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Volunteerism as a mirror of individuals and society:
reflections from young adults in Finland

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Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by due permission of the Faculty
of Theology at the University of Helsinki in Auditorium XIV (Unioninkatu 34),
on the 25th of May, 2012 at 12 o'clock.

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Individual publications

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Publication 3

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Publication 4

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Summary

This study analyses the role of volunteering in the lives of young adults, in their self-reflections related to their identities, life stages, values and religiousness. It aims at understanding the processes related to these themes as perceived by volunteers in the context of late modern self-reflexivity. Life in late modern western societies has been characterized by qualities such as uncertainty, individualism and freedom. Social life is increasingly becoming fragmented and traditional authorities and shared goals are eroding in their influence. Self-reflexivity, active monitoring, realizing and actualizing of the self, have at least partially replaced collective and shared identities and goals. This development has guided individuals in late modern western societies towards increasing individuality, towards the exercise of choice, and personal responsibility. These in turn influence personal identities, values, and religiousness. They are all increasingly viewed as freely chosen, and individually negotiated.

In the context of late modern self-reflexivity, volunteering has also been viewed as a field of active self-reflection, especially among young age groups. Volunteerism is embedded in a culture of self-constructed biographical frames, discontinuity and elective group memberships. Moreover, motivations for volunteering can arise from experiences of biographical discontinuity, crises or re-orientations. Volunteering can be used as a tool for coping with this uncertainty, as a means towards self-realization. These self-reflections in relation to volunteering are scrutinized in this study. Four publications, each of which has its discrete research question, investigate volunteering in relation to identity, life stages, values, and religiousness. Quantitative and qualitative data and methods were combined in order to understand the phenomena from different perspectives. The research questions and results of the four publications are combined in the introductory article, which analyses the special role of volunteering as a mirror between individual and cultural values in contemporary Finnish society.

Results of the study show that volunteering can be used in reflecting and expressing the core values, identities and religiousness of individuals. The results also indicate different styles of religiousness and range of values that can be associated with volunteering. Despite this considerable range the results of this study show that volunteering has a commonly shared position and role in Finnish society. Volunteering is in this context closely intertwined with egalitarian

cultural values. The results of this study indicate that individual volunteers use the cultural category of volunteering in their personal identity work, for reflection on values, worldviews and of the self. This renders the values and meanings ascribed to volunteering personal and sensitive as well.

In the Finnish context the traditional cultural value of egalitarianism is currently being contested by the aims of competitiveness and productivity, at least in political rhetoric and decision-making. In this situation volunteering and civil society hold significant positions in the views of individual volunteers. Volunteering seems to have become an oasis of egalitarian values, which are challenged by other sectors of a society undergoing change. Such a conclusion highlights the crucial importance of the voluntary sector in forming, reinforcing and maintaining equality, social justice, freedom, responsibility, and honesty, which are the basic cultural values of Finnish society. It also highlights the importance of the voluntary sector in forming, reinforcing and maintaining the belief and trust of young adults in these values at the societal level. In order for this to be possible, the values that individuals ascribe to the image of volunteering must be compatible with the values that they personally hold important. Thus, the results of this study indicate that egalitarian values ascribed to volunteering as a societal category should be secured.

1 Introduction

1.1 Young adults, values, and volunteering in late modernity

Young adulthood is a flexible concept. Classical developmental theories have defined young adulthood in different age cohorts ranging from 18 to 40 (Erikson 1950, Havighurst 1972). A recent trend is for young adulthood to be viewed as a life phase that is better described by certain qualities rather than distinct age groups (Mikkola et al. 2007). Young adulthood has traditionally been seen as a time of identity formation, finding a partner and starting a family, building a career and also of discovering one's own approach to civic duties and societal questions (Erikson 1950; Havighurst 1972). In contemporary western societies societal norms related to these developmental tasks are not as strict as they were previously, and individuals settle down later than they did earlier. In Finland, as in many other western countries, the average ages for graduating, getting married, and having a first child have risen over the last two or three decades. In 2010 the average age for a woman to have her first child was 28, the average age for a woman's first marriage 30, and the average age for a man's first marriage 32.6 in Finland (Ketokivi 2004; Suomen virallinen tilasto: Siviilisäädyn muutokset 2011).

