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Canadian journal of nonprofit and social economy research /
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OSBL et l'économie sociale

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ÉDITORIAL / EDITORIAL

La force du libre accès   The Power of Open Access

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ANSERJ est un bel exemple d'une revue avec comité de lecture offerte en ligne et à libre accès dès le premier numéro publié en 2010. À titre de revue officielle de l'Association de recherche des organismes sans but lucratif et de l'économie sociale / Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ARES/ANSER), ANSERJ jouit d'un statut particulier au Canada. Depuis ses débuts, la revue reçoit l'appui financier d'ARES/ANSER et de ses partenaires. En outre, la direction d'ANSERJ espère pouvoir bénéficier à l'avenir de l'appui du Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada (CRSH).

Ce modèle d'affaires permet d'offrir des articles qui sont disponibles sans frais à quiconque a accès à l'internet. Ainsi, autant

In our view, ANSERJ is a fine example of an open-access, peer-reviewed journal that has been available online since the first issue was published in 2010. As the official journal of the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research / l'Association de recherche des organismes sans but lucratif et de l'économie sociale (ANSER-ARES), ANSERJ enjoys a special status in Canada. Since its inception, the journal has received financial support from ANSER-ARES and several universities. In the future, ANSERJ hopes to benefit from support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

This business model allows us to offer articles that are available free of charge to anyone with access to the Internet. In this way, the university community,

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le monde universitaire, professeurs et étudiants, la fonction publique que les praticiens ont accès aux travaux réalisés sur la réalité canadienne des organismes sans but lucratif (OSBL) et de l'économie sociale. Le libre accès permet aussi de rejoindre plus facilement les personnes dans les pays en développement.

Reflétant la diversité canadienne, ANSERJ est une publication dans les deux langues officielles (français et anglais). Ainsi, les articles sont publiés dans la langue de soumission avec des résumés dans les deux langues. Il y a également des comptes-rendus de livres. Au fil des numéros, l'équilibre entre les articles en anglais et ceux en français s'est avéré fragile. En effet, il y a parfois un désir, même parmi les francophones, de publier en anglais. Cela peut s'expliquer par un lectorat potentiel plus nombreux et une reconnaissance perçue comme plus grande dans la langue anglaise.

Dans le cas d'ANSERJ, les auteurs n'ont pas non plus à payer pour soumettre des articles à l'évaluation. D'autre part, contrairement à plusieurs maisons d'édition, les auteurs conservent leurs droits d'auteur et n'ont pas à céder ceux-ci à une tierce personne. Après tout, il s'agit de leur travail intellectuel.

Bénéficiant de l'appui d'un comité de rédaction et d'évaluateurs possédant une expertise certaine, les conseils et le temps investis par ceux-ci permettent d'offrir des articles de qualité. Cette qualité repose sur l'évaluation par les pairs d'une revue avec comité de lecture. Le débat sur le processus d'évaluation par les pairs et son format (anonymat) persiste et n'est pas nécessairement lié au libre accès. Plusieurs personnes reçoivent régulièrement des offres où, moyennant certains frais, on promet d'accepter et de publier leurs articles dans un délai de quelques jours. Cette pratique alimente le débat sur la qualité douteuse de certaines revues qui sont souvent en libre accès. Ce questionnement sur la qualité est sans doute lié davantage aux bénéfices potentiels que certains entrepreneurs voient dans le domaine de la publication.

professors and students, the general public, practitioners and policy makers all have access to the research on the Canadian reality of nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and the social economy. Free access also makes it easier for people in developing countries to learn about Canada.

ANSERJ reflects Canada's linguistic duality as it is published in both official languages (French and English). Articles are published in the language of submission and all articles include a French and an English summary. The overall balance between articles in English and French is a fragile one. There is a tendency, even among Francophones, to publish articles in English due potentially to a larger English-reading audience and greater recognition in the English language.

In the case of ANSERJ, the authors do not have to pay to submit articles or to have published articles openly available. Unlike many publishers, authors retain their copyright and do not have to relinquish it to a third party. After all, this is their intellectual work.

With the support of an editorial board and external reviewers with considerable expertise, advice, and time invested in reviewing articles, ANSERJ publishes high-quality research articles. This quality is based on the blind peer-review process. The debate on the peer-review process and its format (anonymous) is not necessarily related to the open-access format. Many people regularly receive offers from journals that, for a fee, promise to accept and publish articles within a few days. This practice fuels the debate about the questionable quality of some open-access journals. In our view, this questioning of the quality of open-access journals could be related to potential competition in the field of academic publishing.

Une autre explication contextuelle pourrait être les pressions toujours grandissantes pour la publication dans le monde universitaire. En effet, la performance des universitaires est évaluée en grande partie (presque exclusivement?) par leur publication d'articles dans des revues avec comité de lecture. Il faut se questionner sur l'impact des revues en libre accès sur les décisions relatives à la permanence et à la promotion des auteurs dans un contexte universitaire. Nous sommes d'avis que l'impact d'un article dans une revue se reflète surtout par le nombre de personnes qui lisent cet article et à cet égard ANSERJ présente un bilan dont nous sommes fiers. La question de la crédibilité d'une revue relativement nouvelle amène également des questionnements similaires.

D'autre part, dans un contexte d'austérité budgétaire, l'accès sans frais aux revues permet de réduire les dépenses des bibliothèques ou d'orienter leurs fonds vers d'autres activités. Dans une époque plus ancienne (mais pas si lointaine), l'accès aux revues était uniquement sur un format papier. Compte tenu des contraintes budgétaires, les bibliothèques devaient choisir avec soin les revues dans lesquelles investir. Des choix budgétaires similaires ont permis à certaines revues d'être plus accessibles que d'autres à de nombreux endroits, de devenir plus populaires et d'obtenir de meilleurs taux de citation. Toutefois, avec les nouveaux modèles d'affaires que sont les revues en libre accès et les revues vendues en bloc, il y a un changement qui s'opère et les articles ne sont pas nécessairement trouvés uniquement par revue, mais selon le sujet qu'ils abordent.

Y a-t-il un certain snobisme par rapport aux revues à libre accès? Y a-t-il une responsabilité de la part des chercheurs plus expérimentés à publier dans les revues en libre accès et dans les revues canadiennes? Faut-il encourager les universitaires, en particulier les étudiants, à publier leurs recherches dans ce genre de revue et en particulier dans ANSERJ? Les comités de permanence et de promotion devraient-ils modifier leurs procédures et évaluer le bénéfice public lié aux articles dans les revues?

Another contextual explanation could be the ever-increasing pressure in universities to publish. Indeed, many professors are assessed largely (almost exclusively?) on the number of articles published in peer-reviewed journals. We have to wonder about the impact of open-access journals in decisions about tenure and promotion of authors in an academic context. We would argue that the real impact of a journal article is reflected in the number of people who read the article, and in this regard ANSERJ has a record of which it is very proud.

In a context of fiscal austerity, the fact that there is no cost to access journals reduces library expenditures. In an older (but not so distant) time, access to journals was only on paper. Now, given budgetary constraints, libraries must carefully choose the journals to which they subscribe. Similar budgetary choices mean that some journals are more accessible than others, and this popularity means that the journals will enjoy better citation rankings. However, a new business model formulated by journal distributors has meant that open-access journals and subscription journals are sold in blocks or packages—not by journal title, but by subject area.

Is there a certain degree of discrimination regarding open-access journals? Is there a responsibility on the part of more experienced authors to publish in open-access and Canadian journals? Should we encourage the university community—particularly students—to publish their research in such journals, particularly in ANSERJ? Should tenure and promotion committees review their standard procedure and assess the public benefit associated with journal articles?

Bâtir une revue comme ANSERJ est un travail de longue haleine qui repose sur la bonne volonté et le travail d'un grand nombre de personnes. Les fondements sont bien en place, mais c'est un travail continuel. Nous espérons que la collectivité des chercheurs intéressés par les organismes sans but lucratif et l'économie sociale s'investira dans la revue et prendra sous son aile ANSERJ à titre d'abonnés, de lecteurs, d'auteurs, d'évaluateurs ou de membres du comité de rédaction.

Building a journal such as ANSERJ is a long process that is based on the good will and work of many people. The foundations are in place, but it is still a work in progress. We invite the research community interested in nonprofits and the social economy to become a part of ANSERJ, whether as readers, authors, reviewers, or editorial-board members.

Tales of Policy Estrangement: Non-Governmental Policy Work and Capacity in Three Canadian Provinces

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ABSTRACT

Recently, there have been a number of Canadian-based studies of federal and provincial government policy workers. One key theme across all of these studies is the importance of well-established networks outside of government. However, these studies have demonstrated that government policy workers interact very infrequently outside the comfort of their own department cubicles. This stands in contrast to the considerable literature on new public governance theory, which suggests that non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including nonprofit groups, should, and do, play an important role in shaping public policy. This article provides some insights into this question and identifies where NGO–government interaction does exist. The descriptive results from a survey of non-governmental organization policy workers across four fields (environment, health, labour, and immigration) in three Canadian provinces (British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Ontario) clearly illustrate the limitations, at all levels, on interaction between NGO groups and government officials. The article argues that this does not disprove the basic tenet of new governance theory—that non-state actors are engaged, to some degree, in the policy process. The article examines the results of an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model to determine what factors shape and drive NGO interaction with government.

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis peu, bon nombre d'études canadiennes sont apparues sur les stratèges des gouvernements fédéral et provinciaux. Un thème clé dans ces études est l'importance de maintenir des réseaux viables au-delà du gouvernement. Pourtant, selon diverses études, les stratèges gouvernementaux interagissent très peu au-delà de leurs bureaux à cloisons. Cette situation ne reflète pas l'approche recommandée dans les nombreux écrits recourant à la théorie de la nouvelle gouvernance publique. Celle-ci recommande aux organisations non-gouvernementales (ONG), y compris aux groupes sans but lucratif, de jouer un rôle plus important dans la formulation des politiques publiques. Cet article explore cette question et identifie les domaines où existent des interactions entre ONG et gouvernements. Les résultats d'un sondage de stratèges d'ONG dans quatre

domaines (environnement, santé, travail et immigration) dans trois provinces canadiennes (Colombie-Britannique, Saskatchewan et Ontario) illustrent clairement les contraintes, à tous les niveaux, sur les interactions entre ONG et gouvernements. L'article soutient que cette situation ne contredit pas le principe fondamental de la théorie de la nouvelle gouvernance publique, à savoir que des acteurs non gouvernementaux s'engagent effectivement, jusqu'à un certain point, dans la formulation de politiques. Cet article examine en outre les résultats de l'application d'une méthode des moindres carrés pour déterminer quels sont les facteurs qui influencent et motivent les interactions entre ONG et gouvernements.

Keywords / Mots clés : Policy engagement; Policy workers; Non-governmental organizations; New public governance / Engagement politique; Stratèges; Organisations non-gouvernementales; Nouvelle gouvernance publique

INTRODUCTION

This article is based on a survey of non-governmental (NGO) policy workers in the Canadian provinces of Ontario, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan, conducted in early 2012. Our interest in NGO policy workers emerges from the body of new governance literature, which suggests that a substantively greater role for non-government actors in the policy process has emerged over the past three decades. Using an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model, this article identifies various factors that appear to drive NGO engagement with government policy. Our overarching conclusion is that provincial NGO policy actors are relatively active participants in service delivery but less so in policy formulation. The data suggest that key decisions about policy design are made prior to NGO engagement. Following a review of the literature on governance, new public governance theory, and empirical policy work-studies. The second section outlines six research hypotheses designed to explore the drivers of NGO interaction with provincial agencies. The third section details the research methods and data collection process. The fourth section outlines the data collected and the OLS regression multivariate analysis we conducted based on descriptive variables. In the final sections, we test our research hypotheses using the descriptive results of the OLS analysis, and, finally, we discuss policy implications and raise questions for further investigation.

LITERATURE REVIEW: QUESTIONING THE NEW GOVERNANCE LITERATURE

In Canada, several studies have examined policy capacity within Canada's federal and provincial governments. The studies consist of everything from expert panels and reports (Fellegi, 1996; Peters, 1996; Savoie, 2003), to reflections of senior officials (Anderson, 1996; Rasmussen, 1999; Voyer, 2007), to survey results (Bernier & Howlett, 2011; Howlett, 2009; Howlett & Wellstead, 2012; Wellstead & Stedman, 2011; Wellstead, Stedman, & Howlett, 2011). This recent production of quantitative research delves into the nitty-gritty "who and how" details of front line policy work. Given the important policy fields administered by the Canadian provinces, either in whole or to a significant degree (health, education, labour market, immigration settlement, environment), further research at this level is required. Howlett (2009) places the NGO dimension (and this includes business, labour, and civil society organizations) on the research agenda when he asks, "What do policy analysts actually do in contemporary governmental and non-governmental organizations" (pp. 163–164)? He further urges students of

public policy and management to ask if the training and resourcing of policy workers is adequate up to the task. Taking Howlett's (2009) suggestions for additional research seriously, this work explores how governmental and NGO policy workers engage with one another. The new governance literature suggests that "policies can no longer be struck in isolation in government" (Lindquist, 2009, p. 9). The research in this article seeks to establish to what extent this has been put into practice.

In 1996, R.A.W. Rhodes declared that networks had joined markets and hierarchies as one mode of "governing structure" (p. 653). Through the 1980s, in the case of Britain, a decentring of the state in the policy process was observed, whereby policy outcomes were no longer "the product of actions by central government. The centre may pass a law but subsequently it interacts with local government, health authorities, the voluntary sector, the private sector and, in turn, they interact with one another" (p. 657). This led Rhodes to conclude that we now inhabit a "centreless society," wherein it is the task of the "polycentric state" to "enable socio-political interactions" (p. 657). Thus, we have an image of an interactive policy-making process in which the government engages with relevant non-governmental policy actors. Political steering is carried out through networks built of "overlapping roles of political and societal actors" and characterized by "low institutionalization and a general blurring of bureaucratic demarcations" (Koch, 2013, pp. 397–398). Optimally, non-governmental actors enter at an early stage in the process, so as to have a meaningful role in shaping the final policy product (Edelenbos, 1999). This plurilateral policy process, engaging a broad spectrum of non-governmental actors, is understood in the literature to be a positive development in the realm of policy praxis (van der Heijden, 2013), supporting the widely held view that "the more new governance, the better" (Solomon, 2008, p. 862) the policy outcome.

The core characteristics of new governance are collaboration and deliberation (Gunningham, 2009; Hoffman, 2011; Karkainen, 2004; Lobel, 2004; Solomon, 2008). In concrete terms, collaboration in the new governance sense refers to bringing "multiple stakeholders together in common forums with public agencies to engage in consensus-oriented decision making" (Ansell & Gash, 2008, p. 543). Through collaboration, a policy solution can be negotiated for problems too complex to be adequately dealt with through more traditional processes such as by the initiative of a single government department. The closely allied concept of *deliberation* refers to the process through which all stakeholders, not just government decision-makers or elite stakeholders, are given a role in the policy process (Heijden, 2013; NeJaime, 2009). A new paradigm of power sharing thus emerges (Ansell & Gash, 2008). What is distinctive in this paradigm is that "a wider variety of non-governmental organizations are becoming active participants in governing" (Bevir, 2011, p. 2). The proponents of new governance understand this as expressing a "change in the nature of the meaning of government" (Bevir & Rhodes, 2003, p. 4). While this view expresses the new governance orthodoxy, the field is not without a serious body of emerging critical perspectives grounded in empirical research (Bode, 2006; Goetz, 2008; Hoogh & Marks, 2003; Janicke & Jorgens, 2006). The central question to be answered in the governance debate is, as Capano (2011) puts it, "What role do governments now actually play" (p. 1623)?

The new governance model of policy construction is contested. The deliberative process at the centre of new governance theory assumes a fairly even distribution of political and other resources among non-governmental policy actors; the theory fails to acknowledge that in this framework, "talk is disconnected from power" (Noveck, 2011, p. 89). In other words, if policy is an expression of power relations in society, and if that power is unevenly

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distributed, can one assume that increased inclusivity will free the policy making process from this constraint? We need to question the extent to which non-governmental stakeholder participation is meaningful (Ford & Condon, 2011). Moreover, non-governmental organizations themselves reflect this uneven distribution of power. Given that they represent the diverse interests of larger society, not all NGOs have equal access to resources or to political power. Weaker, less politically recognized NGOs, such as those advocating redistributive policy, anti-poverty policy, or labour reform, may not be included in government processes, or consultations with them may be perfunctory. The inequality characterizing wider society is often simply reproduced within the open and pluralized new governance policy process, as insiders with significant resources and political links to the state tend to dominate and realize their specific policy goals (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Mol, 2007). Empirical studies of deliberative processes have found that they often fail to be completely inclusive and that they minimize or ignore the proposals of policy actors who have "outsider" status (van der Heijden & Ten Heuvelhof, 2012; Eversole, 2010).

Consequently, the core thesis underpinning new governance theory, which implies that government is losing its pre-eminent role at the centre of the policy process and that state-dominated hierarchy is giving way to multi-actor plurilateralism, is contested and in some cases rejected (Heritier & Lehmkuhl, 2008; Hill & Lynn, 2005; Howlett, Rayner & Tollefson, 2009). A counter-narrative contends that what "appears to be a shift away from government may turn out to be a path towards government" (Goetz, 2008, p. 272). Capano's (2011) study of the shifting governance framework in the higher education systems of four European countries finds the state to be very much engaged in steering the sector in each case, albeit unevenly and from a distance. Capano finds no pure governance type but rather a "hybridization" of the governance mode (p. 1639). Koch's (2013) analysis of the integration of four public transport systems in Switzerland leads to his observation, at least in terms of the cases studied, that network governance constitutes one step within a process of governance reform which is moving toward a more hierarchical and institutionalized form (p. 418). In other words, the loose governance framework becomes governmentalized, namely institutionalized in government institutions. Howlett, Rayner, and Tollefson's (2009) study of forest planning governance in British Columbia examines a case in which new policy actors successfully shaped both policy processes and outcomes—yet even so, they question the overarching new governance paradigm (p. 384). Their study finds no straightforward shift in governance, but rather that the "reality of BC forest policy is a great deal messier than implied" (p. 384) by the incorporation of new actors in the policy process. They go even further, asking "whether any newly emerging mode of governance is any more effective or legitimate than the 'old' government model" (p. 384).

The Canadian cases studied here tend to offer a complex, perhaps contradictory, perspective on NGO—government engagement. Indeed, NGO respondents provide evidence of "high expectations," even confidence, with respect to their own capacity to make policy, but the opportunities for them to actually engage with government are less evident. For practitioners, we offer insights as to which attributes of NGOs lead to greater engagement with government decision-makers.

Some studies and commentary overviewed here are specifically concerned with the policy role of Canadian NGOs in light of new governance challenges. Phillips (2007) was perhaps among the first to question the new governance thesis within the context of Canadian public policy making. She questions the categorical assertion that new governance "has systematized and institutionalized" the involvement of non-governmental actors in the

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policy process, arguing that "we know relatively little about how and to what extent such groups conduct policy analysis in the current context, how they use it to exert policy influence, and to what end" (Phillips, 2007, p. 497). She poses several basic questions requiring further empirical research:

> Have civil society organizations adopted policy styles that are compatible with a supposedly more open, inclusive, and participatory system of governance? Are they effective participants in policy networks and in shaping Canadian public policy? If not, why not? Are policy processes in Canada actually as open and as participatory as this model of "governance" suggests? (p. 497)

As other Canadian studies considered here note, a key limitation is that "few voluntary sector organizations … have the policy capacity to participate effectively" (Phillips, 2007, p. 498). Carter (2011) reports descriptive results from a 2005 survey of "several thousand" nonprofit groups and a 2007 survey of the voluntary sector as part of her evaluation of the federal government's Voluntary Sector Initiative. Her key finding was that fewer than 25 percent of nonprofit organizations participated directly in public policy processes. This degree of non-participation is not a function of disinterest, but of a lack of capacity (Carter, 2011, p. 430–431). Carter notes, however, that nonprofit organizations are often involved in the implementation of public policy regardless of whether they have been active participants in the agenda setting or design phase of the process (p. 432). Similarly, Mulholland (2010) points out that non-governmental policy capacity has eroded as a consequence of government funding cuts, the Great Recession, and the advocacy chill, among other factors (p. 141). One result has been the emergence of "communities of purpose," which Mulholland (2010) defines as "relatively informal collaborations of organizations and individuals, united in support of a shared aspiration or goal, with a strong innovation focus, and highly skilled at building sectoral and cross-sectoral policy consensus and using this to influence policy" (p. 141).

