

**Young People & Volunteering:**

**A Literature Review**

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# Literature Review

This document explores the literature relating to young people and volunteering with a focus on the Scottish context. It is divided into five sections. The first explores what is entailed by the term volunteering, examines levels of engagement across Scotland and examines different types of volunteering. It argues there are issues with the way volunteering has been defined and that statistical data on rates of engagement may fail to capture the full extent of voluntary behaviour. The second section examines government interventions into youth volunteering and posits that, since the 1960s, successive governments have sought to use volunteering to meet policy goals such as reducing unemployment. It also looks at contemporary Scottish youth volunteering policies and programmes and argues their design may unintentionally exclude young people from areas of multiple deprivation. The third section examines literature concerning volunteering outcomes in terms of individual and social effects. The fourth and fifth sections look at what is known about how young people start and are obstructed from volunteering. While much has been written about these two topics, each section argues that the experiences of young people in areas of multiple deprivation have been overlooked in existing studies.

## The state of volunteering

### Defining volunteering

Rochester, Ellis Paine, and Howlett (2010, p. 19) argue ‘we do not have a single, simple, objective definition which enables us to draw a clear line between what is volunteering and what is not’. Volunteering overlaps with areas of life such as activism and care work. The sometimes hazy boundaries around such terms can make it difficult to determine whether an act constitutes volunteering or not (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Despite this, researchers have sought to define volunteering and commonly cite the following three characteristics:

Table 1.1 Defining characteristics of volunteering (adapted from Ellis Paine, Hill, and Rochester (2010))

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Characteristic** | **Description** |
| 1. Unpaid
 | Volunteering is not performed for payment |
| 1. Benefit
 | The actions performed are of benefit to others |
| 1. Freely undertaken
 | The volunteer is not coerced into acting |

Rather than being viewed as absolutes, Ellis Paine et al. (2010) propose a model for each characteristic to assess whether an act should be referred to as volunteering. They contend incentives and rewards constitute a grey area in relation to the first characteristic. While unexpected rewards and incentives encouraging initial participation are deemed acceptable, the authors consider larger and more formal rewards to move into the realm of payment, thus falling outside their definition. Young people have been found to reflect this position, viewing an ‘inherent contradiction’ in the notion of ‘payment for volunteering’ (Gaskin, 1998, p. 44). The process of defining an act as volunteering, in this respect, however, is further complicated by the fact that that which constitutes a large incentive may vary from one context to another context (Ellis Paine et al., 2010). For example, in contrast to teenagers, Gaskin (1998) found young people in their twenties were more likely to consider a modest wage would make volunteering more appealing. Incentives and rewards raise the question of who benefits from volunteering.

From a utilitarian, net-cost, approach, volunteers may receive rewards such as employment connections, but these should be exceeded by the costs of volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008). The issue of beneficiaries, however, is not straightforward. Musick and Wilson (2008, p. 17) contend that in the public consciousness volunteering is not just unpaid work, but unpaid work ‘performed for the correct reason’ – i.e. a desire to help others. Rather than focusing on motivations, which often include a ‘blend of self-interest and altruism’ (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 22), Ellis Paine et al. (2010) consider the purpose of an activity, rather than the intention of the volunteer, to be important – i.e. is the purpose of the activity to engender benefit to others? If so, then an act can be referred to as volunteering. This still leaves the issue of who benefits. The model proposed by Ellis Paine et al. (2010) considers an act that benefits only the individual or their immediate family to fall beyond the scope of volunteering. They also contend acts which benefit extended family members occupy an ambiguous position. For them, an act can clearly be considered volunteering when it brings benefit to the public, members of a club or society and members of small groups or communities.

The final characteristic, that volunteering is freely undertaken, similarly engenders debate. Ellis Paine et al. (2010) distinguish five types of coercion: physical, legal, social, individual and institutional. They position the first two nearer the ‘coerced’ end of the spectrum, due to the restrictions placed on an individual’s freedom, while contending the latter three occupy a more ambiguous position. In terms of social coercion, Holdsworth and Brewis (2014) found higher education students felt pressured to volunteer in order to enhance their employability. Ellis Paine et al.’s (2010) model considers such coercion to become more problematic when it is stronger and directed. Thus while the students may experience pressure to volunteer, this is ‘not the same as being *required* to do the work or being forced to do the work’ (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p. 12).

In addition to the three characteristics outlined above, some researchers add a fourth – organisational structure. Activities occurring in an organisational setting are known as formal volunteering, while activities beyond such settings – ‘giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives’ – are known as informal volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 20). Ellis Paine et al. (2010) treat organisational setting as a dimension rather than a defining feature of volunteering. Yet academic attention to informal volunteering (Dean, 2013a; Williams, 2003; Woolvin, 2011) contrasts with public perception. Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) found the net-cost of volunteering to be of central importance to the public in their assessments of who can be called a volunteer. Volunteering through an organisation was perceived to engender a greater cost to the actor and thus was a 'more pure volunteering’ (Cnaan et al., 1996, p. 381). More recently, researchers have posited it is unlikely that public perception of volunteering would include more informal acts such as neighbourliness (Rochester et al., 2010).

Not only are there issues concerning public perceptions of informal volunteering, but also the extent to which individuals define themselves as volunteers more generally. In the mid-1990s, Cnaan et al. (1996) argued issues around self-defining as a volunteer meant statistics may underreport the true extent of volunteering. Indeed, Hurley, Wilson, Christie, and Stevenson (2008) found persons in Scotland who identified as non-volunteers had, in fact, volunteered when asked about the types of activities they had previously engaged in. Young people have similarly been found to struggle to define their actions as volunteering (Department for Education and Skills, 2007). Moreover, researchers posit there may be a classed dimension to the extent to which individuals identify with the term volunteer, with those from more affluent backgrounds being more likely to do so (Guild, Harrison, & Saxton, 2014). Stereotypes concerning volunteering as the preserve of the middle-classes (Lukka & Ellis, 2001) and the informal participatory culture said to characterise disadvantaged areas (Williams, 2003) may mean those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to view themselves as volunteers. In light of this, it is important to note the rates of volunteering discussed in Section 1.1.2 may not accurately reflect the extent of volunteering across Scotland and the UK.

In policy and practice terms, emphasis is often placed upon formal volunteering as seen in the definition employed by the Scottish Government (2016b, p. 219):

[T]he giving of time and energy through a *third party*, which can bring *measurable* *benefits* to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one's own *free will*, and is *not motivated* *primarily for* *financial gain* or for a wage or salary (emphasis added)

The definition reflects public perception concerning the importance of an organisational aspect to volunteering (Cnaan et al., 1996; Rochester et al., 2010). However, this precludes the Scottish Government from exploring rates of informal volunteering which, in England and Wales, have been shown to consistently exceed formal actions[[1]](#footnote-1) (Lim & Laurence, 2015). In addition to this, the stipulation that volunteering should not to be motivated *primarily* for financial gain implies that this may be part of an actor’s motivation and thus contradicts the notion that volunteering is an unpaid activity. While volunteers may receive incentives, rewards and have their expenses reimbursed, scholars stress these ought to be small (Ellis Paine et al., 2010). Public opinion similarly rejects the notion that volunteers should receive payment (Gaskin, 1998) and defines volunteering as an act which engenders a greater cost than gain for the volunteer (Cnaan et al., 1996; Musick & Wilson, 2008). Furthermore, the Scottish Government’s contention that volunteering can bring a *measurable* benefit is ambiguous – must an act engender benefit or simply have the potential to do so? Researchers have noted a tension between actual and intended benefit (Ellis Paine et al., 2010) – a volunteer at an arts event, for example, may intend to benefit others but may accidentally cause harm by damaging the display. Furthermore, how is the benefit to be measured? Benefits may be viewed in different lights in different contexts and may escape quantification.

A more holistic definition is offered by the *National Council for Voluntary Organisations* (NCVO), an English charity supporting the voluntary sector and volunteering:

We define volunteering as any activity that involves spending time, *unpaid*, doing something that *aims to benefit* the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice *freely made* by each individual. This can include *formal* activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as *informal* community participation and social action[[2]](#footnote-2) (emphasis added)

In contrast to the Scottish Government’s definition, NCVO consider the organisational aspect of volunteering to be an aspect rather than defining feature of volunteering. Their definition also adds the caveat that volunteering should aim to benefit others and makes clear that volunteering should be unpaid and freely undertaken. While the definition is more comprehensive than the Scottish Government’s, it does not explain what is meant by ‘unpaid’ or ‘free will’. As discussed above, individuals may receive payment in the sense of personal gains such as employment contacts and may experience varying degrees of coercion to volunteer. While these need not necessarily discredit an acts’ status as volunteering, they draw attention to the problematic nature of defining volunteering.

In light of these definitional issues, this thesis approaches volunteering on the grounds that it is an *unpaid*, *freely performed* activity that *seeks to bring benefit* to persons other than volunteers themselves (although volunteers may benefit from their own actions). While it is recognised that volunteering can happen in both formal and informal settings, the research focuses on young people’s attitudes and experiences in relation to formal volunteering. As discussed below, levels of formal volunteering are reported to be lower in areas of multiple deprivation. The thesis seeks to explore how young people find routes to volunteering opportunities in such areas, as well as factors obstructing them from doing so. In addition to this, formal volunteering carries benefits that are more readily recognisable than informal volunteering, such as CV and confidence enhancement, meaning the underrepresentation of young volunteers in disadvantaged areas may act as a form of social exclusion.

