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Best Practices of Actively Engaged Volunteers Within a Megachurch

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Best Practices of Actively Engaged Volunteers Within a Megachurch

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Approval Page

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Statement of Original Work

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Abstract

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In the realm of churches, recruiting, engaging, and retaining volunteers is essential for churches to thrive. This applied dissertation was designed to identify best practices for recruiting, engaging, and retaining volunteers within a megachurch. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to identify those factors that draw people to volunteer, keep them volunteering, and lead to their work satisfaction while they volunteer in a megachurch. The effect of demographics on volunteer satisfaction and engagement were also identified. The final product of this study was a set of best practices for any church to use to improve its volunteer program.

The 2-phased, sequential, explanatory, mixed-methods study was conducted at a large megachurch in the suburb of a large mid-Atlantic city in the United States. Quantitative data were collected over a 30-day period online using the Volunteer Satisfaction Index survey ($N = 123$) during Phase 1 of the study. A focus group ($N = 5$) was conducted on a single day and used to collect qualitative data during Phase 2 of the study. The same population of 900 members of the megachurch was used for each phase of the study.

Analyses of the combined data revealed the success of volunteer programs is contingent upon several key factors; chief among them is the foundation of relationship. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended 7 specific best practices for churches to implement: The organizational leader–volunteer relationship matters, the paid staff–volunteer relationship matters, the volunteer–volunteer relationship matters, volunteer performance expectations matter, recognition matters, effective communication matters, and feeling empowered matters.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The topic. Volunteering is part of the American tableau. From colonial militias who fought the Revolutionary War to volunteers who support organizations like Habitat for Humanity to build homes for low-income families today, serving others with one's time, talent, and money permeates American society. Putnam (2000) observed, "Both philanthropy and volunteering are roughly twice as common among Americans as among the citizens of other countries" (p. 117). In 2011, nearly 27% of adults in the United States volunteered in some form, providing 7.9 billion volunteer hours that equated to $171 billion of value (Corporation for National and Community Service [CNCS], 2012b).

However, Brudney and Meijs (2009) asserted that gaps exist in the supply of volunteers, and volunteer commitment is in decline. The focus of this researcher is the area in which most Americans volunteer—over a third purportedly do so in religious organizations—because many churches struggle with recruiting, engaging, and retaining volunteers (CNCS, 2012a).

A primary competency "leaders struggle with most . . . [is] developing the skills of other leaders to facilitate more effective organizational performance" (Barna Group, 2009, para. 2). Research has confirmed that fewer than 1 in 7 employees worldwide feels highly engaged in the workplace, fewer than 2 in 3 employees feel moderately engaged, and nearly 1 in 4 employees feels disengaged (Crim & Seijts, 2006).

Organizations relying on volunteers may apply the same understanding of employee engagement to their volunteers. Although these individuals choose to spend their discretionary time serving a nonprofit organization, they are not on the organization's payroll. One may argue they have similar behaviors to those who are.

The Pareto principle suggests that "for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes" (Meyer, 2013, p. 3). As Koch (2008) noted, the principle "asserts that a minority of causes, inputs, or effort usually lead to a majority of the results, outputs, or rewards" (p. 4). When associated with the idea of volunteerism, it assumes 20% of people accomplish 80% of the work in an organization (Thumma & Bird, 2011). By understanding an individual's motivation to volunteer, a leader may benefit—in a similar manner—as understanding how paid employees are engaged.

In the realm of churches—nonprofit organizations where volunteer "employees" are essential to operate—recruiting, engaging, and retaining volunteers is essential for churches to thrive (Rizzo, 2009). Couple this with the reality that 50% of pastors do not feel adequate in doing their job (London & Wiseman, 2003), 90% of pastors feel inadequately trained to do their job (Rizzo, 2009), and many pastors simply "do not trust the leaders around them" (Noble, 2010, p. 1), and clearly the volunteer leadership and engagement challenge is exigent.

The research problem. The problem studied in this dissertation was the challenge to adequately recruit, engage, and retain volunteers at a large megachurch in the suburb of a large city in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The study explored this problem within a conceptual framework of volunteerism to discover common themes and best practices to make recommendations to guide the church forward.

Background and justification. Whereas some leaders are successful delegating responsibilities to volunteers within nonprofit organizations, many more are not. The lack of specific training among church staffs is a particular challenge for church leaders (Flesher & Duncan, 1999). As churches thrive and grow, increasing internal

organizational support structures—primarily through volunteers—becomes necessary to facilitate organizational requirements. Leaders cannot, and should not, bear such additional responsibilities alone; in one sermon, a pastor referred to "the days he is overwhelmed by the job—too many deaths and illnesses, too many meetings, not enough time or compassion to deal with it all" (Ellingson, 2007, p. 1).

According to PastorServe (2013a), 80% of pastors (and 84% of their spouses) admit to being discouraged, depressed, or unqualified in their roles. Stewart (2009) found that 75% of pastors in the United States experienced enough stress that they were ready to quit ministry completely at any given time. London and Wiseman (2003) learned that 40% of pastors had "considered leaving their pastorates" and "bailing out" (p. 26) in the previous 3 months. Collectively, an estimated 1,600 pastors leave the ministry each month across the United States, due to termination or their own choice (Rizzo, 2009). In 2011, an estimated 20,000 Protestant pastors left the pulpit (PastorServe, 2013b). These data suggest that vocational ministry is undoubtedly stressful. Reliance upon nonpaid church staff may be an important factor to ease that stress. When nonprofit organizations, such as megachurches, are able to successfully recruit, and then retain, volunteers within their churches, both paid staff and volunteer staff likely will become highly engaged if those volunteers find job satisfaction in their area of ministry. A probable outcome of this will be pastors who are more likely to achieve organizational success, while reducing their own burnout in the process.

Deficiencies in the evidence. Quantitative and qualitative studies on employee engagement within the workplace exist; less evidence in the literature exists showing the connection between volunteer engagement levels and nonprofit, volunteer-dependent organizations. Specifically, what is not clearly known from the literature is how

successful churches engender highly engaged congregants to volunteer their time, or why those volunteers remain engaged in those churches.

Audience. From a theoretical perspective, research has supported the conclusion that nonprofits, in general, operate more effectively when volunteers are happy and engaged (Crim & Seijts, 2006; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001; Gibbons, 2006; O'Boyle & Harter, 2013). Based on what research has said, many theologians believe the essential nature of the Christian Church is for pastors to equip the saints (Piper, 2013; Willard, as cited in Fagerstrom, 2009). This is aligned with many churches' own statements of faith, demonstrating their theology is internally consistent with this idea (Cole, 2011; East Cooper Baptist Church, 2013; Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, 2013). Therefore, it is incumbent on the Christian Church, its leadership, and its pastors to create environments for people who want to volunteer—and find reward in doing so—as a means to equip the saints.

The setting of the study was a large, suburban megachurch in a metropolitan area in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Weekend services in February 2013 and March 2013 averaged 16,500 attendees ("Outreach 100," 2013); attendance swelled to as many as 22,000 for Easter services (Solomon, 2013). The church's annual budget was approximately $25 million (Solomon, 2013).

Definition of Terms

Actively disengaged employees are those employees who are not only unhappy in their jobs but also "are busy acting out their unhappiness" by seeking to undermine their engaged colleagues' successes (O'Boyle & Harter, 2013, p. 21).

Altruistic motivation may be defined as "the desire to enhance the welfare of others at a net welfare loss to oneself" (Elster, 2006, p. 183).

Employee engagement is defined as “a measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization which profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work” (Governing Research, 2012, p. 1).

Engaged employees are those individuals who “work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company” and “drive innovation and move the organization forward” (O’Boyle & Harter, 2013, p. 21).

Not engaged employees are employees whom O’Boyle and Harter (2013) defined as “essentially ‘checked out’ . . . [who] sleepwalk through their workday, putting time—but not energy or passion—into their work” (p. 21).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This review of literature covers several topics related to the recruitment, engagement, and retention of volunteers. In the first section, a theoretical framework for the study is provided. The next section is a general overview of volunteering in the United States. It emphasizes the need for volunteers and the distribution of volunteers across the country. The next section provides a short exploration of megachurch growth in the United States over the past 50 years. This includes a look into the characteristics and staffing of megachurches. The next section provides the major review pertinent to this study. It presents an examination of what attracts people to volunteer, what aspects of individuals' experiences keep them volunteering, and how people derive job satisfaction in the roles they serve as volunteers.

A summation of issues covered is provided at the conclusion of the literature review. Lastly, the purpose of this study and the research questions are stated at the end of this chapter.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the study is altruistic motivation (Bussell & Forbes, 2002; Finkelstein, Penner, & Brannick, 2005; Haug & Gaskins, 2012; Piliavin & Charng, 1990; Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Schoenberg, Pryor, & Hart, 2003; Wu, Suh, & Zhao, 2011). Elster (2006) asserted, "Motivationally, altruism is the desire to enhance the welfare of others at a net welfare loss to oneself" (p. 184). Kolm (2006) defined altruism by its "various origins: it can be hedonistic or natural altruism in empathy, affection, sympathy, emotional contagion, pity, and compassion; or normative altruism of the moral, non-moral social, and rational types" (p. 4). This framework suggests that individuals who are likely to volunteer—and continue volunteering over time—have

prosocial character orientations and philanthropic motives that satisfy a personal need. These individuals enjoy helping others and take pleasure in personal giving (Haug & Gaskins, 2012). Kolm (2006) viewed this behavior as foundational to society:

> Altruism, giving and pro-social [sic] conduct, and reciprocity, are the basis of the existence and performance of societies, through their various occurrences: in families; among the diverse motives of the political and public sector; as the general respect and moral conduct which permit life in society and exchanges; for remedying "failures" of markets and organizations (which they sometimes also create); and in charity and specific organizations. (p. 4)

Piliavin and Charng (1990) pointed out sociobiologists refer to behavior as altruistic if it "benefits the actor less than the recipient" (p. 29). Similarly, Margolis (as cited in Piliavin & Charng, 1990) defined altruistic behavior as when one could have benefited from having chosen to ignore the effect of one's choice on others. Bussell and Forbes (2002) proposed three motivations of volunteers: (a) altruism, (b) a desire to help others, and (c) to satisfy important social and psychological goals. Additional motivations for volunteers include

> being useful, for personal interest and enjoyment, to feel needed, because a family member participates or utilizes programs offered by the organization, because of religious concerns, to gain skills or experiences, to make new friends, to learn about one's community, and/or to utilize or hone one's skills and abilities. (Kummerfeldt, 2011, p. 20)

In their study of the relationship between antisocial behavior and altruism, Krueger, Hicks, and McGue (2001) stated altruism is primarily linked to shared and unique environments, with personality traits reflecting positive emotionality. A study of 1,964 Dutch subjects on altruistic behavior correlated with survey research on financial giving that revealed age, education, income, trust, and prosocial value orientation all influence one's generosity over time (Bekkers, 2007).

In a 2002 study of over 1,000 women aged 18–29 by Schoenberg et al. (2003), the

altruistic foundation of the altruism framework was evident. Schoenberg et al. (2003) discovered 85% of study respondents considered their volunteering as part of their character, their life's mission, and "part of what they perceive as an obligation to make a difference" (p. 8). They viewed their volunteerism "as a lifelong commitment" and a "call to action" (Schoenberg et al., 2003, p. 8). When asked how they would characterize their commitment to volunteering, nearly half of the respondents answered it was who they are or what they do (Schoenberg et al., 2003).

The literature herein suggests that when an individual chooses to help others, the individual engenders prosocial experiences sought out as part of the human condition while serving alongside others. Altruistic motivation becomes an individual journey—experienced on a personal level—within community. The most salient marker of this was the aforementioned survey respondents who stated volunteering is foundational and intrinsic to who they are (Schoenberg et al., 2003).

Volunteering in the United States

In 2011, the CNCS (2012b) reported 64.3 million Americans (or 26.8% of adults in the United States) volunteered in some form and provided 7.9 billion volunteer hours worth $171 billion of value, the most in 5 years. The federal Fair Labor Standards Act defined volunteers as those nonemployees who "provide services without any expectation of compensation, and without any coercion or intimidation" (Hague, 2012, p. 1).

Among religious organizations, 83% of congregations were involved in social services, community development, and neighborhood-organization projects in 2009 (CNCS, 2009). Nearly 36% of American volunteers served with religious organizations between 2006 and 2008 (CNCS, 2009). Putnam and Campbell's (2010) analysis of national survey data led them to conclude the following:

> Religiously observant Americans are more generous with time and treasure than demographically similar secular Americans. This is true for secular causes (especially help to the needy, the elderly, and young people) as well as for purely religious causes. It is true even for most random acts of kindness . . . and the pattern is so robust that evidence of it can be found in virtually every major national survey of American religious and social behavior. Any way you slice it, religious people are simply more generous. (pp. 453–454)

Volunteering is an important part of the American way of life. It is embraced at the organizational level by educational institutions, business and corporate entities, and social fraternities engaging in community-service activities. In other words, the work of volunteers impacts everyone's lives, even if they are unaware of it (Worall-Thompson, as cited in Galindo-Kuhn, 2010).

Volunteer need. Nonprofit organizations relying on volunteers to function must attract individuals who want to give up their discretionary time to serve a greater cause. This is more pressing given the current conditions of the paid workforce. Canton (2006) noted a key challenge for private sector companies in the future will be finding and hiring high-quality individuals from a smaller pool of potential employees. This is largely due to an impending mass retirement of the Baby Boomer generation, those Americans born between 1946 and 1964 (Canton, 2006; Erickson, 2008b).

The U.S. Department of Defense (as cited in Boland, 2010) warned in 2010 that nearly a million federal employees would become retirement eligible within a few years. This prompted the Department of Defense's Chief Information Officer to begin a review of its information technology workforce. The result, according to Boland (2010), was a 128-page *Net Generation Guide* that addressed the Department of Defense's future information-technology workforce needs and expectations. Canton (2006) suggested that organizations approach the challenge of the Baby Boomer exodus as "a forward-looking and productive way to plan for and exploit the new opportunities in a talent-scarce global

labor market" (p. 111). It is against this backdrop nonprofit organizations have to cultivate their own volunteer talent pools, taking into account the dearth of potential volunteers.

Volunteer distribution. The most popular place Americans chose to spend their volunteer time and charitable donations in 2012 was in religious organizations, where over a third (34.4%) of citizens aged 16 and older volunteered (CNCS, 2012a). Polling and survey data analyzed by Putnam (2000) led him to state American adults "who regularly attend both church and clubs volunteer an average of 17 times per year, ten times as often as those who are involved in neither church nor club, who volunteer on average 1.7 times per year" (p. 119). The next largest sectors Americans volunteered were (a) the educational realm, 26.6%; (b) the social service realm, 14.2%; (c) the health realm, 8.2%; (d) the civic realm, 5.5%; and (e) the sport and arts realm, 3.6% (CNCS, 2012a).

Rise of the Megachurch

In 1996, there were 400,000 Christian churches of all types across the United States; half of them were Protestant. The average weekly worship attendance was approximately 75 people each (Trueheart, 1996). By 2003, the average number of weekly church attendees had risen to roughly 90 people per church (Barna Group, 2003). By 2007, the typical church counted 100 attendees (Bird & Thumma, 2011). Meanwhile, by 2010, the number of Christian churches had declined: The amount had dropped to 338,000 congregations, of which approximately 314,000 were Protestant and "other Christian churches" and 24,000 were "Catholic or Orthodox churches" (Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2014, para. 1). Yet, churches with much larger congregations, termed megachurches, were beginning to emerge on the religious landscape.

A megachurch is defined as a Christian, Protestant church with a sustained regular weekly attendance in excess of 2,000 people. Over a third of megachurches are nondenominational, predominantly located in the Southeast and Southwest United States. In 2005, the largest concentration of megachurches was found in California (14%), Texas (13%), Florida (7%), and Georgia (6%), according to the Hartford Institute for Religion Research (2014). More than half of megachurches identify themselves as evangelical, and most share a conservative theology (Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2011).

In 1960, there were only 16 known megachurches in the United States (Bird, 2007). By 1984, the number had increased to 70 megachurches (Bird, 2007). In 1990, there were 250 megachurches across the United States (Bird, 2007). By 1996, the number had swelled to 400 megachurches (Bird, 2007; Trueheart, 1996). The rise of the megachurch was underway (Bird, 2007; Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2014; Trueheart, 1996).

Rapid growth. By 2003, 2% of America's churches claimed weekly attendance of over 1,000 adults per week, significantly outpacing the average American church in numbers alone (Barna Group, 2003; Bird, 2007). Thumma, Travis, and Bird (2005) discovered the number of megachurches in the United States doubled in size between 2000 and 2005; there were 1,210 megachurches in 2005. By 2007, average weekly megachurch attendance also had increased by nearly 60% (Bird, 2007; Fitzgerald, 2007).

In the 5-year period between 2006 and 2011, the number of megachurches in the United Stated continued to increase by an average of 8% each year. The average number of megachurch attendees in 2010 also had increased to 3,597 people (Bird & Thumma, 2011). In 2011, over 1,600 megachurches existed in the United States, of which nearly 50% claimed weekly attendance of between 2,000 and 3,000 worshippers each (Bird &

Thumma, 2011). By the end of 2011, over 6 million people regularly attended a megachurch somewhere in the United States, with an average weekly attendance of nearly 4,000 people (Bird & Thumma, 2011; Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2014).

Characteristics. Most megachurches were established in suburban or exurb areas, near major metropolitan cities like Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Dallas (Bird, 2007). However, "despite their intimidating size, megachurches strive to be welcoming places that provide their attendees with a sense of belonging" (Blaakman, Kuhagen, & Teasdale, 2006, p. 1). The idea of belonging may be attributed to people beginning to feel at home at a church through deep and meaningful relationships, typically with newly established friendships developed there (Thumma & Bird, 2011).

Nearly three quarters (71%) of megachurches identified themselves as evangelical, whereas more than half (54%) self-identified as nondenominational (Bird & Thumma, 2011). The Southeast and Deep South (32%) constituted the largest region of the United States where megachurches were located; the fewest megachurches (1%) were found in New England (Bird & Thumma, 2011).

The appeal of megachurches was overwhelmingly to individuals born between 1965 and 2000, those generations known as Generation X and Millennials (Erickson, 2008a, 2010). Nearly 30% of megachurch attendees were between the ages of 35 and 49; an overall 70% of megachurch attendees were under the age of 50 (Bird & Thumma, 2011). Most people attracted to megachurches were family oriented, with 22% of attendees under the age of 17 (Bird & Thumma, 2011).

Racially, megachurches were more closely aligned with the U.S. population for Whites and Blacks than for Hispanics and Asians. Specifically, 82% of megachurch

attendees were White, compared to 72% of the U.S. population; 10% of megachurch attendees were Black, compared to 13% of the U.S. population. Yet, only 1% of megachurch attendees were Hispanic, compared to 16% of the U.S. population, and only 2% of megachurch attendees were Asian, compared to 5% of the U.S. population (Bird & Thumma, 2011).