From an entirely different perspective, Laforest and Orsini (2005) highlight the increasing importance of evidence-based policy work and its effect on nonprofit organizations. Their thesis contends that government for more evidence-based policy research produced by civil society organizations is displacing NGOs from their prior central role as representatives of their specific constituents. The expanding participation of NGOs in the policy process and the premium placed on information and research have "transformed the policy-making playing field," such that new skills are necessary for shaping policy outcomes: "Access, influence and overall policy success are no longer determined solely by traditional power politics, where actors leverage their strength through numbers.... [The new politics] is a politics in which knowledge, … scientific expertise, triumphs" (Laforest and Orsini, 2005, p. 483). This development worries Laforest and Orsini (2005) because it closes off "political spaces to forms of representation that may be unconventional or deemed too politicized" and, further, because it reframes the policy process as a depoliticized one, in which the only currency is data and information (p. 483).

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Our study tested six hypotheses drawn from Canadian nonprofit policy literature in order to identify factors that contribute to an NGO embracing policy engagement with provincial government ministries. Laforest and Orsini (2005) predict that with more organizations shifting to an evidence-based approach, research will be increasingly emphasized over public advocacy.

Hypothesis 1: Employment in research related positions will increase the extent of respondents' interaction with government.

Laforest and Orsini (2005), Phillips (2007), Carter (2011), and Mulholland (2010) all note the importance of the horizontality of policy making and the prevalence of network-based decision making. As a result, NGOs that frequently interact with each other will be more active policy participants.

Hypothesis 2: Engagement with other NGOs will lead to greater interaction with government.

Carter (2011) found policy identification to be an important role for NGOs. The identification of issues and policy solutions is a critical task in early policy formulation (Howlett, Perl, & Ramesh, 2009).

Hypothesis 3: Greater involvement in the early stages of policy development will result in greater interaction with government throughout the policy making process.

Phillips (2007) found that many nonprofit groups deliver programs, but have very little involvement in other aspects of the policy making process or in policy work similar to that conducted by government agencies.

Hypothesis 4: Greater involvement in the program implementation stage will lead to less interaction with government.

Umbrella organizations, according to Carter (2011), "engage in public policy on behalf of their members" (p. 430). Thus, a person's "desire to have more effective involvement in public policy through greater numbers is usually one of the underlying rationales for forming or signing up with an umbrella organization" (p. 430). We expect membership in umbrella NGOs to lead to greater interaction with government.

Hypothesis 5: Respondents working in umbrella NGOs will have greater interaction with government.

Phillips (2007) points to the importance of briefs presented by voluntary organizations to the Health and Human Resources parliamentary committees of the House of Commons. We argue that active briefing presented by NGOs to all levels of government will increase government interaction.

Hypothesis 6: Greater involvement in briefing tasks will increase the extent of interaction with government.

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RESEARCH METHODS

To probe the above research questions, we designed an NGO based, 248-variable survey questionnaire (with 38 questions), drawing in part from previous government capacity surveys conducted by Howlett (2009) and Wellstead, Stedman, and Lindquist (2009). Questions addressed the nature and frequency of various tasks, the extent and frequency of respondents' interactions with other policy actors, and their opinions and attitudes about various aspects of policy-making processes. Questions also addressed respondents' education, previous work experiences, on-the-job training experiences, as well as background information pertaining to age and gender.

The survey was delivered to 1,763 policy analysts working in the NGO sector in the Canadian provinces of Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. Four policy fields were selected for this survey: environment, health, immigration, and labour.

These provinces and policy sectors were chosen because they represent heterogeneous cases in terms of politics, history, and economic and demographic scale. Ontario, for example, has the largest economy and population of Canada's provinces (13.5 million people and 40% of Canada's Gross Domestic Product [GDP]). Unlike most other provinces, Ontario has a competitive three-party political system; each party has governed at some point since 1990. British Columbia presents a mid-size province (population 4.4 million; 12% of national GDP). Provincial elections have been polarized contests between social democrats and a free market coalition that has been housed within various parties. Saskatchewan is a small province (population 1 million; 3% of national GDP). Its economy is largely based on natural resources and agriculture (Wellstead, 2008). Politics have also been highly polarized, with the provincial government alternating between social democrats and conservatives.

Mailing lists for the survey were compiled, wherever possible, from publicly available sources such as online telephone directories, using keyword searches for terms such as "policy analyst" in job titles or descriptions. In some cases, additional names were added to lists from hard-copy sources, including government organization manuals. Based on preliminary interviews with NGO representatives, we suspected that prospective respondents would undertake a variety of non–policy related tasks. As a result, we also included those who undertook any policy related analysis in their work objectives. Due to the small size of both study populations, a census, rather than a sample, was drawn from each. This method is consistent with other expert-based studies (cf, Laumann & Knoke, 1987; Zafonte & Sabatier, 1998).

The authors sent out an unsolicited survey in early 2012 using Survey Monkey, an online commercial software service. A total of 603 returns were collected for a final response rate of 34.4 percent. With the exception of the NGO respondents working in the labour sector, the percentage of respondents in each of the sectors corresponded closely with the identified population developed by the authors. Data was weighted using the iterative proportional fitting or raking method (Center for Disease Control, 2013) and analyzed using SPSS 20.0. Data generated by the survey provided the basis for testing our hypotheses on NGO interaction with government.

The term *non-governmental organization*, or NGO, as employed in this study, is defined broadly. This is, in part, because of the challenge of achieving wide agreement on an operational definition. As Lewis (2010) notes, precise "definitions vary as to what constitutes an NGO" (p. 2). As a result, "analyzing the phenomenon of NGOs remains surprisingly difficult. … Boundaries are unclear. … This has generated complex debates about what is and what is not an NGO" (Lewis, 2010, p. 2). Moreover, the term is used inconsistently (Anheier and List, 2005, p. 174). Similar definitional challenges confront other related terms, such as *third sector* (Gidron, 2010, p. 2) and *nonprofit* (Anheier and List, 2005, p. 180). Consequently, and given the diversity of non-state organizations inhabiting the four policy fields investigated here, we have taken a broadly inclusive approach, defining NGO as "any non-state, not-for-profit … formed by people in that social sphere. This term is used to describe a wide range of organizations, networks, associations, groups, and movements that are independent of government" (World Health Organization, 2009).

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This section first presents the descriptive results and exploratory factor analysis on the background, work environment, and general perspectives of the respondents. Factor analysis is a method of data reduction that seeks to identify the underlying unobservable (latent) variables reflected in the observed variables (manifest variables). From the descriptive variables thus derived, an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression multivariate analysis explored the drivers of NGO interaction with government officials.

Describing the respondents

More women (55.3%) than men (44.7%) responded to the survey, while over half (52.1%) of the respondents were over 50 years old. In contrast, only 19.5 percent were under 40 years old. This age distribution is similar to previous policy capacity studies of government agencies (see Howlett, 2009; Wellstead et al., 2010). Respondents were well educated, with 49.4 percent reporting an advanced degree. Over two thirds (67.8%) had taken at least one policy specific post-secondary course.

Table 1: Tenure with organization

Length of tenure	*N*	Percent
Less than 1 year	17	3.0
1-5 years	196	33.7
6-9 years	114	19.7
10-14 years	101	17.4
15-20 years	64	11.0
Greater than 20 years	89	15.3
Total	581	100.0
Missing		22
Total	**603**	

In Table 1, 43.7 percent reported tenure with their organization of over a decade, and slightly more than a third (36.7%) reported tenure of less than five years.

Of the three provinces surveyed, respondents from Ontario represented 44.3% of the total, followed by British Columbia (35.7%) and Saskatchewan (19.9%) (Table 2).

Table 2: Province location

Province	*N*	Percent
British Columbia	215	35.7
Ontario	267	44.3
Saskatchewan	120	19.9
Total	602	100.0

Just over one third (34.3%) reported that they worked in the health sector, closely followed by the labour sector (30.4%). Environment-related employment garnered 20.5%, while the immigration sector had the fewest respondents (14.8%) (Table 3).

Table 3: Policy sector, as identified by respondents

Policy sector	*N*	Percent
Environment	123	20.5
Health	207	34.3
Immigration	89	14.8
Labour	183	30.4
Total	**602**	**100.0**

Table 4 lists the types of organizations identified by respondents. Of these, the most frequently mentioned were service delivery NGOs (22.2%) and government-funded NGOs (20.8%), followed by trade unions (16.3%).

Table 4: NGO organization types

NGO type	Number	Percent
Advocacy-based	106	17.3
Government-funded group	125	20.8
Private foundation	12	–
Industry association	42	6.9
Private foundation	14	2.3
Public foundation	12	2.3
Public education	68	11.2
Research-based	64	10.7
Service delivery based	133	22.2
Think tank	20	3.3
Trade union	99	16.3
Umbrella organization	68	11.3

Note: Total is greater than 100 percent due to multiple choices.

Roles, tasks, and networks

When asked what perceived role(s) they fulfilled within their organization, just over a third (35.1%) of respondents identified themselves as directors (Table 5).

Table 5: Role within organization

Role	*N*	Percent
Advisor	103	17.1
Analyst	48	7.9
Communication officer	71	11.7
Co-ordinator	102	17.0
Director	212	35.1
Liaison officer	33	5.5
Manager	153	25.4
Planner	63	10.4
Policy analyst	101	16.8
Researcher	108	17.9
Strategic analyst	70	11.6
Other	117	19.5

The second most commonly mentioned role was that of manager (25.4%), followed by researcher (17.9%), co-ordinator (17.0%), and policy analyst (16.8%). There was a great deal of overlap between the 11 possible roles respondents could choose from (Cronbach's alpha of .742). Thus, a significant number of respondents saw themselves as fulfilling multidimensional roles within their organization. This is interpreted here as an expression of the necessity for NGO staff to multitask. Furthermore, it can be speculated that the prevalence of multitasking is a reflection of the resource constraints experienced by NGOs. This finding reflects Phillip's (2007) point that NGOs simply do not possess the budgetary capacity to employ staff who specialize exclusively in policy, and that they instead rely on "self-taught" generalists (p. 507). The only exception to this general pattern was found among executive directors, who play a key leadership role within NGOs. Given the demanding managerial and leadership functions required of an executive director, it is understandable that they would uniquely identify themselves in a single role.

Table 6: Involvement in different types of policy work, with factor analysis of four broad categories

Type of work	Mean frequency (ranking)	Factor 1 Policy work	Factor 2 Briefing	Factor 3 Networking	Factor 4 Scientific research
Appraise policy options	3.06 (3)	.681			
Conduct policy-related research	2.75 (5)	.652			
Evaluate policy processes and procedures	2.60 (8)	.746			
Evaluate policy results and outcomes	2.63 (7)	.839			
Identify policy issues	3.22 (2)	.848			
Identify policy options	2.94 (4)	.846			
Brief high-level government decision-makers	1.76 (13)		.800		
Brief senior management in government	2.00 (12)		.901		
Brief low- or mid-level policy managers in government	2.46 (9)		.782		
Consult with stakeholders	3.44 (1)			.527	
Implement or deliver policies or programs	2.70 (6)			.692	
Negotiate with program managers	2.38 (10)			.839	
Negotiate with stakeholders on policy matters	2.32 (11)			.747	
Conduct scientific Research	1.71 (14)				.929

Notes: Based on 1–5 scale, where 1=never and 5=weekly. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. 70.38% of the variance explained.

Respondents were asked about their involvement in certain types of policy-related work (on a five point scale, where 1=never and 5=weekly). Consulting with shareholders was the most frequent activity among respondents (mean=3.44, with 31.3% indicating at least monthly involvement) (Table 6). This was followed by relatively rudimentary policy tasks: namely, identifying policy issues (18.0%), identifying policy options (12.1%), and appraising policy options (16.1%), all of which required monthly involvement. A factor analysis of these 14 items (with 70.38% of the variance explained) produced four distinct broad items, as seen in Table 6: *policy work*, *briefing*, *networking* and *scientific research*. These variables (also listed in Table 7) were used in the OLS model.

Table 7: Type of policy work undertaken (summed from above factor analysis)

	N	**Mean**
Policy work	427	2.89
Briefing	501	2.07
Networking	475	2.72
Scientific research	507	1.71

Note: Based on 1–5 scale where 1=never and 5=weekly

Capacity and levels of engagement

Frequent or very frequent (weekly) strategizing or co-ordination with other NGO organizations was indicated by 48.7 percent of respondents (Table 8).

Table 8: Co-ordination with other NGOs

Frequency	*N*	**Percent**
Never	17	3.7
Infrequently	49	10.3
Sometimes	176	37.3
Frequently	133	28.3
Very frequently	96	20.4
Total	471	100.0
Missing		131
Total	**602**	

This indicates a fairly substantial investment toward building policy community coherence. One interpretation is that the NGO actors recognize the value of co-ordinating and designing a shared framing of policy problems and solutions. In support of this coalition-building activity, NGO respondents expressed significant confidence in their capacity to engage in policy matters. In terms of their organization's overall ability to address policy issues, nearly half of the respondents (42.6%) perceived a high level of capacity (Table 9).

Table 9: Organization's capacity to address policy issues

Capacity	N	Percent
Very low	30	6.6
Somewhat low	71	15.4
Moderate	163	35.4
Somewhat high	150	32.6
Very high	46	10.0
Total	460	100.0
Missing		143
Total	**603**	

When pressed for specific organizational commitment to policy work (Table 10), two thirds of respondents indicated that their senior management and/or board were committed to policy-related work (68.7%).

Table 10: Perceived adequacy of organization's commitment to policy work

Activities showing commitment to policy work	N	Adequate/Very Adequate (%)
Executive director and board involvement in policy	457	68.7
NGO involvement in networks	449	56.2
Recruitment of skilled policy staff	452	38.9
Staffing full-time equivalents	446	32.6
Training of policy staff	453	31.8

Over half (56.2%) expressed that their organization had strong commitment to policy work in terms of its involvement in NGO networks. However, as far as keeping the organizations effectively staffed, with sufficient in-house policy staff and on-going training in policy-relevant skills, there was a discernible division. Only a third of respondents thought their organization's commitment to staffing or training were adequate. Another third indicated that their organization was not doing enough.

As noted earlier, the central characteristics of new governance theories are collaboration and deliberation between state and non-governmental actors. Responses to our survey suggest that while policy engagement indeed is taking place, it is not particularly robust. This is illustrated in Table 11, with nearly one third of respondents indicating that they had never been invited by government to participate in a formal policy process. Another 26.1 percent reported they were invited, on average, once per year. At the other end of the participation

spectrum, 22.3 percent were invited to participate in a more rigorous and consistent manner that entailed monthly and quarterly meetings with government. Table 11 also includes "informal" collaboration; in other words, the invitations from government to NGOs to participate in policy through lower profile and more ad hoc processes. Nearly half (49.8%) of respondents reported that they are never invited to participate in any form of consultation with government. More than half (56.4%) of respondents indicated that formal invitations from government are rare, occur only once per year, or are simply never extended. However, a third (33.6%) of respondents said they engage in informal policy meetings on a monthly or quarterly basis; in comparison, only 22.3 percent are invited to formal consultations with government (see Table 11).

**Table 11: Invitations from government to NGOs for formal
and informal input on policy matters**

	Formal		Informal	
	N	Percent	*N*	Percent
Never	146	30.3	132	28.0
Annually	125	26.1	103	21.8
Semi-annually	102	21.3	78	16.6
Quarterly	78	16.3	96	20.4
Monthly	29	6.0	62	13.2
Total	480	100.0	471	100.0
Missing	123		132	

In terms of their interaction with specific types of government representatives, respondents interacted most frequently (monthly or quarterly) with front line staff (59.4%), followed by professional government staff (40.3%) and middle level managers (33.1%) (Table 12). NGO interaction with more senior level government officials was less frequent (senior level provincial managers, 21.1 percent; minister or minister's staff, 18.5%).

Table 12: Level of interaction

Government representative	*N*	Mean	Quarterly (%)	Monthly (%)
Minister or minister's staff	478	2.21	11.3	7.2
Senior level provincial government management	472	2.30	13.6	7.5
Middle level provincial government management	476	3.06	24.9	18.2
Professional government staff	470	3.01	20.2	20.1
Front line staff	476	3.51	23.4	36.0

Notes: These variables, when summed, became the dependent variable in the OLS model, below.
Mean score was derived from a 1 to 5 scale where 1=never and 5=monthly.

The survey asked respondents to assess what stage of the policy process they were most involved in. Just over a third (36.2%) of respondents became involved only after a policy had been developed, in contrast to the 17.1 percent who were actively involved in early policy stages (Table 13). Only a quarter (25.8%) were involved in all stages of the government policy process. A small number (10.3%) were involved only in policy implementation (10.3%), and 10.6 percent were not involved at all.

Table 13: Stage of government policy process in which respondents participated most frequently

Stage of policy process	N	Percent
All stages	121	25.8
Early stages	80	17.1
Post-formulation stage	169	36.2
Implementation stage	48	10.3
Not at all	50	10.6
Total	468	100.0
Missing		135
Total	**603**	

OLS model: Multivariate results

We used an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to test our six starting hypotheses about NGO interaction with different levels of government (as described in Table 14). This allowed us to examine the simultaneous effects of the dependent variables on NGO interaction with government agencies (Sokal & Rohlf, 1969). This analysis has a very robust predictive ability, explaining 59.9 percent of the variation in NGO interaction with government agencies.

Table 14. Explaining variations in the level of government interaction (OLS model)
a. Dependent Variable: Summed interaction with government officials from Table 12.

Model Summary			
R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
.817[a]	.668	.599	3.099

ANOVA					
Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	3831.922	41	93.462	9.730	.000
Residual	1904.404	198	9.605		
Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.

Coefficients					
	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig
Model	B	St. error	Beta		
Province[1]: Saskatchewan	1.991	.696	.146	2.861	.005
Sector[2]: Immigration	-2.230	.737	-.155	-3.027	.003
Age[3]: 31–40	-3.327	1.063	-.243	-3.131	.002
51–60	-3.319	1.106	-.320	-3.001	.003
Years in a policy related position[4]: less than 1 year	3.754	1.768	.110	2.124	.035
Advanced degree	1.274	.487	.130	2.617	.010
Role within organization[5]: Co-ordinator	-1.651	.655	-.122	-2.521	.012
Planner	-1.720	.786	-.125	-2.188	.030
Strategic Analyst	2.567	.824	.187	3.114	.002
Co-ordination with other NGOs	.679	.244	.142	2.782	.006
Adequacy of organization's commitment to policy work: Recruitment of skilled policy staff	-.816	.248	-.202	-3.292	.001
Staffing full-time equivalents	.557	.233	.144	2.395	.018
Stage of participation[6]: Implementation stage	-1.897	.895	-.110	-2.120	.035
Factored variables for involvement in certain types of work: Briefing	2.834	.313	.529	9.048	.000
Networking	1.190	.269	.225	4.430	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Summed interaction with government officials from Table 12.

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HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The OLS model revealed that *research*, whether as a self-identified role or as a specific task of the respondent, did not play a role in increasing government interaction. Thus Hypothesis 1 (*employment in research-related positions will increase the extent of interaction with government*) was rejected. However, the model found that those with co-ordinating and planning responsibilities were less likely to work with government agencies, whereas those who identified themselves as strategic analysts were more likely to. It should be noted that position descriptions vary from organization to organization, and the nature of tasks performed is equally broad.

Hypothesis 2: namely, that co-ordination with other NGOs would lead to a greater level of interaction with government officials—was strongly supported. Networking activities in general also led to greater interaction. The model failed to support Hypothesis 3 (*greater involvement in the post-formulation stage will result in greater interaction with government*). Although involvement in the post-formulation stage had no effect on NGO engagement, those who implemented policy were less likely to interact with government officials than those who were involved in the policy process at earlier stages, thus confirming Hypothesis 4 (*greater involvement in program implementation stage will lead to less interaction with government*).

Membership in umbrella organizations had no effect on the frequency of interaction. Thus, Hypothesis 5 (*respondents working in umbrella NGOs will have greater interaction with government*) was rejected. In fact, the membership in any type of NGO organization has no influence on interaction. Finally, the frequency of briefing activity was one of the most robust independent variables in the model and therefore supported Hypothesis 6 (*greater involvement in briefing tasks will increase the extent of interaction with government*).

The OLS model produced number of unanticipated results that fell outside of the six hypotheses. The model found that sector of employment, location, age, and education levels were all important independent variables. Respondents from Saskatchewan and those with advanced university degrees were more likely to engage with government officials. Those working in the immigration sector and those from two age cohorts (ages 31–40 and 51–60) were less likely to be involved.