### Rates of volunteering

A problem with measuring rates of volunteering is that respondents have been found to struggle to recall such actions without being prompted (Hurley et al., 2008; Rooney, Steinberg, & Schervish, 2004), leading researchers to argue statistics may underestimate the true extent of volunteering (Cnaan et al., 1996). In Scotland, the *Scottish Household Survey* (SHS) is the largest annual dataset on volunteering behaviour (Scottish Government, 2014, 2015c, 2016b). The 2014 wave of the SHS collected data from 10,678 households with a minimum of 250 households participating in each of Scotland’s 32 local authorities. The methodological report accompanying the survey indicates that, in contrast to the 2011 Census figures, younger respondents, aged 16-24, and persons living in socially rented accommodation were underrepresented (Scottish Government, 2015d). Moreover, student accommodation was excluded from the survey meaning higher education students, who are likely to fall within the 16-24 age bracket, may also be underrepresented. In light of such issues, discrepancies may exist between the picture painted in the SHS data and the actual levels of volunteering across Scotland.

Despite these issues, it is possible to note trends in the data. Figure 1.1 indicates that since 2007, females have been found to proportionately volunteer more than males, a trend mirrored in England (NCVO, 2016). Musick and Wilson (2008) argue that while volunteering is subjected to gender norms, these forces are not felt as strongly as in other areas, such as child care and domestic work, as evidenced by the relatively small differentials in Figure 1.1. Historically, volunteering enabled women to access the public sphere while maintaining their femininity through philanthropic and caring roles (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Today, however, Musick and Wilson posit volunteering continues to be impacted by gender norms but that these manifest themselves through the types of voluntary action males and females engage in. Although they may volunteer at similar levels, males are more likely to be in roles emphasising their authority in the workplace while females’ roles are seen as an extension of their “expertise” in the private sphere.

Figure 1.1 Percentage of adults, aged 16 and above, who provided unpaid help to organisations or groups in the last 12 months by gender (based on the Scottish Household Survey reports published between 2008-16)

In addition to gender differences, a downward trend in overall rates of volunteering is notable from 31 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2015 (Scottish Government, 2016b). Researchers have argued falling volunteering rates in England and Wales, between 2008 and 2010, were shaped by the 2008/09 recession (Lim & Laurence, 2015). Lim and Laurence (2015) found the effects of the recession on volunteering rates to be felt most sharply in disadvantaged communities. They posit this was a result of the lack of ‘organizational infrastructure, leadership, and the cultural norms of civic engagement’ in such communities (2015, p. 339). Figure 1.2 shows rates of formal volunteering are consistently found to be lower in the 15 percent most deprived areas compared to the rest of Scotland:

Figure 1.2 Percentage of adults, aged 16 and above, who provided unpaid help to organisations or individuals in the last 12 months by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (based on the Scottish Household Survey reports published between 2008-14)

The definition of ‘most deprived’ used in the 2014 and 2015 waves of the SHS broadened to include the 0-20 percent most deprived areas, meaning a direct comparison with previous years is not possible. The pattern, however, remains the same. A national average of 27 percent was found during 2014 and 2015 compared to 17 and 18 percent in the most deprived areas respectively (Scottish Government, 2015c, 2016b). In keeping with Lim and Laurence’s (2015) contention that the recession negatively impacted volunteering rates in disadvantaged areas, evidence from the SHS similarly indicates a fall in the year following the financial crash (from 18 to 15 percent). While the figure rose in 2011, the emergent picture is one of consistently lower levels of formal volunteering in disadvantaged areas.

This data, however, needs to be treated with caution. Woolvin and Hardill’s (2013) research on the significance of community context in understanding volunteering, in deprived urban areas, argues the language used to describe voluntary action may be more in keeping with notion of ‘helping’ than ‘volunteering’ and thus may not be picked up by conventional measures. Other studies have similarly contended less affluent populations may be less likely to refer to their activities as volunteering compared to those from more advantaged backgrounds (Guild et al., 2014). Thus while the data indicate lower levels of engagement, statistical methods may not be suitable for capturing the volunteering experiences of more disadvantaged sections of the population.

A key issue with the SHS data for this thesis is its underrepresentation of younger people and the fact that data is not collected from persons under 16 years old. This deficit is partly ameliorated by the *Young People in Scotland* survey. The 2014 wave of the survey examined attitudes towards and experiences of volunteering among 2,016 secondary school pupils, aged 11-18, across Scotland (Harper & Jackson, 2015). In contrast to the SHS’s finding that 27 percent of the population formally volunteered in 2014, the *Young People in Scotland* survey found a significantly higher proportion of secondary school pupils, 45 percent, had volunteered in the same year.[[3]](#footnote-3) The 2016 wave of the survey found the proportion of secondary pupils volunteering had risen to 52 percent (Linning & Jackson, 2017).

Among secondary school pupils, variations existed in terms of the extent and locations of volunteering activities. In the 2014 and 2016 waves, participants aged 16-18 were more likely to volunteer at least once a month than those aged 11-13, the older cohort were also more likely to volunteer in their spare time than their younger counterparts. The higher frequency of volunteering among older young people may be related to pressures they experience to use volunteering as a way of easing transitions into university (Dean, 2014). As discussed in Section 1.2, governments have sought to use volunteering to address policy goals such as unemployment. The increase in rates of volunteering as young people age may therefore be related to initiatives seeking to help young people enhance their CVs and move into employment.

Regarding gender differences, the 2014 and 2016 waves *Young People in Scotland* survey echoes the SHS data. Female participants were found to be more likely to volunteer in their spare time, while males were more likely to indicate they did not volunteer and would not consider doing so in the future. The overrepresentation of young female volunteers is evident in other studies across Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2005; YouthLink Scotland, 2009) and the UK (Bennett & Parameshwaran, 2013; NatCent, 2011; Pye, James, & Stobart, 2014). In keeping with Musick and Wilson’s (2008) contention that participation in volunteering activities is not as gendered as other forms of care work, it is notable that across England and Wales, during the period 2003 to 2010, a consistent 2 percentage points difference was found between males and females aged 16-25 (NatCent, 2011). Thus while there are differences in terms of rates, gender norms exert greater influence on the forms of volunteering performed.

Youth volunteering by area based deprivation both mirrors and diverges from broader trends depending on where volunteering was performed. The 2014 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey[[4]](#footnote-4) found participants who attended schools in the least deprived areas were more likely to volunteer at school (23 percent) and in their spare time (46 percent) than those in the most deprived areas (16 and 29 percent respectively). The same pattern was evident in the 2007 wave of the *Being Young in Scotland* survey (YouthLink Scotland, 2009) and in a recent UK-wide survey of youth social action[[5]](#footnote-5) (Pye et al., 2014). Young people in Scotland’s most deprived areas were also more likely to state they did not volunteer and would not consider doing so in the future compared to those in the least deprived areas (19 and 9 percent respectively) (Harper & Jackson, 2015). The 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey, however, paints a slightly different picture.

Figure 1.3 Percentage of pupils from most deprived quintile of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation who had volunteered in the previous 12 months (Linning & Jackson, 2017)

Figure 1.3 shows that, in terms of volunteering in their own time, schools in which 60-100 percent of their pupils lived in the most deprived quintile of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation volunteered at a significantly lower rate than schools where none of their pupils came from such backgrounds (16% and 50% respectively). While this trend mirrors patterns found in existing studies, the data relating to volunteering during school time appears to buck the trend. Schools with the greatest proportion of pupils from the most deprived quintile were found to have the same level of volunteering (33 percent) as those schools with no pupils from the most deprived quintile (33 percent). The ‘U’ shaped curve shows there was a higher level of volunteering in schools with 60-100 percent of their pupils from the lowest SIMD quintile compared to those with 0-60 percent. It may be the case that schools in the least and most deprived areas promote volunteering more so than those in the middle. The findings also suggest there may be limited opportunities for young people in areas of multiple deprivation to volunteer in their local communities outside a school setting.

A limitation of the *Young People in Scotland* surveys is that their methodologies necessarily exclude certain groups of young people. By using state sector schools as research sites, the surveys omit young people who have been excluded from school, who truant from it, attend special schools or who left as soon as legally possible.[[6]](#footnote-6) Evidence suggests school exclusions are more common in deprived areas (Scottish Government, 2015b). Moreover, young people aged 16-19 who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are used as an indicator in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation’s (SIMD) methodology,[[7]](#footnote-7) meaning deprived areas are likely to have a higher concentration of this group. As such, it may be the case that there is a sampling bias which underrepresents the views of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### Types of volunteering

Having outlined rates of volunteering, this section explores the different fields in which it can occur. In their analysis of this issue, Rochester et al. (2010) and Rochester (2013) identify three paradigmatic approaches to volunteering: i) the dominant paradigm, ii) the civil society paradigm, and iii) serious leisure, as shown in Figure 1.4:

Figure 1.4 A three perspective model of volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 15)

The dominant paradigm is contended to be the normative approach to volunteering taken by policy makers, practitioners and researchers in “developed” Western societies such as the UK. Within this framework, volunteering is viewed as an altruistic act motivated by a desire to help those less fortunate than oneself taking place through predefined roles in ‘large, professionally staffed and formally structured organisations’ (Rochester, 2013, p. 177). In contrast to this, the civil society paradigm, which is said to characterise voluntary action in the global south, is less motivated by altruism than mutual aid and occurs through self-help groups and associations rather than formally structured organisations. Rochester (2013) contends the scale of this paradigm is underestimated in the UK as are the contributions made by volunteers acting in this way. The final perspective, serious leisure, places a greater emphasis on the enjoyment and fulfilment volunteers receive from the activities they are engaged in (Harflett, 2015; Stebbins, 2004) in the areas of arts, culture, sports and recreation (Rochester, 2013).