Staffing. McIntosh (2006) suggested as churches become less homogenous, "more complexity in the desires, expectations, and needs" (p. 15) of congregational members emerge. The result is a need for more specialized pastoral staff "to provide for a well-rounded church ministry" (McIntosh, 2006, p. 15). However, multiple staffing for churches is a relatively new requirement. It first emerged as a reality in the 1950s, when the "so-called Information Age sprang on the church, increasing mobility, diversity, and technology" (McIntosh, 2006, p. 12). By 2006, approximately half of all churches in the United States had multiple staffs in some form (McIntosh, 2006).

Bird and Thumma (2011) reported megachurches averaged 11 full-time and four part-time, professional clergy. On average, 33 full-time staff and 27 part-time employees supported the pastoral staff, performing administrative, programming, and other support services (Bird & Thumma, 2011). Combined, megachurch staff requirements—defined as salary and benefits—consumed almost half (48%) of these organizations' budget. The remainder of their budgets was spread between building and operations (21%), program support (13%), missions (13%), and other costs (8%), according to Bird and Thumma.

Still, these paid staff positions were not adequate to support all functions a megachurch needs to offer its congregants to remain viable (Bird & Thumma, 2011).

Nho (2012) pointed out,

Recruiting volunteers has been a major issue in volunteerism. Few organizations

> are exempt from the challenge of recruiting volunteers. The church is also an example of an organization that cannot function without volunteers. Most ministries in the church are conducted with the participation of church volunteers. If church congregations were not willing to serve, the church would cease to accomplish its mission. Thus, today's church leaders are seeking strategies to recruit more of their congregation to serve in the ministry of the church as volunteers. However, many local churches still struggle to find enough volunteers to achieve their ministries. (p. 2)

The average number of volunteers in a megachurch—defined as those serving 5 or more hours a week—was 297 (Bird, 2007). Nearly 75% of megachurches indicated recruiting volunteer leaders was a "continual challenge, but that they eventually find enough willing people" (Bird, 2007, p. 127). Only 27% of megachurches indicated they did not have problems recruiting such volunteers (Bird, 2007). These data suggest that if small churches are unable to operate without dedicated volunteers, megachurches will be unable to successfully operate without a larger number of dedicated volunteers either.

Attracting Volunteers

A basic definition of volunteer recruitment is "the process of matching an organization's needs with a volunteer's interests and skills" (Miller, 2012, p. 5) versus just filling proverbial seats with people. People are attracted to volunteer for many reasons. By understanding those reasons, organizations can leverage them to attract and recruit new volunteers.

A study conducted to better understand volunteer behavior discovered individuals compared the costs and benefits of the volunteer activity in their decision-making process when they determined whether or not to volunteer (Brudney & Lee, 2009). Such decisions were made "knowing that the product of volunteer activity is shared by the community while the costs are borne by individual volunteers" (p. 526). Brudney and Lee (2009) contended their findings indicated "the development of policies that promote a

sense of community embeddedness, as well as those that link the workplace and volunteer opportunities, may motivate rational individuals to volunteer" (p. 526).

Recognizing a volunteer's motivation is critical for the recruitment (and retention) of volunteers, as organizational staff base recruitment and retention efforts on certain assumptions about the motives of potential volunteers (Berger, as cited in Wu et al., 2011). Miller (2012) highlighted the mutual benefits of strategic volunteer recruitment to both organizations and volunteers as threefold: (a) program sustainability, (b) increased satisfaction and sense of connection, and (c) maximizing organizational resources.

Brudney and Meijs (2009) reported the paid managers of volunteers perceived recruitment of volunteers as their primary challenge. Understanding why people are attracted to paid employment may help establish why people are attracted to nonpaid positions. Amundson (2007) identified 10 specific attractors to a workplace after studying multiple approaches to attracting new employees: (a) security, (b) location, (c) relationships, (d) recognition, (e) contribution, (f) work fit, (g) flexibility, (h) learning, (i) responsibility, and (j) innovation. Similarly, Clary et al. (as cited in Finkelstein, 2008) asserted that people volunteered for one of six specific motives: (a) values related to altruism and humanitarianism, (b) desire to learn or use skills, (c) desire to strengthen social relationships, (d) career-related experience, (e) to protect sense of self by reducing negative feelings or addressing personal problems, and (f) psychological enhancement.

Wu et al. (2011) hypothesized there are four elements that contribute to volunteer motivation, after conducting an extensive literature review and a study of hospitality student volunteers: (a) altruistic motivation, (b) material reward, (c) self and career development, and (d) social and leisure motivation. Haug and Gaskins (2012) contended the central motives for why a person is attracted to volunteer are far fewer, based on their

study of volunteer emergency medical technicians. They concluded people choose to volunteer either because they feel a moral or social obligation or because it is a rational choice. The rational choice option suggested that "individuals weigh the cost and benefits of volunteer activity in their decision to volunteer" (Haug & Gaskins, 2012, p. 198). Haug and Gaskins's review of literature further specified four distinct motives for why people volunteer: (a) purposeful, selfless, and humanitarian motives; (b) self-interest, such as accumulating career-related experience; (c) social objectives, like prosocial behaviors, social-role enhancement, and social-role recognition; and (d) some combination of these three reasons.

Multiple studies have indicated the significance of people knowing they are valued for what they can provide to an organization when they are new to it (Finkelstein, 2008; Haug & Gaskins, 2012; Johnson, 2009; Putnam, 2000). When people feel appreciated, they are more likely to offer their services to volunteer there. This is true in church organizations as well. Regarding new adherents, Thumma and Bird (2011) observed,

> New people come in with skills, talents, and interests. . . . Building connections also means being introduced to services, ministries, and opportunities for engagement —and intentionally trying to connect the person's natural interests and talents with what the church has to offer, as soon as possible. (p. 103)

Matching potential volunteers' skills and talents is not the only thing they value. Johnson (2009) asserted that relationships are a key principle of successfully attracting individuals to a church, where they can find an accepting atmosphere of people willing to develop friendships over time. This relational need is evidenced by the multiple social, informal events people take part in as they build what Putnam (2000) called social capital. Based on these relational foundations, Putnam contended attracting volunteers to

an organization or philanthropic activity is as simple as just asking them to do so. Putnam observed,

> When volunteers are asked how they happened to get involved in their particular activity, the most common answer is, "Someone asked me." Conversely, when potential blood donors are asked why they haven't given blood, the most common response is, "Nobody asked." (p. 121)

This is true in the context of attracting volunteer leaders as well. Feldmann and White (2012) discovered a primary reason 20- to 35-year-old volunteers did not become volunteer leaders was they had never been asked to become one. In Feldmann and White's survey of more than 6,500 participants, 40% indicated this was the case for them. Miller (2012) supported this observation, asserting the most effective recruitment tool in any organization remains the direct approach, or what she referred to as "the ask" (p. 42).

The impact of recruiting new volunteers through personal relationships is powerful. Van Vianen et al. (as cited in Haug & Gaskins, 2012) recommended recruiting volunteers motivated by humanitarian obligation, as these volunteers could influence their friends and relatives to become involved as well. The relational foundation is specifically significant for Generation X volunteers—individuals born between 1965 and 1979—and many Baby Boomers who consider themselves more aligned with Generation X because of how they view life (Erickson, 2010). A key finding from a volunteer research study of Millennials—individuals born between 1980 and 2000, also known as Generation Y, although the terms are often interchanged (Baugh & Hurst, 2000; Erickson, 2010)—supported this idea (Feldmann & White, 2012). The study found that more than 80% of Millennials preferred to find out about volunteer opportunities from their peers, underscoring the importance of relationships as a key driver in attracting volunteers (Feldmann & White, 2012). A 2002 study of adult Girl Scout volunteers

underscored the point, revealing only 46% of the volunteers said they found out about a volunteer opportunity on their own (Schoenberg et al., 2003). Another 44% of those volunteers indicated they were asked to volunteer, whereas only 10% of the volunteers stated they responded to a media or public relations campaign (Schoenberg et al., 2003).

The literature has indicated personal contact is clearly important for recruiting volunteers, but the means by which potential volunteers are contacted is important too. The proliferation of social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, allows widespread promotion of volunteer opportunities because it appeals to individuals' sense of community as they tap into their social networks (Brudney & Lee, 2009, p. 526). Eisner et al. (as cited in Brudney & Lee, 2009) emphasized the point, observing technology allows nonprofits to communicate inexpensively with volunteers and build social networks among members and between volunteers and the nonprofit.

Within churches, other factors influence the attraction of individuals to volunteer. For instance, a study of volunteers cited by Thumma and Bird (2011) provided insight into Protestant churches that experienced the most ease in recruiting their volunteer leaders. Thumma and Bird offered (a) "the church is an exciting place where people can get involved in a variety of meaningful activities;" (b) "the church encourages and fosters intense, intimate experiences with God;" (c) "people are engaged in and energized by serious study and discussion of Scripture and theology;" and (d) "the church holds and teaches strong beliefs and moral values" (p. 83). Even so, churches struggle to attract volunteers, and their loss is a persistent problem. McIntosh (2006) observed of the modern church organization,

> One might contend that all the necessary gifts to build a church are present in the people. God has gifted each person and, to the extent each person is empowered to use his gifts, the church will grow. Unfortunately the lifestyle of most people

> today reduces their time for volunteer ministry. The emergence of the two-income family, the growing number of women pursuing careers, and a commuter constituency, among other lifestyle changes have diminished the number of hours the typical church member can devote to the volunteer service. (p. 13)

Recognizing one's value is tied into the idea that some people choose to volunteer simply because they believe it is part of who they are. A 2002 study of over 1,000 women aged 18–29 was commissioned by Girl Scouts of the USA to understand why those women volunteered with the Girl Scouts (Schoenberg et al., 2003). What they discovered was 85% of respondents considered "volunteerism as a part of their personality, part of their life's task, and part of what they perceive as an obligation to make a difference" (Schoenberg et al., 2003, p. 8). They viewed their volunteerism "as a lifelong commitment" and a "call to action" (Schoenberg et al., 2003, p. 8). As noted earlier, when asked how they would characterize their commitment to volunteering, nearly half of the respondents said it was who they were or what they do (Schoenberg et al., 2003). They were also asked to indicate the top three motivations that inspired them to volunteer. Sixty-nine percent stated, "It's personally rewarding and makes me feel better about myself to help others," 68% stated "I feel as though I can make a difference," and 47% stated "I'm able to give back to others less fortunate" (Schoenberg et al., 2003, p. 12). Participants noted additional benefits of volunteering included having fun (33%), taking a stand on issues they believed in (25%), meeting new people (18%), improving their résumé (11%), friends and family (10%), and networking (9%), according to Schoenberg et al. (2003).

Lastly, people choose to volunteer for the public acknowledgement it affords them. In their study of 12 churches, Thumma and Bird (2011) observed that recognition endured as a significant reason people volunteer. Their research showed that, within the

church, organizations that actively recognized their volunteers—and proactively provided training and mentoring of their volunteers—were far more successful at recruiting volunteers in the first place. Thumma and Bird suggested, "Any church that wants to strengthen its volunteer efforts should engage in regular training sessions and mentoring, rotate its leadership of groups, reflect its member diversity in committees, and offer public acknowledgement, reward, and recognition of volunteers" (p. 87).

Retaining Volunteers

Once nonprofit organizations initially attract volunteers, retaining those volunteers is a challenge they must address to ensure long-term, viable support. More than a million nonprofit organizations in the United States rely on volunteers each year (Love, 2009). However, many cannot retain those volunteers. Collectively, they lose approximately a third of them annually (Love, 2009). Nho (2012) observed, "The major challenge that agencies face is not recruitment but retention" of volunteers (p. 3). Skoglund (2006) echoed the warning, stating, "Retention and turnover are important variables to volunteer program managers because they present serious problems for organizations that depend on volunteers to execute their mission statement" (p. 217). In 2005, more than 65 million people volunteered, yet nearly 21 million of those same individuals did not continue volunteering the following year (CNCS, 2007). Taylor et al. (as cited in Kummerfeldt, 2011) noted that whether the volunteering experience was positive or negative impacted volunteers' dedication to (or frustration with) the organization. Interestingly, the initial attractors for a person to volunteer are not always the reasons they remain (Karl, Peluchette, & Hall, 2008).

Hager and Brudney (2004) argued retaining volunteers is important for several reasons, paramount of which is to reduce the cost and time to recruit volunteers in the

first place. One practical reason to retain volunteers is the likelihood of those individuals becoming loyal to their organization through financial support (Hager & Brudney, 2004). Indeed, more than 70% of volunteers defined as Millennials said they raised money on behalf of a nonprofit cause in 2011 alone (Feldmann & White, 2012). Seventy-five percent of those same individuals personally contributed financially to a nonprofit organization, of which 15% contributed more than $500 dollars to an individual nonprofit entity (Feldmann & White, 2012).

The obstacles to successful volunteer retention are well documented. Research has shown the primary barrier to volunteering is simply finding time to commit to volunteer pursuits (Love, 2009; Schoenberg et al., 2003; Torock, 2008). In the 2002 study of adult Girl Scout volunteers, the research data revealed many of the volunteers were concerned they could not dedicate enough time to a volunteer activity (Schoenberg et al., 2003). Seventy-two percent of respondents cited lack of time to volunteer when they were surveyed. In the same study, respondents expressed an overall concern of not being able to honor their volunteer commitments, due largely to the complexity of scheduling myriad daily activities, such as school, job, and family priorities at home (Schoenberg et al., 2003). Similar concerns were echoed in a study of musical festival volunteers. Love (2009) observed, “Factors such as getting a new job, needing to take care of family, and loss of personal time, are some of the strongest reasons participants consider no longer being a volunteer” (p. 172). Another study of more than 700 Texas 4-H volunteers indicated several reasons for not continuing to volunteer, including a lack of time, a lack of staff support, their children aging out of the program, and burnout (Torock, 2008). The challenge of retaining volunteer leaders is not exempt from these dynamics, either. A study of 6,522 men and women aged 20–35 revealed 62% of respondents stated the top

reason they did not commit to volunteer leadership positions was lack of time (Feldmann & White, 2012).

Other studies suggested that volunteers did not continue volunteering because they basically were no longer having fun. Karl et al. (as cited in Kummerfeldt, 2011) predicted that the degree of fun experienced was positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to turnover of volunteers. Pearce (as cited in Nho, 2012) underscored the point, adding that volunteers likely will leave the organization the moment they begin to feel unhappy.

Research has supported the premise that organizations carry the largest weight of responsibility for retaining volunteers. A negative example of this is the absence of initiative that organizations demonstrate in reaching out to their existing volunteers. In the 2002 Girl Scout study, Schoenberg et al. (2003) discovered 30% of respondents cited a lack of awareness of volunteer opportunities available to them as a reason they did not get further involved. The same study showed volunteers wanted to volunteer with organizations offering (a) flexibility, (b) well-defined roles, (c) training and mentoring, and (d) opportunities that matched their interests. The "tools and resources necessary for success" (Schoenberg et al., 2003, p. 24) were highlighted as important for supporting these desired organizational traits. Fundamentally, well-managed organizations are more likely to succeed with volunteers (Walker, as cited in Kummerfeldt, 2011).

Although organizations bear the weight of volunteer retention responsibility, their own staffs often hinder the process. Thumma and Bird (2011) conducted research in large churches that revealed significant differences in how paid staff and nonpaid staff viewed the motivation of volunteers to become involved in various ministries. "[Paid] staff grossly underestimated, underperceived, and undervalued the individual's personal

initiative in becoming involved, whether self-motivated or spiritually motivated" (Thumma & Bird, 2011, p. 115). They discovered almost half of the volunteer survey respondents took the initiative to get involved as a volunteer, but only 15% of respondents believed that was the case. This suggested that the paid staff actually discouraged congregants from volunteering by not actively seeking them out, based on their limited view of what volunteers can actually offer the organization. This is a mistake, because "motivating and sustaining active participation of lay members in the church is the most frustrating problem pastors face today" (Gangel, 2000, p. 133).

Nonetheless, church organizations appear to be well postured for retaining volunteers. The CNCS (2007) determined 70% "of volunteers who serve primarily through faith-based organizations continue serving from one year to the next, the highest retention rate of any type of organization through which volunteers serve" (p. 3). DeVan (2010) cited a Baylor University survey that determined overall megachurch growth can be attributed to active member-outreach efforts, suggesting that retention of volunteers was as simple as asking them to continue volunteering.

Johnson (2009) attributed this to several reasons, such as volunteers developing new, meaningful friendships through their volunteer activities. The result was deeper involvement with the organization. Johnson's reasons also included (a) how volunteers grew spiritually within the church setting, (b) how volunteers were able to use their gifts and talents (and how those were valued), and (c) how much the volunteers believed in the organization's vision. These dovetailed with Hager and Brudney's (2004) suggested approaches to increase volunteer retention, specific to charities. Chief among these was to provide a welcoming culture for volunteers, provide sufficient resources for their support, and encourage volunteers to recruit additional volunteers. Putnam's (2000) assertion that

volunteering fostered more volunteering underscores this, too. When an actively involved volunteer was used to recruit other potential volunteers, retention rates tended to be higher for those organizations. Hager and Brudney (2004) attributed this to the idea that "having volunteers represent the charity implies trust, evidence of a positive organizational culture, and confidence that the charity provides a worthwhile experience for volunteers" (p. 11).

Hager and Brudney (2004) pointed out specific best practices for improving volunteer retention, including (a) volunteer recognition, (b) volunteer training and professional development, and (c) proper placement of volunteers to organizational tasks. Several studies supported volunteer training (along with volunteer retention) as a key factor for successful volunteer retention (Hager & Brudney, 2004; Thumma & Bird, 2011; Torock, 2008). Given this, organizations should provide training and development for their volunteers to ensure successful volunteer retention (Hager & Brudney, 2004). Whereas paid employees are often required to undergo training and professional development, volunteers are typically not. Hager and Brudney posited training and professional development are essential for volunteers, too. Kummerfeldt (2011) provided insight on why this is so: "Training and development programs can have a positive impact on a volunteers' esteem, which in turn increases job satisfaction. It can also have a positive impact on the overall culture in which volunteers have an increased sense of belonging" (p. 45).

When training is accomplished properly, volunteers are more confident in performing their volunteer job (Kummerfeldt, 2011). Research has shown churches whose volunteers were regularly trained—and whose volunteers were regularly recognized for their efforts—were seen as twice as spiritual than other churches that did

neither (Thumma & Bird, 2011). Johnson (2009) observed that 90% of "effective reproduction [of volunteers] is accomplished through intentional one-to-one training" (p. 13). Cook et al. (as cited in Torock, 2008) asserted that volunteer turnover was mostly due to lack of training.