The very small cohort of respondents who had been with their organization for less than one year were more likely to be engaged with government departments in their work. Two items relating to the adequacy of the organization's commitment to policy work were included adequacy of recruitment of skilled policy staff and staffing full-time equivalents. Both of these items, along with "Executive director and board involvement," "NGO involvement in networks," and "Training of policy staff" (as in Table 10), measure the perceived adequacy of the organization's commitment to policy work. In previous government policy capacity studies, when summed, these five items represent policy capacity. A test for reliability resulted in a Cronbach's alpha of .830, meaning that, when summed, the five variables presented a coherent policy capacity. However, in the above OLS model, the decline in government involvement was, in part, explained by the recruitment of skilled policy staff. This was in contrast to when respondents indicated that their organization was doing a good job of staffing full-time equivalents.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MAKING

If the question is, "Do non-government actors play a significant role in the policy process?" then the answer, according to our data analysis, would be, "Sometimes yes and sometimes no." At least, that appears to be the case in the three Canadian provinces surveyed here. More generally, new governance visions of an inclusive, pluralist policy process providing space for non-governmental actors are neither totally accurate nor inaccurate. Both proponents and critics can draw from the data presented here to support their positions. Consequently, we must be more nuanced than categorical in our analysis, as we proceed to examine the means by which policy engagement takes place. New governance–type arrangements may well be evolving, and may be doing so unevenly.

The Canadian analysis indicates an imbalance, both in the capacity of non-governmental actors to engage effectively in policy processes and in their opportunities to actually do so. A stark example of this is that nearly a third of respondents indicated that they had never been invited to participate in any policy discussion with their provincial government. This corroborates Carter's (2011) finding that less than a quarter of nonprofits are able to participate in the policy process. This trend is troubling and certainly provides reason to question the actual extent of engagement. However, in contrast, an equal number of our respondents report fairly frequent (monthly or quarterly) engagement with their provincial government, which is indicative of robust multi-actor policy processes of some type. We need to learn more about why those NGOs at each of these extremes are so significantly or insignificantly engaged.

Several researchers have identified the constrained policy capacity of non-governmental organizations as the key reason for modest or even non-participation in the policy process (Phillips, 2007; Carter, 2011; Mulholland, 2010). Yet just over half of the respondents to our survey considered the policy capacity of their organization to be "somewhat high" or "very high." At the same time, our survey data indicate that non-governmental actors have relatively serious concerns about the on-going policy training of staff, as well as the recruitment of sufficient numbers of staff with policy expertise. This does not necessarily support Laforest and Orsini's (2007) overarching claim that voluntary sector organizations are "investing most of their energy in research and evidence-based advocacy" (p. 482). But it does tend to support their argument that "access, influence and overall policy success are no longer determined solely by traditional power politics. … [The new politics] is a politics in which knowledge … triumphs" (Laforest & Orsini, 2005, p. 483).

Non-governmental actors understand this. What is less clear is whether it is true that this turn to policy-centred work is replacing other forms of representation. Effective policy advocacy often requires a broad coalition of actors working in a co-ordinated manner. Our data analysis demonstrates that more frequent co-ordination between NGOs is associated with more frequent interaction with government. The obvious interpretation is that the co-ordination of NGOs within a policy field maybe a requisite step for deliberation with government. Paradoxically, despite the importance of policy work, our study did not support the hypothesis that research positions would increase interaction with government officials. From this finding, future research should examine how NGO policy networks and coalitions leverage a variety of resources, both policy-related and political, that would facilitate government responsiveness. The success of networked NGOs may also lie in their ability to produce the evidence, which Laforest and Orsini (2005) claim governments demand. The data presented here

indicates networked NGOs expand their capacity to produce research valued by governments. Original, policy relevant research becomes the means to gain a hearing at the government policy table.

A critical consideration that tests the integrity of new governance understandings of the policy process is the stage at which non-governmental actors are invited to participate. For governments, developing a policy proposal from the initial problem framing (the identification of a collective problem) to implementation (establishing a functioning program on the ground) requires the government to determine how that program will be delivered and by whom. In the Canadian context this typically means the NGO role "becomes one of program delivery" (Carter, 2011, p. 432). We assumed that the ideal point of engagement would begin at the earliest stages of the policy making process, when policy is still being formulated and before any concrete directions or details are decided. Engagement at this early stage would indicate a genuine sharing of decision-making on critical aspects of policy. Our data indicate a nearly even split between those invited to participate at the early stages of policy development (or all stages) and those who were invited to participate only in the post-formulation or implementation stages. We observe what Howlett et al. (2014) refer to as a significant "lumpiness"—that is, a significant degree of engagement during the early stages of the process, as well as a significant degree of engagement restricted to the operational end. The fact that the process is not characterized by frequent interaction raises questions about the robustness of the policy process. Are these encounters merely perfunctory, allowing government to "check the box" on consultation?

We cannot conclude, based on our data, that the precepts of new governance theory are wholly inapplicable to our three Canadian cases, but we might characterize them, where they do apply, as "shallow." In practice, new governance theory precepts are more ad hoc than embedded and institutionalized as policy praxis. If governments are serious about opening the policy process up to non-governmental actors, then some greater institutionalization of the process is necessary. As it stands, governments may or may not engage other policy actors, and if they do so, the effect may vary widely, from inconsequential to substantial. Creating new, formal mechanisms for sustained policy engagement would remedy the ad hoc and perfunctory aspects of the existing model. These could take the form of advisory councils composed of both government and non-government policy actors operating in a specific policy domain and mandated to engage in questions of policy design and implementation. Constructing such new councils would serve several substantive purposes. First, if sufficiently resourced, they might address NGOs' uneven capacity to engage in research and policy advocacy. Second, the very existence of such councils might require government to engage with non-state actors in a routine way. And third, non-governmental policy actors might give greater priority to cross-organizational co-ordination and strategizing in preparation for advisory council meetings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1. Reference category: Ontario
2. Reference category: Health
3. Reference category: 30 or younger
4. Reference category: > 20 years (Number of years in total in a policy related position)
5. Reference category: Director
6. Reference category: At all stages

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Third Sector and Social Media

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ABSTRACT

While social media has become a mainstay of communication in the twenty-first century, many organizations still struggle to include it in their operations. This is no less the case for organizations in the third sector. However, evidence-based practices tying social media activity to social media success are still elusive in the field. Examining the Facebook and Twitter presence of 45 Canadian organizations concerned with education, disaster relief, and environmental advocacy, the authors evaluate social media practices used by third sector organizations. Borrowing from Mark Granovetter's (1973) work on the strength of social ties, the authors found that disaster relief organizations tended toward activities to build emotionally intense, or "strong," relationships, while educational organizations offered more informational means to build "weak" relationships based on common interests. Environmental organizations used both strategies, but were less likely to broaden their activities beyond Facebook and Twitter. The authors propose identifying organizations' weak-tie/strong-tie strategies as a tool for evaluating social media activity in the not-for-profit sector. They argue that co-ordinating both types of strategies is necessary for successful social media campaigns.

RÉSUMÉ

Bien que les médias sociaux soient devenus omniprésents dans la communication au 21ème siècle, plusieurs organisations tardent à les inclure dans leurs opérations. Ceci n'est pas moins le cas des organismes du troisième secteur. En même temps, la recherche établissant un rapport entre le recours aux médias sociaux et le succès d'une organisation demeure peu concluante. Dans cet article, les auteurs évaluent l'utilisation de médias sociaux par des organisations du troisième secteur en examinant la présence sur Facebook et Twitter de quarante-cinq organismes canadiens se spécialisant en éducation, en secours aux sinistrés et en activisme écologique. En recourant à l'œuvre de Mark Granovetter sur la puissance des liens sociaux, les auteurs ont trouvé que les organismes de secours aux sinistrés tendaient à effectuer des activités axées sur des relations intenses d'un point de vue émotionnel, donc « fortes », tandis que les organismes éducationnels avaient une

approche plus informationnelle afin de construire des relations « faibles » fondées sur des intérêts communs. Les organisations environnementales quant à elles employaient les deux stratégies, mais elles étaient moins enclines à élargir leurs activités au-delà de Facebook et Twitter. Les auteurs proposent d'identifier les stratégies d'attaches faibles et fortes comme outils pour évaluer le recours aux médias sociaux dans le secteur sans but lucratif. Ils soutiennent que la coordination des deux types de stratégie est nécessaire pour réussir les campagnes de médias sociaux.

Keywords / Mots clés : Social media; Communications; Social networking; Strategies; Best practices / Médias sociaux; Communications; Réseautage social; Stratégies; Pratiques d'excellence

INTRODUCTION

Social media is changing how the third sector serves clients and engages donors, volunteers, and staff. The social media marketplace is vast and offers numerous digital tools (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009; Waters & Jamal, 2011). From an organizational perspective, social media can increase community presence, maximize impacts, and improve effectiveness and efficiency (Curtis et al., 2010; Miller, 2009). From a social perspective, social media can foster social inclusion and encourage stakeholder participation (Vance et al., 2009). The growth of social media trends, combined with potential for relationship development through social networking, suggests that third sector organizations will increasingly rely on digital technologies if they wish to succeed in a society characterized by constant Internet use. This will require both social media expertise and creative experimentation.

While many nonprofits were early adopters of social media tools (Briones et al., 2011; Purdy, 2011), not all nonprofits are leveraging digital technologies. Social media expertise is a major barrier to doing so, and while many nonprofits are aware of the potential offered by social collaboration technologies, they often lack an understanding of social media optimization (Waters et al., 2009). This lack of social media fluency is compounded by an inadequate staffing capacity, inadequate training, and Internet inaccessibility. Nevertheless, there is a strong consensus that nonprofits must actively engage the general public, community members, and clients using Web 2.0 platforms (Kanter & Fine, 2010; Neff & Moss, 2011).

Utilizing the power of social media means more than simply creating a Facebook page or uploading content onto YouTube. In the last five years, interest in Web 2.0 technologies in the public and not-for-profit sectors has produced a flurry of advice on how to maximize impact and increase engagement (Grant, 2009; Shirky, 2011). As nonprofits shift their activities away from the "broadcast paradigm," associated with Web 1.0, toward the "dialogical paradigm" associated with Web 2.0 (Greenberg & MacAulay, 2009), it will be crucial to develop evidence-informed performance measures for assessing the impact of social media activities on social inclusion. Recent work exploring online advocacy has proposed that online engagement occurs in stages, beginning with basic information sharing, establishing trust relationships, and then using those established connections to call for advocacy action (Guo & Saxton, 2014; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). However, staged approaches to online engagement tend to be heuristics unable to explain human motivation and group dynamics; in other words, these might help explain participatory processes, but they do not provide benchmarks for performance, nor do

they supply the types of administrative advice required to achieve an organization's communication objectives (Fischer, 2003; Sabatier, 1991). In the future, measures of efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability will all be major drivers behind the optimization of social media activities (Curtis et al., 2010), while relationship strategies will determine organizational impact and reach.

Unfortunately, scholars and practitioners have only recently become actively engaged in rigorous examinations of social media applications and the capacity of digital tools to serve organizational missions and programming goals (Banias & Malita, 2011; Waters, 2009). Currently, the lack of standardized smart practices creates challenges for nonprofits, especially in selecting the appropriate social media tool for the intended purpose (Watling, 2011). While numerous commentators offer advice on how to optimize third sector social media outcomes, a majority consensus has yet to emerge.

The trouble stems from the fact that social media technologies are currently outpacing research efforts, due to their novelty and rapid spread throughout society. In addition, members of not-for-profit organizations who are online content creators do not necessarily see eye-to-eye with their co-workers about the role of social media in engaging clients (Kenix, 2008). Still, nascent literature offers evidence-informed strategies for employing social media tools in nonprofits for the purposes of 1) serving clients, 2) eliciting volunteers and donations, 3) engaging civil society, and 4) improving accountability and transparency. While there is still a great deal of experimentation occurring across these four dimensions of nonprofit social media applications, these strategies will assist nonprofits in planning, implementing, and monitoring their social media activity, while providing some base-line performance measures.

The research presented in this article uses evidence-informed analysis to evaluate the social media practices of different types of nonprofits: those concerned with education, environment, and disaster relief. While categories such as these are often self-selected by the organizations, we consider education organizations to be those that promote some kind of learning, or discipline (e.g., Historica-Dominion Society's promotion of Canadian history). Our education category does not include quasi-governmental organizations such as universities and schools. Environmental organizations raise social awareness of environmental issues such as biodiversity, climate change, and food security. The range of issues run the gamut, from specific environmental curriculum services through the SEEDS Foundation, to broader environmental awareness from groups such as Sierra Club Canada. Disaster relief organizations provide human welfare support during and after a disaster as well as support for rebuilding infrastructure. These groups range from Canadian chapters of very large multi-national organizations, such as the Red Cross, to smaller national organizations, such as the Bosnian-Canadian Relief Fund.

Our project begins with a brief literature review on emergent smart practices in nonprofits' application of social media tools, drawing advice from both scholars and practitioners. Next, we discuss Granovetter's (1973) strength of *weak ties* thesis, and suggest that tie strength strategies are a critical aspect of optimizing social media outcomes. In the next section, we examine a number of key social media indicators to evaluate the extent to which nonprofits concerned with disaster relief, education, and the environment are applying smart practices and developing tie strength strategies. Finally, we conclude with some key recommendations that will help nonprofits move toward their social media programming goals.

EMERGENT SMART PRACTICES

Social media optimization is a process of online reputation management, wherein organizations seek to maximize the impact of their social media activities by increasing linkability, by incorporating features that assist in message dissemination (RSS feeds, sharing buttons, and so forth), and through promotional activities that attract attention to the organization's goals (social networking sites, YouTube) (Frick, 2010; Lovett, 2011). The main goal of social media optimization is to improve an organization's web presence; however, we currently know little about the macro-level online impact Canadian of nonprofits. Unlike for-profit organizations that use social media to gain market advantage, nonprofits' "financial outcomes are merely a means to an end. The ultimate strategic goal is the fulfillment of some social mission—that is, the creation of public value" (Hackler & Saxton, 2007, p. 477). Thus, the uses and applications of social media in the third sector encompass a number of strategies for cultivating relationships with the public. To date, social networking sites (SNS) are the most popular social media tools for this purpose, since the sites allow an organization to share their mission, invite members to events, actively communicate with members, share information, post calls for volunteers, and undertake targeted fundraising activities.

Extensive evidence suggests that social media is changing advocacy and how civil society organizes for action. There are numerous examples of social media mobilizing people around a specific cause; however, the tactics employed to achieve these outcomes are varied and are often beyond the control of any one organization. There are several fundamental differences between traditional civil society and virtual civil society. First, there has been the emergence of "flash activists," who use social media to mobilize the masses and promote issue awareness using an arsenal of social media tools, including Twitter, blogs, and Facebook (Mehta, 2011). Second, social media has radically increased the influence of free-agent activists not connected to organizations but rather to causes. Third, social media offers systems for the evaluation of content ("likes," for instance) that can "power-charge" some communications while potentially downplaying others (Scott & Orlikowski , 2012). By bringing their organizational brand to social media channels, nonprofits face a conundrum: they may increase influence overall, but decrease their control of their message.

The implications of this trend for nonprofits are threefold. First, nonprofits must go beyond marketing their organization and focus on marketing different causes connected to their mission. Second, nonprofits using social media must treat the technology as participatory, enabling people to create as well as consume media (Lai & Turban, 2008; Russo et al., 2008). Third, nonprofits must build trust (Reynolds, 2010). Nonprofits have numerous opportunities to tap into different virtual grassroots groups and online social movements by joining networks advancing or supporting causes that fall within the mandate of the organization. In the Web 2.0 era, listening is as important as talking. Tapping into collective intelligence and learning what people are saying and doing provides nonprofits with crucial resources for co-ordinating events, designing programs, and garnering support. It also ensures continuous learning among their staff, as new technology and online social activities shift the social media landscape. However, it should also be noted that many smaller nonprofits may find it difficult to maintain virtual relationships due to a lack of human resource capacity and/or social media fluency.

To a nonprofit, accountability is critical, as nonprofit organizations must be trusted to be successful. Gordon, Khumawala, Kraut, and Neely (2010) define accountability as "both a legal and ethical obligation for nonprofit organizations that purport to use resources received to further their charitable mission" (p. 209). As an ethical obligation, accountability includes a number of different reporting activities that justify how resources are managed; it is also a legal obligation, as nonprofits often have reporting requirements through government funding programs. Websites are key to the third sector's accountability efforts, making available annual reports, financial statements, and organizational missions. These public disclosure practices correlate with improved levels of trust, increased charitable giving, and greater volunteerism (Dhebar & Stokes, 2008; Gandía, 2011). Mission statements are key, because organizations "lacking a profit motive rely on a mission statement to articulate their raison d'être" (Kirk & Nolan, 2010, p. 474). Financial reporting, whether in the form of an annual report or financial statement, further demonstrates accountability to funders (Waters, 2007). Internet sharing of programming can also support the spiritual need of volunteers to know that they are helping a worthy cause (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008).

Scholarly work suggests nonprofits may improve accountability along two dimensions:

> a) disclosure, which concerns the transparent provision of key information on organizational finances and performance, and
> b) dialogue, which encompasses the solicitation of input from and interactive engagement with core stakeholders. (Saxton & Guo, 2011, p. 271)

According to Berman, Abraham, Battino, Shipnuck, and Neus (2007), full disclosure on social networking sites means providing a detailed description of an nonprofit's mandate and history, identification of those individuals maintaining the site, visual cues that identify the organization, and links back to their website. Developing online relationships with users can, however, be problematic for some professional groups, in particular those such as medical professionals whose relationships require some level of confidentiality or professional distance (Mansfield et al., 2011).

Despite existing social media best practices, in some instances nonprofits might adopt all of these principles and still not optimize their social media impact. Take, for example, the outcomes for the two nonprofits that won the Hugh Jackman Twitter contest. In April 2009, Australian actor Hugh Jackman pledged to donate AUS$100,000 to the charity that could convince him in 140 characters or less of why their cause was most deserving of the donation. As one of the first philanthropic exercises on Twitter, the contest received a great deal of attention in both social and mainstream media and is an oft-cited example of how social media is changing the charitable landscape. In the end, Jackman split the money between two American charities: Operation of Hope and charity: water. Operation of Hope was founded by Dr. Joseph Clawson, an ears, nose, and throat doctor; it is an organization of charitable doctors who perform facial reconstructive surgeries. The organization had received mainstream media attention as a feature in *O* magazine prior to the Jackman-inspired contest; following the contest, CNN also began reporting on the organization's work. charity: water, founded in 2006 by Scott Harrison, is a development organization that provides clean and safe drinking water to people in over 20 developing nations.

Both organizations exercise the best practices discussed above—providing financial statements, using multiple social networking sites, eliciting donations and volunteers, and so forth. Yet when we compare the two organizations' charitable contributions and social media audience, Operation of Hope and charity: water experienced very different social media outcomes following the contest. Operation of Hope had approximately 1,318 Twitter followers and 1,179 likes on Facebook while charity: water had approximately 1.42 million followers on Twitter, and 294,000 likes on Facebook. In terms of donations, Operation of Hope's total contributions in the 2008/2009 tax year were $360,752, dropping in 2010/11 to $207,306. In contrast, charity: water received $5,498,293 in contributions in 2008, and $24,950,437 in 2011.

What explains these differences? Leadership style? Design? The cause? In the next section, we explore the possibility that the *nature* of nonprofits' relationships with their communities, the public, and organizations with similar interests is a strong predictor of social media success. We explore how the *strength of ties* thesis might be strategically applied to optimize nonprofit's social media outcomes. We further hypothesize that tie strength strategies are most effective when other social media smart practices are already implemented.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TIES

Mark Granovetter's (1973) strength of weak ties thesis suggests that every person will have both acquaintances and friends. Acquaintances are weak ties, individuals with whom social contact is infrequent and often context specific. Friends are strong ties, members of one's egocentric clique; and the more similar the individuals, the stronger the ties (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1362). In social networks characterized by homophily (the "birds of a feather" effect), strong ties are very dense, with few opportunities to make new connections; networks with numerous bridging opportunities (explained below) are characterized by multiple weak ties and loosely knit relationships. In the nonprofit field, actors lacking policy acquaintances, or weak ties, will lack opportunities to access new ideas and information, impairing the innovation process. As Granovetter (1983) explains, "The macroscopic side of this communication argument is that social systems lacking in weak ties will be fragmented and incoherent. New ideas will spread slowly, scientific endeavors will be handicapped" (p. 202). The process of connecting to new acquaintances and developing friendships may be expedited by bridging other actor's networks (Granovetter, 2005).

Bridging refers to a process by which one actor or organization connects to another actor or organization, providing a link between the two networks and expanding the opportunity to diffuse information or connect to new actors individuals. Based on Ronald Burt's (1992) structural holes theory, network innovation is the product of brokering opportunities across gaps in social structure, or structural holes. Networked actors who engage in locating ideas, diffusing information, and brokering exchange enjoy a higher status in that they have privileged access to network resources. The production of ideas and the establishment of new relationships are thus accelerated through the multiplication of weak ties, particularly ties that bridge holes in the social structure (Burt, 2004).

