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Jessica B Rodell, Jonathan E. Booth, John Lynch and Kate Zipay

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Corporate Volunteering Climate: Mobilizing Employee Passion for Societal Causes and Inspiring Future Charitable Action

Jessica B. Rodell
University of Georgia
jrodell@uga.edu

Jonathan E. Booth
London School of Economics and Political Science
j.booth@lse.ac.uk

John W. Lynch
University of Illinois at Chicago
jwlynch@uic.edu

Kate P. Zipay
University of Georgia
kzipay@uga.edu

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING CLIMATE: MOBILIZING EMPLOYEE PASSION FOR SOCIETAL CAUSES AND INSPIRING FUTURE CHARITABLE ACTION

As a society, we grapple with a host of national and global social issues — ranging from hunger and poverty to education to financial stability. Today's corporations are playing an increasing role in efforts to address such concerns, predominantly through corporate volunteering. Yet, because research on corporate volunteering has been primarily focused on the individual volunteer experience, we still know relatively little about how corporate volunteering can help address grand challenges. In this study, we introduce the concept of *corporate volunteering climate* in order to examine the broader, more system-level functioning of corporate volunteering in workplaces. Drawing on the sensemaking process, we theorize about how a corporate volunteering climate develops — to what extent is it driven by company-level policies versus employee convictions for a cause? We also explore the potential influence of corporate volunteering climate for volunteers and non-volunteers, both in terms of the workplace (through employee affective commitment) and in terms of the broader community (through employee intentions to volunteer, both in corporate opportunities and on personal time). The results of a study conducted with United Way Worldwide suggest that corporate volunteering climate not only arises through either employees' belief in the cause or corporate policies, but also that these forces act as substitutes for one another. Moreover, by fostering a sense of collective pride among employees, this climate is related to affective commitment, as well as both corporate and personal volunteering intentions.

Volunteers play a critical, though often unnoticed, role in a functioning society. Even when envisioned at a small scale, within one particular community, volunteers carry a heavy load – they serve as fire fighters, deliver meals to homeless youth or homebound seniors, provide health care services for the homeless and poor, make neighborhoods and parks clean and safe, care for animals in need, build schools and advance education, and the list could go on (Idealist.org, 2008). At a grander level, volunteers can even help to create stable political environments, organize and mobilize basic services – such as sustainable food and water distribution from natural resources, and promote the ideals of civic participation and active citizenship (Institute for Social Research and Community Development, 2008; Points of Light Institute, 2011). Worldwide, it is estimated that approximately 140 million people across 37 countries volunteer every year (Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies, 2011). As noted by the Points of Light Institute (2011):

"If those 140 million volunteers comprised the population of a country, it would be the 9th largest country in the world. Those 140 million volunteers represent the equivalent of 20.8 million full-time equivalent jobs. It's estimated that volunteers contribute around $400 billion to the global economy annually."

Volunteers may very well be the most important resource that society has and, as such, represent the world's best option to affect real change and address important societal challenges across the globe. To provide a modern example, Google's ReCAPTCHA program provides people, worldwide, with an opportunity to create long-term sustainable value. Although captchas (the online form that asks users to input a distorted sequence of characters) were designed to verify that someone is human and not a computer program, they are also a global volunteering initiative that helps to digitize and preserve books, an endeavor that provides infinite education benefits globally. Combined, each day, people type approximately 200 million captchas, which translates into around 100 million digitized words a day (the equivalent of about 2.5 million books a year). Looking at a few more traditional examples, volunteers have helped build homes for 6.8 million people through Habitat for Humanity since the company's foundation, they are currently promoting independence and health for nearly 2.4 million seniors in the U.S. through Meals on Wheels, and they supported UNICEF in supplying 25.5 million people with safe drinking water in 2015.

Despite the vital role that volunteers play in society, indications suggest that volunteering rates are trending down slowly each year (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). If this trend were to continue, it could represent its own challenge on top of the vast number of social issues that the non-profit organizations face themselves. One area where this is not the case – and volunteerism

is actually on the rise – is in the corporate world. Today's business environment encourages organizations to be not only fiscally responsible, but also socially responsible – to exhibit compassion and concern for people outside the boundaries of their organization (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams, & Ganapathi, 2007; Muller, Pfarrer, & Little, 2014). An increasingly prevalent method of achieving this goal is the implementation of *corporate volunteering programs* – formal and informal practices and policies created by organizations to coordinate and encourage employees to donate their time to an external volunteer group (Grant, 2012; Henning & Jones, 2013; Rodell, 2013). Estimates suggest that at least 60% of companies in the United States have formal volunteering programs, and approximately 90% of companies have taken informal steps to encourage and support employee volunteering in some fashion (Basil, Runte, Basil, & Usher, 2011; CECP, 2011, 2014; Points of Light Foundation, 2006). Indeed, corporate volunteering programs have been described as "one of the fastest-growing areas of voluntary activity" of our time (Bussell & Forbes, 2008: 364).

Volunteering initiatives within corporations can be likened to a form of social movement — a collective effort aimed at addressing a broader social need (Muller et al., 2014; Toch, 1965; Simon, Loewy, Sturmer, Weber, Freytag, Habig, Kampmeier, & Spahlinger, 1998). Given the extensive workforce that can be generated by the ubiquitous nature of corporate volunteering programs, corporations collectively have the potential to exert significant impact on national and global societal issues. For example, Morgan Stanley — recognized by VolunteerMatch as one of the top corporate volunteering programs — strives to ensure that young people have access to quality healthcare and education (VolunteerMatch, 2013). Likewise, Darden Restaurants focuses on the battle against hunger in every community that they serve (The Darden Foundation). Health, education, and poverty are grand challenges, of course, and represent only a portion of

the grand challenges facing society. Still, companies like these invest in these endeavors with the

hope of making a difference. In order to achieve such a lofty goal, corporate leaders would

benefit from a clearer understanding of how volunteering functions within their organizations.

Although scholarly research on employee volunteering has recently begun to flourish

(e.g., Brockner, Senior, & Welch, 2014; Grant, 2012; Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014; Rodell,

2013), the majority of this research speaks to individual employee experiences with volunteering.

For example, research has addressed an individual's predispositions and motivations to volunteer

(e.g., Brockner et al., 2014; Rodell, 2013), as well as the personal and work-related outcomes of

their volunteering (e.g., Booth, Park, & Glomb, 2009; Jones, 2010; Mojza, Sonnentag, &

Bornemann, 2011). However, there remains little information and guidance regarding the

system-level functioning of corporate volunteering. Although we recognize that we cannot

provide a completely comprehensive picture of the entire corporate volunteering system in one

study, our goal in this manuscript is to elevate the existing conversation regarding volunteering

by initiating a discussion of the company-wide considerations and implications for corporate

volunteering (both within and beyond the company's borders). In particular, we seek to address

two research questions:

First, what are the conditions that foster an environment of corporate volunteering?

As part of their corporate volunteering programs, companies have begun to provide a variety of

resources to support employee volunteering, such as time off work, transportation, and material

goods (Basil, Runte, Easwaramoorthy, & Barr, 2009; Booth et al., 2009; MacPhail & Bowles,

2009). Yet there is little data regarding the utility of these efforts. Is this the best way to mobilize

a volunteering movement within an organization? Without hard evidence, it is possible that the

rapid adoption of these programs is merely the result of mimetic adoption (DiMaggio & Powell,

1983) without much consideration of the best process. Recent theorizing regarding corporate philanthropy alternatively suggests that such movements may also arise from employee interest and concerns (Muller et al., 2014; Madden, Duchon, Madden, & Plowman, 2012). Thus, are volunteering movements better motivated by grassroots employee beliefs? A clearer understanding of how a corporate volunteering environment emerges may help companies determine where to invest their energy in order to create long-term sustainable programs.

Second, what are the ultimate implications of an environment of corporate volunteering within and outside of the organization? Research to date has provided evidence that individual volunteers benefit in terms of well-being (Mojza et al., 2011), as well as improved job attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Booth et al., 2009; Jones, 2010; Rodell, 2013). However, because these findings pertain solely to volunteers, this research provides only a partial picture. What — if any — are the implications of a volunteering movement for employees who choose *not* to participate in corporate volunteering? Moreover, does this type of movement have the ability for social change beyond the boundaries of the organization — that is, can it affect employee actions not only in the work domain, but also in the non-work domain through their personal lives?

