

# The Interwoven Workplace: Paid and Unpaid Staff Working Together

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Amidst funding cuts and growing demands for services, non-profits are increasingly turning to volunteers to meet their goals. Volunteer-run organizations are also bringing on employees in order to meet funding requirements and expectations of professionalization. At the same time, the volunteer pool is becoming more diverse, with youth and corporate-sponsored, spontaneous and episodic volunteering mixing in with the traditional volunteer image of the retired, energetic senior. The injection of this diverse, unpaid workforce can bring vibrancy and fresh ideas to an organization. Unfortunately, it can also create conflict between the staff and the volunteers. The result can be unhappiness, loss of productivity, and even loss of workers from both sides of the equation. The resources devoted to recruitment and training is wasted and, if deterred by the bad experience, volunteers are lost to society. The ability to avoid or mitigate conflict between paid staff and volunteers would be valuable to Canadian non-profits for their bottom line and their organizational culture. This report seeks to provide the client, Volunteer Victoria, with an understanding of potential causal factors and approaches to avoid or address the conflict and recommendations of ways in which their member organizations can better develop this ability.

For the purpose of this report, the term “interwoven” has been developed to describe a workplace with both paid and unpaid staff working together. This term also implies the overarching contention of this report, that a paid and unpaid workplace encompasses triadic interrelations between the organization, the paid staff, and the volunteers.

Volunteer management scholarship was reviewed for insights into interwoven workplace conflict causes and solutions. This scan had a secondary focus of looking at the use of workplace relations theories in application to the interwoven workplace. Two theories, Perceived Organizational Support, and Psychological Contract Theory, rose to the fore as being favoured by scholars as interpretive frameworks for volunteers working in organizational settings. Two other areas of interest were also discovered through the

literature review: the role of the administrator of volunteers in addressing conflict and the model of the volunteer-friendly organization. Building on the findings of the literature review, the primary research further explored these areas.

Ergo, the two guiding research questions for this report are:

- What are the causes of conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace?
- What are ways for conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace to be addressed?

The secondary guiding research questions were:

- What role should the administrator of volunteers play in addressing conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace?
- To what extent can workplace theories about paid staff relations be applied to the relations between paid and unpaid staff?
- Is the assertion that the organization plays a role in the relationship between paid and unpaid staff, thereby creating a triadic relationship, valid?

## **Methodology and Methods**

This project employed a convergent parallel mixed methods approach in which qualitative and quantitative information was gathered at the same time, and then triangulated to add validity and merged to add depth to the findings (Cresswell, 2014, p. 219). This approach was chosen in order to provide an overview of the current state of conflict in interwoven workplaces, assess possible causal factors and gather smart practices.

The research was designed in two stages: a literature review and an online survey. The first stage, the literature review, examined the causes of conflict, the shifts in volunteer management approaches and also the smart practices and organizational models proposed as means of addressing that conflict. The review also sought theoretical explanations for interwoven workplace conflict. Three areas arose through this review as potential avenues for determining causal explanations or best practices. These areas were: two predominant theoretical explanations which were Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract Theory, the central and complex role of the administrator of volunteers, and the

impact of the model of the organization upon the interwoven relationship. These formed the secondary research questions and guided the design of the second stage of the methodology.

The second stage was an online survey using administrators of volunteers as the sample. The survey was designed to test the validity of Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract Theory as explanatory factors of the conflict. It also assessed the existing responsibilities and resources of the administrators' roles and gathered information about favoured smart practices, including organizational models.

### **Key Findings and Analysis**

The findings of the primary research complemented and built upon the literature review. After establishing current favoured practices and ascertaining that conflict exists between volunteers and paid employees in 35% of respondents' workplaces, the findings were organized by the three areas highlighted through the literature review and illustrated in the conceptual framework: testing the applicability of the two predominant theories, Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract Theory, examining the responsibilities and resourcing of the Volunteer Administrator role, and considering a triadic perspective of a volunteer friendly organization.

#### *Favoured Practices*

Through the survey results it was determined that current favoured practices in volunteer management that the respondents deemed most successful in addressing conflict were one-on-one counselling and mediation and role clarity. The respondents felt strongly that organizations could provide training and opportunity, as well as access to information and decisions as a means of preventing conflict. The role of nurturing interpersonal relationships, in the form of valuing a worker's contribution, caring about their well-being and treating them with dignity and respect, were all highly rated as important to a peaceful workplace.

#### *The Role of Administrators of Volunteers*

The findings highlighted the concern that the role of the administrator of volunteers is often overburdened. Ratios of administrators to unpaid staff were 18 times higher than

that of paid staff. Administrators are responsible for a myriad of duties, and many are coordinating volunteers in addition to another position, quite often that of executive director. Two thirds of the administrators are not aware of, or do not have access to, resources for addressing conflict in their workplaces. When coupled with expanding expectations for the role due to the shifts in demographics and the nature of volunteering, the administrator role is under duress and may not be as effective as intended.

### *The Applicability of POS and Psychological Contracts*

The findings also explored the validity of Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract theories as lenses through which to understand interwoven workplace conflict. Perceived Organization Support Theory uses workplace scenarios related to fair treatment, supervisor support and workplace conditions as indicators of when a worker feels that their organization is supportive of them. In this theory, if support is perceived, workplace behavior is more positive. Lack of perceived support has negative results that can cause conflict. In the findings of this report, several Perceived Organization Support conditions were also rated as favoured practices. These included the three related to the nurturing of interpersonal relationships. Other Perceived Organizational Support factors, such as role clarity and suitability, and training and opportunity were also rated in the surveys as moderating conflict. Most of the factors of the Perceived Organizational Support survey were not strongly supported as affecting conflict in interwoven workplaces, however. This indicates that, while the mechanism behind the theory – that of perceived support affecting workplace behavior and reducing conflict, holds true according to the literature – the factors used to determine support are not generally applicable to understanding conflict in the interwoven workplace.

Psychological Contract Theory is based upon the concept that individuals hold unwritten contracts with other parties, based upon the belief that a promise of exchange has been made. The nature of the exchange, whether it is a gift in exchange for work (transactional), or socioemotional reward (relational) or the furthering of a valued cause (ideological), is said to be different between paid and unpaid staff and that this difference can cause conflict. The research of this report found that the differentiation between paid and unpaid staff was not strong, with the currency highlighted in the literature review as

being exclusive to volunteers, ideological, being the one selected as most equal for both paid and unpaid staff. Again, the mechanism behind the theory – that of individual unwritten contracts with other parties remains valid, but the differences in currencies as an explanation of conflict does not.

### *Volunteer Friendly Organizations*

The findings built upon the models that were presented through the literature review of volunteer-friendly organizational cultures. In the literature review, this was first described as an organization that welcomed volunteers. The description of this organizational culture in the survey responses was an evolved model; one that moved from the unilateral volunteer friendly approach to a triadic workplace with an integrated team that embodied an organization-wide volunteer-friendly ethos. The survey respondents strongly supported this broader interpretation of a volunteer-friendly organizational culture, upholding it as an effective practice for conflict prevention. This interwoven workplace ethos is described by the respondents as a symbiotic relationship between the staff, volunteers, and the organization, based upon mutual appreciation and respect and an acknowledgement of the value of volunteering within the organization.

The creation of this model is the responsibility of all individuals and departments, supported by the administrator of volunteers but not reliant upon them. Given that half the respondents who have conflict-free workplaces describe components of this model, the interwoven workplace ethos becoming a societal norm would be beneficial.

### **Recommendations**

Since Volunteer Victoria serves the community through six core functions, these recommendations have been directed at supporting these functions as a means of easing implementation.

#### **Core Function #1 - Brokerage:**

*Recommendation 1: Consider alternate volunteer management practices and reconsider universalistic practices*

In order to help member organizations adjust to the changing demographic and nature of volunteering, member organizations can be encouraged to be more open to alternate models that would welcome online, episodic, or more informal volunteers. Volunteer Victoria could host forum sessions in which members share their approaches to matching alternate volunteer management styles to the nature, needs and demographics of their organization, the volunteers and the staff. The article by Brudney & Meijs, (2014) discussed in the literature review, gives an overview of scholarship in this area that could be used as pre-reading. The re-enforcement by Volunteer Victoria of the concept that universalistic practice is not necessarily the only accepted approach to volunteer management could trigger some lively discussions, validate efforts by the administrators to use customized approaches in the eyes of their organizations and assist some of the member organizations in being open to a new pool of volunteers.

### **Core Function #2 - Marketing and Promotions:**

*Recommendation 2: Celebrate paid staff who successfully work with volunteers*

Since the literature and the findings showed that paid and unpaid staff are equally invested in the organization socioemotionally and ideologically, and that both paid and unpaid staff should be valued, cared for, and treated with dignity and respect, there is indication that the generally unilateral approach toward volunteer recognition should be re-evaluated. Volunteer Victoria could start a campaign that recognizes the relationships rather than the volunteers alone. This would also encourage other staff and organizations to consider a more interwoven approach to their volunteer program.

### **Core Function #3 - Emerging and Smart Practice Development, Training and Development:**

*Recommendation 3: Offer conflict mediation workshops and resources*

Volunteer Victoria already offers workshops in a variety of topics, including workshops focussed upon paid staff and volunteers working together. This recommendation is to include conflict mediation training in these offerings and promote

resources for information so that the administrators of volunteers are better equipped to recognize and approach conflict when it arises.

*Recommendation 4: Provide training in workplace theories*

An understanding of theories like Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract can be valuable for all stakeholders within an organization to understand what might motivate behaviour. This report found that the conditions of Perceived Organizational Support do not all apply to the interwoven workplace. Some of the workplace relations theories that arose through the literature review of this report could be introduced as topics of discussion to the Emerging Leaders Network and the Volunteer Managers Network of Volunteer Victoria. The conditions of Perceived Organizational Support could be workshopped at the network meetings into a customized list as an exercise to generate discussion around factors that affect conflict in the interwoven workplace.

*Recommendation 5: Provide specialized “off the side of the desk” resources for Executive Directors*

Executive Directors are experts at multi-tasking. Many have extra pressures placed upon them by coordinating volunteers and staff in addition to their other roles. Volunteer Victoria could assist them by providing templates of policies and newsletters, and working to develop a standard at which point a separate position of volunteer coordinator is warranted. This would help the Executive Director recognize when a position is warranted and support their advocacy to their board.

**Core Function #4 - Develop Volunteering Opportunities:**

*Recommendation 6: Advocate for and promote the Interwoven Workplace Ethos as a societal norm.*

Promote the model and consider developing an Interwoven Workplace certification program. The Interwoven Workplace Ethos requires training for paid and unpaid staff in working with each other, organization-wide commitment, including leadership,

communication of organizational values and vision, and integration of volunteers into the organizational culture. Membership organizations should be encouraged to share vision and direction with all levels of staff including volunteers. Discussion around values should be made up of both paid and unpaid staff. The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement provides a solid basis for this ethos, but advocating for the inclusion of a more triadic approach, which places more emphasis upon the paid staff than is outlined in the current code would be valuable. Examples would be the inclusion of paid staff in the training and orientation process and recognition for working within volunteer/ paid staff teams.

#### **Core Function #5 - Policy Development and Response:**

*Recommendation 7: Establish and promote job roles and responsibilities standards for the administrator of volunteer position.*

In order to enable administrators of volunteers to be more effective, provide member organizations with guidelines around maximum supervisory reports, suggested balance of responsibilities, policy and procedure templates for conflict resolution and minimal conflict resolution resourcing.

*Recommendation 8: Encourage unions to incorporate supplementation by volunteers as a benefit, not a threat.*

Job security for employees who perceive volunteers as a threat to their position was seen as only a minor issue in the literature. Job security was strongly dismissed in the research as a cause of conflict. Wording in contracts may still reflect outdated concerns about substitution by volunteers. New contracts can include clear terminology around substitution versus supplementation. Review the wording in existing contracts of key unions and offer suggestions for changes that recognize the current role volunteers play in organizations.

#### **Core Function #6 - Strategic Consultation and Resources:**

*Recommendation 9: Establish a "conflict crisis-line".*

This confidential service, perhaps online, would build upon existing consultation services but be more immediate, offering support for the administrator and outside mediation for the conflicting parties if necessary. For those in need, this would provide the support that was noted by respondents as a key resource in addressing conflict.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....	xv
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Defining the Issue.....	1
1.2 The Client.....	2
1.3 Purpose and Research Questions.....	2
1.4 Report Structure.....	3
2.0 Background and Terms of Reference.....	5
2.1 Conceptualizing Interwoven Workplaces.....	5
2.2 Conceptualizing Volunteering.....	6
2.3 Volunteers in the Non-profit Sector.....	7
2.4 The Administrator of Volunteers.....	9
2.5 Background Summary.....	10
3.0 Literature Review.....	11
3.1 Introduction.....	11
3.2 Conflict in the Interwoven Workplace.....	12
3.3 Approaches to the Administration of Unpaid Staff.....	15
3.3.1 Differences Between Paid and Unpaid Staff.....	15
3.4 Volunteer-Friendliness and Organizational Culture.....	19
3.5 Theories Applied to the Interwoven Workplace.....	22
3.5.1 Status Characteristics Theory.....	23
3.5.2 Social Identity Theory.....	24
3.5.3 Organizational Identity Theory.....	24
3.5.4 Social Exchange Theory.....	26
3.5.5 Perceived Organizational Support.....	27
3.5.6 Psychological Contract.....	27
3.6 Conceptual Framework.....	31
3.7 Summary.....	33
4.0 Methodology, Methods and Data Analysis.....	34

4.1	Methodology: Research Design .....	34
4.2	Methods .....	35
4.2.1	Sample .....	35
4.2.2	Recruitment .....	35
4.2.3	Instrument.....	36
4.2.4	Response .....	37
4.2.5	Analysis.....	37
4.3	Limitations and Delimitations .....	37
5.0	Findings: Interview Results.....	39
5.1	Background Information on the Respondents.....	39
5.1.1	Organizational focus.....	39
5.1.2	Job Title .....	40
5.1.3	Responsibilities .....	40
5.1.4	Organizational Size .....	41
5.2	Survey Theme: Causes of Conflict Between Staff.....	43
5.2.1	Fair Treatment.....	45
5.2.2	Supervisor Support.....	46
5.2.3	Work Conditions .....	48
5.3	Survey Theme: Preventing and Addressing Conflict.....	50
5.3.1	Current Favoured Practices: A Quantitative Query .....	51
5.3.2	Current Favoured Practices: A Qualitative Query .....	52
5.3.3	Current Favoured Practice Based Upon POS Index .....	54
5.3.4	Resources that Prevent and Address Conflict.....	55
5.4	Differences Between Paid and Unpaid Staff.....	56
5.4.1	Transactional PC .....	56
5.4.2	Relational PC.....	56
5.4.3	Ideological PC .....	57
5.5	Summary of Findings.....	58
6.0	Discussion and Analysis.....	59
6.1	The Role of the Administrator of Volunteers .....	59
6.2	Application of POS and Psychological Contract .....	61
6.3	Volunteer Friendly Organizational Culture.....	65
7.0	Recommendations .....	68

8.0	Conclusion.....	73
9.0	References.....	75
10.0	Appendix A.....	92

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1 The Triadic Relationship	p. 3
Figure 2 Conceptual Framework	p. 33
Figure 3 Organizational Focus	p. 39
Figure 4 Job Titles	p. 40
Figure 5 Number of paid and Unpaid Staff	p. 42
Figure 6 Ratio of Workers to Managers	p. 43
Figure 7 Causes of Conflict: Fair Treatment Conditions of POS	p. 45
Figure 8 Differential of Fair Treatment Conditions	p. 46
Figure 9 Causes of Conflict Supervisor Support Conditions of POS	p. 47
Figure 10 Differential of Supervisor Support Conditions	p. 47
Figure 11 Causes of Conflict Work Conditions of POS	p. 48
Figure 12 Differential of Work Conditions	p. 49
Figure 13 Comparative Application of Psychological Contract Currencies	p. 57
Table 1 The Conditions of POS	p. 36
Table 2 POS Conditions: Causes of Conflict	p. 50
Table 3 Current Favoured Practices	p. 51
Table 4 POS: Actions to Address Conflict	p. 55

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Defining the Issue

A growing challenge to non-profit work cultures throughout Canada is the management of an increasingly diverse workforce created by the interweaving of paid staff and volunteers. Issues can arise when paid environments introduce unpaid staff or when volunteer environments introduce paid staff as organizations adjust to changing demands and resources. Organizational cycles, group dynamics, individual life and commitment stages, and personality types can further complicate the interweaving of volunteers and paid staff.

The tensions that can arise within these scenarios can cause unhappiness, loss of productivity and even loss of staff (Yan & Tang, 2003). From the perspective of the individuals, the well-documented benefits of volunteering (Morrow-Howell, 2009, pp. 1-2; Thoits & Hewitt, 2001, p 118; Wilson, 2000) are reduced in such an environment. From the perspective of the organization, resources devoted to recruiting and training volunteers is wasted if the volunteer decides to end the commitment prematurely.

Volunteer Victoria, the client for this project, supports many organizations that rely upon volunteer staff to support their day-to-day operations. Lisa Mort-Putland, Executive Director, has witnessed tensions causing issues within their membership organizations. For example, she is aware of situations where long-time volunteers yell at new staff and staff exclude volunteers from decision-making related to processes and practices. Further, there are liability issues that jeopardize entire programs because volunteers are not following workplace standards. She has also seen volunteers picking up the tasks of laid-off staff, causing paid staff to feel resentful and abandoned and volunteers to feel like the default choice.

## **1.2 The Client**

The client for this Project, Volunteer Victoria, works with a broad range of organizations throughout the Greater Victoria Region with the mission to “inspire everyone to volunteer.” They offer training and advice in volunteerism and non-profit leadership. Volunteer Victoria promotes and connects volunteers and volunteer opportunities. They provide programming and networking aimed at enhancing the volunteer base, the volunteer experience and community health. They also advocate on behalf of the volunteer community and offer resources and consultation services to its members (Volunteer Victoria, 2016, Mission, Vision, Values).

## **1.3 Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this research is to expand upon the understanding of causes of conflict in interwoven workplaces. Volunteer Victoria recognizes that dysfunction in the interwoven workplace threatens the efficacy and productivity of its member organizations and the perception and rate of volunteerism in society. In response, Volunteer Victoria would like to develop a deeper understanding of this problem and provide its membership with the knowledge that will help them manage the unique forces that affect their workplace.

It is anticipated that this report will add to the level of service Volunteer Victoria provides to its membership. The report’s recommendations will offer Volunteer Victoria ideas for working toward a better understanding of conflict in the workplace and means to start addressing the issue.

The two guiding research questions for this report are:

- What are the causes of conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace?
- What are ways for conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace to be addressed?

The secondary guiding research questions are:

- What role should the administrator of volunteers play in addressing conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace?

- To what extent can workplace theories about paid staff relations be applied to the relations between paid and unpaid staff?
- Is the assertion that the organization plays a role in the relationship between paid and unpaid staff, thereby creating a triadic relationship, valid?

#### 1.4 Report Structure

This project is based upon an overarching paradigm of a triadic relationship between paid staff, unpaid staff and the non-profit organization in interwoven workplaces.



*Figure 1:* The triadic relationship between paid staff, unpaid staff and the organization in which they work. The role of the Administrator of Volunteers is shown as an intermediary between the three.

The research seeks to explore the causes and prevention of conflict in light of the influence of the organizational setting. An overview of interwoven workplaces and practices of administration of volunteers in the non-profit sector will be given in the background section. The project then presents a literature review to examine workplace relation theories that have been used to understand and address interwoven workplaces in light of the organizational impact. Organizational Support Theory and the associated

measure, Perceived Organizational Support (POS), are introduced and these two theories provide the structure for some of the primary research. The research, conducted through an online survey, gathered current favoured practices explored causes and moderators of conflict in the organizational setting.

The sample invited to partake in the questionnaire was made up of administrators of volunteer programs of non-profit organizations. This sample was chosen as they are in the central role of the triadic relationship being studied and it was felt that they were in the best position to comment upon the circumstances. The nature of their position is also sensitive to interrelations. The findings of the questionnaire are then presented, followed by a discussion and recommendations.

