
How, why, and to what end? Corporate volunteering as corporate social performance

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Abstract: This paper systematically explores the current corporate volunteering (CV) practice in Switzerland and offers a work-psychological evaluation scenario to assess employees' CV experiences. A nationwide sample of organisations delivered data on the extent and causes of Swiss CV activities via an online survey (Study 1). In a mini-longitudinal comparison group design Study 2 proposes an approach to evaluate CV programs based on a work-psychological framework. The results show: CV is not uncommon in Switzerland, but its practice is implicit and tacit in nature. Larger companies tend to exploit CV strategically to a greater degree. CV is motivated mainly by philanthropic attitudes. A comprehensive evaluation of CV must take into account specific work-psychological antecedents, processes and outcomes. Clear-cut corporate objectives are likely to be achieved only by precisely tailored rather than non-specific CV measures. The common demand to engage in CV is premature. However, CV may be a promising way of promoting an extended concept of organisational citizenship behaviour.

Keywords: corporate volunteering; CV; corporate social performance; CSP; Switzerland; motives; modes of conduct; evaluation; personnel development; corporate citizenship; work psychology.

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1 Introduction

“CV as the “Song of Songs” of CSP”

Corporate volunteering (CV) is one way by which businesses assume their responsibility to society. Although they originated in the USA, CV programmes are common in the UK and are currently gaining momentum in continental European countries (Herzig, 2006).

In the following, we understand CV as follows:

“In its capacity as employer, a company invites its employees to engage voluntarily and actively beyond their specific job description in charitable endeavours - often in cooperation with non-profit-organisations (NPO), while possibly investing additional resources. CV may take place during working hours or during free time, together with colleagues or alone, and singularly or repeatedly (cf. Peterson, 2004a, 2004b; Herzig, 2006; Gentile, 2010; Lee and Higgins, 2001). This concept excludes forms of charity which are private in nature, imply coercion, or are merely passive, such as donating money to foundations or individuals.”

CV is a specific way of giving a face to a company’s social responsibility (CSR). CSR is an integral part of business conduct and encompasses “the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organisations at a given point in time” [Carroll, (1979), p.500]. Its ultimate aim is social betterment (Wood, 1991) and the legitimacy of business (Suchman, 1995; Davis, 1973); society allows companies to conduct their business in return for behaving responsibly.

According to the pyramid model of CSR, companies strive to gain legitimacy in hierarchically organised areas. Their basic responsibilities are to survive as a company (*economic responsibility*) and to abide by the law (*legal responsibility*). The assumption of ethical or philanthropic responsibilities constitutes elaborated forms of CSR. In particular, adherence to basic forms is legally enforceable by various stakeholder groups, whereas *ethical* or even *philanthropic* business conduct (e.g., donations, gifts, or CV programmes) is not necessarily expected and legally not enforceable (Carroll, 1991).

Given that CSR is on the one hand a means of positioning the company well in the competition for good corporate reputation, talents, and local networks (Fombrun et al., 2000; Greening and Turban, 2000; Marquis et al., 2007; Braun and Kukuk, 2007) and on the other hand, a common demand made of almost all corporate players, it is profitable to act on non-enforceable CSR levels: firstly, the more voluntary a company’s behaviour is perceived to be, the greater are its chances of gaining legitimacy (Schäfer, 2009). Secondly, companies enjoy more latitude in designing their responsible behaviours and can consequently customise their social activities to their self-interests (cf. Liu et al., 2010; Basil et al., (2011); Basu and Palazzo, 2008). Thirdly, it is easier to develop a unique selling point in terms of CSR in areas in which not all enterprises are regulated to be active by law (cf. Jahdi and Acikdilli, 2009).

CSR has been and is subject to debate: is there such a thing as corporate responsibility that goes beyond the generation of profits (e.g., Friedman, 1970)? If so, how can companies adhere to diverse responsibilities (e.g., Carroll, 1979)? Of what use is it to the company or others to behave responsibly (e.g., Margolis and Walsh, 2003)? To address these questions adequately, Wood (1991) (drawing on Wartick and Cochran, 1985) proposed a general model of corporate social performance (CSP). In her CSP model, she amended the CSR concept by the comprehensive description of antecedents

(‘why’), processes (‘how’), and consequences (‘to what end’) of companies’ assumption of their social responsibility.

By definition, CSP is “a business organisation’s configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programmes, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm’s societal relationships” [Wood, (1991), p.693]. In the logic of the Wood model, CV is a device of stakeholder management, which in turn is one process underlying the assumption of CSR. Thus, CV is part of a company’s CSP (Wood, 1991).¹

The model’s major contribution is that it goes beyond the reflection of specific responsible behaviours by companies but systematically integrates their antecedents, processes, and consequences. It is therefore well suited to explore CV in Switzerland coherently in terms of its rate of occurrence, the specifics of organisational CV conduct, and organisational motives of CV implementation (Study 1). Employees’ motives for participation and their experience of specific CV activities, as well as firm relevant outcomes of CV are the subject of Study 2. Reference should be made to Table 1 for an overview of the studies’ research questions according to the levels of the Wood model.

Table 1 Levels of research

<i>Research levels – on the basis of the model of CSP</i>		
<i>Principles of CS responsibility</i>		
<i>WHY?</i>	<i>Institution:</i> enterprises (the economic system) as societal subsystem	Study 1 – nationwide survey of the charitable engagement of Swiss enterprises
	<i>Individual:</i> the management as key decision maker in the enterprise	Study 1 – decision makers’ motivations for engagement Study 2 – corporate volunteers’ motivation
<i>Processes of CS responsiveness</i>		
<i>HOW?</i>	<i>Stakeholder management</i>	Study 1 – modes of conduct of CV endeavours of Swiss enterprises Study 2 – corporate volunteers’ perception of the actual engagement
<i>Outcomes of CS behaviour</i>		
<i>WHAT ENDS?</i>	<i>Social impacts</i>	Study 2 – identification of relevant target constructs and preliminary data from evaluation study

Source: Wood (1991)

Study 1: Occurrence and attendant conditions of CV in Switzerland

At institutional level, the Wood model implies a contribution by CV to the organisation’s legitimacy. The basic assumption is that companies adhere to societies’ expectations on their CSP to maintain their legitimacy to operate their businesses (Wood, 1991; cf. Palazzo and Scherer, 2006). According to this notion, legitimacy is a corporate resource which can be positively influenced by a company’s CSP (Suchman, 1995; Schäfer, 2009; Liu et al., 2010).