Though weak ties are important, these linkages may lack diversity in terms of interaction and information sharing. Thus, for nonprofits, the development of strong ties will also be a priority. Haythornathwaite (2002) suggests that strong ties are evident in long-established, emotionally intense and reciprocal arrangements. These arrangements can be formal, such as a contract arrangement, or informal, as in a sharing of values. Studies of web-based networks have tended to assume that online social ties behave similarly to offline social ties (McNutt, 2012). In reality, this assumption only means that stronger ties will have different characteristics from weaker ties. Reciprocation is one example of how strong ties can be observed on social media sites. For instance, an organization that receives more comments on its social media sites can be said to have stronger user ties than one that receives fewer. Thus, actions on social media that attempt to build reciprocal relationships with users can be said to apply a strong-tie strategy.

CASE SELECTION AND ANALYSIS

To examine the importance of social ties to not-for-profit organizations' social media performance, we examined the social media activities of 45 organizations from the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) Charitable Funding databases. Fifteen of the organizations were selected from the "Education" category, fifteen were selected from "Disaster relief," and fifteen were environmental organizations selected from "Benefits to the community and other" category. All three categories are CRA classifications of charities and foundations in Canada. Previous studies of social media use in the nonprofit sector have shown that variables like organization size, lobbying activities, and fundraising budget either do not correlate or negatively correlate to social media use (Nah & Saxton, 2013). However, donor dependence has shown some correlation to frequency of social media use, so our sample contains organizations that issued more than ninety thousand dollars in charitable tax receipts in 2012, as recorded in line 4500 of their T3010 Registered Charity Information Return. We also confirmed that the organizations had some form of social media presence promoted on their website. Because we wanted to examine social media smart practices, and not institutional strength, we excluded quasi-government institutions, such as universities and both public and private schools, from the sample. What resulted was a purposive sample of between 40 and 100 organizations in each category, from which a random sample of 15 organizations was extracted. The sizes of the organizations run from small to mid-sized, such as Canadian Aid for Chernobyl, to very large multi-national organizations, such as the Sierra Club and the Red Cross. For each organization, we conducted a search for their website, Facebook page, and Twitter account and observed the ways in which each organization approached their social media presence. In particular, we analyzed how organizations attempted to develop connections with existing users and how the organizations approached soliciting (Facebook) "likes" and/or (Twitter) "follows" from new users in order to increase their overall presence.

To complement our observations about each organization, we developed 21 qualitative measures to assess that social media sites are being used, how they are being used, and what evaluative markers might indicate success on social media sites. The purpose of these measures was to assess the manner in which each organization attempted to position itself strategically toward Internet users. Unlike profit-based companies, not-for-profits usually orient their positioning strategy to a social purpose, instead of to a particular product or service (Chew & Osborne, 2009). Past content analysis of not-for-profit activity has focused primarily on social media activity, such as one-way communication ("information"), two-way conversations ("community"), and requests ("actions") (Lovejoy & Saxton,

2012). Our method applies a more interpretive approach. For instance, using "one-way" communication to recognize donors and volunteers not only expresses appreciation for those who work for the organization, but also asserts the value of the cause in the eyes of the community. It is quite different from the "one-way" sharing of a statistic about some particular social need. We have therefore avoided these categories, instead choosing to measure organizations' strategies for "bridging" and "bonding," applying these to the diversity of their social media uses, and measuring them against four benchmarks for evaluation purposes.

After initial pretesting, we classified six criteria as *bonding* social media strategies based on activities that seek to strengthen existing relationships and strengthen the organization's reputation. These include: 1) recognizing volunteers and staff, 2) recognizing donors, 3) responding directly to user comments, 4) highlighting offline activities, 5) mentioning partner or related organizations, and 6) using the "Causes" app to raise donor funds for the organization. In general, these strategies either help build relationships with people already engaged with the organization, or facilitate a level of reciprocation from the organization's users to build community ties online. Maintaining these close ties allows the organization to rely on its community to spread the word beyond the walls of the organization. Recognition activities, for instance—whether with donors, volunteers, or partner organizations—reward those who support the organization and encourage others to do the same. Volunteers who recognize themselves in photos can then reaffirm the benefits of the partnership, volunteer activity, or donation, while others can commend them for their dedication to the organization. Responding directly to comments and sharing information about operational activities in the offline world asserts accountability to their user base. Users considering volunteering or making a donation can see first-hand the degree to which their support will serve the organization's charitable cause. Finally, the use of the "Causes" Facebook app to support the crowdfunding of specific projects and programs is perhaps the ultimate way to tie donor relationships directly to organizational activities. Through "Causes," the organization can build a community around a cause in ways that simple policy information or meme-sharing cannot.

We also identified eight *bridging* strategies by identifying activities that appeared to be based on outreach and raising awareness of the cause. These include: 1) recruiting staff and volunteers; 2) using social bookmarks on the organization's website; 3) offering prize giveaways and trivia questions; 4) policy-related information sharing; 5) posting information on a weekly basis; 6) sharing memes, aphorisms, and inspirational quotations; 7) using Facebook's "Events" tool to remind followers of upcoming events; and 7) describing posts with hashtags. In general, these activities reflect an organization's willingness to use social media to attract new people to their web presence. Social bookmarks—weblinks on a website that encourage user to "like" or "follow" the organization—offer an easy way of showing support without having to donate money or advocate on behalf of the organization. Once bookmarked, the reader receives information from the organization on their chosen social media site and can choose whether to read it carefully, filter it, or ignore it. Prize giveaways and trivia contests offer a transactional incentive for followers to remain on the site, which has been shown to increase donors' willingness to encourage their own networks to donate (Castillo et al., 2014). As will be discussed later, these activities do not necessarily increase on-site engagement; however, they do demonstrate an organization's commitment to reaching out the community.

Information sharing is a common bridging strategy. As outlined earlier, the regular posting of information is essential for consistent engagement of the public. In our criteria, we consider once a week to be a satisfactory benchmark for continuous information sharing. Sharing memes is another common way for organizations to ensure a steady stream of content on their organizational accounts. The term meme, coined by Richard Dawkins (2006), refers to any non-genetic apparatus (such as an idea) that replicates itself in some way, creating or defining cultural symbols in large groups of people. For Internet users, memes are pictures, sayings, videos, aphorisms, famous quotations, or novel ideas that are shared frequently over the Internet. For not-for-profit organizations in areas like disaster relief, education, and the environment, memes may be familiar quotations or aphorisms that apply to the mission of the organization. Sharing policy information is somewhat similar to the sharing of memes, except the information shared implies that the organization has some level of expertise or understanding of the policy topic for which they are sharing the information. The purpose of such information is to better inform public debate on social, economic, and environmental issues. By sharing policy-related information, organizations can join a number of interest groups that have varying opinions about the shared information.

Attaching hashtags to information posts is a very efficient way of sharing information with people who otherwise are not already engaged with the organization. The hashtag, popularized by Twitter, is a way of attaching a subject to a tweet or post by including the subject's name with an octothorpe, or hash sign (#), in front of the word. For example, to indicate a post or tweet is about Canadian politics, one might add the hashtag #cdnpoli. By placing a hashtag on a post, the profile enables users who click it to view all tweets that have the same hashtag. Facebook added this functionality in the summer of 2013. This process is a very efficient way for a user to examine what collective users think of a specific topic. By including a hashtag on a post, an organization can attract users who have searched for similar topics.

General performance criteria for social media are difficult to produce because of the varied nature of organizational goals, the varied size and structure of organizations, and differences in geographic focus and frequency of use. For our purposes, we chose four benchmark measures: 1) 1,000 likes on Facebook; 2) 1,000 followers on Twitter; 3) whether users have made three comments in the past three months; and 4) whether the organization was mentioned more than three times on Twitter in the past three months. Organizations that achieve all four of these benchmarks demonstrate some level of user engagement through their social media presence. Organizations that stand below the benchmarks on these criteria usually do so because they have chosen to neglect some aspect of their social media activity (e.g., choosing to feed Facebook statuses to a Twitter account instead of providing original content). In some cases, however, organizations achieved benchmarks despite their choice to neglect specific aspects of their social media presence. The Mennonite Disaster Service, for instance, received a large number of mentions on Twitter because of their support for people affected by the series of tornadoes in Moore and other areas of Oklahoma in 2013. The varied ways in which organizations achieve or fail to achieve these performance objectives suggests that offline activities affect online activities, and vice versa.

Three additional criteria examined the extent of social media use beyond Twitter and Facebook. All 45 organizations had a Facebook presence, and only two did not have a presence on either Twitter or Facebook, so we excluded participation in these networks in our criteria. However, we did examine whether the organizations had an integrated social media strategy. Thus, we also considered whether the nonprofits in our

sample have a presence on YouTube and/or LinkedIn, and we included a category for other social network sites. Examples of sites in the "other" category included Stumbleupon, Pinterest, Flickr, and Google+. However, we did not examine the additional use of these sites for the purposes of this study, electing instead to focus on the organizations' Twitter and Facebook presences.

Given the nature of organizations concerned with disaster relief, education, and environment, and the respective social media behaviours of these organizations, we believe it is useful to consider the use of "weak" versus "strong" social ties to evaluate the effectiveness of social media activities, based on tie strength strategies described by Granovetter (1973; 1983), Burt (1992), and Haythornathwaite (2002). It must be stated outright that taking an interpretive approach to social networks in this way poses a risk due to the possibility of multiple complex factors that may be at play. Nonetheless, this method offers an initial look at the "strong" and "weak" tie mechanisms that can help organizations achieve better results from their social media activities.

THE STRENGTH OF TIES

The wide-scale adoption of social media by not-for-profit organizations in Canada is evident in our sample (see Table 1). Almost every organization had a Facebook account, and an equally high proportion used Twitter and/or other social networking sites to optimize their online presence. Between 70 and 90 percent of organizations in all three categories of the sample place social bookmarks on their website to allow users to connect via social media. Over half of each sample posted content on their social media site more than once per week, using a mixture of photo-sharing, status sharing, and event reminders on their social networking accounts. YouTube, LinkedIn, and other social networking sites appeared in another third of the sample as well. Approximately half of the organizations had more than 1,000 likes on Facebook (another 12 percent had more than 800 likes), and about a third had more than 1,000 followers on Twitter. While a few of the organizations had neglected their social media presence, the organizations in the sample overwhelmingly have made some effort to engage the public online.

Disaster Relief

Disaster relief organizations tended to adopt strong-tie strategies to attract the attention of users. These organizations spent more time recognizing volunteers, highlighting their daily activities and responding to questions, while their users reciprocated by making comments on their Facebook page. Most of the disaster relief organizations had more than 1,000 likes on Facebook, but fewer were engaged on Twitter, where social connection tends to be less cohesive. Many of the organizations used the "Causes" app. These bonding strategies were also implicit in other areas of the disaster relief organizations' social media use. Canadian Aid for Chernobyl, the Islamic Relief Fund, SolidARQu, the Canadian Central American Relief Fund, and the Bosnian-Canadian Relief Fund are examples of disaster relief organizations that used linguistic and national ties to attract users to their social media site. While strong ties provide the benefits of loyal membership who may be easier to engage, strategies that use strong ties must still rely on its user base to attract new people to the site. To use the example of a religious organization, members of the same religion are likely to be loyal to the cause because it promotes their own values, but attracting donors outside the religious group may require some other means besides promoting the values of the organization.

Table 1: Social media optimization for third sector organizations

	Bonding Strategies							Bridging Strategies									Extent of Use				Performance				
	Recognize Volunteers / staff	Recognize Donors	Respond to comments	Highlight offline activities	Mention partner/related organizations	"Causes" app on Facebook	TOTAL BOND	Recruit staff	Social bookmarks on site	Prize give-aways	Policy-related information	Weekly posts	Use of quotations / aphorisms	"Events" tool	Use of hashtags on Twitter	TOTAL BRIDGE	YouTube Channel	LinkedIn Account	Other Social Sites	TOTAL ADDITIONAL SITES	More than 1000 Likes on Facebook	More than 1000 Twitter followers	Public comments on site.	Mentions on Twitter	TOTAL PERFORMANCE
Environment	6	3	4	9	11	2	35 (38.9%)	5	13	7	14	11	7	9	8	74 (61.7%)	6		3	9 (20%)	10	9	8	11	38 (63.3%)
Education	9	4	2	6	7	2	30 (33.3%)	7	14	5	9	11	4	12	10		11	4	3	90 (54.5%)	7	8	8	8	31 (51.7%)
Disaster	12	4	7	9	6	5	43 (47.8%)	2	12	2	8	10	3	9	5	51 (42.5%)	5	3	5	13 (28.9%)	10	4	10	9	33 (55.0%)

Although organizations concerned with topical interests rather than social causes are better equipped to use weak-tie strategies, traditional or strong-tie-oriented organizations can apply weak-tie strategies as well. One strategy used by the Islamic Relief Society was to use a popular Canadian hockey star, Nazem Kadri, as a connector between the Islamic community and the community of hockey enthusiasts. Inspirational quotations can also be used as a means to show the universality of a cause beyond its traditional religious or national values.

Educational Organizations

In our sample, organizations that tend to shun reciprocal relationships excelled in engaging their public through information ties. Many educational organizations, for instance, attracted users by sharing policy-related information, or by applying hashtags to their posts. They were also more likely to share information using YouTube. Education institutions typically share information as a matter of course, so continuing to share information on the Internet is a natural extension of their operations. Take for example, the Writers' Trust of Canada. The Writers' Trust of Canada is an organization whose mission is to raise funds "to encourage a flourishing writer's community in this country [Canada]" (Writers' Trust of Canada, n.d.). Their activities include sharing information about events and programs of interest to writers across Canada and providing content that users can share on their own profiles, whether through the "share" mechanism, by "liking" it, or by retweeting on Twitter. Like the Islamic Relief Society, the Writers' Trust uses its celebrity backing (the organization was founded in part by popular Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood) to increase interest in the organization. On the other hand, despite multiple posts every week, the Writers' Trust Facebook account featured very few comments to suggest user engagement beyond a topical interest in books and writing. While the Writers' Trust's lack of engagement through comments could be seen as contrary to a "flourishing writer's community," this would be taking the concept of "strong" versus "weak" strategies too far. Writers' Trust may be developing very strong off-line community ties among their members, but their social media strategy is to leverage their abundance of useful and entertaining content, instead of those community ties.

Responding directly to users was more effective for disaster relief organizations than it was for education groups. All of the disaster relief organizations that replied directly to users had more than 1,000 likes on Facebook. Conversely, only one of the two education organizations that responded directly to users had more than 1,000 likes on Facebook. More research is necessary to better understand the relationship between engagement on Facebook and attracting an audience; however, it does appear that human services organizations are better equipped than other organizations to attract an engaged user base by communicating directly with their online users.

Environmental organizations

The environmental organizations in our sample adopted both strong- and weak-tie strategies, but were less likely to extend their presence beyond Facebook and Twitter. This is partially explained by the goals of the organizations. Most environmental organizations recognize that raising awareness of environmental issues requires, on the one hand, engaged communities of scientists, activists, and technologists, and on the other, widespread sharing of policy-related information to the broader public, in order to encourage change in government, industry, and consumer behaviour. Unsurprisingly, all but one of the environmental organizations used their social media presence to share policy-related information. Their activities to encourage comments on the site, however, challenge our use of user comments as a measure of strong-tie strategies. In many cases, comments and commentary were more related to encouraging public debate on issues such as biodiversity, food security, and climate change. For example, Food Secure Canada has managed to encourage considerable debate on their Facebook page even though the only strong-tie strategy they applied was to mention partner organizations. There are a number of possible explanations for this result. First, food security involves an already tight circle of agriculture and food advocates that may have already-established virtual communities that gather on the Food Secure Canada Facebook page. Second, the analysis of these pages was conducted at a time of increased policy attention on genetically modified foods. Finally, strong-tie activities may be occurring where we cannot observe them—for instance, perhaps Facebook and other information is also being shared through email, community meetings, and so forth.

COMBINING WEAK AND STRONG STRATEGIES

Whether strongly or weakly connected, nonprofits that apply a user-centred approach to their social media accounts tend to engage more users. While recording organizational activity, calling for volunteers, and requesting donations is common practice for nonprofits interested in being accountable to their respective boards and funders, our evidence suggests that online users are less likely to be interested in this kind of information. The user-centred approach focuses on the interests and values of the user base instead. For instance, rather than showing pictures of operational activities, an organization could present videos, pictures, or quotations that can spark a conversation aligned with the organization's values. Our data show that a greater diversity of activities and content will attract a larger user base. The use of Facebook by celebrity George Takei is one example. Intertwined with posts promoting Takei's acting activities and LGBT rights, Takei shares clever puns and jokes about geek culture (known for playing Lieutenant Sulu on the original Star Trek, Takei has a fanbase that is interested in geek/science fiction subculture).

In our sample, Nature Conservancy Canada is worthy of particular mention because of their ability to apply both weak- and strong-tie strategies to engage their audience. On the one hand, their posts showcase staff and volunteers working in the field, to assure donors and supporters that they are actively putting resources to good use. On the other hand, they create a theme for these posts using the hashtag #fromthefield, which helps users easily share this information. Because their field posts are tagged, not only can a user know quickly that the post is a portrayal of the organization at work, they can also click on the tag to see examples of the work being

done by the organization. They use other tags such as #spotthespecies and #NCCLive to quiz their audience on biodiversity and to let them know when they are actively streaming content to Facebook. Their use of these tags encourages weak-tie users to more actively engage with their content, while making it easy for strong-tie users to expand their content beyond the parochial. Thanks to these efforts, Nature Conservancy of Canada has over 26,000 likes on Facebook, over 9,900 followers on Twitter, multiple comments on many of their daily posts, and a large number of supporters on Twitter promoting the organization's funding drives, programs, and other activities.

Bridging strategies can also improve the impact of advertising. After we chose to "like" the Islamic Relief Fund as part of this research, the organization appeared in ads on YouTube, in Google searches, and in other channels. The video-based ad used visual images depicting young children in wartime situations and was part of an annual appeal that occurs during Ramadan. One of the key benefits of bridging techniques on social media is that once engaged, further ads and promotions become more visible to the user, permitting the availability of more visual appeals for donations, volunteer opportunities, or other opportunities to bond with online users.

One activity that does not appear to benefit social media activities is the use of web-based software to feed posts from one social media account to another. Though providing the same content to multiple sites is less effort, this approach gives users the impression that the organization's attention is elsewhere. This outcome suggests that social media is not a user group in and of itself. Different users use different social media for different reasons, and automatic feeds tend to take organizational statements out of their original context. When organizations apply this strategy, the difference between two different social networking sites is thrown into relief.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of our study suggest that social media optimization requires strategic planning on the part of nonprofits, with the appropriateness of different strategies largely dependent on an organization's missions and goals. The social media practices of the educational, environmental and disaster relief organizations in our sample varied dramatically. While disaster relief organizations tended to adopt strong-tie strategies (bonding), educational organization used weak-tie strategies (bridging), and environmental organizations demonstrated a commitment to both. The current literature on smart practices in nonprofits' applications of social media suggests that all these tools can engage donors, share information, recruit volunteers, engage the public, target specific demographics, demonstrate accountability, and enhance linkability. Our study's findings support the argument that all of these practices are key to social media optimization. In addition to the existing list of smart practices, we would add bridging and bonding as key considerations in a strategic social media program.

To achieve an effective strong-tie strategy, organizations might begin with staff and volunteers. A simple strategy is to set an expectation that all staff include the organizations' Facebook and Twitter accounts on their email signatures. Requesting that volunteers and donors promote the cause through their own social media sites is another simple but effective strategy to leverage an organization's strong ties online. Providing some

staff training in what social media is, how it is used, and what risks are associated with its use can further encourage staff to engage on social media sites; in so doing, they may promote organizational events, affirm the social benefits of programs, and demonstrate enthusiasm for the organizations vision and mission. However, capacity issues can be a risk factor in social media use, as monitoring and maintaining social media activity can be time consuming and difficult, particularly if volunteers are asked to spread the word via their own personal channels.

While adopting a weak-tie strategy attracts viewers to the messaging site, it is unclear whether this attraction supports the objectives of the participating organizations. Other than the David Suzuki Foundation, none of the organizations we examined have what the online world would consider celebrity status, and the mere existence of Facebook friends does not mean that a large amount of funding will come from online sources. It may be that users expect the nonprofits they support to have some kind of social media presence, regardless of how effective it is strategically.

