MOTIVATIONS AND POSSIBLE DECISIVE FACTORS IN EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine the motivations and overarching criteria behind employee participation in corporate volunteering. This participation is extremely limited. It seems appropriate to enhance it, both due to the internal benefits entailed for the company itself, and the external impact it exhibits. With that being said, we stumble upon several problems set out in literature that are confirmed through our research. Ignorance of the precise causes and true decisive factors that guide employee participation in corporate volunteering programmes prevents the development of suitable strategies that help boost the percentages of employee participation.

We have conducted an empirical and qualitative study with the aim of being able to construct a model to gain greater knowledge of this phenomenon and to grasp the social significance of this problem. Participant observation was applied as an ethnographic method for data collection. Thus, we have accompanied and interacted with the employees under







study. This approach represents a less intrusive method to avoid self-serving and politically-correct responses that do not reflect employees' true stimuli.

Keywords: corporate-sponsored volunteerism, employee volunteering, corporate volunteering.

1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate volunteering to leverage a company's social action, within the framework of a theory that views corporate social responsibility as a key to sustainable management, is a tool that has been in place for years. However, it is not offered enough. This work aims to shed light on the reasons why employees decide to engage in volunteer work. We believe that if we know the reasons, we could be in a position to encourage and motivate corporate volunteering (CV).

CV is a good policy because it benefits the company by means of improving its image and reputation (Fombrun et al, 2000; Plewa et al, 2015); improving the processes for the selection and retention of human resources (Greening and Turban, 2000); increasing employees' commitment to the company (Gilder et al, 2005; Bartel, 2001); their level of involvement (Caligiuri et al, 2013) and their loyalty and performance (Arredondo et al, 2011). CV also benefits employees, who can develop specific skills and abilities (Brenner, 2010; Booth et al, 2009; Phillips and Phillips, 2000), as well as aligning their personal values and structures, but it also has a positive impact on the recipients of the action, as well as society.

We feel that the development of CV is important given that some problems cannot be resolved by the state, affected parties or by pure individual will. Society is called upon to resolve these problems, asking suitable candidates to resolve them. A primordial agent is companies and organisations. This is not only because they have the financial resources, but also because they have a great capacity for powerful innovation, knowledge and organisational skills, added to the talent of their employees. Companies aim to create closer ties and develop a new pact with society. The facet of CSR and social action links into this. Employee participation in CV programmes is low and we want to find out the factors that must be in place to encourage volunteering, because if we achieve this, it will be good for both parties (win-win situation).





PARTICIPATION IN CORPORATE VOI LINTERING PROGRAMMES

There are an abundance of relational theories from the field of corporate social responsibility that all state the benefits and advantages of companies being socially responsible (Secchi, 2007). These include the stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984; Carroll 1993), the business and society theory (Davis and Blomstrom, 1966), the corporate citizenship theory (Waddock and Smith, 2000) and the theory of social contract (Donaldson, 1989).

To date, research in the field of corporate volunteering, especially in the area of employees' motivations for participating in these types of programmes, has been meagre. The field is led primarily by practitioners, whose studies lack the necessary rigor (Benjamin, 2001; Booth et al, 2009), with a consequent need for the development of theories to explain this phenomenon (Grant, 2012). CV is very widespread among large companies (Boccalandro, 2009; Points of Lights, 2006) and these theories on programmes could also be extended to all other companies. Furthermore, companies that have implemented these types of programmes have not yet achieved efficacy, given that employee participation rates are low (CECP, 2015).

We think that the lack of knowledge of the real motivations and decisive factors that guide employees' participation in corporate volunteering programmes make it impossible for those in charge of them to develop effective strategies to motivate participation.

When we refer to corporate volunteering, we use the definition given by Peloza and Hassay, which they call intra-organizational volunteerism, 'support for philanthropic initiatives that are planned and endorsed by the employer'. This type of volunteering differs primarily from interorganizational volunteering (supported by, but not strategically aligned to, the company) and from extra-organizational volunteerism 'done by volunteers outside their role as an employee, providing only minimal benefits to the company' (Peloza and Hassay, 2006:358).

Our study seeks to present a conceptual framework on the motivations for CV. With regard to theoretical contributions, we present an inclusive conceptual framework, pointing out the weight of altruistic motivations, and the barriers and risks stemming from CV's link to dismissals. We expand on these ideas in the next three paragraphs.

1) We plan a conceptual framework based on seven core areas that could inform CSR managers of the motivations and possible decisive factors of employee participation in CV programmes so that they can develop effective strategies to motivate and encourage volunteering: al-







truistic and selfish motivations and to support the company, organisational factors and practices, job post design, the characteristics of volunteer work and organisational identification.

- 2) Altruistic motivations outweigh selfish reasons: an employee frequently has several reasons for participating in CV. Although selfish motivations may be present, they tend to be combined with altruistic reasons. In light of this, we oppose the idea set out by other studies that believe employees' altruism for participating in CV outweighs selfishness.
- 3) CV's connection to dismissals: the two sides of the coin. On the one hand, the largest barrier stopping employees from participating in CV is the fear of losing their jobs. This may be basically due to two reasons. First, the fear that managers interpret their participation in CV as the result of feeling that their position is dispensable; second, that other employees draw a link between a colleague's participation and their failure to perform their functions, which has a negative impact on them, as it increases the team's workload when the volunteer is absent. On the other hand and paradoxically, unmotivated employees who are trying to get fired may be dedicated participants in these types of programmes. Thus, CV may be a decisive factor in an employee's career development, both in the positive, and the negative, sense.

We follow the participant observation method because it has been extensively employed in social sciences; it has an important social-anthropological component, and it enables research of the phenomenon from within. This is accompanied by interviews, because in a qualitative research process they provide us with an in-depth account of employees' motivations and reasons for participating in these programmes.

Quotes from the interviews are in quotes to support and show the conclusions obtained. This is an exploratory study that seeks to uncover the social reasoning of these motivations and decisive factors behind employee participation in CV programmes. Its aim is not to obtain a statistical, geographic or sectoral representativeness. For this reason, we structure the study as follows: first, we detail the conceptual framework and then the empirical study, setting out the results of our empirical research. After discussing the scope and identifying the future lines of research, we will draw all pertinent conclusions.