To address these research questions, we draw from the climate literature and introduce the concept of *corporate volunteering climate* — a shared perception regarding the extent to which employees volunteer through their corporate volunteering programs. This climate reflects the sense that volunteering behavior is "something people do here" on behalf of the employees. As shown in Figure 1, we will examine the process through which a corporate volunteering climate emerges — to what extent it is driven by company-level decisions regarding the corporate volunteering program (e.g., resources and benefits) versus an employee-driven process led by their beliefs and convictions. In addition, we will examine the extent to which this climate

ultimately influences employees' attitudes and intentions, both within the workplace (in terms of affective commitment) and beyond (in terms of volunteering intentions through corporate efforts and in their personal lives). Importantly, we propose that a corporate volunteering climate has the potential to influence *all* employees, *regardless* of whether they participate in corporate volunteering or not. We theorize that, by fostering a sense of pride within the organization, this climate has the potential to impact both volunteers and non-volunteers alike. Existing scholarly conversations about volunteering have not theorized about such "crossover" effects. If found, these effects would significantly broaden the importance and reach of corporate volunteering programs.

Insert Figure 1 about here

This research advances our understanding of volunteering in the corporate world in at least two ways. First, by conceptualizing corporate volunteering at the unit level, we extend our understanding of this construct and offer new information about how corporate volunteering functions in the workplace. In particular, by taking this approach, we provide evidence that the effects of corporate volunteering may not simply live in the act of volunteering — that employees may not necessarily need to volunteer themselves in order to get a sense of that value system at the company and for it to impact their attitudes and behaviors. Second, by including a non-work behavior — employees' personal volunteering intentions — we are able to demonstrate that the role of corporate volunteering may extend beyond the four walls of their employer. Together these advancements in the literature highlight the possibility that corporate volunteering may have the potential to contribute to broader social change in society.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING CLIMATE

As described above, corporate volunteering climate refers to employees' shared perception about the extent of employee volunteering through their corporate volunteering programs. Using Chan's (1998) terminology for multilevel models, corporate volunteering climate represents a referent-shift consensus model because it is conceptually and empirically based on an aggregate of individual assessments of group experiences. Although corporate volunteering climate is derived from individual ratings regarding corporate volunteering ("Through the corporate volunteering program, employees at my company give their time to help a volunteer group"), these perceptions are conceptually distinct from an individual's ratings of their own corporate volunteering behavior ("Through the corporate volunteering program, I give my time to help a volunteer group"). Indeed, an individual employee does not need to volunteer in order to perceive the climate of corporate volunteering. In the sections below, we will theorize about how corporate volunteering climate emerges, as well as the broader implications of this climate for employees (volunteers and non-volunteers), both in the work and non-work domains.

Emergence of a Corporate Volunteering Climate

Climate emerges from the interactions among employees (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). It is the result of a sensemaking process where, essentially, employees look to their environment for social cues and information, and then interpret and organize those stimuli into some meaningful structure (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Zalesny & Ford, 1990; Weick, 1995). Schneider's theorizing on climate emergence goes into more detail, suggesting that employees experience or witness events (and actions), which they interpret through their own individual lens, and make sense of through repeated conversation and interaction with colleagues (Schneider & Reichers, 1983).

Information about volunteering in the workplace can come from two sources – either

directly from the company or through the individual experiences of employees. Indeed, a

combination of anecdotal evidence on corporate volunteering and theorizing on related topics

(e.g., philanthropy and compassion) points to two possible processes through which corporate

volunteering climate may form: company-driven practices regarding corporate volunteering and

employee attitudes regarding volunteering (e.g., Booth et al., 2009; Cavallaro, 2006; Gatignon-

Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Grant, 2012; Muller et al., 2014). This distinction echoes multilevel

theorizing that the emergence of group level phenomena can be either top-down – driven by

higher-level contextual influences within a system – or bottom-up – where lower-level,

individual properties converge or spread among employees to create a collective phenomena

(Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). Although we focus on just two possible processes, existing research

on volunteering points to the particular prevalence and importance of these two factors –

company policies and employees' belief in the volunteering cause (e.g., Basil et al., 2009;

Cavallaro, 2006; Geroy, Wright, & Jacoby, 2000; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009).

Company-level influence through policies and procedures on volunteering is reflected in

an organization's corporate volunteering program. Indeed, these programs consist of procedures

and policies set at a higher, organizational level, designed to influence behavior at a lower,

individual level. As described by Muller et al. (2014), this company-driven model represents the

"prevailing paradigm" in corporations regarding philanthropic decisions — where executives

unilaterally make decisions about the likelihood, scale, and form of community involvement on

behalf of their employees.

Reliance on this approach is particularly evident in regard to corporate volunteering. A

significant number of empirical studies have focused on the various policies and procedures that

companies employ in order to encourage corporate volunteering (Basil et al., 2009; Booth et al.,

2009; Cavallaro, 2006; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015). Some of the most common of these practices include: time benefits — such as time-off for volunteering or adjusting schedules to accommodate volunteering, financial support — such as donations of goods (e.g., prizes, gift certificates, t-shirts) and paying entry fees, and logistical support — such as the use of company facilities, equipment, and transportation. We use the term *company-provided resources* to refer to the collection of resources and benefits that companies offer employees as part of their corporate volunteering programs (see also Booth et al., 2009).

According to climate scholars, company-level practices and policies such as these provide the primary foundation for climate to emerge (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2011). In essence, these resources can be viewed as artifacts of the company's underlying culture — a manifest way of signaling latent company values to its employees (Schein, 1990, 2010). Even if employees do not participate in the corporate volunteering program, the existence of such policies and procedures serves as a salient reminder that corporate volunteering is something that the organization values and encourages. Thus, the greater a company invests in resources for corporate volunteering, the more likely it is that employees will perceive a corporate volunteering climate.

Hypothesis 1: Company-provided resources will be positively related to a corporate volunteering climate.

Alternatively, theorizing on organizational philanthropy and compassion has recently adopted an emergent, employee-driven focus (e.g., Madden et al., 2012; Muller et al., 2014). In his recent theorizing on corporate volunteering, Grant (2012) also speculated that it is "typically led by the bottom-up grassroots efforts of employees" (p. 590). This employee-driven process centers on the information that employees gather based on what their peers are doing, what their

peers are saying, and the emotions that their peers convey. Through repeated interaction and communication, employees are continually transferring this information amongst themselves, resulting in individual perceptions and opinions converging on an organizational phenomenon (Hardin & Higgins, 1995).

Much of the social information conveyed about corporate volunteering lives in the attitudes that employees project about their involvement in the activity. Although volunteers may hold a variety of attitudes and motives for their volunteering, evidence suggests that a sense that it is important and meaningful is a predominant force for employees (Geroy et al., 2000). In some of the initial investigations of the functions served by volunteering, Clary and colleagues (1998) introduced the concept of value fulfillment – that volunteering was a way to act on what a person values and an outlet to do something they perceive as worthwhile. Subsequent research on corporate volunteering suggests that this sentiment holds particular importance for employed individuals (Geroy et al., 2000; Pajo & Lee, 2011; Peloza & Hassay, 2006). Of all of the commonly listed reasons for volunteering, employees appear overwhelming concerned with the extent to which it is meaningful, important, and helps a worthwhile cause (Geroy et al., 2000; Pajo & Lee, 2011; Peloza & Hassay, 2006). Accordingly, in this study, we examine employees' *belief in the cause*, which reflects their desire to help a worthy organization achieve its goals.

Employees may communicate their belief in the volunteering cause both explicitly and implicitly (Barsade, 2002; Kelly & Barsade, 2001). For example, an employee passionate about a particular volunteering cause may explicitly share stories with coworkers about his or her personal volunteering experiences. In addition, employees may implicitly share their interest for a volunteering cause with coworkers by wearing their corporate volunteering t-shirt or displaying pictures from a recent volunteering event on their desk.

Moreover, research has also shown that the more intensely an individual member of a group feels about something, the more intensely they convey that information to others and the more likely it is that collective perceptions emerge (Barsade, 2002). Thus, the more an employee cares about and believes in a particular volunteering cause, the more likely this information is to spread and allow a collective perception of corporate volunteering to emerge. Importantly, following this line of theorizing, employees need not volunteer themselves to be aware of the climate for corporate volunteering. By experiencing the attitude from others second-hand – either explicitly or implicitly – they too can gain a sense of the collective norms and values regarding volunteering in their workplace.

Hypothesis 2: Employee belief in the cause will be positively related to a corporate volunteering climate.