Another proven factor for increased volunteer retention is a robust reward and recognition effort by organizations to recognize their best volunteer performers. Many methods are available to recognize volunteers, among them these recommendations Love (2009) discovered during his study:

> Organizational leaders should consider various forms of recognition such as giving awards, listing names in newsletters, special shirts, or t-shirts that recognize important tenure milestones. Rewards are a means to actively celebrate tenure in the organization. Leaders must ensure long-term volunteers always know why they should stay with the organization. (p. 173)

Kummerfeldt (2011) asserted that when a volunteer was recognized, the individual was not only motivated but also motivated other volunteers, and the action positively affected the entire organization's culture. This occurred because a message was sent by the organization when recognizing volunteers: Recognition of volunteers who exceed expectations validated that the organization rewarded its top performers for their diligence and hard work, whether they were paid employees or not. In turn, this led to more motivated (and satisfied) volunteers, which resulted in improved volunteer retention (Kummerfeldt, 2011). Recognition of volunteers led to additional success in future recruiting efforts as well. For instance, among churches that regularly and publically recognized their volunteers for their service, the majority had no problem recruiting volunteers, compared to those churches that did not do so regularly or at all (Faith Community Today, as cited in Thumma & Bird, 2011).

Another factor that may influence volunteer retention is generational variances

between volunteers. Cunningham (2009) discovered Baby Boomers, as a group, are competitive in both the workplace and in the classroom. This could imply Baby Boomers are more disposed to continue volunteering, because they value hard work and are used to putting in long hours from their vocational experiences. Perhaps more important, Baby Boomers "strive to bring heart and humanity to the office" (Cunningham, 2009, p. 19). This aligns with the intrinsic nature of altruistic volunteerism motivators. However, younger generations are just as conscientious. Between 2002 and 2005, the number of college-aged volunteers increased from 2.7 million to 3.3 million (CNCS, 2006). This equated to 30.2% of 18- to 24-year-old college students who volunteered in 2005, "exceeding the volunteer rate for the general adult population of 28.8 percent" (CNCS, 2006, p. 2). From the retention perspective,

> 44.1 percent of college student volunteers engaged in "regular" volunteering (volunteering 12 or more weeks a year with their main organization) . . . [but they] are more likely than the general adult volunteer population (27% to 23.4%) to be "episodic" volunteers (volunteering fewer than two weeks per year with their main organization). (CNCS, 2006, p. 3)

Within the paid workforce, Towers Watson (2012) raised the idea of sustainable engagement as a key focus area for organizational leaders to keep their employees engaged, and therefore retained. Sustainable engagement was described as "the intensity of employees' connection to their organization" (Towers Watson, 2012, p. 5). This was based on a study of 32,000 employees around the world. The idea of sustainable engagement is based on three core elements: (a) being engaged and committed to achieving work goals, (b) being enabled in an environment supporting productivity in multiple ways, and (c) being energized "by a work experience that promotes well-being" (Towers Watson, 2012, p. 5).

If sustainable engagement influences one's commitment to an organization,

whether the individual is a paid employee or not, then helping volunteers connect to their supported organization is imperative. In a small study of two organizations (in which fewer than 70 employees participated), Falkenburg and Schyns (as cited in Baylor, 2010) found that employees with high commitment had a lower relationship between job satisfaction and the intent to quit. This implies a volunteer's satisfaction with the volunteer job is important to understand.

Job Satisfaction

One aspect to understand volunteer retention is to consider how volunteers derive their job satisfaction from participation in such activities. This is significant, as research has shown volunteer job satisfaction is a predictor of future volunteering decisions and of the amount of time people will volunteer (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2010; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001; Wong, Chui, & Kwok, 2010). Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001) referred to this as the need for a volunteer to "feel the ability to be effective" (p. 62) and an antecedent of intent to remain. Nho (2012) described job satisfaction, in general, as "an attitude which can be divided into three domains: emotion, cognitive beliefs, and behavioral attitudes" (p. 27). For the paid employee, job satisfaction refers to "how employees feel about their compensation, benefits, work environment, career development and relationship with management" (Society for Human Resources Management, 2011, p. 37).

Hidalgo and Morena (2009) presented statistical analysis indicating volunteers' intent to remain is highly influenced by social networks, organizational support, positive task, and formation. Research analysis by Omoto and Snyder (as cited in Trauntvein, 2011) on individual volunteer level showed volunteers who reported stronger, self-focused motivation to volunteer and more satisfaction with the volunteer experience

tended to volunteer longer. McKee, Boyatzis, and Johnston (2008) suggested that volunteers develop job satisfaction at the confluence of what is most important to each person on a team, the team's work, and its overall vision. McKee et al. added the leader of a team finds success by understanding each person's sense of purpose and what binds that person to the team.

During Haug and Gaskins's (2012) study of volunteer emergency medical technicians, they observed, "Volunteer behavior may be initiated for reasons including feelings of obligation, career/background expectations, social conformity, altruism/humanitarianism, guilt, to support private goals/principles, as well as other orientation and personality" (p. 202). Haug and Gaskins pointed out,

> People who are more likely to maintain volunteer activities over time likely have pro-social [sic] character orientations and philanthropic motives. They enjoy volunteering because it satisfies some personal need—they enjoy helping others, they take pleasure in personal giving. (p. 202)

Haug and Gaskins also observed, "These volunteers also likely derive other benefits, such as individual/professional development, higher self-worth, self-efficacy, and higher in-group rank. In addition, they show more overall loyalty to the organization" (p. 202).

Several studies have indicated being a valued member of a volunteer team helps increase both one's commitment level to the organization and overall satisfaction in the organization (Van Vianen, Nijstad, & Voskuijl, 2008). When volunteers befriended other volunteers they served alongside on the same team, their satisfaction level increased even more (Van Vianen et al., 2008). In other words, "people volunteer more as they become more engaged in their communities" (Brudney & Lee, 2009, p. 526). The benefits of satisfied volunteers extend beyond themselves:

> Providing volunteers with a satisfying experience builds organizational capacity. Satisfied volunteers are more likely to recruit others, provide additional time, give

> additional support, stay longer, and develop loyalty to the organization. Satisfied volunteers can be your best public relations, marketing, and potential donor base because they have developed a meaningful relationship to the organization that transcends the boundaries of their service work. (Galindo-Kuhn, n.d., para. 1)

As with volunteer retention, the burden of creating an environment where volunteers are satisfied in their responsibilities falls largely on the organizations themselves. Brudney and Meijs (2009) cited a 1998 national survey of Americans that indicated, "Two out of five volunteers stopped volunteering at some point because of one or more short-comings in the way organizations manage (or fail to manage) volunteers" (pp. 568–569). The reasons included poor use of volunteers' time and talents and poorly defining volunteer tasks. Among paid employees, 60% rated opportunities to use their skills and abilities at work as the most important contributor to their job satisfaction, second only to job security (Society for Human Resources Management, 2011). Given this, it is important for organizational leaders to embrace successful volunteer-management practices, lest they experience volunteer attrition.

The ideal situation for individuals who volunteered was when the organization in which they served effectively matched them to positional needs (Miller, 2012). This matching involved an understanding by organizational staff of the skills, interests, experience, and availability of the volunteer to fill positions. Doing so was described as essential to a volunteer finding satisfaction in the work (Miller, 2012). The Society for Human Resource Management (2011) stated,

> It is generally thought that employees feel good about their jobs when they are using their skills and abilities and contributing to the organization. Among employee demographics, opportunities to use skills and abilities rank at the top for employees with two years of tenure or less, six to 10 years of tenure, employees aged 30 or younger, and male employees. This element of job satisfaction appeared to be especially important to employees with college and post-graduate degrees compared with employees with two years or less of college education. (p. 9)

In a study of 254 senior, public-sector decision makers and managers, they were asked to determine how they quantified and measured employee engagement—an indicator of determining job satisfaction—in their organizations (Governing Research, 2012). The matching of skills, interests, and experience to individuals was supported when viewed through the prism of paid employees. Employee engagement "is about employees' commitment and connection at work—what is motivating employees to work harder, who is motivating them to work harder and what conditions are motivating them to work harder" (Society for Human Resource Management, 2011, p. 27). The researchers identified several strategies for improving engagement, one of which was to provide a personalized, long-term career plan for an employee. The recommendation to accomplish this was the following:

> Identify employee strengths and values and create opportunities for them to work in those areas. Develop clear objectives linked to the agency mission and strategic goals. Measure employee performance against these goals, and develop and follow guidelines for rewarding achievement and penalizing underperformance. (Governing Research, 2012, p. 3)

Within churches, volunteers who were rotated in volunteer roles on a regular basis within those organizations were "almost three times more likely to have no problem finding volunteers" (Thumma & Bird, 2011, p. 86). However, poor volunteer-management practices had a more negative impact on volunteer attrition than volunteers' changing personal needs (UPS Foundation, as cited in Hager & Brudney, 2004). On the other hand, when volunteers believe they are fulfilling the motives for which they serve in an organization, volunteerism is sustained (Davis, Hall, & Meyer, as cited in Finkelstein, 2008).

An additional influence on volunteers' feeling they are fulfilling their motives is how organizational leaders treat them. In the paid work environment, the impact of an

organization's leadership on employees can be better appreciated from a 2009 study of a million work teams around the world (Rath & Conchie, 2009). The study revealed nearly 75% of employees would be engaged—an indicator of satisfaction—when they knew their leaders valued strengths in an organization. For employees who had a leader who took time to personally invest in the employees' strengths, engagement levels increased eightfold (Rath & Conchie, 2009). Gallup researchers further discovered "engaged employees have well-defined roles in the organization, make strong contributions, are actively connected to their larger team and organization, and are continuously progressing" (O'Boyle & Harter, 2013, p. 28).

Gibbons (2006) defined employee engagement as intense, emotional connections employees feel for their organization. This connection influences employees to exert greater discretionary effort to their work. Employee engagement is also defined as "a measureable degree of employees' positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues, and organization which profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work" (Governing Research, 2012, p. 1). Viewed through the prism of volunteers, employee engagement can be similarly applied. O'Boyle and Harter (2013) placed workers (or volunteers) into three categories of engagement:

1. Engaged employees "work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company" and "drive innovation and move the organization forward" (O'Boyle & Harter, 2013, p. 21).

2. Not engaged employees "are essentially 'checked out,'" and "sleepwalk" (O'Boyle & Harter, 2013, p. 21) through their workday, working their required hours but putting no energy or passion into their work.

3. Actively disengaged employees are not only unhappy at work but are also

"busy acting out their unhappiness" by seeking to daily "undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish" (O'Boyle & Harter, 2013, p. 21).

Engaged employees hold a strong conviction they make a positive impact for their organization, because of their skills, knowledge, abilities, and their assurance of the same in their colleagues. The outcome of this perspective is mutual benefit for employees, and organizations, as a whole (Crim & Seijts, 2006).

Love (2009) warned organizational leaders to be aware of the conditional nature of volunteering, observing, "Nonprofit organizations whose management fails to provide the necessary leadership to allow for good volunteer cooperation, such as through regular manager feedback to volunteers, might fail to fulfill the expectations of seasoned volunteers" (p. 171). The result of not doing this proved detrimental. Love cautioned, "Such individuals appear likely to go and offer their volunteer services to other nonprofit groups if they believe the current one is not being managed effectively" (p. 171).

Summary

The growth of megachurches in the United States continues unabated while the altruistic nature of Americans citizens to give of their time and talents for the betterment of others remain constant. The research contained herein supports this.

Multiple studies referenced in this literature review underscored the need for organizational leaders to understand and proactively address their volunteer workforces. Data analyses have shown the importance of understanding why people are motivated to volunteer, the factors influencing why people choose to remain volunteers, and the aspects of their volunteer experiences that lead to their satisfaction in carrying out their volunteer tasks.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to identify best practices for local consideration in the recruiting, engaging, and retaining of volunteers within a megachurch. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to sequentially identify those factors that draw people to volunteer, keep them volunteering, and lead to their work satisfaction while volunteering in a megachurch. The final product of the study was a set of guiding principles to guide the local church forward.

Research Questions

This study was guided by three research questions:

1. What factors attract and retain volunteers to roles in a megachurch?

2. What factors influence work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch?

3. What effect, if any, do specific demographics have on volunteer satisfaction or engagement?

Chapter 3: Methodology

The study focused on identifying best practices for actively engaging volunteers within a megachurch by using descriptive research to discover and understand the factors that draw, engage, and retain those volunteers. Specifically, the study used a two-phased, explanatory, mixed-methods design that encompassed quantitative and qualitative perspectives (Creswell, 2008; Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005). Quantitative data were collected using an online survey, and qualitative data were collected using a focus group. Data were analyzed to discover those factors that attract people to volunteer, keep them volunteering, and lead to their work satisfaction while volunteering.

Participants

Quantitative: Phase 1. The population for the study was the approximately 900 attendees at one of the church's multiple campuses who volunteered their time serving in over 20 ministries at the research site. These ministries included a children's ministry, a homeless ministry, and a greeter ministry, among others.

The convenience sample was the group of volunteers at the campus. These ministry teams were representative of the entire volunteer target population of approximately 2,000 total volunteers at the megachurch and were readily available for the study (Creswell, 2008). The number of volunteers at this campus was large so the sample was typical of the entire population. Creswell (2008) noted a potential sampling error will be reduced when there is a large sample size; he suggested that 350 individuals is an appropriate target size for conducting a survey study, for which Phase 1 of this research was proposed.

The target population and the sample were diverse. The sample was composed of both female and male volunteers born between 1939 and 1996. There were individuals in

the sample group under the age of 18 who were not high school graduates. These individuals were typically the children of adult volunteers who joined their respective parent volunteering on the same ministry team. However, they did not participate in the survey. The actual demographics of the sample were compared to the surrounding county's population for data analyses after Phase 1 was completed, using demographic data obtained from the survey questionnaire and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The research site was located in a suburb of a major metropolitan center in the mid-Atlantic United States. The American Community Survey and State and County Quickfacts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) provided insight into the general population of the county from which the target population and sample were primarily comprised.

The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) revealed a growing county of approximately 350,000 residents and 112,749 total households. The residents were 49.6% male and 50.4% female. The sample likely included single, married, separated, widowed, and divorced adults. Of county residents 15 years old or older, 61.5% of males and 58.7% of females were currently married. An additional 8.5% of males and 12.6% of females were separated or divorced. Finally, 0.6% of males and 5.0% of females were widowed.

The sample was multigenerational and included individuals born before 1948 to those individuals born through the late 1990s. The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) noted the median age of a resident in the county in which the research site was located was 35.2 years old. Table 1 shows the detailed age distribution from the 2010 U.S. Census.

The sample included a combination of races and ethnicities. Table 1 shows the ethnic origin of county residents, based on the American Community Survey (U.S.

Census Bureau, 2014). Nearly 1 in 4 county residents was foreign born (22.2%), of which 56% were naturalized citizens and 44% were not U.S. citizens. Of the foreign-born residents, 56.7% were born in Asia, 29.1% were born in Latin America, 8.4% were born in Europe, 4.2% were born in Africa, 1.1% were born in Northern America, and 0.5% were born in Oceania.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the County

Characteristic	% of population
Age	
< 20	32.4
20–34	18.0
35–54	34.5
55–64	8.6
65+	6.5
Ethnicity	
White alone	71.7
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	60.1
Asian alone	16.5
Hispanic or Latino (including Mexican Americans)	13.1
Black or African American alone	7.7
Two or more races	3.5
American Indian & Alaskan Native alone	0.5
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone	0.1
Household annual income	
$200,000+	19.7
$100,000–199,000	41.6
$75,000–99,000	12.4
$50,000–74,000	12.0
< $50,000	13.4
Highest education	
Graduate or professional degree	20.6
Bachelor's	36.1
Some college (including associate's degree)	23.5
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	13.3

Note. Source: *American Community Survey* and *State and County Quick Facts,* by the U.S. Census Bureau, 2014, retrieved from https://www.census.gov/

The sample included mostly middle-class to upper middle-class income earners. The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) revealed the annual median family income for the county in which the research site was located was $129,630 and per capita income was $44,684. The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) revealed the median value of owner-occupied housing units in the county in which the research site was located was $448,700. The median gross rent was $1,628.

The sample included a variety of educational attainment levels, as shown in Table 1. The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) revealed 93.4% of residents in the county in which the research site was located age 25 and older were high school graduates or higher, and 56.7% were college graduates with a bachelor's degree or higher education.

As much of a third of the sample might have included individuals whose primary language was not English. The American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) revealed 29.3% of residents aged 5 or older in the county in which the research site was located spoke a language other than English in their home. Of that group, 19.8% indicated they could not speak English very well. Within this same group, 11.4% spoke Spanish, 7.4% spoke an Asian or Pacific Islander language, 9.2% spoke other Indo-European languages, and 1.3% spoke languages listed as other.

The religious traditions of the residents of the county where the research site was located were varied. The religious tradition of the research site itself (the megachurch campus) can be traced to its founding as a nondenominational Bible church by five families who started the church in 1961. Since then, the church has physically relocated four times, and four people have served as senior pastor, with the current pastor serving

since 1980. In the early 1990s, the church began "an outwardly focused, outreach driven, people centered, multicultural, theologically sound, Christ-centered, impact all of Washington, D.C., for the Lord church" (Solomon, 2012, p. 4). This focus on newcomers, small groups, and discipleship remains today. In 2007, the self-reported total weekly attendance was 11,000 (Bird, 2007); in 2008, that number was 13,699; and by 2013, that number had risen to 16,500 attendees ("Outreach 100," 2013). The number of members was less than 3,000; however, many nonmembers frequently attended and participated at different levels, likely due to its seeker-friendly approach to evangelism (Long, 2013).

The church offered five weekend services: one on Saturday evenings, and four throughout the day on Sundays. The Sunday evening service typically drew a younger crowd of people in their 20s and 30s and had a roughly 50:50 male–female ratio (Bird, 2007). It was estimated to be 80% White, 10% Asian, 8% Hispanic, and 2% Black, according to Bird (2007). During services, the 2,500-seat main auditorium that served as the sanctuary was lit with theater lighting. Large video screens were used to project images of the musicians and the pastor, plus text used for song lyrics and sermon notes or scripture. Bird (2007) observed, "The service was carefully planned and sequenced, led primarily by the pastor and the worship leader. The opening elements contained prayer, congregational singing, announcements, greeting one another, financial offering, and more singing" (p. 16).

Nonprobability convenience sampling was used for Phase 1 of this study. The reason for this sampling approach was based on the observation the volunteers at the campus were likely willing and available to be studied. The researcher regularly attended church services at the megachurch; participants were readily available and convenient to study. Therefore, this sampling procedure was viewed as successful for collecting

quantitative data during Phase 1 (Creswell, 2008).

Qualitative: Phase 2. The target population and sample were the same for both quantitative and qualitative participants. However, the sampling procedure for collecting qualitative data from the participants differed from the procedures noted above for collecting quantitative data (Creswell, 2008).

Purposeful sampling was used for Phase 2 of this study. More specifically, snowball sampling was the sampling approach used in this phase of the study. Data for the study were collected using a two-phased model in which a focus-group interview took place in Phase 2. The campus pastor from the campus was asked by the researcher to recommend 8–10 individuals from within the campus (the sample) to form the focus group in Phase 2 (Creswell, 2008). Participants signed an informed consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board at the beginning of the focus-group interview.