2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Volunteering has been widely recognised as a behaviour that involves prosocial actions (benefitting others) in an organisational setting that is planned and continues over time (Penner et al, 2005) and is posed as a constructor of personal and corporate prosocial identity (Pajo and Lee, 2011). The motivation for these prosocial behaviours springs from two psychological states. The first is the perceived impact for beneficiaries or awareness that one's actions affect other people. The second, beneficiaries' affective commitment, is a concern for these people's wellbeing (Grant, 2007). Further, evolutionary theory (Penner et al, 2005) advocates that people have a genetic predisposition to help via three mechanisms: kin selection (helping leads to inclusion), reciprocal altruism (helping strangers has benefits for social status and reputation), and group selection – psychological processes that facilitate helping.

There are multiple expected reasons and benefits that seem to justify the decision to take part in CV (Peterson, 2004; Peloza et al, 2009). Functionalism, or a functional analysis, of employees' motivations to participate in CV asserts that employees participate in these programmes to satisfy other people's needs (altruistic reasons) or to satisfy their own needs or personal reasons (Houle et al, 2005), namely selfish reasons. Thus, six motivations are given: values, knowledge, improvement, career, social and protection (Clary et al, 1998).

Altruism is associated with the 'warm glow' feeling, and with charitable support behaviour (CSB), making the workplace more productive and inclined toward CV (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). Emotion has great importance in motivating prosocial action (Penner, 2005) and according to organisational identification theory, individuals tend to support organisations congruent with their objectives and values (Du et al, 2014). In this regard, the hypothesis is formulated that altruism and volunteering could be related to religious aspects (Abreu, 2012).

Meanwhile, selfish motivations are based on principal-agent problem, and on rational choice theories (Steen, 2006), where the social factor stands out as a primary motivation (Wilson, 2000). Participating on social networks at work makes the experience more fun, takes you out of the daily routine and lets you learn new things. It provides career opportunities (improving the employee's profile and connections inside the company), lets them spend quality time with friends and peers outside the office, albeit not with co-workers, as there is already a negative link with







participating in CV. It also creates opportunities to become integrated with the team, public recognition and engagement with senior managers, considering that recognition from middle managers is not a motivating factor for employees (Peloza and Hassay, 2006; Peloza et al, 2009).

If we assume that employees are above all led by selfish reasons, it would be suitable to employ internal communication strategies based on this reasoning to encourage CV. However, this could cause some mistrust and scepticism among employees (Pajo and Lee, 2011).

When workers are deciding whether or not to sign up for CV, they first analyse the costs and benefits that will be involved in taking part. If the benefits outweigh the costs, the decision to volunteer is more likely, known by Piliavin as 'cost-reward approach of helping' (Penner, 2005). According to exchange theory, the cost of CV for a worker can be measured by the time and energy he spends on it, and it is related to the functions that the employee no longer does due to participating in CV (Peloza et al, 2009). Employees consider it important for senior managers to support employees' participation in CV and if, the contrary, they believe that managers interpret their CV as a sign of having little work to do or a dispensable job, it is likely that they will decide not to participate in the programme (Peloza and Hassay, 2006).

In addition to these two reasons-altruistic and selfish-a third type of reason must be added: supporting company behaviours, namely the positive conducts performed by employees on behalf of the company or to support colleagues affected by the cause. This is a type of organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) that tends to define employees as 'good soldiers', proud ambassadors for their company, who take this function very seriously, try to make a good. The figure 1 below summarises what has been set out until now.

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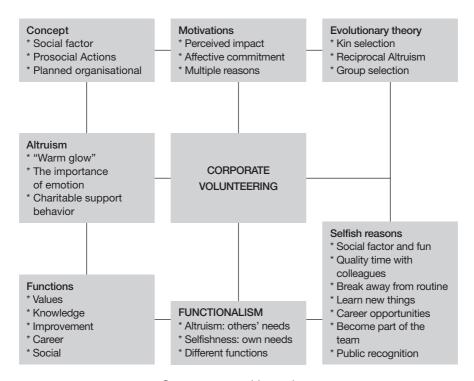
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Source: prepared by authors

Figure 1. Corporate Volunteering Conceptual Model proposed by literature I.

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this issue, it is important for the company to communicate its commitment to CV to the employee, that it supports the employee's work as company ambassador with mechanisms such as wearing t-shirts or caps bearing the company logo or that the NGO benefitting from CV recognises both the employee's and company's efforts (Peloza et al, 2009).

The employees' attitudes about the volunteering programme can also predict responses via social exchange mechanisms; some may believe that they personally benefit from volunteering programmes and may 'pay' the company developing OCB as compensation, that is cooperative behaviours that lead to the company's improved performance (Kim and Lee, 2012).

Likewise, granting them free time to do CV and peer pressure do not affect employee participation, while co-workers' participation has a negative effect on CV (Peloza et al, 2009). This opposes several theories set out by Gilder et al (2005): 1) concerning the idea that the more people who start participating in the CV programme, the stronger the social norm will be; 2) employees who work with colleagues doing CV are more likely to participate in CV, as affirmed in the reasoned action theory; and 3) employees who stay in the office and have a larger workload because their co-workers are doing CV also have a positive outlook toward the programme (Gilder et al, 2005).

Organisational factors: Within this concept, we include social norms (or prosocial climate) and manager support. Both act as moderators when employees take part in CV (Peloza, 2006). According to Grant (2012), the internalisation of employees' identity as volunteers depends on organisational practices such as the existence of incentives, recognition, senior management support and low pressure for them to participate. Thus, overselling the CV programme can make employees feel pressured to volunteer and have the perception that participating is compulsory and not voluntary (Peterson, 2004). Likewise, the possibility of choosing the cause has a positive impact on participation (Pajo and Lee, 2011; Grant, 2012), as well as a fit between the cause and the company core (Pajo and Lee, 2011). However, employees do not necessarily need to identify with the cause in order to do CV (Peloza and Hassay, 2006).

Peterson (2004) joined the employee motivations to participate in CV detected by Fisher and Shaffer (1993) to the strategies to motivate volunteering set out by Wild (1993) and Miller (1997) in this way: 1) Altruistic motivations can be stimulated by publicising strategies: reporting on the community's needs and volunteer opportunities to employees; 2)







Reasons based on social relations can employ the team project strategy; 3) Ideological motivations or those associated with a cause can be encouraged by matching incentive strategies, where the company gives a specific monetary amount for a certain number of hours of volunteering; 4) Motivations of status rewards (such as publicity among the community) can employ the recognition strategy via prizes, articles or praise; 5) Motivations based on obtaining material rewards (as exclusive benefits) can be encouraged through performance evaluations; 6) Time-based reasons can be stimulated (contrary to that which is thought by Peloza et al, 2009) by offering release time to employees.