Workplace Implications of a Corporate Volunteering Climate

Similar to other forms of work climate, corporate volunteering climate has the potential to exert meaningful influence on employee attitudes and behaviors (for a review, see Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). Uniquely, however, corporate volunteering climate may serve as a conduit through which the concept of volunteering may affect not only those employees who participate in the company program (which we refer to as *volunteers*) but also those who do not participate in the company program (which we refer to as *non-volunteers*). In particular, we anticipate that corporate volunteering climate will influence employee affective commitment by creating a positive tone in the environment.

Shared perceptions and experiences – such as climate – foster shared emotions among colleagues (Rime, 2007). Volunteering is a particularly emotion-laden activity. Individual volunteers tend to comment on how it makes them "feel good" (United Health Group, 2013).

One commonly noted reaction to volunteering is a sense of pride – a feeling of pleasure and self-respect (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Tyler & Blader, 2001). For example, based on recent survey of volunteers, the Human Services Council reported that over 90% of people felt that volunteering provided them with a sense that they accomplished something and made a positive difference in the world (Holroyd, 2011). This reaction holds true for employees volunteering through their company's endeavors as well (Caudron, 1994; Grant, Dutton, & Rosso, 2008; Jones, 2010). For example, Jones and colleagues found that employee opinions about corporate volunteering were linked to a sense of organizational pride (Jones, 2010) and that job seekers anticipated a sense of pride from being affiliated with a company known for community involvement (Jones et al., 2014).

There are also indications that volunteering can provide people with a sense of enthusiasm – that volunteering encourages them to look forward to each day (Holroyd, 2011) – and that it can promote awareness and perspective taking about one's own life circumstances compared to others (Clary, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Bartel, 2001), which can lay the foundation for inspiration (Thrash et al., 2010). Although these emotions – pride, enthusiasm, and inspiration – have some distinctions, they are all similarly positioned near 30 degrees on the affect circumplex (Remington, Fabrigar, & Visser, 2000; Yik et al., 2011). This position, referred to as "activated pleasure," reflects a highly pleasant state with a slight level of activation (Yik Russell, & Steiger, 2011). Yik et al. (2011) characterize this state as one where people feel enthusiastic and positive about what they are doing, as well as inspired by and proud of the activity. Despite slight differences in these discrete emotions, it appears that people are likely to experience this general form of positive emotion in reaction to volunteering.

Emotions, such as these, are shared with others in the workplace – explicitly and

implicitly – enabling them to manifest at a higher level (Barsade, 2002; George, 1990; Rime, 2007). Explicitly, employees are likely to directly communicate their emotions to colleagues through their repeated interactions (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Implicitly, emotions also spread at a less conscious level, based on automatic processing (Barsade, 2002). For example, feelings can be communicated through non-verbal signals, such as facial expressions, body language, and tone. The act of sharing an emotion – either explicitly or implicitly – increases that feeling in both the agent and the target (Rime, 2007). As a result, the emotion spreads across individuals and creates a particular emotional climate. Likewise, according to intergroup emotions theory, people experience group-level emotions when they belong to and identify with a particular group, such as their workplace (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Smith et al., 2007). Thus, we expect that the particular positive sentiment associated with corporate volunteering at the individual level – that of pride, enthusiasm, and inspiration – will be shared among colleagues and converge at the group level as well. We use the term *collective pride* to capture this shared affective experience among employees.

Research in this area suggests that a sense of collective pride should influence employees' attachment attitudes (Grant et al., 2008; Jones, 2010). Employees who feel a sense of pride rooted in their group membership are likely to identify with their company (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). These individuals have an emotional desire to remain with that group in order to continue to reap the feelings of pleasure and self-respect (for example, pride and/or inspiration) that they associate with it (Ashforth & Mael, 1989: Tyler & Blader, 2001). As a result, these employees are likely to experience stronger *affective commitment* — an emotional attachment to and identification with their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Empirical evidence supports this connection in regard to corporate volunteering. For example, Jones (2010) found that

employees who viewed corporate volunteering more positively reported more pride in their

company and, ultimately, higher intentions to remain in the organization. In addition, Grant et al.

(2008) discussed the key role that pride played in fostering affective commitment in reaction to

company giving programs. Thus, we expect that, by fostering a sense of collective pride,

companies with a higher volunteering climate will exhibit higher levels of employee affective

commitment.

> *Hypothesis 3a: Corporate volunteering climate will exhibit a positive indirect*
>
> *relationship with affective commitment through collective pride.*

Because the emotional process that we are describing occurs at the unit level, *both*

volunteers *and* non-volunteers are likely to go through the same process. Non-volunteers may

feel the emotions – either directly as result of knowledge of the corporate volunteering climate or

indirectly by catching the emotions of volunteers – contributing to the group's collective pride.

Indeed, research has shown that people can feel emotions on behalf of a group even if they are

not personally affected by it (Smith et al., 2007). Thus, it is likely that non-volunteers are equally

capable of internalizing this group state.

As a result of recognizing and internalizing this group state (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978;

Weick, 1995), non-volunteers may exhibit increased affective commitment to a similar degree as

volunteers. Although the majority of research on corporate volunteering has focused on the

subset of employees who volunteer, there are some indications that non-volunteers have similar

patterns of workplace attitudes. For example, although Jones (2010) did not explicitly distinguish

between volunteers and non-volunteers, he found that positive views of corporate volunteering

and pride were related to commitment intentions across all employees. Likewise, deGilder,

Schuyt, and Breedijk (2005) noted how non-volunteers at a company with a strong volunteering

presence exhibited similar levels of commitment as volunteers. Thus, we expect that the

relationship hypothesized above will hold for all employees within the company, regardless of

whether they participate in corporate volunteering (volunteers) or not (non-volunteers).

Hypothesis 3b: The indirect relationship between corporate volunteering climate and

affective commitment will exist for both volunteers and non-volunteers within the

corporate volunteering program.

Societal Implications of a Corporate Volunteering Climate

Moving beyond workplace implications, we are also interested in whether corporate

volunteering climate may motivate employees' future volunteering behaviors – both with their

employer and on their own time, as well as for volunteers and non-volunteers. If so, the ultimate

impact of corporate volunteering climate may go beyond the four walls of the company and help

contribute to broader societal issues. To quote Steve Jobs (2005), cultivating a corporate

volunteering climate may then be able to help companies put "a ding in the Universe."

As discussed in the previous section, corporate volunteering climate should foster an

environment where employees are proud of their affiliation with a group that is willing to help

others. Internalizing such emotion can influence individual employee action (Schneider &

Reichers, 1983; Smith et al., 2007; Swann & Read, 1981). In particular, research on group

identification suggests that people are likely to behave in consistent ways that reinforce positive

images of themselves (Swann & Read, 1981). A sense of inspiration and pride tends to evoke an

approach motivation – where people are compelled to express or imitate the act that sparked that

sentiment (Thrash et al., 2010). Moreover, research on group emotions suggests that people are

likely to associate themselves with the underlying identity of a particular group-level emotion, in

this case the volunteering climate that fostered pride, and act accordingly (Mackie et al., 2000;

Smith et al., 2007). Thus, we expect that employees at companies with higher levels of corporate

volunteering climate are likely to want to engage in additional actions that will help others. Most

directly relevant in this context is employee intentions to help others through involvement in

their company's volunteering efforts. We use the term *corporate volunteering intentions* to refer

to employees' intentions to volunteer through their company's volunteering program in the

future.

As was the case with affective commitment, we expect that the impact of corporate

volunteering climate on volunteering intentions will exist equally in the group of volunteers and

non-volunteers within an organization. Because all employees are exposed to and internalize the

sense of collective pride, volunteers and non-volunteers alike are capable of exhibiting these

behavioral intentions affiliated with corporate volunteering climate.