The first goal of the research presented here was to explore whether and how companies in Switzerland make use of CV as part of their CSP. In accordance with Wood's suggestion, we will approach Swiss CV practise on diverse levels.

At the institutional 'why' level, we assess how common CV is among Swiss enterprises, how familiar organisations are with the concept and whether they refer to it specifically as 'CV'. This approach responds to the call by various authors (e.g., Graafland and van de Ven, 2006; van der Voort et al., 2009; Houghton et al., 2009) to extend the database of contemporary CV practises in different countries. We further make use of Carroll's (1991) dimensional conceptualisation of corporate responsible behaviour by measuring CV rates with reference to more basic CSR activities. We incorporate the process level of 'how to assume CSR' by assessing the attendant circumstances of employee participation in CV practises. It has been argued that it is essential to the realisation of CV to consider employee perspectives in its implementation (van der Voort et al., 2009; Pedersen, 2010; Basil et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2010; Gentile, 2010). In accordance with other studies (Braun and Kukuk, 2007; MacPhail and Bowles, 2009; Rochlin et al., 2005), we focused on the indicators of the strategic embedment of the companies' community involvements by assessing whether they engaged in corporate communication and evaluating their efforts in this respect.

Thus, the two parts of our research question (RQ) 1 were: Is CV common among Swiss businesses? and: Which conditions accompany the CV endeavours of Swiss companies?

On the individual 'why' level, we gather data on the motivational background of businesses' CV efforts by having participants rate the cruciality of the benefit expectations used in earlier studies (Braun and Kukuk, 2007; Maass and Clemens, 2002; Rochlin et al., 2005). Studies from related fields (e.g., Bronn and Vidaver-Cohen, 2009; Braun and Kukuk, 2007; Ellen et al., 2006; Hahn and Scheermesser, 2006; Graafland and van de Ven, 2006; Maass and Clemens, 2002) point to an amalgam of motivating aspects explaining why companies become involved in their communities, ranging from altruistic, community-oriented motivations to egoistic, self-interest oriented motivations. As regards CV directly, it has been argued that its merits include legitimacy, which may be gained and increased by CV engagement (Schäfer, 2009), positive impacts on the corporate culture (Herzig, 2006), improvements of a company's public image as well as development of its personnel's job skills, community contacts, morale, productivity, continuance commitment, or recruitment advantages (Basil et al., 2009; Bell, 2007; Herzig, 2006; Geroy et al., 2000; Peterson, 2004b; Peloza and Hassay, 2006; Peloza et al., 2009).

Hence, RQ2: Which expected benefits motivate Swiss managers to promote CV in their companies?

Various authors suggest that the occurrence of CSP-related behaviours in general, and specific parameters, such as its strategic exploitation, in particular, increases with the company size. This has been attributed to the greater public visibility of large companies, greater personnel and financial resources, larger scales of operations, and more evolved business administration procedures (Russo and Perrini, 2010; Slater and Dixon-Fowler, 2009; Udayasankar, 2008; Graafland et al., 2003; Donaldson, 2001). Empirically, CSP has indeed been reported to occur more often in larger companies. Basil et al. (2011), for example, recently showed for a Canadian sample of 990 companies that larger companies make more use of CV and use it more strategically to create company benefits (cf. Graafland and van de Ven, 2006).

Our main analyses will consequently be presented with an additional section concerning differences between small and medium-sized enterprises [(SME); i.e., 1-250 employees] and larger companies (251 and more employees; cf. BFS, 2010).

2 Methodology

We conducted a nationwide online survey that specifically assessed CV engagement as well as other forms of charitable behaviour in 2008 and 2009. As there is so far a complete lack of psychometric scales in this field, the questionnaire consisted of single-item measures overtly addressing the issue in question (but they were adapted to items used in other studies tackling similar issues to increase comparability; cf. results tables). It was our declared goal to gather data from as large a sample of organisations as possible in order to generalise our findings cautiously to the Swiss economy. We therefore developed a short online survey that could be completed anywhere and at any time in a maximum of ten minutes (cf. Pelozo et al., 2009). The scope of the survey therefore was explicitly rather broad than in-depth.

2.1 Recruiting procedure and participants' response

The three most representative and influential employers' associations in Switzerland, i.e., the Swiss Employers' Association (Schweizerischer Arbeitgeberverband), Economiesuisse (both representing large companies and industry sectors), and the Swiss Trade and Crafts Association (Schweizerischer Gewerbeverband; representing SMEs) as well as most cantonal trade and crafts associations supported our study by announcing it to their members and nationally disseminating the link to the online survey. The software we used distinguishes mere visits from more thorough approaches to the survey. We finally compiled 2,096 completed questionnaires and 2,310 questionnaires which had been started but left unfinished. We therefore computed a response-visit ratio of 47.1%, indicating sufficient acceptance of the survey.

2.2 Sample

Our sample consisted of 89.5% of SMEs. A further 8.5% of our participants spoke for large companies employing 251 or more persons (2.0% did not indicate the number of their companies' employees). In most cases (55.9%), the respondents were owners of the respective companies. A further 22.9% were CEOs, 13.9% were employees in leading positions, 4.1% were human resource managers, and 3.3% indicated 'other' or skipped the question.

