Men's and Women's Volunteering: Gender Differences in the Effects of Employment and Family Characteristics

Hiromi Taniguchi
University of Louisville

This study focuses on gender differences in the effects of employment and family characteristics on volunteering among White adults using data from the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) 1995-1996. There is a statistically significant difference in the way employment status affects men's and women's volunteering behavior. Relative to full-time employment, part-time employment encourages women's volunteer work but not men's, while unemployment exclusively inhibits men's volunteering. A significant gender difference is also in the effect of elderly care. Only among women is the time spent on elderly care significantly and negatively associated with volunteering. Women typically spend more time providing unpaid care to aging family members, and this will further contribute to the gender gap in volunteering among family caregivers to the elderly. Implications of these and related findings for volunteer work organizations are discussed.

Keywords: *volunteering; employment; family; gender*

How do paid work and family work affect the amount of volunteer work men and women do? Traditionally, the majority of women volunteers were not employed, whereas most men who volunteered had full-time jobs and helped others in the community in their spare time. Although this type of clear-cut gender division no longer exists (Kaminer, 1984), the pattern of volunteering may still be quite different between men and women. Despite the changing gender attitudes and the rapid entry of women into the labor force over the past several decades, women continue to play a major role in running the household and giving care to family members (England, 2000; Hochschild,

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1989), which may, in turn, limit not only their career opportunities but also their civic participation such as volunteering (Bianchi, 2000).

In the current study, I examined gender differences in the effects of employment and family characteristics on the number of hours adults spend doing volunteer work with data from the 1995 National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS; Brim et al., 1996). Although existing studies specify how employment and family-related factors affect volunteering behavior (e.g., Rossi, 2001), our knowledge of the gendered pattern of volunteer work in today's society is quite limited, especially compared with that of the gendered pattern of paid work or family work. The issue deserves more attention in light of the increasingly popular argument linking women's rising employment to the decline of volunteering (e.g., Putnam, 1996; Tiehen, 2000).

GENDER AND VOLUNTEER WORK

Critics have increasingly lamented what they perceive to be the decline over recent decades in civic engagement, including voting, charity giving, and volunteering. Among oft-mentioned culprits of this decline are our society's obsession with individualism, women's increasing participation in the labor force, and the rise of divorce and nontraditional family forms such as single-parent families (Putnam, 1996), which may be seen by some as closely linked to one another. Although quick to point out the major role of women's rising employment in bringing down the level of civic participation, these critics are generally silent on the question of how women's disproportionate family responsibilities might interfere with their efforts to be active in the community (Herd & Meyer, 2002).

The current study focused on whether certain circumstances (e.g., working full time and caring for elderly family members) make volunteering more difficult for women than they do for men. I was interested in studying this type of gender difference because it could have significant implications not only for the overall supply of volunteers but also for women's opportunities to get involved in the wider society. Here we need to realize that civic engagement can be a privilege as well as a responsibility. Volunteering becomes a privilege when participants benefit from it in terms of human interaction, personal growth, and life enrichment. To be sure, individuals may just as well gain similar benefits by working for pay or looking after family. Yet what makes volunteer work distinct from paid work or family work is, rather obviously, voluntarism. One would have more freedom to decide whether to continue or discontinue his or her work as a volunteer than as an employee or a family caregiver. Volunteer work is also likely to give individuals a greater sense of being recognized and appreciated than either paid work or family work because the contributions they make as volunteer participants are not as taken for granted. Besides making them feel free and valued, volunteering is increasingly linked to better overall mental health (Musick & Wilson, 2003;

Wilson & Musick, 2000), greater interpersonal trust (Brehm & Rahn, 1997), and even upward occupational mobility (Wilson & Musick, 2000). In sum, engaging in volunteer work is highly beneficial to participants themselves in a variety of ways. Yet individuals can miss out on these benefits depending on the intensity of career-related and family-related tasks they have to handle on a daily basis.

While the possible tension among what goes on in different life domains is often studied in the context of work-family balance, the focus of the current study lay on a so-called triad relationship among paid work, family work (or informal unpaid work), and volunteer work (or formal unpaid work). In this relationship, volunteer work can be viewed as occupying a middle position vis-à-vis each of the other two domains. Just like paid work, volunteer work typically and increasingly takes place in formal organizations. Just like family work, volunteer work is unpaid, and often though not always involves tasks that are described as caregiving or emotional labor. With this unique position of volunteer work in mind, I explored how individuals' volunteering decisions may differ by gender.

EMPLOYMENT-VOLUNTEERING NEXUS

Because the hours individuals spend working for pay set an upper limit on the time left for other activities, employment status could have a significant influence on the likelihood and amount of volunteering. The number of hours employed is, thus, quite commonly considered as a constraining factor for volunteering (Rossi, 2001). We know that a substantial proportion of volunteers are retirees, many of whom simply had no time for "good deeds" while they were gainfully employed (Goss, 1999; Shapiro, 2001). College students are another major source of adult volunteers. However, do nonretirees and nonstudents who spend no or little time on market work also have greater propensity for volunteering? Persons who were unemployed may have more time for nonmarket activities; however, they may not be well posed to care about the welfare of others if they are concerned about how to make a living for themselves (Putnam, 2000). Mattingly and Bianchi (2003) found that men who were jobless had significantly less free time than men who were employed. Joblessness could mean more domestic work, but perhaps not more volunteer work.