Life in late modern western societies has been described in terms of qualities such as uncertainty, individualism and freedom. Social life is increasingly fragmented and the influences of traditional authorities and shared goals are eroding (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991). Moreover, the development of cultural values of western societies, including Finland, has increased the emphasis on self-direction and individualism (Welzel 2010). Individuals have freedom but also the responsibilities to choose their own life-paths, and according to some views even construct their own identities. Self-reflexivity, active self-monitoring, realizing and actualizing the self, has at least partially replaced collective and shared identities and goals. The place of one's birth, parent's occupations and their life choices no longer dictate those of their children. Any occupation, any country, any life style can be chosen, at least in principle (Giddens 1991).

Despite the societal changes towards reflexivity, the values of young adults do not differ radically from those of their parents. Although the active monitoring and reflecting on values has become common, the central values of young adults

are the same as their parents. Benevolence is the highest rated value among all age groups in Finland, although in general young age groups rate hedonistic values as more important and universalism values as less important than older Finns (Mikkola 2003; Puohiniemi 2006). In relation to attitudes, young adults rate family and health as the most important things in their lives (Mikkola 2006). Power and accomplishment are among the least important matters in the lives of young adults and Finns (Mikkola 2006; Puohiniemi 2006). The context of late modernity is the milieu in which increases in ownership and agency in relation to values, the active monitoring of them and the feeling of choice is prevalent. However, these values do not change rapidly in relation to those held by previous generations.

A similar phenomenon can be related to religiousness. Religiousness has increasingly become a question of individual choice. Collective norms do not dictate church membership or practising religion as strongly as they did earlier (Heelas & Woodhead 2005). Belonging to the majority Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland is no longer an obvious norm or a natural part of the identity of a Finn. Young adults have relinquished their church memberships more rapidly compared to any other age group during the last decade. At the same time as these public forms of religion decline in Finland, the religiousness of individuals has not changed as much. Belief in God or a higher power remains, frequency of prayer is relatively high in Finland compared to many Western European countries, and questions of meaning and spirituality are as relevant as ever. Traditional Lutheran religiousness and identity are mixed with other religions and worldviews and a looser type of spirituality. Atheistic and agnostic worldviews are also an option (Heelas & Woodhead 2005; *Monikasvoinen kirkko* 2008; Mikkola et al. 2007). Furthermore, despite the range of possibilities in relation to values and religiousness, the values and religiousness of parents continues to have a strong influence on those of their children (Helander 2005).

It thus seems that both values and religiousness are still passed down and learned at least to some extent, but the feelings of active choice and ownership have increased. In fact, self-reflexive choice and ownership can also be encouraged and expected in the cultural context. In contemporary western societies an individual is, in principle, expected to choose from endless combinations of life styles, values, and worldviews. As collective norms, values,

and authorities no longer direct these choices as clearly as they did earlier, individuals must have a strong sense of identity to be able to make choices. At the same time, individual choices become ways to reflect, define and express the individual self. This self-reflective, dynamic interaction between identity and choices has been called “identity work”. Individuals actively work to find and maintain a coherent identity through different choices. At the same time, a sense of coherent identity directs future choices. Having a coherent sense of identity is seen as a central human need that also makes the quest for continuity, credibility, and ownership of an identity essential (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991; Welzel 2010).

Volunteering too is changing within the context of late modern societies. A modernization-driven social-structural change from traditional, communal volunteering towards a reflexive and a more individualistic approach to volunteering has been introduced (Hustinx & Lammertyn 2003; Hustinx 2010). Collective volunteerism has been embedded in continuity, group memberships, collective biographies, and often in religious traditions. Reflexive styles of volunteering, on the other hand, are embedded in the late modern culture of self-constructed biographical frames, discontinuity and elective group memberships. Reflexive volunteerism is dependent on self-centered motivations and personal needs and interests that can arise from different life experiences, crises or re-orientations (Hustinx & Lammertyn 2003). Volunteering can thus be a way of coping with the uncertainties of late modern societies, it can also provide one arena of self-reflection and identity-work.