In terms of the types of volunteering performed in Scotland, the 2014[[8]](#footnote-8) wave of the SHS indicates adults, aged 16 and above, classified their actions using generalist terms such as ‘generally helping out’ and ‘doing whatever is required’:

Figure 1.5 Types of volunteering undertaken by adults aged 16 and above in the past twelve months (Scottish Government, 2015c)

Although the data provides a window into how volunteers classify their actions using pre-determined response categories, the top response does not tell us about the nature of these activities. ‘Generally helping out’ is a subjective term that could include a vast array of activities. However, as participants were allowed to select multiple responses, it may be the case that much of this helping out was oriented towards raising money, organising and facilitating events as well as committee work. To further understand the types of volunteering performed in Scotland, the 2015 wave of the SHS collected data on the types of organisations participants reported volunteering with:

Figure 1.6 Types of organisations adults, aged 16 and above, volunteered with in the past twelve months (Scottish Government, 2016b)[[9]](#footnote-9)

Figure 1.6 shows how the types of organisations participants volunteered with varied by gender and age. It indicates younger people were more likely to volunteer with organisations associated with youth and children as well as sports and exercise. The *Young People in Scotland* surveysimilarly found secondary school pupils to express interest in volunteering in sports, exercise, children and young people related activities (Harper & Jackson, 2015) – an interest corroborated in a prior study (YouthLink Scotland, 2009). In terms of deprivation, the same survey found little difference between the interest expressed by those in the most and least deprived areas for volunteering activities relating to children and young people. For sports and exercise related volunteering, however, those in the most deprived areas expressed less interest than the rest of the participants (25 and 34 percent respectively) (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Young people therefore express a widespread interest in volunteering with other children and young people while preference for sports and exercise related activities vary by levels of deprivation.

In addition to this, Figure 1.6 further highlights the gendered nature of volunteering. Females are overrepresented in organisations relating to youth and children and children’s activities associated with schools, while males are more likely to volunteer in organisations associated with sports and exercise. A similar distinction is evident among Scottish secondary school pupils with females expressing preference for volunteering activities relating to children and young people and males for sports and exercise (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Again, these findings add weight to Musick and Wilson’s (2008) contention that volunteering is gendered in terms of its content rather than simply in terms of levels of participation.

The data presented here indicates young people express a preference for volunteering with other children and young people and in a sporting capacity. When broken down by gender, young people’s preferences appear to follow social norms concerning male and female behaviour. While the data highlights broad patterns, it does not reveal what young people do within these fields or what these activities mean to them. This thesis seeks to address this gap by exploring what young people in deprived areas’ volunteering experiences mean to them. It is not the purpose of this thesis to focus on a particular type of volunteering or attempt to locate the participants’ actions within a neatly demarcated paradigmatic framework.[[10]](#footnote-10) Rather, the emphasis lies in exploring the value young people attach (or not) to volunteering, their routes to opportunities and factors that put them off or make it difficult to volunteer. The aim is to provide a qualitative account of attitudes towards and experiences of volunteering in areas of multiple deprivation. Doing so will add to our understanding of the picture painted by statistical data.

## Government interventions into youth volunteering

Researchers have argued that, since the 1960s, various governments have used volunteering as a tool for aiding the delivery of public services (Rochester, 2013; Sheard, 1995; Zimmeck, 2010). As Sheard (1995, p. 118) states:

Just as in the 1960s the government had promoted volunteering as a way of protecting society from the threat of disaffected youth; and just as in the late 1970s the government had called volunteers to protect society from the threat of union power; so, in the 1980s, the government turned to volunteering to protect society from the threats associated with the return of mass unemployment

Zimmeck (2010, p. 86) contends that between the 1960s and 1980s successive UK governments viewed volunteering in instrumental terms, as a way of improving the ‘reach, quality and value for money’ of public services. The 1969 *Aves Committee*, for example, stressed the importance of volunteers in the provision of community based personal social services, while the *Urban Programme* and the *Community Enterprise Programme* of the Thatcher governments sought to use volunteers to ameliorate urban decay and unemployment (Zimmeck, 2010). The coming to power of New Labour in 1997 is noted by researchers as having invoked a change in approach to volunteering policy (Rochester, 2013; Zimmeck, 2010), characterised by Kendall (2005) as ‘hyperactive’. Regarding young people, New Labour launched a number of volunteering initiatives such as the *Young Volunteer Challenge* and the *v Initiative*, both of which sought to enhance employment prospects, and *Millennium Volunteers*, which, while not having employability as an outcome, was promoted with the strapline ‘MV for your CV’ (Kamerāde & Ellis Paine, 2014). These initiatives provide evidence of a continued instrumental approach to volunteering, yet Blair’s governments also sought to use volunteering to enable ‘local people to develop their own solutions to the issues which most affect them’ thus engendering a sense of civic renewal (Home Office, 2003, cited in Zimmeck, 2010, p. 93)

More recently, the 2010 UK Coalition Government, led by David Cameron’s Conservative party, came to power with the *Big Society* agenda. Evans (2011) contends the Big Society positioned volunteering as a key vehicle through which individuals could play their role in fixing “Broken Britain”. For young people, aged 16-19,[[11]](#footnote-11) the *National Citizen Service* (NCS) programme provided an opportunity for such civic activity. The programme entails an outward bound style trip followed by a period of designing and implementing a community project thus providing young people with the opportunity to become ‘active citizens’ (Evans, 2011). In addition to this, volunteering was also emphasised for its capacity to enhance individual employability prospects (Kamerāde & Ellis Paine, 2014) as under previous administrations. Critics of the *Big Society*, however, drew attention to the lack of state funding (Kisby, 2010) that tasks third sector organisations to ‘achieve more with less’ (Alcock, 2010). Resistance to the Coalition’s rhetoric was also evidenced in the devolved Scottish and Welsh nations (Woolvin, Mills, Hardill, & Rutherford, 2015).

As a devolved nation, Scotland is able to make decisions over a range of matters, of which third sector policy is one (Alcock, 2010). Since (re)gaining its own parliament in 1999, researchers have noted a step change in voluntarism policy from an ‘interventional’ to an ‘infrastructural’ approach (Woolvin & Hardill, 2013, p. 277). The former approach was evidenced in the 2004 *Volunteering Strategy* (Scottish Executive, 2004b) which aimed to improve volunteer experiences, remove barriers to volunteering[[12]](#footnote-12) and support young people to volunteer through targeted interventions, namely *Project Scotland*. The infrastructural approach places greater emphasis on investing in local organisations and Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) rather than volunteering at a national level. Each of Scotland’s 32 local authorities has a TSI which seeks to build strong communities through volunteer development, social enterprise development, supporting the third sector and building third sector relationships with community planning.[[13]](#footnote-13) Unlike the interventional approach that aimed to support young people to become volunteers, the infrastructural approach, as evidenced in documents such as the *Community Empowerment Action Plan* (Scottish Government, 2009), shifted attention from the individual toward questions of local context.

Despite this shift in emphasis, the Scottish Government maintains an interest in youth volunteering through *Project Scotland* and the *Saltire Awards*. *Project Scotland* was established to meet the *Volunteering Strategy*’s goal of giving ‘young people of all backgrounds an equal opportunity to benefit from up to a year out to volunteer’ (Scottish Executive, 2004b, p. 23). A report from the working committee, outlining their vision for the programme, states they wanted young people from ‘all backgrounds’ to have the opportunity to participate in a ‘life-changing and life-transforming’ volunteering experience (Project Scotland, 2004, p. 2). In its current form, *Project Scotland* places young people, aged 16-30, in contact with volunteer involving organisations with whom the young person volunteers with for 20-30 hours per week over a three month period.

In terms of recruiting young people to the initiative, *Project Scotland* operate an online form, open to all persons between 16 and 30 years of age, as well as a more localised and targeted recruitment strategy for those furthest removed from the labour market.[[14]](#footnote-14) While the former approach could be said to restrict the access of those from areas of multiple deprivation, due to the lower levels of home based internet access in such localities (Scottish Government, 2016b), the latter approach seeks to widen access for those experiencing multiple barriers. Through their localities model, *Project Scotland* staff work with public and third sector organisations in communities and seek to build trusting relationships with young people before developing personal plans and matching them with suitable placements. Between 2005 and 2015, *Project Scotland* helped 5,000 young people into volunteering placements.[[15]](#footnote-15) Although the targeted approach helps removes barriers to volunteering, the age range *Project Scotland* work with automatically excludes persons under the age of 16.

The *Saltire Awards*, open to young people aged 12-25, partly addresses this age issue. Formerly the *Millennium Volunteers* initiative, the *Saltire Awards* accredits volunteering experiences based on the number of hours a young person volunteers. The marketing and development of the awards is overseen by *Voluntary Action Scotland* who advocate for and support the work of Scotland’s 32 TSIs. In keeping with the infrastructural approach to voluntarism outlined above, the *Saltire Awards* are delivered in each local authority’s TSI.

