among participants in terms of the types of generative concerns they perceived as a priority, and exactly how they saw their role at the Olympics as being connected to the future.
6.3.7 Current and future episodic volunteering

All interviewees had volunteered for other organizations since the 2010 Olympics. The types of volunteering they were involved in varied, and generally fell into three themes. Firstly, some participants had regular volunteer roles, for example working at a seniors centre on a weekly basis, volunteering for a local theatre company, for non-profit health organizations, or working as a volunteer for ongoing community programs. Secondly, some had been involved in more intensive, project-based episodic roles. For example, one individual had gone to Africa to volunteer in a medical capacity, and another had volunteered for a time-limited project in a health care setting. Thirdly, since the Olympics about half of interviewees had volunteered in episodic roles for other sporting events. Reported activities included volunteering for ski racing events, local bike races, as well as various sporting events, such as marathons, organized by charities.

All interviewees expressed that they planned to continue volunteering in episodic roles in the future. For example, an older participant seeking new, more intense episodic opportunities said, “I'm looking for… I've worked in other countries before and I've been thinking, you know, Central America, South America, there might be some like for two to three months.” Likewise, a middle-aged female volunteer explained,

“Well, I'm a special event junkie. With my meeting [planning] background, it's just something that I find very satisfying doing... I think, just look at your skills and look at what you've got and think of what you can offer. And find something that clicks for you. Not everybody wants to pat the cats the SPCA.”
Participants also expressed continued desires to volunteer in episodic capacities for other major sporting events. One interview said, “I think the Commonwealth Games are coming to Ontario in a couple of years. I think I was going to look into that.” An interviewee reported that he will be continuing his participation as an Olympic volunteer at the 2012 London Olympics. As well, two other individuals explained that they had applied to volunteer at future Olympic Games (specifically the 2012 Games in London and the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi), but to date had not received correspondence regarding the status of their applications. Another volunteer had considered pursuing a volunteer position at the London Olympics, but was concerned about not having resources available to him in another country. Furthermore, although they had not formally pursued other Olympic volunteering opportunities, several interviewees made such statements as, “If you’d let me, I’d turn it around and do it all over again” and, “I’d do it again in a heartbeat.” Overall, these findings correspond with research by Fairley and colleagues (2007), which found that many Olympic volunteers were willing to travel internationally in order to continue their participation in the event.

When asked whether their Olympic role had impacted their desire to participate in episodic volunteering, two common themes emerged. Firstly, some volunteers expressed that the VANOC role had positively influenced their motivation to continue this form of volunteering. One interviewee said, “I think it re-sparked it. It starts to make you think of what, okay, where I am going [to volunteer] next?” In contrast, other interviewees explained that their experience
at the Olympics, whether it had been positive or negative, did not impact their future volunteering plans. An older volunteer who had worked at numerous events expressed, “I don’t think it changed anything there. I think whether I had gone through the Olympics or not, I would still be doing these events.”

6.4 Additional results of qualitative data analysis

The pre-determined interview questions were successful in facilitating discussions which allowed the researcher to collect information about the experiences of middle-aged and older VANOC volunteers. Subjects were given opportunities throughout the interviews to provide insight into how they perceived their roles and what impacted their enjoyment, as well as future volunteering activities. To supplement responses to standardized interview questions, the following section summarizes additional themes found in the interview data, through probing and general discussion, that help answer research questions concerning enjoyment, age differences and future volunteering.

6.4.1 Positive social interaction and camaraderie

As described above, a common response to the open-ended post-Olympic questionnaire item on enjoyment was positive social interaction. This was also found in the follow-up calls, as social interaction and camaraderie were prominent topics expressed by interviewees. Several participants expressed how the relationships they developed with fellow volunteers and Olympic staff had been better than expected, and had contributed positively to their enjoyment. For
instance, an older male volunteer said, “There was a much bigger team there that I really enjoyed being with. People I hadn’t met before. We met when we got to the Olympics and we worked with them for two weeks. And I found that quite enjoyable.” Likewise, an older female volunteer explained,

“I think what contributed most to my enjoyment was all the people that I met…There were people from Australia, Italy, I mean virtually all over the world. All of the people that came from everywhere sort of met that need in me…And so I think my volunteer experience very much met those needs.”

In addition, interviewees provided examples of positive relationships and interactions with VANOC staff. One volunteer explained, “Management and supervision was always cordial and…gave us latitude to solve problems and then took over when we couldn’t solve them.” A common theme among volunteers was the idea of the ‘Olympic family’. For example, several interviewees explained how staff had “made [them] feel like family”, and one volunteer said that VANOC staff had, “brought to it the excitement and feeling of family that you have during the Olympics.” One volunteer who had worked closely with international teams explained how she had developed close relationships with the athletes. She said of one particular athlete, “I became so close to this athlete…and he calls me his ‘Canadian mother’… that was really something.” This finding corresponds to research by Skoglund (2006), which determined that feeling a sense of belonging in one’s role can contribute to a positive volunteering experience. It is also congruent with recent qualitative research specifically examining intensive
volunteering, which found that friendships developed among fellow volunteers contributed to a rewarding experience (Piercy, Cheek, & Teemant, 2011).

On the other hand, some volunteers had expected to develop friendships, but were disappointed when this did not turn out to be part of their experience. As one middle-aged female volunteer explained,

“The only piece I feel I missed out of the Olympic experience was my team was so small… and they were quite a bit older than I was. So there wasn’t a huge camaraderie happening. Like you didn’t go out after your shift and do something together. Everyone just went home… and I had heard from several other teams that, you know, you really came away from it feeling like you’d known these people for years, not weeks. And I didn’t get that.”

Although the section above on negative experiences described how some volunteers reported intergenerational issues, positive interactions between younger and older volunteers were also reported. For example, one volunteer who was working within a team led by a young staff member explained how the intergenerational relationship worked well. She said,

“She was quite a bit younger…and really accomplished, we were all really impressed. And I was working with principals and dentists and…pretty educated, professional people. And we all were really impressed by her. We just thought she was the best thing in the world.”

Feelings of camaraderie extended beyond the time frame of episodic roles. For instance, one volunteer explained how the uniform (a blue raincoat with Olympic emblem) she was given by VANOC provided opportunities to connect with fellow volunteers even after the role was over. She said,
“I could be about walking my dog and wearing my blue jacket, cause it’s brilliant on a rainy day, and I’ll still walk by other people wearing their blue jackets. And it’s so much fun – ‘hey, where did you work?’ I mean…it’s almost like you joined a fraternity…If I walk down the street somewhere and I saw somebody wearing the jacket, I would absolutely stop and talk to them. And, you know, wouldn’t do it otherwise.”

Furthermore, several interviewees expressed how they had hoped VANOC would host post-event opportunities to reconnect with other volunteers, and were disappointed that this wasn’t arranged. One volunteer said, “It’s really hard to have like volunteer wrap-up events, things like that. But those would have been great. To have more volunteer, kind of family events afterwards.” Another volunteer explained that she had tried to maintain connections with fellow volunteers, but that her efforts had not been as successful as she had hoped.

The examples above demonstrate how participants viewed interpersonal relationships as an important aspect of their VANOC role, contributing to overall enjoyment. This general finding corresponds to past studies that have identified an association between volunteer satisfaction and social interaction among regular (Haski-Leventhal & Cnaan; 2009; Yanagisawa & Sakakibara, 2008) as well as episodic (Elstad, 2006; Fairley et al., 2007) volunteers.

Interestingly, none of the interviewees mentioned existing social relationships as being an important part of their VANOC participation. One respondent discussed how his wife had volunteered at the same venue and how this had made being away from home easier, but no other volunteers indicated that they had participated in the Olympics with people in their existing social
networks, such as family members, friends or colleagues. This finding differs from a study by Hustinx and colleagues (2008), which concluded that episodic volunteering was more likely than regular volunteering to occur as part of the activities of established networks of friends. However, the formalized volunteer application process that VANO had in place may have made it difficult for groups of individuals to sign up to volunteer together.

6.4.2 Feedback and validation

In the data collected from responses to various interview questions, as well as information obtained through discussion or probing, the theme of receiving feedback and validation emerged as a potentially important contributor to enjoyment. Face-to-face interaction with staff or service users provided opportunities for volunteers to receive immediate, on the job feedback. For example, an older volunteer who worked at the airport checking accreditation gave an example of the feedback and validation her and her team received, and how it impacted her experience. She explained,

“I was one of the fortunate volunteers that got to get feedback on, you know, direct from the public we were serving. So…you get that instant sort of gratification…I was doing accreditation at the airport. And, you know, people were coming in off of these long flights from overseas…I remember one…journalist…when he saw how organized we were and how quickly the lines moved…He said, ‘I am absolutely amazed…I was the third from the end of the line…I just can’t believe how quickly you’ve moved through all those people.’ So, you get that sort of instant gratification. We’re doing something right, yay! So it was a very good experience that way.”
Similarly, a middle-aged volunteer who worked with media during the Games also talked about receiving validation for his work,

“When were checking in the media and then when they signed out at the end of the night – just their positive comments. So you had kind of verification or validation. Yeah, validation almost daily…Just getting that ‘thanks’ or ‘thanks for doing this or thanks for doing that.’ That verification or validation that everything’s gone well.”

Another volunteer explained how staff had motivated volunteers by publishing daily newsletters and awarding the title of ‘Volunteer of the Day’ to recognize the efforts of specific volunteers. In summary, several interviewees gave the impression that rather than the need for tasks to be complex or use their skills, just having positive feedback was appreciated by both middle-aged and older volunteers. This builds on previous research suggesting that episodic volunteers may be more fulfilled than regular volunteers because they are more likely to see the immediate impact of their work (Hustinx et al., 2008), or see a job from beginning to end (Bryen & Madden, 2006; Cnaan & Handy, 2005).

6.4.3 Volunteer identity

An unexpected theme found within the interview data was participant perceptions around how episodic volunteering was tied to their identity or self-concept. Previous research has examined how role identity is associated with volunteering activities. For example, Piliavin and Callero (1991) determined that blood donors developed an aspect of their self-concept related to giving blood, which in turn promoted continued donation. Grube and Piliavin (2000) built on
this research, suggesting that individuals who volunteer for a number of different organizations develop a general volunteer role identity and may also develop specific role identities linked to particular organizations.

The qualitative interviews indicated that several participants had developed general volunteer role identities. “My family and friends know me so well and they know that volunteering is what I do. Like, that’s what I like to do,” said an older volunteer. Likewise, another older volunteer explained,

“You’re talking here to somebody who really is a life-long volunteer. I mean, when I got an interview with the London Olympics, they sort of wanted to know how committed I am to being a volunteer. And I told them, actually, when I started as a volunteer I was in grade school.”

One participant could be considered an extreme example of how episodic volunteering, although involving only temporary or periodic involvement with an organization, can still contribute to a strong volunteer identity. An older retired interviewee shared that within a period of three years, he had volunteered for a total of 124 special events. Throughout the interview, he expressed that volunteering had very much defined him in his retirement and at one point he said, “I’m kind of a professional volunteer, that’s all I do is volunteer.”

For some interviewees, volunteering was connected to their identity at the family level. One interviewee said, “I think volunteering is really important. You know, it was something my family does. My grandparents did it, my parents did it, I do it, I’m getting my child to do it. So it’s just something we do.” Another
volunteer explained how his relatives had volunteered at past Olympics, which influenced his decision to volunteer with VANOC. The concept of family tradition fits with findings presented by Hustinx and colleagues (2008), who determined that episodic volunteers were more likely than regular volunteers to report the continuation of family traditions as a reason for volunteering.