The uncertainties of the societal settings are especially present in the lives of young adults. The life stage of being a young adult in general demands making more active choices than at any other life stage, yet the individuals at this stage have the least life-experience. Nonetheless, they are expected to make choices related to their fields of study, careers, spouse, and possibly starting families, in general the direction of their life paths. Finnish young adults are relatively highly educated. In 2005 only 11 percent of 25 to 34 year-old Finns had not acquired a degree after compulsory education. In OECD countries the average proportion was 23 percent. Most Finnish students work during their studies. The proportion of 25 to 34 year-old Finns working was 81 percent in 2008. Young adults and young age groups in general are relatively content with their lives. In 2007 the

mean grade that 15 to 29 year-old Finns gave to rate how content they were with their lives on a scale from 4 to 10 (Finnish school grade-scale) was 8.5 (Myllyniemi 2008). Active decisions are made in both the biographical and the developmental stages. Finding one's own path is essential for young adults in late modern western societies. Consequently, young adults are an especially interesting group for research on the associations between personal identities and their societal contexts, i.e. identity work.

People that belong to young age groups are interested in volunteering in Finland. Slightly less than one third of young adults participate in volunteering according to various studies (Grönlund & Pessi 2008; Yeung 2001). A substantially larger proportion indicates an interest in volunteering, and up to 50 percent of currently non-volunteering young adults report a willingness to volunteer if someone invited them to come along (Grönlund & Pessi 2008). Volunteering in young adulthood can be viewed in relation to studies, work and family roles. Volunteering can be sought for or easily initiated in areas related to these fields. For example, volunteering in relation to one's children's hobbies. On the other hand, the life stage is full of activities and events which consume time thus there may be little or no time available for volunteering (Musick & Wilson 2008; Oesterle et al. 2004).

This study focuses on the views of Finnish young adults on volunteering, on understanding the role of volunteering in their lives and in relation to their values, religiousness, and on identity in late modern Finnish society. The focus group of young adults was introduced above. The societal context of the study is introduced in the following section (1.2). The aim of the research and detailed research questions are detailed together with the main conceptual framework in section 1.3 of this study. After this a review of previous research is presented in chapter 2, which also describes the motivation and the need for this study in terms of both findings and gaps in the existing body of literature. Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical framework of the study. It summarises the individual theoretical approaches used in the four independent publications. Chapter 4 introduces and describes the methodological choices and their evaluation in the four publications and also discusses the combination of methodological approaches in the entirety of this study. Chapter 5 presents the findings of the four separate studies and provides an evaluating summary of them. After this the results are analyzed from

the viewpoint of the societal context i.e. late modern Finnish society in chapter 6. Deeply personal and individual ways of understanding and approaching volunteering are seen as mirrors to the role of volunteering within the context of late modern Finnish society. The societal situation in relation to volunteering, the changes in the Finnish welfare model, and cultural values are discussed in terms of the image that the individuals perceive about the role of volunteering in Finnish society. Chapter 6 also provides implications for society and policy (6.3), and evaluation of the study and implications for further research (6.4). This study represents the discipline of Church and social studies. Such a discipline directs the orientation to volunteerism research that was chosen in this study. Volunteerism research is an interdisciplinary field, which merges approaches that range from anthropology to pedagogy and from history to economics. Thus, focus is needed. The theories and literature from volunteerism research that are used in this study represent sociological, psychological, social-psychological, and social-political viewpoints to volunteerism. These viewpoints are traditionally the fields that are used in the discipline of Church and social studies. They also provide the means to scrutinize volunteerism both as an individual and as a societal phenomenon, which is the aim of this study.