Since being rebranded, the number of young people receiving *Saltire Awards* has grown from 14,000 in 2012/13 to 27,000 in 2015/16[[16]](#footnote-16) and at a faster rate than other youth awards schemes, such as the *Duke of Edinburgh* or *Youth Achievement Awards* (Education Scotland, 2015). Of the 2,247 *Saltire Awards* distributed in Glasgow during 2015/16, roughly equal amounts were awarded to those in the 0-15 percent most deprived areas (31 percent) and those in the rest of the city (32 percent).[[17]](#footnote-17) This suggests the initiative has been successful in reaching those from disadvantaged backgrounds and appears to counter the notion that volunteering rates are lower in deprived areas. However, these equal rates may be related to Glasgow’s high levels of socio-economic deprivation. In 2014, roughly half (48 percent) of the city’s population lived in the 0-20 percent most deprived areas (Understanding Glasgow, 2014) and in 2016 approximately half (48 percent) of the city was designated as falling within the 0-20 most deprived areas (Scottish Government, 2016a).

In terms of activities, the *Saltire Awards* does not offer a specific programme or stipulate what volunteers must do, but accredits the number of hours young people volunteer in schools and other volunteer involving organisations. While this flexibility is a strength in that it enables the awards to be moulded to individual abilities, it is also a weakness as it potentially excludes young people who have difficult relationships with school and those whose networks do not facilitate access to volunteer involving organisations. Given that experience of childhood poverty, particularly for boys, can lead to early disengagement from school (Horgan, 2009), in addition to the lower levels of formal volunteering in deprived areas, disadvantaged young people may have fewer opportunities to engage with the initiative than those from more affluent backgrounds or less deprived areas.

As well as offering young people a certificate for volunteering, the *Saltire Awards* are designed to ‘dovetail neatly into the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence’.[[18]](#footnote-18) The *Curriculum for Excellence* is the national educational framework for young people, aged 3-18, which aims to develop four capacities: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors (Scottish Executive, 2004a). These capacities are central to the Scottish Government’s aim of enhancing children and young people’s wellbeing and making Scotland ‘the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up’ (Aileen Campbell, former Minister for Children and Wellbeing, cited in Scottish Government, 2013). Yet critics have argued the educational framework places too much emphasis on individual responsibility and underplays the significance of citizenship’s political and democratic dimensions (Biesta, 2008). Moreover, the framework’s promotion of the ‘values on which Scottish society is based’ (Scottish Executive, 2004a, p. 11) has been criticised for its normative character and under theorisation of what these values entail (Gillies, 2006).

Government interventions into youth volunteering in Scotland, therefore, both continue and diverge from trends elsewhere in the UK. Although not specifically referring to youth volunteering, Woolvin et al. (2015) contend Scotland, England and Wales share similar drivers concerning volunteering policy, such as public service reform in the context of challenging economic conditions. They argue, however, that the rhetoric and infrastructure surrounding volunteering differs, notably Scotland and Wales’ resistance to the *Big Society* agenda and Scotland’s stronger localised support, evidenced through its TSI network.

In terms of similar drivers, Scotland continues the trend of viewing volunteering as a means of achieving policy ends, such as civically engaged and employable citizens. For example, while the *Saltire Awards*’ link to the *Curriculum for Excellence* emphasises its aim of enhancing young people’s wellbeing, the initiative, along with *Project Scotland*, also stresses the role volunteering can play in enhancing CVs and employment prospects.[[19]](#footnote-19) This ‘enduring’ policy interest in volunteering as a route to employment, however, is problematic. Ellis Paine, McKay, and Moro (2013) used successive waves of *British Household Panel Survey* to explore the effects of volunteering on entering employment. Not only did they find a weak effect in terms of employment outcomes, but also that if done too frequently, particularly for young people and students, volunteering could have a negative effect on transitions into employment.

Moreover, evidence suggests attempts to instil values in young people through volunteering initiatives are liable to resistance and failure. A qualitative study exploring the effectiveness of UK volunteering policy in instilling young people with a sense of responsibility was inhibited by discrepancies between policy makers’ aims and volunteer coordinators’ actions (Dean, 2013b). Dean (2013b) describes how the perceived impreciseness of responsibility led one volunteer coordinator to avoid discussing it with young people and instead focus on recruiting young people to achieve her monthly statistics. Warburton and Smith (2003) similarly found issues in an Australian youth volunteering initiative that sought to promote active citizenship. The young people in their study reported the compulsory element of the initiative engendered a sense of reduced agency and resistance to developing the policy approved values.

Thus while Scottish youth volunteering initiatives, such as *Project Scotland* and the *Saltire Awards*, may seek to develop certain skills and attributes in young people, it cannot be assumed that this process follows a one-directional linear path. The following section examines the literature concerning the value of volunteering from young people’s perspectives – i.e. what young people report they gain and/or like about volunteering.

## Volunteering outcomes

Having outlined the ways in which volunteering has been configured by various governments, this section explores what is known about volunteering outcomes. The section is divided into two halves, the first half looks at individual outcomes in relation to personal wellbeing and harder outcomes such as CV enhancement and skills development. The second half looks at social outcomes such as volunteering’s relationship with social capital.

### Individual outcomes

The dominant paradigm’s conception of volunteering as an altruistic act to those less fortunate than oneself (Rochester et al., 2010), gives rise to the notion that volunteering is an act which incurs a loss to the volunteer rather than a gain (Musick & Wilson, 2008). The current emphasis on volunteering as a way to enhance skills, however, may have altered this perception with evidence suggesting young people are increasingly encouraged to seeing volunteering as a tool to help them get ahead in life (Dean, 2014). This section outlines what is known about individual outcomes in terms of wellbeing and harder outcomes.

#### Wellbeing

The concept of wellbeing has gained prominence in Scottish policy concerning children and young people, yet remains a contested concept (Tisdall, 2015). The ‘wellbeing wheel’, part of the Scottish Government’s (2012) *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC) approach, identifies eight indicators considered necessary for children to develop and reach their full potential. These include being: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Evidence suggests, however, some of these capacities are under threat from broader economic processes. Bell and Blanchflower’s (2010, 2011) research into the effects of the 2008 financial crash found young people were disproportionately affected by a sharp increase in unemployment with negative implications for their life satisfaction and mental health. The crash and associated financial difficulties for households have also been correlated with increases in self-reported mental health concerns in socio-economically deprived areas of Glasgow (Curl & Kearns, 2015). While caution should be exercised in viewing volunteering as a panacea for social issues (Sheard, 1995), studies suggest it can have a role in supporting individual wellbeing.

The extent to which volunteering can enhance wellbeing, however, varies by the frequency and type of volunteering performed. Using the *British Household Panel Survey* (BHPS), Binder and Freytag (2013) found respondents’ perceptions of their life-satisfaction to rise incrementally as the regularity of volunteering increased. Their findings mirror evidence from the United States where wellbeing, assessed as a self-reported measure of happiness, was positively correlated with higher frequencies of volunteering (Borgonovi, 2008). Regarding types of volunteering and wellbeing, Borgonovi (2008) found those who volunteered with religious organisations were more likely to be ‘very happy’ than those who volunteered with secular groups, even when controlling for socio-economic demographics. Differences regarding religious volunteering, however, may be related to the extent to which people identify with religion in the United States and, as such, may have less of an impact in the UK.

Young people’s wellbeing has also been found to vary by membership of different types of groups. Cicognani, Mazzoni, Albanesi, and Zani (2015) found belonging to civic orientated groups, involving volunteering and charity work, to have a stronger effect on social wellbeing and sense of community than membership of leisure and recreational groups. Wellbeing has also been found to vary by participation in social action, with those who had done so in the past 12 months having higher scores than those who had not (Pye et al., 2014). As quantitative surveys, however, these studies necessarily limit the participants’ responses and only provide partial information on the respondents’ characteristics and life experiences. This gap is partly addressed by Melkman, Mor-Salwo, Mangold, Zeller, and Benbenishty’s (2015) qualitative study of the benefits accrued through volunteering by care leavers, aged 18-26, in Germany and Israel. The care leavers’ volunteering, often with young people in care, provided them with a momentary refuge from their own problems, an opportunity to work through their past experiences and stay connected with others as well as enhancing their sense of normality. Volunteering has also been found to help highly engaged student volunteers make ‘sense of one’s place in the world’ (MacNeela & Gannon, 2014, p. 428) and provide opportunities to learn about themselves (Brewis, Russell, & Holdsworth, 2010). However, as the participants in these studies, including Melkman et al. (2015), were university students, their sense of wellbeing may be influenced by their success in attaining a place in further education.[[20]](#footnote-20) Moreover, under certain conditions volunteers can feel overworked leading to feelings of disillusionment and burnout (Talbot, 2015) problematizing the automatic linkage of volunteering and enhanced wellbeing.

Volunteering has also been found to aid young people’s personal development. Surveys of university volunteers (Brewis et al., 2010), *Millennium Volunteers* (Smith, Ellis, & Howlett, 2002), *v* participants (NatCent, 2011) and young volunteers across England (Department for Education and Skills, 2007) all highlight the positive impact volunteering was felt to have on young people’s self-confidence. Such benefits, however, are contingent upon the type and frequency of volunteering. Youth sports volunteers, for example, were found to derive greater personal benefits if they spent more time volunteering and/or undertook a variety of volunteer activities (Kay & Bradbury, 2009).