## 2.0 Background and Terms of Reference

In this section, an overview of interwoven workplaces in the non-profit sector and the situations that lead to conflict will be given. First, an overview of non-profit volunteering will be provided in order to give an overview of the current circumstances and focus of much of Volunteer Victoria's membership. This is the sector on which the recommendations of this report will focus. The role of volunteer administrators will then be discussed as this is the sample used for the primary research. The paid staff component of the triadic relationship will be introduced in this chapter and will focus on providing information about the differences between paid and unpaid staff within organizations.

### 2.1 Conceptualizing Interwoven Workplaces

This researcher is putting forward a new term as a suggestion to fill the gap in terminology to describe this interweaving of paid staff and volunteers. For the purpose of this report, an organization that involves paid and unpaid staff working together on an operational level is called "interwoven". Terms used in existing literature do not encompass the triadic inter-relations that this project is examining. Other terms in the wider literature that are related, but do not specifically define this concept, are hybrid, co-production, and interactional VM (van Vuuren, 2008, p. 315; Brudney & England, 1983; Studer, 2016).

The hybrid organization (van Vuuren, 2008, pp. 315-316), refers to a broader definition of the combining of values structures and methods of production. Although some non-profits that incorporate both paid and unpaid staff may be included, the definition refers more to a business model such as a social enterprise.

Co-production refers to the overlapping of the users and producers of a service (Brudney & England). It is a form of participative citizenry in which the beneficiaries are producers of the services they use. While volunteering can be one dimension of this, it is not the only one and the interaction with paid staff is also not a vital component.

Interactional VM was coined by Studer to differentiate from the classical human relations management approach and one that evaluates the management of volunteers in the workplace (Studer, 2016, p. 690). While this definition is directly referring to paid and unpaid staff working together, it is describing a management approach, not the

environment itself. The interwoven workplace, therefore, is put forward as a descriptor that acknowledges the complexity of the relations, obligations and expectations between paid staff, unpaid staff, and the organization.

## **2.2 Conceptualizing Volunteering**

The definition of volunteering has been changing over the last 20 years and is still a matter of debate. Most definitions emphasize free will and the absence of material reward. Some definitions include reference to volunteering as being over a longer time period (Snyder & Omoto, 2008, p. 3; Penner, 2002, p. 448). More recent discussions, however, point to the trend toward episodic or spontaneous volunteering (Handy & Brudney, 2007, p. 8; Brudney & Meijs, 2014, p. 305) and micro-volunteering, also known as virtual or online volunteering (Volunteer Canada, 2012, p. 22). References to the beneficiary of volunteering include individuals, groups, a cause, a benevolent organization, a community or society as a whole (Cnann, Handy & Wassworthe, 1996, as cited in Yanay & Yanay, 2008, p. 66., Gaskin & Smith, 1997, as cited in Kreutzer & Jager, 2011, p 637, Snyder & Omoto, 2008, p. 3). More recently, the listed beneficiaries of volunteering have included broader concerns, such as the world economy or the environment, and also emphasize the benefits to the volunteers themselves. Perhaps the main feature of more recent discussions about volunteering is the emphasis upon the diversity of volunteers, motivations, situations, and outcomes.

For the purpose of this study, therefore, volunteering will be defined as freely giving of time, skills or energy to assist where it is perceived that help is needed. This open definition allows for short-term and unplanned volunteering, as well as a variety of desired results and beneficiaries. It also encompasses the aspect of volunteering that is often missed in definitions, that of solo or independent volunteering outside of a recognized cause or group. While acknowledging the diversity of such volunteer situations, the majority of volunteering that is documented takes place within an organizational setting (Penner, 2002, p.450). In Canada, 93% of volunteers work within 161,000 non-profit organizations (Statistics Canada, 2004, as cited in Handy & Brudney, 2007, p.1). This study will be examining this organizational setting and the conflict that can arise between paid

staff and volunteers in this context. Volunteers who work on the operational level of these organizations will be the focus, and, as such, will also be referred to as unpaid staff.

### **2.3 Volunteers in the Non-profit Sector**

Over the last few decades, volunteers working at the operational level have become a defining characteristic of the non-profit sector (Netting et al, 2004, as cited in Caduri & Weiss-gal, p. 2459). Volunteering is also becoming an increasing part of Canadian society and work experience. The following statistics underscore this trait:

- Eighty percent of non-profit and voluntary organizations in Canada have volunteers (Murray, 2006, pp. 21 – 22)
- Volunteers gave over two billion hours of their time to Canadian non-profits in 2007 (Holoday & Veldhuis, 2011, p. 5; Imagine Canada, 2010).
- The dollar equivalent of volunteer labour is more than \$14 million (Mook, Handy & Quarter, 2007, p. 58)
- Almost half of Canadians over the age of 15 volunteer (Vézina & Crompton, 2012, p. 37).
- In BC, 1.5 million volunteer positions contributed the equivalent of 152,000 full-time jobs annually (Murray, 2006, p. 21, Imagine Canada, 2007, p. 57).

There are numerous advantages for non-profit organizations through involving volunteers in their operations. Non-profits find that volunteers enhance their work by supporting new or growing programs, providing leadership, expertise and mentoring, fundraising, and community connections (Eisner, Grimm Jr, Maynard, & Washburn, 2009, Non-profits need more talent, para. 2). Although often referred to only as free labour, volunteers contribute knowledge and experience, diversity, social capital and connections to community members and other potential volunteers (Wisner, et al, 2005, p. 157).

It is also recognized that volunteers are a source of monetary donations, being four times more likely to give a charitable donation than are non-volunteers (Hobson, et al, 1997, p.28). From a broader perspective, the act of volunteering is linked to the health of civil society, beyond the delivery of services and programs. It builds social capital and

cohesion within communities. Ultimately, it is an act of citizenship and an expression of what is deemed essential to a functional, thriving society (Rehnborg, 2007, pp. 122-123; Brudney & Meijs, 2009, p.564; Craig-Lees, Harris & Lau, 2008, p.2).

In the last decade in particular, concerns have been expressed that there has been a decline in volunteering in North America, although the decline in numbers was mostly seen in the United States (Barnes & Sharpe, 2009, p. 170; Brudney & Meijs, 2009, p. 566). In Canada, there has not been a similar decrease, although the number of hours dedicated to volunteer work has levelled out (Vezina & Crompton, 2012, p. 37). It is noted that 35% of North American volunteers leave before finishing a year of commitment, that the average commitment is about 1.5 years and that there are fewer career volunteers. (Da'vila, 2008, as cited in Hidalgo & Moreno, 2009, p. 594-595; Taylor et al, 2006, p.123). The decline in the United States has been connected with a decline in social capital, although there is debate about which came first, as they are interconnected (Putnam, 2000; Cruz, 2009, pp.12-13).

The perception of decline may in fact be accounted for, at least in part, by the shift in the nature of volunteering. Changes in technology, as well as work and life patterns, may be leading to a volunteer demographic that is more spontaneous or episodic in their commitment (Gaskin, 2003, p.5; Snyder & Omoto, 2008, p. 23). There are increasing numbers of corporate volunteers who are supported by their employers to volunteer but often only for brief periods. Student volunteers, for whom the time they give is part of their educational requirements, are also on the increase. Younger volunteers may also be filling a gap year before returning to post-secondary training or paid employment. In a challenging job market, many are looking to volunteering as a means of gaining valuable work experience to pad out their resumes (Brudney & Meijs, 2009, p. 569; Hager & Brudney, 2011, p. 139). Although over half of this younger age category participates in volunteering, their volunteer hours per year are in the lower range - between one to 55 hours a year (Vezina & Crompton, 2012 p. 41).

Conversely, only 39% of those aged 55+ volunteer, but those who do average 223 annual volunteer hours (Sinha, 2015, Imagine Canada, 2010). The characteristics of the top, or "uber-volunteer", is senior (past the age of 65), retired, and committed to an organization for long term, and more hours annually (Volunteer Canada, p. 5; Vezina &

Crompton, p. 38). This top 10% of volunteers accounts for 53% of the total volunteer hours, dedicating over 390 hours per person per year.

There is a branch of volunteer scholarship that examines the motivations and benefits of volunteering. Studies in this field look at the influences of age, gender, commitment, social pressure, religion, education, income, culture, and personality traits as motivating factors (Craig-Lees, Harris & Lau, 2008, pp. 4-5). Benefits of volunteering are also studied, with results ranging from role identity, self-esteem and social integration to enhanced muscular strength, reduced pain and delayed mortality (Fried et al, 2004, Arnstein et al, 2002, and Musick, Herzog & House, 1999, as cited in Tang, Choi & Morrow Howell, 2012, p 605). Interest in the motivations and benefits of volunteering stems from the focus on recruitment and retention by those responsible for volunteers within an organization: the administrator of volunteers.

## **2.4 The Administrator of Volunteers**

The role of the administrator of volunteers varies widely between non-profit organizations, from paid, full time to informal and volunteer. The goal of the position is commonly seen as finding volunteers for the organization and, once drawn in, keeping them committed (Studer, 2016, p.690). From the organization's perspective fewer new volunteers to train, less turnover and greater experience of volunteers means a smaller economic cost and increased productivity (Vantilborgh et al, 2014, p. 219; Stirling, Kilpatrick & Orpin, 2011, p. 321). Hence, knowledge based upon motivation and benefits, as related to recruitment and retention, is seen as the basis of a volunteer administrator's toolkit.

High expectations are placed upon the volunteer administrator to appropriately screen, assign, train and monitor the volunteer with the goal of satisfaction, commitment and positive behaviour (Vinton, 2012, pp. 135 – 136; Handy & Brudney, 2007, p. 2; Paull & Omari, 2015, p. 246; Vecina et al, 2013, p. 292). This positive behaviour is sometimes referred to as Organizational Citizenship Behaviour in workplace theories.

The inverse of the desired outcome of volunteer administration is low retention rates, low productivity or poor work behaviours, also known as Counterproductive Work

Behaviour. These inverse results could be seen as a failing of the administrator's practice. Administrators are expected to develop a comprehensive understanding of a volunteer's motivations and characteristics, monitor changes to these individualistic aspects, apply their skills and motivations to an appropriate task or role within the organization, build trust and an understanding of the organization's policies, values and goals, provide training and information for both paid and unpaid staff, ensure that recognition and rewards are appropriately given and maintain a balance of power within the interwoven workplace (Waters & Bortree, 2007, pp. 63-64; Stirling, Kilpatrick & Orpin, p. 322). It seems that, as the value of the role of administrator of volunteers becomes more recognized, the expectations also increase.

## **2.5 Background Summary**

The term "interwoven" is introduced as describing an organization that involves paid and unpaid staff working together on an operational level. The definition of volunteering itself is changing due to an increasing diversity, motivations and circumstances. In its many permutations, volunteering and the interwoven workplace are increasingly becoming defining characteristics of the non-profit sector and key aspects of the Canadian workforce. Along with this, the role of the administrator of volunteers is becoming more established and the responsibilities of the role are expanding. The literature review will explore the shifting expectations upon the administrator of volunteers and note smart practices and models of the interwoven workplace. It will also provide an overview of workplace relations theories that have been put forward by scholars as potential explanations of conflict in the interwoven workplace.

## 3.0 Literature Review

### 3.1 Introduction

This review seeks to place the proposed research in the context of the previous work conducted in this area. The review process followed a traditional format of scanning peer-reviewed articles using key search words and phrases. Topics around paid and unpaid staff were initially searched, then refined to encompass work that considers the organization as a key component of the interwoven workplace. The search engines Google Scholar and JSTOR were predominantly used in the initial search. Search terms of “volunteer” and “unpaid” were combined with “staff” and “paid” and were further refined with “workplace relations”, “organizational”, “conflict” and some of the more dominant theory names themselves such as “Social Exchange”, “Perceived Organizational Support” and “Psychological Contract”. Reference lists from articles that arose from this initial search were then scanned for relevant articles addressing the organizational component. An effort was made to seek out articles that had been published within the last 15 years. Seminal studies from before that time-period have been included in this literature review in order to give a more complete picture of the development of thought in this field.

The purpose of this search was to determine what theories, practices or models have been put forward that focus on the organizational impact as means of understanding and addressing conflict between paid and unpaid staff in the workplace. The knowledge gained through the literature review also guided the construction of the questionnaire that comprised the primary research of the report.

This literature review can be broken into two sections. The first section will explore discussions that address conflict in the interwoven workplace, as well as the expectations around the role of the administrator of volunteers. Smart practices and models will be noted. This part of the review will also explore the overarching paradigm of this report: that of the triadic relationship between paid staff, unpaid staff and the organization itself as the basis for understanding conflict in the interwoven workplace. Studies that have examined conflict in the interwoven workplace, and those that have looked at means of addressing this conflict will be introduced.

The second section of the literature review will look at theories that have been identified in the literature that examine the volunteer experience in the workplace will be reviewed. This study highlights two related perspectives, the Psychological Contract, and Perceived Organizational Support (POS), as means of illuminating the organizational contribution to the workplace relations within an interwoven workplace. The review explores prominent factors of POS as they have been presented in the literature in relation to the interwoven workplace. This information will provide a solid basis upon which the research analysis and discussion can be built.

### **3.2 Conflict in the Interwoven Workplace**

Among the challenges placed upon the administrators of unpaid staff is the management of conflict in the interwoven workplace. Conflict has long been recognized but not often addressed (Pearce, 1993, p. 142; Kreutzer & Jager, 2011, p. 635). Paid and unpaid staff relations have been described as a delicate balance (Wandersmand & Alderman, 1993, p. 67, as cited in Netting, Borders & Huber, 2004, p. 70). Although this balance is often maintained, when negative experiences arise, job satisfaction for both parties drops with reports of stress, overwork, and greater intention to quit (Rogelberg et al, 2010, p. 435).

Some discussions about paid and unpaid staff conflict are quick to turn to solutions. These are usually identified as the development of better communication, training, clearer objectives, and trust. (Macduff, 1995, Rogelberg et al, 2010, p. 426). The onus is placed on the administrator of volunteers to provide this, both to the volunteers and to the paid staff, in order to bring about a greater degree of mutual understanding. It has been pointed out, however, that the actions of the administrator must be grounded in a solid understanding of the causes of the conflicts (Kreutzer & Jager, 2011, p. 637).

The form that the conflict takes is as individual as the relationships in which it occurs, although some examples are more commonly given in studies; personality clashes, bullying and intimidation, overwork or under-appreciation, being the victim of gossip, rumour or ridicule, and being criticized, shouted at or shut out (Paull & Omari, 2015, pp. 248-251; Rogelberg et al, p. 425). It has been pointed out that many of these issues also

arise in a non-interwoven workplace based upon personality types and interpersonal skills, status, power and turf struggles and miscommunication, all of which fall under the purvey of Human Resource managers. Unique to the role of the Volunteer Administrator, however, is that these issues can be intensified by the additional diversity of age, background, ability, motivation, expectations and even schedule introduced by the presence of unpaid staff. (Paull & Omari, p. 251).

Beyond these standard workplace issues are additional interwoven circumstances that can add to the causes of conflict. These circumstances are usually portrayed from either the perspective of the volunteer or the paid staff. Volunteers may see paid staff as giving them the menial, uninteresting tasks or, conversely, the tasks that are difficult to manage and overwhelming. The perception of volunteers as working out of the goodness of their hearts, based upon emotional bonds to the cause of the organization, can also set up a struggle for legitimacy. In this, volunteers may see their work as more valid and representative of the vision of the organization since their views are unsullied by monetary concerns. They may feel that their actions are better aligned with the goals of the organization and that the actions of paid staff are self-serving and ignorant of the real world (Netting, Borders & Huiber, 2004, pp. 82-83; O'Toole & Gray, 2016, pp. 68 - 71).

Resistance on the part of paid staff to volunteers in their workplace is also often cited as an underlying cause of conflict (Vinton, 2012, p.36). This can stem from paid staff not seeing how volunteers help the organization in getting work done and reaching goals. They may also see volunteers as less capable and more work than they are worth. Paid staff feel that unpaid staff are unreliable, and hard to manage due to the lack of monetary contract (van Vuuren, et al, 2008, p. 316). It is felt that there is no disciplinary recourse or that they will simply withdraw from the organization if opposed (Garner & Garner, 2011, p. 814). There can also be an unspoken belief about how volunteers should behave within an organization, which may not mesh with reality (Murray, 2008, p. 245 as cited in Paull & Omari, 2015, p.246). Finally, a common concern is that volunteers, particularly those who are experienced and proficient, are a threat to the position and job security of the paid staff (Netting, Borders & Huiber, 2004, p. 70 & pp.82-83).

The perception of threat within an interwoven workplace tends to be based upon the difference between substitution and supplementation. Whereas unpaid staff

supplementing the work of paid staff is viewed as acceptable, a substitution of paid staff with unpaid staff is not. Labour unions will often incorporate provisions to protect paid staff against substitution by volunteers and one study did find that, as minimum wage increased, organizations were more likely to substitute those lower-paid positions with volunteers (Simmons & Emanuele, 2010, p.73). In support of this, budget reduction is the most common reason given for substitution. Nevertheless, in general, the perception that substitution by volunteers is a threat in the workplace is not seen as greatly problematic, with only 15% of the respondents in one survey agreeing that there are concerns (Handy, Mook & Quarter, 2008, p.5). The idea that threat to job security is a major cause of conflict may be more of a reflection of past practice, such as the replacement of striking workers, that is no longer accepted in Canada (Handy, Mook & Quarter, pp. 2-3; Netting, Borders & Huiber, 2004, p.72). Although some tasks in non-profits were found to be interchangeable between paid and unpaid staff, it was felt that the majority; over 87% of paid roles, could only be carried out by employees. The reasons given were around the requirement of specialized skills, certifications and experience, liability concerns that could only be avoided through using paid staff, and hours required by the task (Handy, Mook & Quarter, p. 13).

While the threat to paid staff's job security by unpaid staff can be acknowledged as a valid but minor concern, the reverse phenomenon; that of volunteers being replaced by employees, is a growing issue. At the root of this change is the move toward increasing professionalization of non-profits as a requirement for accountability, certification and funding. As organizations grow in size and funding requirements, some volunteers are replaced with paid staff (Russell & Scott, 1997, p.3; Handy, Mook & Quarter, 2008, p. 3). This has the potential to cause negative feelings in the interwoven workplace due to long-term volunteers who have contributed to the organization's success being substituted as a result of that success. The increased professionalization may also have the effect of invalidating unpaid workers' abilities by placing the requirements of certification, licensing and even a paycheque above their time, work and skills. This inverse job-threat must be included in the assessment of the causes of conflict in the interwoven workplace.

### **3.3 Approaches to the Administration of Unpaid Staff**

#### 3.3.1 Differences Between Paid and Unpaid Staff

Addressing the conflicts that can arise for the variety of reasons between paid and unpaid staff is often seen as the responsibility of the administrator of volunteers. A defining factor of smart practice literature for volunteer administration is the distinction between paid and unpaid staff. The perspective taken determines the approach. Standard human resources practices for employees can be applied to unpaid staff equally if the unpaid staff are seen as indistinguishable other than monetary compensation. If, however, volunteers are seen as a distinct workforce, approaches tailored to their needs must be used. Determining the degree and nature of differences between paid and unpaid staff has been the subject of numerous volunteer management studies. The overarching results of these studies state that, while in some ways unpaid workers are similar to employees, there are differences that require attention.

Despite Pearce's seminal 1983 study showing differences between paid and unpaid staff in job satisfaction and intent to leave, Dailey's 1986 research found that work behaviours and organizational commitment was similar (Dailey, 1986). Pearce was also questioned for looking at organizations that had either volunteers or paid staff, not the two working side-by-side (Pearce, 1983, p. 650; Laczko & Hanisch, 1999, p. 457; Liao-Troth, 2001, p. 423). Although they found differences between negative behaviours such as lateness, absence, intent to leave and satisfaction with co-workers in their study, Laczko and Hanisch surmised that, since their study found similar work attitudes and behaviours between the two groups, both groups could be managed in the same way (Laczko & Hanisch, p. 473). Liao-Troth's 2001 study found that there was little difference between paid and unpaid staff in job attitudes and commitment. This finding was highly prescriptive, however, in that it required that the staff be in the same location, performing similar work and subject to the same rules, procedures, contract, expectations, discipline and evaluations (Liao-Troth, p. 436).