Indeed, recent studies suggest that less (more) paid work does not necessarily result in more (less) volunteer work. At the bivariate level, Freeman (1997) found no clear-cut inverse relationship between hours employed and hours volunteered. Similarly, Becker and Hofmeister (2000), in a multivariate study of dual earner couples living in upstate New York, found that the hours of employment have little impact on the hours of volunteering (the only exception is among men working for pay 51 hours or more a week), supporting the view that the allocation of time between paid market work and unpaid volunteer work is not entirely a zero-sum game. There is even evidence link-

ing more paid work to more volunteer work. Freeman (1997) found that those who hold second jobs actually spend more time doing volunteer work than those with only one job. Furthermore, Wilson and Musick (1997) found that professionals and managers, who tend to be the most "workaholic" (Jacobs & Gerson, 2001; Maume & Bellas, 2001), volunteer more than other workers, net of other major correlates of volunteering (e.g., education). Evidence such as these suggest that individuals with stronger labor-force attachment are more fully integrated into the broader society, and as a result, they may be exposed to more opportunities to volunteer.

How much can we generalize the notion of a non-zero-sum game to both genders? Most existing studies on volunteering do include women in their analyses; however, even then gender is often treated only as a variable, which means that the pattern of volunteering is assumed to be the same for men and women (e.g., Rossi, 2001). When analyses are more sensitive to possible gender differences in the effects of specific variables, they tend to focus on subgroups such as married or partnered persons (e.g., Becker & Hofmeister, 2000). While building on earlier research that laid the basis for the employment-volunteering nexus, the current study examined whether employment status affects men's and women's volunteering differently.

I expected that the nexus outlined in the non-zero-sum argument would apply more to men and that the nexus outlined in the zero-sum argument would apply more to women. Relative to full-time workers, persons who were underemployed and unemployed will likely have more time available for volunteering. However, because of the socially expected men's role as breadwinners, men might feel reluctant to do anything but maintain their masculine identity while undergoing underemployment or joblessness (Willott & Griffin, 1997). For example, a married man who holds part-time employment may be pressured by his wife to take more financial responsibility for the family and may focus on seeking more substantial employment. One Israeli study reported that men who are unemployed devote more time than women who are unemployed to job search activities (Kulik, 2000). In contrast, women who are underemployed or unemployed may find volunteering more acceptable, as long as their family members are well looked after. These women may even think that their volunteering experience will lead to a substantial job (Stephan, 1991).

In addition, given the recent literature on the nexus between paid work and volunteer work that is more in line with the notion of a non-zero-sum game, I expected that multiple job holding would promote volunteering. However, I also expected this pattern to be stronger among men than women based on the evidence of a significant gender difference in motivations for moonlighting (Stinson, 1990). There are generally two distinct reasons for moonlighting (Kimmel & Conway, 1995). On one hand, individuals may decide to moonlight to supplement insufficient earnings from their primary jobs. On the other hand, taking on second or higher order jobs might provide workers with the type of nonmonetary satisfaction they cannot expect from their primary jobs.

A well-paid computer programmer working as a part-time computer instructor at a community college is a good example of a multiple jobholder driven by the second type of motivation. Moonlighting of this sort could promote volunteering to the extent to which it facilitates individuals' participation in wider social networks. Stinson (1990) reported that women hold multiple jobs more out of financial necessities, and men more for expanding career choices. It was, thus, hypothesized that moonlighting would promote men's volunteering more than women's.

In sum, I expected that for men the relationship between paid work and volunteer work would be more consistent with the notion of a non-zero-sum game, whereas for women this relationship would resemble the trade-offs implied in a zero-sum game. Specifically, while women who are underemployed and unemployed would volunteer more than their full-time counterparts, among men the underemployed and unemployed would be no more likely than full-timers to volunteer. If anything, men's underemployment and unemployment may be significant factors for volunteering. Based on previous research evidence and common observation, those who are out of the workforce (e.g., retirees and full-time students) are likely to volunteer more than those with substantial employment, while no gender difference was expected in this effect. Given Freeman's (1997) finding, multiple job holding will promote volunteering; however, this effect may be weaker for women.

FAMILY-VOLUNTEERING NEXUS

Existing studies largely find family characteristics, such as being married and having children, to be the facilitators of volunteer work. Marriage has been associated with the higher rate of joining voluntary associations (Rotolo, 2000; Wright & Hyman, 1958) and more volunteering (Rossi, 2001). Married people may volunteer more because the institution of marriage accompanies the social expectation, among others, that married couples be active in the community and its local organizations (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Similarly, those with more frequent contact with their non-coresidential family members, which possibly indicates that they live close by, may be more rooted in the community and, thus, volunteer more actively. The presence of children is also found to promote parental volunteering (Caputo, 1997; Park & Smith, 2000; Rossi, 2001; Smith, 1975). It is reasoned that the school socialization of children into civic activities such as volunteering can also encourage their parents to volunteer, although researchers often ignore the age of children in assessing how parental status affects volunteering efforts.