The concept of a general volunteer role identity also emerged in participant responses when asked whether they felt their Olympic experience had impacted their desire to volunteer for special events. One volunteer said,

“I think that if I would have had a bad experience with the Olympics, I might have been apprehensive about volunteering for another large event in the near future...You know, if you have a bad experience you might think, ‘Oh, I'll never do that again.’ And then, you know, time fades the wound and you go back to it because that's what you do, that's your second nature.”

Studies looking specifically at identity and volunteerism have focused exclusively on regular volunteer contexts, and have not examined episodic volunteer roles. The present study adds to the research knowledge by demonstrating that middle-aged and older adults may consider their participation as episodic volunteers as an expression of, and perhaps a contribution to, their general volunteer role identity.

6.4.4 Pride and prestige

An organization’s prestige can play an important part in developing volunteer identities that are specifically tied to that organization (Grube & Piliavan, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). In addition to the theme of general
volunteer identities, the theme of organization-specific role identities, and specifically themes related to pride and prestige, also emerged from the interviews. For example, when asked why he chose to volunteer for the Olympics, one volunteer said, “It is the prestige, it is world-recognized, it’s in my hometown. I want to be part of it.” A participant who was involved in medals ceremonies explained the feelings of pride instilled in her by others by saying, “You’d be a one of the gates and you would see someone you knew or one of your family. And they were so proud of you…they knew you were part of it and it was really, really satisfying.”

Several volunteers also expressed how having an identifiable uniform facilitated feelings of pride. An older volunteer said, “Wearing the uniform, I had people on the bus, you know, people I don’t know. I would see them on the bus and they would just come up to me and thank me for volunteering. And I was very surprised to have that happen.” A middle-aged volunteer explained,

“Even just walking through [Whistler] Village in your uniform, you knew that at any time somebody could come up and ask you questions. And they did, all the time. And there was just a huge amount of pride in knowing that you were there and that you were recognized.”

Several volunteers also discussed how the prestige of the event, and the pride they felt, had positively contributed to their excitement and enjoyment. One interviewee said, “[The] best part was that I escorted a silver medalist for the medal ceremony…that was the best.” Another volunteer who was also involved in medals ceremonies described the prestige of the event, saying, “We had the
King and Queen of Norway and Prince Albert of Monaco...It was just a wonderful experience for [the athletes]...to see, you know, [their] head of state right there where [they] could just practically touch them and watching [them] get the medal. It was a really emotional, exciting thing.” For some volunteers, feelings of pride continued after the Olympics. A middle-aged volunteer said, “What you certainly do get out of it is you get recognition. I have a picture up on my wall at work, and I have had several people comment on it.”

Although research on volunteer pride has focused almost exclusively on regular volunteering, the examples above illustrate how episodic volunteers felt that the Olympics were a prestigious organization, and continued to feel proud of their participation after their roles ended. Findings around pride and loyalty correspond with research by Hustinx and Lammertyn (2004), who found that episodic volunteers, despite their intermittent involvement, still had a strong sense of loyalty towards voluntary organizations.

6.4.5 Age differences

Analysis of the interview data revealed several differences between middle-aged and older subjects in how they perceived their volunteerism, and the factors that contributed to their enjoyment. The section above already discussed age differences in generativity and how older and middle-age participants perceived volunteering as a generative act. However, additional themes emerged which centred around retirement and aging, and are discussed below.
6.4.5.1 Retirement, aging and volunteerism

As discussed above, several interviewees connected their volunteering work to their identities. It was also evident that individuals associated volunteering with their self-concept in the context of aging and retirement. One older male volunteer who was living with a chronic illness explained,

“I always kid that I know I’m getting older, but I don’t want to be an old man. You know, one of those old grumps sitting at home barking and, you know, complaining and crying and all of that kind of stuff. So even with the arthritis, I don’t sit. I have to get out and do things and hopefully accomplish a few things. That was my decision a number of years ago. And that’s what I continue to do.”

Another older volunteer who had recently retired also talked about the decision to remain involved and active in later life. He said, “Well, if you’re retired you got time on your hands. You got to think what to do with it. And I have always admired the way I couldn’t sit home and watch T.V., I would go nuts!” When speaking about future plans for volunteering, another older participant said,

“I see it as a continuum. The Olympics were special because they’re the Olympics, but it was just a continuum for me of doing the same thing that I’ve been doing for a number of years, and that’s to participate. To keep myself vital, to stay alive and not get to be an old grumpy old man.”

Age differences were also apparent in how middle-aged and older adults expressed their participation at the Olympics. Although the sample size was small, a general pattern emerged suggesting that middle-aged volunteers may be more likely to see episodic volunteering as new and exciting opportunities that diverge from their everyday lives. In comparison, older individuals may be more
likely to have a significant attachment to their involvement at the Olympics, seeing it as more than just a fun experience, but as an activity representing how they chose to spend their time in retirement and later life.

These examples are consistent with research by Warburton and colleagues (2006), which suggests that engaging in generative acts such as volunteering can be a positive aspect of the lives of older adults, and a critical component of successful aging. The idea of making a calculated decision to get involved, as expressed in the quotations above, corresponds to the concept of a ‘crisis point’ proposed by generativity theory. Erikson theorized that retirement presents individuals with the choice of either withdrawing or becoming actively involved (Warburton et al., 2006). The present study suggests that older adults see volunteering, including episodic assignments, as an opportunity to continue to contribute and stay active after retirement and in later life.

6.4.5.2 Flexibility of episodic volunteering

Building on themes around retirement and aging, several retired volunteers explained how episodic volunteering fit well with their schedules and lifestyles. Firstly, volunteers indicated that they became busier once they had exited the paid work force. One older male said, “I find myself busier now when I’ve retired, than I was when I was working.” Likewise, a recently retired interviewee stated, “It’s interesting…I always tell people I’m busier now, but I’m smiling more.” Further, the qualitative data revealed that due to their busy and varied lifestyles, it may be more preferable for older, retired individuals to be
involved in episodic as opposed regular volunteer roles. When asked whether he is currently seeking regular or episodic volunteer opportunities, an older interviewee explained how he would prefer the latter, saying,

“But the reason is really, I suppose I enjoy the freedom that I'm not so tied down...I know a friend of mine used to volunteer at a garden...And really, she found out that it's like, for ten months she couldn't go anywhere and do anything, so I guess I don't want quite that – that I get tied down.”

Similarly, an older female volunteer explained,

“I think for...seniors, I think that a lot of times they like to volunteer for episodic volunteer opportunities. And mainly because... they have things...their families, because now they have grandchildren. And they're retired so they can travel. And they've got so many things going on in their life that volunteering on a regular basis where they go some place once a week or twice a month or something to volunteer interferes. Whereas these episodic events, they can say, 'Okay, it's for six weeks. I can work around that, I won’t plan a trip during those six weeks.' So I think that's part of it.”

Other volunteerism research acknowledges the importance of considering role flexibility. For example, Hustinx and colleagues (2008) hypothesized that episodic volunteers would be more likely than regular volunteers to be satisfied with the flexibility of when they can volunteer. The authors note that having flexibility built into roles, for example allowing volunteers to choose how long they volunteer for, may be important in providing positive episodic volunteering experiences. The current findings also correspond to a recent study by Tang and colleagues (2010), which found that older volunteers often leave regular roles on a temporary basis to engage in other activities, including caregiving, other volunteer projects, travelling, and spending time with family. The authors
conclude that having the flexibility to choose temporary assignments as they fit into one’s life may be particularly attractive to baby boomers.

In contrast, middle-aged volunteers still active in the workforce explained that they had to take time off work in order to participate in the Games, and in some cases travel to Vancouver. They were unsure if they would have time to participate for other events in the future because of their employment status. When asked whether she would volunteer for other events in the future, a middle-aged volunteer who was still working said, “If I didn’t have to take so much time off work. Cause that’s… I used vacation time to do that. If I was retired, I would.” For the majority of volunteers, their role at the Olympics was equivalent to a full-time job. Therefore, the concept of episodic roles fitting better into the schedules of retired persons may only apply to particularly time-intensive roles. The age difference may not apply to other contexts, such as single-day events.

6.4.6 Gender differences

In addition to age differences discussed above, gender differences emerged from the interview data that have implications for understanding factors associated with episodic volunteer enjoyment. Firstly, interviews highlighted the particular importance of interpersonal relationships for female volunteers. When describing their VANOC roles, a pattern emerged in which females were more likely to discuss specific relationships they had formed with volunteers and staff. In comparison, males tended to focus on describing the tasks they had completed. When they did mention social interactions, male volunteers
elaborated on feeling connected to the spirit of the Olympics in a general sense, rather than discussing particular relationships. This builds on previous qualitative evidence suggesting that men are more likely to prefer working alone and focusing on tasks, whereas women enjoy the social or collective aspects of episodic volunteering (Bryen & Madden, 2006).

It is worthy to note that over 60 percent of OVP participants were female, and several interview participants acknowledged that the majority of VANOC volunteers were women. As one older male explained, “That always makes me crazy why men don’t get out….and my question is why aren’t men out there doing the same thing? What’s the matter with these guys? Are they playing golf or are they sitting home?” Therefore, another possible explanation for the observed gender difference may have simply been the fact that in comparison to their female counterparts, there were fewer opportunities for male volunteers to develop relationships with fellow male volunteers.
Chapter 7: Discussion

Overall, this study provides information on the experiences of middle-aged and older adults engaged in episodic volunteer work at a mega sporting event. Results provide several unique contributions to research and practical knowledge on the topic, and can be used to help direct the focus and methods of future studies. This chapter begins with a general discussion of the study’s findings in terms of the research questions, hypotheses and theoretical and conceptual framework. It also reviews limitations, discusses implications related to organizational practices and offers suggestions for future volunteerism research.

7.1 Research questions and hypotheses

The goal of the quantitative analyses was to test hypotheses presented in Chapter 3. Qualitative interviews, although not designed to test specific hypotheses, also helped to inform the research questions by supplementing quantitative results. Below is a summary of what the quantitative data revealed about each hypothesis and sub-hypothesis, as well as additional details discovered through follow-up interviews which relate to the research questions.

7.1.1 Hypothesis 1

Results of the quantitative analysis supported hypothesis 1, which predicted that enjoyment among older and middle-aged adults engaged in episodic volunteer work would be positively associated with volunteers reporting
that they felt their position adequately utilized their skills. This relationship was demonstrated through logistic regression, after controlling for a variety of factors including demographic characteristics, health status and psychosocial variables.

Research previously determined an association between volunteer outcomes, such as enjoyment and satisfaction, and skill utilization. However, earlier examinations of volunteer skill utilization (e.g. Chevrier et al., 1994; Okun, 1994; Omoto & Snyder, 1995), as well as more recent studies (e.g. Byron & Curtis, 2002; Kulik, 2007; Meijs & Brudney, 2007) focused on traditional volunteers who were volunteering on a regular, long-term basis.

The confirmation of hypothesis 1 in the present study builds on previous research knowledge, demonstrating that a link between skill utilization and enjoyment is applicable to episodic volunteers. Another shortcoming of previous research on volunteer skill utilization is the lack of inclusion of middle-aged and older volunteers. This study showed that skill utilization is not only important for younger volunteers who may be driven by career-related goals, but also for middle-aged and older adults who may have other motives, such as generativity.

In addition to the quantitative evidence supporting hypothesis 1, interviews showed that both middle-aged and older adults valued aspects of their role that allowed them to use their skills to make a difference. Several interviewees stated that receiving feedback and validation on their work was meaningful for them.
Participants also shared their insight on how being able to use their skills, and see the impact of their work, made their experience more positive.