The majority of studies claim that there are differences between paid and unpaid staff. Predictably, many of these are focused upon the key administration concerns of recruitment and retention and therefore assess motivation and reward or measure intent

to leave. The primary difference in motivation that is highlighted is, inevitably, monetary. Volunteers are seen as independently entering the workplace by choice as opposed to paid staff who are seen as dependent upon the position, self-serving, or coerced to work by the need for money (Farmer & Fedor, 1999, p 363; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002, pp. 47-48). This freedom from financial incentive can be seen as a benefit or a hindrance to administration. Volunteers are seen as being driven instead by a prosocial other-oriented character, expressed through a desire to help and socialize with others and a devotion to the values of the organization (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, pp. 47-48; Handy & Brudney, 2007, p. 4; Craig-Lees, Harris & Lau, 2008, p. 19). On the flip side, the absence of monetary reward has led to unpaid staff being described as unreliable, more likely to leave and harder to evaluate, discipline and direct (Cnaan & Cascio, 1998, p. 3; Saksida, Alfes & Shantz, 2016, pp. 1-2).

The characterization of volunteers as being less committed to staying on with an organization is a matter of controversy in volunteer studies. While the disincentive of loss of income is given as a reason for paid staff to stay with an organization, volunteers are seen as feeling free to leave on impulse should disinterest or unpleasantness arise (Haski-Levanthal & Bargal, 2008, p. 71; Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002, p. 64; Brudney & Meijs, 2009, p. 569). Studies that test commitment to the organization and intention to leave, however, find that due to stronger emotional and values based ties to the organization, unpaid staff are, in fact, less likely to leave than paid staff, particularly as they get older (Lasco & Hanisch, 1999, p. 459 & 471; van Vuuren et al, 2008, pp. 322-323). While these studies defend the unpaid staff member in the face of accusations of being uncommitted, it appears that, in volunteer scholarship at least, paid staff are not usually given credit for being motivated to work by incentives beyond a paycheque. The emotional connection of the paid staff to their organization is often disregarded in comparisons with volunteers.

Given that so many studies highlight the differences between paid and unpaid staff, the direct transference of traditional human resource management practices to the role of administration of volunteers may seem unwise. Yet, treating unpaid staff as paid staff through human resources management practices, also known as universalistic practices (Brudney & Meijs, 2014, p. 306), has long been supported as good practice in the volunteer literature (Rochester, 1999, p.9; Taylor et al, 2006, p. 125; Machin & Paine, 2008, p.2; Hager

& Brudney, 2011, p. 142). These practices include written job descriptions, recruitment, screening, training, supervision, problem and conflict policies, record keeping, evaluations and recognition (Lockstone, 2004, pp. 147-148; Brudney & Meijs, p. 300; Studer, 2016, p. 690). Although job descriptions and evaluations were found to not be a concern of unpaid staff in one study, universalistic practices, such as recognition and training activities, had a positive correlation with volunteer retention (Hager & Brudney, 2008, as cited in Sterling, Kilpatrick & Orpin, 2011, pp.323-324). When universalistic practices are applied to volunteer management it has been found that there is a higher level of paid staff satisfaction with the volunteer program (Rogelberg et al, 2010, pp.432). This may be due to the familiarity of the practice for paid staff.

There are other reasons for the use of standard human resource practices in a volunteer setting. Integration of the volunteer program into the rest of the organization can be seen as beneficial. If the practices of the administration of volunteers and the work of the volunteers, is seen as aligning with those of the rest of the organization, the program gains credibility within the organization in the eyes of staff and management (Macduff, Netting & O'Connor, 2009, p.410). The increasing pressures for professionalization of non-profits due to funding, legal and licencing requirements have also created a favourable climate for the universalistic approach (Macduff, Netting & O'Connor, 2009, p. 418).

When unpaid work replicates paid work to a degree, universalistic practices can have positive results (Brudney & Meijs, 2014, p. 307). Predictable settings arranged in a traditional structure are well suited to this approach (Macduff, Netting & O'Connor, 2009, pp. 409-410). Suiting the approach to the setting has been found to be crucial, however, and the over-bureaucratization of a volunteer program, particularly one in which informality or autonomy is a key factor, can lead to dysfunction (Gaskin, 2003, p. 27; Taylor et al, 2006, p. 128; Machin & Paine, 2008, p. 7; Barnes & Sharpe, 2009, p. 171 & 185; O'Toole & Gray, 2016, p. 70). The onus is again on the administrator of volunteers to gauge this setting and design an approach that balances the needs of the organization, the staff and the volunteers.

Despite the predominance of universalistic practice in volunteer administration approaches, there are ways in which an organization can welcome a more diverse range of volunteers, including those who are seeking more spontaneous or episodic commitment or

those who want more autonomy or less formality. The role of the volunteer program within the organization and the culture of the organization itself will also dictate the approach (Brudney & Meijs, 2014, p. 300). Each of these alternative approaches can be quite complex, affect the paid staff relationship, and may not work if the rest of the organization has an alternate perspective of smart practice. They also require flexibility and a wide variety of strong management and interpersonal skills on the part of the volunteer administrator, both to set up and facilitate the program and to monitor it and the relationships within it (Brudney & Meijs, p. 305).

The determining factor of these alternate approaches to volunteer administration is an awareness of the unique needs of the volunteers, either individually or as a base, the projects or goals of the organization or the nature of the organization itself. Rochester (1999, p. 12) came from the perspective of the degree of volunteer involvement in the development of his four models: service delivery, support role, member/activist and co-worker. Handy and Brudney (2007, p. 8) described volunteer programs according to the type of volunteer; mandated or service learning, short-term or episodic, virtual (through electronic means), and long-term or traditional. The goal of the organization and the relationship between paid and unpaid staff is the consideration to be made for the adoption of the program or membership management style as proposed by Meijs & Ten Hoorn (2008, p. 39).

Taking a broader perspective, Macduff, Netting and O'Connor (2009, p. 409) created four program coordination types based upon worldview or culture: entrepreneurial, social change, serendipitous, and traditional. A high degree of awareness and openness to change and learning are a crucial component of many of these alternate volunteer administration approaches. In light of the focus of this study, these approaches can add further opportunities for conflict and, in some cases rely on disagreement in order to reach creative solutions. The administrator and organization must ensure that communication and expectations are very clear, personality types and motivations are suitable to the approach chosen and that there is agreement to move forward.

### **3.4 Volunteer-Friendliness and Organizational Culture**

The contention of this report, that the organization itself is a key player in interwoven workplace relations, is not new. Netting Borders & Huiber (2004, p. 74) claim that that organizational culture is so integrated into the paid and unpaid staff relations that it is almost taken for granted. Organizations may have an ingrained culture of accepting volunteers, particularly if they originate as an all-volunteer initiative. In Canada, Volunteer Canada has promoted its Code for Voluntary Engagement since 2000 that, when adopted, recognizes and aims to strengthen the reciprocal relationship between organization and volunteer (Volunteer Canada, 2012, p. 4). Conversely, if an organizational culture of negative perceptions in an interwoven workplace exists, new staff, both paid and unpaid, may inadvertently perpetuate it. Lockstone (2004, p. 124) points out that there may be several competing cultures with an organization, and that the one presented by the leadership as the official culture may not, in fact, be the widely accepted one.

Hager & Brudney (2011, p. 137) stated that there are two types of organizational conditions: nature and nurture. They claim that nature aspects include the size of the organization, the age of the volunteers and role the volunteers play in the organization. They see these aspects as beyond the ability of the volunteer administrator's ability to influence. Nurture aspects are those that the administrator of volunteers and management of the organization can have some impact upon, such as organizational culture and strategic management. While there is validity to the concept that some aspects of an organization are immutable, some administrators may debate the delineations that Hager and Brudney drew between areas they are capable of influencing. In the nature realm, recruitment strategies could target certain age groups and in the nurture realm, opportunities for input into changes to culture and strategic management may be non-existent, particularly in larger organizations.

Caduri & Weiss-Gal (2015, p. 2461) synthesized discussions around organizational culture to state that a strong organizational culture is expressed through an alignment of three elements: managerial culture, (management led policies and messaging) peer culture, (worker-led standards and norms) and organizational artefacts (tangible, physical, and behavioural manifestations of the organizational culture, such as behaviour, items, symbols

and ceremonies). When these three elements are at odds, the culture is weaker. A stronger organizational culture has greater influence over the perceptions and behaviours of the staff. Saksida, Alfes & Shantze (2016, p. 5) surmise that volunteers would be particularly attuned to changes in organizational culture due to their more emotionally driven connection.

The desire to change existing cultures to be more responsive to both existing and potential volunteers, to become a Volunteer Friendly Organization, has been a topic of growing interest over the years. The term was coined by Hobson et al in 1997, and is defined as the extent to which an agency's staff, policies, and programs provide a positive, pleasant and rewarding experience for volunteers and prospective volunteers (Hobson et al, 1997, p. 29). This approach was developed as an answer to perceived dwindling of volunteer participation. It suggests twenty-nine steps to achieving this experience, based upon a four-stage approach that follows a model of commitment stages of the volunteer within the organization: Volunteer Attraction and Recruitment, Initial Personal Interaction with Agency Staff, Volunteer Utilization and Assignment, and Post-Volunteering Follow-Up (pp. 30-32).

Although the definition incorporates staff and the organization as a whole in the creation of this positive environment, the onus is upon the administrator of volunteers to carry out the steps. While making mention of the agency staff in the heading, interaction with the paid staff is not otherwise mentioned. The focus, instead, is on easing the path for volunteers within the organization through the actions of the administrator, not the paid staff or organization itself. This approach was still advocated for in 2011 by Hager and Brudney, and in 2011 by Vinton who recommended the volunteer administrator use training, policies, and communication to change the organizational culture to appreciate volunteerism better (Hager & Brudney, 2011, p. 152; Vinton, 2011, p. 136).

Gaskin (2003, pp. 16-17) picked up this concept of volunteer-friendliness, again in response to competition between non-profits for the pool of available volunteers, and incorporated the need for adapting to the evolving nature of volunteers by emphasizing flexibility and inclusivity. Through calling for a wider range of opportunities, a variety of projects and types of commitment, such as drop-in volunteering, and even providing night-time projects to meet the availability of the volunteers themselves, Gaskin established an

urgency for organizations to be responsive or lose out (p. 18). Unlike Hobson et al, Gaskin emphasized the role of paid staff, specifically as part of the same team as the volunteers and other than the volunteer administrator, in the creation of the volunteer-friendly atmosphere. She also introduced the concept of a volunteer-oriented organization-wide ethos as being crucial to the health of a volunteer program. This signaled a move away from reliance upon the administrator to mediate between a potentially unreceptive organization and the variety of motivations and needs of the volunteers. Gaskin pointed out that organizations need a volunteer philosophy that includes the training of paid staff, commitment of the leadership, communicating the organization's vision and values and integrating volunteers into the organizational culture (pp. 20-21).

Measuring the degree of volunteer-oriented organizational ethos has presented challenges. Mook, Handy and Quarter (2007, p. 64-65) used the proliferation of financially reporting volunteer involvement as a gauge for how valued an organization's volunteer program was and found that the attitude of the executive director to the volunteer program had an impact on the ethos. Hager and Brudney (2011, p. 142 & 149) found that the existence of a paid administrator of volunteers on staff and training for staff working with volunteers signals that an organization values the integration of volunteers and enhances recruitment. The inverse results in their study finds that non-profits that do not commit to a volunteer administrator and have unsupportive staff encounter more difficulty in recruitment (p. 143). If a volunteer-oriented organizational ethos exists, Boezeman and Ellemers (2008, p. 124) pointed out the value to an organization of presenting it externally as a means of enhancing recruitment. Potential volunteers are more likely to join an organization that is perceived as investing in and caring for its volunteers.

Organizational commitment is sometimes upheld as another indicator of a volunteer-friendly environment. Organizationally committed workers are more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviour (van Vuuren et al, 2008, p. 316; Gupta, Agarwal & Khatri, 2016, p.3). Organizational commitment is an obligation to an organization and its goals enacted through a willingness to work hard and intention to continue the relationship (Haski-Levanthal & Bargal, 2008, p. 69; Porter et al, 1974, p. 604, as cited in Aisbett & Hoyer, 2015, p. 354). It is sometimes divided into three forms of commitment: emotional attachment (affective), intention to remain (continuance), and

sense of obligation (normative) (Liao-Troth, p. 2001, pp. 427-428). Van Vuuren et al (2008, p. 323) found that unpaid workers showed higher levels of affective and normative commitment. They use this finding to call for a greater recognition of unpaid worker's role within an organization as far from fleeting and uninvolved, stating that this degree of commitment makes the organization responsible for supporting unpaid staff appropriately.

Van Vuuren et al also pointed out that affective commitment is derived from a type of self-sorting in which the unpaid staff purposefully select an organization with which their values align leading naturally to a positive person-organization fit (p. 317). Vecina et al (2013, pp. 298-299) examined the relationship between organizational engagement and organizational commitment in volunteers and found that, while interrelated, they are not synonymous. They clarified that engagement is more connected to psychological well-being whereas a volunteer may be committed while still lacking in positive feelings about themselves derived through their work with the organization. Engagement, therefore, and not organizational commitment, is more the goal of a volunteer-friendly organization.

Although attention has been given to the volunteer-friendly workplace, the role of the paid staff in this setting has been under-emphasized. Rogelberg et al (2010, pp. 434-435) examined the impact of working with volunteers on the paid staff. They found strong correlations between positive work relations with volunteers and greater commitment to the organization. Inversely, negative experiences caused stress and a greater intention to quit. Rogelberg et al surmise that the negative feelings felt toward the volunteer, on behalf of the employee, are translated as ill will toward the organization itself. They use this argument to call for more attention to be paid to the interrelations of paid and unpaid staff as crucial to the health of the organization.

### **3.5 Theories Applied to the Interwoven Workplace**

Theories that look only at organizational culture and volunteer friendliness to understand the interwoven workplace may be neglecting the impact of individual psychology in the equation. Netting Borders and Huiber (2004, p. 73) point out that theories around volunteers in the workplace can be divided into those that deal with organizational behaviour and those that examine psychological perceptions. They point

out that the combination of both types of theoretical analysis is important in developing an understanding of the interwoven setting, since the individual perception of role in a workplace dictates the placement of these roles in the organization. To this end, they put forward the suggestion that organizational culture should not be examined in isolation but combined with a psychology-based theory, such as Social Status theory, in order to gain a better understanding of the complexity of the interwoven workplace (p. 75).

Rogelberg et al's paid staff perspective highlights the tendency of studies in the volunteer scholarship to examine phenomenon from the perspective of the volunteer in a unilateral approach (Nicholls, 2010, p. 990). Laczko and Hanisch (1999, p. 473) purposefully took a bilateral approach to examine both paid and unpaid workers within an organization and found significant two-way interrelations affecting both groups. Studer (2016, pp. 706-707) took this a step further in examining the role of the administrator of volunteers as being to integrate the volunteer into the workforce and also to mediate between the entire group of volunteers and other organizational stakeholders, meaning paid staff, organizational members, and the strategic body. Snyder and Omoto (2008, p. 7-9), in the development of their Volunteer Process Model, also placed the volunteer at several levels of interaction: the interpersonal, the organizational, and, with a broader perspective, the societal. The following theories have been used in studies to examine the triadic relationship between the paid staff, the unpaid staff, and the organization itself.

### 3.5.1 Status Characteristics Theory

Status Characteristics Theory is based upon the perceived characteristic, for this purpose being a volunteer or paid staff, and status ascribed to that characteristic, such as prestige and power or specific status characteristics related to abilities, and competencies. These perceptions can influence how paid and unpaid staff engage with each other and delegate tasks and responsibility. It is suggested that this theory may explain circumstances where paid employees enjoy greater prestige than unpaid staff (Netting, Borders & Huber (a), 2004, p. 73). Caduri & Weiss-Gal (2014, pp. 2469-2471) followed up on Netting, Borders and Huiber's suggestion in their study of social workers who work with volunteers. This study looked at the impact of both organizational culture and

perception of status and found both to have strong correlations with more positive interaction between paid and unpaid staff.

### 3.5.2 Social Identity Theory

Another approach that combines psychological theory with organizational behaviour-based theory is the application of Social Identity Theory to the interwoven workplace. Grube & Piliavin (2000) introduced this theory as a means of understanding the behaviour of volunteers within organizations. The theory, developed by Tajfel & Turner in 1979, posits that people strive to maintain a positive social identity. This social identity is based upon abstracted generalizations of the type of individuals within a group to which the individual belongs and upon the perceived characteristics of the group itself. Self-concept, therefore, is based upon these distinguishing characteristics of both members and the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 40-41; Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 20). It is a means of bringing a sense of order to one's social environment and placing oneself within that setting.

Since there is a tendency to include oneself in groups that contribute positively to one's social identity and thereby, self-worth, volunteers may develop a self-identity based upon being a volunteer for a specific organization that they value (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008, p. 93). They may also develop an identity based upon the group of volunteers within that organization, of which they are a part. Additionally, others, such as management and staff, identify these groups and individuals based upon their own perceptions. These identities do not always align, creating possibility for conflict. Roles that threaten an individual's identity may also have an impact (Cruz, 2009, p.64). This conflict of identities can be seen as a possible explanation for the dynamic between paid and unpaid staff. Grube and Piliavin (2000, p. 1118) further found that role identity had a stronger correlation with the number of hours worked than did organizational commitment, which only predicted intent to stay. They emphasize the need to pay attention to the social identity of both the individual and the group.

### 3.5.3 Organizational Identity Theory

Conflict of identity on the organizational level can also be a cause of conflict within the interwoven workplace, as illustrated by Kreutzer and Jager in 2011. Kreutzer & Jager

use Albert and Whetten's theory of Organizational Identity as the basis of their study. This theory states that organizational identity is the central and enduring attributes of an organization that distinguish it from other organizations (Whetten, 2006, p. 221). It encompasses values, culture, ways of working and outcomes. Organizations can suffer from conflict between the multiple identities that can develop. Kreutzer and Jager claimed that, within interwoven workplaces it is the managerial (paid staff) and the volunteer organizational identities that clash (p. 639). They found that the perceptions of organizational identity were more similar between paid staff of different organization than between the paid and unpaid staff within the same organization (p. 640).

They also found that, although understanding of the mission and goals of an organization was aligned between both paid and unpaid staff, there was disagreement about how to go about reaching those goals (p. 650). Three areas of conflict were identified: authority, expectations, and motivation. Authority stems from a classic power struggle of who should lead. Volunteers placed expectations upon the paid staff due to perceptions that, since they were drawing on scarce financial resources for their salaries, they needed to prove their worth. Motivation is characterized as what has been referred to as professionalization in other studies; the difference between flexible individualistic working styles preferred by volunteers and the formalized procedure and policy-driven work preference of paid staff (pp. 652-655).

Kreutzer and Jager's recommendations build upon Albert and Whetten's contention that effective leaders need to personify and support both organizational identities (Albert & Whetten, 1985, p. 288, as cited in Kreutzer and Jager, p. 657). This differs from the burden more commonly put upon the administrator of volunteers and recognizes that the broader organizational approach, as put forward and, ideally, embodied by the leader of the organization, have significant impact upon the relations between paid and unpaid staff. Kreutzer & Jager also highlight the need for the leadership, paid staff and unpaid staff to be aware of the differing organizational identities and to attempt to integrate them into a meta-identity (p. 657).

#### 3.5.4 Social Exchange Theory

The relationship between the organization and staff in the interwoven workplace has garnered considerable attention in the last two decades. Central to these discussions are two theories: Perceived Organizational Support, and Psychological Contract. Both stem from the broader Social Exchange Theory (SET).