Regarding the fields of operation, 56.0% of our participants indicated their affiliation to the secondary sector of industry and commerce, 42.6% to the tertiary or service sector, and 1.4% to the primary or agricultural sector. This constitutes an over-representation of the secondary sector in general (cf. BFS, 2009), which – as closer examination of the data reveals – is due to a large number of participants from the building sector. Employers' associations supported our study at their discretion, and we attribute the slightly skewed sample to a randomly greater support willingness by some associations than others. In total, however, our sample maps the Swiss economic structure quite well, with the great

majority being SMEs, a well-balanced distribution over diverse industries, 87.2% of the respondents stemming from German speaking parts of Switzerland and 7.7% and 5.1% from the French and Italian speaking parts, respectively (Swissworld.org, 2010).

2.3 Survey items

All the items used are presented in the results tables. In view of our goal to acquire a large dataset, we had to choose specific single-item questions that measured the constructs described in the following section. Although their scope is limited and they cannot always cover the entire construct, they constitute an initial measurement from which a more elaborate survey tool will be constructed in future. These items were, if possible, taken from studies addressing similar issues, which are also referred to in the results tables.

2.4 Occurrence and conditions

To address RQ1, i.e., whether CV is common among Swiss companies and which conditions accompany it, participants were presented a vignette to describe the concept of CV and were then asked whether they had already pursued CV. Further, participants indicated whether or not they had ever heard the term 'CV' (as the equivalent native word is missing, the English term is usually used to address the issue) before and, if so, whether they knew what it encompassed. Accordingly, those respondents who had already pursued CV stated whether they had termed it 'CV'. Besides their involvement in CV, respondents stated whether they had also been voluntarily engaged in other forms of community involvement.

In line with Herzig (2006) and Braun and Kukuk (2007), participants who had indicated a prior CV engagement were asked who had initiated the specific activities (with multiple-choice answers ranging from 'management', 'employees', 'public actors' (e.g., politicians, local authorities, customers, or 'others') and who had designed them ('management', 'employees', 'the public'). These questions aimed to determine the participatory context within which CV is conducted. Following other studies, we also assessed whether companies engaged in external and internal communication of their charitable acts and whether they evaluated their accomplishments (Braun and Kukuk, 2007; Rochlin et al., 2005).

2.5 Motives

Following Rochlin et al.'s (2005) US study as well as the German studies of Braun and Kukuk (2007) and Maass and Clemens (2002), we assessed multiple motivating factors for the charitable practises pursued in Swiss enterprises. Respondents indicated agreement or disagreement with the following motivating factors: 'It is the social responsibility of our company', 'External expectancy (e.g., customers, politics)', 'Recruiting advantages', 'Reputational gains', 'Increase in teamwork abilities', 'Profit increments', 'Improving regional networks', 'Strengthening employee job satisfaction and motivation', 'Promotion of sales', 'Have always done it as part of the company tradition', and 'Personal interest of the decision maker, e.g., owner, CEO etc.'.

3 Results

In the following, we present the percentages of agreement to the respective questions in total and with regard to the size-rated subsamples. Note, subsample sizes differ as not all questions were issued to all participants (e.g., only participants who had stated their engagement in CV were asked whether they had termed the activity ‘CV’), and because participants were – for the sake of higher compliance – not forced to answer each question, resulting in differing missing rates. Error margins were computed for each indicator of each subsample (Basil et al., 2009). Percentages flagged boldly represent significant differences where 95% confidence intervals do not overlap. Detailed computations may be obtained from the authors of this paper.

See Table 2 for an overview of the occurrence of CV in the Swiss national economy.

Table 2 Occurrence of CV in Switzerland

<i>Item</i>	<i>Employees</i> <i>N = 2,096</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>n = 1,876</i>	<i>1–250</i> <i>n = 1,876</i>	<i>More than 251</i> <i>n = 179</i>	<i>Taken/adapted from</i>
Voluntary community involvement, other than CV	78.3	77.3	77.3	92.2	Braun and Kukuk (2007) Maass and Clemens (2002)
CV engagement	41.0	39.8	39.8	58.7	Braun and Kukuk (2007)
Heard of CV	17.1	15.6	15.6	33.5	Herzig (2006)
Know what ‘CV’ means	N = 359	n = 292	n = 292	n = 60	Herzig (2006)
	65.9	64.6	64.6	75.0	
Addressed as ‘CV’	N = 846	N = 747	N = 747	N = 104	Authors’ item
	7.6	6.8	6.8	13.5	

Note: The agreement percentages are reported.

Three quarters (78.3%) of the respondents indicated their company to be engaged in some form of community involvement and 41.0% are or have been pursuing CV activities. In both cases, the larger companies are more active than SMEs. The term CV is mostly unknown, but larger companies tend to have heard of it more often. Less than 10% of the Swiss companies involved in CV activities call their activities ‘corporate volunteering’.

Table 3 shows the results on the circumstances surrounding Swiss CV. CV activities are usually initiated and designed by the management with considerable participation from the employees. Public actors, such as politicians or organised customers, are involved in the initiation of roughly one quarter of Swiss CV activities. In larger companies, the management initiates the CV projects and designs the specific activities in cooperation with the staff more often than in SMEs. In general, communications efforts relating to charitable endeavours are scanty, with a greater propensity to communicate internally than externally. However, larger companies are significantly more likely to communicate their good deeds. Less than every fifth respondent states that the benefits obtained from their charitable activities are evaluated – interestingly, this occurrence is equally low in SMEs and larger companies.