Both the quantitative and qualitative findings on the relationship between skill use and enjoyment demonstrate the validity of a recent statement by Culp (2009), who asserted that baby boomers will expect to see the results and impact of their volunteering efforts based on the utilization of their skills in their roles.

7.1.2 Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 suggested that based on literature on age differences, it is likely that middle-aged and older volunteers will differ in how certain factors relate to episodic role enjoyment. Sub-hypothesis 2a predicted a stronger positive association between volunteer enjoyment and weekly volunteer hours for older adults. Sub-hypothesis 2b proposed a stronger association between enjoyment and altruism (used as a proxy for generativity) among older volunteers. Although differences between older and middle-aged volunteers were demonstrated when logistic regression was conducted separately for each age group, the findings were inconsistent with the two sub-hypotheses.

7.1.2.1 Sub-hypothesis 2a

Among middle-aged volunteers, enjoyment of duties was positively associated with weekly hours. However, this association was not replicated among older volunteers. Interestingly, the finding is in the opposite direction of hypothesis 2a. One explanation for the unexpected result may be the intensive
nature of the VANOC positions. Volunteers who were active in the workforce took time away from their jobs (e.g. by using vacation time) to be at the Olympics. In addition, several middle-aged subjects had travelled for their assignments, which was likely the case for the general population of OVP participants. Therefore, middle-aged volunteers may have removed from their daily lives. As such, previous literature suggesting competing demands of volunteer roles and other life responsibilities for middle-aged adults (Kulik, 2007; Wilson, 2000) upon which hypothesis 2a was developed, may not apply to the present study’s context.

Qualitative interviews did suggest that older volunteers, particularly those who had retired, were more willing to work longer hours, and time-intensive, time-limited volunteer roles may fit well with their lifestyles. To illustrate, one older interviewee asked to work as many hours as possible, in order to maximize his volunteering experience and contribution. In comparison, middle-aged interviewees did not discuss the same desire.

At the very least, the follow-up interviews suggested individual variation in terms of volunteer willingness to work long hours, and how hours impacted enjoyment, as a number of factors may have been at play. Among participants who worked closely with fellow volunteers, there may have been a stronger, positive association between hours and enjoyment. However, details of the volunteer role, such as whether participants worked alone or with a team, were not measured on OVP questionnaires, and therefore could not be incorporated into quantitative analyses. As such, these conclusions are speculative and
overall the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses do not provide a complete explanation of the relationship between age, volunteer hours and enjoyment in episodic settings.

7.1.2.2 Sub-hypothesis 2b

Sub-hypothesis 2b was also not substantiated by the split-file logistic regression. In both age groups, no association was found between baseline altruism and enjoyment. Other factors, particularly contextual factors related to the volunteer assignment itself, may have had stronger effects on enjoyment in comparison to more stable, individuals factors, such as altruism. Perhaps volunteers with high altruism (or generativity), who were assigned roles which did not adequately use their skills, lacked opportunities to express their concern for others, and in turn had lower enjoyment. The suggestion is consistent with recent literature acknowledging the importance of considering contextual factors when attempting to understand volunteer outcomes (Moreno-Jiménez & Hidalgo, 2010; Morrow-Howell et al., 2009; Tang et al., 2010; Tidwell, 2005).

In addition, the majority of OVP participants reported high levels of altruism. Therefore, with only a small amount of variation between baseline scores, demonstrating a relationship between enjoyment and altruism through statistical analysis may not have been possible within the particular sample.
7.1.3 Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted that evaluations of episodic volunteer experiences would predict future volunteering behaviours. Sub-hypothesis 3a predicted that volunteers who enjoyed their duties would be more willing to volunteer for the Olympics again, whereas sub-hypothesis 3b predicted that participants who enjoyed their duties would be more inclined to continue volunteer work for other organizations, other than VANOC, in the future.

Firstly, hypothesis 3a was supported through bivariate analysis. Results indicated a significant, positive association between volunteer enjoyment and desire to volunteer for the Olympics again, if the chance arose. Although the association was weak, it suggests that ensuring episodic volunteers enjoy the specific tasks they are assigned, in addition to enjoying the overall experience, may be an important consideration where volunteer retention is a priority.

However, it is also important to highlight that over 75 percent of subjects who only enjoyed their duties somewhat, not very much, or not at all still reported that they would volunteer for the Olympics again. One potential explanation may be, as several interviewees articulated, that the Olympics were perceived as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and some individuals even stated that they would have regretted not taking part in the event. In addition, the finding is consistent with other studies that have not found an association between volunteer satisfaction and retention (Wilson & Musick, 1999; Tang et al., 2010), which
suggest the importance of further research to fully understand how individuals
decide to continue participating in a particular form of volunteering activity.

In contrast, sub-hypothesis 3b was not corroborated. Although volunteer
evaluations of an episodic experience may impact willingness to participate in a
similar context in the future, it may not impact future plans for volunteering in
other contexts, such as regular volunteering. This may be due to the observation
that most OVP participants were already active volunteers for other
organizations, most commonly as traditional volunteers, and therefore likely had
plans to continue that work once their role at the 2010 Olympics had concluded.

Data from the qualitative interviews provide additional details on how
individuals perceived the influence of their VANOC experiences on future
volunteering desires. All interviewees expressed that they would enjoy
participating as episodic volunteers again. The follow-up interviews also
demonstrated that whether or not participants had a great experience at the
Olympics, it did not impact their desire to engage in future volunteering, including
special events and other major sporting events. A shared perception was that the
Olympics were simply one example of a life-long continuum of volunteering, and
in some cases a general pattern of remaining engaged in one’s community after
retirement. Overall, both quantitative and qualitative data on future volunteerism
are consistent with previous research suggesting that in general, engaging in
volunteer activities is a life-long behaviour (Tang et al., 2010).
7.1.4 Research questions

Both the quantitative and qualitative components of the thesis contributed knowledge to help answer the three research questions the study was developed around. Although a substantial amount of research is still needed to fully understand episodic volunteering in middle-aged and older adults, the findings add to the empirical knowledge concerning the research questions.

The first research question asked: What factors are associated with role enjoyment in middle-aged and older volunteers? The quantitative analysis revealed that contextual factors were stronger predictors of volunteer enjoyment in comparison to individual factors. Initial bivariate analyses demonstrated no association between enjoyment and the demographic factors of age and gender. In addition, individual factors included in logistic regression were not associated with the outcome of volunteer enjoyment. Null findings on demographic characteristics support recent research which acknowledging that individual characteristics may not play central role in influencing volunteer outcomes. However, it should be noted that null findings regarding psychosocial factors, such as change in stress level and patriotism, may have been due to the lack of variability in the sample on these particular variables.

On the other hand, logistic regression showed a statistically significant association between enjoyment and perceived skill utilization, a contextual factor of the volunteer role. Both middle-aged and older adults were more likely to enjoy their duties when they felt that their position had adequately utilized their skills.
Furthermore, weekly volunteer hours was positively associated with enjoyment among middle-aged volunteers.

Follow-up interviews provided further details on factors impacting enjoyment. Interviews revealed that engaging in positive interactions and developing relationships with others, receiving feedback and validation on one’s contributions, and pride and prestige associated with the organization were all contextual factors that participants identified as having positive impacts on their evaluation of the role, and the experience as a whole. However, interviewees also acknowledged that individual factors, in particular having an easy-going attitude and being prepared for the time-intensive nature of the role, as reasons why they had a positive evaluation of their VANOC experience.

The interplay between individual and contextual factors is demonstrated in other ways by comparing the quantitative and qualitative data. For example, logistic regression found no association between enjoyment and work status. However, the qualitative interviews revealed details on the relationship between employment and episodic volunteering. In particular, participants who were still active in the workforce expressed that having the support of their workplace positively impacted the quality of their VANOC experience. This finding is consistent with recent research by McNarmara and Gonzales (2011), which found that although work employment status did not predict volunteering among older adults, supportive employers increased one’s engagement as a volunteer.
The second research question asked: *Are there age differences (specifically between middle-aged and older adults) with regard to the factors associated with volunteer role enjoyment?* Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate similarities and differences between middle-aged and older volunteers. Quantitative analysis suggests that for both age groups, individual factors, such as gender, marital status and health status, were not associated with enjoyment. Another similarity between age groups was the importance of perceived skill utilization in predicting enjoyment.

In terms of differences, weekly volunteer hours were positively associated with enjoyment for middle-aged volunteers, however hours were not a predictor of enjoyment among older volunteers. In addition, quantitative analysis suggests that life satisfaction may be a predictor of enjoyment for older volunteers (results were approaching statistical significance), however the relationship was not replicated among middle-aged volunteers. Furthermore, the positive association between perceived skill use and enjoyment was stronger for middle-aged volunteers, though the age difference was not substantial.

Although the follow-up interviews only had a small number of participants, patterns emerged which also suggest both similarities and differences between older and middle-age volunteers in factors influencing enjoyment. Common themes of positive social interaction, camaraderie, feedback and validation, pride and prestige were expressed by both age groups. Similarities were also found in participant perspectives on what did not impact their enjoyment. For example,
both age groups expressed that other contextual factors, such as stressful life events, did not have considerable effects on their overall experience. Also, both age groups, when providing examples of negative aspects of their VANOC experience, explained that their enjoyment was not significantly impacted.

In terms of differences, middle-aged interviewees were more likely to focus on the novelty and excitement of their role, and relationships with others, as contributing to enjoyment. In contrast, older volunteers tended to express that episodic volunteering was a meaningful and enjoyable activity because it was one of many opportunities to contribute to their community in later life. These age differences are consistent with earlier volunteerism research differentiating between intrinsic rewards that come from within a person, such as feeling that one’s work is valuable, and extrinsic rewards, such as feeling a part of a team. Chevrier and colleagues (1994) concluded that volunteers change their focus from extrinsic rewards to intrinsic rewards as they grow older. The finding is also in line with the concept that societal generativity increases with age.

In addition, the common theme of retired individuals appreciating the flexibility of episodic roles was another notable difference between age groups. Morrow-Howell (2007) suggests that baby boomers will be looking for flexible volunteer roles as they gradually exit the workforce. However, the interviews suggest that preferences for flexibility may extend beyond retirement transitions, as the data indicate that even once they have completely exited the workforce, baby boomers may still wish to have flexible volunteering assignments.
The final research question asked: *For middle-aged and older adults, does enjoyment of episodic volunteer roles affect actual or intended future participation as a volunteer?* The quantitative portion of the study, which measured intended future participation, suggests that the answer may depend on the type of volunteering being considered. Reported enjoyment predicted likelihood of desire to participate as an Olympic volunteer again, but did not predict likelihood of intent to volunteer in other contexts.

Qualitative interviews provide additional information on actual and intended future participation as volunteers. Interview data suggest that once some time had passed and volunteers had an opportunity to reflect on their experiences, the impact of their VANOC role on current and future volunteering activities was insignificant. At the time of follow-up interviews, many individuals were actively engaged in regular volunteer roles, or were looking for new opportunities to become either long-term or episodic volunteers. Interviewees also indicated that other factors, such as inability to take time off work if still employed, or the challenges of travelling to another country to participate in other Olympics, were reasons for discontinuing future participation in similar types of events. In summary, especially because study participants tended to be life-long volunteers, overall they did not feel that their role at the Olympics had a strong influence on their desire to continue volunteering.
7.2 Theoretical implications

The theoretical framework used for the study, which was a combination of four different theories or concepts on volunteerism, guided the focus, methodologies, hypotheses and interpretation of results. The results of both the quantitative and qualitative study components contribute new knowledge to each theoretical or conceptual area, including information on how the theories and concepts relate to middle-aged and older volunteers in episodic roles.