1.2 The context of volunteering in Finland

Volunteering takes on different meanings in different settings. At its simplest volunteering can be defined as giving time freely and without financial reward to help other people or a cause. However, cultural settings influence the understanding and practice of volunteering within different contexts (Handy et al. 2000, Merrill 2006). Societal contexts provide the socio-political models that regulate the requirements and possibilities for volunteering (Stadelman-Steffen & Freitag 2011). Furthermore, the substantial differences in values and norms between cultures lead to different meanings and motives for volunteering. Cultural values also influence and are affected by the political systems of different countries (Hofstede 2001; Inglehart 1997).

The political system is related to the welfare model of each country. Behind the different welfare models are different political principles. Welfare is provided in most societies by four domains, which are: the public sector (state, municipalities), the private sector (market), civil society (non-profit, non-

governmental organizations and voluntary work), and the family. In his classic albeit much debated study, Esping-Andersen (1990) introduced an ideal-typology of welfare-state regimes. The ideal types are a) the liberal welfare model, in which the private sector, i.e. the market provides most of the welfare services, b) the conservative welfare model, in which the family provides most of the welfare services and c) the social democratic model, in which the public sector, state and municipalities provide most of the welfare services. For decades Finland has represented the social democratic model, albeit as an eclectic mix of welfare as practiced in most countries particularly today.

The way in which the welfare provision is allocated between state, market, and families can influence the needs, norms, and motives for volunteering in different countries. Volunteering also exists in countries for which the public sector takes care of a majority of welfare needs (Rochester et al. 2010). The political system has a significant impact on the type of volunteering individuals engage in within any particular country rather than participation rates *per se* (Anheier & Salamon 1999; Stadelman-Steffen & Freitag 2011). For example, in countries in which social democratic welfare models function, and the role of public sector in welfare is significant, volunteering mostly happens in relation to recreational and expressive activities such as sports, culture, religion, advocacy and hobbies rather than welfare. On the other hand, in “liberal” and corporatist states, volunteering is more service-oriented (Salamon & Sokolowski 2003).

In the social-democratic welfare state model the services provided by the voluntary sector have mainly complemented the services provided by the public sector. It has revealed new needs for welfare and created new working methods. The public sector, the state and the municipalities have been responsible for a majority of services such as the care for children and elderly, which in many societies are provided by family members, voluntary organizations and churches and other religious organizations. Thus, the expectations for unpaid help in service provision are not as high in countries of the social-democratic welfare model as they can be in countries with other welfare models (Esping-Andersen 1990; Salamon & Sokolowski 2003). Despite this, volunteering can be significant and widespread in social democratic welfare models as well. It keeps up trust and active citizenship, and enables services that would not be available otherwise. For example, sports associations are fundamentally reliant on voluntary work in

organizing their activities. Yeung (2002) has stated volunteering to be “one of the fundamental pillars of society”.

As mentioned above, welfare models are the result of political systems, which are rooted in and interact with cultural norms and values of a country. In Finland, the social democratic welfare model has been rooted in a long tradition of political democracy, a long history of social-democratic political values, a strong will for and an ability for social and national integration, and also the Lutheran version of Christianity. The values of individualism, gender equality, and aim of equal treatment for all citizens are intertwined with this welfare model. In general universalism (humanitarianism) and benevolence are the values that have been connected with volunteering activity most clearly at the level of individuals (Bekkers 2005; Cnaan et al. 2011). As noted earlier, benevolence is the highest rated value among all age groups in Finland (Puohiniemi 2006).

According to Schwartz (1994, 1999), egalitarianism and harmony are the most central cultural values in Finland. Cultural values are studied through personal values of large groups of individuals in the same cultural context. Egalitarianism entails voluntary commitment to promoting the welfare of others: equality, social justice, freedom, responsibility, and honesty. The individual level value of benevolence, which is the most central value for a majority of Finns resembles the content of egalitarian cultural values. The other central cultural value, harmony refers to fitting harmoniously with the environment: unity with nature, protecting the environment, and world of beauty (Schwartz 1994, 1999).