Table 3 Attendant conditions of Swiss CV activities

<i>Initiated by –</i>	<i>N = 859</i>	<i>n = 747</i>	<i>n = 103</i>	
Management	62.6	61.0	75.0	
Employees	43.8	42.2	55.8	Braun and Kukuk (2007)
Public	25.6	26.1	23.1	Herzig (2006)
Other	3.3	3.3	2.9	
<i>Designed by –</i>	<i>N = 859</i>	<i>n = 747</i>	<i>n = 103</i>	
Management	69.0	69.2	68.3	
Employees	46.0	44.2	60.6	Braun and Kukuk (2007)
Other	5.8	5.6	7.7	Herzig (2006)
	<i>N = 1642</i>	<i>n = 1451</i>	<i>n = 165</i>	
External communication	25.0	22.9	42.0	Braun and Kukuk (2007)
Internal communication	43.9	40.8	66.3	Rochlin, et al. (2005)
Evaluation	18.1	17.0	18.4	

Table 4 Motives

	<i>N = 859</i>	<i>n = 747</i>	<i>n = 104</i>	
It is the social responsibility of our company	79.2	78.0	89.4	
External expectations (e.g., customers, politics)	22.4	22.1	26.0	
Recruiting advantages	8.7	6.6	23.1	
Reputational gains	53.7	51.8	70.2	
Increase in teamwork abilities	28.6	26.8	43.3	Braun and Kukuk (2007)
Profit increments	9.7	3.6	4.8	Maass and Clemens (2002) Rochlin et al. (2005)
Improved regional networks	32.0	31.2	38.5	
Strengthened employee job satisfaction and motivation	36.4	32.9	63.5	
Have always done it as part of the company tradition	41.2	40.2	50.0	
Personal interest of the decision maker	75.0	76.7	67.3	

Note: The agreement percentages are reported.

Multiple-choice questions were used to determine the factors that motivate companies to engage in CV (cf. Table 4). Participants indicated an average of four motivating factors, most often stating that they perceived it their duty to adhere to their CSR, followed by the personal interest of the decision maker. More than half of the respondents (53.7%) stated that expected reputation gains stimulated their charitable activities. Other self-serving incentives, such as strengthened employee morale, better local networks and increased teamwork abilities, rank lower. The main motivational difference between SMEs and larger companies is that the latter state more incentives behind their engagements in general, and specifically more self-interest.

4 Discussion

Our nationwide survey of Swiss enterprises was developed to determine whether CV is common among Swiss businesses, and if so, which conditions accompany their CV practise. We further researched the expected benefits of charitable acts among the questioned managers. Our results indicate that CV is not uncommon in Switzerland. However, more than every second respondent still stated that they were not and never had been involved in any CV practise. As almost 80% of the participating organisations claimed to be active in the wider field of CSP, we maintain that CV is one of numerous ways of living up to one's CSR. However, the concept is much more often practised than addressed as 'CV' by the respondents. Likewise, many have heard of 'CV' but state that they are unfamiliar with its meaning. Thus, we perceive CV to be a possible form of community involvement whose potential, however, seems to be largely neglected so far. Larger companies, which are often said to possess more evolved administration procedures and thus conduct more strategic management policies, appear to have travelled further on the path towards adopting CV as a management issue than SMEs.

Our results concerning the notion that CV is a process of stakeholder management, as classified by Wood (1991) are somewhat ambiguous: a considerable volume of participation in the initiation and design of CV is evident in Swiss companies, as indicated by the major roles played in it by both management and workforce. This is even more developed in larger companies, suggesting their professional use of CV as a stakeholder management tool (Udayasankar, 2008; Madden et al., 2006). However, the most valuable means of stakeholder management, namely corporate communication, is under-developed. CV is only reluctantly communicated externally, which may be explained by the companies' nervousness towards the public insinuation of alibi policies (Braun and Kukuk, 2007). Potential stakeholder scepticism aroused by extended communication efforts of a company's good deeds is a threat to CV programmes (van der Voort et al., 2009; Palazzo and Richter, 2005). The reluctance to communicate CV may also indicate the implicitness that characterises European CSP, i.e., good is done – not talked about (Matten and Moon, 2008). Accordingly, less than half of our sample communicates their good deeds even to internal stakeholders (on whose part scepticism is unlikely). However, it is again the presumably more professionalised large companies who communicate their CV practise to internal and external stakeholders. These results leave us with the conclusion that CV may serve as a stakeholder management instrument. However, SMEs do not yet deploy it in that way: participatory processes among them may rather be due to a need to share the workload of organising CV.

Whereas the inclusion of employees and management shows the potential for achieving a win-win-situation, the 'exclusion' of public stakeholders such as NPOs or other interest groups is rather critical (Gentile, 2010). This seems particularly the case when the intentions of multi-stakeholder learning dialogues are taken into account, as these promote cross-sector learning between economic and civil actors (Scherer and Palazzo, 2007).

Equally scarce among SMEs and large companies, and thus remarkable in *a fortiori* terms, is the evaluation of the benefits to be achieved by CV. An anticipatory glance at the motivational factors offers the explanation that companies tend not to await benefits on a short-term scale, if they are expected at all and are relevant as motivational impetus, but rather to see them as sustainable long-term merits. Another reason for the absence of

evaluation efforts may lie in the methodological difficulties of assessing long-term benefits that are intrinsically hard to quantify (cf. MacPhail and Bowles, 2009).

It remains an open question as to how companies are supposed to gain social legitimacy when a failure of communication means that at most their internal stakeholders know of their community involvement. However, the motivational basis does point to the interest of companies to increase their legitimacy by means of such engagement. The most prominent motivational drivers tend to be community-related issues that promote the legitimacy of the companies. In line with the idea that legitimacy is a corporate resource to be positively influenced by strategically applied CSP activities (Wood, 1991; Suchman, 1995; Liu et al., 2010), most companies indicate community-related as well as self-serving reasons. Thus participants also admit to benefits for their staff (i.e., teamwork, job satisfaction and motivation, recruiting advantages) and their organisational development (i.e., reputational gains, strengthening of local networks). By now, it should come as no surprise that larger companies more often expect their CSP to contribute to a favourable corporate reputation, recruiting advantages, etc. SMEs, on the other hand, seem to be influenced more strongly by their respective decision-makers than large companies: although this tendency is noteworthy because personal interest was the only motivator noted more frequently by SMEs than by large companies, the difference was not actually significant.