Meanwhile, individuals' abilities to help others in the community are likely to be constrained by family care responsibilities. Women continue to spend more time than men on domestic work, and this may directly result in their greater time constraints. Caregiving can be also constraining, especially for women, because they are often in charge of more labor-intensive tasks (Finley, 1989; Hochschild, 1989). Focusing on elderly care, Matthews and Campbell

(1995) found that men are slightly more likely to perform instrumental care tasks, involving driving, shopping, and banking, whereas women are much more likely to perform personal care tasks such as assisting with bathing, feeding, toileting, and dressing. Given its day-to-day, hour-by-hour nature, personal care leaves caregivers little recourse in terms of changing their caregiving schedules to accommodate other activities.

Despite the evidence of a significant gender difference in caregiving, relatively few studies have addressed whether looking after family might affect women's volunteering more adversely than men's. A study by Hoyert and Seltzer (1992) found that, among women, family caregivers are generally more active in joining organizations than noncaregivers, and reasoned that they might do so as a way to cope with their stressful lives. However, the same study also found that the level of participation in formal organizations is significantly and negatively correlated with the duration of care given to aging parents, indicating the possible social isolation of those who are involved in long-term elderly care. As for the direct link between volunteering and caregiving, a study of female residents in an upstate New York community found that those with volunteering experience are more likely to become family caregivers (Robinson, Moen, & Dempster-McClain, 1995). How informal caregiving influences volunteering is less clear. Using a national sample of adult men and women, Rossi (2001) found no effect of caregiving on the time spent on volunteer work. However, Rossi's study did not address the possibility that the effect of informal caregiving may differ by gender, and her finding may thus be seen as inconclusive. Meanwhile, the effect of caregiving on volunteering may also depend on the type of care given. Gallagher (1994) found that helping friends and volunteering are mutually reinforcing activities, whereas helping family and volunteering are not. Her research suggests that it is important to distinguish types of caregiving when examining its effect on volunteering.

Aside from the actual caregiving, the feeling that individuals must attend primarily to the needs of their kin may constrain their efforts to help others. No matter how similar the tasks to be performed as part of informal caregiving and formal volunteering may be, different attitudinal factors may underlie the two types of unpaid work. While individuals may become informal caregivers mainly because of their sense of normative obligation ("I help because I have to"), the sense of chosen obligation ("I help because I want to") is likely to play a more important role when it comes to deciding about volunteering. While most people would experience both types of obligatory feelings, the relative intensity of the two could significantly vary from one person to another. To those who feel strongly obligated to their kin, the idea of helping strangers may not occur easily, and the likelihood of volunteering may thus be reduced. In a similar but converse vein, Gallagher (1994) argued that older persons may be more active in volunteering partly because of their reduced sense of being obligated to help their family members, and their enhanced sense of doing as they please. Although previous research examined the effect

of the sense of family obligation on informal caregiving and found a positive relationship between the two (Rossi, 2001), its effect on formal volunteering has received limited attention.

In sum, given previous research, I expected that family characteristics such as being married, having frequent family contact, and having older school-aged children would encourage men and women's volunteering efforts. However, I also expected that other domestic factors such as having preschoolers and caring for elderly family members would restrict volunteering, especially among women. In terms of the attitudinal aspect of volunteering efforts, those with a stronger sense of family obligation are expected to volunteer less. I expected no gender difference in this effect, although on average women may feel more obligated to their kin, given the gender norm of women's role as family caregivers. (In this latter sense, the sense of family obligation will contribute to a significant gender gap in volunteering.)

METHOD

DATA AND SAMPLE

My data come from the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) 1995-1996, which is a national sample of "non-institutionalized, English-speaking adults aged 25 to 74, selected from working telephone banks in the coterminous United States" (Research Network on Successful Midlife Development, 1999, p. 1).[1] The MIDUS survey was conducted by phone and mail and had the overall response rate of 61% (Research Network on Successful Midlife Development, 1999). The survey contains a series of questions about the time volunteered by respondents and their time spent on caregiving to family members, relatives, and friends. Equally important, the survey contains a variety of attitudinal items including those related to the feeling of family obligation, one of the key factors focused on here. While the current study closely examined possible differences between men and women in the correlates of volunteering, it only considered Whites. Ideally, one would study the issue of gender variation across different racial and ethnic groups because the pattern of volunteering tends to greatly vary between Whites and non-Whites (Musick, Wilson, & Bynum, 2000). However, the number of Black and other minority respondents in the MIDUS was too small for separate analyses that would have allowed me to make such group comparisons. After deleting cases from the initial sample because of missing data, the analytical sample consists of 2851 (1477 men and 1374 women) respondents.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