SET emerged during the 1960s from the work of two theorists, George Homans and Peter Blau, and continues to evolve. This theory views the development of relationships over time as a self-reinforcing cycle, based upon the responses of one person to the actions of another (Cropanzo & Mitchell, 2005). These exchanges, which can be between individuals or larger social systems (Sherr, 2008, p. 42), are perceived as either a reward or a cost. If the perceived cost of an action outweighs the reward, it is unlikely to be repeated. Conversely, if an action is rewarded with an exchange of something perceived as valuable, it is likely to be repeated. The higher the perceived value of the reward, or if the reward has been received for a similar action in the past, the more likely the repetition of the action. The more often this reward is received, however, the more its value is diminished. Individuals also have different reward expectations (Cook & Rice, 2003, p.55), through either personal orientation or situation, which dictate their response to social exchanges (Cropanzo & Mitchell, Cook & Rice).

Although early discussions presented the exchange as a rational choice, this has been criticized as too economic and reductionist in its approach (Emerson, 1976, p. 338). Emerson, an early and significant contributor to the SET debate, described the continual shifting of social relations, and points out that one individual may be involved in multiple competing social exchanges at any given time (p. 350). Recent contributors have organized the resources, which are the units of exchange, such as love, status, information, money, goods and services, into economic and socioemotional resources (Foa & Foa, 1980). Economic resources in social exchange tend to be more short-term, tangible, often financial, and usually part of a negotiated, rational exchange. Socioemotional resources are often symbolic or intangible and tend to apply to social or esteem needs, often involved in a reciprocal exchange.

These reciprocal exchanges have been found to produce better and more egalitarian work relations (Molm 2001, 2003). Volunteers are seen as being primarily concerned with socioemotional resources within an organization. In socioemotional exchange, cost is seen as either adverse stimulus – for example, boring, embarrassing or painful work, or the loss or foregoing of reward elsewhere, such as time with friends or other, more exciting opportunities (Emerson, p. 349).

### 3.5.5 Perceived Organizational Support

Eisenberger et al (1986) developed the concept of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) based upon the Levinson's concept of human-organization relationships. Levinson contended that employees present themselves as agents of their organizations and that, through transference, organizations becomes personified through the actions of the agent of the organization (Levinson, 1965, pp. 376-377). Eisenberger et al extrapolated that, because of this personification, organizations can be seen as being supportive, valuing a worker's efforts and caring about their well-being (p. 501). They went on to develop a 36-item measure of Perceived Organizational Support. This measure included considerations of fair treatment, supervisor support and work conditions. Positive factors contribute more to POS if thought to be voluntarily given rather than through obligation or previous agreement (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 698). POS has been found to be related to organizational commitment, performance, satisfaction, engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (Rhoades & Eisenberger, p. 699; Aisbett & Hoye, 2105, p. 352; Gupta, Agarwal & Khatri, 2016, pp. 2-3).

### 3.5.6 Psychological Contract

Psychological contract, another social exchange-based construct, although first discussed in the 1960's, was put forward in 1989 by Rousseau as a work-relations approach. It has since gained increasing acceptance as a valid lens with which to interpret volunteer behaviour within the workplace (van Schie, Guntert & Wehner, 2013, p. 853). A psychological contract refers to an individual's understanding of the unwritten agreement in place with another party. Reciprocity and trust are paramount, in that there is the belief, at least on the part of one of the two parties, that a promise has been made and an obligation to exchange is inherent (Rousseau, 1989, p. 123).

Rousseau and Parks (1993) posited that psychological contracts can be transactional, which are usually close-ended and primarily economic, to relational, which are more open-ended, value-laden and connected to interpersonal relationships (pp. 10-12). Messages about organizational values and beliefs given by the organization to its workers can become incorporated into the psychological contract (Farmer & Fedor, 1999, p. 351). Violations of the contract have been shown to lower Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, attendance, commitment, and satisfaction (Farmer & Fedor, p. 351). Rousseau put forward the Psychological Contract Inventory as an instrument of measure (Rousseau, 2000).

Although originally the contract was characterized as being between an employee and an organization, scholars have since applied it to the relationship between volunteers and the interwoven workplace. Farmer and Fedor (1999) were at the forefront of this approach. They presented it as a tool for administrators of volunteers to increase retention, stating that the relational form of contract is particularly well suited to the volunteer circumstance, particularly since motivation is so often value-based (p. 355). They conjectured that much of this expectation for exchange might be symbolic, such as recognition, caring about well-being, supportive social interaction, and connection to results (pp. 362-363). They called for the administrator of volunteers to gain a clear understanding of the expectations of each volunteer and attempt to provide the symbolic organizational obligations.

Liao-Troth (2001) questioned the transferability of the concept of psychological contract from paid workers to volunteers. His findings found the concept to apply to both groups of workers, providing they were carrying out similar tasks. (p. 436). In his study, he criticized Farmer and Fedor for characterizing psychological contract unilaterally as expectations on the part of the volunteer. He pointed out, as Rousseau did himself, that it is a reciprocal obligation (Rousseau, 2000, p. 669; Liao-Troth, 2001, p. 426). He stated that the organization could offer, as their contribution to the obligation, benefits (sometimes intangible), fair dealings, job satisfaction, and safe and well-resourced working conditions (pp. 426-427). Liao-Troth, however, agreed with Farmer and Fedor that it is important for the administrator of volunteers to be aware of the perceptions of agreements between the volunteer and the organization. He does not put forward suggestions to address the

difficulty of this task. The highly individualized and shifting nature of psychological contracts would make the directive of understanding and providing for them challenging, if not impossible (Netting, Borders & Huiber, 2004, p. 82).

Breach of Psychological Contract occurs when one of the parties does not meet the perceived obligations. It can lead to feelings of violation, which can reduce satisfaction and commitment, and induce Counterproductive Work Behaviour (Greip, et al, 2016, p. 254). A 2006 study by Taylor et al, found that disparity between managerial practices and expectations of volunteers caused breach of Psychological Contract between paid and unpaid staff within a sporting organization (Taylor et al, 2006, p. 144).

Based upon this, Stirling et al examined how management practices impact Psychological Contract for volunteers (Stirling, Kilpatrick & Orpin, 2011, p. 323). They put forward that the increasing professionalization and formal volunteer management strategies of non-profit organizations is causing breaches in Psychological Contract by threatening social capital. They define the climate for social capital as being one of trust, networks, reciprocity, and social norms. Professionalization, they state, generically treats volunteers exactly like paid staff, and reduces flexibility and opportunity for individualization necessary for meeting the obligations of the array of psychological contracts. Informal managerial practices that allows for personalization, individual recognition and freedom from bureaucracy was found to be the most conducive to maintaining Psychological Contracts with volunteers (pp. 330-333).

Nichols (2012) commented upon the surge in popularity of applying Psychological Contract to the study of volunteers. He surmised that it was due to the simplicity of being able to measure expectations and its particular applicability to the volunteer circumstance (p. 988). In his article, he provided an overview of studies about volunteers that employed the concept of the Psychological Contract. He bemoaned the equating of volunteers to paid staff in many of the studies, claiming that these studies disregarded distinctions. He was also critical of the preponderance of quantitative research around the volunteer experience, claiming that a qualitative approach would be a more appropriate methodology for studying this social construct. Finally, he pointed out that the Psychological Contract studies often took the unilateral perspective of the volunteer, rather than that of the manager. He stated that this is due to the purpose of these studies as

being one of providing a managerial tool rather than understanding the interrelationship (pp. 990 – 993). Despite recognizing the potential that the contract for volunteers is with the organization itself (p. 996), he does not suggest that studies take a triadic approach, including the organization in the consideration of reciprocal obligations.

Vantilborgh et al (2014) recognized that many earlier Psychological Contract studies attempted to determine what the perceived obligations were, but few had looked at the impact on volunteers of Psychological Contract breach (p. 218-219). In their study they recognize a third type of psychological contract beyond transactional and relational – that of ideological. This type, introduced by Thompson and Bunderson in 2003, is based upon a commitment to a valued cause or principle, and is exclusive to an individual-organizational psychological contract (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003, p. 574).

Vantilborgh et al state that this type of contract is most likely to exist between volunteers and non-profit organizations (p. 218). They support the idea that perception of obligation is a continuum, ranging from over-fulfillment to under-fulfillment (p. 219). They underscore Thompson and Bunderson's findings that when there is an under-fulfillment of obligations in an ideological psychological contract, the individual will attempt to correct the situation rather than withdraw. This is due to the ideological contract being based upon personal values. In this circumstance, therefore, which applies to many volunteers working within non-profits, there is a converse reaction to Psychological Contract breach, which may see an increase in effort and engagement (Vantilborgh et al, p. 220).

Vantilborgh et al warn against seeing this as a positive for the organization, however, as it can become burdensome on the individual and burnout, or a rethinking of the Psychological Contract can occur, leading to withdrawal. They suggest avoiding the under-fulfillment of ideological Psychological Contracts by creating more realistic expectations through training, mentorship, and clear communication. They emphasize the importance of the administrators of volunteers in carrying out these tasks (p. 228).

Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract are related beyond their antecedents in Social Exchange Theory. Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) described the two theories as mutually interdependent with key processes of each influencing the relationships of the other (p. 491). Both theories deal with socioemotional exchange based upon reciprocity and note that a positive exchange is perceived as being of greater value if

given by free will and without external constraints. Fair treatment is also given as a key factor in both theories and can be a mitigating influence in the event of a contract breach. Both theories also assume that the actions of the agent of the organization, such as a paid staff member, supervisor or leader, can be attributed to the organization itself, leading to a personification of the organization.

Despite these similarities, there are differences. While a Psychological Contract is based upon individualized promises and obligations, the favourable treatment of POS as it is widely accepted, is standard and consistent. Also standardized is the expected exchange from the staff – in the form of commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour. In contrast, the exchange in a psychological contract is established early on in the relationship and differs between parties (pp. 497-499). Other scholars have acknowledged Aselage and Eisenberger's contention that the two theories are interdependent, with POS being seen as an antecedent and outcome of the psychological contract and that breach can have a moderating effect upon POS (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, p. 778; Gupta, Agarwal & Khatri, 2016, p. 3).

### **3.6 Conceptual Framework**

The Conceptual Framework for the research of this project starts with the main research questions that look at the causes, and means of addressing, conflict in the interwoven workplace:

- What are the causes of conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace?
- What are ways for conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace to be addressed?

The literature review examined these questions through the perspective of the triadic relationship between paid staff, unpaid staff and the organization, and found three areas that formed the secondary questions:

- What role should the administrator of volunteers play in addressing conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace?

- To what extent can workplace theories about paid staff relations be applied to the relations between paid and unpaid staff?
- Is the assertion that the organization plays a role in the relationship between paid and unpaid staff, thereby creating a triadic relationship, valid?

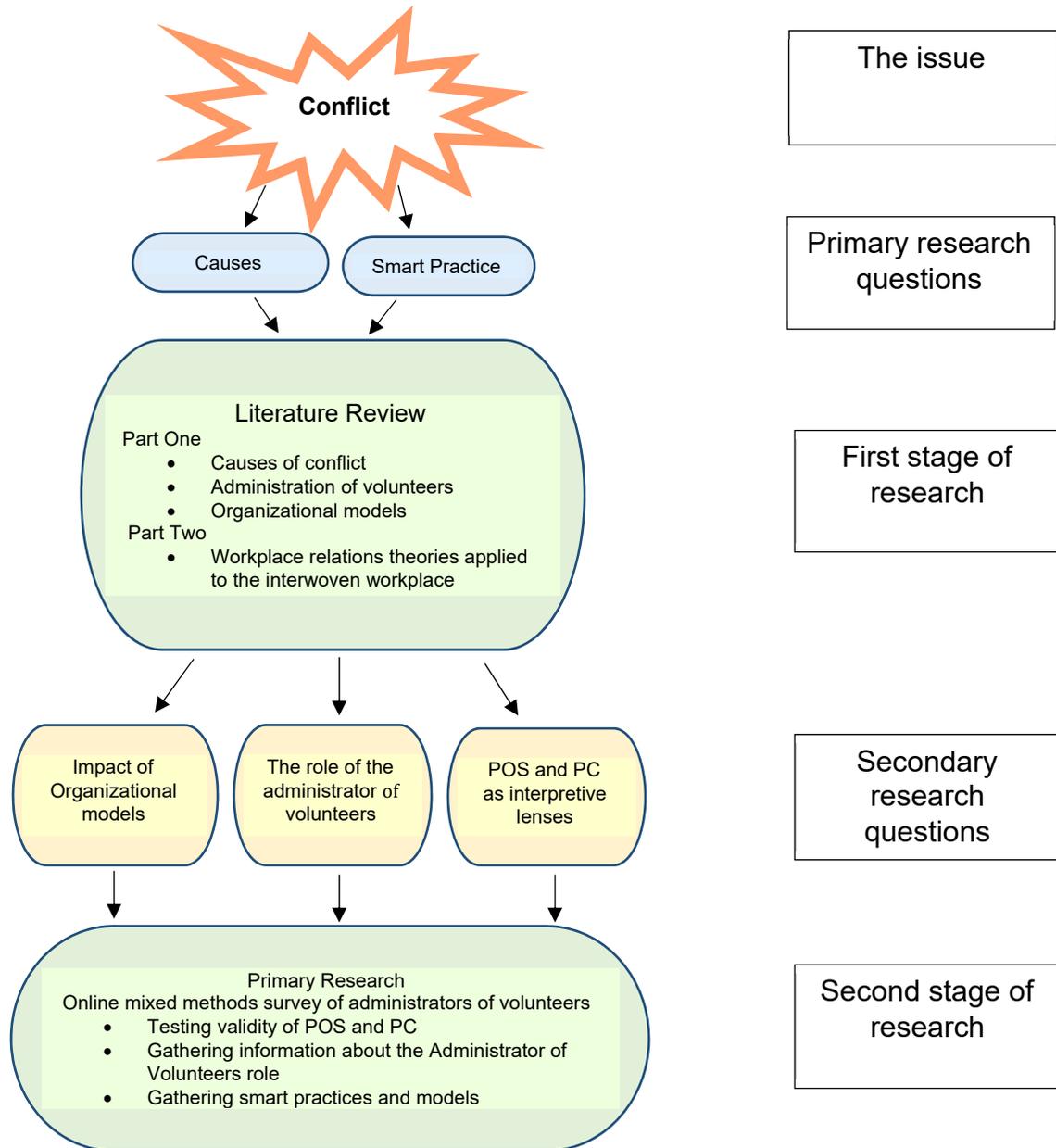


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework. This illustrates the key concepts and the basic research approach taken.

This framework informs the methodology design and provides the organizational structure for the findings and discussion chapters.

### **3.7 Summary**

The findings of this literature review have provided an overview of scholarly approaches to understanding conflict in the interwoven workplace, explained the evolving perceptions of the role of the administrator of volunteers, and brought forward theories that have been applied to the study of volunteer management. This review has also highlighted gaps in the scholarship around the interwoven workplace. The emphasis placed upon the value of the administrator of volunteers is widespread, but with little practical advice on responding to the abundance of demanding and diverse responsibilities for the role.

The application of Social Exchange Theories, such as Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract have gained favour as lenses through which to analyze the interwoven workplace, but there is much still to be explored, in particular with the triadic nature of the interwoven workplace in mind. The standardized nature of the factors of POS seem ripe for reassessment in the evolving landscape of volunteers and non-profits and the development of the ideological psychological contract as a particularly valuable lens for volunteer administration holds promise for more exploration.

Finally, focus on volunteer-friendly organizations and the predominantly unilateral approach of most studies have excluded the paid staff and the organization itself from the equation, despite placing the organizational culture at the fore in many instances. The following Conceptual Framework and Methodology sections will outline how this report will seek to address some of these research gaps.

## 4.0 Methodology, Methods and Data Analysis

### 4.1 Methodology: Research Design

This project employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach in which quantitative and qualitative information is gathered at the same time, and then triangulated to add validity and merged to add depth to the findings (Cresswell, 2014, p. 219). This approach was chosen in order to provide an overview of the current state of conflict in interwoven workplaces, assess possible causal factors and gather smart practices.

The research was designed in two parts: a literature review and an online survey. The first stage, the literature review, sought to answer the primary guiding research questions, which looked at conflict in the interwoven workplace through the perspective of a triadic relationship. This review examined the causes of conflict and also the smart practices in the literature of addressing that conflict. The literature review highlighted two predominant theories that have been applied to both explaining the cause and addressing conflict in interwoven workplaces: Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract Theory. The myriad expectations upon the role of administrator of volunteers and the model the volunteer friendly organization also arose as key means of addressing conflict. These three areas – predominant theoretical explanations, the role of the administrator of volunteers, and the impact of the model of the organization – formed the secondary research questions and guided the design of the second stage of the methodology.

The second stage was an online survey using administrators of volunteers as the sample. The survey was designed to test the validity of Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract Theory as explanatory factors of the conflict. It also assessed the existing responsibilities and resources of the administrators' roles and gathered information about favoured smart practices, including organizational models. The use of adapted existing quantitative POS and Psychological Contract Theory instruments sought to build upon and test previous scholarship, as well as assess current smart practice. The qualitative responses were used to verify, refute and illustrate the quantitative results and

were also gleaned for further smart practices and descriptions of models, as well as the portrayal of the administrator of volunteers' role.

## **4.2 Methods**

The primary research was conducted through a FluidSurvey online survey (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey). The survey used a mixed methods approach that employed both structured and unstructured questions. The use of mixed methods allows for the subjective nature of the area of focus; that of individual perception to be examined, while basing responses upon past quantitative studies and building upon this past scholarship. Qualitative data was drawn from the open-ended questions of the survey while tools, such as rating scales, multiple choice and yes/no questions provided quantitative data.

In order to conduct the online survey, an application for ethical approval was submitted in December 2015 to the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Review Board. Ethical approval was granted in January of 2016. A resubmission with amendments was made in August of 2016 and approval was granted in November of 2016.

### 4.2.1 Sample

The sample chosen for the online survey was the administrators of volunteers in non-profit organizations. Based upon the conceptual framework of the research; that of the interaction between the volunteer, the employee and the organization, it was decided that the administrators of volunteers play a central role in this triadic relationship and would be best positioned to provide insights. The sample was purposive, based upon voluntary participation but targeted to administrators of volunteers through their member organizations.

### 4.2.2 Recruitment

The administrators of volunteers were reached through two member organizations, Volunteer Victoria, the client for this project, and AVRBC (Administrators of Volunteer Resources of British Columbia). The survey was sent by the administration of both organizations via email and e-newsletter to the membership with an introductory letter written by the researcher briefly explaining the project and inviting participation.

Volunteer Victoria has nearly 300 members and affiliates while AVRBC has 150. An invitation to participate was also posted on the researcher’s social media sites: Twitter, Facebook, and to a Volunteer Management Best Practices group on LinkedIn. The survey was left open for one month, from November 6<sup>th</sup> to December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

#### 4.2.3 Instrument

The online survey was based upon the two Social Exchange Theories that arose to the fore through the literature review: Perceived Organizational Support, and Psychological Contract. In order to build upon past scholarship, the survey partially reflected the 36 Item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS), which was developed by Eisenberger et al (1986). This survey has been repeatedly verified as a scale with which to measure Perceived Organizational Support. In order to transpose the quantitative scale to a qualitative study, three categories of organizational support, as described in the meta-analysis of POS by Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002), were used. These categories are fair treatment, supervisor support, and work conditions. Each of the three was further broken down into sub categories as outlined in the table below (see Table 1).

<b>Table 1 The Conditions of POS</b>		
<b>Fair Treatment</b>	<b>Supervisor Support</b>	<b>Work Conditions</b>
Distribution of resources	Contribution is valued	Reward and Recognition
Access to information	Well-being is cared about	Job Security
Input into decisions		Autonomy
Dignity and respect		Workload
		Role Clarity
		Role suitability
		Flexibility

Table 1: All the conditions listed in this Table, based upon Eisenberger et al’s 36 Item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (1986), have been found to increase POS through past studies.