The inclusion of work design models in recent years has involved studying the impact of tasks (meaningfulness, networking and role changes) and the social and relational context of the volunteer work itself

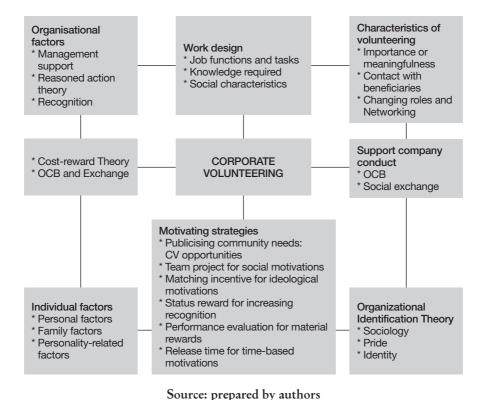


Figure 2. Corporate Volunteering Conceptual Model proposed by literature II.







on the employees deciding to participate in CV (Grant, 2012). In addition, CV is related to job meaningfulness and volunteer meaningfulness, thus as the meaning of their jobs lessens, the stronger the connection to CV (Rodell, 2013). Regarding job design, the employee's work will play an important role: If there is a lessening in the characteristics of the daily tasks of the employee's job (with regard to importance, identity, autonomy and feedback), in social characteristics (interdependence, chances for friendship, interaction and contact with beneficiaries) or in the characteristics of the knowledge needed (such as skills, specialisation, information and problem resolution process), employees may participate in CV programmes to reduce the effects of these shortcomings (Grant, 2012). Although employers frequently give employees the day off to volunteer, other factors related to the work context, such as the employee having a temporary contract or an hourly wage may lead to the worker spending less time volunteering (Rodell et al, 2016).

According to the social identity theory of Ashforth and Mael (1989), people see themselves as members of a social category and tend to select activities congruent with aspects forming part of their identities and support institutions that promote these identities (Brammer, 2007; Du et al, 2014). Introducing the concept of identity has entailed adding the study of CV to the field of sociology. A field in which psychology traditionally studied employees' reasons from a functional viewpoint, thus justifying their participation in CV programmes as a way of meeting their needs or for functional reasons. Organisational identification theory suggests that employees who value the volunteer programme will feel prouder of belonging to the organisation, which in turn increases their identification with the company or their intention to remain at the company (Jones, 2010).

Employee identification with the organisation will increase due to an increased pride of belonging (feeling of pleasure and self-respect due to working at the organisation) that is caused by the CV programme. It is precisely employees' positive outlook of the CV programme that leads them to identify with the organisation on a deeper level (Bartel, 2001; Jones, 2010). Normative commitment (Caldwell et al scale from 1990) represents the degree to which an individual internalises the organisation's objectives and values owing to common and shared values. According to Madison et al (2012), there is a significant relationship between the employee taking part in CV and the length of time worked at the company. This normative commitment is distinguished from other instrumental







commitments (employee's attitude of conformity), and there is also a positive relationship between the worker engaging in CV and their level of education and satisfaction with the volunteer experience.

From the theory of planned behaviour (Meyer and Allen scale from 1991), normative commitment (that which is correct, moral, must be done) is exercised via subjective norms (that which their superiors, coworkers and peers expect of employees), and is therefore different from affective commitment (identity with values and ideals), and the continuity commitment (Brammer, 2007; Bingham et al, 2013). In this regard, Henning (2008), also following the theory of planned behaviour, sustains that employees' intentions about CV are determined by three factors: 1) attitudes towards behaviour, such as the individual's evaluation of behaviour; 2) subjective norms: perception of social pressure to keep the behaviour or not; 3) control of perceived behaviour: perception of the degree of difficulty to change the behaviour. It also merits mention that the concept of identity extends to Steele's self-integrity concept (1988) and therefore Clary's six functional values (values, knowledge, improvement, career, social and protection), except for the values of career and prospects (which are not related to self-integrity), can all affect the employee's selfintegrity experience when doing CV (Brockner et al, 2014).

When also considering personal and family factors in CV, there are variables that positively influence the decision to do volunteer work, such as age (Peterson, 2004), education (Madison et al, 2012), and having school-age children (Houston, 2006), being married (Gilder et al, 2005) and social status (Wilson, 2000). Other variables, however, such as gender, doing household chores and caring for school-age children, do not bear such influence (Ariza and Montes, 2015).

With regard to personality-related factors, we can stress that factors like friendliness and sincerity predict prosocial reasons for volunteering; while neuroticism predicts reasons such as skill development, self-improvement and self-protection; and extroversion and neuroticism together predict career improvement reasons (Erez at al, 2008 cited by Grant, 2012).

3. EMPIRICAL STUDY AND RESULTS

If we were to conduct a survey to study employees' motivations, individuals involved in corporate volunteering programmes would probably







be more likely to respond to the survey (Okun et al, 1998). We also believe that the qualitative approach is necessary to avoid possible self-serving responses from area managers (volunteerism, CSR, HR and marketing directors), particularly in a field in which the measurement of the impact has hardly ever been researched.

Researching the motivations by means of the explanations of the volunteers themselves is not a suitable method either (Okun et al, 1998). We feel that holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study and a method that will let us collect subjects' opinions in the least intrusive way possible is essential. We believe that participant observation is the most appropriate, as it lets us avoid possible self-serving responses from employees, or possible 'politically correct' responses that differ from the real situation. Berreman defined participant observation as 'the practice of living among the people one is studying, getting to know them, knowing their language and lifestyles through intense and continued interaction among them in their daily lives, being present at as many situations as possible, learning to know them in as many settings and as many facets as one can (Berreman, 1968:340). The sample was obtained from six companies in different sectors (marketing, services and finance) and sizes (SMEs and large company) located in Spain that currently have corporate volunteering programmes and to which we had access. We conducted 60 observations, assuming the role of observer as participant at volunteering activities, meetings and other events related to the volunteer programmes at each of the companies.