Instruments

Data were collected by two means, each supporting one of the two phases of the study. Quantitative data were collected during Phase 1 using an online survey to assess respondents' opinions, perceptions, and attitudes (Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005) and to collect demographic data such as age and gender (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative data were collected during Phase 2 using a focus group to primarily determine the participants' perceptions about volunteer recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction (Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005). Attitudinal measures for the study were necessary to measure the variables in the research questions. These attitudinal measures were particularly useful during Phase 2 to best document the feelings of the volunteers when they provided their feedback, because the research questions were subjective in nature.

Instrument 1: Phase 1. The instrument for Phase 1 of the study was the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (VSI; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001), a single-survey instrument designed to measure volunteer experience outcomes. The VSI survey is located in the Appendix of this report. Written permission was obtained from the instrument's developer to use it.

The VSI was developed by Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001) as "a multi-faceted measure of job satisfaction specifically applicable to organizations which rely predominantly upon volunteer workers" (p. 45). Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley reviewed relevant literature to design the VSI within a framework that differentiates between employees in paid work environments from volunteers in unpaid work environments when they reviewed relevant literature to develop the VSI. The instrument uses a 7-point Likert-type rating scale that assesses 39 specific items (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001).

The VSI's validity was tested using intent to remain as the dependent variable in alignment with Creswell's (2008) recommendations to evaluate "plan and procedures used in constructing" (p. 172) an instrument to validate the content of any survey. For the VSI, a population of 327 volunteers, aged 19–72 years old, in a nonprofit organization took part in the study; data analysis determined 39 was the mean, median, and mode age (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001) observed, "Overall, the results of the current study produced positive results with regard to establishing the reliability and validity of the proposed measurement instrument, the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (VSI)" (p. 62). Factor analysis was used to yield four specific measurements of volunteer job satisfaction: (a) organizational support, (b) participation efficacy, (c) empowerment (relationship with organization), and (d) group integration. Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley learned that each of the four dimensions had a significant,

though moderate, correlation in relationship to the other dimensions. The analysis showed Cronbach's alpha was .91 for organizational support, .84 for participation efficacy, .75 for empowerment, and .87 for group integration (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley observed, "While the dimensions are related they are also distinct" (p. 62). They further noted, "Regression results indicated that participation efficacy and group integration were significantly correlated with volunteer satisfaction and are predictors of intent to remain" (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001, p. 45). They asserted that both the VSI's reliability and validity were supported. However, they did recommended augmenting the VSI with qualitative research methods (e.g., focus groups or interviews) to address limitations in wholly identifying volunteer satisfaction influences solely using the VSI.

The SurveyMonkey (2013) online survey website was used as the mechanism to administer the VSI survey to the volunteers at the campus. Using this method eased administration as well as use for participants since the survey questionnaire was online. Because the survey was Internet based, the deployment mechanism (i.e., the VSI developer) offered built-in, existing controls that provided stable, consistent responses. Participants themselves experienced little ambiguity in the questions and responses available to them because of the nature of the administering tool (Creswell, 2008). The survey questionnaire was designed to maximize response options for participants, as the VSI included both nominal and ordinal categorical scales in the survey (Creswell, 2008). This was particularly important because of the variables introduced in the research questions and the nature of attitudinal responses by participants (Creswell, 2008).

The process for participants to take the survey was standardized through instructions given to them in written format on the website once they commenced the

survey questionnaire. Part I of the survey questionnaire included an electronic informed-consent participation letter that participants read and agreed to. This document was based on Nova Southeastern University's Applied Research Center informed-consent template. In Part II, participants responded to 40 statements that reflected their level of satisfaction with their volunteer position. Introductory comments for this section also provided a definition of terms for clarity. The instructions directed respondents to click a box to identify their level of satisfaction with certain characteristics described in a statement with numbers between 1 (*very dissatisfied*) and 7 (*very satisfied*). In Part III, participants responded to eight statements reflecting their level of agreement regarding communication about changes in their organization. The instructions directed respondents to click on a box with numbers between 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*). In Part IV, participants were asked to respond to the question: "Unless unforeseen changes occur in your life, do you see yourself volunteering for this agency 1 year from now?" The instructions directed respondents to click on a box with numbers between 1 (*certainly not*) and 7 (*certainly*). In Part V, participants answered nine demographic questions. The survey ended with an open comments box for participants to provide any additional narrative inputs.

Instrument 2: Phase 2. The instrument for Phase 2 of the study was an interview methodology. Questions developed for the interview reflected the qualitative research questions for qualitative inquiry to help answer the research problem (Creswell, 2008).

An interview protocol for the focus group was developed that was reviewed once Phase 1 was complete and initial analyses of the quantitative data had taken place. A focus group was convened, and interviews were conducted to explore the central phenomenon of the research problem (Creswell, 2008). The focus-group interviews were

used to discuss the prevailing themes of Phase 1 survey results, as the intent of the focus-group interview questions was to magnify those themes.

Using a focus-group interview methodology provided several advantages in collecting qualitative data. Kitzinger (1995) contended group discussions are particularly helpful in collecting qualitative data when a series of open-ended questions is used; it encourages "research participants to explore the issues of importance to them, in their own vocabulary, generating their own questions and pursuing their own priorities" (p. 299). Furthermore, using focus groups to conduct interviews is helpful because "they do not discriminate against people who cannot read or write and they can encourage participation from people reluctant to be interviewed on their own or who feel they have nothing to say" (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 299). Creswell (2008) added using such interviews does not restrict participants' views, either.

Procedures

Data were collected and analyzed for the study to address the research problem. The study investigated several key areas to answer the research questions. Successful strategies for recruiting volunteers, exploring why congregants chose to volunteer, and determining what motivated congregants to continue volunteering answered Research Question 1: What factors attract and retain volunteers to roles in a megachurch? This question was primarily answered by the focus-group interview responses with secondary support data from the VSI survey. Understanding key elements that drive volunteer job satisfaction helped answer Research Question 2: What factors influence work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch? This question was primarily answered by the data analyses from the VSI survey with additional insight provided by focus-group responses. Exploring how age, gender, and other demographic properties influence volunteer

engagement helped answer Research Question 3: What effect, if any, do specific demographics have on volunteer satisfaction or engagement? This question was answered by the data analyses from the VSI survey responses with secondary support data from the focus-group interview responses. The process that accomplished this follows.

Design type. An explanatory, mixed-methods design was used to conduct the study. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the study and compared during data analyses (Creswell, 2008).

Timing. A sequential, two-phased model for data collection was used. Quantitative data were collected first during Phase 1, followed by qualitative data that were collected during Phase 2 (Creswell, 2008). Phase 1 took place over a 30-day period. Phase 2 immediately followed Phase 1 on a single day 5 days after the completion of Phase 1.

Weighting. Quantitative data were given greater weight (or priority) than qualitative data. More emphasis was placed on the quantitative data collected over the qualitative data collected for this study, as the latter helped explain the former (Creswell, 2008).

Mixed data. Quantitative data and qualitative data collected for the study were mixed during data analyses (Creswell, 2008). Data were collected from participants using an online questionnaire to obtain quantitative data during Phase 1 of the study. Follow-up interviews were conducted using a focus group of selected participants from the sample to collect qualitative data during Phase 2 of the study. The intent of doing this was to use the qualitative data (the focus-group interview answers) to expand on the quantitative data (survey responses) by providing detailed, specific information that provided more in-depth understanding of the data to better understand the research problem (Creswell,

2008).

Design rationale. The rationale for using this design were the qualitative data collected in Phase 2—provided by the volunteers ($n = 5$) who composed the focus group—helped explain the statistical results obtained from the online survey questionnaire (i.e., the quantitative data) collected in Phase 1. Because the quantitative data were drawn from a larger sample ($N = 143$), these data were more generalized, thus providing what Creswell (2008) called a "general picture of the research problem" (p. 560). On the other hand, qualitative data provided in the form of the focus-group's interview responses during Phase 2 helped with data analyses to "refine, extend, or explain the general picture" (Creswell, 2008, p. 560) of the survey results administered during Phase 1. More specifically, the qualitative data enabled the researcher to probe key results discovered from the survey questionnaire (Creswell, 2008).

Quantitative data: Phase 1. The research design that was used during Phase 1 of the study to answer the research questions was the survey design. The purposes for choosing the survey design were primarily the following:

1. The survey helped "identify important beliefs and attitudes of individuals" (Creswell, 2008, p. 387).

2. It provided "an economical and efficient means of gathering a large amount of data" (Creswell, 2008, p. 387) from many volunteers ($N = 143$).

3. It was used to survey a random sample of volunteers.

4. It was a proven method for data collection.

5. It provided a manageable means for the researcher to analyze the data and draw conclusions (Creswell, 2008).

Specifically, a cross-sectional survey design was used. The reason for this again

related to behavior. This type of study was ideal to examine a population's current attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices (Creswell, 2008).

The unit of analysis for the study was a large megachurch located in a suburb of a major metropolitan center in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. This organization was appropriate to provide the information necessary to answer the quantitative research questions for this study (Creswell, 2008). The population for the study during Phase 1 was the approximately 900 people who attended church at the research site. These individuals supported over 20 different ministries within the church.

The instrument for data collection during Phase 1 of the study was the VSI (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). The administration of the VSI was online through a survey questionnaire hosted on the SurveyMonkey website. The survey questionnaire was accessed by volunteers at the campus over the Internet using the SurveyMonkey (2013) website. The VSI survey is attached as the Appendix.

Information obtained in Phase 1 of the study was strictly confidential unless law required future disclosure. All VSI data collected were secured in a protected manner onto an external hard drive kept in the researcher's home office in a locked firebox. The data will be kept for 36 months from the end of the study, and destroyed after that time using the "Secure Empty Trash" function for digital files. Participants' names were not used in the reporting of information in publications or conference presentations because subject anonymity was maintained, as the survey did not ask for any personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, phone number).

The volunteers at the campus were asked to take the VSI survey using an e-mail sent from one of the paid staff leaders at the campus. A short cover letter was provided to this leader by the investigator in advance as a suggested lead-in for the e-mail. A

hyperlink included in the e-mail connected participants directly to the SurveyMonkey website and the VSI survey.

Once participants accessed the secure website using the hyperlink provided to them in the e-mail, they were presented with on-screen instructions to read the Participation Letter to obtain their informed consent. They then proceeded with answering the survey questions. All subjects who accessed the survey had the option to print out the Participation Letter using instructions on the SurveyMonkey website using their web browser's print menu option.

A 30-day time frame was announced via the e-mail, during which the survey was available to be completed. After 2 weeks, a second e-mail was sent to the same group of volunteers by the aforementioned paid staff member encouraging anyone who had not completed the survey to do so. After 30 days had elapsed, the survey was formally closed on the website (Creswell, 2008). To ensure there were not more responses to the survey than what was needed, the "maximum response count" feature on SurveyMonkey was used to automatically close the survey once a predetermined number of subjects had taken it.

Web-based tools were available throughout the 30-day period showing the response rate of how many people had begun the survey and how many people had completed the survey. This was especially important to monitor because response rates tend to be lower when surveys are accomplished electronically (Creswell, 2008). Monitoring the response rate provided the investigator immediate feedback on completion rates from the sample during the active data collection period.

Qualitative data: Phase 2. A narrative, field-research approach was used during Phase 2 to gain a better understanding of volunteer behavior by collecting anecdotal

material (Kern, 2011). The procedure for collecting these data was a focus-group interview following completion of Phase 1 (Creswell, 2008). A key purpose of using a focus group was because "the method is particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and can be used to examine not only what people think but how they think and why they think that way" (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 299). The unit of analysis, the population, and the sample were the same for both Phases 1 and 2.

The sampling procedure for the study during Phase 2 was purposeful sampling. Specifically, snowball sampling was used (Creswell, 2008)because focus-group participants were sought out after the study began (Phase 1). The researcher informally asked the senior staff at the campus to recommend 8–10 individual volunteers within the campus who were "information rich" (Creswell, 2008, p. 214) and could participate in the focus group. Krueger and Casey (2009) contended focus groups develop certain characteristics influenced by five ingredients: (a) people who (b) possess certain characteristics and (c) provide qualitative data (d) in a focused discussion (e) to help understand the topic. The sampling procedure used herein helped achieve these.

The individuals who participated in the focus group came from the sample of the population and unit of analysis mentioned herein; they were volunteers at the campus. The researcher recommended to the paid staff that at least one participant be selected from each of the five key ministry sections at the campus (e.g., children's ministry, weekend host team, worship team) to provide a well-represented focus group from within the sample.

The researcher then provided a suggested e-mail to the paid staff to send to the prospective focus-group participants inviting them to take part in the focus group. The e-mail explained the purpose of the focus group and included the researcher's name, phone

number, and e-mail address so invited volunteers who wanted to know more about the study could contact him directly. However, none of the prospective participants did so. On the day the focus group convened, five of the invited volunteers participated. The smaller number of participants was likely due to competing events at the research site on the day the focus group convened.

The instrument to collect qualitative data for Phase 2 of the study was a semistructured interview methodology administered to the focus group. In semistructured interviews, the researcher asks predetermined questions as a general guide, with clarifying follow-up questions as needed (Patton, as cited in West, 2013). The data obtained during this phase augmented the quantitative data that were collected and analyzed after Phase 1 was complete (Creswell, 2008; Kitzinger, 1995). The following focus-group interview questions were developed to reflect both the qualitative research questions and the prevailing themes of the research problem:

1. Describe the reasons you were drawn to volunteer with this ministry when you first began volunteering.

2. Describe the benefits you derive from volunteering in this ministry.

3. Tell me about your reasons for continuing to volunteer in this ministry.

4. Describe the aspects of volunteering that make it worthwhile for you.

5. Tell me how you feel about volunteering in this ministry for the long term.

The focus-group interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder. The researcher transcribed the recording in his home office using headphones to guard participants' privacy after the focus group was conducted. The transcripts of the digital audio recording did not have any information that could be linked to participants. The media used to save the recording and transcript was kept securely in the researcher's

home office in a locked firebox. The recording and transcript will be kept for 36 months from the end of the study, and will be destroyed after that time using a "Secure Empty Trash" function for digital files.

Although none of the focus-group interview questions asked participants for information that could have been linked to them, confidentiality for things they said on the recording could not be guaranteed, as participants' voices were potentially identifiable to anyone who heard the recording and knew them. However, access to the digital file was limited, and all information obtained in the study was strictly confidential unless law requires disclosure. The audio recording itself was only available to be heard by the researcher, Institutional Review Board staff, the dissertation chair, and the committee member. Furthermore, the focus-group interviews were conducted in a private room with a closed door. Only focus-group subjects and the researcher were in the room. Therefore, only the researcher and the five participants who attended the focus group knew who participated in the focus group.

The administration of the focus-group interview took place June 22, 2014, at the research site, 5 days after the online survey from Phase 1 was formally closed. The focus group was scheduled to convene for 90 minutes; it formally lasted 75 minutes. There was informal banter between the participants at the beginning of the focus group (prior to the interviews being conducted), so the actual total time the focus group was together was closer to 100 minutes overall. Although a back-up date for the focus group had been scheduled 1 week later than the originally scheduled date, it was not needed. The purpose of doing this was to address any unforeseen closure at the research site due to a local weather event or other unplanned event such as a power outage, neither of which occurred.

The setting for the focus group was at the research site, as it was a large facility with multiple meeting and conference rooms. The researcher coordinated with the campus staff to reserve a small conference room where he met with the selected focus-group participants. Once all five participants arrived at the room, the researcher shut the door for privacy. The setting was comfortable, with participants sitting halfway around a small conference table. The researcher sat in the middle of one long side of the table, while one participant sat next to him, one participant sat at the head of the table, and the other three participants sat across the table on the opposite long side. The intent of this seating arrangement was to establish a more relaxed atmosphere (Kitzinger, 1995). The total session was scheduled for 90 minutes, and participants were reminded of this time frame during introductory comments.

Once the session formally began, the researcher provided a hard copy of the Adult Consent Form to each participant to read and sign. This form was based on Nova Southeastern University's Applied Research Center informed consent template and was already approved by the Institutional Review Board. It provided information to the participants on (a) the study, elaborating on its purpose; (b) the purpose of the focus group; (c) why they were being asked to participate in the focus group; (d) what they would be doing if they agreed to participate in the focus group; (e) the use of an audio recorder during the focus group; (f) any dangers to them for participating in the focus group; (g) benefits and risks to them for participating in the focus group; (h) any remuneration for participating in the focus group; (i) how their information would be kept private if they participated in the focus group; and (j) their rights if they participated in the focus group and then chose to withdraw from the study.

The researcher collected the signed informed consent forms from all five

participants prior to any interview questions being asked. The researcher added his signature to each individually signed informed consent letter and then used a copy machine at the research site to provide a copy of the signed document to each participant. The researcher kept the original signed informed consent letters securely in his home office in a locked firebox, where they will remain for 36 months from the end of the study. These original signed informed consent letters will be destroyed after that time using a paper shredder.

Data analysis. Several strategies were used to analyze the data after collection in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study (Creswell, 2008; Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005). Data analyses were based on the research questions and the research design approved for the study.

Comparative statistical analyses were used for Phase 1 using the quantitative data collected from the VSI survey. The data analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 21 software. Descriptive statistics were used that included regression analysis, frequencies, means, and standard deviations for each survey item on the VSI.

Content analysis was used for Phase 2 using the qualitative data obtained during the focus-group interview. This was accomplished by transcribing the audio recording from the completed focus-group interviews to determine common or repeated themes that emerged from the participants' responses. First, a survey database was created using the transcripts. Each focus group participant's responses were color coded on the transcript. Next, the data were analyzed by learning the contents of the data (Fink, 2003), and a codebook was created. The data were then organized, stored, and cleaned. Finally, a deductive analysis of the qualitative data was accomplished. This process enabled the

researcher to present common themes in both table and narrative form to expand and explain the quantitative data collected.

Limitations

Four limitations were acknowledged leading into this study:

1. The study was constrained by a focused view of a large, suburban church and did not fully explore other dimensions of the organization that may have influenced volunteer participation, retention, or job satisfaction.

2. The study was restricted in that it did not answer all potential questions relating to volunteer engagement during collection procedures.

3. The study was limited by the population sample size, as the volunteers surveyed were located in a single church, at a single location, within a single campus.

4. The researcher limited the study, as he relied almost entirely on self-reported data of the research site.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the results of quantitative and qualitative research conducted for the applied dissertation. Data analyses conducted by the researcher are included. The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to identify best practices for local consideration in the recruiting, engaging, and retaining of volunteers within a megachurch. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to sequentially identify those factors that draw people to volunteer, keep them volunteering, and lead to their work satisfaction while volunteering in a megachurch.