> *Hypothesis 4a: Corporate volunteering climate will exhibit a positive indirect*
>
> *relationship with corporate volunteering intentions through collective pride.*
>
> *Hypothesis 4b: The indirect relationship between corporate volunteering climate and*
>
> *corporate volunteering intentions will exist for both volunteers and non-volunteers within*
>
> *the corporate volunteering program.*

In addition, drawing on the work-non-work literature, we suspect that this internalized

sense of pride will transfer home with employees and influence their actions beyond the

workplace boundaries. In particular, the concept of a spillover effect is particularly relevant to

this possibility (for a review see Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). A spillover perspective suggests

that employees can carry thoughts and emotions with them from one life domain (e.g., the

workplace) into another life domain (e.g., home). The spillover of moods and emotions is highly

likely and unintentional – employees may not intend to carry their feelings home with them from

work, but they do it anyway without realizing it (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

This theorizing suggests that the internalized emotion garnered by a corporate volunteering climate – a sense of pride and inspiration – is likely to transfer home with employees when they leave the workplace. Similar to the implications for corporate volunteering intentions, we then expect that employees should be more likely to seek out opportunities to engage in volunteering in the non-work domain (Smith et al., 2007; Swann & Read, 1981). We use the term *personal volunteering intentions* to refer to employees' intentions to volunteer on their own time (outside of the corporate volunteering structure). Moreover, as with the theorizing above, we expect to see a similar pattern of relationships for volunteers and non-volunteers because they equally share in the general sense of inspiration at their company.

> *Hypothesis 5a: Corporate volunteering climate will exhibit a positive indirect*
>
> *relationship with personal volunteering intentions through collective pride.*
>
> *Hypothesis 5b: The indirect relationship between corporate volunteering climate and*
>
> *personal volunteering intentions will exist for both volunteers and non-volunteers within*
>
> *the corporate volunteering program.*

METHOD

Sample and Data Collection

Companies and participants were recruited through their affiliation with United Way Worldwide. United Way Worldwide is a global organization with a mission to "improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities around the world" (United Way Worldwide). The participating companies collaborate with United Way Worldwide as part of their corporate volunteering programs. Each of the recruited companies has their own form of a corporate volunteering program, which vary widely in structure. Through their corporate volunteer

program, employees volunteered for organizations such as Meals on Wheels, the Humane

Society, Boys and Girls Club, the American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, and Habitat for

Humanity – as well as other volunteer activities, such as one-time events (e.g., Relay for Life,

United Way's Day of Caring, and Race for the Cure). Each United Way Worldwide affiliate

designates an employee – a United Way liaison – to manage its corporate volunteering program.

Through collaboration with the United Way, we were put in contact with each company's

volunteering liaison – the employee who oversees their corporate volunteering program and

coordinates their efforts with their local United Way office. At the start of our study, the liaison

from each participating company completed a survey about the structure of their corporate

volunteering program — specifically about company-provided resources. Of the 108 companies

that we contacted, we received completed surveys from 58 company liaisons, resulting in a

response rate of 54%. After adjusting for incomplete surveys and liaison surveys without any

matched employee surveys, our final sample included surveys from 50 different companies.

These companies represented a range of industries – 20% utilities, 22% retail, 30% financial,

14% education and health, and 14% other. On average, the liaisons were 42.18 years old (SD =

9.38) and had company tenure of 12.10 years (SD = 8.15). Of the 50 liaisons in our final sample,

78% identified as female and 73% were Caucasian.

In addition to completing the survey about company-provided resources, each liaison was

asked to identify approximately 10 employees to participate in our study — including a mix of

employees who volunteered through the corporate volunteering program and employees who did

not volunteer through the program. As a result, we contacted 520 potential participants, of which

445 completed Time 1 surveys, resulting in a response rate of 86%. At the end of the first survey,

we asked participants if they would be interested in completing a second survey, of which 319

participants agreed. Approximately four weeks later, we emailed these individuals the Time 2

survey. We received 255 completed responses, resulting in a response rate of 80%. After

removing incomplete responses, our final sample included 229 participants — 160 of whom

indicated that they had volunteered through their corporate volunteer program and 69 of whom

indicated that they did not. On average, we had complete data from six employees ($SD = 2.29$) in

each company, which represented approximately 35% (SD = 6.9%) of the total company

population. These participants were, on average, 42.88 years old ($SD = 10.51$) and had company

tenure of 11.62 years ($SD = 9.97$). Of the 229 participants in our final sample, 65% identified as

female and 82% were Caucasian.

At Time 1, employees completed a survey including measures of their belief in the

corporate volunteering cause, as well as their perceptions of corporate volunteering climate and

basic individual differences and demographic information. The Time 2 survey included measures

of employees' perceptions of collective pride and prosocial climate, as well as individual

outcomes of affective commitment, and corporate and personal volunteering intentions.

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, all measures used a five-point Likert scale from 1 =

Strongly Disagree to 5 = *Strongly Agree*.

Company provided resources. Company liaisons assessed company-provided resources

for volunteering using a nine-item measure developed by Booth et al. (2009). Following the

prompt of "Our company's volunteer program includes," example items included, "Approval to

take time off to spend some time volunteering," "Approval of use of facilities or equipment for

employee volunteer activities," and "Donation of prizes, gift certificates, food, etc." ($\alpha = .73$).

Employee belief in the cause. We developed four items to assess the extent to which

employees who volunteered did so because they cared about the volunteering cause. Following

the prompt of "I volunteer…" the items read as follows: "Because I believe in the 'cause' of the

volunteer organization," "To help the volunteer organization meet its goals," "To improve the

chances that the volunteer organization will achieve their mission", and "Because I support the

mission of the volunteer organization" ($\alpha = .82$). These rating were only provided by the subset

of employee volunteers in our sample. Using an additive composition model (Chan, 1998), the

level of belief in the cause within each company was operationalized as the average of these

ratings. Initial evidence points to the validity of this measure – both convergent ($r = .40$ with

prosocial identity and .34 with empathy) and discriminant (non-significant relationships with

other motives, such as socialization -.02, gaining skills .12, impression management -.08).

Corporate volunteering climate. To measure corporate volunteering climate, we

adapted Rodell's (2013) five-item volunteering measure. Corporate volunteering climate reflects

a referent-shift composition model, which measures employees' shared belief regarding

employees' engagement in the corporate volunteering program. As such, we adapted items to

reference "employees at my company" rather than "I". Following the prompt of "Through the

company's volunteering program…," example items included "Employees at my company give

their time to help a volunteer group" and "Employees at my company employ their talent to aid a

volunteer group" ($\alpha = .97$). Employees responded to these items with a frequency scale ranging

from 1 = *Almost Never* to 5 = *Very Often*. Initial evidence for the validity of this concept can be

drawn from prior research on volunteering using this scale – for example, it has correlated

strongly ($r = .64$) with other measures of volunteering (Gillath, Shaver, Mikulincer, Nitzberg,

Erez, & Ijzendoorn, 2005 and a direct measure of volunteering; see Rodell, 2013) – and from an

expected pattern of relationships with data in the current study (e.g., $r = .34$ with prosocial

climate and .19 with company positive tone).

The referent-shift nature of corporate volunteering climate is supported by an examination of within-group agreement of individual ratings of this scale (Chan, 1998). Thus, we calculated r_{wg} and ICC scores for each company to establish the appropriateness of aggregating employee responses from the individual level to the company level (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984). Although the ICC scores were rather low – ICC(1) .05 and ICC(2) .16 – the average r_{wg} score across companies was .83. The low ICC scores were not entirely surprising, given that our recruitment process encouraged within-company variance in volunteering (both volunteers and non-volunteers participated) and suppressed between-company variance by surveying companies with an existing relationship with a worldwide volunteering organization (United Way). However, the r_{wg} provided support for aggregation and we calculated the average value of employee responses within each company to create corporate volunteering climate. In order to capture and examine the within-company variation, we also calculated the standard deviation of these ratings and controlled for this variation when testing our hypotheses.

Collective pride. We measured collective pride using a referent-shift adaptation of three items from the PANAS-X (Watson & Clark, 1994). These three items correspond with a particular quadrant of the affect circumplex at the 30 degree angle called "activated pleasure" – which reflects emotions that primarily denote a high state of pleasantness with a secondary implication of arousal (Yik, Russell, & Steiger, 2011). In particular, participants rated the extent to which "employees in my company tend to feel…": "proud," "enthusiastic," and "inspired" on a scale ranging from 1 = *Very Slightly/Not At All* to 5 = *Extremely* (α = .88). The average r_{wg} score across companies was .74 and ICC(1) and ICC(2) were .14 and .39, respectively.

Affective commitment. We measured affective commitment using Meyer and Allen's

(1997) six-item scale. Example items include "I feel like 'part of the family' at my company" and "I feel a strong sense of belonging to my company" ($\alpha = .92$).