7.2.1 Functional theory

At its essence, the functional theory of volunteerism assumes that different volunteer functions are important to different people. Quantitative and qualitative data indicate that episodic volunteers may be motivated by, and gain enjoyment from, both altruistic and egotistic factors. For example, egotistic functions of volunteering include opportunities to socialize and to use leisure time constructively (Bryen & Madden, 2006). Both of these egotistic functions were expressed by middle-aged and older interview respondents. Altruistic functions of volunteering, such as contributing to the success of the event, using one's skills, and encouraging younger generations to volunteer in the future, also emerged as important concepts in both types of analyses.

Interpreting the data using a functionalist perspective also raises interesting questions on whether specific functions can be considered altruistic or egotistic. For instance, functionalist theory suggests that even highly generative
individuals may use volunteering as a means of protecting the ego, or maintaining the integrity of the self-concept (Narushima, 2005). The common theme of ‘giving back’, or recompensating for benefits enjoyed earlier in life, was a specific type of generative motivation expressed by volunteers. Although it may be interpreted as an altruistic function of volunteering, it could also be interpreted as an egotistic, self-serving function with the goal of improving one’s feelings about benefits received earlier in life.

The opportunity to use one’s leisure time constructively is also considered by some authors to be an egotistic function of volunteering (Bryen & Madden, 2006). The theme of constructive use of leisure time was common throughout follow-up interviews, especially for retired participants. Similar to the concept of ‘giving back’, the desire to use leisure time in this way could be interpreted both as egotistic and altruistic. These examples illustrate the complexities that emerge when attempting to understand the functions of episodic volunteering, and suggest that specific functions may be simultaneously self-serving and altruistic.

7.2.2 Productive aging

Productive aging is a prominent concept within literature on volunteerism in later life. Thus, it was important to consider as a concept for the study, and was the main concept behind hypothesis 1. Results of quantitative analysis, which supported the hypothesis, reinforce the idea that productive aging is important to baby boomer volunteers. In addition, themes of productive aging were evident throughout follow-up interviews. Older, retired volunteers expressed
that they enjoyed the opportunity to use their skills, continue to remain active and contribute to their communities. Contributing to one’s community, rather than sitting at home, was described as a choice made at retirement and in the face of age-related chronic illnesses. Overall, both the quantitative and qualitative data support Gottlieb and Gillespie’s (2008) prediction that volunteers of the baby boomer generation will be particularly interested in putting their skills to work and engaging in productive aging activities after retirement and into later life.

Gottlieb and Gillespie (2008) predict that volunteers of the baby boomer generation will “come with résumés and letters of reference tucked into their briefcases, looking for meaningful opportunities to put their skills and talents to work” (p. 404). The present study supports this prediction and suggests that organizations consider the concept of productive aging in order to successfully fulfill the motivations and expectations of older volunteers of the future.

7.2.3 Generativity theory

Responses to the general interview question on generativity confirmed the theoretical differentiation between parental and societal generativity, and corroborated the idea that middle-aged adults are likely to be concerned with the former, whereas older adults may be more inclined to focus on the latter.

Interview data also provide evidence supporting other researchers’ conceptualizations of multiple forms of societal generativity. Firstly, interviewee perceptions of their volunteer participation, both at the Olympics and in general,
reflected communal generativity concerns, which focus on nurturing and promoting the welfare of future generations. In contrast, the concept of agentic generativity, described as the self-oriented interest of leaving a legacy (Morfei et al., 2004; Warburton & Gooch, 2007), did not emerge as a theme.

Communal generative concerns specifically characterized by the desire to give back, or recompensate for benefits received earlier in life, also emerged when volunteers described their motivations for both episodic and regular volunteer work. This finding supports previous literature suggesting that giving back to one’s community can be considered a distinct type of generative concern and action (Narushima, 2005).

An interesting and unexpected finding was that interviewees also perceived their volunteerism as a way to contribute to the future of volunteering in their community. Several individuals saw themselves as role models, encouraging younger generations to get involved in volunteering. This idea fits with a broadened definition of generativity that includes actions to preserve valued institutions and practices (Son & Wilson, 2011). The concept of being a role model was applied to the context of the community at large, but for some middle-aged volunteers it related specifically to their own children.

Although interviews demonstrated age differences in terms of parental versus societal generativity, the qualitative interview data was unable to properly establish the existence of age differences regarding agentic versus communal
generative concerns. Narushima (2005) found that younger volunteers (in their 50s and 60s) were more likely to be motivated by agentic generativity, whereas older volunteers (over 70 years) were more likely to express communal generativity. However, in the present study, there was not a substantial opportunity to explore these potential age differences, particularly as only one interview participant was over age 70.

Another topic that the qualitative interviews did not explore was whether the opportunity to express generative concerns through volunteer work impacts an individual’s level of enjoyment. According to Snyder and Clary (2004), individuals perform generative acts from which they derive satisfaction, and will continue the activity as long as it continues to fulfill their generative motivations. Although interviewees indicated that in general, the fulfillment of motivations and expectations impacted their evaluation of the experience, it is unclear whether the fulfillment of generative concerns in particular contributed to enjoyment.

Overall, qualitative data indicate that generativity is a multifaceted concept, and many forms of generativity exist, both between and within individuals. The demonstrated complexity of how generativity and volunteerism interact supports the need for future research to fully understand how generative concerns, and the fulfillment of those concerns, impact middle-aged and older volunteers. To concur with a suggestion by Scott and colleagues (2003), future studies exploring how volunteer outcomes, such satisfaction and retention, are influenced by generativity are encouraged.
7.2.4 Volunteering as serious leisure

Previous literature adopting a serious leisure perspective views volunteers as consumers of an experience. Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses support the relevancy of a serious leisure perspective for middle-aged and older volunteers in episodic roles. Firstly, ideas around having a pleasurable experience and meeting new people, identified in previous studies taking a leisure approach to volunteerism, were a common theme in the interviews. When interviewees described their motivations for participating as VANOC volunteers, and when explaining positive aspects of their experience, many were inclined to speak in terms of having a fun and enjoyable experience, and did not focus on volunteering or duties per se, but rather the experience as a whole.

Furthermore, a pattern emerged from interview data suggesting that enjoyment may have been more important for middle-aged volunteers. Having an enjoyable experience and being part of the excitement of the Games was an aspect of the role more often discussed by middle-aged interviewees in comparison to their older counterparts. This age difference may be an indication that especially for baby boomers, volunteering in a special event setting may be perceived as a consumer experience.

The serious leisure perspective on volunteering is characterized by ideas and processes similar to consumerism or market models. It predicts that, much like repeat consumers are motivated by enjoyment and met expectations, a volunteer’s enjoyment will impact their desire to participate again (Hustinx &
Data from the present study suggest that the relationship between volunteer enjoyment and desire to volunteer again is not necessarily straightforward. Although enjoyment predicted desire to volunteer again at Olympics, it did not impact future plans to volunteer for other organizations.

However, one gap in the post-Olympics questionnaire was that it did not measure future plans or desires to volunteer in other episodic roles. The follow-up interviews attempted to fill this gap, and most interviewees indicated that they were currently involved in or were seeking new episodic opportunities. It may have been the case that enjoyment had a temporary impact on desire to get involved in episodic roles, but that eventually the influence faded. This concept was expressed hypothetically by one interviewee, but more research would help elucidate the validity of the idea.

Another shortcoming of OVP questionnaires was the lack of questions pertaining to the fulfillment of motivations and expectations. Although the pre-Olympics questionnaire asked about motivations for volunteering, the post-Olympics questionnaire did not measure whether these initial motivations were matched by actual experiences. Although the follow-up interviews provided some data on whether expectations were met, how matched expectations subsequently impacted desire to participate as an episodic volunteer remains unknown, but may have provided more complete information on whether the serious leisure or consumerist view applied to study participants.
In general, study results lend support to the argument made from a serious leisure perspective that special event volunteering should be examined through a leisure lens rather than occupational perspectives (Misener et al., 2010). However, additional research is warranted to determine the extent to which consumer-like behaviours are integrated into volunteer activities among middle-aged and older volunteers, particularly in episodic roles.

7.3 Study limitations

There are several limitations of this thesis that are important to acknowledge, and to consider when interpreting the results. It is recommended that researchers interested in episodic volunteering and volunteerism among the baby boomer generation consider these shortcomings when developing the focus of future studies and designing methodologies.

7.3.1 Generalizability

A key limitation of the study relates to the generalizability of results. The Olympic Games are an international, mega sporting and cultural event. Although findings may apply to volunteers at other large events, they may not be relevant to smaller scale events, or traditional, long-term roles. One study participant illustrated this point during an interview, saying, “It’s really comparing apples and oranges because the scope of it makes it incredibly special.” Other studies on specific volunteer programs have identified the same concern (e.g. Harrison, 1995) and overall, generalizability is a challenge recognized as inherent to the
study of volunteers, given that roles vary in a number of ways, such as organizational context and assignment length (Morrow-Howell, 2010).

However, previous studies have documented a lack of differences between older volunteers associated with diverse types of organizations, such as religious, political or community organizations, on a range of measures, including perceived benefits of volunteering (Morrow-Howell et al., 2003). Moreover, studies examining episodic volunteers, such as research on Olympic volunteers conducted by Fairley and colleagues (2007), have reported results that parallel findings on regular, long-term volunteers.

Additionally, existing literature has acknowledged the complexity of volunteers, determining that one-size-fits-all is not an effective approach to recruitment and retention (Hustinx & Handy, 2009). As episodic volunteering continues to gain prevalence, the future of volunteerism will likely be characterized by increased episodic opportunities being offered by voluntary organizations (Bryen & Madden, 2006) as well as baby boomers who prefer episodic roles (Culp, 2009; Handy & Srinivasan, 2009; Rozario, 2006). Thus, although the study’s context is unique, it represents what can be expected in the future and what is currently in need of more investigation (Hustinx et al., 2008).

Another concern, also related to representativeness and generalizability, is the lack of random sampling used during recruitment for the OVP. According to a report commissioned by VANOC (2010), 19,000 volunteers were required for
the Olympics, and 6,000 for the Paralympics. Since they self-selected to participate in the study, there is a risk that subjects may not have provided an adequate representation of middle-aged and older VANOC volunteers. However, it is important to acknowledge that the sample was representative of the overall, general population of middle-aged and older volunteers (Zedlewski & Schaner, 2006). Older individuals with higher education, income, health, social integration and overall social capital, are more likely to engage in volunteer activities (Carr, 2009; Morrow-Howell, 2010; Murayama, Taguchi, & Murashima, 2010; Musick, 1999; Wilson, 2000) and volunteering in later life has been identified as a primarily elitist activity (Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that OVP participants were representative of older and middle-aged VANOC volunteers. In addition, it should be noted that self-selection has been used as a recruitment technique in previous volunteering studies that are exploratory in nature (Hustinx et al., 2008).

Moreover, because only a selection of OVP subjects were chosen for follow-up interviews, the inclusion of qualitative methods introduces added concerns regarding representativeness. Qualitative findings may not be generalizable to OVP subjects who did not participate in follow-up interviews, as well as volunteers in general. This type of concern is fundamental to most qualitative studies (Warren, 2005; Willig, 2008). However, Willig (2008) makes the point that although we may not be able to generalize small-scale qualitative findings, or know how many people share a given experience or perspective, we
are still able to determine that it is present within the context being studied, and therefore relevant and important to capture.