As well as enhancing individual wellbeing and confidence, evidence suggests volunteering is valued for its social aspects and as a satisfying or fun activity in and of itself. Two of the most emphasised benefits in Low, Butt, Ellis Paine, and Davis Smith’s (2007) national survey of volunteering were the sense of satisfaction derived from seeing the results of volunteering and the fact that volunteers ‘really enjoy’ volunteering (see Table 1.2 below). This aspect was evident among student volunteers (Brewis et al., 2010) and younger youth volunteers, such as the 8-12 year olds in Shannon’s (2009) study and the adolescents in Haski-Leventhal, Ronel, York, and Ben-David’s (2008) research. Therefore, in addition to enhancing wellbeing and developing skills, volunteering can be experienced as a pleasurable activity (Harflett, 2015; Roberts & Devine, 2004) which, in turn, has the potential to enhance individual wellbeing.

Such evidence paints a positive picture of the impact volunteering can have on individual wellbeing. As noted, however, this is not a straightforward relationship but is partly contingent upon the type of volunteering and frequency with which it is performed. There are further issues concerning self-reported measures of wellbeing. As a highly subjective attribute, participants may well interpret ‘good wellbeing’ in numerous ways. In addition to this, positive wellbeing outcomes may be impacted by selection bias in studies. Using large scale quantitative datasets covering 16 European countries, De Wit, Bekkers, Karamat Ali, and Verkaik (2015) found volunteering to have a positive impact on subjective wellbeing. This relationship, however, was found to be stable over time, leading the authors to question whether those who volunteered were more likely to have higher levels of wellbeing prior to volunteering, thereby limiting the effect it is purported to have.

The problematic nature of attributing causal status to volunteering’s role in enhancing wellbeing is highlighted in Kamerāde and Bennett’s (2015) analysis of the relationships between unemployment, volunteering, subjective wellbeing and mental health across 29 European countries. While they found regular volunteering to be positively related with wellbeing, they found this relationship to be stronger in countries with more generous unemployment benefits. Indeed, the authors found regular volunteering in countries with low benefits could have negative effects on mental wellbeing. Kamerāde and Bennett argue generous benefits provide space for volunteering without generating concern over daily survival. Therefore, while volunteering can be associated with positive wellbeing outcomes, these cannot be presumed from the outset without taking the personal circumstances of the volunteer into account.

#### CV enhancement and skills development

Section 1.2 explored the employability emphasis evident in policy approaches to youth volunteering. While establishing a causal link between volunteering and employment is problematic (Ellis Paine et al., 2013), evidence indicates CV enhancement remains a valued aspect of volunteering for certain cohorts of young people. Pye et al.’s (2014) recent UK-wide survey of youth social action found participants reported a mixture of altruistic and self-interested benefits, from enjoying helping others to developing new skills. When broken down by age they found older participants, aged 16-20, recognised a greater variety of benefits such developing skills, socialising and CV enhancement while younger participants, aged 10-15, were more likely to view volunteering as fun.

For 16-19 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs), the employability aspect of volunteering may have particular pertinence. Newton, Oakley, and Pollard (2011) explored the impact of *vinspired*’s yearlong *vtalent* volunteering programme on young people’s transitions into education and employment with a sample of 36 young people, 23 of whom were classified as NEET or unemployed. They found their participants saw volunteering as a way to improve their employability and develop generic and specific skills to enhance their CVs. As well as developing skills, a number of participants, including vulnerable and low-skilled young people, made transitions into educational destinations while a few progressed into employment. The authors argue their research demonstrates ‘the success of volunteering in engaging young people, helping them to gain qualifications and secure positive progression to further education’ as well as ‘raising their personal and/or career ambitions’ (Newton et al., 2011, p. 6). Their small sample, however, makes demonstrating the ‘success of volunteering’ in this manner problematic. Moreover, the term NEET has been criticised for failing to capture the diversity of young people’s experiences (Yates & Payne, 2006). Young people may, for example, have consciously chosen to not be in education, employment or training or may be in a transitional period between school and further education. Newton et al.’s findings may therefore reflect a transition young people were already intending to make. Finally, as a yearlong ‘high quality structured placement’ aimed at providing participants with the opportunity to ‘gain skills to improve their employability’,[[21]](#footnote-21) the extent to which their findings are able to speak to shorter and less structured volunteering opportunities may be limited.

Evidence from studies with larger samples, however, indicates different age groups vary in the significance they place on the educational and employment benefits derived through volunteering. Low et al. (2007) recruited 2,075 participants from the 2005 *Citizenship Survey* to explore how and why persons aged 16 and above formally volunteered. They found younger cohorts, who volunteered at least once a month during the previous year, were more likely to ascribe importance to gaining new skills and qualifications as well as enhancing their employment prospects than older participants.

Table 1.2 The personal benefits of volunteering by age (adapted from Low et al. (2007, p. 62))

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Age** |
| **Proportion saying very/fairly important** | **25-34** | **All** |
| I get satisfaction from seeing the results | 98 | 97 |
| I really enjoy it | 98 | 96 |
| It gives me a sense of personal achievement | 94 | 88 |
| It gives me the chance to learn new skills | 80 | 61 |
| It gives me the chance to get a recognised qualification | 25 | 13 |
| It gives me the chance to improve my employment prospects | 53 | 23 |
| *Base (unweighted)[[22]](#footnote-22)* | *124-5* | *827-833* |

While younger participants placed greater emphasis on skills, educational and employability benefits, Table 1.2 indicates that these were considered less important than the more intrinsic aspects of volunteering. Nonetheless young people appear to emphasise such outcomes more so than older persons. This evidence, however, does not demonstrate that volunteering improved these factors, but rather that the participants perceived volunteering to provide an opportunity to develop them. Perception, rather than progression, is evident in other studies, such as vInspired’s (2008) online survey of young people’s perceptions of volunteering and Smith et al.’s (2002) evaluation of the *Millennium Volunteer*’s programme, both of which indicate participants perceived volunteering to have benefitted their employability prospects without providing evidence of whether or not it actually had.

Regarding progressions into employment, Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, and DiTommaso (2015) used a large-scale, longitudinal quantitative dataset to examine the relationship between volunteering and subsequent employment among persons aged 16 and above in the US. In contrast to Ellis Paine et al.’s (2013) finding that volunteering had little effect on later employment in the UK, Spera et al. found volunteers who were out of work in Year 1 had a 27 percent higher chance of being employed in Year 2 compared to those who did not volunteer. This relationship was found to be stronger for those from certain subgroups, notably, those with lower levels of educational attainment. The authors suggest three possible hypotheses to explain this relationship, the third of which they find most compelling: i) volunteering increases social capital and thus access to employment opportunities, ii) volunteering increases human capital meaning volunteers are prepared for work, and iii) volunteering acts as a signal that makes volunteers more attractive to employers. The extent to which volunteering acts as a signal to employers, however, is debateable. While Scottish employers have been found to have a positive view of volunteering on applicants’ CVs, volunteering was often not specifically expected nor played a formal role in the recruitment process (Reilly, 2013). The type of volunteering also made a difference to employers as did the form of accreditation – accreditation based on hours volunteered was viewed less favourably than that based on skills acquired. Thus, while volunteering may have a role in developing suitable skills for the labour market (Rego, Zózimo, Correia, & Ross, 2016), its capacity to translate this into employment is contingent upon a range of factors beyond the individual volunteer.

Despite the difficulty of assessing such outcomes, evidence from these studies indicates volunteering has the potential to enhance individuals’ educational and employment prospects. Indeed, this may be particularly so for NEET young people and those with lower levels of educational attainment, both of which are more prominent in areas of socio-economic deprivation.[[23]](#footnote-23) Having looked at how volunteering can give rise to favourable individual outcomes, the following section examines broader, social outcomes

### Social outcomes

In addition to deriving personal benefits, volunteering can aid citizenship attributes and young people’s engagement with their local communities. Putnam’s (2000) work on the relationship between volunteering and social capital has proved influential here. For Putnam, social capital refers to ‘connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’ (2000, p. 19). Polson, Kim, Jang, Johnson, and Smith (2013) used Putnam’s conception to explore the extent to which youthful participation in the Boys Scouts of America influenced social capital later in life, as measured by the number of clubs adults belonged to and the extent to which they worked with neighbours to address issues in the community. They found participation in Scouts promoted the development of social capital in later life, particularly if the participant was highly engaged in Scouting. Their measures, however, are problematic. By not focusing on the type of clubs adults belonged to it is difficult to know whether membership fostered norms of reciprocity or trust as clubs built on exclusivity may not do this. A similar issue emerges by not explaining the nature of the issues they sought to address in their communities – for example, did they challenge or promote prejudiced attitudes?

Putnam (2000) also distinguishes between bonding and bridging social capital. He contends both can have ‘powerfully positive social effects’ – the former provides a basis for reciprocity and solidarity while the latter enables ‘linkage to external assets’ and ‘information dispersal’ (Putnam, 2000, pp. 22-23). NatCen’s (2011) evaluation of the *v* initiative found young people to relish the opportunity to make friends, particularly for those with disabilities and those who had been out of education and employment. They also found participation drew together young people from diverse backgrounds leading to the development of new social networks with persons they would not normally meet as well as contact with ‘trusted’ adults who could become mentors (NatCent, 2011, p. 91). The authors of the report argue these findings indicate the generation of bonding and bridging capital. The generation of such forms of capital, however, does not necessarily entail positive outcomes. John (2005), for example, found closed bonding capital could restrict the academic attainment of school pupils in England among young people from low socio-economic families, thus problematizing the linear progression of volunteering to positive social capital development.

Despite issues in assessing the benefits accruable to volunteers and the communities in which they act, evidence suggests there are many positive factors volunteering engenders, many of which may have particular pertinence for young people in disadvantaged areas. The following section explores routes into volunteering.