Corporate volunteering intentions. We measured corporate volunteering intentions using an adapted version of Rodell's (2013) five-item measure of employee volunteering. In particular, we adapted the prompt to capture the future orientation of this variable, which stated "Next year, through my company's volunteering programs, I intend to…" Example items included "Give my time to help a volunteer group" and "Engage in activities to support a volunteer group" ($\alpha = .96$).

Personal volunteering intentions. Similarly, personal volunteering intentions was assessed with adapted version of Rodell's (2013) five-item measure of employee volunteering. Following the prompt, "Next year, outside of my company's volunteering programs, I intend to…," example items included "Give my time to help a volunteer group" and "Engage in activities to support a volunteer group" ($\alpha = .97$).

Control variables. We included several control variables designed to speak to alternative explanations for the relationships predicted in our model. Primarily, we wanted to account for the known relationship between prosocial nature and volunteering (Penner, 2002; Rodell, 2013; Wilson, 2000) – both at the individual and company level. To account for an individual's prosocial nature, we controlled for employee's prosocial identity – the extent to which a person sees themselves as caring and kind (Grant et al., 2008; $\alpha = .79$). We also controlled for employee perceptions of prosocial climate – using a referent-shift adaptation of Grant et al.'s (2008) scale ($\alpha = .91$; average $r_{wg} = .91$; ICC(1) = .15; ICC(2) = .41). Those three items were: "I see this company as caring," "I think that this company is generous," and "I see this company as being genuinely concerned about its employees." Including prosocial climate ensures that volunteering

climate has a unique role beyond a general sense that employees at a company are "good" and

"kind." In addition, this form of climate accounts for a potential cognitive evaluation (in contrast

to the emotional explanation that we modeled) that may explain the impact of a corporate

volunteering climate on employee attitudes.

RESULTS

We tested our model using multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) in MPlus

(Muthén & Muthén, 2010), which adopts a FIML (full information maximum likelihood)

approach. MSEM is able to capture the nested nature of the data, thus addressing potential issues

with non-independence inherent in multilevel data (Bliese, 2000). In particular, we used the

"cluster" option within this program based on company level identifiers. Given our smaller

sample size at the organizational level, we used single indicators to model these latent variables

(factor loadings provided in parentheses): company-provided resources (.86), employee belief in

the cause (.92), corporate volunteering climate (.98), collective pride (.93), and prosocial climate

(.96) with the error variances for these latent products set to (1-alpha)*variance (Kline, 2005).

Individual-level variables were modeled as fully latent variables (average factor loadings

provided in parentheses): affective commitment (.81), corporate (.93) and personal (.91)

volunteering intentions, and prosocial identity (.78).

The measurement model provided good fit to the data (χ^2 [281] = 571.06, CFI = .92,

RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .03). We then added paths to reflect the conceptual model presented in

Figure 1, which also suggested good fit to the data (χ^2 [305] = 557.02, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .06,

SRMR = .05). The descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations for our variables are shown in

Table 1, and a summary of the standardized MSEM results are in Figure 2. All path coefficients

and p-values are presented below or in the relevant tables and figures. Given sample size loses with

aggregate data, we report both p <. 05 and p < .10 alpha levels. As noted in the figure, we

controlled for several potential alternative explanations in the analyses. Any significant

relationships in that regard are discussed below in our test of hypotheses.

Insert Table 1 and Figure 2 about here

Hypothesis 1 predicts that company-provided benefits will be positively related to

volunteering climate. Hypothesis 2 predicts that employee belief in the cause will be positively

related to volunteering climate. As shown in Figure 2, both hypotheses were supported – the path

coefficient from company-provided benefits to volunteering climate was significant at (ß = .29,

p=.06) as was the path coefficient from employee belief in the cause to volunteering climate (ß =

.37, p=.00; R^2 for corporate volunteering climate was .34, p=.01).

Hypothesis 3 focuses on the workplace implications of corporate volunteering climate.

Hypothesis 3a predicts that corporate volunteering climate will exhibit a positive indirect

relationship with affective commitment through collective pride. The relevant path coefficients

for this indirect effect can be found in Figure 2 (ß =.27, p=.04, and ß =.32, p=.00, respectively).

The indirect relationship of corporate volunteering climate with affective commitment (ß =.09,

p=.08) was significant, supporting Hypothesis 3a (and R^2 for affective commitment was .14,

p=.00).

Hypothesis 3b predicts that the indirect relationship of corporate volunteering climate

with affective commitment will be significant for both volunteers and non-volunteers. Following

Mathieu, Tannenbaum, and Salas' (1992) recommendations for modeling moderators in

structural equation modeling, the relevant product terms – calculated from the mean-centered

scale score for the independent variable and the moderator (Cortina, Chen, & Dunlap, 2001) –

were used as single indicators of the latent interaction variables. The coefficient alphas for the

interaction terms were calculated with the formula: $((r_{xx} * r_{zz}) + r^2_{xz}))/(1 + r^2_{xz})$, where X was the

independent variable, Z was the moderator, and r_{xz} was the correlation between those latent

variables (Cortina et al., 2001). We relied on Edwards and Lambert's (2007) approach for

second-stage moderated mediation using bias-corrected bootstrapping to test these moderated

indirect effects. As expected, in regard to Hypothesis 3b, we saw that the indirect relationship

between corporate volunteering climate and affective commitment was not moderated by

corporate volunteer participation. Moreover, as shown in Table 2, the indirect relationship

between corporate volunteering climate and affective commitment was significant for both non-

volunteers (.15) and volunteers (.18) and a test of the difference between those estimates was

non-significant.

Hypotheses 4 and 5 focus on the societal implications of corporate volunteering climate.

Hypothesis 4a predicts that corporate volunteering climate will exhibit a positive indirect

relationship with corporate volunteering intentions through collective pride. Although the

relevant path coefficients (ß =.27, p=.04, and ß =.15, p=.02, respectively) were significant, this

indirect relationship (ß =.04, p=.14) was not significant (R^2 for corporate volunteering intentions

was .26, p=.00). In addition, in regard to Hypothesis 4b, we found that employees' current

corporate volunteering participation significantly moderated this relationship (ß = -.12, p=.04).

As presented in Table 2 and Figure 3, the indirect relationship between corporate volunteering

climate and corporate volunteering intentions was significant for non-volunteers (.08) and not

significant for volunteers (-.05). Moreover, the difference between these two estimates was

significant (-.13). In terms of the control variables, employee prosocial identity (ß = .26, p=.00)

was significantly related to corporate volunteering intentions.

Insert Table 2 and Figure 3 about here

Hypothesis 5a predicts that corporate volunteering climate will exhibit a positive indirect relationship with personal volunteering intentions through collective pride. Based on the relevant path coefficients (ß =.27, p=.04, and ß =.29, p=.00, respectively), this indirect relationship (ß =.08, p=.08) was significant (R^2 for personal volunteering intentions was .23, p=.00). As expected, in regard to Hypothesis 5b, the indirect relationship between corporate volunteering climate and personal volunteering intentions was not different for volunteers and non-volunteers. As shown in Table 2, although the relationship was significant for non-volunteers (.16) but not significant for volunteers (.09), a test of the difference between those estimates was non-significant. Regarding the control variables, prosocial identity (ß = .22, p=.00) and prosocial climate (ß = -.14, p =.06) were both significantly related to personal volunteering intentions.

Interaction of company-driven and employee-driven processes

Theorizing on climate emergence would suggest that there might be integrative effects of various sources of information (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). People gather information from their surroundings – company policies and procedures, as well as peer attitudes, emotions, and behaviors – then integrate this information and interpret it through their own personal lenses. This logic suggests that company provided resources and employee belief in the cause may not only have direct implications for corporate volunteering climate, but also may interact in some fashion to influence that climate.

We did not formally hypothesize this interaction because theoretical arguments can be made for contradictory patterns for this relationship (see Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Howell, Dorfman, & Kerr, 1986). On one hand, company-provided resources

and employee beliefs may act in a complementary fashion – where they serve to reinforce each other and ultimately enhance or magnify the level of corporate volunteering climate. Following this line of theorizing, it is possible that company-provided resources allow for the mobilization of employee beliefs into the kinds of activities and interactions that can give rise to climate. On the other hand, these forces may act as substitutes that compensate one another. In the absence of company-provided resources for employees, it may be possible for other more easily accessible factors – such as employee beliefs in a volunteering cause – to act as a substitute and exert a significant influence on corporate volunteering climate (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Howell et al., 1986).