It is also important to highlight the fact that this study examined the experiences of episodic volunteers at a mega sporting event which took place in Canada, and the majority of 2010 Olympic and Paralympic volunteers (85 percent) were Canadian (VANOC, 2010). Thus, the theoretical framework, findings and implications from this study may not apply to Olympics or other volunteering events taking place in other cultural and social contexts, such as the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia or the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A final concern regarding generalizability is the risk that the study may have failed to capture particularly negative volunteering experiences, as volunteers who had negative experiences may have been less likely to complete the post-Olympics questionnaire. However, over 89 percent of participants who completed the pre-Olympics questionnaire also completed the post-Olympics questionnaire, and all those who were reached by phone agreed to participate in follow-up interviews. In addition, purposeful sampling ensured that interviews included subjects who reported various levels of enjoyment on the questionnaire.

Despite the concerns around representation and generalizability discussed above, it is also important to recognize that studying episodic
volunteers at a large, international event also may have provided some advantages in terms of representativeness.

Firstly, previous volunteerism research, particularly studies which are cross-sectional in design, has been plagued by the problem that subjects are active, long-term volunteers, and are likely to be committed to and satisfied with their role (Penner & Finkelstein, 1998; Sakires et al., 2009). In many contexts it may be the case that volunteers who have negative experiences drop out and are not currently volunteering when a study is conducted (Hegeman et al., 2010; Kulik, 2010; Morrow-Howell, 2010; Yan & Tang, 2003). Active volunteers may also be more inclined to respond positively (Greenslade & White, 2005; Institute for the Study of Labor, 2004). However, studying volunteer enjoyment in a time-limited context is advantageous because both volunteers that enjoyed and did not enjoy their experiences were included as subjects.

Secondly, studying a large-scale event also provided the opportunity to examine a wide range of episodic volunteer roles and duties. Even among the small sample of follow-up interview subjects, a range of volunteer roles was represented. Therefore, although the Olympics may have been a unique context for the study of volunteers, the large scale of the event allowed for the inclusion of many different roles that varied on several dimensions, such as complexity, level of responsibility, degree of interaction with others, and location.
7.3.2 Use of self-reports

Another potential limitation was the use of self-reports. The risk of participants providing socially desirable responses is an important limitation to consider. For example, some researchers have expressed the need to control for social desirability when measuring generative concerns (e.g. Schoklitsch & Baumann, 2011), and as indicated above, others have been concerned that active volunteers may feel that they ought to be enjoying themselves (Millette & Gagné, 2008). Furthermore, social desirability of responses is especially inherent in a phone interview setting (McAdams, de St. Aubin, & Logan, 1993).

However, the follow-up interviews provided opportunities to explore volunteer perceptions in depth. A significant amount of time had passed since participants had been involved in their role at the Olympics, and they potentially had time to reflect on their experiences and become more detached from their roles and the organization. Because the excitement of the Olympics was over at the time of follow-up interviews, it is reasonable to assume that interviewees were in a position to provide valid, unbiased accounts of their experiences.

7.3.3 Instruments used

The sections above already identified some limitations of items included on OVP questionnaires with regard to their ability to answer research questions and test hypotheses. One reason for the limitations is that the questionnaire design was, for the most part, general and atheoretical. The OVP is a larger study, with multiple researchers using the data collected to explore various facets
of volunteering among middle-aged and older adults. As a result, in some instances, ideal variables were not available for use in quantitative analyses.

For example, scales associated with certain theories, such as the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) developed by researchers using a functional approach (Allison et al., 2002; Clary, 1998; Greenslade & White, 2005), were not incorporated into the OVP. Furthermore, the Special Event Volunteer Motivation Scale (SEVMS) developed by Farrell and colleagues (1998), which is a revised version of the VFI, may have been particularly useful in the present study. Instead, open-ended questions were used to capture volunteer motivations.

Generativity was also not included on the questionnaires, and therefore altruism was used as a less than ideal proxy. In contrast, several volunteerism studies have employed the Loyola Generativity Scale, which is credited as being both a sensitive and practical measure of generative concern (Hart, 2011). The scale consists of 30 items and has demonstrated high internal consistency (Hegeman et al., 2010) and construct validity (Hart, 2001). Including the Loyola scale on both questionnaires would have allowed the researcher to examine whether baseline generativity was associated with volunteer outcomes, and whether engaging in episodic volunteer work has an impact on subsequent generativity, as predicted by other researchers (Narushima, 2005). However, there were benefits to including generativity in the follow-up interviews. Whereas the Loyola scale captures general information on generativity, interviews allowed for discussions on generativity in the context of volunteering.
Furthermore, enjoyment was measured on the OVP questionnaire by asking participants a single-item question with Likert scale. The question focused specifically on enjoyment of duties performed, rather than the overall enjoyment of the role or the Olympic experience. Other studies of volunteerism using single-item questions to assess enjoyment have primarily asked more general questions, or have administered scales measuring multiple facets of volunteer satisfaction, such as the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). Therefore, determining how the results of the current study fit with previous research, which has often measured volunteer satisfaction as a main outcome, is somewhat of a challenge.

Furthermore, discrepancies between the quantitative and qualitative data bring into question the validity of the post-Olympic questionnaire item on enjoyment. Several participants who indicated that they did not enjoy the duties they performed did not subsequently report any negative aspects of their experience during the follow-up interview. For instance, when asked on the post-Olympics questionnaire whether she had enjoyed the duties she performed, an older female volunteer indicated ‘not very much’. Yet the same participant, when asked during the follow-up interview about negative aspects of the experience, said, “Not at all. I can’t think of a negative experience to tell you the truth.”

There are a number of possible explanations for the discrepancy. Perhaps although certain participants had not enjoyed the duties they performed, the overall experience may have been enjoyable due to other factors, such as social
interaction, which were better remembered. Another explanation may relate to the fact that a significant period of time had passed between the post-Olympics questionnaire and follow-up interviews. As such, participants may have been exhibiting what Fairley and colleagues (2007) identified as ‘nostalgia-like’ feelings regarding their past involvement in a prestigious event.

The lack of volunteer context variables included on questionnaires was another shortcoming. The OVP focused primarily on measuring individual characteristics, rather than assessing volunteer roles and experiences. Although questionnaires did contain some items about the VANOC experience, the study would have benefited from the inclusion of other variables related to the context and role. Data on the type of role held, the complexity of assigned duties, level of interaction with other volunteers, and other aspects of the experience would have allowed quantitative methods to examine relationships between contextual factors and outcomes such as enjoyment and future volunteering.

Overall, the limitations of variables included in the present study are a factor of the thesis being designed after both OVP questionnaires were created, essentially making the quantitative portion of the thesis a form of secondary data analysis. Although the qualitative interview had limitations, such as a small sample size and the ineffectiveness of content analysis as a method for testing causal relationships (Berg, 2004), interviews attempted to fill research knowledge gaps by including questions and discussions around generativity, the fulfilment of expectations and contextual factors.
### 7.4 Practice implications

Although it is difficult to predict the future of volunteering, it is likely that older adults, particularly the aging baby boomers, will play a major role (Rozario, 2007), and therefore it is important for voluntary organizations to develop strategies for supporting this generation of middle-aged and older volunteers (Tang et al., 2009). Results of the study offer a number of practical suggestions, discussed below, which may be beneficial for voluntary organizations to consider.

Firstly, the findings can help inform practices on how to promote positive experiences for middle-aged and older volunteers in episodic roles. The quantitative analysis highlighted the importance of assigning roles which make adequate use of one’s skills. Congruent with the findings of Hustinx and colleagues (2008), the study indicates that just like regular volunteers, episodic volunteers want to deliver high-quality work. Other authors have suggested that there may be a variety of ways in which organizations can ensure they are making use of the skills and experiences of older volunteers (Tang et al., 2009), including leadership skills (McNamara & Gonzales, 2011).

This study suggests that in order to facilitate skill utilization among episodic volunteers, it is important for organizations to firstly take measures to avoid an abundance of volunteers. Too much idle work time may decrease opportunities for skill utilization, leading to unmet role expectations and especially for volunteers who are working alone, potentially boredom. Facilitating opportunities where volunteers can witness the impact of their skill use is also
key. Instead of focusing on tangible rewards or formal recognition, volunteer programs could incorporate ongoing positive feedback, which was appreciated by study participants. As the interviews suggest, giving volunteers opportunities to be stationed at locations where they can interact with service users, seeing the impact of their contributions, may be one strategy to ensure validation.

Voluntary organizations may also want to find ways to increase pride felt by episodic volunteers. Although the Olympics are considered a highly prestigious event, smaller organizations may also be able to involve volunteers in aspects of events showcasing excitement or prestige, such as award presentations or other types of ceremonies. Providing a standard volunteer uniform is another strategy, as several interviewees expressed that having a uniform contributed to feelings of pride and sense of belonging, both during and after the event, and when on or off duty.

Another consideration to increase enjoyment among episodic volunteers is to ensure there are sufficient opportunities to engage in positive social interactions, and possibly develop meaningful relationships with fellow volunteers. The study demonstrates the importance of social interactions in shaping positive experiences. Among interviewees who reported especially positive connections with others, these relationships resulted in their expectations of the role and overall experience being exceeded. As previous research has demonstrated the importance of matched or exceeded expectations in predicting repeat volunteerism (Cheung et al., 2006; Davis et al., 2003;
Finkelstein; 2008a), fostering relationships among episodic volunteers may result in positive outcomes for both volunteers and organizations.

In addition to suggestions around promoting positive experiences, some of the study’s findings can inform recruitment strategies for new episodic volunteers. Hustinx and Handy (2009) explain that large organizations will not gain loyal, committed volunteers simply by encouraging participation through the use of generic, abstract or inconsequential mission statements. Although not designed to assess the impact of recruitment practices, the study indicates several themes which may be useful for organizations when planning recruitment strategies directed at middle-aged and older volunteers for special events.

For example, qualitative interviews revealed that as the baby boomer generation exits the workforce, they will want volunteer roles to fit into the variety of other activities that they are involved in. Therefore, in the future, the flexibility of short-term volunteer assignments may be particularly appealing to retired persons. As such, volunteer recruitment strategies may want to highlight the flexibility that certain positions offer, and how they can fit into the busy, varied lifestyles of aging baby boomers.

As discussed above, social interaction and camaraderie were important for many participants. Thus, ensuring prospective volunteers are aware of opportunities to work closely with fellow volunteers may be an effective recruitment strategy, with qualitative data indicating that this may be particularly
applicable to females. In addition, themes related to prestige and excitement, fulfillment of generative concerns and productive aging may appropriately guide recruitment messages targeting baby boomers and older adults.

In addition to recruitment, the study provides ideas to promote episodic volunteer retention. Organizations can benefit from retaining episodic volunteers, as they often retain the skills and knowledge from previous events. However, ensuring that episodic volunteers return can be challenging for event organizers (Fairly et al., 2007). Voluntary organizations may benefit by offering opportunities for volunteers to connect in between periodic events, or implementing other strategies for extending the experience. For example, organizations may want to consider hosting reunions, follow-up events or Internet discussion groups to facilitate ongoing interactions amongst episodic volunteers. These strategies may help foster feelings of belongingness and camaraderie, potentially reinforcing individuals' identities as volunteers for the organization and increasing the likelihood of their continued involvement.