In the MIDUS survey, respondents were asked "On average, about how many hours per month do you spend doing formal volunteer work at (a) hos-

pital or nursing home, (b) school, (c) political organizations, and (d) any other organization?" By using responses to this question, I computed the total hours volunteered per month for each individual. On this variable, the value 0 was assigned to those who do not engage in any volunteer work.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Employment status was included as a discrete variable with six categories: 1 = employed full time (35-50 hours a week, referent), 2 = employed overtime (51 hours or more),[2] 3 = employed part-time (less than 35 hours), 4 = unemployed or temporarily laid off, 5 = retired, full-time student, or homemaker, 6 = on maternity leave, on sick leave, or disabled). Some studies, including the one by Rossi (2001), consider employment as a continuous variable (e.g., hours employed per week) even when their samples contain persons without jobs. By contrast, the current study treats employment categorically to differentiate groups such as retirees and students on one hand, and those who are in the labor force but not working for pay, on the other. In addition to employment status, whether having more than one job was also considered.

Several family-related variables were included. Marital status is a binary variable (1 = married, 0 = not married). Contact with non-coresidential family members (e.g., grown children) was measured on a scale from 1 to 8 with higher values indicating more frequent contact. The number of children was considered along with their age, and the effects of having young (younger than age 6 years) and older children (age 6 years or older) were included. Three types of family caregiving were measured by the total hours spent monthly on informal care derived from responses to the question, "On average, about how many hours per month do you spend providing unpaid assistance (a) to your parents, . . . the people who raised you?" or " . . . your in-laws?" (b) " . . . to your grandchildren or grown children?" and (c) " . . . to any other family members or close friends?" In addition, the feeling of family obligation was measured with an 8-item question.[3] For this variable, I standardized the scores across all items, computed the mean of these scores, and adjusted the mean by taking into account the respondents' reported feelings of civic obligation.[4]

Four control variables were included because of their known or hypothesized links to volunteering, and also to the key independent variables. The first two of these were age and education. Although evidence is mixed about the effect of age on volunteering, some studies find its positive and significant effect (e.g., Gallagher, 1994). Meanwhile, age can influence the likelihood of assuming certain roles within the family. Rossi (2001), for instance, showed that age is significantly and negatively associated with time spent on informal caregiving. Likewise, while individuals who are highly educated tend to volunteer more than individuals who are less educated (Hodgkinson, 1995; Staub, 1995; Wilson & Musick, 1997), education is also negatively related to the likelihood of experiencing employment difficulties (Holzer & LaLonde,

2000; Light & Ureta, 1992) and the likelihood of becoming a family caregiver (Robinson et al., 1995). Age was measured chronologically, and education by years of formal schooling.

Generativity, the third control variable, concerns the feelings of being relied on and being a good role model to others and is shown to promote volunteering efforts (Rossi, 2001). At the same time, the sense of being relied on or needed, especially by family members and other close contacts, is also likely to increase the amount of paid work or family work one is willing to do. This variable is an index of six attitudinal statements.[5] The last control variable is the level of social contact, which is known to be positively related to volunteering (Putnam, 2000). Some argued that those with a higher level of social contact might volunteer more because they are more likely to be asked to volunteer (Freeman, 1997). On the other hand, having more social contact could also mean being asked more often to give informal assistance. Social contact was measured on a 8-point scale with higher values indicating more frequent contact.

MODEL

Consistent with earlier studies, the majority of respondents in the current sample spent no time volunteering (61% among men and 56% among women, see Table 1). This suggests that we consider at least two types of volunteering decisions. First, individuals will decide whether to spend any time at all volunteering. Second, those who decide to volunteer will also need to make up their minds about how much time they should spend as volunteers.

The truncated and skewed nature of my data on hours of volunteering makes the application of standard regression techniques problematic, although most studies of volunteering time apply the OLS regression (e.g., Rossi, 2001). I address this problem with the Tobit regression model. Following Musick et al. (2000), I decomposed Tobit coefficients into two elements, one of which concerns the probability of volunteering, and the other the contribution of time among volunteers, with the computation method recommended by Roneck (1992).

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the ranges, means, and standard deviations of the study variables by gender, and the statistical significance of gender differences in the mean values.