After interaction and observation with the informants, we decided to select 50 key subjects detected during observation, according to these criteria: gender diversity and parity, exceptionalness (those who had never done volunteering) and representativeness (those who participated with greater frequency, considering departments and jobs) of the study phenomenon. Interviews were employed to try to confirm those conducts or motivations detected among the same subjects that were noticed in participant observation. We deem interviews suitable for the purpose of our study because they let us collect subjective experiences, due to the exploratory nature of our research, because it makes it possible for us to extend the information obtained in participant observation (greater depth) and employ typical native language.

Thus, we conducted 50 informal interviews with each of these 50 informants: 25 men and 25 women. We also need to mention that 20% of the interviewees were managers in different departments. The interviews







lasted for approximately 40 minutes. Given that we noticed some mistrust and discomfort from interviews when we were going to record the first interviews, we decided to take written notes of them. Interviewees were asked about their volunteering experiences and about which were the most significant factors regarding their motivations, as well as about the determining factors for participating in the CV programme, which we had previously detected during the participant observation process. Employing the basis of work by Peloza and Hassay (2006), we wanted to follow the same theoretical approach for data analysis used by Glaser and Strauss (1967), which involves 'comparing and contrasting repeatedly the data obtained and the theory'.

The interviews conducted let us group the motivations and decisive factors in employee participation in CV programmes into seven categories: altruistic reasons, selfish motivations, to support the company, organisational factors and practices, work post design, the tasks of volunteer work, organisational identification and commitment.

As mentioned above and regarding the theoretical approach for data analysis, we will combine each textual statement made by interviewees with a correlative statement from literature, that is, comparing and contrasting the data repeatedly.

Firstly, according to Rynes' signalling theory (1991) employees make use of a company's social reputation to judge what it would be like to work for this organisation (Aguilera, 2005). Thus, one informant stated 'I knew about the company's social and volunteer activities before starting there. In fact, it was one of the reasons why I applied for the job. The volunteer programme is very comprehensive'. In this regard, Jones (2010) suggests that the company should help employees find volunteer opportunities that fit their motivations as well as possible.

It is vitally important for workers to participate in the company's social action initiatives: in planning, in coordination and in decision taking (Du et al, 2015; Van Schie et al, 2011). This contributes to workers' personal growth taking place (Aguilera et al, 2005). 'Corporate volunteering has helped me grow professionally. I felt the need to prove to myself that I was capable of doing this type of project independently, from start to finish, with excellent results', commented one volunteer interviewed.

To help understand the interviewees' answers, we will first detail how internal communications on CV were done at these employees' companies.







In this regard, the information obtained in this study agrees with findings in literature, and with authors including Groza and Walker (2011).

The companies of the interviewed employees may communicate information on the CV programme to their employees via different media. The corporate intranet is a regular medium on which employees are notified of the objectives of the CV project, the activities they can do (dates, times, available resources, requirements, etc.), as well as information on the beneficiary groups of each activity. For example, some people interviewed commented that there is a calendar containing all CV activities in the CSR area of the corporate intranet exclusively for employees' internal use.

This communication is frequently employed jointly with sending emails to employees' email accounts, reminding them of upcoming CV activities and inviting them to take part. At some companies, the person in charge of this mailing may even be a senior manager. In addition, and depending on each company, other channels can be added to this, including meetings, talks and presentations on the CV project. For example, employees may be called to a presentation on a specific topic or cause (such as fighting cancer or gender violence) at which they may try to raise awareness, educate and report on said topic while, in parallel, presenting CV actions and requesting employees' participation.

This communication tends to be done by the CSR or CV departments or, otherwise, by Marketing or HR departments, depending on each company's organisational structure. Managers may likewise offer incentives for their teams participating in this type of activity, such as including CV on the agenda of their regularly-scheduled frequent meetings with their direct team.

Moreover, informal communications may take place among employees: for example, at the company dining room during breakfast or lunch they may speak of some specific CV activity and decide to sign up. This type of communication can also occur between workmates in the same department or among employees from different departments, as well as employees at different levels and job posts.

Lastly, companies may also conduct external communications to society on their CV programme, on their employees' participation or the groups at risk of social exclusion benefited. To do so, they employ different channels, including the corporate website, press releases, advertising in the media, and others.





GÓMEZ 13

MOTIVATIONS AND POSSIBLE DECISIVE FACTORS IN EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES

Table 1. Employee motivations for participating in CV programmes

1 Altruistic or humanistic reasons: for others' wellbeing

2 Selfish reasons: to improve their own situation

Social relations

Career

Ideological /religious reasons

Physical and mental health

Potential risks

3 Supporting the company: the employee as 'good soldier'

4 Organisational factors and practices

Perception of senior management support

Availability of resources and facilities

Selection factors

Recognition

Pressure to participate

Social norms

Worker selects the cause

Social responsibility culture

5 Work design: Design of job post

Tasks: importance, identity, autonomy, feedback

Social: interdependence, interaction, contact

Knowledge: skills, problem resolution

6 Characteristics typical of volunteer work

Meaningfulness of the activity

Contact with beneficiaries: proximity, depth, frequency

Networking

Possibility of changing roles

7 Organisational identification

Pride in belonging

Identification with the organisation

Commitment to the company

Source: prepared by authors

3.1. ALTRUISTIC REASONS

Although the motivation for doing volunteer work is a multidimensional construct made up of different, albeit related, factors (Okun et al, 1998), the majority of interviewees stressed reasons like altruism, prosocial reasons and helping others to justify their participation. *T believe in*







karma, and believe it is our moral obligation to help others: you will receive a lot more than you give' (volunteer interviewed).

Ohreen and Petry (2012), in line with Kantian philosophy, confirm that companies should be philanthropic, because they have the moral duty to help general society. 'CV is a way to be able to fulfil the obligation to help others that we have as individuals, but also as a company,' said one volunteer interviewed. Within the scope of moral obligations that lead workers to do corporate volunteering, the psychological need to have a meaningful existence is particularly relevant (Aguilera et al, 2005). In this regard, one interviewee commented, 'It doesn't make sense that the only purpose of my job is for the company to make money. It should also be used to benefit society'.

3.2. SELFISH REASONS

3.2.1. Career

Volunteering may also be an opportunity for a worker to become involved with the work team, obtain public recognition and engage with the company's senior managers (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). One interviewee stated: 'In CV, your job within the company doesn't matter. I like to be able to share my sandwich with my boss's boss, and chat with him'.