Taken together, we note multiple functions of CV, including sustainable benefits for society as well as long and short-term benefits for the companies. Since the short-term incentives are principally drawn upon to advise enterprises to become engaged in CV activities (e.g., Geroy et al., 2000), we designed a second study to develop an evaluation approach that may be used to assess predefined expectations. We also collected employee estimates of the benefits that CV yields for themselves and their employers. So far, only little is known about the motivations of employees to apply their manpower to charitable actions by their companies. Accordingly, our second study focuses on the employees' motivation to volunteer in their company's name as well as on their experience of specific events.

Study 2: A work-psychological evaluation model for short-term job-related outcomes and volunteers' perception of CV

In terms of Wood's CSP model, Study 2 sets out to learn more about the 'why' question of employees' CV involvement, the 'how' question of their experiencing CV, and the 'to what ends' question of its possible outcomes. Further study of the doubtlessly interesting processes of CSP at organisational level (i.e., environmental assessment and issues management) and their outcomes (i.e., implemented programmes or policies) would have gone beyond the scope of our work and had to be omitted.

5 The evaluation model

Not only the corporate decision makers (cf. Study 1), but many scholars (e.g., Peterson, 2004b; de Gilder et al., 2005) and practitioners (e.g., Bell, 2007; Tuffrey, 2003) also expect CV to contribute to individual short-term staff development. However, evaluation studies that critically examine these assumptions are almost completely lacking in the CV field. Moreover, the expectations of favourable effects of CV on the job mostly stand alone without any consideration of the underlying processes, such as volunteers'

experiences of CV. Therefore, the aim of this study is to present a work-psychological evaluation model that incorporates employees' job satisfaction, organisational commitment, work engagement, the voluntary functions involved and associated recovery experiences, as well as to provide first insights into the data to be gathered by applying such a procedure. By this means, we provide a profound psychological perspective that sets itself apart from the abbreviated instrumental approaches to the motivation of employees to participate in CV.

5.1 Job satisfaction

Among the most frequently mentioned virtues to be achieved by CV are positive effects on employees' affective and motivational states (de Gilder et al., 2005). The prototypical affective state at work is job satisfaction, defined as a pleasurable emotional state in the work situation (Locke and Henne, 1986). With regard to voluntary activities on the job, job satisfaction is worth considering because it has been shown to relate to extra-role performances (Felfe, 2003). As job satisfaction results from a momentary appraisal of the work situation, it is susceptible to being affected by attributes of the work situation, such as a job that is stimulating, relevant, multifaceted, and subject to autonomous control (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). Volunteering engagements are by definition self-determined, the decision to participate is autonomous; in addition, CV activities are multifaceted and stimulating, as they are usually performed beyond the scope of the actual job description and therefore present job variation, and finally they are relevant as they serve a good societal cause. Therefore, we suggest a positive association between participation in a CV project and job satisfaction.

5.2 Normative and continuance organisational commitment

A further influential concept in the area of positive emotions at work is organisational commitment – the strength of the individual's identification with his or her organisation (Mowday et al., 1982). According to Allen and Meyer (1990), organisational commitment consists of three facets that are independent and may vary intra-individually: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Beyond the affective facet of organisational commitment, which is semantically close to job satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2002), the two other facets are of interest in the context of CV: normative commitment, defined as the moral obligation to comply with the organisation's values and goals, and continuance commitment, meaning the determination not to leave the organisation (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Both may be positively influenced by a company's CV involvement: on a normative route, it may become harder for an employee to separate him- or herself from a company that behaves in a socially valued way. On a continuance route, it is likely that a current CV engagement increases the attractiveness of the current employer over other potentially interesting companies (Greening and Turban, 2000). Thus, we propose that continuance and normative commitment will increase as a result of CV participation.

5.3 Work engagement

As regards potential CV effects on motivational states, a possible approach is to measure employees' work engagement. This concept describes a 'positive, fulfilling, work-related

state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption' [Schaufeli et al., (2002), p.72]. Research shows work engagement to be associated with high performance levels, enthusiasm for one's job and the willingness to invest effort in the work process (Salanova et al., 2005), as well as with proactive behaviour (Sonnentag, 2003). Perceived job relevance predicts high work engagement (May et al., 2004). Beyond this, work engagement has been shown to increase following a successful recovery from work stress (Sonnentag, 2003). Hence, work engagement is a motivational state that varies intra-individually in response to positive work experiences (Sonnentag, 2003; Schmitt et al., 2007). We therefore suggest that work engagement is positively related to participation in CV projects.

5.4 *Voluntary functions*

As pointed out above, the often-supposed beneficial effects of CV are mostly presented without any consideration of the underlying processes. The functional approach to volunteerism (Clary et al., 1998) suggests that volunteering serves multiple functions and that the satisfaction of the motives accounts for sustained volunteering (cf. Chacón et al., 2007). The motivational functions of volunteer work described by Clary et al. (1998) are an expression of individual values, such as making social contacts, career enhancement, protection from negative experiences in other life domains, learning and enhancing self-esteem. On the basis of theoretical and practical considerations aiming to develop a parsimonious evaluation model, we concentrate on the four functions that have obvious associations with a regular job; namely value expression (as a match between the employee's and employer's values is assumed to relate to normative organisational commitment), social contact to colleagues and supervisors, career enhancement resulting from one's CV involvement, and a protective function adapted to the work domain. We expect all four of these motivational functions to be evident within a group of corporate volunteers, thereby extending the polyvalent motivational conception of volunteer motivation to the field of CV. More specifically, we expect the value-expressive and social-adjustment functions of CV to dominate the motivational spectrum, as they should be more easily accessible via CV than career enhancement, which needs sustained effort rather than a one-day CV event. Also, the job-protective function will rank lower as the volume of negative feelings resulting from one's job that may be compensated by CV is limited, because reaching a certain level of job dissatisfaction will reduce employees' willingness to engage in proactive activities such as CV. In line with Chacón et al. (2007), we expect the satisfaction of various motives to be positively associated with the satisfaction with the CV event, thereby predicting repeated CV participation.