Data were collected over a 5-week period at a megachurch located in a large, mid-Atlantic metropolitan area of the United States. Phase 1 and Phase 2 were conducted sequentially between May 19, 2014, and June 22, 2014.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The researcher used the VSI survey (see Appendix) in Phase 1 of this study to collect quantitative data from 143 volunteers to measure their "important beliefs and attitudes" (Creswell, 2008, p. 387) regarding their volunteer experiences. The data collected from the VSI primarily addressed Research Questions 2 and 3 and complemented qualitative data collected for Research Question 1.

Nonprobability convenience sampling was used to obtain the sample at the research site. The researcher invited prospective subjects to take the online survey via a staff member at the campus. In turn, potential subjects were invited by the staff to take the survey.

Subjects accessed the VSI survey online using the SurveyMonkey website. Of the 143 volunteers who responded, 123 completed the survey. This yielded an 86% useable response rate. Implementation took place May 17 though June 19, 2014. As described in

Chapter 3, the VSI was composed of four sections.

VSI Survey Part I: Introduction. The first section contained introductory comments from the researcher and the Participation Letter for informed consent. No data were collected or analyzed from this section of the survey.

VSI Survey Part II: Satisfaction level. The second section of the survey contained 40 questions that required subjects to indicate their level of satisfaction related to their volunteer roles. Data collected were used to measure respondents' satisfaction levels within four dimensions of satisfaction: Organizational Support, Participation Efficacy, Empowerment, and Group Integration. Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001) determined these dimensions when they developed the VSI instrument.

The researcher used factor analysis to measure specific items within each dimension using the Factor Items Key provided by the VSI developers. The Cronbach's alpha value was calculated for each dimension to assess internal consistency. Results indicated excellent internal consistency within each factor, from .88 to .95, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Factor Analysis of Volunteer Satisfaction Dimensions

Factor	Cronbach's α	*M*	*SD*	Valid *n*	# of items
Organizational Support	.947	56.51	13.00	127	10
Participation Efficacy	.925	29.37	5.82	127	5
Empowerment	.842	17.62	3.87	135	3
Group Integration	.880	22.55	5.02	131	4

Note. Total respondents = 143.

VSI Survey Part III: Communication. The third section of the survey required subjects to answer eight questions exploring their views of how the organization

communicated changes to them. Data collected in this section were used to measure respondents' satisfaction levels with how the organization communicated changes to them. The researcher used factor analysis to calculate the Cronbach's alpha value for these items to assess internal consistency. The result indicated strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha value of .911 (see Table 3).

Table 3

Factor Analysis of Organizational Communication

Factor	Cronbach's α	*M*	*SD*	Valid *n*	# of items
Organizational Communication	.911	44.19	9.3	124	8

Note. Total respondents = 143.

VSI Survey Part IV: Intent to remain. The fourth section of the survey required subjects to respond to the question, "Unless unforeseen changes occur in your life, do you see yourself volunteering for this agency 1 year from now?" to indicate their intent to remain volunteering with the organization ($M = 6.26$, $SD = 1.42$). The question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*certainly not*) to 7 (*certainly*). Table 4 shows the mean, standard deviation and frequencies for the survey question indicating intent to remain.

Table 4

Frequencies for Responses Regarding Intent to Remain

Item	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unless unforeseen changes occur in your life, do you see yourself volunteering for this agency 1 year from now?	6.26	1.42	3	2	3	8	5	16	86

Note. $N = 123$. *Note.* Scale of 1 = *certainly not*, 4 = *unsure*, 7 = *certainly*.

VSI Survey Part V: Demographics. The last section of the survey required subjects to provide demographic information. Table 5 shows a summary of these data.

Table 5

Summary of Demographic Data, Volunteer Satisfaction Index Survey

Demographic	*n*	%
Gender		
Female	85	69.1
Male	38	30.9
Age		
18–25	3	2.4
26–35	20	16.3
36–45	43	35.0
46–55	32	26.0
56–65	17	13.8
66–75	8	6.5
Ethnicity		
White/European American	98	79.7
Black/African American	6	4.9
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	1.6
Asian American/Pacific Islander	4	3.3
Mexican American	0	0.0
Other Hispanic	8	6.5
Other[a]	5	4.1
Annual income		
Over $80,000	76	61.8
$71,000–80,000	2	1.6
$61,000–70,000	4	3.3
$51,000–60,000	12	9.8
$41,000–50,000	8	6.5
$31,000-40,000	7	5.7
$21,000-30,000	3	2.4
$11,000-20,000	1	0.8
Less than 10,000	10	8.1
Highest level of education completed		
Graduate degree	44	35.8
College graduate	53	43.1
Some college (includes community college)	25	20.3
High school graduate	1	0.8

Note. $N = 123$.

[a]Responses were "Brown complexion, born in the USA," "German," "Multiracial," "N/A," and "Why is this important?"

Qualitative Data Analysis

The researcher obtained qualitative data from five volunteers who participated in a single focus group. The purpose of the focus group was to gain a better understanding of volunteer behavior by collecting anecdotal material from the participants by exploring their knowledge and experiences as volunteers at the research site. The focus-group interview was conducted at the research site on June 22, 2014, from 12:45 pm to 2:15 pm (90 minutes). The researcher conducted the interview.

Qualitative data were also collected from the open-ended questions on the VSI survey. These data complemented the qualitative data collected from the focus-group interview.

The qualitative data primarily addressed Research Question 1 and complemented quantitative data collected for Research Questions 2 and 3. During the focus group interview, the researcher asked the subjects five questions related to their volunteer experiences:

1. Describe the reasons you were drawn to volunteer with this ministry when you first began volunteering.

2. Describe the benefits you derive from volunteering in this ministry.

3. Tell me about your reasons for continuing to volunteer in this ministry.

4. Describe the aspects of volunteering that make it worthwhile for you.

5. Tell me how you feel about volunteering in this ministry for the long term.

All participants were over the age of 18. Three of the participants were female and two were male. Four of the participants were married (two to each other); the remaining female participant one did not indicate her marital status. All five participants indicated they had at least one child. The researcher observed three of the participants as

White (two females, one male) and two as Asian American (one female, one male).

All participants had attended church at the research site for at least 1 year, with most having attended for 6 or more years. One participant had attended for 1.5 years and volunteered for that time as well. Two had attended for 6 years, volunteering for 5 years. Two had attended 7 years and volunteered for all 7 years.

Results for Research Question 1

What factors attract and retain volunteers to roles in a megachurch? The first research question was answered primarily by focus-group data and augmented with survey data. The combined results emerged to provide an understanding of (a) successful volunteer-recruitment strategies, (b) why congregants chose to volunteer, and (c) what motivated congregants to continue volunteering.

Qualitative data: Attraction factors. Qualitative data for Research Question 1 were obtained from the focus group. For attraction factors, data were specifically analyzed using these data. The following qualitative data addressed the factors that attract volunteers to roles in a megachurch. Three specific themes emerged for why people were attracted to volunteer to their roles in this church: (a) seeking relationship by connecting with others through serving, (b) finding a good place for their children to attend church, and (c) fulfilling the purpose of serving others because Christian principles direct it.

Four participants specifically stated they were seeking a way to feel connected in relationship with other people by volunteering. One participant said she was "looking for a community of like-minded women, [a] place already feeling like a family." She stated, "Volunteering makes it small. When you start to serve, you meet the same people each time. You start to invest in each other, and it makes it feel more like a family." Another participant said,

> I almost feel like we get much more connected to the church by serving because, Number 1, you have all the team members you serve with, but then also, Number 2, it gives you an easier opportunity to recognize people's faces and names, and again there's a lot of people we don't know, but better than if we had not started serving at all.

Finally, a third participant observed,

> For us, practically, the church got very small when we started serving. At [the church's main campus] there's 13,000 people that roll through there on a weekend, and if you just warm a seat and leave, other than the greeters who serve such a critical role—because they're frankly the people you see every week—you're not going to get to know anybody. You're not going to get to know your kid's teachers, you're not going to get to know anybody if you're just showing up.

He added,

> We have never met any Christian friends that we didn't meet serving with them. That's the place where we have met Christian friends, where our children have made friendships, so the model of the body in the Bible, that shouldn't surprise us that that's where the connection occurs when you're serving.

The participants also specifically acknowledged they were attracted to volunteer because of the importance of finding a good place for their children. One participant stated,

> I wanted to stay involved with my son in the [children's ministry] program and there somewhat was a requirement there for somebody—[it] had to be either your husband or yourself—to volunteer, and I love working with children. My background is in teaching. I had also been a kindergarten volunteer for several years [at the church's main campus].

Another participant sought out a church where her children would enjoy attending. At a previous church the participant attended, she had experienced challenges with childcare. She offered,

> I was volunteering in [another church ministry] and I heard about the kids program [at the research site]. I had a community of women that I felt comfortable with, and we were looking for another church. We brought the kids here [and] they loved it, and they call it "churchy church," and they just told my husband [and he] saw how much they loved it, and so he came, and we started coming as a family.

She added, “I come [to the research site] during the week to volunteer, and they get so excited because they have so much fun here.” A third participant was attracted to volunteer because of his passion to serve children and his belief “there is no greater return on investment and time than investing in children for Jesus.”

Lastly, most of the participants expressed a sense of Christian duty to serve others as an attractor to their volunteer roles. One participant commented, “I think [volunteering] is to give back and give glory to God, and we’re supposed to kind of open the doors and I think it’s a way to serve.” Another participant expressed this idea more directly:

> Not to be sort of the Sunday school answer, but Jesus commands it [serving others]. If the body isn’t being used, if everyone is not using their gifts in some sort of service, the church is dysfunctional. So one of the reasons we serve is because we’re supposed to serve. Now, we do it because we love Christ, not just out of compulsion. But we’re supposed to serve.

Qualitative data: Retention factors. The following qualitative data addressed the factors that retain volunteers to roles in a megachurch. The common themes that emerged were mattering and connectedness. Conversely, perfectionism emerged as a negative factor.

The first theme that emerged for all focus-group participants was a sense of mattering to others. One participant said, “I think ‘mattering’ is the real reason why we keep going, even when it’s exhausting. . . . Volunteering has its challenges like everything else, but we feel like we do something that matters.” This idea permeated the group’s conversation. Another participant reflected that being a volunteer was a “privilege of serving my community and my church, so I’ll continue serving.” Other participant comments were “I feel like I accomplish something”; “I can’t imagine myself doing anything else”; “I can see myself doing this forever”; “I would love to serve even

more"; "I will be in children's ministry until I am dead"; and "in terms of wanting to serve long-term, I hope to do it for all the days of my life."

When asked about reasons for continuing to volunteer, one participant responded,

> It's a rewarding experience . . . being able to serve in the community. A church this size gives me the opportunity to give my time and my love to my brothers and sisters in the community. I think that is the best gift you can give to any single person in the world: time and love.

Another participant said that even when he did not feel like volunteering at times, he felt an obligation to do so against the backdrop of "all that Christ has done for us," because "when you feel a little down, you power through it by the power of the Spirit." A third participant added, "We don't just want to take what the church is offering, we want to give back."

The value of connectedness and building closer relationships emerged as a second common theme and retention factor for all five participants (this factor also emerged as an attraction factor). One participant observed, "When you start to serve . . . you meet the same people each time, and you're sharing prayer requests, and you're sharing your life with them on a small level." She specified, "You start to invest in one another, and it does make it feel more like a family. It's not just showing up." Another participant said a reason he continued to volunteer was

> to be able to connect and make the church smaller, because [volunteering] definitely does. When you know more people, it just shrinks this whole church down. One of the benefits of being at [the research site] is the benefit of a small church with the benefits of a large church.

A third participant stressed how even one other volunteer can make the difference in retention. This participant stated there was a sense of family for her because a fellow volunteer "has a dysfunctional family like I do, and so she really says this is her family. And my family's a wreck, so this is what I'd like to be my family . . . and that's why I

keep coming." This latter comment suggested that people may volunteer to connect beyond simply making friends by seeking far deeper relationships that serve a therapeutic purpose.

In addition to positive factors that emerged for retaining volunteers to roles in a megachurch, the focus group participants revealed a factor they felt hindered retention of volunteers as well. They unanimously agreed there was pressure to perform to what they perceived as an unattainable level of perfection that permeated the culture of the megachurch; they could not attain nor maintain such perfectionism as volunteers. One participant observed this stress in the paid staff and warned it could "hinder your volunteer retention or people even being willing to volunteer." Another participant said, "There can be this seeming requirement for perfection at [the research site], and that . . . creates some stress. I know this, and it can bleed to volunteers." A third participant understood the organization's goal of "doing things with excellence" but cautioned the church needed "to balance it in a way so that people don't feel like they're the afterthought." To that statement another participant added, "Because that makes people feel like a number." One other participant advised, "You have to be comfortable with some mistakes if you're going to be pushing more [responsibilities] to the volunteers."

The researcher also analyzed retention factors that emerged from the open-ended Additional Comments section of the VSI survey. These comments were categorized as a sense of belonging, acceptance, and recognition. For example, one respondent shared,

> Volunteering at [research site] has helped us to feel plugged in to the church. We have made many wonderful friends and feel like we are a part of the church, rather than just someone who shows up for the sermon.

Another respondent offered,

> If my husband and I had not volunteered, we never would have met so many

> people, and would not have felt a part of the church. We spent years sitting in the pews not getting to know many people, not getting involved. Volunteering has changed our lives—for the better. Truly a blessing.

A third respondent noted, "I would like to thank all of the staff at [the research site] for creating an atmosphere that is welcoming, friendly, and encouraging. It is a pleasure to serve beside you, and I have always felt appreciated and welcomed."

Quantitative data: Retention factors. Quantitative data for Research Question 1 were obtained from the survey. Data were specifically analyzed from Part IV: Intent to Remain for retention factors. There were no quantitative data to support the part of Research Question 1 regarding factors that attract volunteers to roles in a megachurch. This was expected as the researcher proposed the qualitative data from the focus group would answer this part of the question.

The following quantitative data addressed factors that retain volunteers to roles in a megachurch. Respondents were required to answer the question, "Unless unforeseen changes occur in your life, do you see yourself volunteering for this agency 1 year from now?" The question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*certainly not*) to 7 (*certainly*) to measure respondents' intent to remain (Table 4). The mean score of 6.26 (SD = 1.42) suggested that respondents overwhelmingly planned to remain volunteering with the organization. Nearly 70% of respondents indicated they would certainly volunteer with the organization 1 year from when they answered the question. That percentage increased to 87% of respondents when data for scale levels 5 and 6 were included.

Eight respondents (6.5%) indicated they were unsure if they would remain volunteering with the organization long term, and three respondents (2.4%) indicated they would certainly not volunteer long term. Each of the latter respondents cited moving

as the reason. Several explanations were noted for respondents who were unsure. One felt criticized by the volunteer supervisor. One cited not being permitted to volunteer in the area of his or her "calling and gifts from God," which the respondent would only be able use if hired as a paid staff member, which the church staff did not want to do. One noted a lack of appreciation, pointing out,"[I] have a great deal to offer that I feel is not tapped into [or] encouraged." One stated, "The students that I have been working with are transferring to another age group," and the participant was considering moving up with them to the next grade level as a volunteer.

The researcher also used correlational analysis to examine the relationship between respondents' intent to remain and the four volunteer-satisfaction dimensions. A bivariate Pearson product correlation coefficient was calculated for each dimension: Organizational Support (r = .410, p = .000), Participation Efficacy (r = .313, p = .000), Empowerment (r = .372, p = .000), and Group Integration (r = .333, p = .000), as shown in Table 6. Results indicated a statistically significant correlation between intent to remain and each dimension, with a positive correlation between all variables. The strongest relationship was between intent to remain and Organizational Support (r = .410). The remaining dimensions each had a moderate positive relationship with the variable of intent to remain.

Table 6

Pearson Correlation Between Intent to Remain and Volunteer-Satisfaction Dimensions

Variable	Organizational Support	Participation Efficacy	Empowerment	Group Integration
Intent to remain	.410	.313	.372	.333

Note. All correlations significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

Correlational analysis was also used to examine the relationship between

respondents' intent to remain and the Organizational Communication section of the survey. A bivariate Pearson product correlation coefficient was calculated for the eight organizational communication items, yielding $r = .415$, $p = .000$. As with the volunteer-satisfaction dimensions, the organizational communication variable showed a statistically significant, positive correlation with the variable of intent to remain.

Results for Research Question 2

What factors influence work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch? The researcher addressed Research Question 2 by administering the VSI survey (Appendix A), specifically drawing from the data collected in Part II: Satisfaction and Part III: Communication. These data were augmented with focus-group interview findings. Results emerged from the combined data that provided an understanding of key elements that drive volunteer job satisfaction.

Quantitative data. Results from the survey indicated respondents experienced a high level of satisfaction in their volunteer roles. This was determined after analyzing the item scores as defined within the predetermined four dimensions of measurement: Organizational Support, Participation Efficacy, Empowerment, and Group Integration (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001).

The Organizational Support factor measured how a volunteer's satisfaction was derived through the educational and emotional resources the organization provided (Wong et al., 2010). This dimension included 10 items. Each question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 7 (*very satisfied*). Table 7 shows the mean, standard deviations, and frequencies for this factor.

Within this factor, respondents rated "the availability of getting help when I need it" the highest item ($M = 6.06$, $SD = 1.39$) that was also perceived as the strongest area.

The next highest rated item was respondents' relationships with paid staff (*M* = 5.94, *SD* = 1.63) followed closely by how respondents felt about the amount of permission they needed to do the things they needed to do on their job (*M* = 5.82, *SD* = 1.52) and "how often the organization acknowledges the work I do" (*M* = 5.80, *SD* = 1.48).

Table 7

Frequencies for Organizational Support Items

Item	Valid *n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The availability of getting help when I need it.	143	6.06	1.39	2	3	4	14	10	30	80
The support network that is in place for me when I have volunteer-related problems.	135	5.59	1.58	4	3	5	20	20	28	55
The way in which the organization provides me with performance feedback.	135	4.96	1.65	5	5	10	39	18	21	37
The support I receive from people in the organization.	131	5.72	1.57	3	6	4	9	23	28	58
The amount of information I receive about what the organization is doing.	131	5.50	1.62	4	4	10	10	24	31	48
How often the organization acknowledges the work I do.	127	5.80	1.48	2	5	4	9	23	26	58
The amount of permission I need to get to do the things I need to do on this job	127	5.82	1.52	3	4	3	14	14	29	60
My relationships with paid staff.	127	5.94	1.63	6	3	5	3	13	28	69
The degree to which I feel I belong in the organization.	127	5.66	1.55	3	5	6	11	17	35	50
The degree to which the organization communicates its goals and objectives to volunteers.	127	5.43	1.72	5	7	7	13	18	31	46

Note. Scale of 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 4 = *undecided*, 7 = *very satisfied*.

The lowest rated item in this factor (perceived as the weakest area) was "the way

in which the organization provides me with performance feedback" (*M* = 4.96, *SD* = 1.65). The second lowest rated item was how respondents felt about the degree to which the organization communicated its goals and objectives to them (*M* = 5.43, *SD* = 1.72).