Understanding that middle-aged and older baby boomers are a source of volunteers is an important first step for organizations. Voluntary organizations who do not offer episodic volunteer opportunities may want to consider doing so in order to attract older volunteers, and to tap into the pool of retired volunteers the aging baby boomer generation will eventually form. Previous research suggests that Canadian voluntary organizations are not focused on recruiting and applying the skills of older volunteers. Narushima (2005) proposed the existence
of indifference, and perhaps even ageism, in voluntary organizations when it comes to older volunteers. However, older volunteers can play an important role in community organizations, especially when given the opportunity to cultivate their generativity and desire to give back (Narushima, 2005). Therefore, incorporating older volunteers and episodic roles into volunteer programs will likely become an even more important strategy as baby boomers retire.

7.5 Suggestions for future research

The last few decades have been characterized by significant advances in the study of volunteers (Wilson, 2000), from initial studies focusing on bystander intervention (Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003), to current research that considers multiple helping contexts, including episodic volunteering. However, Gottlieb and Gillespie (2008) describe the future agenda for psychological research on older volunteers as “daunting” (p. 405). Likewise, recent literature on volunteering within organizational contexts recognizes that there is still so much to learn (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007). Especially because the current study examined a relatively unexplored context, it offers a substantial amount of useful suggestions for future research focusing on similar as well as differing volunteer settings.

7.5.1 Consideration of contextual factors

Perhaps the most prominent suggestion for future research would be the consideration of contextual factors when attempting to understand volunteer outcomes. The present study demonstrates a need to explore contextual factors
impacting episodic volunteer enjoyment, as well as repeat participation at an event or within an organization. Follow-up interview participants held a variety of roles, and reported very different experiences depending on the nature of their work assignment, the location they were stationed at, and the amount of interaction they had with others. In comparison, most previous research has not specified the nature of volunteer work and the range of activities performed by participants (Morrow-Howell, 2010). Therefore, future research would benefit from gathering information about the jobs held by volunteers.

Unfortunately, limitations of the study’s design did not allow the researcher to test associations between enjoyment and a variety of contextual factors through quantitative methods, which could give a better indication of causation. Designing future studies of episodic volunteer behaviours from which causation can be established is another important consideration. For example, in the currently study volunteers expressed how they would have enjoyed follow-up activities after the event was over, in order to keep their connections to the organization and fellow volunteers. Empirically testing the effectiveness of hosting follow-up events between volunteering assignments may help determine whether it would be an effective strategy in terms of episodic volunteer retention.

However, more recent research has begun to recognize the importance of considering both contextual and individual factors in order to gain a complete understanding of what influences the attitudes, behaviours and other outcomes of volunteers (Tang et al., 2010). To date the research continues to focus
primarily on long-term, regular volunteer roles. Thus, there is still much to learn about the causal effects of contextual factors in episodic volunteer settings.

7.5.2 Male volunteers

The current study highlights the need to consider how gender relates to volunteering. Not only were the majority of participants female, but the lack of male volunteers was a theme expressed in the interviews. Because volunteering is primarily an activity that women engage in, many researchers have exclusively studied female volunteers (e.g. Kulik, 2010; Tan et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2008). However, the same attention has not been given to male volunteers.

Despite the prominence of females in volunteer-related research and practice, studying generativity in older male volunteers may help researchers more fully understand motivation to volunteer in later life. In a recent analysis, Schoklitsch and Baumann (2011) found that contrary to previous studies on middle-aged adults, older men were actually more likely to report higher generativity than women. These researchers suggest an age by gender interaction effect, whereby generative differences between genders decline with age, with men becoming more aware of their generative concerns as they get older. The design of the current study did not allow for these ideas to be explored, and overall more research is needed to better understand changing gender roles throughout the lifespan and how they are associated with generative acts (Schoklitsch & Baumann, 2011).
7.5.3 Socioeconomic and cultural diversity

An important limitation of the current study was the lack of inclusion of volunteers from various socioeconomic backgrounds, as indicated by education levels. This is not surprising, as volunteering is considered an activity of the middle class (Hendricks & Cutler, 2004). Furthermore, critical perspectives on volunteering suggest that organizational biases towards higher status volunteers can marginalize lower status groups and perpetuate existing inequalities (Hustinx, Cnaan, & Handy, 2010). However, previous research suggests that disadvantaged older adults may experience more benefits from volunteer activities, as they have more to gain from participating, particularly in terms of resources and recognition (Morrow-Howell et al., 2009; 2012).

Literature also suggests that providing disadvantaged older adults, for example those with low formal education and lack of work experience, with volunteer opportunities that match their skill level is a strategy for voluntary organizations to consider (Morrow-Howell et al., 2009; Tang, 2008). The qualitative portion of the study highlighted the variety of roles available to episodic volunteers at large events, many which involved minimal training and did not require existing technical skills gained from previous work experience or other roles. Thus, episodic volunteer assignments in particular may provide opportunities for older adults from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds to have enjoyable experiences that they can benefit from.
It is also recognized that engaging disadvantaged individuals as volunteers can be challenging, as there may be multiple barriers to participation (McBride, 2007). Therefore, disadvantaged older adults may be marginalized from engagement in voluntary activities that they could potentially benefit from (Hong, Morrow-Howell, Tang, & Hinterlong, 2009). As such, it would be valuable for future research to explore how to involve disadvantaged older adults in episodic volunteering, and how to ensure they have positive experiences.

In addition to the importance of considering volunteers of various socioeconomic groups, future research efforts should also consider focusing on including individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Volunteers tend to be a homogenous group, however research suggests that motivations related to actions such as volunteerism, and psychosocial constructs such as generativity, may differ between individualistic and collectivistic cultures (Snyder & Clary, 2004). Furthermore, research has indicated that engaging in volunteering may be especially beneficial for minority groups, particularly recent immigrants (Gottlieb & Gillespie, 2008). Therefore, as research on episodic volunteering continues to move forward, examining the experiences of individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds is worthy of consideration.

**7.5.4 Inclusion of older subjects**

The present study’s sample did not include a substantial proportion of volunteers who were older than the baby boomer generation. In particular, only
27 percent of OVP participants were over 65 years of age, and among follow-up interview participants, only three were over that age.

One challenge presented by the small sub-sample over age 65 was the difficulty in determining whether differences between middle-aged and older subjects were due to age or generational differences. The middle-aged group included individuals between the ages of 45 and 59, and was therefore comprised of baby boomers. The group of older volunteers included individuals of an older generation (55% were over 65), however it also included a substantial percentage of baby boomers (45% were between 60 and 65). Therefore, teasing out age and generational differences between the two age groups was difficult, and is a challenge noted by other researchers (e.g. McAdams et al., 1993).

Furthermore, especially as baby boomers are predicted to have high life expectancies (Einolf, 2008; Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008), understanding volunteering among older adults, such as those over 70 years of age, will become increasingly important in the future.

7.5.5 Longitudinal design

Future volunteerism research would also benefit from longitudinal studies. From the qualitative interview, it was clear that some subjects considered themselves to be life-long volunteers, whereas others volunteered on occasion, or planned to volunteer in the future if convenient. Correspondingly, McNamara and Gonzales (2011) recognize that older volunteers tend to fall into two
categories: those who are life-long volunteers and those who are new to volunteering. These authors suggest that future research should employ longitudinal methods to study volunteering during early, middle and late adulthood to gain an understanding of how these two categories differ.

In addition, research still has yet to ascertain whether engaging in volunteerism can promote generativity. One study did not find significant changes in generativity after older adults participated in an intergenerational volunteering program (Hegeman et al., 2010), whereas others suggest that volunteering can cultivate generativity (Narushima, 2005). Furthermore, recent research by Piercy and colleagues (2011) suggests that highly altruistic volunteering may positively impact both generativity and ego integrity (characterizing Erikson’s eighth stage of psychosocial development) in later life. Thus, it may be beneficial for future research to examine what types of volunteer activities may increase generativity.

Longitudinal studies that are longer than the present study may be the most appropriate approach to tracking episodic work of baby boomers as they go through later life transitions such as retirement and grandparenthood. There is a lack of knowledge on what happens to older volunteers as they continue to age, particularly why and how volunteerism is curtailed in late life (Scott et al., 2003). Thus, longitudinal research following older volunteers for many years may provide a more complete picture of how volunteerism plays out in later life. In addition, longitudinal research may also help minimize the challenge of differentiating between age and generational differences discussed above.
7.5.6 Data sources

Continuation of mixed methods approaches, including the collection of data from a variety of sources, may help move volunteerism research forward. For example, the current study only included VANOC volunteers as subjects. The same is the case for the majority of volunteerism studies, which usually focus on surveying or interviewing volunteers themselves. Future studies may gain value by studying organizational characteristics on a larger scale, for instance by interviewing staff who work directly with event volunteers and volunteer program managers, as well as examining job descriptions or other information about volunteer programs. Including a wide variety of data sources may provide additional information, such as details about volunteer recruitment, orientation and training procedures, as well as volunteer management policies that may not be known by volunteers themselves.

A few recent studies are moving in that direction, recognizing the importance of considering organization and program-level characteristics in the study of volunteer outcomes. In a recent study, Hong and colleagues (2009) measured institutional capacity for engaging older adult volunteers by surveying program directors. They contributed to the literature by operationalizing capacity in this area, identifying eight characteristics of voluntary organizations which engage older adults. Their findings, in addition to the results of the current study, suggest the importance of comprehensive assessments including factors at the individual level, volunteer duties and roles assigned, organizational structures,
and contextual factors outside the volunteer role. Future research may also benefit from collecting data from comparison groups consisting of non-volunteers, or volunteers working with other organizations, in order to make methodologies more robust.

7.5.7 **Outcome selection**

Finally, future research will benefit from careful consideration of outcome variables. One limitation of volunteer research in general is inconsistency in measures used. The current study demonstrated that although enjoyment was the main outcome assessed, the variable can be broken down into a number of different forms. Whereas enjoyment of duties was measured on questionnaires, more general concepts of role enjoyment and overall satisfaction were discussed during interviews. The study also showed that participant responses differed significantly when asked about enjoyment of duties, role and overall experience. Future researchers should carefully consider which aspects of the volunteer experience they are attempting to assess.

Episodic volunteer retention is one outcome for future research to consider. Several authors identify the need for studies examining volunteer discontinuation and strategies for reducing dropout (Choi & Chou, 2010; Tang et al., 2010). However, future studies should also explore factors associated with the likelihood of episodic volunteers returning to previous roles. Although the current study provides some initial information, decisions around repeat episodic volunteering were not thoroughly explored. Morrow-Howell (2010) declares that
understanding the dynamics of older volunteers, or how they move between episodic roles, is an important frontier for future research.

Volunteer behaviour is complex (Grube & Piliavin, 2000), and more research is needed to fully understand this activity in the context of aging and retirement. Research on how to best use volunteerism to improve the lives of older adults, and their communities, needs to continue in order to keep pace with the aging population. As Nancy Morrow-Howell stated in a recent article concerning research frontiers on late life volunteering, “Applied knowledge about volunteering in later life to guide program and policy initiatives has never been more important” (2010, p. 467).

7.6 Conclusion

The main goal of this thesis was to explore the experiences of older and middle-aged adults, primarily individuals who are part of the baby boomer generation, who participate as episodic volunteers. The study was somewhat exploratory in nature, as it examined middle-aged and older adults engaged in episodic volunteer work at a large-scale event, a particular context that past research has not focused on specifically.