The questions were also partially based upon Thompson and Bunderson’s concepts of Psychological Contract currencies: Transactional, Relational and Ideological

(Thompson & Bunderson, 2003) and Bal & Vink's questionnaire for ideological currency (2011).

All of the questions were designed to be compatible with the perspective of the administrators of volunteers so that their responses could represent their bridging role between the paid staff, the unpaid staff and the organization. A degree of triangulation in the data was sought through a combination of repeated questions in different formats, including quantitative and open-ended questions.

#### 4.2.4 Response

Thirty-six responses were received. Nine of these responses had many, but not all, of the questions completed. Two of these partially completed responses were not coordinators or managers of volunteers and were deleted from the data as being not from the targeted sample. The majority of the completed responses were initiated through the direct emailing of Volunteer Victoria, with nine responses received on that day and seven in the two following days.

Eight respondents sought clarification or offered feedback by contacting the researcher directly via email. Two of these respondents offered to distribute the survey, one offered constructive criticism of the survey design, two needed assistance with completing the survey, and two expressed interest in the report. Eight of the respondents requested condensed versions of the final report and six more gave their contact information in case further clarification or depth of information was needed.

#### 4.2.5 Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using the instruments available on Fluid surveys and manually. Cross-tabulation and comparison of percentages and ratios was used to explore relationships between responses. The written responses were scanned for themes, sorted, and cross-tabulated with the quantitative responses. Illustrative quotations were also drawn from the written responses.

### **4.3 Limitations and Delimitations**

The main limitation of this research is in its assertion that the administrator of volunteers in an organization is able to provide an assessment of the triadic relationship

that is being studied. Initially, the study was conceived as an interview process between the paid staff and the unpaid staff in conflictual situations. Apart from the challenges of setting up these interviews, this approach excluded the third player in the relationship: the organization. Although the role of administrator is the best suited to provide assessments of the triadic relationship, their responses are limited to their awareness of situations occurring in their workplaces. Their responses may also be coloured by their own frustrations with their support within the organization. Conversely, they may wish to portray an organization that is conflict-free, as highlighting dysfunction in their workplace could be seen as reflecting upon their own abilities to mediate.

## 5.0 Findings: Interview Results

This section reviews the responses and perspectives provided in the surveys. It will be provided in four sections: the respondents, causes of conflict, ways to prevent and address conflict, and differences between paid and unpaid staff. Each subheading will start with a brief explanation of the purpose of the survey question and how it will relate to the analysis in the discussion section.

### 5.1 Background Information on the Respondents

The initial and concluding questions in the survey established the basic statistical data around the respondents. Much of the information around the role of Administrators of Volunteers is drawn from these sections. Some of this data is also cross-tabulated with the responses from later questions for the purpose of the discussion around Perceived Organizational Support in the following chapter.

#### 5.1.1 Organizational focus

Twenty-four percent of the respondents represented a health-sector non-profit. Twenty-one percent stated that they worked within a social service organization. Eighteen percent were from the education field, and 12% worked with the environment or with animal welfare. Ten percent worked in the area of arts and culture and six percent supported fair trade through their work. The remaining respondents represented disaster response, housing, sports and recreation/childcare, and a soup kitchen.

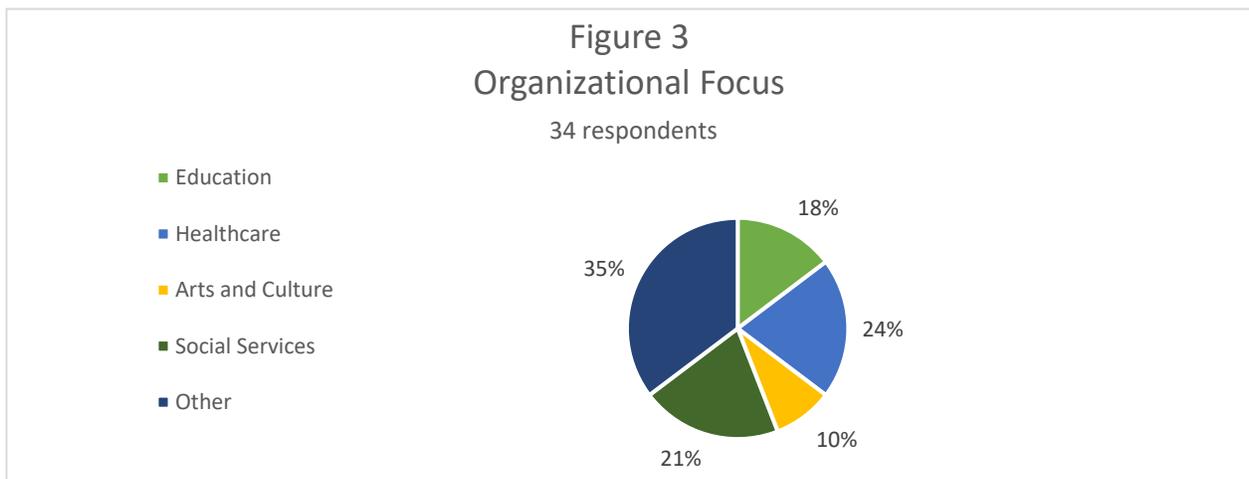


Figure 3 The respondents represented education, healthcare, arts and culture, and social services sectors. Others included disaster response, housing, sports and recreation/childcare, and a soup kitchen.

### 5.1.2 Job Title

The respondents were asked to provide their job title and a description of their responsibilities. This was in order to ensure that they represented the desired sample of administrators of volunteers, and to provide information for the discussion around the role and resourcing of the administrator of volunteers in non-profit organizations.

Half of the respondents had a job title that denoted them as administrators of volunteer programs. Of these, over two-thirds had the title of coordinator. A quarter were titled manager and one was called director. Of the other half of the respondents, 25% had the title of Executive Director and 11% were involved with the board of their organization. Both these groups listed volunteer coordination as part of their responsibilities. The remaining respondents had titles that were unique to their positions but listed administration of volunteers in their responsibilities.

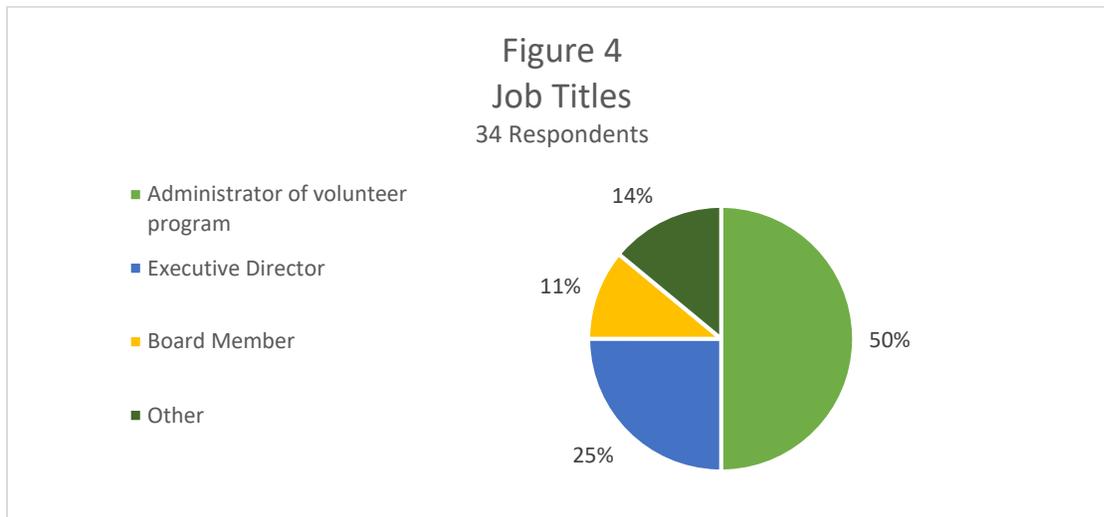


Figure 4 Half of the respondents had a title that reflected their role as administrator of volunteers.

### 5.1.3 Responsibilities

Of the 34 accepted respondents, 14 listed their responsibilities as being focused on volunteers and the volunteer program within their organization, although one of these stated that, “Three-fifths of my job is devoted to volunteer administration”.

Responsibilities listed by the remainder of the respondents included human resource duties for paid staff, fundraising, community outreach, and programming and communications. The majority of Executive Directors and Board Members listed multiple duties, including the management of the volunteer program within their organization. One

respondent summed this up by stating, “Basically, if a non-profit organization needs to do it, it’s my job.” Other respondents managed several portfolios, sometimes quite diverse, such as communications or marketing, fundraising or product pricing, and sales, on top of their volunteer management duties. Six of the respondents identified themselves as volunteers managing volunteers.

Respondents who described themselves as coordinators/administrators/managers of volunteers included a range of responsibilities for their position. Most (71%) listed onboarding, also described as recruitment, screening and training as their main tasks. Only one mentioned retention, although several (28%) stated that their role was to manage or support the volunteers in the program. Recognition and evaluation were also cited as priorities by about half of the respondents. A few of the respondents conducted on-going support and coaching, beyond the initial training. Two mentioned the coaching of paid staff in working with unpaid staff. Two included discipline and termination as part of their included in their responsibilities.

Respondents were also asked if conflict mediation was part of their job description. Fifty-two percent responded that it was, while 37% stated that it was not. Eleven percent were not sure if it was included.

#### 5.1.4 Organizational Size

Organizational size was included in the survey questions as this arose in the literature review as an element that affected both the role of the administrator of volunteers and the professionalization of the volunteer positions within the organization. The categories that were used for analysis were: zero, one, 10 or fewer, 20 or fewer, 100 or fewer, and more than 100.

#### *Paid Staff*

The respondents represented a wide range of organizational size, but the majority, 76%, employed fewer than 100 paid staff members. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents came from organizations that had 10 or fewer paid staff. Twelve percent of these had only one paid staff member, three of whom were part-time. Two of the organizations represented had no paid staff.

Thirty-eight percent of the organizations had between 10 and 100 paid staff, with 15% of those having between 10 and 20. Twenty-four percent of the organizations had more than 100 paid employees, with one outlier employing 20,000, although the average, excluding this highest exception and the lowest exception in order to determine the trimmed mean, was 658 on the payroll.

Ten of the represented organizations had more paid staff than unpaid staff. Of these, the average ratio of paid staff to unpaid staff was 10:4.

*Unpaid Staff*

In contrast to the paid staff numbers, half of the organizations represented have more than 100 unpaid staff members. The average, excluding the highest and the lowest to determine the trimmed mean, was 907 volunteers. The highest organization, excluded from this average, worked with 19,000 volunteers, alongside 1,300 paid staff. The organization with 20,000 paid staff had 6,800 unpaid staff. Thirty-eight percent of the organizations had 100 or fewer volunteers, with 12% of these having 10 or fewer volunteers.

Twenty-four of the represented organizations had more volunteers than paid staff. Of these, the average ratio of volunteers to paid staff was 10:2.

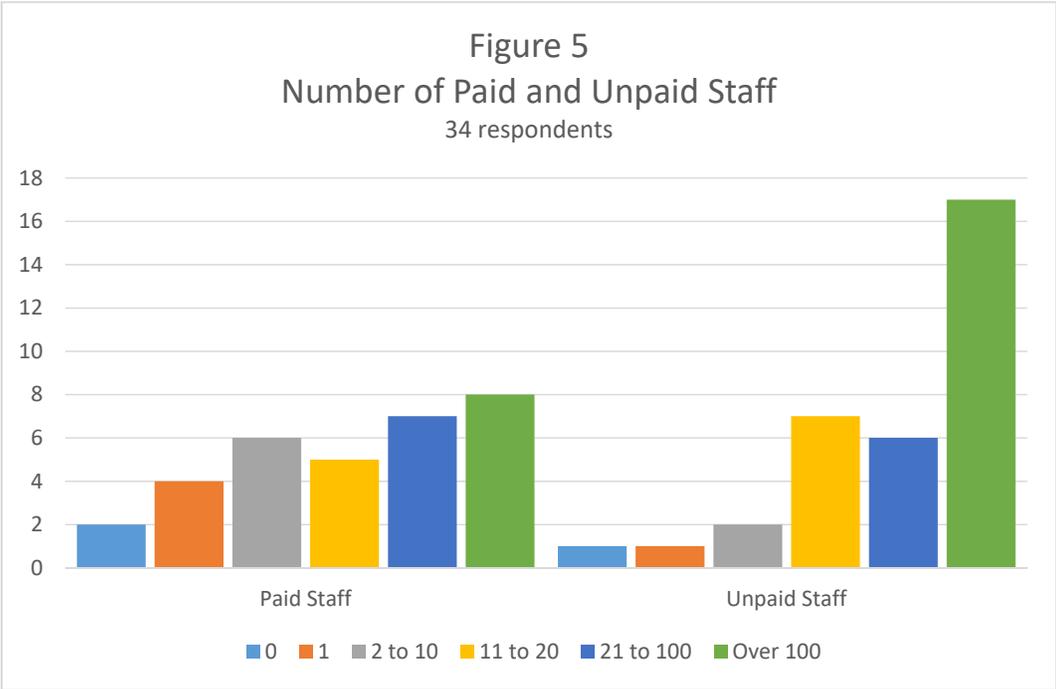


Figure 5. Half of the organizations represented had over 100 volunteers.

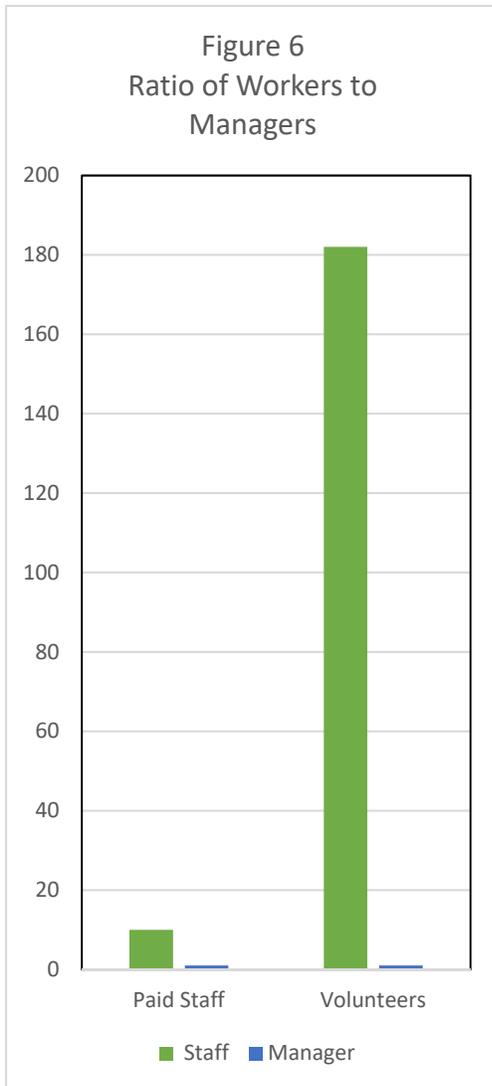


Figure 6: The ration of managers to paid staff is 1:10, compared to the ration of managers to unpaid staff, which is 1:182.

#### *Managers of Paid staff*

Of the respondents, 84% had 10 or fewer managers of paid staff. Thirty-three percent of these had only one manager of paid staff and 10% had none. The average number of paid staff in this percentage was 3.1. The mean-average ratio of paid managers to paid staff of the represented organizations was 1:10.

#### *Managers of unpaid staff*

Ninety-one percent of the represented organizations had 10 or fewer managers of unpaid staff, almost half of which (40%) had only one manager and 15% of which had none. The average number of managers of unpaid staff for organizations with 10 or fewer managers was 1.8. The mean-average ratio of managers of volunteers to volunteers within the represented organizations was 1:182. This ratio does not include the six organizations which had no manager for their average of 25 unpaid staff each.

## **5.2 Survey Theme: Causes of Conflict Between Staff**

One of the baseline questions in the survey was, “Is there conflict between paid and unpaid staff in your workplace?” This sought to validate the evidence of the literature review and verify the concerns of the client that there is, in fact, a problem that needs addressing.

Three respondents answered “Don’t know” to this question. Of the remaining respondents, 35% stated that there was conflict and 59% said that there was not. One-fifth of the “No” respondents noted that they would have preferred to have selected

“sometimes” if it had been an option, citing situations that occur but were not happening at the time of the survey. As one of the “No” respondents stated, “Conflict is not absent, but is managed.” Of the “No” respondents, the average ratio of administrators to unpaid staff was 1:205, compared to 1:114 for the “Yes” respondents. There was a slight correlation between the “No” respondents to those who had the official role and title as coordinator of volunteers in their workplace. Thirty-one percent of those with the official role of volunteer coordinator stated that there was conflict in their workplace, as opposed to 40% of the respondents who had roles with more varied responsibilities.

A corresponding survey question asked how often conflict between paid and unpaid staff affected the respondent’s job. In this question, only 31% stated “Not at all”. Sixty-one percent reported that conflict affected their job “Occasionally throughout the year”. Eight percent selected “Once a month”.

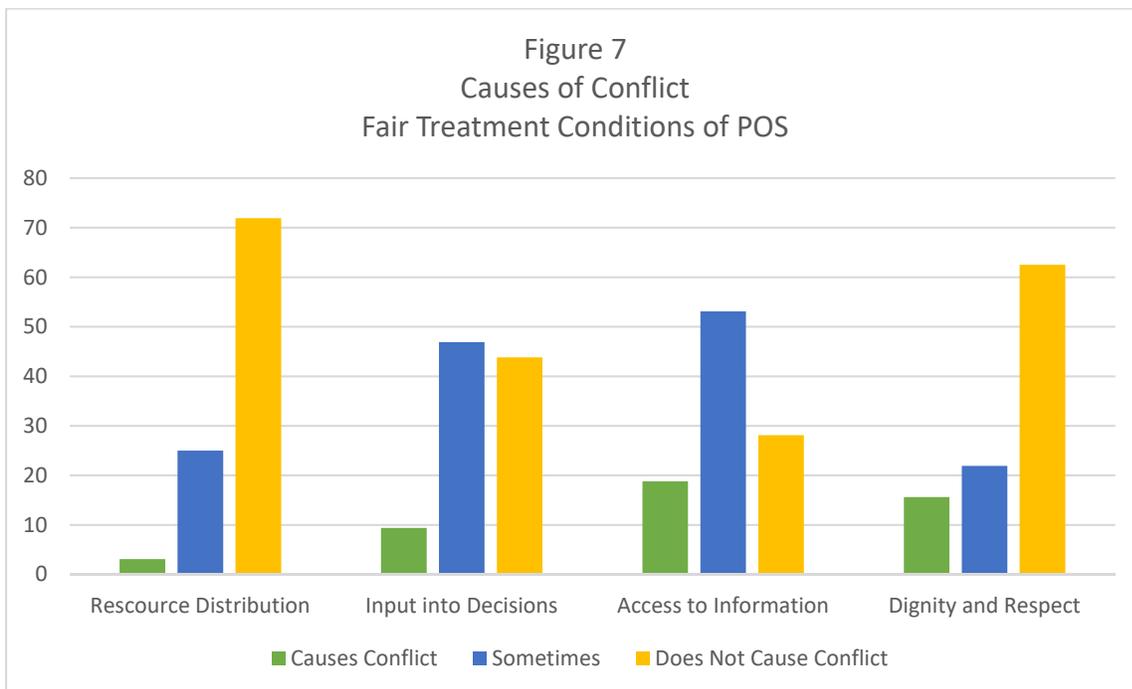
One of the main survey questions that addressed causes of conflict was structured around the conditions of Perceived Organizational Support as outlined in Table 1. This question also sought to test the applicability of POS to the interwoven workplace. This survey question offered 14 scenarios based on these conditions and asked the respondents to rate how often they thought these might cause conflict. In general, respondents favoured the neutral answer option of “sometimes”. Responses for this question were skewed to the negative, with “Never” being the second most selected, followed by “Seldom”. Of the 492 responses, only 15 “Always” were selected, and 47 “Sometimes”.