To reiterate, it should be kept in mind that my data on volunteering is heavily skewed. For men and women, the median time volunteered is zero; that is, the majority of respondents did not spend any time at all volunteering. There is a statistically significant gender difference in whether to engage in any volunteer work, and women are significantly more likely than men to vol-

Table 1. Summary Statistics for the Study Variables by Gender

	Men		*Women*		$\mu^{men} - \mu^{women}$
Variable, range	M	SD	M	SD	*Significance*
Outcome variable					
Being a volunteer, 0-1	.387	.694	.440	.697	$p < .01$
Hours volunteered per month, 0-120	4.751	14.699	5.931	18.434	$p < .05$
Employment characteristics					
Employment status					
Full-time (35-50 hours a week), 0-1	.475	.712	.436	.696	*ns*
Over time (50+ hours a week), 0-1	.255	.622	.083	.388	$p < .001$
Part-time (< 35 hours a week), 0-1	.041	.281	.134	.478	$p < .001$
Unemployed, temporarily laid off, 0-1	.042	.285	.025	.217	$p < .05$
Retired, student, homemaker, 0-1	.171	.536	.294	.639	$p < .001$
On leave, disabled, 0-1	.018	.187	.028	.230	*ns*
Multiple jobholder, 0-1	.140	.495	.098	.418	$p < .01$
Family characteristics					
Marital status, 0-1	.712	.646	.599	.688	$p < .001$
Family contact, 1-8	5.551	2.275	5.998	2.018	$p < .001$
Number of infants and toddlers, 0-3	.187	.687	.188	.667	*ns*
Number of older children, 0-9	.699	1.494	.666	1.528	*ns*
Caregiving to aging parents, 0-360	5.034	23.748	7.189	41.225	$p < .05$
Caregiving to grandchildren, 0-360	7.130	42.998	10.059	49.273	$p < .05$
Caregiving to relatives and/or friends, 0-360	8.425	32.529	12.377	52.764	$p < .01$
Family obligation, –3.487-3.082	–.0370	1.183	.143	1.139	$p < .001$
Other variables					
Age, 25-74	44.679	18.240	44.350	17.692	*ns*
Education (years), 0-20	14.351	3.921	13.896	3.369	$p < .001$
Generativity, –5.969-1.116	.011	.985	.045	1.008	*ns*
Social contact, 1-8	5.611	2.393	5.752	2.352	$p < .05$
Number of observations	1477		1374		

unteer ($p < .01$). The mean hours spent monthly on volunteer work also differ between men (4.8 hours) and women (5.9 hours) ($p < .05$). The gender-specific means look quite different, though, depending on the employment status category (not shown in table). Among full-timers, on average men and women spend 4.7 and 3.9 hours, respectively, a month doing volunteer work. Among part-timers, the corresponding figures are 2.9 and 7.9 hours, and among persons who were unemployed 1.3 and 10.8 hours. At a descriptive level, then, among those in the workforce, men's time allocation to paid work and volunteer work is more consistent with the notion of a non-zero-sum game, and women's with the notion of a zero-sum game.

As might be expected, a much higher proportion of men (73%) than women (52%) are employed 35 hours or more a week. Yet a closer look at the data suggests that there is no significant gender difference in the proportion of those who work for 35-49 hours a week, and it is the overtime (50+ hours a week) category that is dominated by men. While more women (13%) than men (4%)

are part-timers, full-time employment is more common than part-time employment among women as well as men in the workforce. Significantly more men than women (4% vs. 2%) are unemployed or laid off, whereas more women than men (32% vs. 19%) are out of the workforce. Significantly more men than women (14% vs. 10%) hold multiple jobs.

A significantly greater proportion of men than women (71% vs. 60%) are married, while women have a significantly higher level of family contact. There is no significant gender difference in the number of children in either age group. As expected, women spend significantly more time caring for family members, extended kin, and close friends. Relative to men, women on average spend about 2 additional hours a month caring for aging parents or in-laws, 3 additional hours caring for grandchildren or adult children, and 4 additional hours caring for extended kin or close friends. These gender differences become more pronounced when noncaregivers are excluded from analysis. For example, among those who give care to their aging parents or in-laws, the mean hours of caregiving are 12 and 19 hours for men and women, respectively. Women also express significantly stronger feelings of family obligation than men.

Table 2 presents results from the Tobit regression models predicting volunteering. The estimated coefficients and their standard errors from the full sample analysis are reported under Model 1, and those from the analyses run separately for men and women are reported under Models 2 and 3. Although the gender-specific analyses were conducted because of the substantive focus of this article, the Chow test also indicated that the effects of the independent variables significantly differ between men and women ($\chi^2(18) = 29.02$, significant at a .05 level). Because the Tobit regression coefficients are not straightforward to interpret, Table 3 presents the effects of the independent variables on the likelihood of volunteering for all respondents, and the effects of the independent variables on the contribution of time among volunteers.

As we can see, the process of volunteering is gender specific with respect to some of the key employment-related and family-related variables. The results here suggest the view that the allocation of time to paid work and volunteer work is a non-zero-sum game applies more to men than women. For men, whether having a part-time or full-time job makes no difference in volunteering efforts. (However, it should be noted that the effect of men's part-time employment is negative, and the lack of statistical significance of the effect may be because of the small number of male part-timers.) Inconsistent with Becker and Hofmeister (2000), male overtime workers are no different from full-time workers in terms of their volunteering efforts, which lends further support to the notion of a non-zero-sum game. For women, hours of employment do matter in deciding whether and how much to volunteer. Female part-timers are 16% more likely than female full-timers to volunteer, and among female volunteers, on average, part-timers volunteer 2.9 hours more a month than full-timers. The gender difference in the effect of working part time is statistically significant at a .01 level.