According to the World Value project, Finland manifests strong self-expression values and strong secular-rational values similar to those of other traditionally protestant European countries. Countries with such values emphasize civil and political freedoms and tolerate nonconformity. Self-direction and trust in other people are high in such contexts. On the other hand, the emphasis of religiousness, respect for authority and obedience are lower (Welzel 2010).

The cultural values of Finland introduced above can be said to represent a background of values, which promotes volunteering and altruism among individuals. Indeed, altruistic reasons are extremely central in volunteering motivation in Finland. A will to help is the highest rated individual reason to volunteer (Yeung 2001). For example, in a recent survey 68 percent of Finns responded that they are willing to help other people in the future by volunteering

(Pessi 2008). According to different studies, over a third of Finns volunteer (Pessi 2008; Yeung 2001; Study on Volunteering in the European Union 2011), and health and welfare services, sports, and education are the most popular fields of volunteering (Yeung 2001). At slightly under one third, volunteering of the young age groups is close to the national average (Grönlund & Pessi 2008).

The Finnish social-democratic welfare model has central aims that are built on this same value base as Finnish volunteering namely: social solidarity, gender equality, and equal treatment for all citizens. These aims have intertwined with the cultural values in the Finnish welfare state model introduced above. The voluntary sector and the welfare state model have supported and strengthened each other, and provided social capital (Pessi & Saari 2011; Yeung 2004).

Nevertheless, during the last two decades productivity and competitiveness have become central concepts and aims in political decision-making in Finland. The dominating principles of the market economy have weakened the emphasis on reciprocity, solidarity and equality, which have previously been central in the Finnish welfare state model and voluntary sector (Saari & Pessi 2011). During the last 20 years of competitiveness, significant changes have also been made in the Finnish welfare system, which challenge the earlier welfare state model. Welfare services have been increasingly outsourced to the private sector, voluntary sector, and the Church from the public sector. The responsibility for the quality and financing of the services remains largely with the public sector but services are also being cut back, whereas the percentage of private financing has increased (Forma et al. 2007). For example, care for the elderly provided by the public sector was cut back during the recession of the 1990's, and has not been increased to its former levels since then. The private sector, the voluntary sector, and families provide a large amount of services for the elderly in Finland (Lehto & Blomster 2000; Vaarama et al. 2010). Income differences and poverty have increased continuously over the last 15 years (Saari & Pessi 2011; Julkunen 2001; Vaarama et al. 2010). Other sectors of society, voluntary organizations, the Church, and individual citizens have been forced to react to those needs that are no longer met by the public sector (Grönlund & Hiilamo 2006; Lehto & Blomster 2000; Vaarama et al. 2010).

The changes from a social democratic welfare state model towards welfare pluralism also influence volunteering. The view on volunteering as based entirely

on altruism and individual interest instead of societal needs and expectations is now being challenged. The emphasis on competitiveness and productivity also raise the question of whether the traditional societal values of equality, altruism, and solidarity still remain. At the same time Finnish citizens strongly support the idea of a tax-funded welfare state, and expect the public sector to take on the main responsibility for welfare needs (Vaarama et al. 2010; Pessi & Grönlund 2011). The discussion on the influence of competitiveness and the new welfare model on the Finnish society, on its cultural values, and also on the motivation behind volunteering is only beginning within the Finnish context (Pessi & Saari 2011). The role of volunteering in this changing context is discussed in chapter 6.

1.3 Aims of the study and conceptual framework

The study aims at understanding the individual processes related to identity, life stages, values, and religiousness of volunteers. These processes are scrutinized in four studies, which were published and their research questions are:

- 1. How is volunteering associated with reflexive processes related to self-images and life courses by young Finnish adults? (Publication 1)*
- 2. How is volunteering associated with identities and central values as parts of identities among individual young Finnish adults? (Publication 2)*
- 3. What is the relationship between different types of religious identification and volunteering among young Finnish adults? (Publication 3)*
- 4. Are cultural values associated with the volunteering motivation of individual volunteering students in different cultural contexts? (Publication 4)*

This introductory publication gathers the results of these questions and provides a collective analysis of them in which the individual level is combined with the societal level. The main goal of this second level of analysis is to carry out the following:

Analyze the special role of volunteering as a mirror or channel between individual and cultural values in contemporary Finnish society.