## Starting volunteering

The previous sections have examined the nature of volunteering in terms of definitions, government interventions and outcomes. The rest of the literature review focuses on how individuals start and are inhibited from volunteering. This section focuses on routes into volunteering by exploring motivations for doing so and social factors shaping participation. It problematizes distinctions between altruistic and individualistic motivations and highlights the importance of social context in understanding how individuals start volunteering.

### Motivations

Section 1.2 argued government interventions into youth volunteering often configure volunteering as a way of enhancing employability and meeting policy goals. Hustinx’s (2001) analysis of the shift from ‘classical’ to ‘new’ volunteering sought to capture the movement from unconditional volunteering based on altruism to conditional volunteering based on individualism. Within this framework, volunteers are considered more likely to adopt a cost/benefit approach to volunteering that takes into consideration what they might gain from it. Evidence indicates, however, that the movement from altruism to individualism overlooks the extent to which both motivations can emerge simultaneously (Brooks, 2007; Cornelis, Van Hiel, & De Cremer, 2013; Department for Education and Skills, 2007; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2008; MacNeela & Gannon, 2014; Marta, Guglielmetti, & Pozzi, 2006; Rehberg, 2005; Shannon, 2009).

Dean (2014) argues youth volunteering policy and programmes encourage young people into viewing volunteering in individualistic terms as a route to employment. Young people’s motivations, in contrast to older cohorts, appear to reflect this approach as shown in Table 1.3:

Table 1.3 Reasons for starting to volunteer (Low et al., 2007, p. 37)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Age** |
| **Reasons for starting to volunteer** | **16-24** | **All (16+)** |
| To learn new skills | 46 | 19 |
| To help my career | 27 | 7 |
| *Base (unweighted)* | *64* | *1351-1352* |

In light of young people’s precarious labour market position (Bell & Blanchflower, 2010), it may be unsurprising that they are more likely to be motivated to enhance their employment prospects.[[24]](#footnote-24) Neatly demarcating older and younger volunteers’ motives, however, is a complex endeavour. Using volunteers from the 2012 London Olympic Games, Nicholas and Ralston (2016) explored the extent to which motivations to volunteer differed between older (aged 55 and above) and younger (under 30s) groups. Their initial coding of interview transcripts indicated older volunteers were more likely to identify with altruistic motives and younger volunteers with CV enhancing drivers. However, they found the stories recounted during interviews revealed a ‘complex interplay of values, circumstances and experiences’ making it difficult to assess whether there were different values at play or whether the two groups were responding to different circumstances (Nicholas & Ralston, 2016, p. 142).

Furthermore, young people do not constitute a homogeneous group as evidence by research indicating motivations to volunteer vary by age and socio-economic background. A study of student volunteers in English universities, for example, found younger students, i.e. not mature students,[[25]](#footnote-25) and those from less advantaged backgrounds, assessed by parental occupation or education, were more likely to identify with employability motives (Brewis et al., 2010). Similarly, a UK-wide evaluation of the *v* initiative found persons aged 16-20 were more likely to report being motivated to improve their employability than those aged 21-25 (NatCent, 2011). The Department for Education and Skills (2007) found young people to value volunteering as a way of enhancing employability. Older respondents and those with higher levels of educational attainment had more specific ideas about their career paths and sought volunteering opportunities to further these, while others saw volunteering as a way of compensating for lack of educational achievement.

Individualistic attitudes also appear to be shaped by gender. Several studies have found females to demonstrate greater prosocial attitudes, be motivated to help others and contribute to society in contrast to males who are more likely to volunteer to meet their own needs (Gaskin, 2004; Gil-Lacruz, Marcuello-Servós, & Saz-Gil, 2015; Hill, Russell, & Brewis, 2009). Such findings may be related to normative assumptions concerning the association of masculinity with the public sphere and independence and femininity with the private sphere and caring. The ethic of care, an ethical position associated with femininity and an empathetic concern for others, has been analysed in relation to young people and their dispositions towards volunteering (Karniol, Grosz, & Schorr, 2003). While the ethic of care is associated with femininity it should not be understood as objectively related to females but rather as a set of characteristics linked to normative expectations about female behaviour. During their research, Karniol et al. (2003) found young females were significantly more likely to volunteer than young males. They also found a relationship between the ethic of care and volunteering whereby the higher an individual’s caring score the more likely they were to volunteer, thus reinforcing the normative relationship between volunteering and femininity.

While young people appear to emphasise employability motives, the ends to which these are put appear to vary. The authors of the *v* evaluation argue that for NEET young people volunteering was considered a ‘fundamental stepping stone to becoming more employable’, while for those looking to transition into further education, volunteering added ‘supplementary value’ to their applications (NatCent, 2011, p. 53). For those with fewer educational resources volunteering may, therefore, be viewed as a direct route into work while for their more advantaged counterparts it may be part of a broader strategy of investing in the self for the future (Skeggs, 2004). This contention is evident in other studies. Brooks (2007, p. 426), for example, found middle class young people from relatively affluent areas in England viewed volunteering as a way to present a ‘rounded self’ when applying to university. Similarly, a study of young volunteers in one of Glasgow’s most affluent areas found unanimous recognition of the role volunteering could play in obtaining a place at university (Clement & Lafferty, 2015).

It is important to note young people’s motives for volunteering are not tied solely to individualistic drivers. The 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey found that ‘having fun’ was the most common response to the question of what would make participants volunteer (Linning & Jackson, 2017), echoing earlier research about what young people want from volunteering (Gaskin, 1998). Thus, while volunteering may be promoted to young people in terms of skills development, which may be reflected in their motivations, evidence suggests this is not necessarily their primary motivation. For example, university students across 12 countries were found to identify altruism as a stronger motivation than CV building or social reasons (Handy et al., 2010) and highly engaged student volunteers have been reported to disapprove of individualistic motivations, such as career enhancement (MacNeela & Gannon, 2014). Moreover, a national survey of adults (Low et al., 2007) and a national evaluation of the *v* initiative (NatCent, 2011) found to ‘improve things’ and ‘help others’ were the most cited motivations for volunteering.

### Trigger factors

Motivations for volunteering are important in understanding participation, but so too is the social context from which routes to volunteering are found. Francis (2011) used Clary et al.’s (1998) Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) model to explore university students’ motivations for volunteering. The model assesses motivations by asking respondents to rate the importance of several functions – values, protective, enhancement, understanding, career and social. Rather than being motivated to fulfil a particular function, Francis (2011, p. 9) found the VFI model ‘under-values the importance of primary referents in establishing social norms’. Francis’ data suggests social norms play a large role in determining volunteering behaviour as individuals seek to mimic the conduct of those who are important to them. The importance of context in facilitating volunteering is also highlighted in Holdsworth’s (2010, pp. 434-435) research on university students’ motivations:

[T]he prevailing theme in the literature is of the need to distinguish between individualistic or altruistic motivations. Yet are attempts to categorise motivations driven by an individualistic ontological framework that assumes volunteering activities have to have a purpose?

Holdsworth’s (2010, p. 435) research found that while some participants could locate their activities within their biographical decisions, others ‘recognised the importance of chance encounters, volunteering as much on a whim without a clearly defined purpose’. The question of altruism versus individualism may, therefore, underplay to role of social context in understanding how people start volunteering. Fleischer (2011) continues this line of thinking and contends it is impossible to make a meaningful distinction between altruism and individualism due to the complexity of actors’ motivations. For example, he found his participants’ motives for volunteering changed over the course of their experiences from wanting to help others to emphasising changes in their personalities. These arguments, however, are based on research with university students. Given the emphasis on student volunteering as part of the university experience (Brewis, 2014), it may be the case that such cohorts of young people have increased opportunities to start volunteering, thus problematizing the translation of such arguments into situations where fewer opportunities exist.

Lack of awareness of opportunities to volunteer has been found to be a barrier to young people’s participation (Hill et al., 2009). In terms of finding routes to volunteering opportunities, Shannon’s (2009) research with young volunteers, aged 8-12, found that being asked was a commonly reported reason for volunteering. This raises the question of who encourages young people to volunteer, a question partly addressed in the *Young People in Scotland* survey (Harper & Jackson, 2015). In keeping with existing literature highlighting the significance of families, schools and peers in facilitating volunteering (Law, Shek, & Ma, 2013), the survey found young people to be most influenced by parents or guardians, teachers and friends. The influence of these groups was not felt evenly, females were more likely than males to report that friends encouraged them to volunteer, the influence of friends and parents or guardians was found to decrease as young people aged, while encouragement from teachers was found to rise as young people got older. These differences highlight how the significance of certain groups can vary at different stages of young people’s lives.

Nonetheless, these findings draw attention to word of mouth as a route into volunteering (Low et al., 2007) and suggest individuals may fall into volunteering ‘through circumstance or serendipitous opportunities’ (Holdsworth, 2010, p. 432). This is not, however, circumstance in a vacuum, but within a social context. Circumstantially falling into volunteering is contingent upon access to social networks and/or an environment in which opportunities or a culture of volunteering exists. For example, attending a school that promotes volunteering or has civic-mindedness as part of its identity can enhance pupils’ chances of volunteering (Ballard, Caccavale, & Buchanan, 2015; Dean, 2016). Conversely, growing up in a deprived area or low income household, where volunteering rates are lower, may reduce the opportunities young people have for serendipitously accessing volunteering opportunities. While an individual may be motivated to volunteer, without access to the necessary conditions to do so they will struggle, highlighting how volunteering is ‘highly situated within the rhythms and relations of everyday life’ (Hogg, 2016, p. 186).