Table 2. Effects of Employment and Family Characteristics on Volunteering

	Model 1 Men & Women		*Model 2 Men*		*Model 3 Women*	
Variable	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Employment characteristics						
Employment status						
Overtime	–1.523	1.390	–1.961	1.620	–.362	2.765
Part-time	6.191***	1.730	–2.201[a]	2.913	8.974[a]***	2.229
Unemployed, temporarily laid off	–.096	4.265	–7.698[a]*	3.523	10.501[a]	8.154
Retired, student, homemaker	7.527***	1.353	4.883*	1.925	9.137***	1.865
On leave, disabled	–2.066	3.901	–4.266	5.646	–.796	4.996
Full-time	—	—	—	—	—	—
Multiple jobholder	4.942**	1.472	6.024**	1.822	3.844	2.380
Family characteristics						
Marital status	3.531**	1.225	4.583**	1.560	2.745	1.713
Family contact	.430	.325	.087	.395	.513	.507
Number of infants and toddlers	–1.233	1.314	–1.169	1.543	–2.127	2.002
Number of older children	4.447***	.722	4.649***	.618	3.871**	1.128
Caregiving to aging parents and/or in-laws	–.037	.021	.037[a]	.027	–.073[a]**	.027
Caregiving to grandchildren	.011	.014	.017	.022	–.003	.021
Caregiving to relatives and/or friends	.024	.015	.026	.020	.022	.019
Family obligation	–2.455***	.701	–2.402**	.899	–2.528*	1.043
Other variables						
Age	.110*	.050	.137*	.067	.101	.074
Education (years)	1.547***	.193	1.388***	.238	1.762***	.307
Generativity	5.565***	1.203	5.690***	1.453	5.253**	1.760
Social contact	2.362***	.319	1.987***	.408	2.672***	.472
Intercept	–57.679***	5.356	–53.006***	5.894	–61.733***	8.639
Chi-square (*df*)	247.82 (18)***		151.98 (18)***		125.62 (18)***	
Number of observations	2851		1477		1374	

Notes: a. These estimated coefficients differed significantly by gender.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$, two tailed.

Another significant gender difference is in the effect of unemployment or temporary layoff. As expected, unemployment significantly reduces the probability of men's participation in volunteering by 16% and male volunteers' time contribution by 2.4 hours. No comparable effect was found for women, and the gender difference in the effect of unemployment was significant at a .05 level. These results are consistent with the argument that the social norm of male as breadwinner discourages men who are jobless from volunteering. As expected, for men and women, retirees, full-time students, and full-time homemakers were significantly more likely to volunteer than those who are employed 35 hours or more a week.[6] In line with the notion of a non-zero-sum game as well as the finding of Freeman (1997), multiple job holding does not reduce but instead increases the likelihood and amount of volunteering. This

Table 3. Effects of Employment and Family Characteristics on Volunteering

	Model 1 Men & Women		*Model 2 Men*		*Model 3 Women*	
	Probability	*Hours*	*Probability*	*Hours*	*Probability*	*Hours*
Employment characteristics						
Employment status						
Overtime	–.029	–.480	–.040	–.604	–.007	–.119
Part-time	.118	1.951	–.045	–.678	.164	2.946
Unemployed, temporarily laid off	–.002	–.030	–.158	–2.370	.192	3.448
Retired, student, homemaker	.143	2.372	.100	1.503	.167	3.000
On leave, disabled	–.039	–.651	–.088	–1.313	–.015	–.261
Full-time	—	—	—	—	—	—
Multiple jobholder	.094	1.557	.124	1.855	.070	1.262
Family characteristics						
Marital status	.067	1.113	.094	1.411	.050	.901
Family contact	.008	.136	.002	.027	.009	.168
Number of infants and toddlers	–.023	–.388	–.024	–.360	–.039	–.698
Number of older children	.085	1.401	.096	1.431	.071	1.271
Caregiving to aging parents and/or in-laws	–.001	–.012	.001	.011	–.001	–.024
Caregiving to grandchildren	.000	.004	.000	.005	–.000	–.001
Caregiving to relatives and/or friends	.000	.008	.001	.008	.000	.007
Family obligation	–.047	–.774	–.049	–.739	–.046	–.830
Other variables						
Age	.002	.035	.003	.042	.002	.033
Education	.029	.488	.029	.427	.032	.579
Generativity	.106	1.754	.117	1.752	.096	1.725
Social contact	.045	.744	.041	.612	.049	.877

effect holds equally for both genders but is only significant for men, as expected. (This gender difference is statistically insignificant.)

The hypothesis about the effect of marital status on volunteering was only partly supported. Results from the full sample analysis suggest that being married increases the likelihood of volunteering by 7% and the amount of volunteering by 1.1 hours. When models are run separately by gender, however, this effect only holds for men. Family contact has no significant effect on volunteering in any of the models considered.