The approach of the research is that of the individual. It aims in understanding individual processes, as experienced by volunteers. At the same

time these processes are analyzed in relation to the societal context as late modern identity work. Deeply personal and individual ways of understanding and approaching volunteering are seen as mirrors of the societal context of late modern Finnish society and of the role of volunteering in this societal context.

Conceptual framework: Volunteering

No single, simple, and objective definition for volunteering exists. The lack of specificity and the boundaries of the phenomenon have been discussed from several viewpoints including categories of different styles of voluntary action, different motives for such actions, the beneficiaries, and the organizers of voluntary action (Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth 1996; Rochester et al. 2010; Wilson, 2000; Yeung 2004). As mentioned above, cultural contexts influence what is defined as volunteering. The status of volunteerism in different countries and different linguistic concepts influence this (Dekker 1999). Differences in understanding and defining volunteering exist even between European countries. For instance, in the United Kingdom volunteering is mainly considered unpaid work, in Germany a volunteer is often a board member, and in Sweden volunteering is seen as being idealistic or altruistic (Meijs & Bridges Karr 2004).

Nevertheless, work by Cnaan, Handy, and their colleagues (Cnaan et al. 1996; Handy et al. 2000) has shown that in spite of these inconsistencies in defining volunteering there is a reasonable consensus among respondents on what is definitely volunteering. However, there can be less agreement over more marginal forms of volunteerism. In the study by Handy et al. (2000) respondents from five different countries including India, Italy and the United States were asked to rate 50 items on a Likert-type scale ranging from a non-volunteer to definitely a volunteer. Three scenarios were identified as definitely volunteering in all countries. In addition remuneration (monetary or otherwise) to the individual had a negative impact on people's perceptions of what is a volunteer across all regions (Handy et al. 2000, p. 63).

As this research builds on the understandings of individuals and the role of volunteering in their lives, a relatively simple definition was adopted. Volunteering is defined as *an individual giving his or her time freely and without financial reward to help other people or a cause in an organized manner*. The organizer of the volunteering does not necessarily have to be a formal organizer of

the activity, but the activity as organized by *inter alia* an informal group of friends. As in many definitions, helping one's family members or friends is not defined as volunteering.

In relation to the societal level of volunteering, the concepts of civil society, the third sector, and voluntary sector are used. Each of these concepts refer to the societal arena of non-profit, non-governmental organizations, voluntary work and citizen activity with slightly different connotations. The concept of civil society is the broadest. It is often used to refer to all civil actions taken by citizens including political activity. For example, the Civil Society Index (CIVICUS Civil Society Index 2012, p.15) defines civil society as “the arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market where people associate to advance common interests.” The concept of a third sector is used to refer to the role of voluntary organizations and activities in welfare and in relation to the other three sectors of welfare in society: the public sector (state, municipalities), private sector (the market), and family. The concept of the voluntary sector is used most clearly to refer to organizations, which organize voluntary work and individuals, who volunteer. Civil society including political activity, citizenship, and the third sector have been studied and theorized over extensively (Edwards 2011; Taylor 2010), and they represent genres of their own. Such research and theories are mainly limited out of the scope of this study. To summarize, the focus of this study is in volunteering and the voluntary sector, as defined above.

Values, religiousness, identity

Values can be defined as the guiding principles in the life of an individual. They are relatively stable desirable goals, which guide the actions of an individual (Rokeach 1973; Schwartz 2007, 712). Values are thus trans-situational, and in this way they provide a window to the essence of identity. Values vary in importance but the most central values of an individual serve as guiding principles in the life of a person. They are seen as normative and justified but are often also emotional and to some extent unrecognized. In addition to the level of individual, values can be viewed and researched at the level of groups and societies. Both the approach of individual values as a part of identity and the approach of cultural values at the level of society are adopted in this study.