This study assumes that a social media strategy is a desired component of a charitable organization's mission. In reality, however, social media may not make sense for all organizations. While a social media presence is fairly easy to set up, it is not always easy to maintain. Depending on the strategic mission of the organization, social media engagement can lead to "mission creep," as attracting an online public distracts the organization from its original purpose. Social media can also be a liability in some cases, as stakeholders and government can monitor social media activity more closely than they can day-to-day activity. In particular, nonprofits must take care not to share too much advocacy information on their channels, as this can threaten their status as a registered Canadian charity.

While many nonprofits use social media effectively, a great deal of research remains to be done around social media optimization. The primary limitation of this research is that it favours the interpretation of social media content, at the expense of examining more complex, and therefore difficult to measure, variables such as organization size, existing network arrangements, provincial and municipal institutional arrangements, and so on. Further study, perhaps using multivariate analysis of social networks, would be useful for developing more complete models of social media optimization. In addition, research on the experimental use of social entrepreneurial activities and crowdfunding will be important considerations in long-term strategic social media planning. Other potential challenges associated with nonprofits' adoption of social media will include accessibility, privacy, and e-inclusion, all of which require further study. There is also room for more studies of how nonprofits are using digital tools for different purposes, along the lines of Waters, Burnett, Lamm, and Lucas' (2009) study on stakeholder engagement. Much recent research suggests that what the market is to the private sector, and what hierarchy is to the public sector, networking is to the third sector.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Analyzing Recent Citizen Participation Trends in Western New York: Comparing Citizen Engagement Promoted by Local Governments and Nonprofit Organizations

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ABSTRACT

Engaging citizens in the decision-making process is becoming an important priority for many local governments. This article evaluates three citizen engagement events in two jurisdictions in western New York: public forums held by the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, Citizen Participation Academy, and Participatory Budgeting Project. Using in-depth interviews with public and nonprofit employees, the article outlines several findings, including a distinctly higher level of effectiveness of engagement strategies when advanced by not-for-profit organizations. The engagement initiated by state and municipal governments reflects authoritarian and bureaucratic models of participation. This study highlights several challenges to the sustainability of citizen involvement at municipal levels, and its results have important implications for other towns implementing participatory tools.

RÉSUMÉ

Pour plusieurs gouvernements locaux, l'engagement des citoyens dans la prise de décision devient prioritaire. Cet article examine cette situation en évaluant trois événements portant sur l'engagement des citoyens dans deux juridictions de l'ouest de l'État du New York, à savoir des forums publics organisés par le Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, le Citizen Participation Academy et le Participatory Budgeting Project. Au moyen d'entrevues en profondeur auprès d'employés des secteurs public et sans but lucratif, cet article fait plusieurs constats, y compris celui d'une efficacité beaucoup plus grande des stratégies d'engagement suivies par les organisations sans but lucratif. En revanche, l'engagement sollicité par les gouvernements des États et des municipalités reflète des modèles de participation relativement autoritaires et bureaucratiques. Cette étude souligne plusieurs défis soulevés au niveau municipal par les tentatives d'inclure la citoyenneté. Les résultats de cette étude ont des implications importantes pour d'autres villes qui s'efforcent d'encourager la participation.

Keywords / Mots clés : Citizen participation; Local government; Nonprofit; Participatory budgeting / Participation citoyenne; Gouvernement local; Sans but lucratif; Établissement de budget participatif

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INTRODUCTION

Engaging citizens in decision-making is becoming an important priority for many local governments. Citizen participation is seen as the core of democratic governance (Pateman, 1970), and it ensures the legitimacy of the political process (Box, 1998; King, Feltey, & Susel**,** 1998). However, administrators promote participation to varying degrees and some are more innovative than others. Some local administrators carry out participatory responsibilities on their own, while others outsource these functions (Silverman, Taylor, & Crawford, 2008).

Although numerous local participatory tools exist, they still have flaws or are not fully utilized by citizens (Barber, 1984). In 2005, Baker and his colleagues surveyed city managers to examine factors that led to effective engagement. The authors found that properly advertising forthcoming engagement events, ensuring that citizens' comments are taken seriously, and developing effective follow-up mechanisms made the process of participation more meaningful (Baker, Addams, & Davis, 2005). Yet municipalities often only include citizens after decisions have already been made (Yang & Callahan, 2007). Kasymova and Schachter (2014) illustrated that this phenomenon occurs even in the context of municipalities outside/beyond the United States.

Ideally, jurisdictions need to involve residents on a regular basis in order to promote "deep and continuous involvement in administrative processes with the potential for all involved to have an effect on the situation" (King et al., 1998). When it is properly encouraged, public engagement is found to be beneficial not only for citizens but for public officials as well (Adams, 2004; Hassett & Watson, 2003; Kuo, 2012; Watson, Juster, & Johnson, 1991).

In general, governance structure, population size, and budgetary resources influence how municipalities use engagement tools (Berry, Portney, Bablitch, & Mahoney**,** 1984; Dalehite, 2008; Ebdon, 2000; Fölscher, 2007; Franklin & Ebdon, 2002). The level of trust in the political system impacts participation as well (Berman, 1997; Cortner & Moote, 1999). More citizen involvement can result in an improved trust in government.

As different jurisdictions are promoting engagement with various amounts of success, it becomes imperative to evaluate what contributes to the success of citizen involvement in different-sized communities. We evaluate this problem by looking at three engagement tools used in the city of Buffalo and the town of Tonawanda. The following are the three central research questions of this study: First, how are participatory tools implemented and who participates? Second, what factors influence the success of engagement? Third, what is the level of effectiveness of these mechanisms? The findings of this article could potentially broaden the research on drivers of participatory processes in jurisdictions. The results will contribute to and inform best practices in citizen engagement.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

A growing number of studies examine diverse citizen participation tools. But most engagement tools are not legally mandated, with the exception of citizen participation in public hearings (Berner, 2001; Berner & Smith,

2004). As a result, a larger number of existing studies focus on the analysis of citizen participation in hearings (Adams, 2004; Franklin & Ebdon, 2002; Goldfrank & Schneider, 2006; Paul, 2007; Vodusek & Biefnot, 2011). Theoreticians demonstrated several successful outcomes when an engaging process was used (Avritzer, 2000; Carr & Halvorsen, 2001). Successful engagements became common for some communities in South America and Eastern Europe (Hartay, 2011; Sintomer et al, 2008). As Sintomer, Herzberg, & Rocke (2008) have pointed out, engaging residents in European cities contributed to improving the communication between citizens, administrators, and political elites.

Citizen surveys are another widely studied participation tool among public administration researchers (Gao, 2012; Miller & Miller, 1991; Rivenbark & Ballard, 2012; Swindell & Kelly, 2000; Van Ryzin & Charbonneau, 2010; Verschelde & Rogge, 2012). In contrast, other participation tools, such as conversations with community groups, community dinners, citizen advisory boards, and citizen academies have not been as widely investigated (Carr & Halvorsen; 2001; on citizen academies, see Marcus, 2007; Morse, 2012).

Given the long history of participatory studies, researchers have developed several theoretical frameworks to evaluate citizen participation as advanced by government agencies (Arnstein, 1969; Fölscher, 2007; Goetz & Gaventa, 2001). However, in 2008, Silverman and colleagues came to the conclusion that these frameworks, such as Arnstein's participation theory, are becoming less effective in understanding modern citizen involvement practices. This is due to the fact that local governments now outsource many of their services, leading to the outsourcing of citizen participation functions (Silverman et al., 2008). As a result, it is necessary to examine whether citizen participation organized by other players, including nongovernmental actors, results in different outcomes when compared to government-led participation.

In 2012, Waheduzzaman (School of Management and Information Systems, Victoria University) and Mphande proposed a new theoretical framework to evaluate participation tools and their relationship to the governance model. The authors argued that citizen participation has a direct impact on the improvement of governance, by ensuring accountability, transparency, and legitimacy. They suggested a direct relationship between stages of participation and stages of improving governance. Similar to Arnstein (1969), they identified stages of participation, which range from informing to empowering (see Table 1 for details). They also further deconstructed governance into authoritarian, bureaucratic, political, and democratic models, in relation to stages of participation, making their framework particularly useful.

This study examines and compares three participation events in western New York. Specifically, it explores the origins of engagement tools, including the drivers of participatory processes. I also evaluate challenges faced during the implementation process of participatory tools. Most importantly, I examine the effectiveness and rank of each tool based on Waheduzzaman and Mphande's (2012) governance framework.

Table 1: Relation of citizen participation with good governance

Stages of Participation	Model of Governance
Stage 1: Informing—a one-way process, when the governing agency tells people about their decision before or during implementation of development programs.	**Authoritarian model:** In this model, a decision comes from the top and is implemented mostly by bureaucrats. Total process of the program lacks transparency, accountability, and predictability.
Stage 2: Consulting—a two-way communication, but engagement of people is limited within the decision-making of the program. Governing agency is used to inform people and to get feedback but the agency makes its decision and implements it unilaterally.	**Bureaucratic model:** In this model, people's participation is not enough to ensure the transfer of power. The process of the program is less transparent and less predictable, and the agency remains accountable to the top, not to the people.
Stage 3: Involving—at this stage, the governing agency not only listens to people to make its decision, but also engages people for budget distribution and implements the program together. Usually the whole community does not get the scope to be engaged in this process.	**Political model:** In this model, people's participation is enough**,** but people are engaged in the development programs in different segments that may revolve conflicts. The governing agency is transparent and accountable to a group of people but not to the whole community.
Stage 4: Empowering—at this stage, the governing agency allows developing the capacity of people to come with their decisions and resources to implement development programs jointly. The agency works as a facilitator.	**Democratic model:** This model allows for developing partnerships with people, delegates authority to make decisions, and implements a program with the sharing of local knowledge. Total process of the program is highly transparent, accountable, and predictable.

Source: Waheduzzaman and Mphande, 2012.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT OF WESTERN NEW YORK

This research was conducted in the city of Buffalo and the town of Tonawanda. Buffalo is the second-largest city in New York state, with a population of more than 259,000. The city is known for its relatively high volunteer rate and active civic engagement, with a reported 24.7% of residents active in volunteer work and a reported 8% participating in public meetings (Corporation for National & Community Service, n.d.). According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, in 2011, the Buffalo-Niagara district, which includes Buffalo, is reported to have registered 1,563 charitable organizations working in a variety of areas, including human services and the environment (NCCS, 2014). With respect to its political structure, the city is headed by a mayor who is elected by the population. From a socio-economic development perspective, Buffalo faces numerous economic challenges, including mediocre performance of public schools, a high level of poverty, and environmental issues. The city received a Citizen-Engaged Community Award from 2010 to 2014, granted by the Public Technology Institute.

Tonawanda is a small town with a population of 41,676 located in western New York. Like in many other towns in western New York, Tonawanda's younger population has been emigrating elsewhere at a high rate. With the median family income at $51,416, Tonawanda is a comparatively wealthier town and is racially homogeneous, with a 95.7% white population, according to the 2010 census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

There is a clear deficiency of research on citizen engagement in western New York. To address this, this study examines the implementation of the Mayor's Citizen Academy in the city of Buffalo, citizen participation within the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, and participatory budgeting in the town of Tonawanda. Different agents promoted each of the three participatory tools. For example, the Mayor's Citizen Academy was convened by the city of Buffalo. Public participation in budget forums within the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority was administered and controlled by New York state, while participatory budgeting in Tonawanda was implemented by a local community-based nonprofit organization.

METHOD

The study is based on eight interviews and nonparticipant field observations, as well as archival materials, government and news reports, and informal reports of nonprofits. I conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews with three municipal public administrators in Buffalo, two mid-level administrators at the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, two representatives of the key nonprofit organizations in Tonawanda, and one municipal employee of the Town of Tonawanda in November and December 2013. (Please see the Appendix for a list of interview questions.) Several follow-up questions were asked by phone and email. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed to identify themes and key points, as well as similarities between responses. The author spent a day witnessing the budget hearing that took place in Buffalo in 2014 and attended one session held at the Citizen Participation Academy on February 25, 2014. On March 3, 2014, the author participated in a tour of a Tonawanda neighbourhood. Given the context of this research, I use a case study approach. Yin (2009) notes that the case study method is used when a researcher believes that the contextual conditions are highly pertinent to the circumstances and results of the study.

THREE CASE STUDIES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

City of Buffalo

A centre of commerce in the early 1900s, Buffalo turned into a less competitive city by the end of the 1960s. It experienced financial losses and a high emigration rate. Residents in Buffalo became less confident in the leadership as a result of historical mismanagement and a patronage culture that remains strong in the public sector (Dillaway, 2006). In the past several decades, Buffalo has had several opportunities to build on feasible and lucrative economic opportunities, including the development of a rapid-transit line connecting the city with its developed suburbs. This project failed primarily because of a lack of leadership, vision, and consolidating power (Dillaway, 2006).

Although Buffalo is one of the largest urban jurisdictions in New York State, it is also one of the poorest cities in the United States. The local government in Buffalo has tried, through several different avenues, to involve citizens in the budgeting process. The division of citizen services within Buffalo city hall has initiated a diverse set of engagement processes, including the Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy. Like many other towns around the country, the city of Buffalo has implemented a 311 call centre, and in 2013 it celebrated its one hundredth call. Extensive public input is being sought for the city's ongoing rezoning efforts (Buffalo Green Code, 2014).

With respect to the legal framework for government openness, the following needs to be highlighted: Buffalo is subject to the legal regulations of New York state. The state established the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) on January 1, 1978. It is codified in Article 6 of the Public Officers Law. Its provisions are very similar to the Freedom of Information Act. Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, entitled the Open Meetings Law, became effective in 1977. This law lays out all the necessary requirements with respect to meetings held by public bodies, including rules that require every meeting be open and specific regulations for notifying the public (for more information, please consult the website: http://www.dos.ny.gov/coog/foil2.html).

Mayor's citizen participation academy

In 2006, the newly elected mayor of Buffalo launched the Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy. The goal of the initiative was to provide residents of the city of Buffalo with an opportunity to better understand the workings of their local government. Furthermore, the initiative was designed

> to give practical and relevant information to citizens, while creating an informal environment wherein city administrators and officials can interact with concerned residents. … By extracting the wealth of experience of these officials and in turn empowering citizens, the academy was supposed to create a citizenry who is educated and informed about the principles of civic action and excited about community involvement." (*Mid-level administrator C1*)

It was also expected that this inside view of government would inspire involvement in the community for a sustained period of time.

Citizen academies share many similarities with community police academies due to their civic education component. Researchers examined citizen participation academies in other jurisdictions and found that most citizen academies have the goal of building civic education capacities (Morse, 2012).

Selected participants of the Buffalo citizen academy attend a 10-session course, which includes meetings with department heads. "Each session brings together several commissioners and directors with participants in an informal setting to learn about the structure, challenges and the vision for their respective departments." By providing citizens an avenue to observe government, a "sense of connectivity is established between the city government and its constituents" (*Mid-level administrator C1*).

Conducted two times a year, this mechanism is designed to bring together a diverse set of the population. On average, 28 residents participate each semester. The announcements and recruitments are carried out primarily online. The selection of participants ensures that at least three people represent each of nine common council districts. Administrators attempt to select a wide range of participants with respect to gender, age, and income. The interviewee noted that the academy normally has more women than men, with a ratio of 2:1. One of the most important selection criteria is the residence of a potential candidate, which should be the city of Buffalo. Candidates are required to provide references, while demographic characteristics, such as race, are not asked on the application form.

Once the selection is completed, participants are invited to attend the 10-session program arranged by city hall. Regular topics covered during a semester include education, community programs, public safety, and economic development. In addition to sessions at Buffalo city hall, program organizers arrange field trips to fire and police stations and other sites of city operation.

The author attended one of the sessions, on February 24, 2014. Approximately 22 academy students were present. Academy participants consisted of a diverse group of individuals with respect to gender, race, and age. A variety of commissioners from several municipal departments presented weekly from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. At the meeting on March 25, 2014, for example, the academy organized a session on building permits and the municipal green code process. Earlier sessions had taken place in the field with the municipal police. During the workshop, academy members asked questions and the process appeared to be informal and interactive. Upon completion of the workshop, an evaluation survey was collected.

After finishing the program, attendees receive a certificate during an official ceremony attended by the mayor. With respect to the impact of the program, the following should be noted. The interviewee at the Buffalo citizen services division noted that the city maintains communication with all previous participants of the program. Some academy graduates have been recommended by the mayor to serve as board members in organizations in Buffalo (*Mid-level administrator C2*). The interviewee also noted that the city of Buffalo is evaluating opportunities to use social media to recruit a younger group of participants in its future programs.

Academy participants remain engaged after completing the program. "There is some evidence that former academy graduates get engaged in their respective block clubs" (*Mid-level administrator C2*). Other graduates "become leaders" in other organizations in the city (*Mid-level administrator C2*). In sum, former academy graduates become more involved in volunteer work in other organizations. For example, several former graduates are citizen committee members for the on going rezoning process of the Buffalo Green Code (*Mid-level administrator C2*). The key challenge for the academy's sustainability is the small number of applicants. In various years, sessions were cancelled due to an insufficient number of applicants (*Mid-level administrator C2*).

Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority

In 2003, the New York State Legislature declared that the city of Buffalo faced a "severe fiscal crisis," which "could not be resolved without assistance from the State" (Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, 2003). As a result, the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority (BFSA) was created by the state of New York to oversee the financial

operation of the city of Buffalo. In general, the BFSA's responsibilities include reviewing financial plans of the city and assisting with deficit financing.

With an operating budget of over a million dollars, the BFSA is considered a corporate government agency; it is managed by a group of nine directors, one of whom is a citizen of Buffalo (Mancuso, 2009). The remaining members are appointed by the state of New York, and they include the mayor of the city and the Erie County executive (Mancuso, 2009). The BFSA places a high value on input from the public, which is viewed as fundamental to the success of the organization. As a result, the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority Act requires the authority to engage the public and examine citizens' recommendations about municipal financial management. Citizens can submit idea proposals related to possible cost savings and revenue increases in the city.

From 2003 to 2008, the BFSA partnered with the Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York, to coordinate citizen participation. In 2003, the first year of the BFSA's operation, the institute reported that approximately "250 citizens attended the forum, while 54 orally voiced their opinions on the financial plan to the panel. Specifically, 27 citizens (18 individuals, 9 organizations) spoke at the first session, 14 at the second (7 individuals, 7 organizations), and 13 at the third (6 individuals, 7 organizations)" (Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, 2003). The BFSA stationed three computer terminals outside the auditorium, which were used by eight citizens to submit comments; 38 offered written comments—either by mail or hand delivery to the institute or forum—and 29 delivered their comments via email to the BFSA forum, institute, and city of Buffalo email accounts (Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, 2003).

That said, the number of participating residents decreased annually in the following years. In 2005, the Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth reported that only 32 people attended the forum, while in 2012 only eight citizens were present, with six voicing their opinions on the budget and financial plan during the public comment period.

We analyzed all citizen reports posted by the BFSA on its website, which revealed that most speakers represented those who disagreed with the proposed budget plan as well as with the budget discussion. But frequently, concerns were raised over the *process of decision-making* rather than the document itself (with comments such as "lack of consultation," "behind closed doors," "rushed," "lack of accountability"). For example, several participants expressed concerns over the lack of citizen input in the budget process during the 2008 budget forum. Some complained that discussions were scheduled only a few days prior to the release of the budget.

The analysis of the BFSA's annual reports demonstrates a significant decrease in citizen input since the first year of operation. One interviewee representing the BFSA explained that limited public finance knowledge and a decreased interest in the work of the authority are key reasons for a decreasing number of participating citizens, as "the new institute like BFSA lost its novelty and became less interesting for residents" (*Mid-level administrator B2*).

The BFSA used various methods to involve residents in budget forums, including distributing information through the news media and other outlets, as well as preparing a simplified and user-friendly version of the budget. Since 2003, the authority exercised a "hard" oversight mandate that enabled it to implement a municipal employee pay freeze, saving the city close to $150 million**.** Due to numerous lawsuits, however, the wage freeze was lifted in 2007. In 2005, the mandate of the BFSA was downgraded to an advisory status. The same interviewee noted that the change of mandate may also have negatively impacted citizens' desire to participate, leading to a decline in institute influence.

Community involvement in environmental issues in Tonawanda

Tonawanda is a small town located in western New York and one of the most polluted towns in the state (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 2009a). The town has a high density of major sources of air pollution in the area, as it hosts multiple facilities, including a foundry coke plant, two petroleum distribution terminals, and multiple trafficking depots. According to various estimates, close to 52 industrial facilities are located within a radius of two miles in Tonawanda. In 2009, a local environmental community-based organization, the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York (CACWNY), began an investigation of local air quality due to a particularly high level of chronic illness. The investigation confirmed a high pollution level in Tonawanda. Following **r**elease of the coalition's findings, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) initiated a year-long community air quality monitoring study in the town of Tonawanda to measure the concentration of air pollutants within the community and evaluate the potential risk to public health (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 2009b). The DEC results found the main source of pollution to be the Tonawanda Coke Corporation (TCC).