As expected, the effect of children on volunteering depends on their age. It is the presence of older children (age 6 years or older) that encourages adults to volunteer. Across the models, each additional older child increases the likelihood of volunteering by 7% to 10%, and the amount of volunteering by 1.3 to 1.4 hours.[7] Inconsistent with my prediction, however, there is no indication that young children exclusively discourage women from volunteering. In fact, the presence of preschoolers affects neither men's nor women's volunteering.

Whether individuals' family care responsibilities reduce their volunteering efforts depends not only on the gender of caregivers but also on who the care recipients are. Only women who provide informal care to their aging parents or in-laws are discouraged from volunteering. The size of this effect is arguably small (.1% and .02 hour reduction in the likelihood and amount of volunteering for each additional hour of care given monthly). However, many of those who care for aging family members spend a great amount of time doing so, and the actual negative effect of elderly care on women's volunteer work is likely more substantial than it appears at first glance. The gender difference in the effect of elderly care is significant at a .01 level. That women spend significantly more time than men caring for aging family members will further contribute to the gender gap in volunteer work among family caregivers to the elderly.[8]

As expected, those who feel more strongly obligated to family members spend significantly less time volunteering. While there is no significant gender difference in this effect, because women generally express significantly stronger feelings of family obligation (as shown in the descriptive analysis), this attitudinal factor will reduce women's volunteering efforts to a greater extent than men's.

The effects of the control variables are largely as expected. Consistent with previous studies, older persons are more likely to volunteer, although the effect of age is only significant in the full and male-only sample models. Education significantly promotes volunteer work. Those who strongly believe that they are relied on by others are significantly more likely to volunteer. Having more social contacts also contributes to more volunteering. No significant gender difference is found in any of the effects of these control variables.

DISCUSSION

The recent trend toward reduced government involvement in social service delivery has prompted the nonprofit or voluntary sector to take the initiative in implementing programs to tackle the society's complex problems such as poverty, aging, homelessness, and substance abuse. Meanwhile, this country is faced with the challenge of meeting the increased demand for volunteers at a time when many Americans are putting in more hours at work, struggling to balance career and family, and enjoying less free time. It is in this context that the current study focused on how employment and family demands affect men and women's volunteering efforts. My main finding was the existence of a gender asymmetry in the way volunteer work is related to paid work and family work: In similar potentially time-constraining situations (e.g., working full time and caring for aging parents), women are more pressed for time than men to participate in volunteer work.

As far as men are concerned, my findings were consistent with the increasingly well-established perspective that the allocation of time between paid

work and volunteer work is not entirely a zero-sum game. Whether men work full time or part time makes no difference in their volunteering efforts. Moreover, unemployment, which supposedly frees up substantial time, actually discourages men's volunteering. Given the gender norm that men should go out to work for pay, men who were unemployed might find it unacceptable to heavily devote themselves to nonmarket activities, especially those outside the family. On the other hand, the notion of a zero-sum game appears to have more relevance to women. For them, part-time (full-time) employment promotes (restricts) volunteering. This suggests that female full-timers may be under more pressure than male full-timers to balance career and civic activities. Although the possible direct effect of caregiving on volunteering was less clear from the previous literature (e.g., Rossi, 2001), the current study found that women (but not men) who spend more time caring for the elderly (but not grandchildren, relatives, or close friends) are likely to volunteer less, controlling for their employment status and other variables such as age and education.

These gender differences are important because of their implications not only for the overall supply of volunteers but also for women's opportunities to get involved in the community, cultivate social networks, attain personal growth, and gain life satisfaction. As Mattingly and Bianchi (2003) argued, women's free time is likely to be more fragmented into smaller units and more contaminated by nonleisure activities, especially caregiving tasks. Relative to men's free time, women's free time may have lower quality and may not allow for as many opportunities to fully escape the confines of family life. However, is it possible to pull women out of those confines on a regular basis? What role can volunteering play toward this end?

The question thus becomes how the voluntary sector can extend volunteering opportunities to those who are overburdened with an enormous amount of informal caregiving to family members. One potential strategy may be centered on the conscious effort to blur the boundaries between informal and formal settings of caregiving. Consider the case of intensive elderly care. While caring for elderly family members who are incapacitated can be quite demanding psychologically as well as physically, individual caregivers may benefit from delivering similar care to nonfamily members as volunteers (which would certainly require volunteer work organizations to provide the family caregivers with respite services). By caring for aging family members of strangers, family elderly caregivers are likely to see their tasks from a new perspective and may find what they do as caregivers more valued and appreciated. Moreover, having sufficient contacts with others put in similar family circumstances might also help reduce the oft-mentioned sense of isolation among informal caregivers. This type of care setting could also be advantageous for care recipients themselves, if they are to maintain varied social interactions. These ideas may seem redundant to some; however, the potential contributions the volunteer work organizations could make by enhancing the well-being of informal caregivers and care recipients are enormous.