Because of this skew, the differential between the positive and negative responses was also looked at as was the neutral “Sometimes” score. This differential provides insight into the strength of the rating when combined with a consideration of the neutral score. The average differential was a 45-point spread, and the average neutral answer percentage was 25%. A higher neutral score, coupled with a more balanced positive and negative score indicates either more consensus or that the condition may exist but does not always cause conflict. A higher neutral coupled with a distinctly higher rating for the positive or negative could be interpreted as either uncertainty about the wording of the question or, again, that the condition exists but is not always a major cause of conflict. The findings from this question are divided into the three categories of the Perceived Organization Support conditions: fair treatment, supervisor support, and work conditions.

### 5.2.1 Fair Treatment

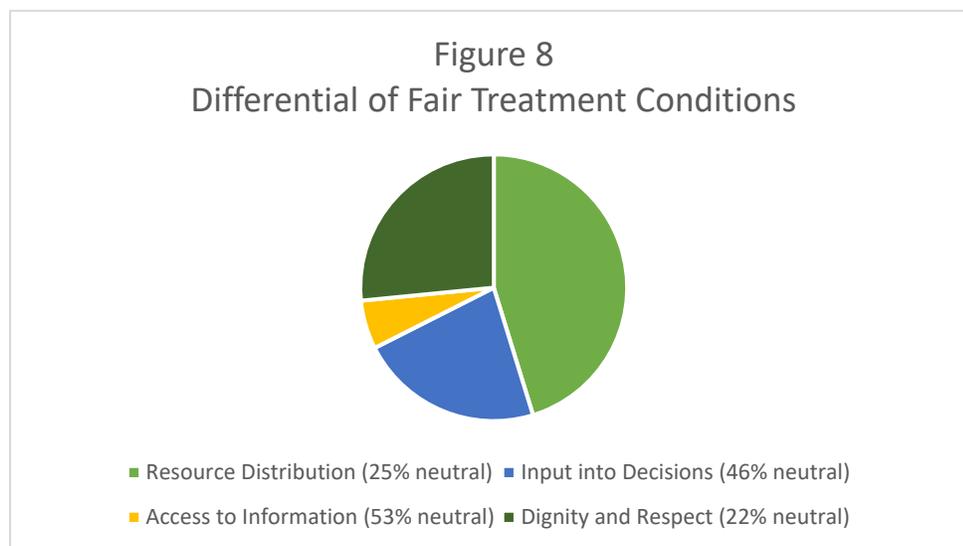
Conditions of fair treatment revolve around the distribution of resources, solicitation of input into decisions, access to needed information, and respectful treatment. Insufficient access to needed information was seen as a cause of conflict, while unequal distribution of resources was the most rejected as a cause in the fair treatment conditions.

Although one respondent stated that unfair distribution of resources was always a source of conflict, 70% felt that it was seldom or never an issue. While 9% felt that lack of opportunity for input into decisions was always or often a cause of conflict, 37.5% dismissed it as “seldom” or “never”. Insufficient access to information or decisions was the only scenario in this question that came close to a split decision. Twenty-two percent of the respondents felt that this was often a cause of conflict, compared to 25% who felt it was either seldom or never a cause. This scenario also garnered the most neutral responses, with 53%. Concerns about being treated with dignity and respect was felt to be a cause of conflict by 16% of the respondents, but dismissed by 59%.



*Figure 7:* Resource Distribution and Dignity and Respect were both rejected as causes of conflict. Access to information, was the least rejected, and the highest rated as a cause, but also received a string neutral rating.

The differential analysis of the fair treatment conditions supported the results from the rated choices, with insufficient access to information or decisions showing only a nine-point difference in positive and negative response, and the highest neutral response (53%) for the fair treatment scenarios. The second-highest neutral response (44%) was given to “lack of opportunity for input” and was also the second lowest differential, with a difference of 34 points. Of note for both of these conditions is that the neutral response was higher than either the positive or negative response. This high neutrality could either be interpreted as greater consensus around these conditions as causes of conflict, an agreement that the condition exists but is not a strong trigger for conflict, or that the question itself was ambiguously worded. The highest differential was seen in the scenario of unfair distribution of resources, with a 69-point spread, and a slightly lower than average (22%) neutral response.



*Figure 8: The differential between “causes conflict” and “Does not cause conflict” responses for the Fair Treatment conditions of POS combined with the percentage of neutral responses indicates strength of response. Resource distribution was strongly rejected. Access to information had a more ambiguous response.*

### 5.2.2 Supervisor Support

The two questions that dealt with concerns about supervisor support suggested that a lack of valuing the contribution of a worker or caring about their well-being could cause conflict. Both of these scenarios were strongly dismissed by most respondents as being a cause of conflict, with 72% and 78% respectively stating that these were seldom or never a cause of conflict. Fifteen percent did feel that insufficient valuing of contribution was always or often a cause of conflict while six percent stated that a lack of caring was often a cause.

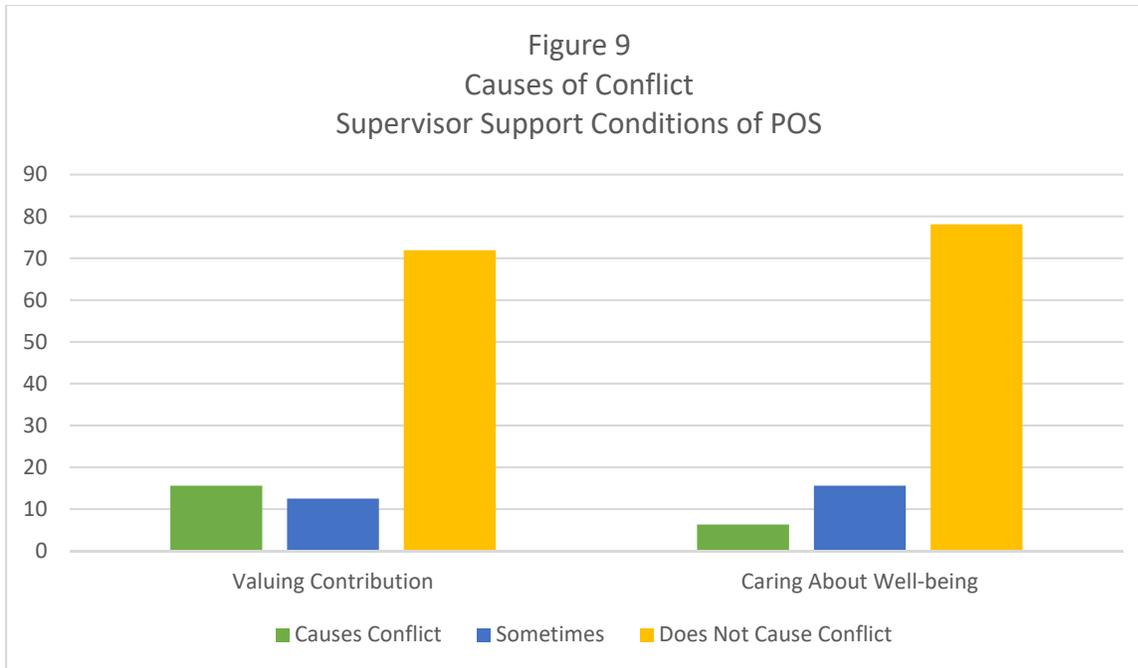


Figure 9: Lack of Supervisor Support conditions were strongly rejected as being causes of conflict.

The differential in the supervisor support scenarios was high. Insufficient valuing of contribution had a 56-point spread, while lack of care about well-being had a 72-point difference. Neutrality was low for both, ranging from 12 to 16%.

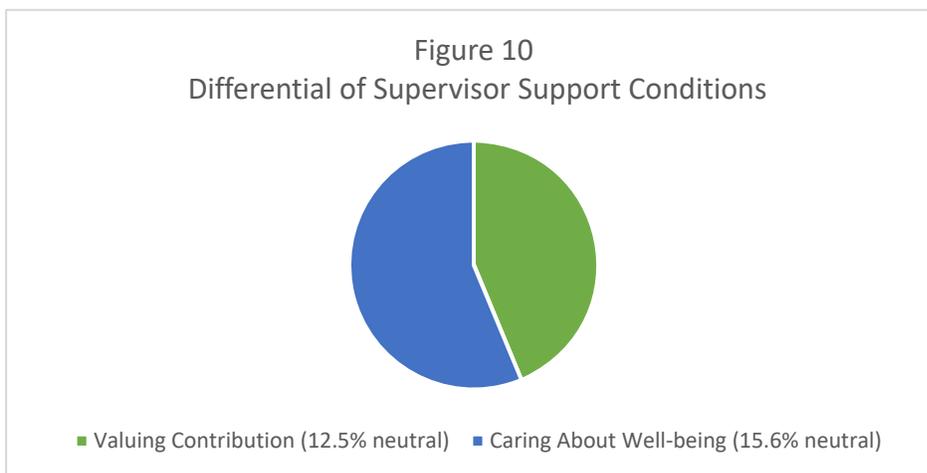


Figure 10: Both of the Supervisor Support conditions were strongly rejected as causes of conflict, as indicated by the high differential spread and the low neutrality percentage.

### 5.2.3 Work Conditions

Perceived organizational support scenarios around work conditions deal with reward and recognition, job security, autonomy, opportunity, work load, role clarity and suitability, and flexibility. The top two scenarios that were the most highly rated for being causes of conflict were: insufficient opportunity and training, and unreasonable workload. Twenty-two percent of the respondents felt that these created issues in the workplace. Role suitability was a close third with 19% of the respondents rating it as a concern. Of these scenarios, job security was the most soundly rejected, with only two respondents rating this as always an issue but the majority (84%) rating it as seldom or never a concern. The other scenarios had less vehement rejection, ranging from 59% for not enough reward and recognition and for insufficient flexibility to meet individual needs, to 48% for insufficient training and opportunity. Fifty-six percent stated that lack of role clarity was not an issue, while 55% felt that unreasonable work load was not a cause of conflict. Half of the respondents felt that concerns about role suitability and autonomy did not cause conflict between paid and unpaid staff.

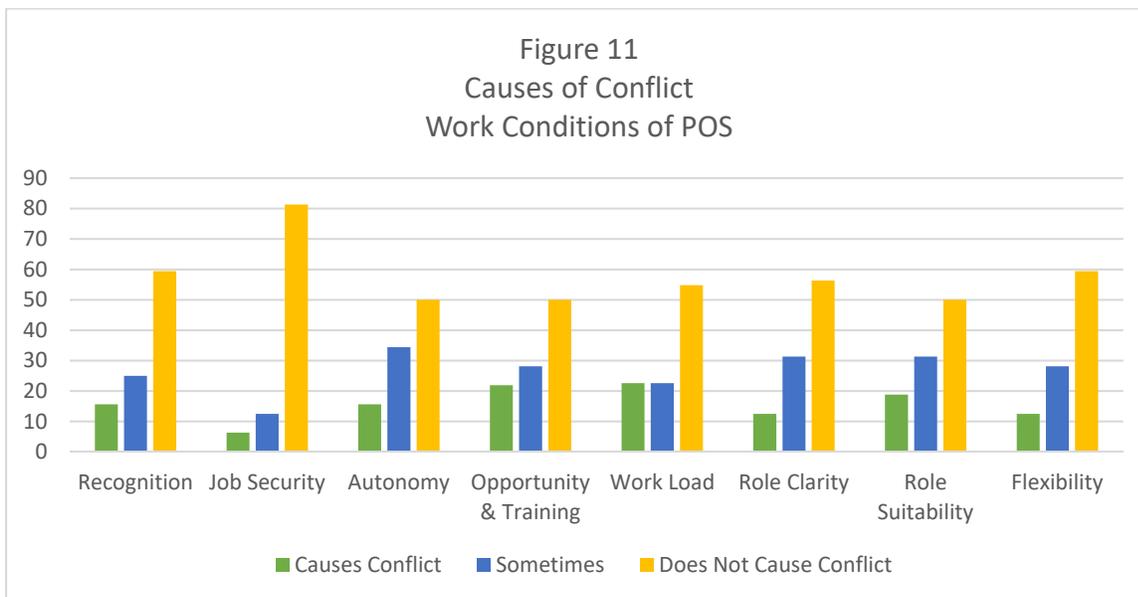
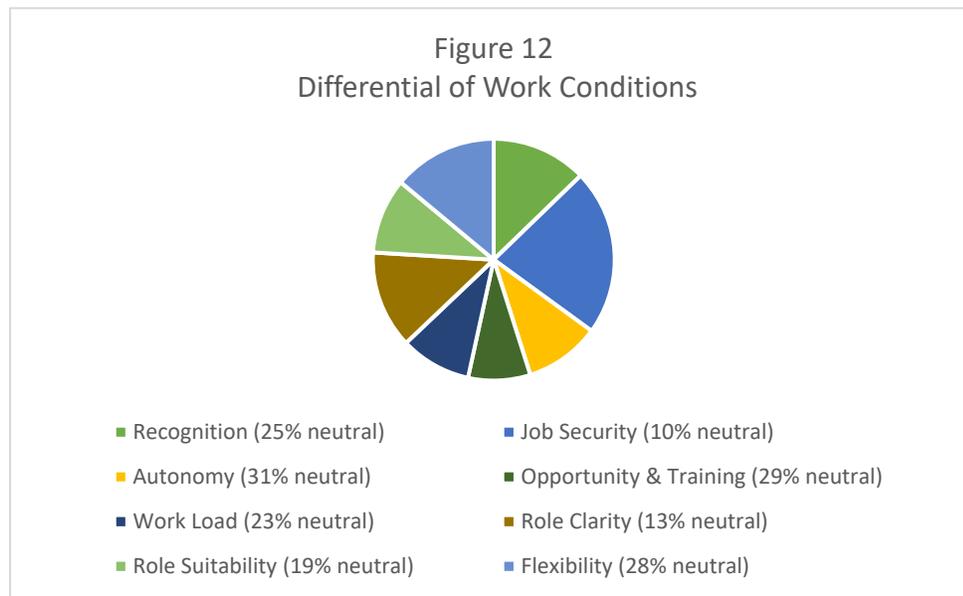


Figure 11: Of the Work Condition of POS, insufficient opportunity and training, and unreasonable workload were the two selected as most likely to cause conflict. Job security was strongly rejected as a cause.

There were four work condition scenarios that had a differential lower than the average 45-point spread. These were: autonomy and role suitability (both at 34 points), opportunity (28 points), and workload (32 points). Autonomy and opportunity both had

higher than average neutral responses at 31% and 29%, respectively. Workload was just under the average with 23% neutral responses and role suitability had a 19% neutral response. One work condition scenario – job security is threatened– had the highest differential in this survey question, with a 75-point spread. The neutral response for this scenario was also well below average at 10%. The other responses in the work conditions scenarios were fairly close to the average of the 45-point-spread and the 25% neutral response, except for clarity of roles which had a low neutral response of 13%.



*Figure 12: Of the work conditions, Job Security had the strongest differential combined with a low neutral response, indicating a strong rejection of this as a cause of conflict.*

Despite the skew toward negative and neutral responses, useful data could still be drawn from this survey question when also considering the differential and the percentage of neutral response. Of the overall conditions of POS, the two that were most strongly supported as causes of conflict were insufficient training or opportunity and unreasonable workload. These were followed by role unsuitability and lack of access to information. The conditions that were most clearly rejected were job insecurity and unfair distribution of resources. The two conditions that are based upon supervisor support were strongly rejected, and the other more socio-emotional condition, that of not being treated with dignity and respect, was also rejected by the majority of respondents.

<b>Table 2 Perceived Organizational Support Conditions</b>	
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Top Causes of Conflict</b>
1	There is not enough training or opportunity
2	Work load is unreasonable
3	The responsibilities of the role do not match the skill of the person in it
4	Access to information or decisions is insufficient
<b>Rejected as Causes of Conflict</b>	
13	Resources are unfairly distributed
14	The security of the job or position is under threat

Table 2: This table indicates the top four highest and the two lowest ranked of the 14 conditions of Perceived Organizational Support as indicated by one survey question. The ranking was based upon their likelihood to be a cause of conflict in the workplace.

### **5.3 Survey Theme: Preventing and Addressing Conflict**

There were four questions in the survey, two quantitative and two qualitative, which generated information about favoured practices in preventing and addressing conflict. The first question asked participants to select the most common approaches from a list of options used to address conflict in their organization. There was also an “other” selection, with the option to elaborate. The question limited the respondents to one selection but feedback from several of the respondents indicated that they would have preferred to have chosen several or all options, dependent upon the situation.

The second quantitative question in the survey looked at potential organizational responses to conflict. This question, which employed a drag-and-drop instrument, was the most skipped by respondents, with 20 (58% of the original accepted respondents) completing the question. The options for this survey were based upon the same conditions of Perceived Organizational Support as in the question that was looking at causes of conflict, in an effort to triangulate the responses.

The two qualitative questions that sought information around favoured practices in the field were open-ended. One was requested from those who responded that there was no conflict in their workplace. They were asked to reflect upon the reasons for this absence

of conflict. The other question asked for a description of resources provided by the respondent’s organization to address conflict.

### 5.3.1 Current Favoured Practices: A Quantitative Query

The quantitative survey question asked respondents to select their favoured practice for addressing conflict from a list. A quarter of the respondents showed a preference for one-on-one counselling and mediation conducted by the volunteer administrator themselves. The second most selected option, with 16% of the responses, was to review and clarify the job description. Three approaches were each selected by 9% of the respondents: group meetings, communications, and referral to higher levels. Only one respondent selected work training as a means of addressing conflict. Two respondents stated that their organization does not address conflict, with one of these respondents stating that “people tend to leave if they don’t like the atmosphere”. Six of the respondents (19%) stated that they used multiple methods to address conflict. One of these respondents explained that “management of conflicts are an ongoing, proactive process with a combination of techniques, to avoid any escalation”.

<b>Table 3</b>	
<b>Current Favoured Practices</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
One-on-one counselling and mediation conducted by the volunteer administrator	25%
Review/clarification of job description	16%
Group Meetings	9%
Communications (newsletters, emails)	9%
Referral of issue to higher levels within the organization	9%
Work relations training	3%
We do not address this conflict	6%

Table 3: One-on-one counselling was the preferred practice for addressing conflict in the interwoven workplace. Several respondents indicated that they use multiple practices, dependent upon the circumstance.

### 5.3.2 Current Favoured Practices: A Qualitative Query

The qualitative question that gathered information about favoured practices was requested from those respondents who stated that there was no conflict between paid and unpaid staff in their organization. They were asked to explain what they thought contributed to the reduction or prevention of conflict. Several factors were repeated by multiple respondents.

#### *Role Clarity*

Having clear roles and expectations, also described by one respondent as “clear objectives, roles and success measures”, was one practice that was cited by a third of the respondents as being something that helps keep the peace in their workplace. One respondent stated, “Part of my role is to advocate for appropriate supports between volunteers and staff. This includes advocating for volunteer roles, proper recognition of volunteer contribution and clear role boundaries”. Another respondent stated that they shared their vision of what they saw volunteers as being able to achieve and laid out expectations as part of their practice.

#### *Separation of Roles*

Other respondents who also agreed that role clarity was important to avoiding conflict accomplished this by keeping paid and unpaid jobs completely separate, as described by this respondent:

The roles of our unpaid staff (volunteers) is completely separate from our paid staff. The volunteer duties are distinct and only held by volunteers. Our organization stands on the premise that paid positions are never held by a volunteer as this would create a division within the organization and lead to conflict.

Another stated that, “roles are clearly defined and divided so there is little opportunity for conflict between paid and unpaid staff”. One respondent expressed trepidation about an upcoming transition from separate roles to paid and unpaid staff working together: “We need to manage this well with clear rationale and support for staff upfront to understand the benefits of change and support it.”

### *Communication and Support*

The importance of clear communication was also emphasized, as was supporting staff who work with volunteers. One respondent stated: “Accurate information and resources available to staff who supervise volunteers prevents conflict”. Frequency and quality of communication mattered, according to one respondent who cited, “meeting face to face as often as possible” as key to preventing conflict. Another felt that the depth of information that was being given was important, “allowing volunteers to understand where the administrators are taking the organization and volunteers”.