As shown in Figure 2, there was, indeed, a significant interaction between company-provided resources and employee belief in a cause (ß = -.29, p=.02). The plot of this relationship (see Figure 4) supports the idea that these two forces act as substitutes for one another – in the absence of company-provided resources, employee belief has a significant relationship with corporate volunteering climate, and vice-versa.

Insert Figure 4 about here

DISCUSSION

As a society, we grapple with a host of national and global social issues, ranging from hunger and poverty to education to financial stability. Focusing on hunger in particular, recent reports suggest that one out of every nine individuals around the world – approximately 805 million people – face chronic hunger (World Hunger Education Service, 2015). Over the past few decades, the role of corporations in the fight against such issues has been steadily increasing. For example, Panera Bread runs *Panera Cares Community Cafes* – non-profit locations that will

feed anyone whether they can pay or not (Panera Cares). Likewise, Darden Restaurants run a program called *Darden Harvest* where they rescue food from landfills and get it to those in need. Through this program, Darden Restaurants has donated more than 100 million meals – as they put it, "enough to feed every person in Manhattan three meals a day for three weeks" (The Darden Foundation).

Given the large-scale efforts of companies like these and others, there is the potential for the corporate world to exert significant social change. This potential raises the questions: How can these efforts be fostered within organizations? What are the organizational implications of them? And, can the environment of corporate volunteering inspire employees to tackle grand challenges in their own personal lives? With these questions in mind, the goals of this study were twofold: First, to examine the conditions that foster a corporate volunteering climate within an organization, and second, to examine the impact of this climate on employee actions – both within and outside of the companies' boundaries.

By examining these questions, we were able to gain insight into how the corporate world may be able to uniquely and positively impact grand societal challenges. One of the most relevant take-aways in this regard is that corporate volunteering climate may improve volunteering rates. Specifically, we saw that employees in companies with higher volunteering climates had higher intentions to volunteer, both in the corporate program and on their own personal time, compared to companies with lower volunteering climates. Importantly, corporate volunteering climate did not only wind up impacting the subset of employees who already volunteer, but it also increased volunteer intentions among non-volunteers. Given the increasing adoption of and participation in corporate volunteering programs, the impact of this relationship could be tremendous. As noted at the onset of this paper, volunteers represent a significant (and

free!) resource that can be used to address societal issues. Over the past 13 years, the

volunteering work by Americans alone is estimated as a $2.1 trillion value – efforts that have

helped the 670,000 homeless, 48 million hungry, and 46.2 million living in poverty, among

others, in that country alone (Corporation for National & Community Service, 2014; Volunteers

of America, 2016). Moreover, volunteers are twice as likely to donate money to such causes,

compared to non-volunteers (Corporation for National & Community Service, 2014). If

corporate volunteering climates can help increase volunteering rates, they may also indirectly

increase income to these important causes.

In addition, the corporate world may just be uniquely suited to tackle these types of

challenges. Not only is it the fastest growing sector of volunteerism (Bussell & Forbes, 2008),

but also the skills necessary in the business world may be precisely what non-profit organizations

need in order to increase their impact. Most volunteer organizations suffer from lack of business

acumen – in particular, they struggle with management of human resources, such as their

volunteer workforce (Connors, 2012; McKee & McKee, 2012). In her introduction to a recent

volunteer management handbook, Connors wrote, "many volunteer resource programs remain

underappreciated and under developed regarding their strategic potential to the organization's

ability to fulfill its public service mission" and "managers need more training in such

management areas as strategic planning and implementation" (2012: p. XV). Corporate

involvement may inherently bring theoretical and practical knowledge to non-profit

organizations enabling them to, ultimately, address the societal challenges more efficiently.

Given the amount of good that corporate volunteering climate may help accomplish,

companies are likely to want to know how to cultivate this type of environment. The results of

this study suggest that the development of corporate volunteering climate is the result of both a

bottom-up process – stemming from the passion that employees have for the volunteering cause – and a top-down process – driven by company policies and practices pertaining to corporate volunteering. Moreover, these processes appear to be able to compensate for one another. In the absence (or low levels) of one driving force, the other is capable of driving the corporate volunteering climate. This finding seems to suggest that either approach is an effective mechanism for forming and sustaining a volunteering climate.

Taken together, these results provide insight on how corporate volunteering could be used to address the grand challenges that face society today. In instances where companies do not have a significant employee volunteering presence, management may want to consider creating and implementing a formal program to support and encourage the behavior. Given the important role played by employees' belief in the cause, organizations with an existing volunteer force may instead want to focus on the types of challenges employees are most passionate about. The evidence here suggests that allowing employees to continue with their grass-roots interests will organically foster a corporate volunteering climate. As a climate for corporate volunteering emerges, it then becomes more salient to employees – both participants and non-participants – that volunteering is something that employees "do" at a given organization. That climate can then inspire employees to grapple with grand challenges on their own personal time – perhaps the same issues the corporate programs are addressing or still new issues not considered by the company.

Implications for Organizational Theory

The current study advances the nature of the conversation among volunteering scholars in a few significant ways. First, this is the first study to conceptualize corporate volunteering as a group-level perception. As such, we are able to empirically examine the role of corporate

volunteering programs in creating an environment for corporate volunteering. This framework

also enables us to expand the current discussion about volunteering to include employees who

choose not to participate in corporate volunteering programs (i.e. non-volunteers). As the results

demonstrated, this was indeed the case in our sample — corporate volunteering climate

influenced non-volunteers' affective commitment to their employer, as well as their intentions to

volunteer both through the company's efforts and in their personal lives.

Second, although a handful of scholars have discussed the impact of personal

volunteering on one's work domain experiences (Mojza & Sonnentag, 2010; Mojza et al., 2011),

there has not yet been much discussion of the impact of corporate volunteering on employees'

home behavior – particularly in terms of their personal volunteering behaviors. In this

manuscript we make the conceptual distinction between corporate volunteering and personal

volunteering – although both are instances of employees volunteering, one is part of company

initiative in the work domain (corporate volunteering) and the other is part of employees'

personal lives in the non-work domain (personal volunteering). This distinction allows us to see

a type of transferring of attitudes and behaviors from the work domain to non-work domain and,

more broadly, provides hints of the larger social impact of corporate volunteering climates.

Limitations and Future Research

There were several limitations within this study that should be noted, a few of which

point to potential areas for future research. First, we relied on various self-reports of

phenomenon – a practice that may inject common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, &

Podsakoff, 2003). That said, we took steps to avoid common method concerns whenever

possible. For example, data collection of the focal antecedents – believe in the cause and

corporate volunteering climate – was separated in time from the outcomes – affective

commitment and volunteering intentions (Doty & Glick, 1998). In addition, corporate

volunteering climate and the mediating mechanism (collective pride) were modeled as group-

level perceptions, and interacted with an individual-level volunteering variable – reducing

concerns about correlation inflation (Lai, Li, & Leung, 2013 Podsakoff, et al., 2003). In cases of

cross-level main effects, where common method bias is thought to be a larger concern, the

results presented hold up to their suggested higher standard of $p < .01$ (Lai et al., 2013).

A second issue pertains to the representativeness of the respondents in our data. Although

we were able to assess employees in a broad range of companies – 50 organizations across

various industries – the number of respondents in each organization was rather low ($M = 6$, $SD =$

2.29). Although this type of sampling is consistent with recent climate research (e.g., Collins &

Smith, 2006; Schminke, Ambrose, & Neubaum, 2005), it still may present a validity concern –

primarily that we cannot be certain that the climate perceptions by our participants are fully

representative of their broader organization. Relatedly, the nature of our data collection approach

presents two unique concerns regarding aggregating company-level perceptions. First, we

collected data from both volunteers and non-volunteers within each company, which inherently

increases within-company variance in perceptions. Second, companies were recruited to

participate based on their existing partnership with the United Way Worldwide, which implies at

least some degree of volunteering presence and likely limits the between-company variance in

volunteering climates. As a result of these procedures, our sample may suffer from selection

bias. In an ideal situation, and as research on specific types of climate progresses, we would like

to collect data from a broader set of companies – including those with strong volunteering

programs as well as those without existing volunteering programs – as well as a more

representative sample of employees within each organization.

Third, we relied on one particular employee attitude about corporate volunteering – belief

in the cause – as an indicator of the bottom-up process for climate emergence. Although this

individual factor was supported in our data, there may be other individual factors to consider in

this process. For example, employees have also been shown to be motivated to participate in

corporate volunteering because it represents an opportunity for socializing with coworkers and

for building work-related skills (Geroy et al., 2000). Future research may consider how some of

these other individual motives factor into corporate volunteering climate.