Age is an important factor when considering the motivations to participate in CV. For example, for older people the career reason is less important than for other ages (Clary et al, 1998). 'At my age (55 years old), one thinks very little about rises. I don't participate in volunteering for this reason. I do it from my heart and because I feel better about myself when I help out in these areas' (volunteer).

Our research also identified that there may be employees who decide to take part in corporate volunteering with the aim of improving their careers by developing new skills, such as teamwork and communication skills; and to strengthen existing skills, such as leadership (Caligiuri et al., 2013; Beerli et al., 2002).

Thus, CV allows for the development of skills, particularly in terms of employees' promotion (Lee and Higgins, 2001). 'CV has helped me to improve as a professional on several fronts: for example, it helped me to lose my fear of public speaking,' said another person interviewed.





3.2.2. Social relations

CV is organised as group activities that let employees get to know each other and develop relationships outside the work context. As a result of these relations, respect and appreciation are developed for other workmates at different levels and in different areas of the firm. Co-workers become more cooperative after the chance to personally interact outside the workplace (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). 'After CV, my daily work went faster, reports took less time to arrive and my colleagues were more receptive', stated another interviewee.

Another important reason for participating in CV is spending quality times with friends and workmates outside the office, even when these benefits are not formally promised or expected in these types of programmes (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). Quite frequently, we also found employees' reasons related to relieving boredom, loneliness or the use of free time (Okun, 1994). CV lets them meet new people and build friendships (Proteau, 2008). 'I see CV as a hobby (I am not from here) to help make friends whilst also helping' (volunteer interviewed).

3.2.3. Ideological motivations

In accordance with the theory on organisational identification, individuals tend to support organisations that operate in line with their objectives and values (Du et al, 2014). Thus, sometimes altruism, volunteering and compassion are related to issues such as religiosity or religious affiliation (Abreu, 2012). 'I am a Catholic and with CVI can help the most disadvantaged around me' (volunteer interviewed). 'I frequently collaborate on the volunteer work proposed by the company that is related to helping religious organisations' pointed out another person interviewed.

There is therefore a considerable influence from religion on volunteering. Thus, practicing religious employees (with the highest frequency of religious practice) are more likely to participate in volunteering activities and, within the religions, Protestants are most likely to participate in volunteering programmes than those with other religious affiliations or non-religious people (Lam, 2002). We also found several more employees during our study who gave religiosity as a fundamental motivating factor for taking part in corporate volunteering.







3.2.4. Physical and mental health

As people grow older, they may do volunteer work with the aim of preserving their physical and mental health, or to have fun (Hackl et al, 2007). 'I started to participate in CV many years ago because it was a factor considered in my annual performance evaluations conducted by the company. Over time, my motivations have changed, and it also helps me to be more active' (volunteer interviewed). Helping others lets volunteers forget about their own problems, increases the meaning of the value of their own lives, improves their self-esteem and increases their good mood and chances for social integration (Midlarsky, 1991 cited by Penner, 2005). In this regard, one interviewee said, 'Doing volunteer work makes me feel better, more alive and my problems now are smaller'.

There were also several volunteers who stated that they felt happier, greater wellbeing and more satisfied as a consequence of taking part in the activities included within the corporate volunteering programme at their company, in line with the results of Konrath (2014).

3.2.5. Possible risks

A potential risk of the CV programme is that it may attract employees who are not highly motivated in their jobs, who have an excessive zeal for fun and are not motivated to stay at the organisation (Gilder et al, 2005). In this regard, the statements we obtained during the study are paradigmatic. 'I have a great time in volunteer activities. I try to go to almost all of them, because I prefer them over being at the office: I honestly don't like my job and the company has not kept its promise about my wages. When I find something better, I will leave' (volunteer interviewed). 'Volunteering is a good option: I am waiting for them to fire me, so I can collect my severance pay' (volunteer interviewed).

Similarly, employees who do not participate in CV programmes may believe that CV is a private issue that should not be funded by the company, and the money spent could be alternatively used in its own interests (Gilder et al, 2005). One interviewee commented, 'I don't participate in CV because I think giving my time or my money should be kept privately and I do not like mixing it in a work environment. Furthermore, these funds could be better used to pay overdue bonuses'. If the employee thinks that the company is developing a CV programme with the aim of improving its public relations, this can lessen the positive effects that this corporate support has on the perception of the company's

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prosocial identity and, consequently, on employees' affective commitment as volunteers (Gatignon-Turnau and Mignonac, 2015). 'I don't identify much with CV because I think the company's only reason for starting up CV is marketing, and not social reasons', commented another volunteer.

3.3. MOTIVATION OF SUPPORTING THE COMPANY

OCB means organisational citizenship behaviour and goes beyond the typical functions of employees' job posts. This behaviour is therefore one that cannot be demanded of the employee and is consequently not contained in organisations' official remuneration systems (Bozkurt and Bal, 2012).

Some employees think that it is their duty to support the company in its social action endeavours. The general public does not understand or appreciate companies' level of support for the local community; therefore, CV is a 'visible' way to support the community, letting the company receive recognition for its efforts and improve its image in the community (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). For example, one interviewee stated, 'It has a lot of merit that the company allocates resources to CV. I think we have to support it by volunteering so that people also know about the company through this activity'.

3.4. ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS AND PRACTICES

3.4.1. Perception of senior management support

The employee will not participate in CV if managers view the CV programme as a waste of time, as a sign that the worker has a low workload or the job is dispensable (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). If the worker thinks it may have negative consequences on his career, he will not participate (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). 'I think CV is very interesting, but I participate very little because my department is being revamped and there have been several dismissals. My workmates hardly participate in CV and I am afraid that my boss could end up thinking that I am not necessary if I go to this type of activity' (volunteer interviewed).

In their research, Peloza and Hassay (2006) detect a perception of management support as a determining organisational factor. Along this







line, we detected that a lack of perception of senior management support is established as the greatest obstacle for employees who do not take part in CV programmes - over half of the cases. This idea may arise from employees' perception that managers do not support the CV programme because senior management has not conveyed the idea to them that CV is strategic and a part of company culture. We also detected that there is a relationship between the lack of direct manager support and their employees feeling that participating in CV is neglecting their functions, causing an increased workload for the rest of the team, as the absent employee's tasks must be distributed among the rest of the team when they are at a CV event.