Religion and religiousness can be viewed either as a part of individual identities and values, or as a societal phenomenon or a combination of both. Religion in general is a debated concept, which can be scrutinized from different angles. One of these approaches is to divide definitions of religion into the substantive and the functional groups. Substantive definitions focus on the substance of religions such as beliefs and rites. Functional definitions define religion in terms of its social or psychological functions (Berger 1974). Both of these definitions are discussed in this study (especially publication 3), although a substantive definition forms the basis of approaching religion and religiousness. Substantive definitions constitute what is usually referred to as religion in common understanding. Religion is often defined as belief in a (personal) God. It usually involves obedience and worship and is associated with tradition, institution, community, ritual, scripture and moral codes. Religiousness is an individual's grounding within the religion (Heelas & Woodhead 2005; Roof 2003). Religions are also a societal force, which have shaped and still shape nations, cultures, cultural values, and the individuals living in these nations. Moreover, religions and their societal contexts interact and influence each other (Davie 2007). The societal viewpoint to religion is utilized in this study by analyzing and discussing the connections of religion with personal and cultural values and in relation to the societal context of volunteering in general.

In addition to traditional substantive religiousness, the study includes looser types of spirituality. Spirituality is usually described as being more individualistic and personal. Its definition is nevertheless more general and embraces a wider scope than religion's. It can mean faith in a transcendent deity when it involves traits of religion and is intertwined with it. In complete contrast, it can be a humanistic and psychological self-transformation, an experienced relationship with holiness in this world and in this life as an option to commitment to a transcendental truth (Heelas & Woodhead 2005; Roof 2003). In this study, spirituality, new age worldviews, uncertain religious questions, atheism, and agnostic worldviews are all included as meaning systems. The roles of these meaning systems are sought for in relation to volunteering. In general, strict definitions are not applied but worldviews are approached openly leaving room for individual understandings.

Identity can be defined broadly as the sense an individual has of oneself. Some theorists view values as the core of identity (Hitlin 2007). In the field of psychology identity formation and maintenance are seen as central needs for an individual. Identity comprises the abilities, roles, values, background, and reference groups important to the individual. One must have a sense of them, an identity (Blasi 1993; Erikson 1968). The definitions and the approach used in this study build on this psychological understanding, and also on the sociological viewpoints to identity. The sociological approach views identity as a reflexive process of an individual within cultural contexts. The societal context of individuals influences how their identities are formed and how they understand and view themselves. By this route individual identities always mirror the society an individual lives in. In sociological theories these reflexive identities are often seen as fragmented and even momentary. Nevertheless, continuity is also important in these theories. The reflexive process of identity work has been described as negotiating or forming a life story (Giddens 1991; Taylor 1989). The philosophical discussions on identity are outwith the scope of this research, as is a review of the details of the scientific approaches on the concepts of identity. For a review on identity theories see Leary & Tangney (2002).

2 Previous research – gaps and inspiration

2.1 Need for in-depth, holistic approaches

This study aims at understanding individual processes that relate to identity, life stages, values, and religiousness by volunteers. Previous research on volunteering at the level of the individual has mainly focused on socio-demographics and motives. Numerous studies have scrutinized socio-demographic variables to detect patterns of behavior in relation to age, gender, occupation, education and country (McCloughan et al. 2011; Musick & Wilson 2008; Rochester et al. 2010; in the Finnish context Yeung 2001; Pessi 2008). Altruism, learning, career, and social motives were revealed to be central in nearly all studies on volunteering motivation. The different motives have also been scrutinized in relation to socio-demographic backgrounds and fields of volunteering. In addition, the categorization of motives has been common in these studies. For instance, the intrinsic versus extrinsic and the self-oriented versus socially-oriented divides are widely used categories in volunteerism research (Clary et al. 1998; Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen 1991; Snyder & Omoto 1992; Musick & Wilson 2008; in the Finnish context Nylund & Yeung 2005; Yeung 2004).