The current study also considered a couple of factors, that is, multiple job holding and the feeling of family obligation, that are rarely considered to predict individuals' volunteering efforts. Consistent with Freeman's (1997) descriptive analysis showing that multiple jobholders volunteer more than other workers, the multivariate results here suggest that holding more than one job encourages men's, and to a lesser extent women's, volunteering efforts. Multiple jobholders are likely to be part of wider work-based networks, and this may put them in a position of being asked to volunteer every so often. As there is no evidence suggesting that multiple jobholders stay in the volunteer workforce long enough, whether these workers are a reliable source of volunteers remains to be seen. As for my finding of the negative association between the feeling of family obligation and volunteering, I want to echo Gallagher's (1994) decade-old statement that it will be futile to try to "reobligate" prospective volunteers to look after strangers with the rhetoric of traditional family values.

There are certainly many limitations of the current study. Because of its cross-sectional nature, the current study was unable to clearly identify causal relationships for the observed patterns of men's and women's volunteering. One issue that would be particularly worth further investigation in this respect is the link between part-time work and volunteer work that was found for women. On the one hand, because volunteer work typically involves some form of occupational training, women who are underemployed may use volunteering as a way to develop new skills and gradually enter the full-time workforce. In this scenario, the causal direction runs from part-time job holding to volunteering. Yet the opposite causal direction is also possible: Volunteering may open up only part-time job opportunities for those who are unemployed or out of the workforce. Longitudinal research assessing the relative significance of these two causal directions could inform policy makers about whether and how women who are underemployed and/or unemployed benefit from volunteering in the processes of entering and reentering the workforce.

Another major limitation is the current study's exclusive focus on Whites. While the pattern of volunteering is known to greatly vary across different racial and ethnic groups, few studies have focused on minorities. However, there will be much to be gained by examining the major correlates of minorities' volunteering, given that the rate of volunteering among them is significantly lower than among Whites (Musick et al., 2000). Future research along this line of investigation will ideally also focus on the aspect of gender.

The current study also has paid little attention to the organizational setting of volunteer work. Yet just like the labor market, the voluntary sector is highly segregated by gender. Among those who are active volunteers, women are more likely to volunteer for organizations in the areas of social and health services, while male volunteer participants are often found in political, economic and scientific fields. Related to this, Roxburgh (2002) went further to argue that, for men, volunteering is a leisure activity whereas for women it is more

akin to a chore. Moreover, the leadership roles of women in volunteer organizations may still be somewhat limited across fields. Incorporating organizational factors into research will certainly enrich our understanding of the gendered pattern of volunteering.

Notes

1. The National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) 1995-1996 includes an oversample of older persons. Sampling weights are available to correct for a possible bias because of this oversampling. The current study uses these weights.

2. The cutoff to define overtime work is based on Becker and Hofmeister's (2000) finding that those who work more than 50 hours a week show reduced volunteering efforts but not the rest of full-timers (defined as working 35 hours or more). In a separate analysis, the finer distinction among full-timers (35-44, 45-50, and 50+) was used; however, this added no new information.

3. This 8-item question is "How much obligations would you feel to (a) drop your plans when your children seem very troubled; (b) call, write, or visit your grown children on a regular basis; (c) raise the child of a close friend if the friend died; (d) drop your plans when your spouse seems very troubled; (e) take your divorced or unemployed adult child back into your home; (f) take a friend into your home who could not live alone; (g) call your parents on a regular basis; and (h) give money to a friend in need, even if this made it hard to meet your own needs?" Responses to these items ranged from 0 (*none*) to 10 (*very great*).

4. This adjustment is needed because of a high correlation between the feelings of family and civic obligation. Specifically, I divided the mean standardized score on the feeling of civic obligation into the mean standardized score on the feeling of family obligation. The feeling of civic obligation is measured with a 4-item question, "How much obligations would you feel to (a) serve on a jury if called, (b) be fully informed about national news and public issues, (c) testify in court about an accident you witnessed, and (d) vote in local and national elections?" Responses to these items ranged from 0 (*none*) to 10 (*very great*).

5. These statements include "Others would say that you have made unique contributions to society," "You have important skills you can pass along to others," "Many people come to you for advice," "You feel that other people need you," "You have had a good influence on the lives of many people," and "You like to teach things to people." Respondents expressed their level of agreement on a 4-point scale, ranging from *not at all* to *a lot*.

6. For both genders, the effect of being a retiree, full-time student, or full-time homemaker is significantly different from that of being employed over time at a .01 level (not shown in table).

7. In an additional analysis I estimated similar models separately by the setting of volunteer work to test more directly the hypothesis about the effect of children on volunteering. A significant positive effect of older children was only in the model predicting school-based volunteering.

8. Using the MIDUS data, Rossi (2001) found no effect of caregiving on time volunteered. This, I suspect, is not only because she did not run models separately by gender but also because she did not consider to whom care was given. When I ran my models while disregarding the type of informal care, I found no significant effect of caregiving for men or women.

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Hiromi Taniguchi is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Louisville. Her research areas are the sociology of work, occupations, and organizations and the sociology of life course.