5.5 *Recovery experiences*

Mojza et al. (2010) argue that volunteering in one's free time contributes to recovery. Recovery is conceptualised as a process by which individual functional systems that have been called upon during work return to their base level (Meijman and Mulder, 1998). Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) have defined several leisure-time experiences that contribute to successful recovery: firstly, psychological detachment from work pertains to an 'individual's sense of being away from the work situation' [Etzion et al., (1998), p.579]. It implies disengaging oneself mentally from work by not thinking about job-related

topics. Secondly, mastery experiences are defined as activities that provide learning opportunities or that challenge individuals (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007). Although self-regulation and effort are required to engage in mastery activities, they contribute to recovery by creating new resources, such as a sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1998) and new competences (Hobfoll, 1989). Finally, relaxation experiences are characterised by decreased activation (Benson, 1975) and are associated with positive affect (Fredrickson, 2000). Recovery usually takes place when job demands cease (Meijman and Mulder, 1998) or when new resources are created (Hobfoll, 1989). Therefore, recovery processes may occur during work, i.e. during breaks at work (Troughakos et al., 2008) or during CV (Mojza et al., 2010). Specifically, we expect psychological detachment from work to occur during CV because this usually comprises activities that are beyond the scope of the job description and therefore constitute variation on the job (for a similar finding cf. Pelozo et al., 2009). Moreover, CV should be positively associated with mastery experiences because it offers opportunities for experiences of learning and practise (Clary et al., 1998). Finally, relaxation should occur during CV, as supporting a good cause provides rewarding and uplifting experiences (Clary et al., 1998).

Thus, we consider recovery as one possible individual process taking place in CV. In a similar way to fulfilled motives, recovery experiences may further contribute to the sustainability of CV participation by supporting a favourable appraisal of it.

Please refer to Figure 1 for the evaluation approach.

6 Tentative testing procedure and results

6.1 Setting

To gain insights into whether the evaluation approach seems worth pursuing, we tentatively employed it at a social CV event (organising and supporting a sports event for the disabled) organised by the Swiss branch of a bank on a Saturday in September 2008. This preliminary test was realised with 32 participants, 18 of whom participated in the CV event and 14 supplied comparison data. The proposed design seems promising when the corporate volunteers comply with the procedure, and the deployed scales prove applicable in the CV context and also yield plausible results.

6.2 Measures and design

We used valid and reliable psychometric instruments to assess the relevant psychological constructs and adapted their wording to make them suitable for the CV event. Table 5 presents the items used and their respective sources. Reliability coefficients are presented in Figure 1.

We propose a mini-longitudinal design of a comparison group study with one baseline measure of the dependent variables before the CV event (as well as demographic data), two assessments after the event to monitor potential differences in the dependent measures, as well as one measurement time on the day of the CV event itself (t2). The comparison group is recruited from non-volunteering employees of the same company who fill out mostly identical questionnaires. In view of the fluid nature of affective appraisals and attitudes towards the organisation (Sonnentag, 2003), a study design with repeated measures at short intervals is adequate.

Figure 1 Proposed evaluation model

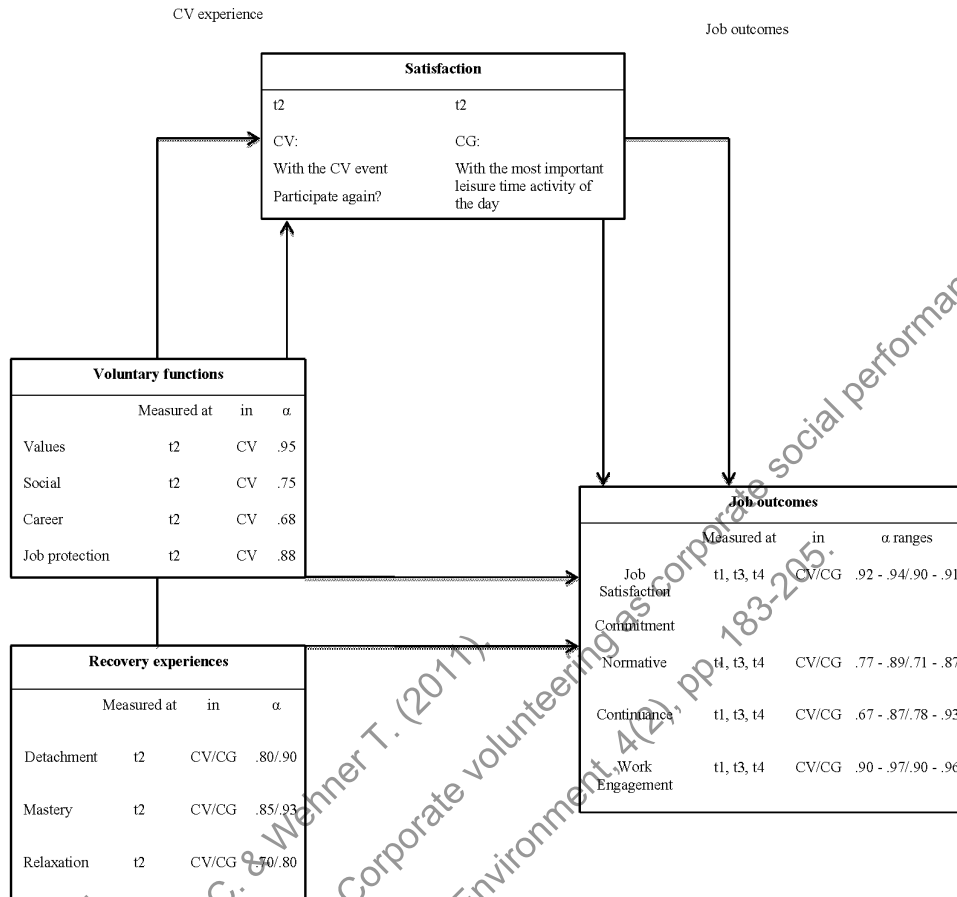


Table 5 Scales employed

Construct: Measurement (Cronbach's α were acceptable (.67) to excellent (.97) in all employed scales

Job satisfaction	Seven items – single item measure at t4 – on a 6-point Likert scale by Kil et al. (2000). Sample item: "I am satisfied with my work."
Continuance commitment	Five or three items respectively on a 7-point Likert scale by Schmidt et al. (1998). Sample item: "Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation now."
Normative commitment	Five or three items respectively of Schmidt et al.'s (1998) instrument. Sample item: "One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that I believe that loyalty is important and I therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain."
Work engagement	Nine or three items respectively of the short version of the Utrecht Work Engagement scale by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). Sample item: "I get carried away when I am working."