Fourth, there are two related assumptions in our model regarding volunteering intentions.

To start, we are assuming that volunteering intentions reflect subsequent behaviors. Although

there is precedence to expect a significant relationship between intentions and behaviors (e.g.,

Ajzen, 1991; Webb & Sheeran, 2006), the two are not interchangeable and not all intentions will

be successfully realized. Moreover, there is an assumption that this volunteering ultimately

benefits the intended targets and exerts impact on societal issues. Although we do not have data

from the direct beneficiaries, there is evidence to suggest these effects from other sources. For

example, the 2013 Societal Impact of Volunteerism study by the Points of Light Institute

demonstrated that volunteering makes a significant contribution to the global economy, makes

communities stronger and safer, and enhances connections between business sectors. Combining

data from the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Independent Sector

provides quantitative data that, in 2014, 62.8 million volunteers in America volunteered 7.9

billion hours, which constitutes 184 billion dollars of services contributed.

The nature (and limitations) of our study point to several directions for future research as

well. To offer one example, future research on corporate volunteering climate may benefit from

including perceptions of others' motivations for volunteering. Although, in our sample, we saw

that employee belief in the cause translated into corporate volunteering climate, non-volunteer reactions to that attitude might depend on the perceived sincerity. Such opinions may also influence the impact of volunteering climate on employees. Indeed, Rodell and Lynch (2016) recently demonstrated that colleague perceptions of motives factored into whether acts of volunteering were credited or stigmatized and, ultimately, how colleagues reacted to those volunteers.

To offer another example, the role of company-provided resources was not significant as we expected. Given the size of the path coefficient, it is possible that this result reflects a lack of power at the company level (N=50) in our sample. It is also possible that employee reception to company-provided resources may depend on other factors, such as how the information is communicated or the attributions that employees assign for the company's involvement. Although not yet empirically examined in-depth, researchers have reported that companies take a range of approaches regarding how to communicate information about corporate volunteering to their employees (e.g., Basil et al., 2009). In addition, Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac (2015) provide some evidence that public relations attributions for corporate volunteering programs harm employee reactions. Understanding these types of nuances regarding corporate volunteering programs would provide better guidance to companies on where to focus their efforts and investments in order to create the most successful environment possible.

Conclusion

Given the increasing position of corporations to address social issues through corporate volunteering, it is important to understand the system-level role that these efforts play within those organizations. By introducing the concept of corporate volunteering climate, this study takes one of the first steps in that direction. Our results indicate that corporate volunteering

climate may be fostered through either an employee-driven process – emerging from employee

belief in the volunteering cause – or through a company-driven process, based on resources that

companies provide for corporate volunteering. In addition, our results suggest that corporate

volunteering climate has positive implications for employee attitudes regarding their employee

(in terms of affective commitment), as well as intentions for social action through both corporate

and personal volunteering intentions. The seeming ability of corporate volunteering climate to

cross life boundaries (from work to non-work) hints at the vast level of social change that may be

sparked by such endeavors. Moreover, our results generally suggest that this pattern of attitudes

and intentions is consistent among employees, regardless of whether they are volunteers or non-

volunteers.

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TABLE 1

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Individual Level Variables [a]											
1. Affective Commitment	3.76	.80									
2. Corporate Volunteering Intentions	3.39	.87	.15*								
3. Personal Volunteering Intentions	3.78	.84	.07	.52*							
4. Prosocial Identity	4.15	.54	.15*	.28*	.27*						
Organizational Level Variables [b]											
5. Company-Provided Resources	4.13	.56	--	--	--	--					
6. Aggregate Belief in the Cause	4.51	.28	--	--	--	--	.03				
7. Corporate Volunteering Climate	3.81	.38	--	--	--	--	.21	-.34*			
8. Collective Pride	3.53	.49	--	--	--	--	.09	-.02	-.19		
9. Prosocial Climate	4.14	.31	--	--	--	--	.11	-.23	-.34*	.25	
10. Corporate Volunteering Climate Strength	0.75	.36	--	--	--	--	.12	-.15	-.25	.05	-.14

[a] $N = 229,$ [b] $N = 50$

*$p < .05$

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TABLE 2
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Breakdown of Indirect Effects of Corporate Volunteering Climate
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(through collective pride) for Volunteers vs. Non-Volunteers
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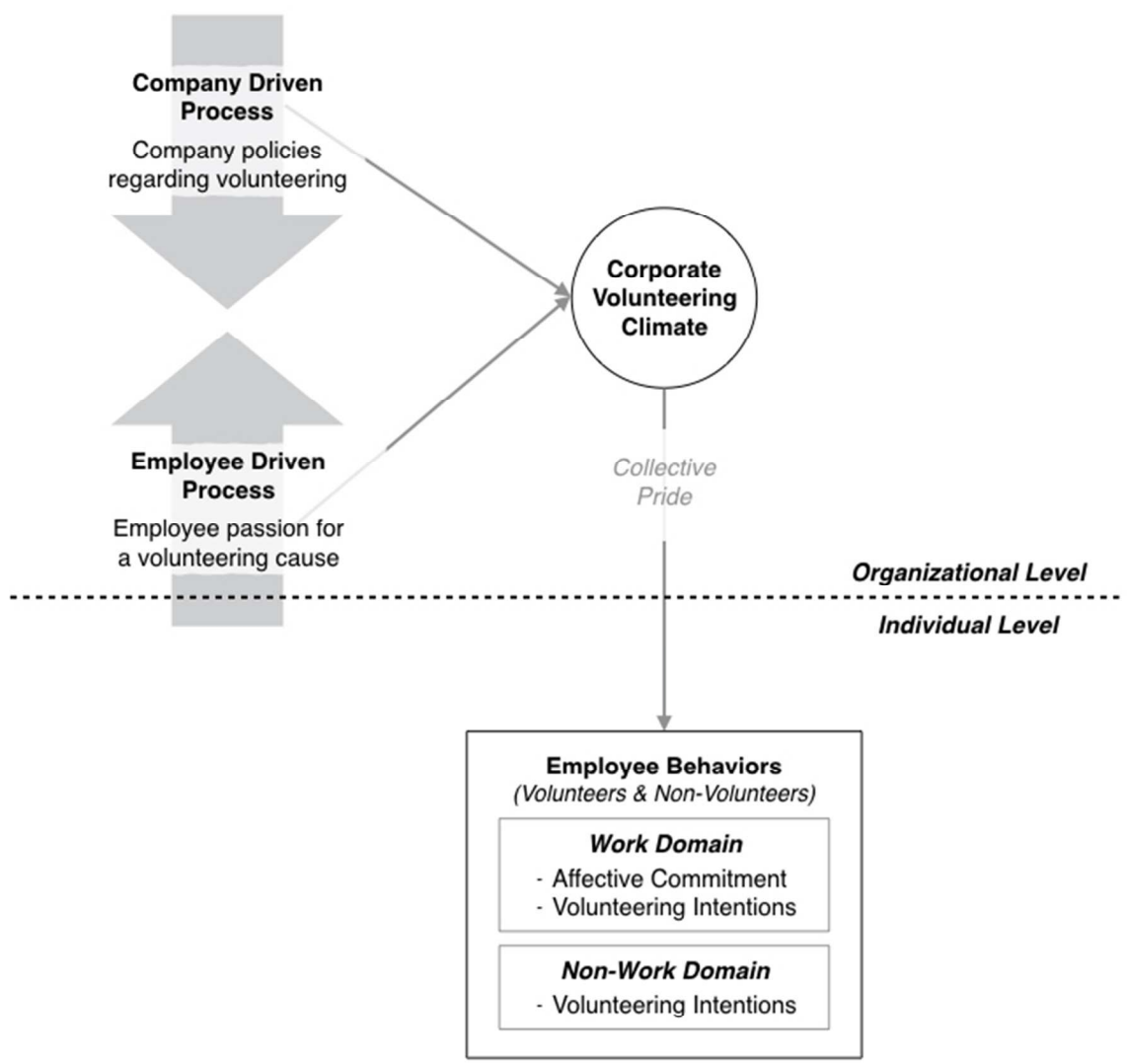| Outcome Variable | Non-Volunteers | Volunteers | Difference |
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| Affective Commitment | .15* | .18* | .04 |
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| Corporate Volunteering Intentions | .08* | -.05 | -.13† |
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| Personal Volunteering Intentions | .16* | .09 | -.07 |
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$*p < .05, {}^{\dagger}p < .10.$
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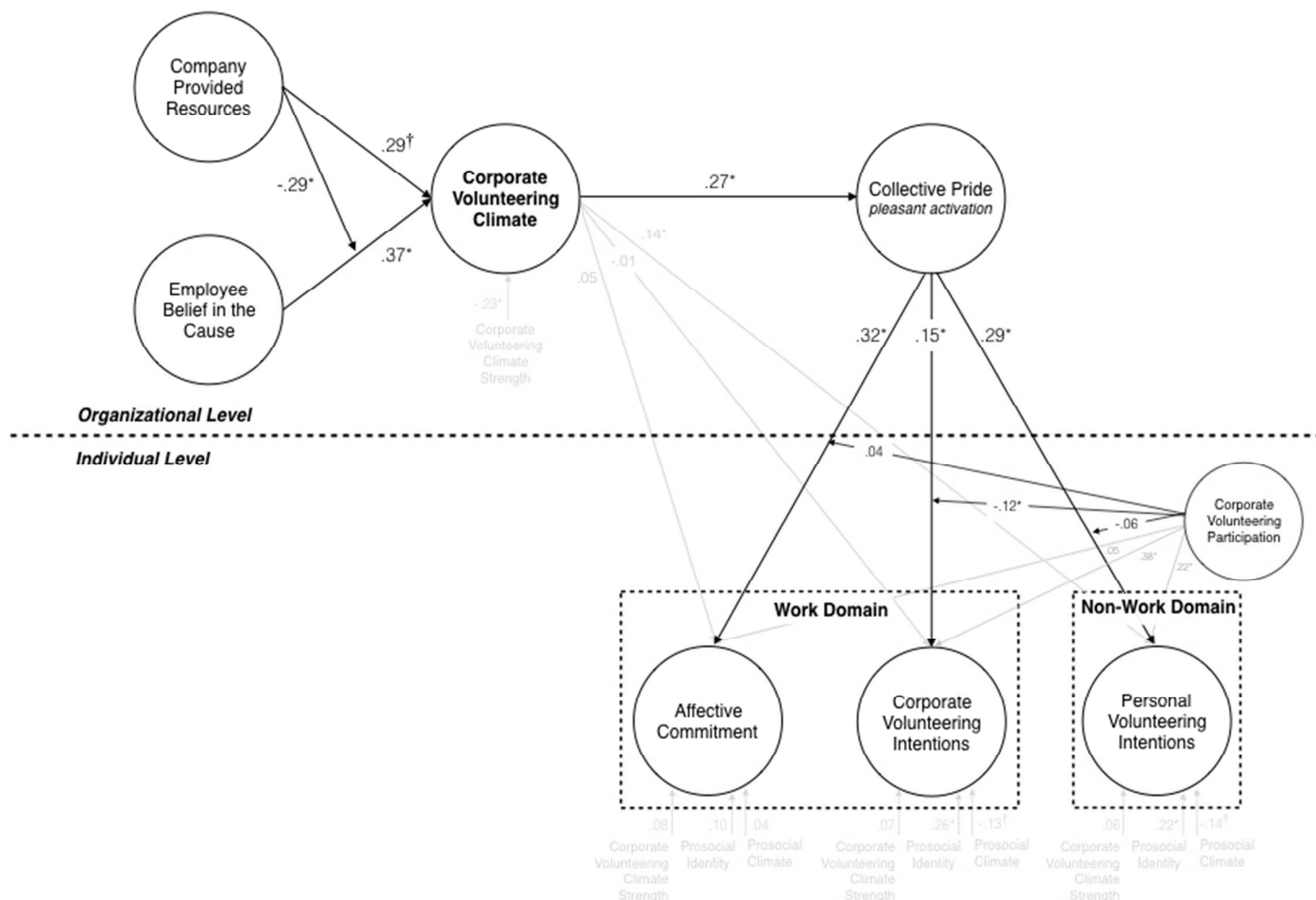37
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FIGURE 1