One of the defining features of volunteering, discussed in Section 1.1.1, is that it should be a freely undertaken activity. Ellis Paine et al. (2010) distinguish between different forms of coercion – physical, legal, social, individual and institutional – arguing the latter three occupy an ambiguous position in terms of whether an act can be called volunteering.[[26]](#footnote-26) In terms of institutions, researchers have argued there is an increasing expectation that university students should volunteer to increase their employability (Anderson & Green, 2012; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014), while policy and programmes are argued to encourage employability orientated motivations among young people (Dean, 2014). Socially, coercion can be found in the notion that volunteering is necessary in order to stand out from the crowd when applying for further education or employment opportunities (Holdsworth, 2015). Individually, young people may experience pressure from teachers, family or friends to volunteer.

Evidence on the effects of coerced volunteerism is mixed. Henderson, Brown, Pancer, & Ellis-Hale (2007) and Henderson, Pancer, and Brown (2014) found little evidence to suggest mandatory high school community service in Canada generated negative attitudes towards community engagement when comparing the attitudes of university students who had and had not completed the high school programme. University students in England, however, have been found to ‘resent being told to volunteer’ (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014, p. 215), as have unemployed young people in socio-economically deprived locations (MacDonald, 1996). Differences here may be related to the nature of involvement, perceived quality of the opportunity and demographic variations. Those who completed the mandatory service in Canada experienced their volunteer work as meaningful and interesting (Henderson et al., 2014). The unemployed young people in MacDonald’s (1996) study, however, were sceptical about the purported benefits of the volunteering initiative. MacDonald (1996, p. 30) contends their involvement was a ‘strategic response to the negative experience they had of the alternatives open to them’ in the context of a deindustrialised area with scarce employment prospects.

Understanding how young people start volunteering is therefore a complex task. While some young people may be motivated for clear reasons, others may be unable to provide such accounts and may volunteer simply through having been asked. Much of this existing research, however, is based on the responses of university students or those involved in volunteering initiatives. It may therefore underrepresent the experiences of those under the age of 18 and those who are excluded from formal volunteering programmes. The following section looks at barriers to volunteering opportunities and how growing up in a disadvantaged area may shape such obstacles.

## Barriers to volunteering

Section 1.1.2 looked at rates of volunteering and noted demographic variations, such as the lower levels of volunteering exhibited by males and those in areas of multiple deprivation, as well as the higher rates among young people compared to the rest of the population. The structuring of volunteering in this way suggests barriers affect certain demographics. This section examines what is known about such barriers. While it can be difficult to separate personal matters from public issues, the barriers have been grouped into two categories, personal and social.

### Personal barriers

The most cited reason for stopping volunteering in the 2014 wave of the *Scottish Household Survey* was lack of time (Scottish Government, 2015c), a barrier which has been found to have particular pertinence among young people (Gaskin, 2004; Hill et al., 2009; Rochester et al., 2010). A mixed methods study conducted for the *Institute of Volunteering Research* (IVR) (Ellis, 2004), found lack of time to be the most significant barrier to volunteering among young people. Participants perceived volunteering as an intensive activity that had to compete with other demands on their time, such as studying and work commitments. Related to this was the opportunity cost of volunteering – i.e. by volunteering young people have less time to undertake paid work. The IVR study contains little demographic information on the background of the participants,[[27]](#footnote-27) meaning we do not know whether or how their findings vary by social status.

In addition to the opportunity costs of volunteering, barriers have been noted to exist regarding the actual costs of volunteering. Smith, Ellis, Howlett, and O'Brien’s (2004) study exploring the link between volunteering and social exclusion[[28]](#footnote-28) among adults found concerns over travel costs and the perceived difficulty of claiming expenses to be an obstacle. Given young people’s economic dependence on their family, such issues may be heightened.

Lack of confidence can also obstruct routes to volunteering opportunities and is a commonly cited barrier among young people (Ellis, 2004) and socially excluded adults (Smith et al., 2004). It has been argued that if a volunteering opportunity occurs in an alien setting to the participant, their lack of familiarity can undermine their confidence in being there (Rochester et al., 2010). Experience of childhood poverty has been found to undermine young people’s confidence (Ridge, 2011). In light of this, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds may struggle to enter new and unfamiliar settings with the same ease and confidence as those who enjoy privileged upbringings at elite schools (Khan, 2011).

Barriers to further volunteering have also been found to exist following negative experiences of volunteering. Pantea’s (2013) research with young Romanians engaged in cross-border volunteering found evidence of barriers arising before, during and after participation. For example, some volunteers reported feeling instrumentalised which engendered a sense of disempowerment. A similar sentiment was noted among young Australians engaged in compulsory volunteering (Warburton & Smith, 2003). The young volunteers felt they gained little through the volunteer programme while others benefitted, thus leaving them feeling exploited. Indeed, a study in a deprived area of England found unemployed young people had rejected a volunteering programme which was perceived to generate little personal benefit (MacDonald, 1996).

### Social barriers

In terms of social barriers, access to information has also been cited as a barrier to volunteering (Smith et al., 2004). Ellis (2004) found two dimensions to this obstacle among young people, in the first instance there was an apparent lack of information, while in the second, once information had been found, participants were overwhelmed by it and were unable to digest it. This issue highlights the importance of social networks in facilitating access to relevant information about volunteering. Rochester et al. (2010, p. 197) contend there is a ‘danger that those who are not connected to relevant social networks will simply not be asked to get involved’. A UK-wide survey of social action found 11 percent of young people stated they would engage in social action in the future if they knew more about opportunities to take part (Pye et al., 2014). In Scotland, 19 percent of secondary school pupils who did not volunteer indicated they would consider doing so in the future (Harper & Jackson, 2015). These findings suggest an appetite for volunteering that may be curtailed by limited access to information. The sampling strategies used in these studies, however, mean they may not capture the opinions of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.[[29]](#footnote-29) Ellis (2004, p. 9) contends ‘disaffected’ young people have narrow ideas concerning the nature of volunteering reflecting a ‘lack of interaction with volunteers or volunteering’, yet her report does not explicate what is meant by ‘disaffected’. Given the lower levels of formal volunteering in deprived areas and the importance of friends, family and milieu in encouraging volunteering (Francis, 2011; Law et al., 2013), it is possible that this barrier will be exacerbated among those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A longstanding barrier to volunteering is the image people have of it (Gaskin, 1998; Lukka & Ellis, 2001; Smith et al., 2004). Rochester et al. (2010) argue the dominant paradigm (discussed in Section 1.1.3) may perpetuate narrow views of volunteering by conceptualising it as a philanthropic activity, geared towards the provision of help for the needy. The narrow image of volunteering – as an activity for middle-aged, middle-class and altruistic females – has led some researchers to refer to it as an ‘exclusive construct’ (Lukka & Ellis, 2001). The perception of volunteering as a solely altruistic act has been argued to make it a problematic term for young people who, by virtue of wanting something from volunteering – such as incentives, experience and laughs (Gaskin, 1998) – do not see it as applying to them (Lukka & Ellis, 2001). Scholars have argued image issues may explain the low status volunteering has been found to have (Rochester et al., 2010). Recent evidence, however, suggests young people in Scotland have a positive view of volunteering and that negative perceptions are decreasing – 78 percent of secondary school pupils thought volunteering was about helping people, while the proportion who thought it was boring fell from 19 percent in 2009 to 10 percent in 2014 (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Less is known, however, about the attitudes of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Harper and Jackson’s (2015) study found female participants were more likely to view volunteering as an altruistic act, while males were more likely to have negative perceptions. This resonates with findings from an older study (Gaskin, 1998, p. 37) that argued young men were particularly vulnerable to experiencing peer pressure as a barrier to volunteering, as one respondent put it:

It’s like, “Do you want to come and do some voluntary work?” Leave off! I’ve got a reputation to uphold. If my mates see me down there…

The image of volunteering as a pursuit for middle-aged, middle-class women may be particularly off-putting for young males from disadvantaged backgrounds. Fraser’s (2015) ethnography of a Glasgow based young male gang examines the strategies his participants employed to construct masculine identities following the shift from traditional industry to a service economy. He argues that being ‘wan ae the boays’, engaging in risky behaviour and avoiding activities that might be considered ‘girly’ were important ways of constructing their identities. Given that non-volunteering young people are more likely to have narrow perceptions of volunteering than volunteers (Ellis, 2004), it may be the case that non-volunteering young males in disadvantaged areas are put off volunteering by virtue of perceiving it as a feminising activity.

Other people’s attitudes have also been found to act as a barrier to volunteering. Adults with disabilities, ex-offenders and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds have reported being apprehensive about seeking volunteering opportunities through fear of discrimination (Smith et al., 2004). In 1996 the *Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector* argued ‘perhaps the greatest obstacle is the negative attitude to young people as volunteers: many organisations continue to see young people as problematic and not capable of playing a significant role in their activities’ (cited in Gaskin, 2004, p. 27). More recently, research has indicated that younger youth, aged 8-12, are undervalued as potential assets and therefore not offered opportunities to volunteer (Shannon, 2009). Young people have long been viewed as problematic in popular representations (Pearson, 1983) which continue today in debates about youth as a risky population (Shaw, 2013). The stereotyping of young people in disadvantaged areas of Glasgow has been reported to leave young people feeling alienated and marginalised (Neary, Egan, Keenan, Lawson, & Bond, 2013). Not feeling part of a community can act as a barrier to volunteering (Boulianne & Brailey, 2014) and thus may dissuade the involvement of disadvantaged youth in volunteering opportunities.