Career reasons that motivate employees to participate in CV may be based on obtaining a network of contacts within the company and earning recognition from key directors. Achieving recognition from immediate managers is not as motivating for employees (Peloza et al, 2009). One interviewee commented: 'Personally, I have never gone to any volunteering activity. I prefer my team not to go either, as I need focused people who are not distracted, who give 120% to their jobs, I prefer not having to distribute more work among us because part of the team is spending the day out of the office, hanging out and chatting with colleagues'.

This statement contradicts Gilder et al (2005), who affirms that workers who remain at their job posts and have a higher workload due to their co-workers doing CV also have a positive attitude toward the programme.

3.4.2. Availability of resources and facilities

To make the decision on whether or not to participate in a CV activity, employees tend to first analyse the cost and benefit of participation. The lower the cost and the higher the benefit, the more likely they decide to participate (Piliavin et al, 1981 cited by Penner, 2005). There are three interrelated variables that affect the employee's involvement in CV: the meaningfulness of the project, social support and the availability of resources (Caligiuri et al, 2013). 'The company gives us free time to do volunteer work, has coaches ready, meals, and organises everything. I put on my volunteer t-shirt, get on the coach and go help', claimed another volunteer interviewed. Thus, lack of recognition of volunteering hours and their associated lack of skills development may cause a lower percentage of participation in CV at the company (Booth et al, 2009). 'I participate very little in CV because I haven't seen anything about it





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anywhere around the company and nobody has expressly told me that I have the right to go. I know I am not obligated and don't really think it is very important' (volunteer interviewed).

3.4.3. Selection factors

Employees consider several factors when deciding whether to participate in a new corporate volunteering project, such as the date and time as which the activity is being held, their preferences (the group potentially benefitting from the activity), community needs, the location of the event, the type of tasks that need to be done (Benjamin, 2001) and the business objective (Brown, 2005). 'I look at my schedule and the dates of the volunteer activities. Then from among the available dates I select those at which I can be useful, especially working with sick children or ones with problems' said another volunteer interviewed.

We also detected during our study that employees place importance on the specific days and times these activities are done. For example, for activities during the workday on Monday and Friday, they are more reluctant to participate as it disrupts them from organising their weekly work and closing topics. They also stated that they prefer volunteering in the afternoons instead of all morning. Similarly, it is more complicated for them to attend at the end of the month, for the same reasons of workload and closing the month or deadlines. We can frame these decisions within the preliminary cost of helping analysis employees do before taking decisions on whether or not to participate in a specific CV activity mentioned earlier.

3.4.4. Recognition

Transmitting knowledge outside the organisation motivates employees. Credit, recognition and time must be given to employees to do it (Burgess, 2005). 'I feel that it is important that my company lets me teach young people in situations of social exclusion. I really value it' (volunteer interviewed).

Along the line of Peloza et al (2009), we have found that the company's support by giving time is effective at increasing employees' participation in CV programmes for increasing their pride, satisfaction and encouraging others to participate (Brenner, 2010). 'Every year the company has a gala to award the most committed volunteer employ-









ees. Last year I received an award and I thought it was a lovely touch. Since then, a lot of people have asked me how they can participate and have taken an interest in the programme', said one party interviewed.

It is also important that the beneficiaries are pleasant, receptive and appreciate the value of the volunteer employees' work (Cohen and Sutton, 1998 cited by Grant, 2007). 'I help children without resources and those with the most difficulties to do their homework. To me, it is one of the best challenges of the week because they value that someone is concerned about them and consider me a friend, as they behaved badly with me at first' (volunteer interviewed).

3.4.5. Pressure to participate in CV

As mentioned earlier, overselling the CV programme can make employees feel pressure to participate and have the perception that volunteering is obligatory and not voluntary (Peterson, 2004). Another interviewee stressed: 'I've thought about participating before, but I don't like that at presentations of the programmes they tell us it is voluntary and then they send us loads of notices and information on it'.

We also detected several cases during the course of our study in which the employees interviewed complained of the incongruence between employees being told that the CV programme is voluntary, and the indirect pressures or coercion that employees may face when managers ask them to become involved in the programme. These are cases in which the managers are very involved in the project, regularly aligned with the company CEO on the project. In these cases, managers' support may take on more force and even end up converting into putting pressure on employees.

3.4.6. Social norms

Peer pressure does not affect employees' participation in CV, and the participation of co-workers has a negative effect on CV (Peloza et al, 2009). 'If only people from my department are going, I would rather not go' commented one interviewee. We cannot neglect subjective norms, by means of which normative commitment is exercised: what superiors, colleagues and peers expect of the employee (Bingham et al, 2013). 'Although it is voluntary, everyone signs up for these activities. It is part of



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the company culture: giving part of the profits it receives back to society' (volunteer interviewed).

Thus, we detected that some employees prefer to meet new workmates from other departments in the framework of corporate volunteering over going with colleagues from their own department. This is related to the so-called CV relational motives: to build relationships of friendship, to make friends and to meet new people through these types of activities (Proteau and Wolff, 2008).

3.4.7. Worker selects the cause

Employee participation is very important in designing CV programmes and their familiarisation with them (Van Schie et al, 2011; Du et al, 2015). 'When I told the company that I would like to do volunteer work with animals, they gave me free rein, support and the funds to organise it, and I organised everything' commented another interviewee.

We also detected cases in which the fact that employees can pick the cause, meaning the beneficiary groups of a specific corporate volunteering activity becomes a significant driver, in line with the work by Pajo and Lee (2011), as there are employees who have greater awareness of one cause tan others or, conversely, there may be employees who oppose a concrete cause. Itend to volunteer for child cancer patients, as I am very sensitive of this disease, especially among the youngest,' commented another employee.

3.4.8. Environment of social responsibility at company

An environment of social responsibility at the company acts as a moderator in employees participating in CV: it strengthens the relationship between pride and the meaning of volunteer work (Yim and Fock, 2013). Employees who perceive their companies as socially responsible increase their commitment and performance both in the workplace and in social action activities (Aguilera et al, 2005). 'Social action belongs to a company's DNA now, and sets us apart from the rest of the sector, where volunteering programmes like ours aren't available' (volunteer interviewed).