In 2011, more than 200 people who were primarily residents of Tonawanda, led by the CACWNY, filed a lawsuit against the Tonawanda Coke Company for violating the Clean Air Act. Tonawanda Coke was charged with 19 federal counts for violating the Clean Air Act and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act from 1998 to 2009. In 2013, the jury requested over $200 million[1] in fines to be used to address the consequences of air pollution in the community (Bagley, 2013**).**

On March 23, 2013, the CACWNY held a community meeting to discuss potential ways of spending the settlement resources, including introducing the concept of participatory budgeting. The CACWNY reached out to the community by mail and other sources. It held a community assembly meeting with more than 100 residents in attendance and hosted four additional planning meetings, which led to the streamlining of numerous proposals into 25 final projects developed by elected budget delegates. These projects were designed to reduce and address the environmental damage caused by pollution, especially in heavily impacted areas. Residents were expected to select five final projects from the list of 25 used during the voting process.

The CACWNY became the key agent in advancing the participatory budgeting process in the town of Tonawanda. Volunteers and members of the CACWNY organized and administered 11 polling stations, which were open on the voting day, in May 2013. In total, more than 560 residents participated in the voting (Bagley, 2013), which led to the selection of five priority projects that residents considered important. After the voting, the

CACWNY submitted a memorandum with voting results to the Department of Justice, the EPA, and the judge on behalf of the Clean Air Coalition.[2]

In sum, the CACWNY used various strategies to engage residents, including educating the populace, organizing several deliberation and discussion sessions, and voting on priorities. The CACWNY faced several challenges in administering the entire participatory process, their most important hurdle being limited financial and human resources (*Interviewee T1*).

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Although the three engagement tools presented are different, similarities emerge with respect to challenges in sustaining participation. All three events required time and resources to ensure continuous citizen interest in these projects. The level of effectiveness of participation differed across the three cases as well.

Some commentators contend that citizens may be more interested in government-led participation initiatives because of available financial and technical resources (Koontz, Steelman, Carmin, Korfmacher, Moseley, & Thomas, 2004; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2000). But this argument does not support how participation events in Buffalo, which were sponsored by the government, turned out.

Moreover, governments are often suspected of only engaging a specifically selected slice of the population (Barnes, Newman, & Sullivan, 2007). The leading role of a nonprofit organization in participatory budgeting in Tonawanda may be viewed as the key to its successful engagement because the nonprofit was perceived as a neutral entity in the process (please refer to Table 2 for details of analysis). The success of engagement is expressed in the number of voters and participants, whom the CACWNY was able to involve within a short period of preparation. The effectiveness of the engagement in Tonawanda is reflected in the final selection of community projects, one of which is currently in the process of being implemented.

Overall, the three engagement tools pursued different goals. Citizen involvement was particularly important to legitimize the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority. The mission of the Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy was to educate and foster trust and communication between the municipality and its residents. Both goals were not fully realized given the continuous difficulty that organizers faced in sustaining continuous participation. Participatory budgeting in Tonawanda had several goals, including an increased engagement in deliberation and decision-making. As a result, participatory budgeting in Tonawanda was the only tool that allowed the town to delegate decision-making power to residents, which, given the model by Waheduzzaman and Mphande (2012), places the process at the stage of empowerment, or the *democratic model of participation.*

Table 2: A comparative analysis of three engagement tools

	Buffalo Financial Stability Authority	Involvement organized by the community-based organization in Tonawanda	Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy in Buffalo
Initiators	*State government*	*Grassroots community-based nonprofit*	*Municipal government*
First year of implementation	2003	2013	2006
Participation time frame	Annual	One-time event	Two times per year
Goal	Inform / Involve the public	Involve citizens in budget expenditure allocation	Education, civic capacity building
Mode of participation	Information / Deliberation	Deliberation / Decision-making	Education
How residents are informed about this event	Through media, newspapers, and online	Through community leaders	Online, newspapers, radio, etc.
Who participates	Diverse group	Older residents over 50	Diverse selection procedure
How many participate	250 in 2003; 8 in 2012	560 voted	28 or less
Organization of participation	Direct participation in the meeting	Direct voting and decision on priority policies	Direct participation in seminars and presentations
Challenges to implementation	A decreasing level of participation over time; difficulty to retain interest	Financial constraints to implement; difficulty of narrowing down citizens' priorities	Lack of interest among residents/time deficit
Effect of participation	Creates a forum for deliberation	Sense of empowerment	Better understanding of local government; local civic capacity building
How results of engagement are shared with the pubic	Reports are available online	Newspapers, reports, online newspapers	Information is available on graduation ceremony
Impact on the government decision-making process	BFSA pays attention to key comments	Education and knowledge diffusion about local government responsibilities; decision-making impact	Education and knowledge diffusion about local government responsibilities
Use of participation outcomes	Used during the budget discussion	Distribution of resources based on citizen preferences	City hall maintains communication with former graduates
Role of citizens in implementing feedback received	Lower level of engagement citizens	Active role of citizens particularly in the voting process	Not clear
Stages of participation	Informing	Empowering	Informing / Involving
Models of governance based on Waheduzzaman & Mphande (2012)	Authoritarian	Democratic	Bureaucratic / political

In the case of public forums within the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Academy**,** the government used the services of a third party to help organize the forum during its first years. The BFSA created an increased interest in the first years, because it was a new institute, funded by the state (*Mid-level administrator B2*). The BFSA kept the public informed by sharing online forum discussion results and updates on citizens' cost reduction and revenue increase recommendations. But a transparent information sharing practice did not lead to more participation in the subsequent open forum meetings.

Using Waheduzzaman and Mphande's (2012) framework, we would place participation in budget forums within the BFSA at the stage of informing, which belongs to the *authoritarian model.*

The impact of the Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy is not clear. Although former academy participants are reported to have continued their involvement in other community-based projects, such as the Buffalo Rezoning Committee, it is not clear whether graduating from the academy influenced these citizens' decisions to remain active. It could also be claimed that those who attended the academy were already active within the community. Furthermore, the application form contains some questions that could potentially favour the selection of candidates who are already active in the community. Prior studies have found this to be the case (Hochsztein, 2011). Given the engagement format and goals of the Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy, it can be considered to represent a *bureaucratic/political model.*

CONCLUSION

The goal of this research was explorative in nature. It was designed to try to make sense of some of the engagement practices taking place in selected jurisdictions in western New York and to build a foundation for future in-depth studies. The study examined three participation tools: public forums within the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority (BFSA), the mayor of Buffalo's Citizen Participation Academy, and a participatory budgeting project in the Town of Tonawanda. The three engagement tools had different drivers as well as different goals. Using Waheduzzaman and Mphande's (2012) theoretical model, the findings demonstrated that the public involvement strategy used in Tonawanda was meaningful as it utilized several strategies, including education, deliberation, and actual decision-making. As a result, it reached the highest level in the participation stages. The size of the community in Tonawanda could have impacted the success of the event, as smaller communities are expected to be easier to organize around issues.

Ebdon and Franklin (2004) stress that some participatory tools used in the budgeting process do not guarantee a two-way communication between residents and the government. The BFSA faced a decreasing rate of citizen involvement, due in part to the lack of two-way communication. Although it proactively released reports on open forums, municipal budgets, and other related information, it is not evident whether citizen input was incorporated into the final budget decisions. The BFSA created a platform for deliberation, and the authority was proactive and transparent in sharing information, but citizens did not influence final decisions.

Owing to recent fiscal events, a distrust of government institutions is still prevalent in Buffalo and has a negative impact on any projects advanced by the government, even if the project is well intentioned. Consequently, any participatory initiative that is affiliated with the government is negatively perceived. In a political climate of distrust, all participatory tools are doomed to fail. For example, during several informal conversations with residents, I learned some of them felt that the municipality used the Mayor's Citizen Participation Academy to advance its own agenda and create a group of its own advocates in communities.

There are several implications to this research. First, the case of the BFSA demonstrates that transparency alone is not sufficient to sustain participation. Sustainability of participation requires a two-way communication with residents and, more importantly, concrete actions to address concerns. Similar to previous studies (Kasymova & Schachter, 2014), this research finds a more effective engagement process when it is advanced by local nonprofit organizations, especially in jurisdictions with a long history of corruption and a lack of trust in government. Finally, citizen involvement should not be limited to a single engagement tool, but instead, a set of various engagement techniques should be implemented, as was done in Tonawanda.

Leighninger (2014) suggests that current laws regulating citizen participation in government decision-making are outdated, inadequate, and obsolete, only intensifying distrust. These three case studies, to an extent, also demonstrate that the use of ineffective engagement tools may result in a more suspicious and skeptical citizenry.

Waheduzzaman and Mphande's (2012) framework was particularly useful for the analysis of the examined participation tools, although given the diversity of existing engagement mechanisms, the framework may require additional classifications, such as mixed models, for example, semi-authoritarian or semi-democratic.

As with any study, this research has its limitations. First, the research focused on selected participation events in western New York. Meanwhile, there are a growing number of different participatory initiatives in western New York that the study did not examine. Also, the study evaluated annual engagement events convened by municipal and state governments. In contrast, the participation process administered by the nonprofit organization in Tonawanda took place within a time frame of less than a year and may not occur again soon. This may impact the study's results. Future research could address this shortcoming by evaluating citizen participation led by nonprofit organizations through a number of years. A longitudinal analysis could also help in developing a quantitative metrics for measuring the effectiveness of participation. The number of participatory processes examined in the city of Buffalo and the town of Tonawanda are not equal, which is another limitation of this study. Tonawanda and Buffalo differ from each other in terms of social capital, income levels, and ethnic composition. The author acknowledges that these differences impact the study's results. Furthermore, the small number of interviews may also limit an ability to generalize the findings of this study.

I recommend that future studies attempt to include interviews with citizens. Most of the existing public administation studies rely on public administators as the main source of data when evaluating citizen participation. To my knowledge only a few studies exist that have attempted to incorporate the perspectives of citizens (Gaynor, 2011; Kasymova, 2013). Ensuring the representation of citizens who participate and who do

not participate in public gatherings is one of the main challenges when collecting citizen-based data. Identifying and collecting data from a robust and representative sample of citizens may be the principal factor that prevents researchers from pursuing citizen-based qualitative studies on citizen participation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1. The final fee was settled by the judge in the amount of $24 million.
2. The projects that received the highest number of votes were 1) Industrial Pollution Prevention Project; 2) Community Environment Health Institute; 3) Wickwire Park Redevelopment Project; 4) Tonawanda Area Environmental Health Study; and 5) Town of Tonawanda Tree Farms (see Bagley, 2013). At the time of writing, the case was still being finalized at the court, the judge of which eventually decided to allocate some portions of fee payments to the project Tonawanda Area Environmental Health Study.

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APPENDIX: LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Please tell me about your work.

Citizen involvement initiatives and procedures
- Tell me more about any of your projects that relate to citizen engagement.
- When did you start promoting this initiative?
- What are some key challenges in implementing citizen participation?
- On average, how many people participate in this initiative?
- Could you please describe what does an average participant look like?

Implementation
- How do you select your participants?
- What factors influence the success of citizen engagement?
- Can you please tell me in general about citizen participation in this community? Is the environment here conducive for engagement?

Effects, Challenges, Future
- What is the effect of citizen participation?
- Are there any changes that you observe when citizens become involved in the decision-making process? Please tell me more.
- Were there any managerial challenges and difficulties during the process of engagement?
- What did your organization want to accomplish by promoting this initiative?
- What is the future of your initiative?

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Individual and Organizational Factors in the Interchangeability of Paid Staff and Volunteers: Perspectives of Volunteers

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ABSTRACT

This study builds upon earlier studies of the degree of interchangeability between volunteers and paid staff in nonprofit organizations. While these earlier studies were from an organization perspective, this study is from the perspective of volunteers, and looks at individual and organizational characteristics in all types of organizations—nonprofits, for-profits, government agencies, and others. The findings indicate that 10.8% of volunteers reported replacing a paid staff member, 3.1% permanently. Volunteers also reported being replaced by paid staff**:** 7.6% reported being replaced, 2.1% permanently. The study suggests that organizations utilize a co-production model and appear to interchange their paid staff and volunteers when needed in tasks requiring higher-level skills.

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RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude se fonde sur des études antérieures qui portaient sur le niveau d'interchangeabilité entre Cette étude se fonde sur des études antérieures qui portaient sur le niveau d'interchangeabilité entre bénévoles et salariés dans des organismes à but non lucratif. Tandis que ces études antérieures adoptaient une perspective organisationnelle, cette étude-ci adopte celle des bénévoles et examine les caractéristiques individuelles et organisationnelles de toutes sortes d'organisations—à but non lucratif, à but lucratif, gouvernementaux et coopératifs. Elle se fonde sur deux sous-échantillons provenant d'une enquête aléatoire par téléphone avec 768 individus provenant de partout au Canada. Les résultats indiquent que 10,8% des bénévoles disent avoir remplacé un salarié, 3,1% en permanence. Les bénévoles disent d'autre part que des salariés les ont remplacés : 7,6% ont ainsi été remplacés par des salariés, 2,1% en permanence. L'étude semble montrer que les organisations utilisent un modèle de co-production et paraissent échanger leurs salariés et bénévoles au besoin pour des tâches requérant des habiletés de haut niveau.
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Keywords / Mots clés : À but non lucratif; Bénévoles; Salariés

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing body of literature that examines the prevalence of interchange between volunteers and paid staff and the characteristics related to this phenomenon in various settings, including hospitals (Handy, Mook, & Quarter, 2008; Handy & Srinivasan, 2005), nonprofit organizations (Chum, Mook, Handy, Schugurensky, & Quarter, 2013; Handy et al., 2008), and public sector and government agencies (Brudney, 1990; Brudney & Gazley, 2002; Brudney & Kellough, 2000). A key driver for research on interchangeability is the concern that the substitution of paid staff by volunteers over the long-term could result in a decrease in paid jobs within an organization and thus be viewed as a form of labour exploitation. Then again, the substitution of volunteers by paid staff in the short-term may signal a restricted volunteer labour supply.

While previous studies (Brudney, 1990; Brudney & Gazley, 2002; Brudney & Kellough, 2000; Chum, Mook, Handy, Schugurensky, & Quarter, 2013; Handy, Mook, & Quarter, 2008; Handy & Srinivasan, 2005) have illuminated some organizational and individual factors associated with the interchangeability of volunteer and paid staff, they 1) rely on convenience or purposive samples, 2) have an exclusive focus on either the nonprofit or public sector without comparisons across sectors, and 3) have not looked at the extent to which replacement is permanent or temporary. Drawing on a random sample of Canadian volunteers, this is the first study that investigates the human resource interchangeability phenomenon across nonprofit, for-profit, and public sectors to quantify and compare the extent to which temporary and permanent replacement of volunteers by paid staff (and vice versa) occurs in the Canadian context from the perspective of the volunteer. In addition, this is the first

time a study has explored the volunteer's perception of whether the volunteer/paid staff interchange is ethical or not. The recent trend in the literature on "volunteerability" has emphasized that volunteer labour can best be deployed if we better understand the volunteer's perspective (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2010; Meijs, Tschirhart, Ten Hoorn, & Brudney, 2009). Given the value of volunteers to organizations, it is important to understand their perspectives on the interchange between volunteer and paid labour, as it can impact their satisfaction and eventually their retention and recruitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interchangeability between volunteer and paid staff has been examined in various contexts, including hospitals, nonprofit organizations, and the public sector. One study looked at hospitals (Handy & Srinivasan, 2005) and another at Ronald McDonald House (Haski-Leventhal, Hustinx, & Handy, 2011). The first study found that in hospitals, it is not always viable to replace paid staff dealing with direct medical services with volunteers for legal reasons. In programs such as Ronald McDonald House, the tasks that volunteers perform are not those that could be feasibly done by paid staff on a permanent basis.

A study of Canadian nonprofits found that the interchange of volunteers and paid labourers was widespread among nonprofit organizations, but that it was limited to a specific set of tasks related to customer service and to tasks requiring general skills (Chum et al., 2013). This accounted for about one-eighth of all tasks in one study (Handy et al., 2008) and about one-quarter of tasks in another (Chum et al., 2013). The study by Femida Handy, Laurie Mook, and Jack Quarter (2008) relied on a national survey of 661 Canadian nonprofits and was augmented by two case studies of two Canadian hospitals, while the one by Antony Chum, Laurie Mook, Femida Handy, Daniel Schugurensky, and Jack Quarter (2013), surveyed 836 nonprofits across Canada.

Both studies identified a wide range of volunteer/paid staff interchange among organizations, with some organizations not interchanging any tasks and others interchanging nearly all tasks. In addition, the variables associated with interchangeability of tasks varied in the two studies. The first study (Handy et al., 2008) did not systematically explore these factors, but noted that important determinants of whether tasks were interchanged were "the historical precedents of who has done the task traditionally … [and] the degree of unionization and the regulations in collective agreements" (p. 16). The importance of these variables was particularly evident in the hospital case studies examined by the authors. The second study (Chum et al., 2013) explored the organizational-level variables associated with interchangeability more systematically and found that the three most significant predictors of greater interchange in nonprofit organizations were: 1) having a greater number of paid staff (reflecting organization size); 2) being a religious congregation; and 3) having an increase in the workload of paid staff.

Studies on the public sector demonstrate a form of co-production in which varying degrees of paid and volunteer labour are combined (Brudney, 1990; Brudney & Gazley, 2002; Brudney & Kellough, 2000). While this interpretation may be suitable for some types of activities, it does not address the social significance of organizations using volunteers to replace paid staff. Femida Handy and Jeffrey Brudney (2007) focused on the economic factors involved in interchange decisions, such as the marginal costs and productivity of each type of labour. However, the existing research does not examine the factors involved in who gets interchanged, except in a general cost/benefit framework.

To the best of our knowledge, there has been no research on individual volunteers that examines their perceptions of the extent to which they replace paid staff or are replaced by paid staff. Thus, we embarked on this research with the purpose of examining the interchange of paid staff and volunteers from the perspective of the volunteer. In order to do so, we explored five research questions that have been overlooked in previous studies:

1. How prevalent is the replacement of a) paid staff by volunteers and b) volunteers by paid staff? Do rates of interchange vary according to organizational or individual factors?
2. What proportion of the replacement of a) paid staff by volunteers and b) volunteers by paid staff was permanent rather than temporary?
3. From the volunteer's perspective, what are the reasons why organizations are replacing paid staff and/or volunteers? Do these reasons differ for those who were permanently or temporarily replaced?
4. For volunteers who replaced paid staff or were replaced by paid staff, how many considered this interchange to be unfair/unethical? Does the opinion differ between volunteers who replaced employees permanently versus temporarily?
5. What are the organizational and individual factors affecting the replacement of a) paid staff by volunteers and b) volunteers by paid staff?

The purpose of this study was to extend existing research by comparing interchangeability across multiple contexts (e.g., nonprofit, for-profit, government), and to examine interchangeability from the perspective of volunteers.

METHODS

A Canadian cross-sectional survey was administered by telephone between December 2011 and August 2012. Individuals were selected from a randomly generated sample obtained from a national online phone directory, which contains aggregated information of residential land- and mobile-based numbers from publically available local telephone records for published telephone listings across Canada. To generate the sample, a python script

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was used to randomly pull numbers from the database by each area code across Canada. In total, 20,000 phone numbers were obtained, with the number of listings roughly proportionate to the population by province. Out of the 20,000 numbers, around 2,100 individuals agreed to do the survey. A pre-screening question was asked: "in the past 12 months, have you volunteered?" to which 1,024 individuals answered "yes." The interviews were fully completed by 768 individuals resulting in a response rate of 75%. All participants were 16 years of age or older and had volunteered in the past 12 months. The interviews, which lasted between 30 to 45 minutes, were conducted over the phone by trained interviewers who spoke both English and French. The Research Ethics Board at the University of Toronto provided approval for the study, and participants were asked to grant oral consent before commencing the interview.

As we were examining the replacement of paid staff by volunteers and the replacement of volunteers by paid staff, we excluded 211 participants (27.5%) who reported that there were no paid staff members at the organization where they volunteered. To address our first research question (the prevalence of replacement of paid staff by volunteers) we asked survey participants the following two questions: 1) "In the past 12 months, for the organization you volunteered at the most, have you ever replaced a paid staff member?" 2) "In the past 12 months, for the organization you volunteered at the most, have you ever been replaced by a paid staff member?" Since we are doing two separate outcomes for this study, we separated the sample sizes into two groups. For the volunteers who reported replacing a paid staff member, we excluded 37 individuals who responded "unsure" to the response choices given ("yes," "no," or "unsure"), which left us with a final sample size of 520 participants for outcome 1. For outcome 2—volunteers who reported being replaced by a paid staff member—we removed 30 participants who responded "unsure," giving us a final sample size of 527.