### *A Culture of Volunteerism*

Half of the respondents described a culture of volunteerism and credited it for the lack of conflict. This culture of volunteerism was described by respondents as “a culture of one team... integration between staff and volunteers”, and “volunteers have a sort of symbiotic relationship with the paid employee”. For some organizations, this culture was seen as something that had evolved over time. One respondent stated that “volunteers have been a part of this organization since 18XX and therefore it is part of our culture”. Another said, “this was set up long ago and continues to move smoothly through each year”, and another stated that “one of the principles of our organization is voluntary service”. For others, the culture of volunteerism was carefully cultivated and maintained: “Paid and unpaid staff are trained and/or selected for positive, appreciate attitudes to one another – this has developed into our institutional culture”. Another stated that, “new hire orientation highlights contributions volunteers make and expectations of staff”.

Characteristics of this culture of volunteerism are described with the repeated use of the words, appreciation and respect. Empathy is also highlighted, as is a shared vision and treating others as members of a team. As one respondent stated, “we tend to all have the same outlook”. Respondents also pointed to an organization-wide acknowledgement of the culture of volunteerism as being key to a peaceful workplace. This was made clear through respondents stating that, in their organization, “Senior management appreciates volunteers and views as essential to our work”, and that there is “consistency around the importance of volunteers from all levels of the organization”.

### 5.3.3 Current Favoured Practice Based Upon POS Index

The second quantitative question around preventing and addressing conflict asked respondents to rank organizational actions that would help address workplace conflict better. The options were based upon Eisenberger et al's (1986) 36 Item Survey for POS. Apart from determining favoured practice, this question also sought to test the validity of using POS as a perspective to address conflict in the interwoven workplace and act as a triangulation of the previous question, based upon the same survey.

Seventy-six percent of the respondents felt that role clarity and suitability was an important organizational step that could be taken. This was also the action that had the smallest number of neutral responses. Two thirds felt that it was important to provide more training and opportunity. Sixty-one percent felt that the organization should make both paid and unpaid staff feel more valued and cared for, while 58% felt that organizations should provide better access to information and decisions. Fifty-three percent stated that organizations should treat both paid and unpaid staff with more dignity and respect. Of these latter three actions, however, a strong percentage, between 26 and 32%, felt that these were not as important.

Ensuring job and position security was seen as a less important organizational action by three-quarters of the respondents. Two-thirds felt that the distribution of resources was not something their organization needed to address. Approximately 55% did not see providing more freedom to decide individual tasks as important to reducing conflict, nor did they think that their organization needed to provide more flexibility to meet individual needs.

Half of the respondents felt that having more reasonable workload expectations would not improve issues of conflict in the workplace, but 35% of the respondents felt that this would be helpful. Providing more reward and recognition was another action that was seen by most, (44%), as not as important, and yet by 22% as being of value. This action had the highest rate of neutral responses. Another action that garnered mixed responses was that of the organization asking for more input into decisions. This was seen as important by 42%, unimportant by 26%, and neutral by 31%.

<b>Table 4 Perceived Organizational Support Conditions</b>	
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Actions to Address Conflict</b>
1	Ensure roles are clear and appropriately assigned
2	Provide more training and opportunity
3	Make paid and unpaid staff feel more valued and cared for
4	Provide better access to information and decisions
5	Treat paid and unpaid staff with more dignity and respect
<b>Rejected as Actions to Address Conflict</b>	
11	Distribute resources more equally
12	Ensure job/position security

Table 4: Respondents ranked role clarity and suitability as the top action an organization could take to address workplace conflict better. Better job security and resource distribution were ranked as the least valuable.

#### 5.3.4 Resources that Prevent and Address Conflict

To add to the favoured practice data, the survey used a two-part question to gather information about resources provided by organizations to address conflict. Thirty-five percent of respondents stated that they were not provided with resources and 35% said that they were. Thirty-one percent stated that they were not sure if their organization provided them with the resources or not. The second part of this question, the response from those who stated that they received resources, provides another insight into what are seen as smart practices in the field.

Respondents to this second part of the question highlighted four types of resources they received. Two-thirds considered the support and expertise of co-workers as a resource. One-third stated that they could turn to the human resource staff or personnel committee if in need of advice or assistance: “We have a team of HR individuals who, through their experience and outside resources, provide the knowledge/resources we need”. The other third felt they could rely upon the expertise, mentorship or support of other staff with more experience or in a supervisory position: “I feel I have the authority to handle volunteer/staff related issues and have direct support from my director should I require it”. Books, workshops and training was also cited as an available resource by a

third of the respondents: “I have some money for training that I take at our local volunteer centre”. Finally, organizational policy and procedures was seen as a resource by two of the respondents: “I have a volunteer dismissal policy to follow. I have designed the volunteer orientation, and volunteer role descriptions to create success”.

#### **5.4 Differences Between Paid and Unpaid Staff**

One element of the survey focused upon the difference between paid and unpaid staff. This was guided by the literature review and used concepts of Psychological Contract currencies: Transactional, Relational, and Ideological. The questions and were based upon questionnaires developed by Thompson and Bunderson’s (2003) and Bal & Vink (2011). There were two questions for each of the currencies. The purpose of the question was to ascertain if there was a perceived difference in the way paid and unpaid staff engaged with the organization through their psychological contract, and which, if any, currency was favoured. Respondents were asked to decide if the statements around motivation to work applied more to paid staff, unpaid staff, or was equal for the two.

##### 5.4.1 Transactional PC

As discussed in the literature review, the transactional PC revolves around economics and rewards. The questions for this currency made direct reference to fair reward and opportunities for advancement and reward. Thirty-one percent of the respondents felt that the fair reward statement applied to paid staff, as opposed to 19% who felt it reflected unpaid staff better. Half of the respondents felt it was equal for both. The second transactional statement, which mentioned opportunities for advancement and reward, was seen as applying more to paid staff by 44% of the respondents. Nineteen percent felt it applied more to unpaid staff and 37% felt it was even between both.

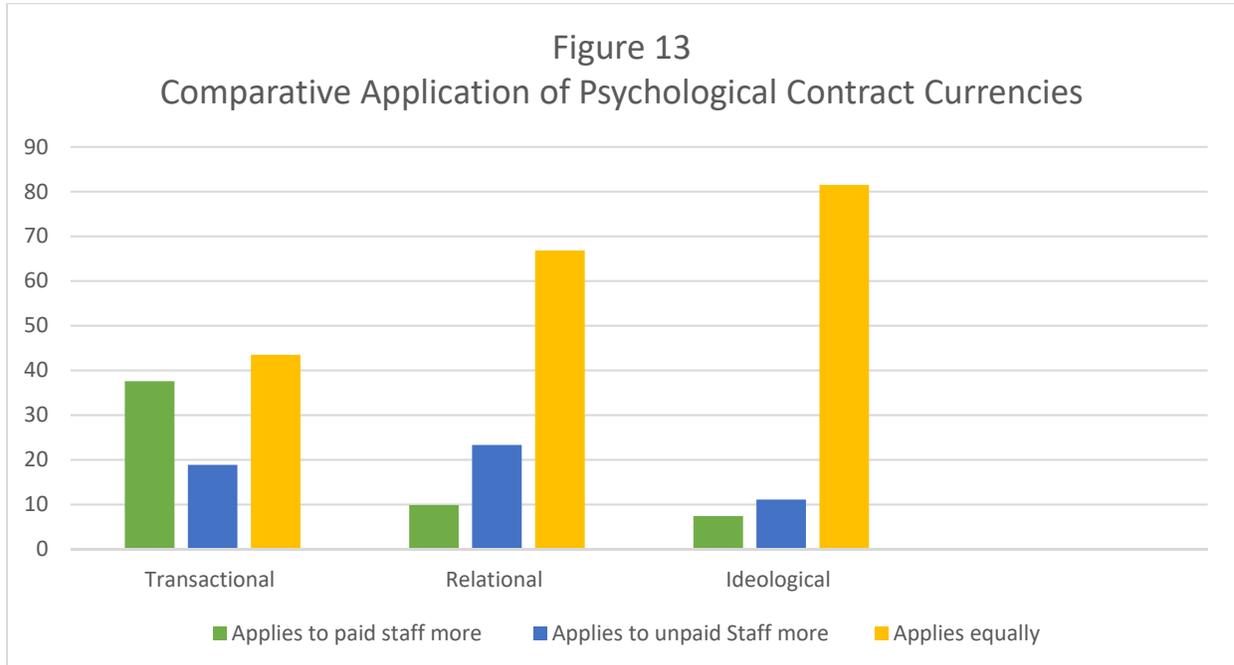
##### 5.4.2 Relational PC

Relational PC is connected, in large part, to interpersonal relationships. The two questions for this currency in the survey dealt with friendships and liking people at work. Both questions were seen by the majority as applying equally to both paid and unpaid staff, with the friendship question being seen as equal by 76% of the respondents and divided

evenly between paid (12%) and unpaid (12%) staff for the other respondents. The question referring to staying because of liking people at work had 58% of the respondent seeing it as equal between the two groups but 35% felt that it reflected unpaid staff more.

#### 5.4.3 Ideological PC

Ideological PC is based upon based upon a commitment to a valued cause, and is thought to be exclusive to an individual-organizational psychological contract. The questions for this currency revolved around belief in what the organization was doing and working to achieve the organization’s mission. Both of these questions were seen as equally applicable to be paid and unpaid staff by a large majority. Eighty-five percent saw the belief in the organization as even between the two groups, while 78% saw working to achieve the organization mission as the same for both. Only four percent saw the belief in the organization as more true for paid staff. The remaining 22% of respondents were evenly split between paid and unpaid staff for the achievement of mission statement.



*Figure 13.* The majority of respondents felt that all currencies of psychological contract applied equally to both paid and unpaid staff, particularly ideological currency.

## **5.5 Summary of Findings**

The findings from the statistical data, including responsibilities, titles and ratios, provided information about the current circumstances of staff and the administrators of volunteers in non-profits. Some of this, combined with responses to questions around resourcing and favoured-practice responses, will assist in addressing the secondary question of this report: What role does the organizational support of the volunteer program play in the alleviation of conflict between paid staff and volunteers?

The next two areas of focus in the findings, the causes of conflict and preventing and addressing conflict, directly address the primary research question of this report: How can conflict between paid and unpaid staff in an interwoven workplace be understood and addressed? As the survey questions in these two areas were also based upon the two theories that arose as predominant through the literature review, these findings can be used to address one of the secondary questions of the report: To what extent can workplace theories about paid staff relations be applied to the relations between paid and unpaid staff? The final section of the findings chapter that addressed differences between paid and unpaid staff further contributes to addressing this last research question by providing information about the transferability of workplace theories to the interwoven workplace, while also looking at Psychological Contract currencies.

## 6.0 Discussion and Analysis

Three key areas of interest arose from the literature review as potentially addressing the research questions of this report. The primary research conducted for this report sought to build upon these three areas: the role of the administrator of volunteers, the applicability of the workplace theories Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contracts to interwoven workplaces, and the phenomenon of volunteer-friendly organizations. The following discussion will examine each of these areas by drawing correlations between the findings, linking the findings to the background and literature review, and examining implications of the research.

### 6.1 The Role of the Administrator of Volunteers

As the background and literature review highlighted, the role of administrator of volunteers has evolved in a relatively short time. There is increasing demand for volunteers at the same time that the pool is possibly dwindling. The nature and demographics of volunteering has been changing, requiring those who administer the volunteer program to work beyond the standard duties of recruitment and retention and consider diverse individual motivations, abilities and commitments, shifting organizational needs and climate, and societal and technological trends. As pressures from funders for standardization of reporting have grown, more universalistic approaches drawn from human resource practices, such as job descriptions and contracts, policies and procedures, evaluations, and discipline and termination, have also fallen to the coordinator role. Studies highlighted in the literature review drew attention to calls for alternate volunteer management practices and place the onus upon the administrator to design, introduce, monitor, and promote these practices. Volunteer management scholars have suggested that the administrator consider integration of the volunteer program into the organization, and act as the mediator between groups of volunteers and paid staff, the organization and the larger strategic body. It was put forward that administrators should also be catering to different types of volunteers, including episodic or spontaneous, virtual or activist, or adjusting the program to group dynamics, project goals, or even worldview and culture. Social Exchange theorists suggested that it is the administrator's role to gauge each

volunteer's psychological contract and perception of organizational support. Avoiding under fulfillment of the ideological currency of the Psychological Contract was indicated as another key concern for administrators.

Part of the research of this report wanted to examine if the resourcing and stated responsibilities of the role have evolved with these expanded expectations. This was based upon the supposition that, since part of this role is to support the volunteers and the program, undue stress on the position and insufficient resourcing to address conflict may be contributing to, rather than mitigating, conflict in the workplace.

The title "coordinator", can be defined as a person whose job is to organize events or activities, and to negotiate with others in order to ensure they work together effectively (Coordinator, 2016. in OED.com). The predominance in the responses using this title denotes an understanding by the responding organizations that this position has interactive, connective, and interpersonal requirements. The findings indicated that many of those responsible for the administration of volunteers, particularly executive directors, reported that they were also responsible for a myriad of other duties, including budgeting, communications, fundraising and product merchandizing. In addition, while managers overseeing paid staff had an average of 10 staff members reporting to them, those who were overseeing volunteers, some of them volunteers themselves, had an average of 182. The face-to-face meetings, personal mediation, clear communication, review of job descriptions and role clarity put forward as smart practices by those who stated that conflict did not exist in their workplace would be challenging with this ratio. Potential for misunderstandings going uncorrected or escalation of small issues leading to loss of staff would be high. As one respondent stated:

As do many NGO's, we are limited in our budget in what we can do for volunteers, and how much time we can put into managing volunteers. We could do much better. Nevertheless, most of the volunteers we have dealt with are very enthusiastic and hardy. Those that are not, tend to go away.

Thirty-five percent of the respondents stated that there was conflict in their workplace, while over two-thirds stated that they were not provided with resources to

address conflict or were unsure if it was available. Additionally, nearly half did not have conflict mediation as part of their job descriptions. These factors suggest that, when issues arise, the coordinator may not be sufficiently equipped or supported in addressing them. The responses give indication that this would not be challenging to remedy. The smart practices outlined by those who responded that they were provided with resources for dealing with conflict suggest that support from other departments, co-workers with expertise or leaders was sufficient for most.

The potential overburdening of coordinators, both with duties and numbers of positions to supervise, as well as insufficient official acknowledgement of the need for mediation skills and other conflict resolution supports, suggests that the expectations and resourcing of the role of coordinators or volunteers has not kept up with the changes in the nature and demographics of volunteering. The role that could be ameliorating conflict, therefore, may not be as effective as intended.

## **6.2 Application of POS and Psychological Contract**

Perceived Organizational Support Theory (POS) and Psychological Contract Theory, both based upon Social Exchange Theory, rose to the fore in the literature review as predominant theories in volunteer management scholarship.

POS is divided into three areas: fair treatment, supervisor support and work conditions. All of these can be seen as rewarding units of exchange by paid and unpaid staff. As studies in the literature review explained, their absence can be seen as a cost, leading to Counterproductive Work Behaviour. Psychological Contract Theory relies upon reciprocity and trust, and is based upon an individual's unwritten contracts with another party or an organization. There is a belief that a promise of exchange has been made but the promise varies between relationships, over time and from person-to-person.

There are three currencies of Psychological Contract: Transactional, Relational, and Ideological. POS and Psychological Contracts can be interdependent: POS can precede Psychological Contracts and a breach of a contract can have a moderating effect upon POS.

The research in this report based upon POS and Psychological Contracts sought to determine if these conditions played a role in the cause or the mitigation of conflict. The

three factors of POS and their subcategories were queried through survey questions as causes of conflict and as mitigating factors of conflict. Psychological contract currencies were explored to validate which of the three currencies were more applicable to paid and unpaid staff.

Some of the factors of POS and the effects of Psychological Contract arose through the literature review as having an impact upon conflict in interwoven workplaces and yet were not fully supported by the quantitative primary research. These include the professionalization of volunteer programs, the two conditions of supervisor support and being treated with dignity and respect.

The professionalization of volunteer programs, alternatively referred to as the over-bureaucratization, was found to lead to dysfunction in work settings where informality or autonomy are valued. It was also described as causing breaches of Psychological Contract by threatening social capital. The same factor was said to have a positive effect upon interwoven workplaces that are traditionally policy and process driven. The fact that volunteers tend to prefer the informal style and paid staff the more structured style was put forward as a potential cause of conflict. The primary research of this report did not uphold this literature. The POS factors that would relate to this professionalization, autonomy and flexibility, were not rated as significant factors of either causes or moderators of conflict.

Supervisor support, in the form of valuing contributions and caring was given as a positive unit of exchange in the literature. It was also put forward as an example of a part of relational currency for Psychological Contract. While one quantitative question ranked the lack of both of these factors as not being causes of conflict, the other quantitative question saw a majority choosing supervisor support as an important means of addressing workplace issues. This second perspective was supported in the qualitative responses that highlighted supervisory support of the volunteer programs as a contributing factor to a culture of volunteerism.

The discrepancy between the quantitative data may be due to a limitation of the survey design in that the respondents may have seen the first question as a judgement of their own role as supervisor. A similar result was seen in the second most likely cause of conflict in the fair treatment category: that of not treating people with sufficient dignity

and respect. This is a factor that could be seen as being more related to supervisory support and, as such, may also have been interpreted to be reflecting the actions of the respondent and not that of the organization. As described in the literature review, both POS and Psychological Contract make the assumption that the actions of the agent of the organization can be attributed to the organization itself and result in the personification of the organization. The agent can be the paid staff, the supervisor or leader, or the person who represents the organization. In this circumstance the respondent may have seen themselves in that role.

Another interpretation of this result could stem from the perception that, although there is not a current lack of supervisor support causing conflict, should the lack occur it would have a significant impact. This would explain why these received low scores as causes of conflict but high scores as factors of prevention. This would also support the finding in the literature review that perceived supervisory support is a mitigating factor for deficits in other POS factors and in Psychological Contract breach.

The conditions of role clarity and suitability, as well as training and opportunity were supported by both quantitative survey questions. Only role clarity and suitability was also supported by the qualitative responses. This may relate to the history of universalistic practice as discussed in the literature review, which sees the transference of human resource practices, such as job descriptions, to volunteer positions. Most of the respondents training will have been borne from this practice, which could explain the favouring of role clarity.

The conditions that were most clearly rejected as causes of conflict by both quantitative questions were job security and distribution of resources. The concept of volunteering being a threat to paid job security makes up a good percentage of early volunteer scholarship. In more recent studies it was given as a valid but minor concern. A factor that was illuminated through the literature review was the concern of volunteers that employees would displace them. The debate over substitution versus supplementation of either paid or unpaid staff continues as a concern in the volunteer literature but was not supported in the research of this report.

The survey question based upon Psychological Contract and its three currencies sought to validate the claim in the literature review that paid and unpaid staff operate with

different Psychological Contract currencies; a difference which could create conflict in the workplace. While transactional currency has an obvious relation to paid staff through the exchange of salary for work, this research posited that the unit of exchange could also be seen as discounts, gifts, membership, tickets or special privileges. In this light, relational currency could apply equally to paid and unpaid staff, depending upon motivational factors, but in the literature review it is emphasized as more suitable for volunteers. Ideological currency is seen in the literature as the most applicable to the relationship between volunteers and their organizations.

Although in the literature, transactional currencies are seen as being almost exclusive to paid staff, and relational and ideological more applicable to unpaid staff, this was not borne out by the research. As seen in the findings, although some respondents did feel that the transactional statements applied more to paid staff than unpaid staff, more felt that the two statements combined applied equally to both paid and unpaid workers. The relational statements also strongly favoured an equal response. The strongest equal response was seen for the ideological currency, where a high majority for respondents felt that ideological statements around believing in the organization and achieving its mission applied equally to both paid and unpaid staff. This refutes the claims made in the articles of the literature review, particularly Vantilborgh et al's (2014) assertion that ideological currency is most likely to relate to volunteers.