The Participation Efficacy factor measured how respondents felt about their ability to be effective in their volunteer roles and how competent they felt in carrying out their tasks. This dimension included five items. Each question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 7 (*very satisfied*). Table 8 shows the mean, standard deviations, and frequencies for this factor.

Table 8

Frequencies for Participation Efficacy Items

Item	Valid *n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The progress that I have seen in the clientele served by my organization.	143	5.44	1.38	3	2	1	30	37	26	44
The difference my volunteer work is making.	135	5.89	1.40	4	1	2	13	19	35	61
My ability to do this job as well as anyone else.	131	6.19	1.19	2	1	0	10	13	33	72
How worthwhile my contribution is.	127	6.13	1.24	2	1	3	7	12	36	66
The amount of effort I put in as equaling the amount of change I influence.	127	5.65	1.36	1	2	5	20	22	31	46

Note. Scale of 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 4 = *undecided*, 7 = *very satisfied*.

Within this factor, respondents rated "my ability to do this job as well as anyone else" as the highest rated item (*M* = 6.19, *SD* = 1.19), which was also perceived as the strongest area. Fifty-five percent of respondents were very satisfied with their ability to do their volunteer job as well as anyone else. However, 10% of respondents were either dissatisfied or undecided in their ability to do the job as well as others.

The next highest rated item was "how worthwhile my contribution is" ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 1.24$). Fifty-two percent of respondents indicated they were very satisfied with how worthwhile their contribution to the organization was, whereas only 4.7% of respondents were dissatisfied with how worthwhile their contribution to the organization was.

The lowest rated item (perceived as the weakest area) was for "the progress that I have seen in the clientele served by my organization" ($M = 5.44$, $SD = 1.38$). Only 30.8% of respondents were very satisfied in this area, and only 2.1% of respondents were very dissatisfied. This item might have been rated lowest because the term *clientele* is not common within church settings and might have been interpreted differently. For instance, some respondents might have viewed clientele as other members within the church whom respondents were serving as volunteers, whereas other respondents might have viewed nonchurch members as clientele.

Of the two remaining items rated in this factor, 45.2% of respondents felt very satisfied in the difference their volunteer work was making, whereas just 3% of respondents were very dissatisfied in this area ($M = 5.89$, $SD = 1.40$). Just over a third of respondents (36.2%) were very satisfied with the amount of effort they put in to their volunteering as equaling the amount of change they influenced ($M = 5.65$, $SD = 1.36$), whereas 6.3% of respondents were very dissatisfied in this area.

The Empowerment factor measured the sense of empowerment volunteers felt they had regarding their relationship with the organization as they carried out their volunteer responsibilities. This dimension included three items. Each question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 7 (*very satisfied*). Table 9 shows the mean, standard deviations, and frequencies for this factor.

Respondents rated "the freedom I have in deciding how to carry out my volunteer

assignment" as the highest rated item in this factor (*M* = 6.02, *SD* = 1.34), which was also perceived as the strongest area. More than half of respondents (51.9%) were very satisfied with the freedom they had in deciding how to carry out their volunteer assignments, whereas only 12.6 % of respondents were dissatisfied or undecided.

Table 9

Frequencies for Empowerment (Relationship With Organization)

Item	Valid *n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The chance I have to utilize my knowledge and skills in my volunteer work.	143	5.95	1.38	3	2	3	12	20	33	70
The access I have to information concerning the organization.	143	5.61	1.66	5	4	9	17	14	33	61
The freedom I have in deciding how to carry out my volunteer assignment.	135	6.02	1.34	2	2	4	9	19	29	70

Note. Scale of 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 4 = *undecided*, 7 = *very satisfied*.

The second highest rated item was for how respondents viewed their opportunity to use their knowledge and skills in their volunteer work (*M* = 5.95, *SD* = 1.38). Nearly half of respondents (49%) were very satisfied with the chance to use their knowledge and skills, whereas 14% of respondents were dissatisfied or undecided.

The lowest rated item (perceived as the weakest area) was for "the access I have to information concerning the organization" (*M* = 5.61, *SD* = 1.66). Fewer respondents (42.7%) were very satisfied with getting access to information about the organization, whereas 24.5% were either dissatisfied or undecided.

The Group Integration factor characterized the social relationships volunteers fostered with other volunteers and paid staff. This dimension included four items. Each question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 7 (*very*

satisfied). Table 10 shows the mean, standard deviations, and frequencies for this factor.

Table 10

Frequencies for Group Integration

Item	Valid *n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My relationship with other volunteers in the organization.	143	5.93	1.33	2	1	5	15	16	38	66
The friendships I have made while volunteering here.	143	5.77	1.42	1	4	8	12	25	31	62
The amount of interaction I have with other volunteers in the organization.	135	5.58	1.56	3	4	10	12	23	31	52
The amount of time spent with other volunteers.	131	5.28	1.50	1	4	13	22	28	25	38

Note. Scale of 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 4 = *undecided*, 7 = *very satisfied*.

Respondents rated "my relationship with other volunteers in the organization" the highest item within this factor (*M* = 5.93, *SD* = 1.33), which was also perceived as the strongest area. Almost half of respondents (46.2%) were very satisfied in their relationship with other volunteers in the organization; only 1.4% of respondents were very dissatisfied.

The next highest rated item was for the friendships the respondents made while volunteering in the organization (*M* = 5.77, *SD* = 1.42). Only one respondent was dissatisfied (0.7%), whereas 43.4% of respondents indicated they were very satisfied with the friendships they made while volunteering at the research site.

The second lowest rated item was the amount of interaction respondents had with other volunteers in the organization (*M* = 5.58, *SD* = 1.56). Just over a third of respondents (36.4%) were very satisfied with the amount of interaction they had with other volunteers in the organization; only three respondents (2%) were very dissatisfied.

The lowest rated item (perceived as the weakest area) was for "the amount of time spent with other volunteers" ($M = 5.28$, $SD = 1.50$). More than one fourth of respondents (26.6%) indicated they were very satisfied with the amount of time they spent with other volunteers, compared to just one respondent (0.7%) who was very dissatisfied.

Results from the survey also indicated respondents experienced a high level of satisfaction with how the organization communicated changes to them. Of the eight questions in this section, none had mean scores lower than 5. Each question used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Table 11 shows the mean, standard deviations, and frequencies for these items.

Respondents rated the question "I am more willing to accept changes when I am satisfied with how they have been communicated with me" as the highest rated item in this section ($M = 6.18$, $SD = 1.18$). Almost 90% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The next highest rated item was "I receive information about changes early enough to perform my duties well" ($M = 5.67$, $SD = 1.40$). The lowest rated item in this section indicated respondents were more likely to oppose a change in the organization when they were unsatisfied with how that change was communicated with them ($M = 5$, $SD = 1.72$).

In addition to the survey items categorized within the four dimensions of measurement, several other items provided significant insight into volunteer satisfaction. The highest rated stand-alone question of all items from this section of the survey was "the flexibility I am given to fit volunteer work into my life." Sixty-eight percent of respondents indicated they were very satisfied ($M = 6.31$, $SD = 1.29$). That percentage increased to 91.8% when Levels 5, 6, and 7 were combined. Similarly, 8.1% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with flexibility given.

Table 11

Frequencies for Organizational Communication

Item	Valid *n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The amount of information I receive about changes in my organization is sufficient to perform my duties.	124	5.58	1.42	0	6	5	14	28	27	44
I am satisfied with how information is communicated to me about changes in the organization (ex: in writing, face-to-face).	124	5.49	1.47	1	5	7	18	21	32	40
I am satisfied with how frequently I receive information about changes in my organization.	124	5.41	1.53	2	5	7	18	25	27	40
I receive information about changes in a timely fashion.	124	5.51	1.49	2	4	6	17	25	27	43
I receive information about changes early enough to perform my duties well.	124	5.67	1.40	0	5	5	17	17	34	46
The impact of organizational changes on my duties is explained clearly.	124	5.30	1.54	2	5	7	26	20	27	37
I am more willing to accept changes when I am satisfied with how they have been communicated with me.	124	6.18	1.18	1	1	2	9	13	29	69
I am more likely to oppose a change when I am unsatisfied with how it has been communicated to me.	124	5.00	1.72	4	9	9	28	18	22	34

Note. Scale of 1 = *strongly disagree*, 4 = *undecided*, 7 = *strongly agree*.

The second highest rated stand-alone question of all items from this section of the survey was relationship with paid staff ($M = 5.91$, $SD = 1.57$). Over half (54.8%) of

respondents indicated they were very satisfied. That percentage increased to 82.2% when Levels 5, 6 and 7 were combined. Similarly, 12.0% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the relationship with paid staff.

By comparison, the stand-alone item from this section of the survey with the lowest percentage of very satisfied respondents was "the amount of educational resources made available," with 29.1% of respondents (M = 5.01, SD = 1.69). That percentage increased to 55.9% when Levels 5, 6, and 7 were combined. Similarly, 16.6% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the amount of educational resources. The second lowest rated stand-alone item for satisfaction from this section of the survey was the flow of communication coming from paid staff and board members, with 29.8% of respondents indicating they were very satisfied (M = 5.29, SD = 1.65). Nearly 68% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied when Levels 5, 6, and 7 were combined. Similarly, 13.7% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the flow of communication from paid staff.

Qualitative data. Results from the survey's open-ended Additional Comments section, combined with the common themes that emerged from the focus-group interview, suggested that certain factors led to a high level of satisfaction in volunteer roles in this megachurch. This included comments such as, "All staff personnel are very appreciative of my volunteer activities," "The great people at the church make it a joy . . . fun personalities, authentic and refreshing to be with," and "The [research site] has expanded outreach and training opportunities and is very supportive and responsive to volunteer needs at all times." Conversely, some comments also suggested factors that may lead to dissatisfaction, such as, "I'd like to see a better multi-cultural representation of the congregation in the volunteer group." One noted, "The church needs some basic

essentials, like a few more copier/printers, including color toner. Lack of these things hampers efficiency." Another participant wrote,

> There was no training for the nursery: emergencies, allergies, crying babies, etc. I think it would be good to have some training because no one would know what to do. Also, it would be good to have a volunteer list to find substitutes when a conflict in schedule arises.

In addition to the survey's open-ended comments, the common themes of fulfilled relationships, supportive staff, recognition, and commitment emerged from the focus-group interview that addressed factors that influenced work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch. Similar to the factors that Research Question 1 addressed regarding attraction and retention factors, a fulfilled relationship with other volunteers emerged as the most significant factor that influenced volunteers' work satisfaction.

The focus-group participant who had been a volunteer the least amount of time observed, "You're going to connect, and . . . that connection with people, it's going to be such a rewarding experience for you." She added that experiences meeting other volunteers were how relationships were built up within the church. "Even with 900–1,000 people [at the research site]. . . . It's big. But when you start serving in an area, you start serving in relationships with a closer group of people, and that's how you get connected." She noted there were between 300 and 400 children in the children's ministry each weekend, and as a volunteer there

> it just feels smaller when you're serving. I walk in and I say, "Hi" to 10 people that I pass in the hall that I can name their kids and I know where they serve. That's when you start to talk outside and do friendship-based things, initiated from serving.

The researcher discovered a genuine and supportive paid staff was also a significant factor that influenced volunteer work satisfaction. One participant said the staff "are very encouraging here, and we are very blessed to have that from this pastoral

staff, down to the administrative staff." All five participants agreed with this comment and echoed the observation with complimentary statements. One participant stated the staff did "everything without grumbling and complaining, to the volunteers at least. I don't think they get enough recognition. . . . They work tirelessly." Another participant added, "And they all serve with so much heart, they really do. They're honest, up front. They're real. And I really appreciate that."

Related to genuine and supportive staff was the importance of both formal and informal recognition of the volunteers by the staff. All participants agreed an annual volunteer-recognition event organized by the paid staff was important to them. Their fellow volunteers also wholly appreciated it. One of the participants who served as a volunteer team leader said the staff's volunteer appreciation event

> was wonderfully done. It was very good; it was excellent. I appreciate the effort. You can tell they went into a lot of effort. They even made skits, films. They did the whole thing. They had food. . . . It was a great event. They put effort and heart into that appreciation event, which was great.

Conversely, a desire by volunteers for more personal recognition from senior staff members emerged as a dissatisfaction factor for most of the participants. One participant who had been a long-time, regular volunteer at the research site (more than 5 years) said that although she enjoyed talking to the senior pastor, she had "only ever had two personal conversations" with him in a 2-year time frame. Two other participants (both volunteer team leaders) expressed a similar desire for their volunteers to have a more personal connection to the organization's leadership as well. One of these participants stated, "Some volunteers would like to have that personal connection/recognition from, or acknowledgement from [the senior leadership]," which would make them feel more valued. Another participant acknowledged a perceived formality of the organization's

leadership toward volunteers. The participant suggested that offering a comment to a volunteer such as, “Hey, how are you doing?” could provide a more personal aspect to the relationship between paid staff and volunteers.

The researcher also discovered that commitment, or the lack thereof, was one other factor that emerged from the focus-group interview as influencing work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch. The longest serving participant observed,

> We have a culture, maybe it’s [specific city], I suspect it’s culture in general, where there is a problem with commitment. So we talk about making it an environment that truly makes it easy on the volunteers. But to your point, sometimes you’ve got to [do a specific job] and it isn’t fun. But somebody has to [do it]. And we have a culture where people say, “Well, I’m just not going to go today.” And that’s a challenge—a longer term, systemic challenge—that needs to be addressed from the pulpit or from the staff of the church in terms of teaching. This isn’t something you sort of do because you feel like it. You’re making a commitment; you’re making it to Christ. And I think that’s a general challenge with volunteers that create challenges for the other volunteers when those people don’t show up and you have to teach 50 kids, right? And then, “I’m not doing that anymore.” So I think it creates systemic, cascading problems because they don’t honor their commitments.”

All of the other participants nonverbally agreed with these comments. One participant added the commitment challenge was definitely the case in his experience. He noted that as a volunteer ministry coordinator he was “sort of [a] leader of last resort. If something comes up and the [team] leader’s not able to do it, . . . we’ll just substitute. So, I feel like sometimes we need to be kind of on call.”

Results for Research Question 3

What effect, if any, do specific demographics have on volunteer satisfaction or engagement? Research Question 3 was answered primarily by the survey data and augmented with focus-group data. The original research design proposed to use the focus group for primary data to answer the research question. However, relevant data emerged from the VSI survey to change this precedence. Results emerged from the combined data

that provided understanding of how age, gender, and other demographic properties influenced volunteer satisfaction and engagement.

Qualitative data. Qualitative data for Research Question 3 were obtained from the focus group. However, the common themes that emerged from the focus group that addressed the effect of specific demographics on volunteer satisfaction and engagement were limited. Two areas of significance did emerge: (a) the influence of families with children on volunteering and (b) the impact on satisfaction and engagement based on length of time volunteering.

Analysis of the focus-interview responses showed there was some effect on volunteer involvement for adult volunteers with younger children, both positively and negatively. One of the volunteer team leader participants knew of several volunteers on the church's Greeting Team who had children. Any negative impact on their engagement was minimal. The team leader recalled a specific volunteer couple who needed extra time to check their children into children's church before serving as greeters. He noted the couple had a new baby, but "the following month, they were on the schedule and [the new mother] did show up; she was holding their 1-month-old baby [as] the two of them were greeting at the door."

Conversely, two other participants expressed concern with not enough opportunities for adult volunteers to include their children while volunteering. One participant said, "I've had a lot of people . . . [who] can't [volunteer] because it's a work–life balance issue, or a family-balance issue." The participant asserted, "If there is a way to change the culture so that [volunteer] service includes your family or the realization that people understand that," more people with children might volunteer. The participant's fellow focus-group member suggested that the issue was a "broader thing,

looking for ways for people to volunteer as families, whatever that means." Setting a good example by serving as a volunteer was an important aspect of this: "You know, we don't just go to church, kind of darken the door and go home. We give of our time, talent, and treasure. It's setting an example for our children."

The other area of impact where specific demographics did not suggest an effect on volunteer satisfaction or engagement was the duration of time a volunteer served. Of the five focus-group participants, two stated a desire to become full-time ministry staff in some capacity based on their experiences volunteering at the church. These two participants were the one who had served the least amount of time as a volunteer at the research site (approximately 18 months) and the one who had served the longest amount of time (more than 7 years) with the organization. A third participant, who was already a volunteer team leader, expressed his desire to volunteer in more ministries in addition to the one he was already leading. This participant had volunteered for 5 years.

Quantitative data. Results of the VSI survey's demographic section indicated respondents shared some commonalities and differed in others. These demographics included gender, age, ethnicity, education, income, and volunteer data.

The majority of the volunteers who completed the survey were female (69.1%) compared to males (30.9%). Data were not available from the research site to determine if the significant difference in these results reflected the population.

The researcher also analyzed gender data in relation to the results for the variable of intent to remain to calculate what effect gender had on the respondents' desire to continue volunteering long term in the organization. Results indicated females had a significantly higher intent to remain compared to males: 74% of females and 60.5% of males would certainly continue to volunteer long term. After adding Levels 5 and 6 to the

data, results showed 90.5% of females indicated their intent to remain compared to 79% of males. Conversely, data analysis revealed only 10% of females would certainly not remain or were unsure about doing so, compared to 21% of males.

The median age range of respondents was 36–45 (35%). Roughly a fourth of respondents (26%) were between the ages of 46 and 55. The youngest respondents were ages 18–25, and the oldest respondents were ages 66–75.

When the researcher compared age ranges (both male and female) with the combined data on intent to remain (Levels 5, 6, and 7 of the survey responses), results showed 100% of respondents aged 18–25, 56–65, and 66–75 planned to remain volunteering long term. Ninety percent of respondents aged 26–35 indicated this, as well as 83% aged 36–45 and 78% aged 46–55. Moreover, 22% of respondents aged 46–55, 17% of respondents aged 36–45, and 10% of respondents aged 26–35 indicated they would certainly not remain volunteering long term or were unsure about doing so. Table 12 shows these comparisons.

Table 12

Age Range Comparison With Percentage Responses to Intent to Remain Volunteering Long Term

Ages	1	2	3	4	1–4 combined	5	6	7	5–7 combined (positive)
18–25	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100
26–35	0.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	10	0.0	30.0	60.0	90
36–45	2.5	2.5	5.0	7.0	17	2.0	7.0	74.0	83
46–55	6.3	0.0	0.0	15.6	22	3.0	12.5	62.5	78
56–65	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	12.0	12.0	76.0	100
66–75	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	12.5	12.5	75.0	100

Note. Scale of 1 = *certainly not*, 4 = *unsure*, 7 = *certainly*.

The majority of volunteers were European American (80.3%), followed by

Hispanic (5.74%, not including Mexican American), and African American (4.9%). Four percent of respondents described themselves as of other ethnicity, specifying "multiracial," "brown complexion—born in the USA," "German," "NA," and "Why is this important?" By comparison, 71.7% of residents in the county where the research site was located were identified as White, 13.1% as Hispanic or Latino (including Mexican American), 7.7% as Black or African American, and 3.5% as multiracial (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). This suggested that the sample's ethnicity closely reflected the surrounding community's ethnic composition.