Table 5 Scales employed (continued)

<i>CV motivation and experience variables were measured on the evening of a CV event</i>	
Voluntary functions inventory	<p>Three items of the German version by Bierhoff et al. (1995) of the VFI (Clary et al., 1998) on four subscales. Slight adjustments to the specifics of CV.</p> <p>We adjusted the original protective function subscale, which is described as “The individual uses volunteering to reduce negative feelings, such as guilt, or to address personal problems [Clary and Snyder, (1999), p.157] to focus on negative feelings related to one’s job.</p> <p>Sample items:</p> <p>“I feel it is important to help others” (value expressive function),</p> <p>“Colleagues of mine share an interest in corporate volunteering” (social integrative function), and</p> <p>“Volunteering can help me to get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work” (career function).</p> <p>“Corporate volunteering is a good way to escape from my own troubles at work” (job protective function).</p>
Satisfaction with the event	<p>Single item on a visual scale ranging from 0 (extraordinarily unsatisfied) to 100 (extraordinarily satisfied).</p> <p>Non-volunteers responded to a similar item that referred to their leisure time activities during the respective Saturday. Corporate volunteers additionally indicated whether they would participate in another CV activity and whether they would recommend participation to a colleague.</p> <p>“How satisfied were you with your volunteer work at today’s sports event?”</p>
Recovery experiences	<p>Three items on three subscales developed by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007).</p> <p>Both volunteers and non-volunteers responded to these items. For the corporate volunteers, we re-phrased the items to refer the recovery experiences to the experience of the CV activity. Non-volunteers answered the questions with regard to what they did on the respective day.</p> <p>Sample items:</p> <p>“During my work as a corporate volunteer at today’s sports event, I did not think about my regular work“ (psychological detachment from work);</p> <p>“... , I learned new things” (mastery);</p> <p>“... , I used the time to relax” (relaxation).</p>

6.3 Results

The results of the evaluation are presented in brief and in general terms as the sample sizes are simply too small to permit reliable conclusions. With regard to the favourable job outcomes that were expected to be related to the CV participation, ANOVAs yielded no significant results indicating that job satisfaction, commitment facets, and work engagement neither differed within or between groups nor changed during the period of time assessed in this study. Corporate volunteers indicated that all four volunteer functions had influenced their decision to participate. Also in line with our assumption, participants tended to agree to the value-expressive and socially integrative functions as motivators rather than to the career and job-protective functions. All pair-wise t-tests yielded significant results. Satisfaction with the CV event was evident in the volunteer

group and comparably high in the non-volunteer group, indicating that CV was perceived to be equally agreeable as a weekend leisure time activity. The satisfaction scores also related significantly to how well volunteers managed to relax during their CV work. Recovery is experienced during CV to a comparable extent to that experienced by the non-volunteers. However, non-volunteers reported more mastery experiences than corporate volunteers, indicating that the CV activity was not greatly challenging. All corporate volunteers indicated their willingness to participate in further CV activities.

6.4 Discussion

Critical for the appraisal of the proposed design is whether the procedure is accepted by the corporate volunteers, whether the deployed scales are usable in the context in question and whether they yield plausible results. The evaluation procedure employed gained acceptance among both participating volunteers and non-volunteers. Participants were easily found, were committed to the study and filled in the questionnaires conscientiously. Moreover, when requested to voice criticism anonymously in the questionnaire, they did not evaluate the study design negatively. The applied measures, such as adapted instruments to assess voluntary functions or recovery experiences, functioned well in the CV setting, as indicated by the sufficient-to-high reliability parameters. Moreover, they yielded plausible results with regard to the motivation to participate and the experience of the event: multiple motivations were involved and weighted by the participants according to our assumptions; recovery processes were experienced during the event; satisfaction was high, showing a trend that correlated positively with volunteer functions and recovery experiences; and participants consequently declared their willingness to participate in CV again. Although they are preliminary, the results point to a limited potential of CV with regard to short-term individual personnel development, as no changes were evident in the measured construct.

We perceive the scholarly contribution of this work in its scrutiny of the ubiquitous demands that CV must contribute to employees' job satisfaction, motivation, and identification with their organisation and in offering a theoretically and empirically sound approach to evaluating such promises. The small sample size is an obvious weakness of this study, and impairs statistical testing of the model. Considering that CV programmes may affect the climate and culture of a company and hence its entire workforce (Caudron, 1994; Miller, 1997), the positive influence that a specific CV activity exerts becomes even smaller and thus more difficult to detect statistically. Multi-level approaches, comprising different forms of CV, several enterprises and comparison groups with varying proximities to CV may well remedy this situation.

7 General discussion

This paper provides a unique, near 360-degree empirical perspective on CV in Swiss companies: we generated results on the extent, nature and motivation of CV among a national sample of enterprises; we also considered the motivation to take part in CV and its potential consequences for individual employees.

We consequently offer answers to the questions of ‘why’, ‘how’, and ‘to what end’ raised by the Wood model of CSP (Wood, 1991). On the level of the principles of CSR – the ‘why’ – we found that companies expect multiple benefits from their charitable engagement, amongst which the satisfaction of the personal need to be involved in and for the community plays the most important role. However, they also confirm self-serving motivations, such as beneficial effects on corporate reputation or staff development. Employees, on the other hand, mostly seem to be motivated to participate in CV by the opportunity to express personal values and the social encounters CV provides. Although these findings are tentative, we regard it as promising to adapt the polyvalent approach of Clary et al. (1998) to model the motivations of corporate volunteers.