While articles in the literature review expressed enthusiasm for the application of POS and Psychological Contract to the interwoven workplace, the research of this report did not strongly support this. Some conditions of POS were supported in the quantitative responses as being causes of conflict or a moderating factor in the workplace, but the qualitative responses supported only one: Role clarity, and this may be due to historical reliance upon this practice. Nevertheless, the strong quantitative support for POS factors such as access to information and decisions, and to training and opportunity, provide some insight into causes or mitigators of conflict. What this result does indicate is a re-evaluation of the individual conditions of POS as significant factors in the interwoven workplace.

Psychological Contract still stands as a valid means of interpreting motivation and responses of both paid and unpaid staff, but this research suggests that since significant

differences in currencies between paid and unpaid staff were not perceived by the respondents, it may not be a cause of conflict. Future studies could repeat this research with a volunteers and paid staff as the sample in order to verify these results.

### **6.3 Volunteer Friendly Organizational Culture**

One of the areas of interest that arose through the literature review and was subsequently examined in the primary research was that of the volunteer-friendly organization. This builds upon this report's overarching framework of the triadic relationship between paid staff, unpaid staff and the organization itself. In the literature review, Netting, Border and Huber (2004) made the claim that the organizational culture is so deeply ingrained in the paid and unpaid staff work relations that it is taken for granted. It would seem from the survey results that it is becoming more appreciated. Without prompting, half of the survey respondents from organizations that were not experiencing conflict stated that the organizational culture was a key factor to that peace.

Hobson's 1997 concept of the Volunteer Friendly Organization, described an organization in which the paid staff, policies and programs create a welcoming atmosphere for volunteers. Like most recommendations in volunteer management scholarship, the onus, in Hobson's model, as well as more recent iterations in the literature review, falls upon the administrator of volunteers to move the organization toward this ideal by smoothing the path for volunteers. Although Hager and Brudney (2011) indicated that the mere existence of the position of volunteer coordinator within an organization signals a valuing of the volunteer program, Gaskin (2003) went a step further in her assertion that the participation of paid staff as part of an integrated team was crucial to an organization-wide volunteer-friendly ethos. The responses of the survey participants strongly supported this need for a sense of team. Gaskin's four requirements to achieve this symbiotic state were: training of paid staff, commitment of leadership, communication of organization values and vision and integration of volunteers into the organizational culture. The survey responses reflect these requirements, stating that the support of the leadership and organization-wide recognition of the importance and value of volunteers by staff was crucial. Judging from the responses, the ideal of a Volunteer-Friendly

Organization has evolved from a unilaterally focussed administrator driven state to a triadic inter-relationship: that of a true interwoven workplace ethos.

The characteristics of the new interwoven workplace ethos revolve around respect and appreciation. According to the respondents, this runs throughout the triadic relationship, with paid staff celebrating volunteers and volunteers admiring paid staff while the leadership and organization recognize and support this interrelationship as a guiding principle of their work. As was evidenced in the literature, more credit should be given to volunteers for being committed, even if the going gets tough, and more credit should be given to paid staff for placing importance upon the socioemotional or ideological rewards of their workplace. While role clarity has long been a mantra of coordinators of volunteers, shared vision may be the new goal. This is supported by the predominance of respondents citing access to information and decisions as one of the best ways to avoid conflict and by the findings around ideological currency being equally as important to paid staff and unpaid staff.

If this report was in keeping with the majority of those articles touched upon in the literature review, this would be the point at which to outline the tasks of the administrator of volunteer to implement all the recommendations. An interwoven workplace ethos, by its very nature, cannot be accomplished by one position or even one department. Several of the respondents gave explanations of how their organization reached the point of integration. Some stressed that it was based on a history of volunteer service or long-standing reliance upon volunteers. Others indicated a careful cultivation of the culture, through training, preferential hiring of staff who had experience either as a volunteer or worked well with them, and a sharing of expectations and organizational vision. This cultivation would require the support and dedication of the entire organization in order to be effective. The administrator would play a key role, but dependence upon that role to carry out the task would be inviting failure.

An aspect of the interwoven workplace ethos would also come from a societal expectation of this as a norm. As explained in the background of this report, volunteers and paid staff working together in an organization has become a defining feature of non-profits in Canada. As this circumstance becomes more common and essential, it would be sensible if the interwoven workplace ethos becomes not only recognized but also a standard for

organizations that involved volunteers. The respondents of this report's research seem to recognize it as a consistent means to a peaceable workplace. The next step would be the promotion of the interwoven workplace ethos as the ideal to which non-profit organizations can aspire.

## 7.0 Recommendations

Volunteer Victoria's mission is to inspire everyone to volunteer. The prevention of conflict in the interwoven workplace will contribute to achieving that mission. Since Volunteer Victoria serves the community through six core functions, these recommendations have been directed at these functions as a means of easing implementation.

### **Core Function #1 - Brokerage:**

*Recommendation 1: Consider alternate volunteer management practices and reconsider universalistic practices*

In order to help member organizations adjust to the changing demographic and nature of volunteering, member organizations can be encouraged to be more open to alternate models that would welcome online, episodic, or more informal volunteers. Volunteer Victoria could host forum sessions in which members share their approaches to matching alternate volunteer management styles to the nature, needs and demographics of their organization, the volunteers and the staff. The article by Brudney & Meijs (2014) discussed in the literature review, gives an overview of scholarship in this area that could be used as pre-reading. The re-enforcement by Volunteer Victoria of the concept that universalistic practice is not necessarily the only accepted approach to volunteer management could trigger some lively discussions, validate efforts by the administrators to use customized approaches in the eyes of their organizations and assist some of the member organizations in being open to a new pool of volunteers.

### **Core Function #2 - Marketing and Promotions:**

*Recommendation 2: Celebrate paid staff who successfully work with volunteers*

Since the literature and the findings showed that paid and unpaid staff are equally invested in the organization socioemotionally and ideologically, and that both paid and unpaid staff should be valued, cared for, and treated with dignity and respect, there is indication that the generally unilateral approach toward volunteer recognition should be re-evaluated. Volunteer Victoria could start a campaign that recognizes the relationships

rather than the volunteers alone. This would also encourage other staff and organizations to consider a more interwoven approach to their volunteer program.

**Core Function #3 - Emerging and Smart Practice Development, Training and Development:**

*Recommendation 3: Offer conflict mediation workshops and resources*

Volunteer Victoria already offers workshops in a variety of topics, including workshops focussed upon paid staff and volunteers working together. This recommendation is to include conflict mediation training in these offerings and promote resources for information so that the administrators of volunteers are better equipped to recognize and approach conflict when it arises.

*Recommendation 4: Provide training in workplace theories*

An understanding of theories like Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Contract can be valuable for all stakeholders within an organization to understand what might motivate behaviour. This report found that the conditions of Perceived Organizational Support do not all apply to the interwoven workplace. Some of the workplace relations theories that arose through the literature review of this report could be introduced as topics of discussion to the Emerging Leaders Network and the Volunteer Managers Network of Volunteer Victoria. The conditions of Perceived Organizational Support could be workshopped at the network meetings into a customized list as an exercise to generate discussion around factors that affect conflict in the interwoven workplace.

*Recommendation 5: Provide specialized “off the side of the desk” resources for Executive Directors*

Executive Directors are experts at multi-tasking. Many have extra pressures placed upon them by coordinating volunteers and staff in addition to their other roles. Volunteer Victoria could assist them by providing templates of policies and newsletters, and working to develop a standard at which point a separate position of volunteer coordinator is

warranted. This would help the Executive Director recognize when a position is warranted and support them when they advocate for it to their board.

#### **Core Function #4 - Develop Volunteering Opportunities:**

*Recommendation 6: Advocate for and promote the Interwoven Workplace Ethos as a societal norm.*

Promote the model and consider developing an Interwoven Workplace certification program. The Interwoven Workplace Ethos requires training for paid and unpaid staff in working with each other, organization-wide commitment, including leadership, communication of organizational values and vision, and integration of volunteers into the organizational culture. Membership organizations should be encouraged to not only share but also develop vision and direction with all levels of staff including volunteers. Discussion around values should be made up of both paid and unpaid staff. The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement provides a solid basis for this ethos, but advocating for the inclusion of a more triadic approach, which places more emphasis upon the paid staff than is outlined in the current code would be valuable. Examples would be the inclusion of paid staff in the training and orientation process and recognition for working within volunteer/paid staff teams.

#### **Core Function #5 - Policy Development and Response:**

*Recommendation 7: Establish and promote job roles and responsibilities standards for the administrator of volunteer position.*

In order to enable administrators of volunteers to be more effective, provide member organizations with guidelines around maximum supervisory reports, suggested balance of responsibilities, policy and procedure templates for conflict resolution and minimal conflict resolution resourcing.

*Recommendation 8: Encourage unions to incorporate supplementation by volunteers as a benefit, not a threat.*

Job security for employees who perceive volunteers as a threat to their position was seen as only a minor issue in the literature. Job security was strongly dismissed in the research as a cause of conflict. Wording in contracts may still reflect outdated concerns about substitution by volunteers. New contracts can include clear terminology around substitution versus supplementation. Volunteer Victoria could review the wording in existing contracts of key unions and offer suggestions for changes that recognize the current role volunteers play in organizations.

### **Core Function #6 - Strategic Consultation and Resources:**

#### *Recommendation 9: Establish a "conflict crisis-line".*

This confidential service, perhaps online, would build upon existing consultation services but be more immediate, offering support for the administrator and outside mediation for the conflicting parties if necessary. For those in need, this would provide the support that was noted by respondents as a key resource in addressing conflict. It is ultimately a component of the consultative service already provided by Volunteer Victoria, but with a focus upon immediacy and the issue of conflict and mediation support.

Volunteer Victoria's vision is that volunteering is a pillar in everyone's life. These recommendations could move forward the possibility of the interwoven workplace ethos being a pillar of society as a whole.

### **Implementation Strategy**

These recommendations vary in degree of challenge and impact. Some of these recommendations can be considered when the roster of learning and events is being planned. Recommendations One (reconsidering universalistic practice), Three (conflict mediation training), and Four (workplace theory discussions), can be single events or, ideally, repeated, depending upon demand and response. These three recommendations will add to the depth of understanding within Volunteer Victoria's membership and offer members new perspectives on their roles and the relations within their organizations.

Other resource-based recommendations such as Five (resources for Executive Directors), Seven (standards for Administrator of Volunteers' roles and responsibilities), and Nine (conflict crisis line), can be added to the work plan when it is next reviewed. It is possible that the templates or models for these resources already exist and may be available through provincial and national volunteer resource networks. Packaging the templates and standards as tools available through Volunteer Victoria would provide another level of service to the membership.

Recommendation Eight, advocating with the unions to view volunteering in a better light, builds upon Volunteer Victoria' advocacy efforts but targets contract wording in a non-confrontational way. This could be accomplished through one of Volunteer Victoria's volunteer experts, who may have legal or contractual experience. This recommendation can be considered a continual task – one that gradually re-adjusts the perception of volunteering by unions.

Volunteer Victoria already succeeds in celebrating the volunteers in the community. Recommendation Two suggests a shift in the focus in order to emphasize the relationship with the paid staff and the organization as a factor in the success of the volunteer. This can be highlighted in the Annual Report and in the marketing collateral.

The most overarching recommendation is Recommendation 6, the Interwoven Workplace Ethos. This recommendation would require the acceptance of the staff and board of Volunteer Victoria of the concept of the interwoven workplace ethos as a model to which member organizations should aspire. Once accepted, the standards for certification should be discussed and a campaign to promote the concept developed and initiated. This initiative has the benefit of building upon the existing Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (Volunteer Victoria, 2012) which should ease its acceptance and adoption.

## 8.0 Conclusion

This report completed for the client Volunteer Victoria, was initiated due to a concern that conflict between paid and unpaid staff in non-profits is affecting happiness, productivity and retention. The primary research question sought to develop an understanding of this conflict and smart practices to address it. The secondary research questions were based upon the applicability of workplace theories to the interwoven circumstance and upon the overarching paradigm that interwoven work relations are triadic, between paid staff, unpaid staff and the organization itself.

The literature review highlighted three areas of interest that could lead to a better understanding of the causes and mitigators of conflict; the role of the administrators of volunteers, the application of workplace theories to the interwoven workplace, and the model of the volunteer-friendly organization.

Much of the literature review studies placed expectations for the implementation of recommendations upon the administrator of volunteers. The research for this report suggests that, if such a role exists in an organization, they are often outnumbered and overburdened. For those organizations that do not have a dedicated coordinator position and yet still rely upon them, the person responsible for the task may be even more under duress. For many of those who coordinate volunteers, maintaining status quo may be a challenge, let alone implementing new practice.

This potential overburdening of the role comes at the same time the nature and demographics are shifting. The literature review traced a rapid evolution of the prevalence of volunteers within the workplace, the shifting motivations of volunteers and the impact of technology or societal factors, such as company-supported, school-mandated or career-driven volunteering. There has been a generalized acceptance of approaching the volunteer workforce with modified human resources practices. This grew in partial response to reporting requirements for funding and partially to gain acceptance for the volunteer program from reticent leadership. This management style has not kept pace with the recent shifts in volunteerism, perhaps contributing to the perception that volunteering is on the decline.

The idea of applying existing and proven workplace theories to the interwoven workplace was not unique to this report. What is unique, is the testing of the elements of the two predominant theories against the knowledge and perceptions of the administrators of volunteers. Current smart practices were compared to the conditions of Perceived Organizational Support, and transactional, relational and ideological currencies were explored for differences between paid and unpaid staff. While the literature supported the use of workplace theories for interwoven workplaces, the research found that the accepted instruments used to gauge them were not applicable. Only a few of the POS conditions were verified through comparison with stated smart practices as having an impact upon conflict. The Psychological Contract currencies that were said to be more important or exclusive to volunteers were found to be valid for paid staff as well. These workplace theories offer insight into motivations and perceptions that may cause conflict, but the instruments do not.

The concept of the volunteer-friendly organization came from the literature review as a model that could help prevent conflict. The qualitative research of this report strongly supported this and built upon the model. An emphasis on the triadic relationship incorporating appreciation and respect throughout the organization, implies training for paid and unpaid staff for working with each other, organization-wide commitment, including leadership, communication of organizational values and vision, and integration of volunteers into the organizational culture. This Interwoven Workplace Ethos can be a model that organizations can aspire to, an expectation that comes from within the organization itself and from society as a whole.

It is the hope that Volunteer Victoria can now take the recommendations and implementation suggestions included in this report, armed with the information from the literature review and the findings, and apply this report to further the creation of peaceful, productive, and volunteer-rich workplaces.

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## 10.0 Appendix A

### Conflict in the Workplace

Welcome to the Conflict in the Workplace survey! My name is Kate Kerr and I am a UVic graduate student working on my Masters Project for Volunteer Victoria. My research is looking at the inter-relationships between paid and unpaid (volunteer) staff, and the organization in which they work. I believe that, in your position in your organization, you have knowledge about these relationships that provides valuable insight. The questions in this survey are based upon existing workplace relations theories and current thinking about volunteering in non-profits. Your responses will help increase the impact of the results. Analysis and results will be confidentially compiled in a final report. An abbreviated version will be made available to you if you request it. The survey is in three short parts and will take about 15 minutes or less to complete. All responses will be kept anonymous and no identifiers will be used in any part of the report. This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Board of the University of Victoria. If you have any questions, please contact me at [katekerr@telus.net](mailto:katekerr@telus.net) or (250) 882-2309. Thank-you again for taking part in this important survey!

#### Part A: General Information

1. What is your job title and what are your responsibilities?

Title

Responsibilities

2. In your organization there are: (Please fill in approximately how many)

Paid staff

Unpaid staff

Managers/Administrators of paid staff

Managers/Administrators of unpaid staff

3. What is the main focus of your organization?

Healthcare

- Arts and Culture
- Social Services
- Education
- Government (all levels)
- Sports and Recreation
- Professional Association
- Business and Industry
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B: Workplace Relations**

4. Is there conflict between paid and unpaid staff in your workplace? (check one)

- Yes ( Go to question 6)
- No
- Don't know

5. If you answered "No" to the previous question, could you explain what you think reduces or prevents conflict in your workplace?

6. How often do you think that frustrations around the following are a cause of conflict between paid and unpaid staff in your workplace?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	
Resources are unfairly distributed	<input type="radio"/>	None				
Input into decisions is not wanted	<input type="radio"/>	None				
Access to information or decisions is insufficient	<input type="radio"/>	None				
Person is not treated with enough dignity and respect	<input type="radio"/>	None				
Supervisor does not value contribution of person	<input type="radio"/>	None				

Supervisor does not care about well-being of person	<input type="radio"/>	None				
There is not enough reward or recognition	<input type="radio"/>	None				
The security of the job or position is under threat	<input type="radio"/>	None				
There is not enough freedom to decide what, and how, tasks should be done	<input type="radio"/>	None				
There is not enough training or opportunity	<input type="radio"/>	None				
Work load is unreasonable	<input type="radio"/>	None				
The definitions of roles are not clear	<input type="radio"/>	None				
The responsibilities of the role do not match the skills of the person in it	<input type="radio"/>	None				
The organization is not flexible to meet individual needs	<input type="radio"/>	None				

7. How do you currently address this conflict? (select the most common approach used)

- We do not address this conflict
- One-on-one counselling/mediation conducted by the volunteer administrator
- Group meetings
- Communications (newsletters, emails)
- Disciplinary action
- Creation and implementation of policy
- Increasing reward and recognition
- Reassignment of one of the parties
- Dismissal / end of commitment of one of the parties
- Review/ clarification of job description

- Referral of issue to higher levels within the organization
- Work relations training
- External mediation
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. From this list of twelve options, please rank what your organization could do that would help address workplace conflict better. Drag the puzzle piece to the appropriate ranking starting with one as the most important.

	Most important	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Least important
Distribute resources more equally	<input type="radio"/>											
Ask for more input into decisions	<input type="radio"/>											
Provide better access to information and decisions	<input type="radio"/>											
Treat paid and unpaid staff with more dignity and respect	<input type="radio"/>											
Make paid and unpaid staff feel more valued and cared for	<input type="radio"/>											
Provide more reward and recognition	<input type="radio"/>											
Ensure job/position security	<input type="radio"/>											
Provide more freedom to decide individual tasks	<input type="radio"/>											

- Provide more training and opportunity
- Have more reasonable workload expectations
- Ensure roles are clear and appropriately assigned
- Provide more flexibility to meet individual needs

9. Please select whether you feel the following statements apply more to paid staff or unpaid staff:(Note: "Reward" can mean by pay or by discounts, gifts, membership, tickets or special privileges)

	More true for paid staff	Same for paid and unpaid staff	More true for unpaid staff	
I work for this organization because the reward is fair for the work I do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	None
My friendships within the organization are an important part of my time at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	None
My work here provides me with other opportunities for advancement or reward	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	None
If I didn't like the people I work with I wouldn't stay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	None
It is important that I believe in what this organization is doing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	None
It is important to help this organization achieve its mission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	None

**Part C: The Role of the Administrator of Volunteers**

10. To what extent does the conflict between paid and unpaid staff in your workplace affect your job as the Administrator of Volunteers?

- Not at all
- Occasionally throughout the year
- Once a month
- Once a week
- Daily
- All the time

11. Is the role of conflict mediation recognized by the organization in your job description?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

12. Does your organization provide you with resources to address conflict between paid and unpaid staff?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question please describe the resources:

Please add further comments about any part of this survey or on this research topic that you would like me to consider:

Thank you for completing this survey! Your input is appreciated and the hope is that it will contribute to happier and more productive relations between the paid staff, the unpaid staff, and non-profits organizations! Please include your email address or phone number beside any of three options you would like, or contact me directly at [katekerr@telus.net](mailto:katekerr@telus.net):

- Would you like me to email you an abbreviated version of the report? Email:

\_\_\_\_\_

- Would you like me to contact you? Phone or Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- If I have further questions may I contact you? Phone or Email: \_\_\_\_\_