Quantitative analysis revealed the importance of contextual factors, in particular skill utilization, in predicting enjoyment of duties among volunteers. It also indicated that individual factors were not associated with episodic volunteer
enjoyment. Quantitative data showed that although episodic work enjoyment predicted immediate desire to participate in future roles of the same nature, plans to continue volunteering in other capacities were not impacted in the same way.

Follow-up interviews also confirmed the importance of contextual, or organizational factors in shaping volunteer experiences and subsequent perceptions. Perhaps the most important theme revealed through qualitative analysis was that although roles may be temporary, middle-aged and older adults working as episodic volunteers perceive their participation at special events as contributing to their general volunteer identity and as a means of expressing generative concerns, just as past research has demonstrated for traditional, long-term volunteers. This implies that even episodic volunteering can play an important role in characterizing the activities, identities and psychosocial development of baby boomers as they age. Although this particular study examined volunteers at the Olympic Games, findings have general implications for future research on volunteerism, and offer suggestions for organizations who work with baby boomer volunteers, or will be doing so in the future.

We live in an aging society, and how older adults spend their time will continue to be an important topic for individuals themselves, organizations and communities. Policy makers have taken a strong interest in how the aging baby boomer generation will impact society as they leave the full-time labour force (Einolf, 2009), and like the current study, research on older volunteers can provide important information to shape best practices and public policies.
(Manning, 2010). Although this study examined negative experiences and feelings of exploitation, overall it did not adopt a critical perspective of volunteering in later life. However, as the baby boomer generation continues to exit the paid workforce, consideration of critical perspectives will serve to expand volunteerism research and its policy implications (Hustinx et al., 2010). All stakeholders would benefit from the continued development of research knowledge on how various forms of volunteerism, including episodic roles, can improve the lives of aging baby boomers, and the effectiveness of organizations. Overall, research on episodic volunteering, especially among aging baby boomers, has only just begun.
Chapter 8: References


Statistics Canada. (2010). Projected population, by projection scenario, sex and age group as of July 1, Canada, provinces and territories, annual. Ottawa, ON.


Chapter 9: Appendices
Appendix A.

Consent Form

2010 Olympics Older Volunteer Project

CONSENT FORM

The purpose of this study is to study the experience of middle-aged and older volunteers supporting the 2010 Olympic Games. This study will help us understand differences in the experience of volunteers and will contribute to the 2010 VANOC Legacy towards future Olympics.

You will be required to read and sign this Consent Form prior to being mailed the questionnaire. You will then be asked to mail or fax the Consent Form to the principal investigator (see below). Once this Consent Form has been received, you will be mailed a 10 page Questionnaire (with a stamped envelope) that takes about 20 minutes to fill in. It will ask you questions about your prior volunteer experience, your VANOC volunteer experience, some health-related factors such as how you perceive your health and some background information. Therefore, there is no risk to you. A second Questionnaire that will take only 10 minutes to fill in will be mailed to you about one month after the Olympics, also in a stamped envelope. We have two questionnaires so that we can compare changes in volunteer experience over time.

You may also be asked to participate in a 15-30 minute telephone interview to elaborate on your volunteer experience. If you are interested in this additional participation, please provide your phone number below.

The data in this study will maintain confidentiality of your name and the contributions that you have made to the extent allowed by law. Your identity is guaranteed to remain confidential because the questionnaires are secured in a locked file in a locked office. Your name will be replaced by a number so that we can analyze the responses. If you participate in the telephone interview, this information will also be secured. Consent Forms will also be kept in a secure location with the Principal Investigator. VANOC has given approval to conduct this study. You may withdraw from this study any time and this will have no adverse effects on your volunteer status with VANOC. You may register a complaint to: Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, Office of Research Ethics, Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6 (phone 778-782-6593, email hal_weinberg@sfu.ca).

You will be mailed a copy of the study results from the Principal Investigator (see below).

Signed ___________________________ Date ______________

Phone # (if interested in phone interview in addition to mailed questionnaire) ______________________

Your mailing information: Name: ________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: __________________ Province: ___ Postal code: __________

Mail or Fax Signed Consent Form to the Principal Investigator/Research Assistant:
Dr. Andrew Wister, Chair/Jennifer O’Hagan, Research Assistant
Gerontology Department, Simon Fraser University @ Harbour Centre
515 West Hastings St., Vancouver, BC, V6B 5K3
(FAX: 778-782-5066) (Phone: 778-782-5044)
*Alternatively, you may scan this form and email it to Jennifer at: jeo1@sfu.ca
Appendix B.

Pre-Olympics Questionnaire

2010 Older Volunteer Project Questionnaire #1

PLEASE CIRCLE OR FILL IN THE CORRECT ANSWER AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE – QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE PAGE

Socio-Demographic Questions

1. What year were you born? _____ (Must be at least 45 years to be in study)

2. What is your sex?
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Prefer not to answer

3. What is your current marital status?
   a. Married
   b. Common Law
   c. Living with a partner
   d. Widowed
   e. Separated
   f. Divorced
   g. Single
   h. Don’t know
   i. Prefer not to answer

4. Are you currently living alone?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Prefer not to answer

5. What is the highest level of education that you have attained?
   a. Some high school
   b. High school diploma (or equivalent)
   c. Some trade, technical or vocational school
   d. Some community college
   e. Some university
   f. Diploma or certificate from trade, technical or vocational school
   g. Diploma or certificate from community college
   h. Bachelor or undergraduate degree
   i. Professional degree
   j. Masters
   k. Earned doctorate
   l. Other: __________________________________________
   m. Don’t know
   n. Prefer not to answer
6. What is your current work status?
   a. Full-time
   b. Part-time
   c. Semi-retired (retired from full-time work but continue to work part time)
   d. Unemployed - Looking for employment
   e. Unemployed - Not looking for employment
   f. Long Term Disability (not working because of a disability)
   g. Retired
   h. Unpaid labour
   i. Don’t know
   j. Prefer not to answer

7. Were you born a Canadian citizen?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know
   d. Prefer not to answer

8. If you were not born a Canadian citizen have you or are you:
   a. Become a Canadian citizen
   b. A landed immigrant
   c. A citizen from another country (please name country):
   d. Don’t know
   e. Prefer not to answer

Health and Well-being Questions

9. In general, would you say that your health is:
   a. Excellent
   b. Very Good
   c. Good
   d. Fair
   e. Poor
   f. Don’t know
   g. Prefer not to answer

10. Do you currently have a chronic health condition (a long-term condition that has lasted or is expected to last more than 6 months and has been diagnosed by a health professional)?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know
    d. Prefer not to answer
11. Does a long-term physical or mental condition or health problem affect the amount or the kind of activity that you are able to do?
   a. Often
   b. Sometimes
   c. Never
   d. Don’t know
   e. Prefer not to answer

12. How many **days per week** (on average over the past 3 months) have you engaged in moderately intense physical activity (for at least 30 minutes each time)? Moderate intensity is defined as some increase in breathing rate and heart rate, for example brisk walking, heavy housework, or yard work.
   a. 0
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4
   f. 5
   g. 6
   h. 7
   i. Don’t know
   j. Prefer not to answer

13. How would you describe your current stress level?
   a. No stress at all
   b. A bit stressed
   c. Moderately stressed
   d. Very stressed
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

14. Please respond to the following statement: “I can do just about anything I really set my mind to”.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree or disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
   f. Don’t know
   g. Prefer not to answer

15. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?
   a. Very satisfied
   b. Satisfied
c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
d. Dissatisfied
e. Very dissatisfied
f. Don’t know
g. Prefer not to answer

Social Participation Questions

16. Do you belong to any groups or participate in group activities such as a social club, a hobby group, religious services or meetings?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know
d. Prefer not to answer

17. If yes, approximately how many hours per month do you engage in these activities (total hours)? _________

18. How often do you see any friends or family members outside of your household?
   a. Every day
   b. At least once a week
   c. At least once a month
d. Less than once a month
e. Not at all
f. Don’t know
g. Prefer not to answer

19. How would you describe your sense of belonging (how closely you feel connected) to your local community?
   a. Very strong
   b. Somewhat strong
c. Somewhat weak
d. Very weak
e. Don’t know
f. Prefer not to answer

Volunteer Experience Questions

20. In the 12 months prior to volunteering for VANOC, did you volunteer through another group or organization?
   a. Yes
   b. No
c. Don’t know
d. Prefer not to answer
21. In the 12 months prior to volunteering for VANOC, did you volunteer in another capacity that was not for a family/friend, group or organization?
   a. Yes- please specify: ____________________________________________
   b. No
   c. Don’t know
   d. Prefer not to answer

22. If you volunteered in the 12 months prior to volunteering for VANOC, approximately how many hours per month did you volunteer and for how many months?
   _______ hours _______ months

23. If you volunteered in the 12 months prior to volunteering for VANOC, did you do any of the following? Mark all that apply (write yes; no; don’t know; or prefer not to answer in the space provided).
   a. Canvass/collect donations, fundraise or sell tickets ________
   b. Organize or supervise activities or events for an organization ________
   c. Consulting or administrative work or were you an unpaid member of a board or committee for an organization ________
   d. Anything else not already mentioned:
      I). ____________________________________________
      II). ___________________________________________
      III). _________________________________________

24. In the 12 months prior to volunteering for VANOC, did you enjoy the duties that you performed?
   a. Very much
   b. Somewhat
   c. Not very much
   d. Not at all
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

25. Do you think that your volunteer position at VANOC adequately utilizes your skills?
   a. Yes (please explain):
      ____________________________________________
      ____________________________________________
      ____________________________________________
   b. No (please explain):
      ____________________________________________
c. Prefer not to answer

26. How did you find out about volunteering for VANOC?
   a. Print (i.e. poster, newspaper, brochure, etc.)
   b. Television
   c. Internet
   d. Word of mouth
   e. Other
   f. Don’t know
   g. Prefer not to answer

27. Why did you decide to volunteer for VANOC?

Altruism and Patriotism Questions

28. How would you describe your motivation to help others?
   a. Highly motivated
   b. Somewhat motivated
   c. Not very motivated
   d. Not at all motivated
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

29. How would you describe the satisfaction you get out of helping others?
   a. Very satisfying
   b. Somewhat satisfying
   c. Not very satisfying
   d. Not at all satisfying
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

30. How would you describe your patriotism* for Canada (*the love for or devotion towards one’s country)?
   a. Very strong
   b. Somewhat strong
   c. Moderate
   d. Weak
   e. Don’t know
f. Prefer not to answer

Please answer the following questions about your volunteer work using the scale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never.</td>
<td>A few times a year or less</td>
<td>Once a month or less</td>
<td>A few times a month</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>A few times a week</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often (record 0-6 using above scale)

33. __________ I feel emotionally drained from my volunteer work.

34. __________ I feel used up at the end of the workday.

35. __________ I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.

36. __________ Working [volunteering] all day is really a strain for me.

37. __________ I can effectively solve the problems that arise in my [volunteer] work.

38. __________ I feel burned out from my [volunteer] work.

39. __________ I feel I am making an effective contribution to what this organization does.

40. __________ I have become less interested in my [volunteer] work since I started this job.

41. __________ I have become less enthusiastic about my [volunteer] work.

42. __________ In my opinion, I am good at my [volunteer] job.

43. __________ I feel exhilarated when I accomplish something at work.

44. __________ I have accomplished many worthwhile things at this [volunteer] job.

45. __________ I just want to do my [volunteer] job and not be bothered.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Never. A few times a month A few times a week A few times Every
a year or less a month a week day

How often (record 0-6 using above scale)

46. __________ I have become more cynical about whether my [volunteer] work contributes to anything.

47. __________ I doubt the significance of my [volunteer] work.