Of the survey respondents, 20.5% had some college education. The majority of respondents (78.7%) had a college degree or higher: 43.4% had an undergraduate college degree and 35.25% had a graduate degree. One respondent was only a high school graduate. By comparison, 57.9% of residents in the county where the research site was located had a bachelor's degree or higher, and 6.6% of residents were only high school graduates (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). This suggested that the sample's education level was moderately higher than the surrounding community.

The highest annual income of respondents was over $80,000 (62%). The next highest annual income was $51,000–60,000 (9.84%), and the third highest annual income was less than $10,000 (7.38%). The least highest income reported was $11,000–20,000 (0.82%). The data did not indicate if respondents answered this question as an individual income or with their household income in mind. The median household income in the county where the research site was located was $122,068 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

Over half of respondents (50.8%) volunteered at the research site 3 years or less. Seventy-five percent volunteered 5 years or less, and 91% volunteered 8 years or less. This latter statistic is consistent with the population of the research site ($N = 900$), in that

people had attended the church for about the same amount of time as it had been established—less than 8 years prior to when respondents took the survey. The researcher learned from focus-group comments that "some" people transferred from the main campus to the new campus when it was established. This was the case with three of the focus-group participants. It may explain the remaining 9% of respondents who volunteered 9 years or more, to include the 1.64% of respondents who had volunteered over 20 years. These data suggested that some respondents included their comprehensive time volunteering at both the church's main campus and the new campus when they answered this question.

When asked the question, "Is this the only organization with which you volunteer?" 47.2% of respondents indicated "Yes," whereas 52.8% indicated they volunteered with other organizations. Of the latter respondents, 32.3% indicated they had volunteered for more than 10 organizations in their lifetime, and 44.6% percent had volunteered for at least five, as shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Frequencies for Number of Volunteer Organizations

Item	Valid *n*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
For how many organizations have you volunteered in your lifetime?	65	2	11	6	10	8	3	3	1	21

Regarding weekly volunteer commitment, more than 85% of respondents volunteered with this organization 5 hours or less a week, 10.6% of respondents volunteered 6–10 hours a week, and 4.1% of respondents volunteered 11–15 hours a week. No respondents volunteered more than 15 hours a week.

Summary

This chapter presented results of the applied dissertation using both quantitative and qualitative data collected during the research study. Data were analyzed and presented to answer three research questions by identifying those factors that drew people to volunteer, kept them volunteering, and led to their work satisfaction while volunteering in a megachurch.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to identify best practices for local consideration in the recruiting, engaging, and retaining of volunteers within a megachurch. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to sequentially identify those factors that drew people to volunteer, kept them volunteering, and led to their work satisfaction while volunteering in a megachurch. This chapter examines the research findings, presents implications of those findings, discusses limitations of this study, and provides recommendations for future research. This chapter includes specific best practices for volunteers within a megachurch based on the research data analyzed in the preceding chapter. Generally, the data were consistent with the research cited in the literature review.

Major Findings of the Research

Findings for Research Question 1. What factors attract and retain volunteers to roles in a megachurch? The first research question was primarily answered by the focus-group interview responses. Additional insight was provided by data collected from the VSI survey responses. The themes that emerged for why people were attracted to volunteer to their roles in a megachurch were straightforward: (a) they sought relationship by connecting with others through serving, (b) they wanted to find a good place for their children to attend church, and (c) they felt they were fulfilling their purpose to serve others as Christian principles direct.

The theme of seeking relationship by connecting with others through serving is consistent with findings in the literature that people are drawn to volunteer in organizations for this purpose. Miller (2012) identified a sense of connection as one of three mutual benefits of strategic volunteer recruitment. Amundsen (2007) identified

relationship as one of 10 attractors to the workplace, and Clary et al. (as cited in Finkelstein, 2008) identified the longing to strengthen social relationships as among six reasons people volunteer. Haug and Gaskins's (2012) synthesis of literature highlighted social objectives among several motives for why people volunteer. Putnam (2000) pointed out the need for relationship as social capital, whereas Johnson (2009) asserted that relationships were a key principle in successfully attracting individuals specifically to churches because of accepting atmospheres where friendships can be built over time.

The theme regarding children is more unique to this particular study. All focus-group participants said they were attracted to volunteer at the research site because finding a good place for their children was important to them. The assumption is that because the research site had a good children's ministry, the volunteers were attracted to the church. Then, because their children enjoyed attending the children's ministry, the adults continued attending services at the church. Therefore, those same adults started volunteering, thereby binding them to the organization.

The literature showed the primary barrier to volunteering is finding the time to commit to doing so (Love, 2009; Schoenberg et al., 2003; Torock, 2008). The findings of this study suggest that if volunteers are able to volunteer in a ministry either at the same time as their children are in children's church (such as the children's ministry itself, where the majority of VSI survey respondents indicated they served at the research site) or by including their children serving alongside them (a recommendation offered by the focus-group participants), then volunteers will remain both committed and satisfied. The one area this assumption does not work is when a volunteer's child ages out of a program. The 4-H study cited by Torock (2008) found that one of the four reasons parents stopped volunteering was children aging out of that program. It could be

assumed, though, there is an element of self-interest in such a response as a justification for no longer volunteering in a regard that is distinct from altruistic motivations normally associated with volunteerism.

The theme of Christian duty is somewhat supported by the literature and aligns with findings by Schoenberg et al. (2003), who discovered volunteers considered doing so is a lifelong commitment and a "call to action" (p. 8) as well. The idea of duty is typically associated with military service and is certainly not limited to Christians alone. The findings showed duty is something Christians feel they must do, though, as a compulsion to serve others. Such a need to serve others is presumably something volunteers do with a joyful expression of gratitude as their primary motivation. The high satisfaction level and intent to remain in volunteering by volunteers in this study suggested that this was the case at the research site.

The predominant quantitative finding regarding volunteer retention was that the majority of volunteers at this research site planned to continue volunteering long term. The quantitative data showed a mean score of 6.3 (SD = 1.4) on a 7-point scale for the respondents' intent to remain question, implying the volunteers at the research site were overwhelmingly planning to stay there for the long term. About 70% of respondents were within this range. This suggested that these respondents were satisfied with their volunteer experience. A small number of respondents did not intend to remain volunteering long term. A few of these were easily explained, as the individuals were moving away from the area.

Regarding why people continue volunteering in their roles in a megachurch, analyses of qualitative data revealed three common themes: (a) mattering; (b) connectedness; and (c) perfectionism, which emerged as a negative factor. The theme of

mattering that emerged from the focus-group complements existing research on volunteer motivations. The notion of altruistic motivation—the theoretical framework upon which this dissertation was built—asserts people "desire to enhance the welfare of others at a net loss to oneself" (Elster, 2006, p. 183). The elements of social exchange theory—in which individuals who choose to volunteer receive significance in exchange for their time and their efforts—is foundational to why people volunteer in megachurches and other nonprofit organizations. The assumptions that people donate their time and talents because they are part of a significant effort that gives them that significance (i.e., mattering) was seen in the Schoenberg et al. (2003) report in which 85% of respondents considered volunteering "part of what they perceived as an obligation to make a difference" (p. 8). This concept of making a difference also resonated with research participants in a study of Christian church volunteers in the Midwest as one of the primary themes that emerged (Peters, 2010).

The second theme of connectedness and building closer relationships concurs with research cited in the literature review. This was found to be important for most volunteers. Indeed, yearning for relationships has been established as a common thread in multiple studies specific to volunteer motivations and found to be a key factor for both attraction and retention (Amundson, 2007; Feldman & White, 2012; Finkelstein, 2008; Johnson, 2009). The longing for connectedness is particularly linked with megachurches, as these organizations seek to create a welcome space and a sense of belonging for congregants (Blaakman et al., 2006). Thumma and Bird (2011) revealed this need for deep and meaningful relationships in their study of megachurches as well.

An additional layer of connectedness also surfaced during this study that the researcher had seen only glimpses of elsewhere in the literature. One focus-group

participant in this study offered a very specific response addressing her dysfunctional family, reflecting that the "volunteer family" was more ideal than her actual, dysfunctional, family. This implies people may become involved as volunteers to connect beyond simply making friends. In its place, they may seek far deeper relationships that serve a therapeutic purpose heretofore not seen in general findings of other studies of volunteer retention factors. One study that did, however, was by Bussell and Forbes (2002), who asserted that people volunteer as a reason to satisfy social and psychological goals. In this regard, this is further supported by a study of 336 megachurches that found 61% either agreed or strongly agreed their congregations were like a "close-knit family" (Bird & Thumma, 2011, p. 11). This intimates the psychological comfort experienced by congregants in those megachurches imbues volunteer teams as well.

There was overwhelming concern from the focus-group participants—although not a negative statement on the church overall—that a tension existed between the organization's expressed beliefs of valuing people and doing things with excellence. The feeling from the volunteers was they were expected to maintain the same, high level of performance that the paid staff was expected to maintain. This perceived expectation caused a level of stress among some volunteers; it was enough of a concern to be specifically noted as a hindrance to retention for some volunteers. The question arose of "how good is good enough" when volunteers perform tasks.

The researcher suggests that an approach that may mitigate this potential challenge is for church staffs to purposefully participate in the selection, placement, and ongoing management of volunteers, expressly of volunteer leaders. This is grounded on findings in the paid work environment in which employee engagement increased 8 times when leaders personally invested in their employees' strengths (Rath & Conchie, 2009).

It may be argued the same will happen with volunteers while those same volunteers simultaneously achieve a higher level of excellence expected by many organizations because they are performing in their area of strength.

Findings for Research Question 2. What factors influence work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch? The second research question was primarily answered by data collected from Part II of the VSI survey responses. Additional insight was provided by focus-group responses.

Analyses of the quantitative data overall suggested that the volunteers at this megachurch experienced a high level of satisfaction in their volunteer roles. The Pearson correlations of the 40 satisfaction items within the four domains of volunteer satisfaction (Organizational Support, Participation Efficacy, Empowerment, and Group Integration) were all significant, with the Organizational Support dimension shown as the most significant. As this factor measured how volunteers derived their satisfaction through the emotional and educational support the organization provided them, it suggests that the megachurch in this study met this need well for its volunteers. Indeed, the two highest rated survey items for this dimension—the availability of getting help when needed and volunteer relationships with paid staff—support this assertion.

Although analysis showed the volunteers at the research site were satisfied overall, a few respondents were overall not happy with their volunteer experiences. Such dissatisfaction may be represented by one dissatisfied respondent who stated, “I have a great deal to offer that I feel is not tapped into/encouraged.” This is to be expected as not every person who volunteers experiences a mostly positive experience. Regarding the sample in this study, this individual was an outlier (1 of 123 respondents) for this statement, as well as most other statements in the survey. The researcher analyzed all of

this respondent's responses and discovered he or she was mostly dissatisfied with all areas of the volunteer experience. Without the opportunity to interview this individual, though, it is difficult to further explore and ascertain what qualitative factors led to this individual's dissatisfaction. This does represent a major tension in managing volunteers: being cautious to not let people burn out by overextending them yet not leveraging their talents and skills to the point they feel underutilized either.

One well-defined factor that does lead to dissatisfaction is poor quality or ineffective communication between an organization and its volunteers. For this study, nearly 25% of respondents were either dissatisfied or undecided about their access to information concerning the organization; 42.7% were very satisfied in this area.

Regarding analyses of qualitative data, factors that influenced work satisfaction among volunteers in a megachurch were revealed by the focus group. Four common themes emerged: (a) fulfilled relationships, (b) supportive staff, (c) recognition, and (d) commitment.

Van Vianen et al. (2008) pointed out that volunteers' satisfaction levels increased when they befriended their volunteer teammates. This was the case for the participants in this study as well. The findings from the survey suggested that the respondents yearned for additional peer-to-peer time spent with fellow volunteers. In fact, only 69% of respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied in this area. The qualitative data reinforced the conclusion that fulfilled relationships are important to volunteers, as noted by one focus-group participant who asserted, "You're going to connect [through volunteering], and . . . that connection with people, it's going to be such a rewarding experience for you." This statement is consistent with Johnson's (2009) discussion of volunteers developing meaningful friendships, and to some degree, such rewarding

experiences may be what Haug and Gaskins (2012) were alluding to in their study that found people enjoyed their volunteer experiences "because it satisfied some personal need" (p. 202). These sentiments were similarly expressed in Peters's (2010) study of Christian church volunteers, who referred to volunteering as a "source of deep reward" and satisfaction (p. 36).

With respect to the staff–volunteer relationship, the focus group overwhelmingly agreed support from the paid staff was fundamental to their collective, positive volunteer experience. Staff members who were sincere made an especially significant impact. According to one focus-group participant, "[The staff] all serve with so much heart, they really do. They're honest, up front. They're real, and I appreciate that." These findings suggested that paid staff who treat their volunteers with respect and authenticity will earn mutual respect and accolades from their volunteers in return. Another focus-group participant added, "[The staff] does everything without grumbling and complaining, to the volunteers at least. I don't think they get enough recognition. . . . They work tirelessly."

By way of caution, organizations that do not support and manage their volunteers well will certainly experience attrition as those volunteers begin to realize they are not valued by the organization. Brudney and Meijs (2009) reported that 40% of volunteers stopped volunteering in organizations that poorly managed their volunteers. Likewise, Cnaan and Cascio (1999) discovered "certain aspects of volunteer management and agency structure affect volunteer satisfaction, tenure, and commitment" (p. 30). By contrast, however, Nieuwhof (2014) asserted that when volunteers are well supported by staff—and thus know they are valued by the organization—"the mission [of the church] advances further and faster" than if they are not (p. 2).

The importance of volunteer recognition was found to be consistent with previous research findings emphasizing the importance of recognition to volunteer satisfaction. Hager and Brudney (2004) identified it as a best practice, Thumma and Bird (2011) pointed out its significance in their study of megachurches, and Love (2009) identified use of rewards "to actively celebrate tenure in the organization" (p. 173). Volunteers were also found to have become more committed and satisfied in organizations when they felt valued as a member of a volunteer team (Van Vianen et al., 2008). Similarly, Amundson (2007) recognized recognition as a specific workplace attractor for paid employees. Conversely, Peters (2010) discovered volunteers "would rather leave than continue to feel negatively" about their experience, asserting, "Committed, long-term volunteers . . . are still volunteering because their positive self-feelings have been preserved, and that positive self-feeling, or rewards, is a factor to longer-term commitment" (p. 62).

For this study, focus-group participants identified a desire for more personal recognition—specifically from senior staff members—as a factor that could improve satisfaction for most of the volunteers. One participant who had been a volunteer at the research site for more than 5 years noted that despite enjoying talking to the senior pastor, the volunteer had "only ever had two personal conversations" with him in a 2-year time frame. Two other participants (both volunteer team leaders) expressed a similar desire for their volunteers to have a more personal connection to the organization's senior leadership. One of these participants stated, "Some volunteers would like to have that personal connection/recognition from, or acknowledgement, from [the senior leader]," which would make them feel more valued. This request did not intimate a need for extensive contact, but something as simple as a private, "Hey, thanks" to assuage their

need for acknowledgment.

The topic of commitment by volunteers to their responsibilities—or more precisely, the lack thereof—resonated with the focus group. Through their prism as seasoned volunteer leaders, most of the participants verbalized their concern regarding commitment. Lack of volunteer commitment can lead to a negative effect on volunteer leaders' satisfaction, as they must step in at the last minute to fill gaps created by those volunteers who do not show up.

This finding was consistent with the literature, too. Schoenberg et al. (2003) observed that 72% of the Girl Scout volunteers in their study expressed concern about honoring their commitments. Feldmann and White (2012) reported lack of time as the reason 6 out of 10 volunteers did not commit to leadership positions specifically.

Findings for Research Question 3. What effect, if any, do specific demographics have on volunteer satisfaction or engagement? The third research question was primarily answered by data collected from the VSI survey responses. Additional insight was provided by focus-group responses. One significant research finding addressed whether or not specific demographics affect volunteer satisfaction or engagement: They do. In this regard, two areas of analysis stood out: organizational involvement and gender.

The number of organizations volunteers were involved with in their lifetime was the first distinguisher. The related VSI survey question asked respondents if they volunteered with other organizations, and if so, for how many. The analyzed data using means showed 52.8% of respondents had volunteered with at least one other organization. Of these respondents, almost a third had volunteered for more than 10 other organizations in their lifetime, and another 44.6% had volunteered for at least five organizations in their lifetime. This complements data from Putnam (2000) that showed

American adults volunteered 10 times more often when they were regularly involved in churches (and clubs) compared to those who were not. It also underscores the importance of organizations placing volunteers into positions in which they feel they are effectively matched to positional needs (Miller, 2012). Retention is negatively impacted when volunteers begin to feel they are not well matched to volunteer positions—and therefore begin to feel they are not used effectively (Brudney & Meijs, 2009; Cnaan & Cascio, 1999; Davis, Hall, & Meyer, as cited in Finkelstein, 2008; UPS Foundation, as cited in Hager & Brudney, 2004; Love, 2009).

The other significant research finding that addressed the impact of demographics on volunteer satisfaction or engagement was gender effect. It was clear from the data gender does make a difference. The majority of respondents who completed the survey were overwhelmingly female (69.1%) compared to male (30.9%). Yet, this alone did not reveal the impact of gender. The data did reveal that the ministry area in which respondents self-identified as volunteering in most was the children's ministry. This implies that if the majority of volunteers who took the survey were from the children's ministry, and the percentage of respondents who took the survey was nearly 70% female, then the majority of children's ministry volunteers are presumptively female.

This may also explain the skew in the gender data difference. Although the research site did not track the gender of its volunteers, the skew may be evident in its membership data. Such data were not available to the researcher, so it remains unknown whether or not the skew in gender is consistent with the research site's larger population. Nevertheless, other research has revealed that women outnumber men in churches as a general rule, with the balance between them closer in megachurches. To wit, previous research of the 336 megachurches revealed the gender ratio in the general population of

those churches was 55% women and 45% men (Bird & Thumma, 2011). This suggests that the results of the current study are generally consistent regarding overall gender balance.

Implications of Findings

Factors shaping attitudes toward volunteers' intent to remain. The mean score of 6.3 for the question regarding intent to remain suggested that volunteers were going to stay overwhelmingly long term at the research site. The standard deviations of 1.4 indicated about 70% of respondents were in this range. Moreover, analysis of quantitative results showed retention was significantly related to the four dimensions of work satisfaction. This is consistent with findings of the original study conducted by Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001) using the VSI.