Our results are in line with those of El Akremi (2015) with regard to the important of the company's ethical climate as a driver in CV participation.







'I feel like my company is socially responsible, at least more than others where I have worked or that I know of. I tell my friends about volunteering activities and they are quite envious, and would like to have them at their companies,' commented another employee interviewed.

3.5. WORK DESIGN: MAKING UP FOR SHORTCOMINGS IN THE JOB POST

Employees can grant great importance to the level of contact with beneficiaries in each CV activity, both regarding physical proximity and the depth of this contact (Grant, 2007). 'It was an eye-opener of reality. We spent one morning with a group of disabled people at a special job centre. We shared their daily lives, normal tasks, their hopes and their desires' said another volunteer interviewed. Employees likewise value the importance or meaningfulness of the impact of their volunteer work on the potential beneficiaries (Grant, 2007). 'I felt respect for activities like donating blood or bone marrow. However, I have managed to overcome my fear, thinking that I could save a child's life: Could I ever achieve something so important by another activity in my daily life? (volunteer interviewed). Volunteers also value the frequency of contact with the beneficiaries offered by the CV programme (Grant, 2007). 'I have attended different volunteering activities with girls without resources over the last five years. I have seen the girls grow, not only their heights, but also their knowledge and values', stated one interviewee.

In our study, we detected that the lack of a job rich in the characteristics of the tasks, social aspects and knowledge required to develop it may make employees decide to participate in CV programmes (Grant, 2012). 'I like leaving my admin job for a while, quite repetitive, and going to raise people's awareness in food drives. I like talking to people, listening to them and explaining to them why it is important to help out to help families that don't have any food' (volunteer interviewed).

A job that only demands that an employee use a small part of her knowledge and skills may make her decide to participate in CV with the aim of being able to learn and develop new skills and improve her occupational development (Grant, 2012). 'Volunteering in training youths who have difficulties finding work helps me lose my fear of public speaking. I like it so much now that I am studying to work as a teacher', said





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another person interviewed. CV can become a way to seek enrichment of their job posts (Giles, 1977). 'CV lets me employ other abilities that I have, which I put to use in other jobs, but now don't use in my daily work' (volunteer interviewed).

3.6. DESIGNING THE TASKS TYPICAL OF CV ACTIVITY

Similarly, we also detected in our research that the importance that the employees give to the impact of their work as volunteers is another driver in their participating in the CV programme.

Employees value the meaningfulness or importance of the volunteer work, relational issues of the task that make it fun, entertaining and intrinsically satisfying and the chance to experience a variety of roles (Pajo and Lee, 2011). 'Volunteer days are really enjoyable. It's a way of helping and having a really nice time: one day you make giant soap bubbles, another day you cook cakes with sick children, and another day you may plant trees' (volunteer interviewed). CV is also related to job meaningfulness and volunteer meaningfulness. In other words, the less meaning their jobs have, the stronger their relationship is with participating in CV (Rodell, 2013). 'I work as a receptionist. It's not an exciting job, but it puts food on the table for my kids... Volunteering lets me do important things, but that are as basic as helping so that poor children can eat', said an interviewee.

3.7. ORGANISATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND COMMITMENT

The theory on organisational identification suggests that employees who value the volunteer programme will feel greater pride in belonging to the organisation, which increases their identification with the company and promotes associated responses (such as an intention to remain there); the pride of belonging expands individuals' experiences, giving them a feeling of pleasure and self-respect due to belonging to the organisation (Jones, 2010). 'Tve received job offers from other sector companies, but to me my company's social actions are very closely aligned with how I understand life' (volunteer interviewed). Heslin and Ochoa (2008) even point out that employees frequently prefer earning lower wages due to working at a socially responsible company. 'CV is something









very important that I feel very proud of. To me, my paycheque isn't everything' corroborated one interviewee with this viewpoint.

As mentioned above, the company is interested in employees' level of commitment due to the impact on the company's financial growth. It has great relevance due to its relationship with performance and, consequently, with productivity (Cuesta, 2015). In this regard, there is a positive relationship between organisational commitment and CV. An instrumental commitment represents an attitude of the employee's conformity and is a measure of commitment for obtaining a reward or finishing a task. On its part, normative commitment represents the degree to which the individual internalises the organisation's objectives and values and identifies with the organisation due to shared values (Madison et al, 2012). 'I feel like my help is important so that underprivileged children can have an opportunity, and I feel more committed and in harmony with the company due to its social sensitivity. We need more companies like this' (volunteer interviewed).

Employees' motivation to participate in CV may be based on the desire to express personal significant values, help those who are most in need, and is positively related to corporate commitment (Brockner et al, 2014). One person interviewed said that 'Helping others is always good. Volunteering is one more way to demonstrate my commitment, my wish to continue learning and generating value for the company'.

4. DISCUSSION, SCOPE AND FUTURE LINES OF RESEARCH

Our results set out the importance of employees' familiarity with and participation in the design of CV programmes (Van Schie et al, 2011; Du et al, 2015), which is not being achieved because lack of knowledge of the motivations and real determinants that guide employees' participation in corporate volunteering programmes make it impossible to develop effective strategies that create incentives for participating (Clary et al, 1994). Since there is no in-depth knowledge of these motivations, effective internal marketing cannot be carried out to motivate employee participation (Peloza et al, 2009). The results obtained show that an employee's decision to participate in CV programmes is based on multiple reasons. However, our results differ from the opinion of Clary et al (1998) and Peterson (2004) that employees' prosocial behaviour in CV is based solely on altruistic and selfish behaviours.

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Our results also find other reasons, such as support of the company's behaviour, and charity support behaviour (CSB), and reveal that organisational practices have a very significant weight in employees deciding to participate in CV programmes proposed by the company (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). Another result revealed by our research in participant observation, corroborated by the results obtained in interviews, is the preponderance of altruistic reasons, along the line of the work of Pajo and Lee (2011), contrary to the results of Peloza et al (2009).

We have detected that a single employee is frequently not only guided by selfish reasons, but that they also volunteer for altruistic motivations. We believe this is an important factor when defining strategies to encourage employees' participation in CV programmes. We should point out that the interviewer was the same person who was in charge of participant observation, with the aim of going into greater depth in the behaviours and attitudes observed. Open informal interviews were conducted, so that the spotlight would fall on the person being interviewed, seeking depth and fluency in our conversations.