Conceptual Model of Corporate Volunteering Climate

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FIGURE 2

Summary of Study Results [a]

[a] Path coefficients are standardized *p* < .05, [†]*p* < .10.

FIGURE 3

**Conditional Indirect Effects of Corporate Volunteering Climate
through Collective Pride**

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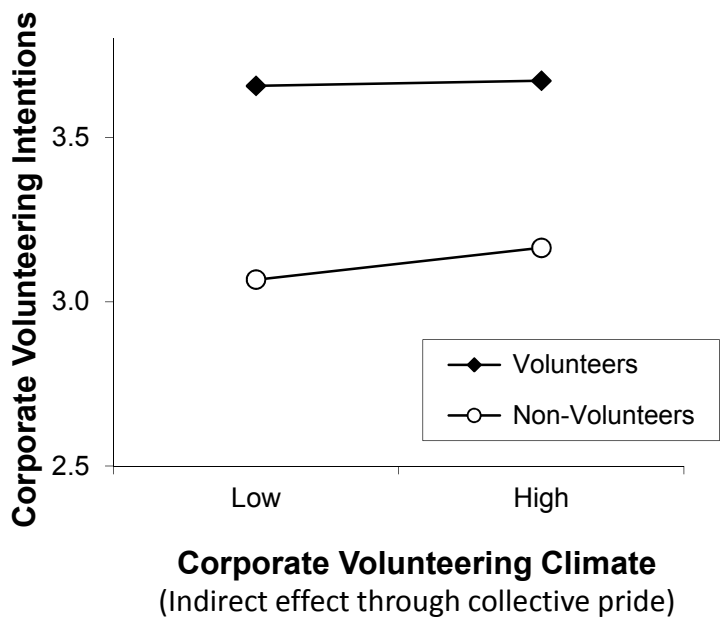
FIGURE 4

**Interaction between Employee Belief in the Cause
and Company Provided Resources**
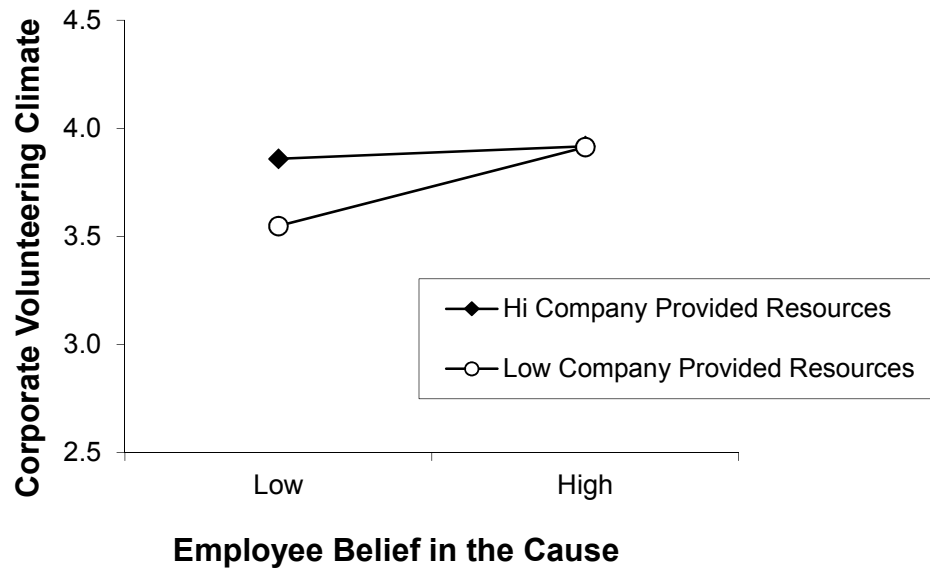
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Biographical Sketch

Jessica B. Rodell (jrodell@uga.edu) is an associate professor in the Department of Management at the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business. She received her Ph.D. and MBA from the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business. Her research focuses on employee volunteering, justice, and emotions.

Jonathan E. Booth (j.booth@lse.ac.uk) is an assistant professor in the Department of Management at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management. His research interests include prosocial behavior, charitable giving, and volunteering; stigma and mistreatment; leadership; and the self-concept.

John W. Lynch (jwlynch@uic.edu) is an assistant professor in the Department of Managerial Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business. He researches employee identity management, stigmas, and volunteering.

Kate P. Zipay (kzipay@uga.edu) is a doctoral student in the Department of Management at the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business. Her research interests include work and leisure interface, employee volunteering, mercy, and justice.