It is worth noting the findings from the current study showed the strongest Pearson correlation between the variable of intent to remain and the Organizational Support dimension, followed in turn by Empowerment, Group Integration, and Participation Efficacy. Interestingly, in the Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001) study, regression results using the same instrument yielded results that showed Participation Efficacy and Group Integration were most significantly correlated with volunteer satisfaction as predictors of intent to remain (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). This likely suggests that although both studies were conducted using adult volunteers, the dimensions most important to the volunteers were different because of the organizational cultures (influenced by their respective leaders and staff) that significantly influenced the relationships between them.

Gender differences. With respect to gender differences for determining intent to remain volunteering, the correlation was just on the edge of being significant. Female

volunteers were more likely than male volunteers to volunteer long term. What is not known is if this difference is consistent with all volunteers. The research site for this study did not have data showing the breakdown of genders among the general population.

However, the Barna Group (as cited in Henderson, 2012) reported the percentage of adult women who attended church during any given week over the past two decades (1991–2011) dropped by a staggering 20%. Moreover, there was a 31% drop in "the number of women who volunteer at a church during the course of a week" in the same time period (Henderson, 2012, p. xv). This may indicate the number of female volunteers who intend to do so long term may, in fact, be declining in contrast to the findings of this study.

Limitations of Study

The researcher believes the results of this study provide valuable new information that contributes to the current literature regarding the attraction, retention, and engagement of volunteers in megachurches. However, several limitations of this study merit mindfulness.

Population and sample. The researcher planned to use the megachurch's approximately 2,000 volunteers as the population and initially proposed using a sample from within this population derived from a key ministry that contained about 300 volunteers at its main campus. However, when the researcher sought approval to conduct the study from the organization, its senior leadership suggested using one of the church's other campuses for the study. As such, one of the other campuses served as the research site, an adjustment from the original proposal.

The staff of the campus that was used as the setting to implement the study self-reported 1,400 people regularly attended weekend services. Approximately 900 of those

congregants were adults over the age of 18. The researcher decided to deem the entire adult population of the research site as both the study population ($N = 900$) and as the sample. When Phase 1 of implementation began, 143 of the prospective participants invited to take the survey did so; 123 of these individuals completed it. When compared to the population size, this number of respondents equated to approximately 16% participation.

When the researcher asked the campus staff for the total number of volunteers there, they reported 975 volunteers. However, this appeared to be in conflict with the population. It is likely this number included nonadult as well as adult volunteers. Moreover, this number might have included multiple counting of an individual volunteer in more than one volunteer ministry position.

To wit, once Phase 1 implementation was completed, the researcher analyzed the actual number of volunteer positions indicated on the VSI survey against each individual respondent who completed it. The researcher determined there were approximately 345 volunteer positions accounted for among the 123 completed survey respondents. This analysis led the researcher to conclude the 975 total volunteer number might have indicated 975 total volunteer positions, not individuals. This is consistent with research findings from this same study that show many people who volunteer do so in more than one position and in more than one organization.

Focus group. Prior to Phase 2 implementation, the researcher recommended the research site staff select 8–10 volunteers to participate in the focus group. However, on the day of the actual interview, only five volunteers were available to participate and did so. Although these particular participants were exceptionally information rich, they might not have been representative of the entire sample. Snowball sampling was used to recruit

the participants by the staff. This limited the researcher's ability to directly recruit volunteers and thus more likely assure a focus group composed of a higher number of possibly more representative participants.

VSI ministry area breakouts. Another limitation specific to the VSI survey was the mechanism used to conduct it. The SurveyMonkey website was used for the online survey. The researcher was challenged with creating specific subcategories of key ministry areas for respondents to identify with in the demographics section of the survey. The survey-building tool in SurveyMonkey simply did not permit the researcher to build the survey to this level of fidelity. As such, this question on the survey might have been confusing to respondents. From a data analysis perspective, determining the actual percentages of how many respondents volunteered in a particular key ministry and its associated subministries proved challenging.

Overall satisfaction question. Although the VSI had 40 questions specifically related to volunteer satisfaction, it did not include a single, overall question about volunteer satisfaction. A statement such as, "I am satisfied with my overall volunteer experience at [the research site]" would have been helpful in determining general satisfaction of respondents. Akin to the single item on intent to remain, an overall satisfaction statement would have provided the researcher an overarching point of data in determining the collective satisfaction level of the respondents. This then could have been used in regression analysis for determining more precise correlations and relationships with the attraction, retention, and work-satisfaction factors and specifically used with gender data.

Demographics. The megachurch campus used as the research site did not systematically track demographics (e.g., male-to-female ratio). If these data had been

available to the researcher, it could have enabled more in-depth data analyses to answer Research Question 3: What effect, if any, do specific demographics have on volunteer satisfaction or engagement?

Best Practices for Volunteers

The results of the study have implications for practice. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher offers the following recommended best practices for volunteers in megachurches:

1. The organizational leader–volunteer relationship matters. The perceived relationship between volunteers and senior leaders matters. The question is, can a senior leader be relational with each individual volunteer on this scale? The answer can be yes, if an organization's leadership is (a) aware of its importance, (b) proactive about making it a priority, and therefore (c) willing to infuse it culturally into the organizational fabric. Research revealed that thoughtful, deliberate acts of kindness such as a simple, "Hi, how are you doing?" when interacting with volunteers—even if in passing—can have tremendous positive impact on an individual volunteer, thereby aiding in satisfaction and therefore retention.

Regarding this study's research site, one of the focus group's overall concerns was a perceived formality of the organization's senior leadership toward its volunteers. The participants suggested that a more personal aspect to the relationship between leaders and volunteers could go "a long way" in reducing this perceived formality. The inevitability of large churches and their leaders being task focused to maintain organizational excellence (on a practical level) is a natural result to maintain forward momentum. As the mechanics of operating a megachurch eclipse the relational mission of the Church—whether real or perceived—an internal value conflict can arise that must

be addressed if volunteers are to feel valued for their contributions. This awareness is particularly needed when pastors, often relational by nature, by necessity move into more demanding, executive roles. If they become too task focused with their additional executive responsibilities, they may appear disconnected and unknowingly—and unintentionally—project a lack of personal concern for individuals.

2. The paid staff–volunteer relationship matters. The relationship between paid staff and volunteers is critical. More precisely, the perception by volunteers of the relationship with paid staff is crucial to volunteer satisfaction and therefore retention. Volunteers want to know the paid staff supports them. In this study, the Organizational Support satisfaction dimension, which measured how a volunteer's satisfaction was derived through the educational and emotional resources provided to them by the organization, had the strongest correlational relationship when analyzed with the variable of intent to remain. Indeed, in addition to the strength of the relationship between the volunteers and the paid staff, the most important items rated in this area of the study were the availability of volunteers getting help from the organization when it was needed and the amount of permission needed by volunteers to do things they needed to accomplish their jobs.

3. The volunteer–volunteer relationship matters. The findings suggested that those volunteers work alongside and the relationships fostered between those individuals matters. Indeed, within the Group Integration dimension of volunteer satisfaction, characterized by the social relationships volunteers foster with other volunteers and paid staff, the highest rated item was "my relationship with other volunteers in the organization," with which 84% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied. The friendships those volunteers made with each other while volunteering at the research site

followed closely, with 83% of respondents indicating they were either satisfied or very satisfied. These findings align well with previous research that revealed volunteers are more satisfied with their experiences when they befriend other volunteers on their same team (Van Vianen et al., 2008). Correspondingly, Peters (2010) learned that relationships built through volunteering became the foundation of volunteers' sense of satisfaction and reward in a study of multiple Christian church volunteers.

4. Volunteer performance expectations matter. As churches continue to grow (and paid staff more difficult to afford), reliance on volunteers increases rapidly. For churches that operate with a high level of performance expectation, this can create a challenge. How do leaders value people's contributions while maintaining an expected high level of organizational performance? Nieuwhof (2014) observed, "Nobody likes feeling used, but that's often how churches and other organizations treat people" (p. 2). This study illuminated the concern when one focus-group participant declared, "People have to matter more than excellence." This statement followed a unanimous concern that emerged from the focus group of a perceived pressure to perform at a certain level of perfection that they felt not all volunteers could maintain.

Indeed, the question of "how good is good enough when you're getting it from a volunteer" is one an organization must determine for itself. Churches clearly benefit from volunteers in many ways beyond the actual tasks they accomplish. Yet, when volunteers feel a real or perceived pressure toward perfection—either directly or indirectly through staff under pressure to perform to those standards—both the organization and individual suffer. Organizations must be cognizant of this tension and be comfortable with best efforts as they push more responsibilities to volunteers. The findings of this study, coupled with existing literature, clearly show relationships matter to volunteers more than

anything else.

5. Recognition matters. A culture of recognition is important for engaging volunteers. One activity the megachurch in this study implemented was an annual Volunteer Recognition event. It received 100% positive feedback from the focus group; several VSI comments noted the importance of recognition as well. The megachurch staff hosts the recognition event to thank volunteers for their service. The event incorporated food and fun activities that included skits performed by the staff and short, funny videos created by the staff. The organization staff demonstrated they valued their volunteers by formally recognizing them as both a collective resource and as individuals.

This study's findings distinctly showed the importance of gratitude as a critical factor to volunteer satisfaction. However, as positively impactful as a formal recognition event can be for volunteers, the findings also unmistakably indicated the importance of—and need for—senior leaders and their staff to continually show their gratitude to volunteers in an ongoing and personal manner. This was evidenced in a study of 510 human service organization volunteers revealing that thank you letters, certificates of appreciation, and luncheons were specifically associated with longer volunteer tenure (Cnaan & Cascio, 1999).

6. Effective communication matters. It is important for volunteers to receive adequate information to know what is happening within the organization. Data analyses of the communication section of the VSI clearly indicated this. When volunteers are included in the communication process, they are more satisfied and thus willing to accept changes taking place within the organization. The data showed the exact opposite is true when volunteers do not feel they are included in the communication process and leads to their dissatisfaction. As shown in this study, the statement "the flow of communication

coming to me from paid staff and board members" was the second-lowest rated stand-alone survey item measuring satisfaction.

Communication also matters on a personal level. One specific way to achieve a positive relationship using effective communication is through performance feedback. In this study, the item with the lowest rated overall score of any VSI survey item was "the way in which the organization provides me with performance feedback." Only 27.4% of respondents indicated they were very satisfied in this area. This organization is not unique in this respect; the literature showed continuous evaluation within volunteer programs is uncommon (Cnaan & Cascio, 1999). Moreover, organizations "may be reluctant to evaluate the work of volunteers because such evaluations may seem to question" their efforts (Cnaan & Cascio, 1999, p. 9). Indeed, Love (2009) cautioned that organizations that do not provide effective feedback are at risk of losing their seasoned volunteers. Often these volunteers are the ones who serve in leadership positions.

7. Feeling empowered matters. Volunteers need to feel they are empowered to carry out their volunteer tasks. This includes what they do, how they do it, and when they do it. The highest rated item among the 40 items that measured satisfaction in the VSI survey was "the flexibility I am given to fit volunteer work into my life." Nearly 95% of respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with this statement. Of the remaining questions, one of the highest rated items in the study was the amount of permission needed by volunteers to do things they needed to accomplish their jobs.

Feeling empowered leads to volunteers being satisfied and is evidenced by literature that revealed psychological empowerment has been positively related to job satisfaction in the business sector (Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004). A 2007 study to understand responses to volunteering showed that empowerment is positive for

volunteers; results showed the individuals with the highest levels of empowerment expressed greater satisfaction regarding their volunteer activities, "high levels of satisfaction with the rewards of being a volunteer," and lower burnout levels (Peters, 2010, p. 16).

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should include qualitative studies to explore volunteers' perceptions and attitudes in more detail regarding volunteer peer relationships. Of specific interest to this researcher are the psychological foundations of how volunteer "families" serve as a replacement for real families for some volunteers. With the high percentage of divorced families and broken homes in the United States today, this area of research may yield insightful data to better understand both attraction motivations and retention factors of engaged volunteers.

Research also should be conducted to better understand demographic impacts on volunteer populations within megachurches. Increased fidelity of volunteer populations may yield more accurate insight of respective samples and thereby generate findings to better finesse recruitment strategies for these populations. This specifically should include both gender and generational impacts to volunteer populations.

Future research also may be considered to better understand what level of volunteer performance is considered good enough within nonprofit organizations. The findings of this study imply internal tensions may exist within high-performing megachurches between expectations of the paid staff and expectations of the volunteers who support them as they collectively seek to function at high operational levels. The researcher concluded from this study that relationships are more important than performance factors (or any other factor) within the context of volunteerism.

Conclusions

Nonprofit organizations will continue to need volunteers; they are the lifeblood of nonprofit organizations. This will remain particularly true for churches, whether they number 200 or 20,000 congregants. The research shows the success of volunteer programs is contingent upon several key factors, but foundational to them all is relationship—with other volunteers, with paid staff, and with organizational leaders.

At its core, the Christian Church strives to connect people to Christ. Volunteering accomplishes this practically through the organizational mechanism of assigning people to ministries where they believe they can best serve. In turn, they connect with other volunteers. As Miller (2012) pointed out, recruiting volunteers is "the process of matching an organization's needs with a volunteer's interests and skills" (p. 5). As volunteers become highly engaged in a megachurch, they become better contributors to the organization. As they become better contributors, they become more invested in the mission of the Christian Church. When that happens, these actively engaged volunteers become proponents of the church away from the church, furthering its mission and mutually benefiting themselves and the organization.

Although this study took place at a single megachurch in a mid-Atlantic state, its findings can be applied universally to other churches and nonprofit organizations seeking success with their volunteers. Specific to megachurches, implementing the recommended best practices from this study will lead to actively engaged volunteers. This will occur by effectively improving volunteer attraction and retention strategies, which then will result in volunteers who are highly satisfied, while reducing pastor and staff burnout.

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Appendix

VSI Survey

Volunteer Satisfaction Index (VSI) Survey

PART I:

The following statements are about your satisfaction with characteristics of your current volunteer job. If you are very dissatisfied with the characteristic described in the statement, circle 1; if you are very satisfied with the characteristic described in the statement, circle 7. You may circle any number between 1 and 7 which accurately describes your response to the statement.

For clarification, the following is a definition of terms used:

a. agency/organization	The organization for which are currently working as a volunteer.
b. staff	Paid employees of the organization such as the volunteer coordinator director, or others with whom you have contact.
c. client	The beneficiary of your volunteer work; the population of people being served by the organization.

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following:		**Very Dissatisfied**			**Undecided**			**Very Satisfied**
1.	The accuracy of the information I have been given concerning my volunteer job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	The chance I have to utilize my knowledge and skills in my volunteer work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	The influence that my participation is having in the lives of the clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	The availability of getting help when I need it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	My relationship with other volunteers in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	The friendships I have made while volunteering here.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	The chance to receive additional skill training for this volunteer job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	The progress that I have seen in the clientele served by my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	The level of challenge this volunteer job provides me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	The access I have to information concerning the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	The realism of the picture I was given of what my volunteer experience would be like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	The freedom I have in deciding how to carry out my volunteer assignment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please indicate your level of <u>satisfaction</u> with the following:		**Very Dissatisfied**			**Undecided**			**Very Satisfied**
13.	My ability to effectively help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	The resources I have been given to do my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	The amount of interaction I have with other volunteers in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	My relationship with paid staff.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	The support network that is in place for me when I have volunteer-related problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	The difference my volunteer work is making.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	The flexibility I am given to fit volunteer work into my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	The way in which the organization provides me with performance feedback.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	The flow of communication coming to me from paid staff and board members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	How interesting my volunteer work is.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	My ability to do this job as well as anyone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	The opportunities I have to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	The way in which other members of the organization relate to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	The amount of time spent with other volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	The support I receive from people in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	How appreciative the clientele are of our help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29.	The fit of the volunteer work to my skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please indicate your level of <u>satisfaction</u> with the following:		**Very Dissatisfied**			**Undecided**			**Very Satisfied**
30.	The amount of information I receive about what the organization is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31.	How often the organization acknowledges the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	The amount of permission I need to get to do the things I need to do on this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33.	How worthwhile my contribution is.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34.	The training I have received.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35.	My relationships with paid staff.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36.	The degree to which I feel I belong in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37.	The degree to which the organization communicates its goals and objectives to volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38.	The convenience of this job to my schedule.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39.	The amount of effort I put in as equaling the amount of change I influence.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40.	The amount of educational resources made available to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PART II.

The following questions refer to communication about changes in your organization. If you Strongly Disagree, please circle 1. If you Strongly Agree, please circle 7. You may circle any number between 1 and 7 which accurately describes your response to the statement.

		Strongly Disagree SD						**Strongly Agree SA**
41.	The amount of information I receive about changes in my organization is sufficient to perform my duties.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42.	I am satisfied with how information is communicated to me about changes in the organization (ex: in writing, face-to-face)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43.	I am satisfied with how frequently I receive information about changes in my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

44.	I receive information about changes in a timely fashion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45.	I receive information about changes early enough to perform my duties well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46.	The impact of organizational changes on my duties is explained clearly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47.	I am more willing to accept changes when I am satisfied with how they have been communicated to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48.	I am more likely to oppose a change when I am unsatisfied with how it has been communicated to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PART III:
The following questions refer to how certain you are about remaining with the agency for which you currently volunteer. If you are certain you will not, circle 1; if you are certain that you will, circle 7. You may circle any number between 1 and 7 which accurately describes your response to the statement.

Please indicate how <u>certain</u> you are about the following:		**Certainly Not**			**Unsure**			**Certainly**
1.	Unless unforeseen changes occur in your life, do you see yourself volunteering for this agency 1 year from now?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	If not, why? _____							

PART IV:
In order to interpret your answers to the survey questions, I need to know a little more about you and your volunteer work. I am asking only for information which has been found to relate significantly to volunteerism. Please answer each of the following questions:

1. How long have you volunteered with <u>this</u> organization? ____Year (s) and ____Month(s)

2. Is this the only organization with which you volunteer? _____Yes _____No

   2a. If no, for how many organizations have you volunteered in your lifetime?_____

3. How many hours a week do you volunteer at this organization?

_____less than 5	_____16-20	_____31-35
_____6-10	_____21-25	_____36-40
_____11-15	_____26-30	_____over 40

4. Please indicate the areas in which you most often volunteer (check as many as apply).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. What is your age range?

_____18-25	_____66-75
_____26-35	_____76-85
_____36-45	_____86-95
_____46-55	
_____56-65	

6. Are you _____Female _____Male

7. Annual income:

_____Less than $10,000	_____$51,000-$60,000
_____$11,000-$20,000	_____$61,000-$70,000
_____$21,000-$30,000	_____$71,000-$80,000
_____$31,000-$40,000	_____Over $80,000
_____$41,000-$50,000	

8. Ethnicity:

_____American Indian/Alaskan Native	_____Laotian
_____Asian American/Pacific Islander	_____Mexican-American
_____African American	_____Other Hispanic
_____Caucasian	_____Other (please specify)
	_____

9. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
   _____Less than high school graduate
   _____High school graduate
   _____Some college (includes community college)
   _____College graduate
   _____Graduate degree

Thank You for your time!

If you have additional comments you would like to add, feel free to write them below in the space provided.