On the process or ‘how’ level, we assessed the concomitant effects that Swiss companies encounter when becoming active in CV. Results show that although CV is not widely known, the larger the company, the better known the concept is and the more professionally exploited are its strategic advantages. Participation seems an important issue in CV and it seems worth considering in greater depth how the coordination between managements and employees in implementation and design works. On an individual level, the how question is answered by the fact that corporate volunteers’ experiences may be approached by accounting for recovery processes during CV (Mojza et al., 2010). Of relevance to CV practise is our result that it involves multiple functions, and that these include personal values and social experience, thereby partly contradicting the findings of Pelozo et al. (2009) (in contrast, cf. Slater and Dixon-Fowler, 2009), rather than motivations related to career aspirations or negative feelings at work (cf. Clary et al., 1998; Peterson, 2004b). Thus, companies offering CV are well advised to design this in the form of social events with volunteering teams that operate within areas consistent with their values. Moreover, the CV activities may be designed to be more challenging in order to increase the mastery experience of them. Nevertheless, CV may well lead to psychological detachment from work and be announced to employees as relief from the daily job routine (cf. Mojza et al., 2010; Pelozo et al., 2009). Both experiences partly relate to satisfaction with the event.

Finally, it is too early for definitive diagnoses at the outcome level. However, we have presented several possible pathways via which promising results may be achieved. Although the preliminary results did not point to any unequivocally positive effects of CV on job satisfaction, commitment, and work engagement, this is not to say that a sustained CV programme may not yield positive effects on the corporate climate and subsequently on individual aspects such as attitudes towards work and the employer, motivation, or even competence gains and job performance. However, we need to learn more about the underlying processes to judge which individual benefits on the job are at all realistic. The participants enjoyed their CV activity independently of any job-related benefits. They indicated high satisfaction with the event and were willing to become involved again. Moreover, volunteering did not hamper their recovery processes, which is essential for company-initiated voluntary activities that take place on weekends. At the organisational level, empirically sound evaluation studies are necessary to show whether CV has a favourable effect on the community, public perception of the company or the workforce.

To sum up, our results show CV to be a tacit way of assuming CSR. Managements are mainly motivated to be involved in charitable community work because they perceive

it to be linked to their role as a corporate actor. However, they also perceive it to contribute to business-oriented goals. Whereas these results confirm the ubiquitous 'win-win situations' articulated as a CV result in the literature, most companies do not make strategic use of their CV engagements by evaluating or communicating their results. The first impressions gained from the evaluation study also support the notion that companies pursue CV without expecting it to pay back instantly. Although its self-serving potential is recognised, CV seems somewhat emancipated from the ROI rationale evident in most other business activities. Employees' perceptions mirror this finding when they report positive personal experiences that are mostly independent of the job or career-related aspects. Accordingly, further professionalisation of CV in practise, that will be associated with the need to justify it in terms of business gains, may hinder its development: as the benefits of CV are non-pecuniary, difficult to assess and realised on rather extended time scales, any attempt to justify it on the basis of ROI will corrupt the intrinsically philanthropic motivation behind it. However, companies are requested to find a way to manage employee-related engagements within a morally sound CSR concept that guarantees the legitimacy of their participation in or decline of the offer (Ulrich, 2008).

Until the merits of CV are further examined empirically, it is premature to demand that companies become active in CV in return for their own and others' gains. In this sense, further in-depth examinations are needed that focus on areas such as the perception of CV by employees, the public and the media as well as cooperation with non-profit partners and their clientele without whose involvement CV activities would often be impossible. Thus, a normative stakeholder-oriented approach to CV is needed to overcome an instrumental perception tied to corporate benefits. Moreover, it is important to consider certain CV attributes, such as continuity, subject and target groups, team involvement and other forms of charitable engagement. Thus, a taxonomy of different forms of CV would contribute to more differentiated research efforts.

7.1 Limitations

Our studies possess some weaknesses, which the reader should take into account. Our first study suffered from a lack of a general theory of CV. We consequently had to use items relating to those few studies that attempted to gather information on national CSP practises rather than psychometric scales. Further, we aimed to measure CV and CSP in a way that allows for a tentative generalisation referring to the Swiss economy. Consequently, and in view of the novelty of CV in the Swiss corporate landscape, we conducted a short online survey that was to be completed quickly. However, this restricted the depth of our data. An obvious weakness of the second study is its small sample size, which impairs statistical testing of the model. Because CV programmes affect the climate and culture of a company and thus its entire work force (Caudron, 1994; Miller, 1997), the positive influence exerted by a specific CV activity is reduced even further and is consequently more difficult to detect statistically. Multi-level approaches comprising different forms of CV in a larger number of enterprises as well as comparison groups with varying depths as regards their proximity to CV promise to remedy this shortcoming. However, we see the academic contribution of this work in the way that it scrutinises the ubiquitous demand that CV must contribute to employees' job satisfaction, motivation, and identification with their organisation and offers a theoretically and empirically sound approach to evaluate such remedies.

8 Conclusions

CV does not appear to act like a broad-spectrum antibiotic – curing without distinguishing between different indications. Other corporate objectives – such as improving team cohesion, reputation, or employees' work-life integration – may be reached more effectively by taking more precise measures – such as outdoor training, marketing, and implementing flexible work schedules – than by means of corporate volunteering. However, if a company strives to cultivate an extended concept of being active in an organisation (e.g., to promote a sense of citizenship that used to be the preserve of the private domain), CV may be one promising way to do so – as long as the organisation's goal is internally legitimised. Consequently, CV may promote organisational citizenship behaviour so that it extends to the wider society. Future fields of action will then be the development and institutionalisation of sophisticated coordination processes designed to facilitate partnerships between employees and managements as well as between profit-oriented companies and NPOs rather than examining the monetary return on investment in charitable corporate endeavours.

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Notes

- 1 In the following, CSR is understood as the notion that companies need to comply with public expectations to behave responsibly in general; CSP is referred to as the integrative process of why, how, and with what results this is done.