As well as problematic relationships with local areas acting as barriers to volunteering, young people’s relationships with schools can also limit prosocial behaviour. Experience of being suspended from school as an adolescent has been found to negatively impact volunteering behaviour for those in their early twenties (Kupchik & Catlaw, 2015). Evidence suggests school exclusions are higher in disadvantaged areas of Scotland (Scottish Government, 2015a) suggesting this may be a greater issue for those from such backgrounds. Moreover, the development of a civic orientation has been found to be contingent upon the construction of civic values in a school’s identity (Ballard et al., 2015). Research comparing volunteer brokerage workers’ experiences of recruiting at grammar and comprehensive schools, in middle- and working-class areas of England respectively, found the brokerage workers to report difficulty in working with the latter who were perceived to be ‘unwilling to let outside agencies in’ as they had to ‘prioritise the vital above the important’ (Dean, 2016, p. 651). The brokerage workers also felt comprehensive schools were less likely to view volunteering as part of the ‘educational biographies’ of their pupils in contrast to grammar schools who were perceived to see it as a way of enabling pupils to differentiate themselves when applying for university (Dean, 2016, p. 653). By using private schools as research cites (Ballard et al., 2015) and volunteer brokerage workers as participants (Dean, 2016), however, these studies do not capture the voices of young people in areas of multiple deprivation and thus do not tell us how they experience their schools as facilitators or inhibitors of volunteering.

## Discussion and research questions

This literature review has shown variations in levels of volunteering across Scotland. While young people have been shown to volunteer at a proportionately higher rate than adults, levels of engagement are similarly structured by gender and area based socio-economic deprivation. Conclusions drawn from this data, however, need to be treated with caution due to the varying ways in which people identify themselves as volunteers, a factor which has been argued to vary by social status. In contrast to the dominant paradigm’s conception of volunteering as a predefined and altruistic act, the literature suggests there is a generalist nature to the types of volunteering performed in Scotland which are motivated by a range of reasons. Government interventions were argued to value volunteering for its capacity to enhance policy goals such as employment and wellbeing. Although evidence suggests volunteering can bolster these outcomes, the extent to which it does so is contingent upon the type and frequency of volunteering performed.

The literature review also looked at routes into volunteering and argued the dichotomy between altruistic and individualistic motives potentially overlooks the extent to which individuals fall into volunteering opportunities through social circumstance. Social context was also posited to be an important factor in creating barriers to volunteering. Lack of information, the image of volunteering and negative relationships with school and neighbourhood were shown to inhibit access to opportunities. Such factors are arguably heighted in disadvantaged areas where young people may have less contact with volunteers, may be more likely to view volunteering as a concept that does not relate to them and where educational attainment tends to be lower.

While much has been written about youth volunteering, there are still important gaps in our knowledge. In light of definitional issues, particularly in disadvantaged areas, there is a need to explore the attitudes young people in such areas express in relation to volunteering. There is also a need to look at the value they attach to it, i.e. what does it mean to them and what do they get from it. As discussed, dominant approaches to volunteering are argued to conceptualise it in narrow terms often as a formal procedure geared towards policy goals. The evidence cited above suggests young people express a variety of reasons for volunteering yet this literature largely omits the qualitative experiences of those in disadvantaged areas. In light of the importance of social context in constructing barriers to volunteering there is a need to explore the practical and attitudinal obstacles young people experience in socio-economically deprived neighbourhoods. Finally, the literature review also noted arguments concerning Scotland as having a unique, more localised, approach to volunteering policy than England (Woolvin et al., 2015) highlighting the need for localised studies. This thesis will therefore add to the literature by exploring the volunteering experiences of young people in some of Scotland’s most socio-economically deprived areas via the following research questions:

1. In what ways do young people in deprived areas of Scotland perceive volunteering?
	1. What do they understand by the term volunteering?
	2. What are their attitudes towards volunteering?
2. What do young people in such areas gain from volunteering?
3. How do young people in such areas become involved in volunteering opportunities?
	1. What motives, or would motivate, them to start volunteering?
	2. What factors enable them to start volunteering?
4. What barriers do young people in such areas encounter in relation to volunteering opportunities?
	1. What attitudes are expressed by participants that put them off volunteering?
	2. What factors prevent access to volunteering opportunities?

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1. It should be noted that on 03 August 2015 Volunteer Scotland organised a workshop with the Scottish Government and third sector organisations entitled: ‘Informal Volunteering in Scotland: what is it, and how should we measure it?’ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See: https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy (accessed 29 July 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Despite the different methodologies of these studies – the SHS data was collected in a face-to-face interview, the *Young People in Scotland* data was based on a self-completion questionnaire conducted in school – the questions posed about volunteering behaviours were broadly similar. As such a meaningful, if not direct, comparison can be made. The SHS asked: ‘Thinking back over the last 12 months, have you given up any time to help any clubs, charities, campaigns or organisations. In mean in an unpaid capacity?’ while the *Young People in Scotland* survey asked: ‘Thinking back over the last 12 months, have you given up any of your time to help out with things like clubs, campaigns or organisations without being paid?’. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Data concerning volunteering by deprivation was not analysed in Harper and Jackson’s (2015) report. I would like to thank *Volunteer Scotland* for sharing the raw data on this relationship thereby enabling its examination. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Social action is defined as ‘practical action in the service of others to create positive change’ and covers activities such as ‘fundraising, supporting charities, tutoring and mentoring, supporting other people, and campaigning for causes’ (Pye et al., 2014, p. 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Pupils in Scotland are legally able to leave school aged 15 at the end of May if they turn 16 between 01 March and 30 September that year (see: https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school) (accessed 09 December 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00504766.pdf (accessed 13 September 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The 2015 wave did not contain information on the types of volunteering performed. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The missing column titles are: ‘Health, disability and social welfare’, ‘Local community or neighbourhood groups’, ‘Children’s activities associated with schools’ and ‘Sports/exercise (coaching or organising)’. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Rochester (2013, p. 182) contends the three paradigms can overlap to generate ‘hybrid’ forms of volunteering meaning more than one perspective can be required to understand volunteering. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The current age range for the *National Citizen Service* has been reduced 15-17, see: http://www.ncsyes.co.uk/ (accessed 14 September 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Despite efforts to remove barriers to volunteering, Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 indicate rates of volunteering have remained fairly constant across Scotland, suggesting barriers remain. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See: http://www.vascotland.org/tsis/what-is-a-tsi (accessed 14 September 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Demographically, of the young people *Project Scotland* work with through their localities model, 56 percent have a physical disability or mental health problem, 60 percent live in jobless households, 43 percent have no experience of paid employment, 10 percent have criminal convictions and 25 percent suffer significantly from anxiety and/or depression. This information is taken from a *Project Scotland* document entitled ‘Making it work for Scotland’s hardest to reach young people’ which was kindly supplied by staff at the organisation. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See https://www.projectscotland.co.uk/volunteers/find-the-5000/ (accessed 16 February 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Figures taken from the Voluntary Action Scotland newsletter, circulated on 03 June 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The remaining 37 percent did not supply valid postcodes. This information was kindly provided via personal communication with staff at Glasgow’s TSI, *Volunteer Glasgow*. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See: http://saltireawards.org.uk/schools/curriculum-for-excellence/ (accessed 15 September 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The *Saltire Awards* are promoted to young people partly on the basis that it ‘look[s] great on your CV’ (see http://saltireawards.org.uk/youngperson/saltire-overview/ accessed 15 September 2016). *Project Scotland* offer a Certificate of Work Readiness and state volunteering provides ‘real skills and experience in something you enjoy that could help you get a great job in the end’ (see https://www.projectscotland.co.uk/volunteers/faqs/ accessed 15 September 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This is not to overlook the problematic relationship people from, for example, working class backgrounds can have at university (Loveday, 2015) or the potential difficulties young people can experience post-graduation (Roberts, Noden, West, & Lewis, 2016), but to highlight that as university students the participants in these studies are in a more socially advantageous position than those who are not in education, employment or training. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See https://vinspired.com/content\_packages/633 (accessed 23 September 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The base includes ‘All current formal volunteers who volunteered regularly with their main organisation. Don’t know/refusal responses excluded’ (Low et al., 2007, p. 62). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The number of NEET young people is used as a measure in the educational domain of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Educational attainment at the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 4, 5 and 6 are lower in the 0-20 percent most deprived areas of Scotland (Scottish Government, 2015b). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The small sample size for the 16-24 cohort may, however, bias the result. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Mature students are aged 21 and over and did not go straight to university after school or college (see https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/mature-undergraduate-students) [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. They argue physical and legal coercion to volunteer undermines an act’s status as volunteering. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. One of the organisations, Dubit, who helped conduct the study on behalf of IVR, noted many of their participants were disaffected and hard to reach or marginalised. However, it is not explained what is meant by these terms. The other organisations, Kikass, Youth Action Network, and YouthNet do not provide information regarding the social status of their participants. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The term social exclusion was used to refer to ex-offenders, disabled people and members of BME groups (Smith et al., 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Pye et al. (2014) report on the social class of their participants as assessed by parental occupation, however they do not discuss how this was identified. If based on the young people’s (aged 11-18) accounts of what their parents do, it is possible that the measure is inaccurate. As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, the Harper and Jackson (2015) report sampled pupils in Scottish secondary schools and therefore may have missed those who have left school or are excluded from it – factors which are higher in disadvantaged areas. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)