In order to improve the representativeness of our data set, we assigned weights, a recommended practice in doing national surveys (Lohr, 1999; Pfeffermann, 1996). Probability weights were created based on the results of the 2010 *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* (CSGVP) to address a potential selection bias within our data due to unlisted telephone numbers (Statistics Canada, 2012). These weights are used to reference the Canadian population of volunteers and we discovered, using a descriptive analysis, that our sample was either over- or under-represented by the following characteristics: gender, age, and province of residence. Probability weights were then constructed from those three socio-demographic characteristics. A value of one translates to an equal proportion between the representation of our data set and the Canadian population of volunteers, while a deviation may represent either an over- or under-representation. By weighting our sample, we maintain that our data are representative of the target population.

For our survey, we asked questions with regards to the participants' socio-demographic status, along with the amount of hours they volunteered and where they volunteered. We used questions from the CSGVP, a validated survey developed by Statistics Canada that reports on various aspects of volunteering across Canada. In addition, we asked questions that investigate the interchange between paid staff and volunteers.

In almost one-fifth of cases, one or more of the dependent or independent variables of interest were missing due to survey non-response, with the question regarding net family income most frequently skipped (17.7%). To account for the missing data we used multiple imputations—a highly recommended state-of-the-art methodological solution for replacing missing data (Rubin, 2004; Schafer & Graham, 2002). We used multiple imputations by chained equations (MICE) to generate 50 complete datasets reflecting data collected on 50 random occasions. We then executed MICE on IVEware (Raghunathan, Solenberger, & Van Hoewyk, 2002). After the MICE procedure, we used the MI analyze procedure (PROC MIANALYZE) in SAS 9.3 to simultaneously analyze the 50 data sets. The program generated pooled estimates and standard errors for all analyses in this study.

FINDINGS

We present our findings in two sections. We first present the results to our five research questions for volunteers who reported replacing paid staff. Then we report the results for volunteers who reported being replaced by paid staff.

Results for volunteers replacing paid staff

1. How prevalent is the replacement of volunteers by paid staff? Do rates of interchange vary according to organizational or individual factors?

In response to the first question, which examines the prevalence of replacement, we found that 10.8% of the volunteers (*n*=56) reported that they replaced a paid staff member, with a 95% confidence interval (CI) of 7.9% to 12.9% estimated from 1,000 bootstrap samples (i.e., resampling with replacement from the original sample). When looking at different types of organizations, replacement of paid staff by volunteers was highest in for-profit organizations (13.8%), followed by government (11.3%), and nonprofits (9.2%). However, there was no significant statistical difference between the three groups.

Table 1 examines the sample characteristics of participants who volunteered at organizations with paid staff, and includes respondents who replaced a paid staff member. To examine whether or not there is a significant relationship between each of the individual-level and organizational-level predictors and both types of replacement, the bivariate odds have been reported.

In terms of organizational factors, in addition to organization type reported in the first research question, we looked at organization field and the size of the paid workforce. We found a range of rates for the replacement of paid staff reported by volunteers across the different types of organization. In particular, education-related organizations had the lowest rate of replacement (5.1%) while religious organizations had the highest (30.2%).

For the replacement of paid staff by volunteers, religious ($p<0.01$) and recreation ($p<0.05$) organizations had significantly higher rates compared to social services.

In regard to the size of an organization, volunteers from medium-sized organizations (from 6 to 20 paid staff) had a replacement rate of 17.7% and were significantly more likely to replace a paid staff member compared to very large organizations (over 50 staff) ($p<0.05$).

In terms of individual-level characteristics, the data in Table 1 show that while a volunteer's gender or education level were not found to be significantly associated with replacement, the complexity of the tasks they undertook was. We found that 29.3% of volunteers who engaged in highly skilled tasks reported replacing a paid staff member ($p<0.001$). This rate is significantly higher than those who were engaged in general-level tasks, with only 4.9% replacing a paid staff member, or board-level tasks, with 8.5% reporting replacing paid staff. Furthermore, we found those who volunteered more hours to be significantly more likely to report replacing a paid employee. This significant association was more likely for those who had volunteered more than 210 hours in the previous 12 months as compared to those who volunteered 40 or fewer hours ($p<0.001$) in the same period. Additionally, two groups of volunteers—those not in the labour force (including volunteers who were

Table 1: Sample characteristics and rates of individuals who volunteer at organizations with paid staff for outcome 1: Volunteers replacing paid staff (weighted N = 520)[3]

	Total	OUTCOME 1: In the past 12 months, have you replaced a paid staff member?		Bivariate odds of paid staff replacement (yes versus no)
		No	Yes	
Total	520	464 (89.2%)	56 (10.8%)	
Organization-level characteristics				
Organization type				
Nonprofit[1]	403	366 (90.8%)	37 (9.2%)	---
For-Profit	29	25 (86.2%)	4 (13.8%)	1.473
Government	62	55 (88.7%)	7 (11.3%)	1.289
Other	7	7 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0.944

Organization field				
Culture	71	65 (91.5%)	6 (8.5%)	1.022
Health	118	110 (93.2%)	8 (6.8%)	0.851
Religion	38	28 (73.7%)	10 (26.3%)	4.082**
Education	102	95 (93.1%)	7 (6.9%)	0.862
Recreation	59	47 (79.7%)	12 (20.3%)	2.885*
Unsure	25	21 (84.0%)	4 (16.0%)	1.885
Social Services[1]	105	96 (91.4%)	9 (8.6%)	---
Size of paid workforce				
Fewer than 5	129	118 (91.5%)	11(8.5%)	2.218
6–20	198	163 (82.3%)	35 (17.7%)	5.068**
21–50	84	78 (92.9%)	6 (7.1%)	1.700
Over 50[1]	102	98 (96.1%)	4 (3.9%)	---
Individual-level characteristics				
Gender				
Male[1]	236	211 (89.4%)	25(10.6%)	---
Female	284	252 (88.7%)	32(11.3%)	1.080
Education				
High school or less	113	102 (90.3%)	11 (9.7%)	0.885
Some college or university	72	65 (90.3%)	7 (9.7%)	1.094
Postsecondary undergraduate degree or diploma	186	164 (88.2%)	22 (11.8%)	0.822
Graduate university degree[1]	146	130 (89.0%)	16 (11.0%)	---
Skill level of task				
General level[1]	325	309 (95.1%)	16 (4.9%)	---

High skill level	123	87 (93.8%)	36 (29.3%)	7.907***
Board member	47	43 (91.5%)	4 (8.5%)	1.588
Hours volunteered in the past year				
1–40 hours[1]	133	125 (94.0%)	8 (6.0%)	---
41–100 hours	146	137 (93.8%)	9 (6.2%)	1.086
101–210 hours	112	101 (90.2%)	11 (9.8%)	1.677
211+ hours	128	100 (78.1%)	28 (21.9%)	4.409***
Employment status				
Employed[1,2]	318	293 (92.1%)	25 (7.9%)	---
Unemployed	67	63 (94.0%)	4 (6.0%)	0.745
Not in labour force	125	100(80.0%)	25 (20.0%)	2.889***
Age				
15–24 years old	103	96 (93.2%)	7 (6.8%)	0.915
25–34 years old	83	76 (91.6%)	7 (8.4%)	1.153
35–64 years old[1]	259	239 (92.3%)	20 (7.7%)	---
65+ years old	74	52 (70.3%)	22 (29.8%)	4.889***

retired and on-leave from work) and those aged 65 and up—were also more likely to report that they had replaced paid staff (both at $p<0.001$).

2. What proportion of the replacement of paid staff by volunteers was a permanent rather than temporary replacement?

With regard to the second question, which asks what proportion of replacement was permanent rather than temporary, 28.6% (*n*=16) indicated a permanent replacement. The remaining 71.4% (*n*=40) of volunteers who had replaced paid staff stated that they did so temporarily. Out of our whole sample, representative of those who volunteered at organizations with paid staff, 3.1% (with a 95% CI of 1.0% to 3.5%) reported permanently replacing a paid staff member.

3. From the volunteer's perspective, what are the reasons why organizations are replacing paid staff with volunteers? Do these reasons differ for those who were permanently or temporarily replaced?

About three-quarters (43 out of 56; 76.8%) of the respondents who replaced paid staff indicated they did so to cover absences**,** with a significant difference between those who replaced an employee temporarily (31 out of 40; 77.5%) and permanently (14 out of 16; 87.5%) (p<0.01). Almost a quarter (13 out of 56; 23.2%) indicated the reason they replaced staff was because of budget cuts, and this was far more prominent for those who indicated that they were replacing paid staff permanently (11 out of 16 or 68.8% for permanent replacement versus 2 out of 40 or 5.0% for temporary replacement, p<0.001). A change in the organization was mentioned less frequently (7 out of 56; 12.5%), but more for those who replaced temporarily (6 out of 40; 15.0%) than permanently (1 out of 16; 6.3%), although this difference was not statistically significant. Expansion of services was a reason indicated by a quarter of the respondents (15 out of 56; 26.8%); it was mentioned by 6 out of 40 or 15.0% of those who replaced paid staff temporarily and by 9 out of 16 or 56.3% of those who replaced paid staff permanently (p<0.01).

4. For volunteers who replaced paid staff, how many considered this interchange to be unfair/unethical? Does the opinion differ between volunteers who replaced employees permanently versus temporarily?

With regard to the fourth question, volunteers who replaced paid staff were asked whether they viewed such substitution as fair, using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (very unfair) to 5 (very fair). Overall, 7.1% of these volunteers felt that their replacing a paid staff member was unfair or very unfair. For those volunteers who indicated that they had temporarily replaced a paid staff member, 7.5% (n=3) felt it was unfair or very unfair; 12.5% (n=2) of volunteers who took over permanently felt this was unfair or very unfair.

5. What are the organizational and individual factors affecting the replacement of paid staff by volunteers?

Since our dependent variable is a dichotomous variable (whether volunteers replaced a paid staff member or not), and we have a highly stratified sample of zero-inflated binary data, we used exact logistic regressions, a method that is useful for analyzing small or unbalanced binary data with covariates (Mehta & Patel, 1995), further examine whether or not volunteer characteristics and organizational factors affect rates of interchange.

Table 2 presents the estimate of the odds of the replacement of paid staff and volunteers. Only variables from Table 1 that were found to be significantly associated with both types of replacement were used in the models.

Table 2: Exact logistic regression to estimate the odds of volunteers replacing paid staff (weighted *N*=520)[3]

	Model 1: Organizational factors	Model 2: Organizational factors and individual-level covariates
Organizational-level predictors		
Organization type		
Culture	1.095	1.171
Health	.0961	.0977
Religion	3.957 **	2.501
Education	1.164	1.129
Recreation	3.046 *	1.647
Unsure	1.999	
Social services[1]	---	---
Size of paid workforce		
Fewer than 5	1.999	3.275
6–20	4.391**	6.021**
21–50	1.665	2.237
Over 50[1]	---	---
Individual-level characteristics		
Age		
15–24 years old	---	0.967
25–34 years old	---	0.846
35–64 years old[1]	---	---
65+ years old	---	2.740
Hours volunteered in the past year		
1-40 hours[1]	---	---
41-100 hours	---	0.729
101-210 hours	---	1.194
211+ hours	---	1.364
Skill level of task		
General level[1]	---	---
Board member	---	1.327
High skill level	---	6.781***
Employment status		
Employed[1]	---	---
Unemployed	---	1.141
Not in labour force	---	0.971

Model 1 (see Table 2) examines the multivariate association between organizational-level predictors and the odds of paid staff being replaced by volunteers. We found that recreation and religious organizations were positively associated with the odds of paid staff being replaced by volunteers when compared to social service organizations. There was a higher odds ratio (OR) for recreation organizations (OR 3.046; $p<0.05$) and higher odds for religious organizations (OR 3.957; $p<0.01$). Also, organizations with 6 to 20 paid staff had higher odds of replacing paid staff with volunteers when compared to those that had 50 or more paid staff (OR 4.391; $p<0.01$).

Model 2 (see Table 2) inserts both individual-level characteristics and organizational-level predictors into a fully adjusted multivariate model. After adjusting for the individual-level characteristics, the organizational field lost its significance, except that paid staff had higher odds of being replaced by volunteers in organizations with a paid workforce of 6 to 20 paid employees when compared to organizations with a paid workforce of over 50 (OR 6.021; $p<0.01$). There was, however, an important individual finding: paid staff had higher odds of being replaced by volunteers who were engaged in high skill level tasks over those volunteers who were doing general level tasks (OR 6.781; $p<0.001$).

Results for paid staff replacing volunteers

Sample Characteristics

We now turn to the results relating to the subsample of volunteers reporting whether or not paid staff replaced them. This subsample included 527 respondents. Female volunteers comprise 54.6% of this group, which is similar to the 2010 CSGVP national sample of volunteers (51.9% female). As with the first subsample, the majority of volunteers held a postsecondary degree or higher (64.6%), compared to 57.3% in the 2010 CSGVP. Most volunteers in this sample volunteered at nonprofit organizations (82.8%) with health, social services, and education being the most predominant types of organizations. The majority of our sample (63.1%) was employed in either part- or full-time jobs, which is similar to the 2010 CSGVP rate (61.3%). Volunteers who were replaced by a paid staff member volunteered an average of 308 hours, and those who did not experience any replacement volunteered an average of 164 hours.

1. How prevalent is the replacement of volunteers by paid staff? Do rates of interchange vary according to organizational or individual factors?

Of the 527 respondents, 7.6% (n=38) reported that they had been replaced by a paid staff person, with a 95% confidence interval of 3.8% to 7.8%. The bivariate odds were examined between organizational type and "volunteers who had been replaced by a paid staff" (see Table 3). When looking at different types of organizations, replacement of volunteers by paid staff was highest for the "Other" category (40.0%), followed by for-profits (13.8%), nonprofits (5.6%), and government (4.8%). Both the for-profit and government groups were not statistically different from nonprofits.

Table 3: Sample characteristics and proportion of individuals who volunteer at organizations with paid staff for outcome 2: Paid staff replacing volunteers (weighted *N* = 527)[3]

| | Total | OUTCOME 2: In the past 12 months, have you been replaced by a paid staff member? | | Bivariate odds of volunteer replacement (yes versus no) |
		No	Yes	
Total	527	489 (92.8%)	38 (7.2%)	
Organization-level characteristics				
Organization type				
Nonprofit[1]	412	389 (94.4%)	23 (5.6%)	---
For-Profit	29	25 (86.2%)	4 (13.8%)	2.697
Government	63	60 (95.2%)	3 (4.8%)	0.855
Other	5	3 (60.0%)	2 (40.0%)	13.768**
Organization field				
Culture	68	66 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)	0.673
Health	118	115 (97.5%)	3 (2.5%)	0.485
Religion	39	31 (79.5%)	8 (20.5%)	5.020**
Education	109	100 (91.7%)	9 (8.3%)	1.742
Recreation	56	48 (85.7%)	8 (14.3%)	3.285*
Unsure	25	21 (84.0%)	4 (16.0%)	3.819
Social services[1]	110	105 (95.5%)	5 (4.5%)	---
Size of paid workforce				
Fewer than 5	131	125 (95.4%)	6 (4.6%)	0.672
6–20	202	179 (88.6%)	23 (11.4%)	1.834
21–50	88	86 (97.7%)	2 (2.3%)	0.381
Over 50[1]	99	93 (94.0%)	6 (6.0%)	---
Individual-level characteristics				
Gender				
Male[1]	239	223 (93.3%)	16 (6.7%)	---
Female	287	265 (92.3%)	22 (7.7%)	1.160
Education				
High school or less	113	111 (98.2%)	2 (1.8%)	0.159*
Some college or university	72	67 (93.1%)	5 (6.9%)	0.573
Postsecondary undergraduate degree or diploma	191	176 (92.1%)	15 (7.9%)	0.670

Graduate university degree[1]	147	131 (89.1%)	16 (10.9%)	---
Skill level of task				
General level[1]	327	320 (97.9%)	7 (2.1%)	
High skill level	125	98 (78.4%)	27 (21.6%)	12.047***
Board	51	45 (88.2%)	6 (11.8%)	4.435*
Hours Vvolunteered in the past year				
1–40 hours[1]	131	125 (95.4%)	6 (4.6%)	---
41–100 hours	149	143 (96.0%)	6 (4.0%)	0.930
101–210 hours	118	113 (95.8%)	5 (4.2%)	0.855
211+ hours	129	108 (83.7%)	21 (16.3%)	4.077**
Employment status				
Employed[1, 2]	326	312 (95.7%)	14 (4.3%)	---
Unemployed	69	68 (98.6%)	1 (1.4%)	0.451
Not in labour force	122	100 (82.0%)	22 (18.0%)	4.750***
Age				
15–24 years old	105	102 (97.1%)	3 (2.9%)	0.359
25–34 years old	86	84 (97.7%)	2 (2.3%)	0.352
35–64 years old[1]	268	249 (92.9%)	19 (7.1%)	---
65+ years old	69	54 (78.3%)	15 (21.7%)	3.593**

In terms of organizational-level factors, we found a range of rates for "paid staff replacing volunteers" reported by volunteers. In particular, health-related organizations had the lowest rate of replacement (2.5%) while religious organizations had the highest (20.5%). For the replacement of volunteers by paid staff, religious and recreation organizations had significantly higher rates compared to social services. With regard to the size of an organization, medium organizations had an increased rate of replacement compared to very large organizations (11.4% compared to 6.0%), but the difference was not significant in our statistical test. Overall, there was no significant likelihood when examining the rate of replacement of volunteers by paid staff based on the size of the organization's workforce.

In terms of individual factors, there were no differences by gender. Compared to those with a postsecondary degree, respondents who had completed high school or less were significantly less likely to have been replaced by a paid staff person (1.8% versus 10.9%, $p<0.05$). We found that 18.3% of volunteers who engaged in highly skilled tasks and 11.8% of volunteers performing board-level tasks reported being replaced by a paid staff member ($p<0.001$). These rates are significantly higher than those who engaged in general-level tasks, with only 2.1% being replaced by a paid staff member ($p<0.001$; $p<0.05$). Furthermore, we found those who volunteered more hours to be significantly more likely to report replacement. This significant association was more likely for those who volunteered more than 210 hours in the previous 12 months as compared to those

who volunteered 40 or fewer hours ($p<0.01$). Additionally, two groups of volunteers—those not in the labour force (including volunteers who were retired and on-leave from work) and those aged 65 and up—were also more likely to report that they were replaced by paid staff ($p<0.001$ and $p<0.01$ respectively).

2. What proportion of the replacement of volunteers by paid staff was a permanent rather than temporary replacement?

Of the volunteers who reported being replaced by a paid staff member, 28.9% ($n=11$) reported a permanent replacement and 71.1% ($n=27$) said that this replacement was only temporary. Out of our whole sample, representative of those who volunteered at organizations with paid staff, 2.1% (with a 95% confidence interval of 0.8% to 3.2%) reported being permanently replaced by a paid staff member.

3. From the volunteer's perspective, what are the reasons why organizations are replacing volunteers with paid staff? Do these reasons differ for those who were permanently or temporarily replaced?

The volunteers who had been replaced by paid staff ($n=38$) were also asked to give reasons as to why they had been replaced. For 55.3% of them ($n=21$), it was due to a shortage of volunteers. For those who were permanently replaced ($n=11$), this rate was 27.3% ($n=3$). For those temporarily replaced ($n=27$) the rate was 66.7% ($n=18$). This was a significant difference with $p<0.05$. Others reported that volunteers did not possess the skills required for the tasks ($n=7$; 18.4%). The rate for permanent replacement was 36.4% ($n=4$) and for temporary replacement it was 11.1% ($n=3$); however, this difference was not found to be statistically significant. Another reason for replacement of volunteers by paid staff was that the organization received more money for paid staff ($n=8$; 21.1%). For permanent replacements, this rate was 45.5% ($n=5$); for temporary replacements it was 11.1% ($n=3$), a significant difference ($p<0.05$).

4. For volunteers who replaced paid staff, how many considered this interchange to be unfair/unethical? Does the opinion differ between volunteers who permanently replaced a paid staff member versus those who replaced one temporarily?

With regard to this question, volunteers who were replaced by paid staff ($n=38$) were asked whether they viewed such substitution as fair, using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (very unfair) to 5 (very fair). Overall, 18.4% ($n=7$) of volunteers felt that their replacement of a paid staff member was unfair or very unfair. For those volunteers who indicated that a paid staff member had temporarily replaced them ($n=27$), 11.1% ($n=3$) felt it was unfair or very unfair, compared to 36.4% ($n=4$) of volunteers who were permanently replaced ($n=11$). Overall, the difference between the two groups as to the fairness of the replacement was not statistically significant.