48. __________ At my [volunteer] work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done.

Please indicate if you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

49. You feel that you have a number of good qualities.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

50. You feel that you’re a person of worth at least equal to others.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

51. You are able to do things as well as most other people.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

52. You take a positive attitude toward yourself.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
e. Strongly disagree

53. On the whole you are satisfied with yourself.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

54. All in all, you’re inclined to feel like a failure
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

Please answer YES or NO to the following questions.

During the past few weeks, did you ever feel:

55. Particularly excited or interested in something?_____

56. Did you ever feel so restless that you couldn’t sit long in a chair?_____

57. Proud because someone complimented you on something you had done?_____

58. Very lonely or remote from other people?_____

59. Pleased about having accomplished something?_____

60. Bored?_____

61. On top of the world?_____

62. Depressed or very unhappy?_____

63. That things were going your way?_____

64. Upset because someone criticized you?_____

Please take a moment to think about what makes your life and existence feel important and significant to you. Please respond to the following statements as truthfully and accurately as you can, and also please remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer according to the scale below and circle only one number for each question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolutely Untrue</th>
<th>Mostly Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat Untrue</th>
<th>Can’t Say True or False</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Absolutely True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

65. I understand my life’s meaning.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

66. I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

67. I am always looking to find my life’s purpose.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

68. My life has a clear sense of purpose.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

69. I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

70. I have discovered a satisfying life purpose.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

71. I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

72. I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.
   1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.
73. My life has no clear purpose.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

74. I am searching for meaning in my life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

75. Are you a paid volunteer for VANOC?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know

Thank you for participating in this study. Please add any comments about the questionnaire below so that we can improve it for the follow-up.

--------------------------------------------------

--------------------------------------------------

--------------------------------------------------
Appendix C.

Post-Olympics Questionnaire

ID # ______

2010 Older Volunteer Project Questionnaire #2

THIS IS THE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE. PLEASE FILL IT IN AND MAIL IT BACK TO US. IF YOU ARE VOLUNTEERING FOR THE PARALYMPICS, WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE DONE THAT WORK BEFORE FILLING IT IN

CIRCLE OR FILL IN THE CORRECT ANSWER AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE – QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE PAGE. SOME QUESTIONS ARE THE SAME AS THE FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE SO THAT WE CAN EXAMINE CHANGES IN VIEWS OVER TIME

Socio-Demographic Questions – linking questions

1. What is your day-month-year of birth? ________
   d/m/y

2. What is your sex?
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Prefer not to answer

Health and Well-being Questions

3. In general, would you say that your health is:
   a. Excellent
   b. Very Good
   c. Good
   d. Fair
   e. Poor
   f. Don’t know
   g. Prefer not to answer

4. Do you currently have a chronic health condition (a long-term condition that has lasted or is expected to last more than 6 months and has been diagnosed by a health professional)?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know
   d. Prefer not to answer
5. Does a long-term physical or mental condition or health problem affect the amount or the kind of activity that you are able to do?
   a. Often
   b. Sometimes
   c. Never
   d. Don’t know
   e. Prefer not to answer

6. How many **days per week** (on average over the past 3 months) have you engaged in moderately intense physical activity (for at least 30 minutes each time)? Moderate intensity is defined as some increase in breathing rate and heart rate, for example brisk walking, heavy housework, or yard work.
   a. 0
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4
   f. 5
   g. 6
   h. 7
   i. Don’t know
   j. Prefer not to answer

7. How would you describe your current stress level?
   a. No stress at all
   b. A bit stressed
   c. Moderately stressed
   d. Very stressed
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

8. Please respond to the following statement: “I can do just about anything I really set my mind to”.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree or disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
   f. Don’t know
   g. Prefer not to answer
9. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?
   a. Very satisfied
   b. Satisfied
   c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
   d. Dissatisfied
   e. Very dissatisfied
   f. Don’t know
   g. Prefer not to answer

Social Participation Questions

10. How often do you see any friends or family members outside of your household?
    a. Every day
    b. At least once a week
    c. At least once a month
    d. Less than once a month
    e. Not at all
    f. Don’t know
    g. Prefer not to answer

11. How would you describe your sense of belonging (how closely you feel connected) to your local community?
    a. Very strong
    b. Somewhat strong
    c. Somewhat weak
    d. Very weak
    e. Don’t know
    f. Prefer not to answer

Volunteer Experience Questions

12. While volunteering for VANOC, did you volunteer for another group or organization?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know
    d. Prefer not to answer

13. If Yes to question #12 above, how many hours per week on average did you volunteer, not including VANOC? #___________
14. While volunteering for VANOC, approximately how many **hours per week** (on average) did you volunteer? #

15. While volunteering for VANOC, approximately how many **weeks in total** did you volunteer? #

16. While you were volunteering for VANOC, did you enjoy the duties that you performed?
   a. Very much
   b. Somewhat
   c. Not very much
   d. Not at all
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

17. While you were volunteering for VANOC, what did you enjoy the most?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

18. While you were volunteering for VANOC, what did you enjoy the least?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

19. In retrospect, do you think that your volunteer position at VANOC adequately utilized your skills?
   a. Yes (please explain):
      __________________________________________________________
      __________________________________________________________

   b. No (please explain):
      __________________________________________________________
      __________________________________________________________

   c. Prefer not to answer
20. Would you volunteer for the Olympics again, if the chance arose?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don't know
   d. Prefer not to answer

21. Since volunteering for VANOC, approximately how many hours per week in total do you volunteer for other organizations (besides VANOC)? #

22. Do you plan to volunteer for other organizations, other than VANOC in the future?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know
   d. Prefer not to answer

Altruism and Patriotism Questions

23. How would you describe your current motivation to help others?
   a. Highly motivated
   b. Somewhat motivated
   c. Not very motivated
   d. Not at all motivated
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

24. How would you describe the satisfaction you get out of helping others?
   a. Very satisfying
   b. Somewhat satisfying
   c. Not very satisfying
   d. Not at all satisfying
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer

25. How would you describe your patriotism* for Canada (*the love for or devotion towards one's country)?
   a. Very strong
   b. Somewhat strong
   c. Moderate
   d. Weak
   e. Don’t know
   f. Prefer not to answer
Please answer the following questions about your VANOC volunteer work experience using the scale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A few times a year or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A few times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Once every week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A few times every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often (record 0-6 using above scale)

26. __________ I felt emotionally drained from my volunteer work.
27. __________ I felt used up at the end of the workday.
28. __________ I felt tired when I got up in the morning and had to face another day on the volunteer job.
29. __________ Working [volunteering] all day was really a strain for me.
30. __________ I could effectively solve the problems that arose in my [volunteer] work.
31. __________ I felt burned out from my [volunteer] work.
32. __________ I felt that I was making an effective contribution.
33. __________ I became less interested in my [volunteer] work since I started.
34. __________ I became less enthusiastic about my [volunteer] work since I started.
35. __________ In my opinion, I was good at my [volunteer] job.
36. __________ I felt exhilarated when I accomplished something at my volunteer work.
37. __________ I accomplished many worthwhile things at this [volunteer] job.
38. __________ I just wanted to do my [volunteer] job and not be bothered.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never.</td>
<td>A few times</td>
<td>Once a</td>
<td>A few times</td>
<td>Once a</td>
<td>A few times</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a year</td>
<td>a month</td>
<td>a month</td>
<td>a week</td>
<td>a week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or less</td>
<td>or less</td>
<td>or less</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often (record 0-6 using above scale)

39. __________ I became more cynical about whether my [volunteer] work contributed to anything.

40. __________ I doubted the significance of my [volunteer] work.

41. __________ At my [volunteer] work, I felt confident that I was effective at getting things done.

Please indicate (circle) if you currently strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

42. You feel that you have a number of good qualities.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

43. You feel that you’re a person of worth at least equal to others.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

44. You are able to do things as well as most other people.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree
45. You take a positive attitude toward yourself.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

46. On the whole you are satisfied with yourself.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

47. All in all, you’re inclined to feel like a failure
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

Please answer YES or NO to the following questions.

During the past few weeks, did you ever feel:

48. Particularly excited or interested in something?______

49. Did you ever feel so restless that you couldn’t sit long in a chair?______

50. Proud because someone complimented you on something you had done?______

51. Very lonely or remote from other people?______

52. Pleased about having accomplished something?______

53. Bored?______

54. On top of the world?______

55. Depressed or very unhappy?______

56. That things were going your way?______

57. Upset because someone criticized you?______
Please take a moment to think about what makes your life and existence feel important and significant to you. Please respond to the following statements as truthfully and accurately as you can, and also please remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer according to the scale below and circle only one number for each question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolutely Untrue</th>
<th>Mostly Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat Untrue</th>
<th>Can't Say True or False</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Absolutely True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

58. I understand my life’s meaning.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

59. I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

60. I am always looking to find my life’s purpose.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

61. My life has a clear sense of purpose.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

62. I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

63. I have discovered a satisfying life purpose.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

64. I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

65. I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolutely Untrue</th>
<th>Mostly Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat Untrue</th>
<th>Can't Say True or False</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Absolutely True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

66. My life has no clear purpose.

67. I am searching for meaning in my life.

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

Thank you for participating in this study. Please add any comments about the questionnaire below so that we can change it for future studies.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix D.

Qualitative Interview Guide

General introduction

Thank the individual for participating in the initial portion of the study (pre-Olympics and post-Olympics questionnaires), build rapport.

Explain purpose of follow-up qualitative interview.

Explain how the qualitative interview will work (predetermined questions, casual format, participant can end the interview at any time if they wish to do so).

Ask permission to record conversation (ensure maintenance of confidentiality, no affiliation with the Olympics or VANOC)

Ask participants if they have any questions before questions begin.

Introductory question

*Can you please confirm your date of birth?* (In order to study age differences in qualitative data)

*Can you start of by telling me how you heard about the opportunity to volunteer for VANOC?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Associated Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer role and duties</td>
<td><em>What was your role during the Olympic Games?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Can you describe your main duties you were responsible for during the Olympic Games?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>What skills or training were required for you to do your role?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>At any time was there confusion as to what you were supposed to be doing?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation and expectation fulfillment</td>
<td><em>If you could choose the most important reason why</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Associated Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you decided to volunteer</td>
<td>during the Olympic Games, what would it be? Why? How did your volunteer role at the Olympics compare to previous volunteer work you have been involved in? Do you feel you had the experience that you had hoped to get by volunteering for the Olympics? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive aging</td>
<td>Did you feel that the duties you performed as a volunteer made a significant difference?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generativity concerns</td>
<td>How important is it for you to support and guide future generations? Do you think that your experience at the Olympics was an opportunity for you to contribute to the future of your city/province/country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative experiences</td>
<td>Were there any negative aspects of your volunteering experience that have really stuck in your mind? Please describe. How did these negative experiences impact your overall evaluation of your experience as an Olympic volunteer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual factors</td>
<td>Did your family members and/or friends support your involvement in the Olympics? Why or why not? Did this impact your feelings about your involvement in the Olympics as a volunteer? Was there anything else happening in your life outside of your volunteer role during the Olympics that affected your experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current/future episodic</td>
<td>Since the Olympics, have you volunteered for any other special events? Would you consider volunteering on a short-term basis for other special events, such as the Olympics, again in the future? Why or why not? How do you think your experience at the Olympics affected your desire to participate as a volunteer for time-limited events?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding questions/comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your volunteer experience?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Do you have any questions for me about this research study?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank individual for their participation, express appreciation for their time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Write down overall impressions immediately after interview is complete.**