Likewise, we have tried to eliminate the influential effect of the interviewer, trying to put communication skills into practice such as empathy, active listening, acceptance of the other, not making value judgements or trying to amicably dispute information given. With regard to the questions in the interviews, the order depended on the party interviewed, and questions related to the CV programme were included: about their knowledge of it, perceptions, experiences, behaviours, feelings and opinions produced by the programme with respect to the seven points set out in the conceptual framework proposal. These are: altruistic and selfish motivations, to support the company, organisational factors, characteristics of the job post, and volunteer activity and organisational identification. We paid particular attention to the most significant issues detected among subjects during participant observation.

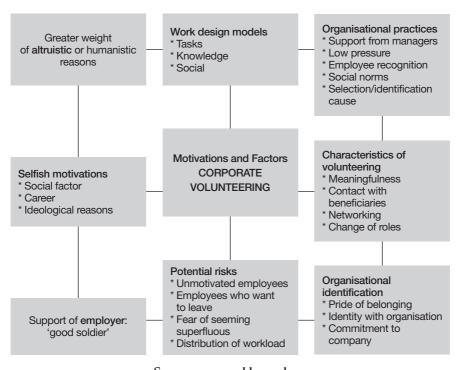
Moreover, among the selfish reasons, the social factor stands out as the first motivation (Wilson, 2000), above other reasons such as careers, ideological reasons, health reasons and so forth.

In this regard, we saw that there is a negative relationship with coworkers and CV participation (contrary to the reasoned action theory of Gilder et al, 2005) and a positive link to the possibility of obtaining recognition from senior managers (Peloza and Hassay, 2006; Peloza et al, 2009). We detected the importance of CV for employees as a lever to develop their careers but, in parallel, it is a factor that could cause the loss









Source: prepared by authors

Figure 3. Model proposed: Motivations and factors in employee participation in corporate volunteering programmes

of their job if their direct boss feels that CV is a distraction for his team that reduces its productivity level. Paradoxically, this same interpretation can lead to employees using CV as a trigger to try to get themselves fired, when they are not motivated at the company. We also detected that this circumstance is more frequent at companies where senior management does not tend to participate in volunteering activities or meetings.

We detected cases in which the company does not take the importance of the age variable into account, unaware that the application of strategies based on recognition and evaluation is more favourable among younger employees, whereas strategies based on incentives and team projects are more effective among older employees (Peterson, 2004). Moreover, we have also seen examples of the efficacy of strategies based on incentives, such as the company making donations for each hour of volunteer work done by employees (Geroy et al, 2000). With regard





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to other organisational practices, we verified the existence of the costreward approach of helping (Penner, 2005), where it is important that: 1) senior managers support employees' participation in CV; 2) pressure placed on volunteering is low; and 3) the volunteer employee is recognised (Grant, 2012). We have also seen among those interviewed that the possibility of selecting the cause and its fit with the company core positively affects workers' participation (Pajo and Lee, 2011; Grant, 2012), while it is not necessary for employees to identify with the cause for them to participate in CV (Peloza and Hassay, 2006). We also found that many people interviewed are guided by compensatory reasons at their job posts, because the tasks they perform do not let them use their full knowledge and skills, are tedious, not challenging, or do not let them interact how they would like (Grant, 2012). We have also seen how there are real risks in implementing CV programmes, such as attracting unmotivated employees who want to leave the company, or some mistrust of CV by some employees who consider it a private affair of each employee, which should not be financed by the company (Gilder et al, 2005).

Independent motivation is revealed as a go-between between the characteristics of the job and satisfaction (Millette and Gagné, 2008), where significant psychological implications in the employees' motivation have the importance of a task (Humphrey et al., 2007).

Moreover, we discovered that some employees participate in CV due to the importance of the tasks in the volunteer activity, because they can do networking, change roles with respect to their daily job functions or due to the social and relational support of the activity itself (Pajo and Lee, 2011). As mentioned in interviewees' responses, we could determine the relationship between job meaningfulness and volunteer meaningfulness, as the less significant an employee's job is, the greater the strength of the CV relationship (Rodell, 2013). Similarly, those interviewed prefer activities and institutions that are coherent with their identities, beyond mere satisfaction of their needs or functional reasons (Brammer, 2007; Du et al, 2014). We also detected that CV produces a pride of belonging among employees, which increases their identification with the company (Jones, 2010).

With regard to the scope and limitations of the study, we present a conceptual framework of the motivations for corporate volunteerism. This is an exploratory study whose aim is to obtain the social significance of the motivations and decisive factors in employees' participation in CV pro-







grammes, although our goal was not to obtain statistical representativeness. We did not seek geographic or sectoral representativeness, or the phenomenon as related to company size. Nor did we aim to comprehensively study the phenomenon of CV according to the number of hours each employee participates each year, or the years of experience they have participating in CV programmes, which could be a project for future research. In upcoming studies, we could try to determine whether or not there is a relationship between highly motivated and active employees in CV with a low level of support from their direct managers, and their having been dismissed or leaving the company. We could also incorporate personal and personality factors into the study. Another interesting option could be to study which strategies are most effective for maximising employee participation in CV programmes, taking into account the new proposed conceptual framework. The objective would be to expand the study of strategies that could be implemented to encourage employees to participate, in accordance with the diverse motivations set out in this paper, also extending the study of the possible risks stemming from developing these types of programmes, in order to be able to identify and overcome them.

5. CONCLUSIONS

We believe that with this research project, we have made progress in understanding the phenomenon of corporate volunteering from the perspective of employees' motivations. The method used, based on co-existence with the employees, has let us get to know them in a way that is less intrusive, by interacting with them in a range of situations. Thus, we consider that we have achieved the rigour required, and we have been able to avoid self-serving and politically-correct responses that are contrary to employees' real motivations, as we are in a field that socially assumes that people help exclusively for altruistic or humanitarian reasons.

This study lets company managers better know and understand the decisive factors of employees participating in corporate volunteering programmes, to therefore be able to motivate and maximise them (Clary et al, 1994). This research could benefit companies and those groups at risk of social exclusion who are recipients of new corporate volunteering programmes that are developed both at companies where this type of activity is already implemented and at those that are starting to implement these programmes.







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Submission: 11th July 2016 Acceptance: 27th October 2016

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This paper was recived on July 25th 2016, and was approved on March 29th 2016.