5. What are the organizational and individual factors affecting the replacement of paid staff by volunteers?

Table 4 examines the variables from the bivariate analysis items in Table 3, which were found to have a significant association with regards to volunteers who had been replaced by a paid staff member. Model 1 in Table 4 examines organizational characteristics. In this model, when compared to nonprofit organizations, organizations in the category "other" had higher odds (OR 14.468; $p<0.01$) of replacing a volunteer with a paid staff member. Also, recreation organizations had higher odds (OR 3.541; $p<0.05$) of replacing volunteers when compared to social services.

Table 4: Exact logistic regression to estimate the odds of paid staff replacing volunteers (weighted *N*=527)

	Model 1: Organizational factors	Model 2: Organizational factors and individual-level covariates
Organizational-level predictors		
Organization field		
Nonprofit[1]	---	---
For-Profit	1.545	3.002
Government	0.704	0.761
Other	14.468**	6.705
Organization type		
Culture	0.623	0.391
Health	0.466	0.337
Religion	1.488	1.854
Education	1.285	1.707
Recreation	3.541*	1.589
Unsure	3.498	2.697
Social services[1]	---	---
Individual-level characteristics		
Education		
High school or less	---	0.121*
Some college or university	---	0.454
Postsecondary undergraduate degree or diploma	---	0.390

Model 2 (see Table 4) examines both the significant organizational factors and individual-level covariates with the replacement of volunteers by paid staff members. When the individual factors are added, the significance of the organizational factors disappears. In this case, three individual factors emerge as significant. The odds are lower for those with a high school or less education compared to those with a graduate degree (OR 0.121; $p<0.05$). Highly skilled volunteers had higher odds of being replaced than volunteers performing tasks at a general level (OR 6.677; $p<0.001$), as did those not in the labour force compared to those who were employed (OR 3.578; $p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION

One of our main findings was that 10.8% of the Canadian volunteers who participated in our survey reported that they replaced a paid staff member. These replacements were predominantly temporary, but 3.1% of the sample reported permanently replacing a paid staff member. Overall, volunteers did not feel that replacement was unfair.

Interestingly, 7.6% of volunteers reported that they had been replaced by paid staff, and of the total sample, 2.1% reported that the replacement was permanent. The social importance of a volunteer being replaced by a paid staff member cannot be compared to a paid staff being replaced by a volunteer, but the fact that both of these practices were reported and at not dissimilar rates may suggest that nonprofit organizations, in particular, view their human resources, whether paid or unpaid, as interchangeable, and move these human resource components about according to organizational need. This finding is consistent with previous studies, using the organization as the unit of analysis (Chum et al., 2013; Handy et al., 2008).

To a degree, the data from this study could lead to the interpretation that paid staff and volunteers are like interchangeable parts, not as a general operating strategy but rather one to help the organization cope in times of need. The evidence to support this is underlined by the point that those being interchanged tended to be engaged in high-skill tasks, suggesting that they were an integral part of the organization. This interpretation is consistent with the co-production model (Brudney, 1990; Brudney & Gazley, 2002; Brudney & Kellough, 2000), which views paid and unpaid human resources as a collaborative arrangement that organizations utilize to meet their objectives. The Brudney et al. studies were undertaken with public sector organizations; our study involves volunteers predominantly with nonprofit organizations. In those organizations where paid staff replaced volunteers, the volunteers were more likely to be not in the labour force than employed. These volunteers were mostly retirees, perhaps stepping in as *pro bono* consultants for organizations re-evaluating their strategic direction or successfully increasing their funding in order to grow. This may be reflective of the increased emphasis on older adult volunteers wanting to give back in their retirement stage (Cook & Speevak Slodowski, 2013; Lapierre, 2013).

In general, we found that larger organizations were less likely to replace paid staff with volunteers. Although the reasons for this were unclear, one could speculate that they have the resources to address their needs with paid staff and use volunteers in relatively peripheral or niche roles. This interpretation is consistent with some of our findings that indicated that the tendency to interchange human resources was reported as being for such needs as covering absences, expansion of services, budget cuts, and changes in the organization. The data for budget cuts as a reason for replacement were of interest because they were far more prominent for those who indicated that they were replacing paid staff permanently (68.0% versus 5.0% for those replacing paid staff temporarily). If budget changes are indeed a driver of organizations interchanging paid staff and volunteers, and assuming that financial fluctuations are not uncommon among nonprofit organizations, it might be that having a pool of volunteers to work with paid staff, as in the co-production model, gives organizations flexibility they would otherwise lack. Therefore, co-production arrangements may come about because they offer flexibility for organizations with unpredictable resources, not because they represent a workplace ideal. Assuming that this is the case, one might expect that, for organizations with relatively stable finances, the tendency to interchange paid staff and volunteers may be far less than it is for organizations with greater financial unpredictability.

Summary and suggestions for further research
This study is part of a broader research project on volunteers and paid staff in organizations, and builds on previous studies. Unlike those studies, this one used individual volunteers as its unit of analysis rather than nonprofit organizations. As with many surveys, a limitation of the findings is that they are based on the self-reporting of volunteers, and this should be kept in mind.

As far as we know, this study is the first of its kind to attempt to determine the degree to which volunteers and paid staff are being interchanged (volunteers replacing paid staff and vice versa) and the individual and organizational characteristics related to this phenomenon by collecting data from individual volunteers. The responses to the research questions shed some light on the extent of the interchange, the type of organizations where interchange is more likely to occur, and the profile of the volunteer who is more likely to be interchanged. This study also opens several new questions that could be explored in further research.

First, there is a need to explore the relationship between the volunteer/paid staff interchange and organizational type. As noted above, larger organizations appear to be much less likely to interchange. Qualitative research is necessary to probe the explanations for this, examining whether larger organizations have certain characteristics that affect the likelihood of labour interchange.

A second recommendation for research is to explore why volunteers who engage in high-skills tasks are more likely than those who engage in low-skills tasks to replace paid staff and vice versa. A third suggestion for future research is to explore the characteristics of the specific jobs and the paid staff that are being interchanged, and

the reasons for short-term and long-term interchange. A fourth suggestion is to look more closely at the characteristics of those volunteers not in the labour force, and the relationship of this factor to the replacement of volunteers by paid staff, as this was a significant factor in the regression analysis.

Finally, we strongly suggest that this issue be examined further through the representative sample studies of volunteering conducted by Statistics Canada and by other researchers, particularly with a focus on how this issue might differ for nonprofits, for-profits, and government agencies. This issue takes on greater importance because of the growth of unpaid internships and accumulating evidence that basic labour laws do not cover them. In brief, we believe that this phenomenon deserves more attention from researchers, from policymakers, and from the voluntary sector alike.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1. Reference category: selected due to being the largest category and/or had no association with interchange.
2. Employed includes both part-time and full-time employment.
3. *$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$; ***$p<0.001$

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Book Review

By John Maiorano & Ushnish Sengupta

Inner City Renovation: How a Social Enterprise Changes Lives and Communities. *By Marty Donkervoort*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2013. 137 pp. ISBN 9781552665817.

Inner City Renovation: How a Social Enterprise Changes Lives and Communities by Marty Donkervoort is a valuable addition to the literature on social enterprise and the social economy. In it, Donkervoort presents the case of Inner City Renovation (ICR), a construction and renovation social enterprise founded to strengthen low-income, inner city neighbourhoods in Winnipeg by providing "quality" jobs with the opportunity for skill development and employee ownership to marginalized inner city individuals. As co-founder, board member, and general manager, Donkervoort provides a rare and invaluable insider's view of a social enterprise, guiding the reader through ICR from its initial inception in 2001 to his retirement in 2010. Donkervoort documents how he utilized his business acumen and social values to confront the opportunities and challenges facing ICR to improve the livelihood of its employees and community. A postscript provides an update of ICR as of 2013.

Donkervoort approaches the topic with a thoughtfulness he developed over a lifetime of considering the impacts that business decisions can have on an organization's employees and the community it serves. He offers advice that is both thoughtful and business savvy—sometimes idealistic but predominantly pragmatic. And here lays the strength of his book and its key contribution to the literature: the wealth of experience gained and lessons learned in building a thriving and sustainable social enterprise.

Donkervoort carefully documents the opportunities available to social enterprises in manifesting their missions while outlining the associated challenges they face as they compete against other organizations, often for-profit ones. One of the fundamental concerns for social enterprises is the balancing of their social missions with their financial objectives. Donkervoort's approach to this issue resonates throughout the book as he continually places the focus on the long-term sustainability of the social enterprise. He stresses the importance of engaging a board of directors and a general manager who are all committed to social values and the mission of the enterprise in order to defend against mission creep. However, this advice is offered with the caveat that the financial health of the organization is of great importance in ensuring the long-term viability of the organization and its mission. ICR is evidence that financial success in a social enterprise is not just a pipe dream as ICR, which was highly reliant on grants in its first few years of operation, achieved 95% of its revenue from providing construction and renovation services by 2010 and 98% by 2012, reflecting a decrease in its grant revenue.

The list below provides a clearer example of topics covered in the book:

- The evolution of a social enterprise's business plan: when to deviate from it and when to stay the course.
- How best to approach a marketing plan when hiring a marginalized work force, some with a history of incarceration or gang activity.
- Opinions on procurement policies and the importance of spending locally to enable true community development.
- The importance of patient capital that provides active support.
- The length of time it takes for a social enterprise to be financially self-sufficient.
- Through documenting the failures of two enterprise initiatives, Inner City Janitorial and Inner City Property Management, Donkervoort outlines ICR's non-linear path to financial sustainability and the importance of learning from failures.
- The importance of psychosocial supports for marginalized employees—recounted through a description of the services of ICR's trained social worker and the triggers that led to his hire.
- The danger of social enterprises being co-opted as islands of success, as different levels of government offload their social responsibilities.
- The importance of purchasing practices for social enterprise and "leakage" of money from the local community.

Donkervoort also provides intimate details of the accomplishments of ICR's social mission. In Part 2 of the book, the journeys of 14 employees are provided to the reader, outlining their personal challenges—which relate to poverty, substance abuse, family challenges, housing issues, and gang ties—along with the impact that ICR had on each of them. At points like these, the book can be inspirational, as the reader experiences the seeds of change that ICR has sown, which Donkervoort has documented so carefully.

Perhaps a deeper analysis of the root causes of poverty in Winnipeg's Aboriginal community, including a long history of colonialism and racism, and the role of social enterprise in addressing the root causes of social issues rather than the symptoms would have augmented the scope of the book. Social enterprise can often have a limited effect on symptoms of larger social issues—for example, addressing the unemployment of a small number of individuals rather than dealing with the more systemic issues and root causes that result in poverty for marginalized groups. Nevertheless, Donkervoort does indicate that a social enterprise with an integrated workforce such as ICR has the opportunity to bring different communities with a history of conflict together to work on community projects. Interestingly, Donkervoort does not attempt to overshoot the mark, reflecting that although broad social change is slow, ICR did manage to achieve incremental change, and that perhaps the full realization of its social mission will take generations.

This book is highly relevant in the field of social enterprise and nonprofit studies, especially for those seeking evidence-based outcomes of practices leading to the successful assimilation and integration of marginalized people in the work force.

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Book Review
By Jack Quarter

Internal Affairs: How the Structure of NGOs Transform Human Rights. *By Wendy Wong*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012. 272 pp. ISBN 9780801450792.

Why are some human rights organizations more successful in their international campaigns than others? Professor Wendy Wong of the Political Science department, University of Toronto, offers a simple but compelling analysis that runs counter to the prevailing logic. In brief, Wong argues that organizational structure, not the amount of resources, is the determining factor. Her research focuses upon the agenda setting structures of human rights organizations. She subdivides agenda setting into three mechanisms: proposal development, enforcement powers, and implementation, and she argues that the most successful NGOs in the international human rights field centralize the proposal development and enforcement mechanisms of their organization but decentralize the implementation mechanism. Centralization allows human rights NGOs to create a coherent message and the power to enforce that message through vetoing rights and the ability to disallow the organization's trademark if members deviate from the central agenda. Decentralization "enables NGOs to capitalize on local capabilities and knowledge" (p. 190). Wong argues that decentralization of implementation is very important for mounting effective campaigns because what works in one cultural context may not necessarily work in another. Also, decentralized implementation motivates members in differing local contexts by giving them decision-making power.

One of the challenges experienced by international NGOs is that they operate in diverse cultural contexts. Participants from different cultures may interpret issues differently, which poses a dilemma for the NGO: does it accept those differences in its agenda or does it opt for one message independent of location? Professor Wong argues that

> [m]any NGOs simply do not navigate the transnational dilemma well: they run aground on intersectional squabbles over principles, policies, and political positions because their organizational structures do not allow for the creation of a coherent advocacy agenda and an implementation strategy that focuses on maximizing applicability of that agenda across a variety of contexts. (p. 192)

The takeaway from this analysis is that both centralization and decentralization are important for the appropriate functions: centralization is essential for agenda setting and enforcement so there is a common message, and decentralization is necessary for implementation so that the message is adapted in the appropriate manner for each cultural context.

Professor Wong develops her theory from a thoughtful review of the organizational research literature. For organizational theorists, her synthesis of that research may be self-evident; however, the primary purpose of this research is its application to the international development field, which is something that this book does forcefully and creatively.

Professor Wong's research focuses upon seven organizations: International Committee of the Red Cross, Human Rights Watch, Médecins sans Frontières, Oxfam International, Anti-Slavery International, Amnesty International, and the International League of Human Rights. It is not completely clear why these particular organizations were selected, but presumably they offer sufficient variety to illustrate Dr. Wong's point. The presentation of these seven organizations is interesting for readers who are unfamiliar with the international development field. Much of the discussion focuses on Amnesty International, which relies on effective local implementation and neatly illustrates the central theory of this book. A more rigorous test of Dr. Wong's theory would require its application to a broader sample of NGOs.

A central idea in this book is political salience. Professor Wong differentiates between political salience as a social norm (as it is often used in political theory), and political salience as a reference point for a particular organization. Although the two may go together in some cases, in others they do not. She gives the example of anti-slavery as a strongly held social norm, but Anti-Slavery International (an NGO that advocates for that norm) lacks organizational salience and is relatively weak in terms of its organizational impact at this point. While issues that are addressed by Amnesty International may run counter to the norms in particular cultures, Amnesty's strong organizational structure makes it a politically salient organization.

Internal Affairs is a story worth reading. The theory it presents is elegant and unpretentious, and its simplicity opens up the theory to further empirical testing without any uncertainty about what the author intended. Like the international NGOs that are the focus of this book, Dr. Wong's theory of organizational political salience is an idea with legs, and I strongly recommend this very readable book.

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CBR (chapter 2). The first section clearly portrays the importance of framing CBR in its political context, a theme that reemerges throughout the book.

The chapters are well written, with each conveying the complexity of engaging in CBR. The authors are honest in their reflections, often acknowledging the challenges associated with doing CBR. A nuanced theme that emerges throughout the book is the importance of knowing the context in which the CBR happens, whether as part of a program, a project, or a course. Moreover, the authors each acknowledge that CBR is a rewarding experience that is difficult but with results that are worth the effort. Whether the reflections focus on teaching a topic in a classroom or facilitating a community-based experience, the authors provide enough detail for the reader to understand the importance of the experience.

What makes this book stand out from others that focus on CBR as a methodology is that the authors try to link pedagogy to practice, living up to the book's title. The reader comes to appreciate how learning and teaching are part of the same experience; one does not supersede the other. The book is a refreshing departure from the standard texts that treat the learning and teaching of CBR as distinct experiences.

While reading the book I was continually impressed with the richness of the reflective accounts and the diversity of the experiences. Each author brought a unique perspective that conveyed the importance of pedagogy and practice. However, what was often missing was a discussion of the theoretical foundations that informed their practice. Given the audience, the book could have benefited from a more explicit discussion of the theories that inform CBR as pedagogy and practice. Nevertheless, the book achieves its goal of providing a series of accounts that help the reader appreciate the power of CBR.

I would have liked to have seen a concluding chapter that brought together the various themes that emerged throughout the book. The editors did an excellent job of framing the book in the introduction; a concluding chapter would have provided a chance to synthesize the lessons learned and reflect on the future of CBR as a pedagogical and practical experience.

Overall, I recommend this book to anyone interested in learning about CBR, whether as a student, a practitioner, or an academic. The book provides a rich collection of accounts that convey the power and complexity of CBR. The editors have done an admirable job of selecting pieces that speak to the diversity of experiences associated with CBR. The book is a valuable contribution to the growing body of literature on CBR and will be a useful resource for anyone interested in this important methodology.

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research (chapter 2). The chapters in the second section, "Learning with Community: Teaching CBR in Community Settings," provide examples of tools found in practice, such as training strategies (chapter 4), community mapping techniques (chapter 5), and considerations in facilitations (chapter 6). The section concludes with an interesting chapter by Budd Hall sharing how his experiences in participatory research have led him to embrace CBR as an important lens for community-oriented work.

As I read the first two sections I was eagerly waiting for an account of some tools that CBR proponents actually use in practice. I was partially satisfied with the content in the third section, "Campus Beyond the Classroom: Innovations in CBR Programming." Each of the chapters in this section outline important and useful applications of pedagogical practices within specific contexts. The fourth section, "Promoting Knowledge Democracy: Teaching CBR in University Classrooms," builds on the previous section by taking the reader through different scenarios where CBR is applied in learning settings.

The last two chapters in the final section, "Moving Forward: Productive Tensions and Persistent Challenges of Learning, Teaching, and Assessing CBR in Universities," offer considerations for the reader as they consider a research path grounded in CBR. Chapter 15 is particularly important, because the editors summarize the content of the book thoroughly, linking themes across the chapters, and provide a set of questions for further thought. I was particularly struck by the questions "Who are the learners? Who are the teachers? Who is the community?" (p. 313). While the editors make an effort to explain each of the themes, responding to their questions could be the basis of a new volume. The book includes two appendices with useful resources and potential evaluative instruments. While the listing is limited, they can be helpful for those who are unfamiliar with CBR.

Learning and Teaching has many strong points. The chapters are clearly written by practitioners or academic researchers with a strong connection to the field who have decided to share their rich experiences with a broader audience. I am thankful for how clearly the authors expressed complex ideas in a very limited format with such an authentic tone. I am quite confident that the authors captured many of the crucial themes associated with CBR, like the importance of collaboration and the need to dismantle inequitable power structures between the researcher and the subject of the research, which are both integral to practicing authentic CBR.

I have struggled, however, with the notion that CBR can enhance one's understanding of the reality faced in the community context. While I am generally supportive of this presumption, the challenge has been that such an understanding – or the acceptance of such an understanding – is built on what is considered important and crucial for universities and government policy makers. On that note, I find that a significant shortcoming of this book and the way in which CBR is described is the emphasis placed on the role of formal educational institutions as the principal means by which knowledge is constructed and legitimized.

While I feel the book is balanced in terms of chapters, I found there to be an imbalance associated with some of the content. It is certainly an asset that there was a substantial focus on indigenous studies and health related fields, which has been notoriously underrepresented in different scholarly contexts. However, the reader may mistakenly think that CBR is best accomplished in those settings, thereby limiting its applications to only specific communities. Moreover, the use of indigenous-led and indigenous-focused approaches to CBR implies a link or a synergy between the two, which was not addressed in this book.

An additional shortcoming is the focus on Victoria, British Columbia. With the exception of one author, the cases and content reflect experiences within Victoria. I understand the challenges of assembling an edited volume, but I

would have appreciated a thoughtful discussion of whether the editors see this as a potential limitation on how people perceive potential applications of CBR. While a small point of criticism about an otherwise outstanding book, it is nevertheless important for the reader to consider the socio-historical context from which the content is drawn. Finally, I feel a particular set of values (e.g., reciprocity, equity) were scattered throughout the chapters, and these values support CBR. All research work is value-laden, and we should celebrate this reality, but since our approach to learning is a reflection of those values, we need to critically reflect on this fact, which is something not included in this book.

In keeping with the approach taken by many of the authors in *Learning and Teaching,* I feel the need to position myself within the CBR community. I have been engaged in this type of research for almost 20 years, but I have always found there to be a poor slate of accounts that illuminate CBR-oriented research activities. Over the years, significant resources have been developed that explain CBR in practice, but a lack of context has kept the field of CBR on the fringes of academic research. While this book excels in using a typical academic lens, in this review I have tried to consider the content by appreciating the inherent value and rigor demonstrated by the authors. I believe this book provides an important foundation for future development of community-based research as an integral mindset for institutional and non-institutional researchers.

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