A majority of research on young adults' volunteerism focuses on the influence of socio-demographic backgrounds, personality traits and / or the motives of volunteering young adults (Handy et al. 2010; Marta & Pozzi 2008; Marta et al. 2006; Rehberg 2005; in the Finnish context Grönlund & Pessi 2008; Yeung & Grönlund 2005). These studies found the motives for volunteering among young adults to be especially multidimensional, varied and differentiated. Combining different motives in a reflexive and individual manner seems typical among young adults. Nevertheless, individual reflections are always embedded in the life history and social and societal contexts of an individual, and young adults often started volunteering in their youth. This highlights the influence of parents, peers, school and other communities. Volunteering in youth also predisposes the individual to volunteering as an adult (Musick & Wilson 2008). In young adulthood volunteering is more influenced by work and family roles, at least in relation to available time to spend volunteering (Oesterle et al. 2004). In-depth approaches to understanding the roles of volunteering in the lives of young adults are scarce; as it is in relation to all age groups.

Few studies have focused on how volunteering is understood and associated with self-reflections and biographical needs of individual lives. Consequently, qualitative research approaches on understanding the individual and reflexive uses of volunteering in self-realization or autobiographical frames have been called for (Hustinx 2010; Marta et al. 2006; Yeung 2004). The existing research literature on volunteering in personal or autobiographical uses has introduced individual ways by which volunteering can be used in negotiating identities and life paths (Rehberg 2005; Reimer et al. 2009; Yates and Youniss 1996). In that body of literature reflexivity, identity processes and identifying with ideological perspectives were shown to be relevant in volunteering, including among young age groups. Volunteering can be connected with personal goals of the self, in relation to moral traits, and discovering or transcending personal limits. It can be used for stability and continuity in life, reaffirming central roles such as professional roles, and belonging to a community. In addition, it has been associated with the search for the self, in re-orientations of life, and even in therapeutic uses (Jakob 1993; Wuthnow 1998).

How individuals appear to use volunteering for self-esteem and social status in individual studies (Cohen 2009; Fuller et al. 2008; Kulik 2007; Kulik 2010) raise the question as to why the approach of self-reflection has not been used more in volunteerism studies. Only a few novel approaches have been adopted in this field, such as that used in the study by Hustinx (2010) on self-realization and on quitting volunteering. In her research, dissatisfaction with limited opportunities for self-realization in volunteering was indicated as one reason for quitting. The lack of studies in self-reflexive uses of volunteering may at least partially result in the strong position of quantitative studies of large data in the field of volunteerism research. Reflexivity or reflexive uses are not easy to test by using surveys, as Hustinx (2010, p.252) pointed out. More qualitative research is needed to understand further the reflexive uses and functions of volunteering in individual lives. This present study answers this particular need by using a holistic approach to volunteering. The core of this holistic approach is in studying volunteerism in relation to personal values and worldviews of the volunteers. Such an approach is scarce as will be demonstrated in the following section.

2.2 Personal values, identities, and religiousness in volunteering

Studies that relate volunteering to identity and values can come close to the reflexive approach discussed above. A widely used study on the psychological functions of volunteering for individuals adopted the viewpoint of reflexive use of volunteering as early as the 1990s (Clary et al. 1998; Omoto & Snyder 1995). The approach shows that volunteering fulfills different functions, different needs and different goals in the lives of different individuals. These needs can be very personal, and relate to individual life situations and values. Volunteering has been demonstrated to be one way of expressing individuality, as it can provide the volunteers with a sense of identity (Wuthnow 1991). Research related to volunteering role-identity has deepened the understanding of the actual ways volunteering can be intertwined in personal processes (Finkelstein et al. 2005; Grube & Piliavin 2000). This approach states that individuals have multiple social role identities that are a result of social interaction and the expectations of others. Social role identities can gradually become central for the individual, a part of the concept of “the self”. Volunteering role-identity has been especially used to understand the commitment to volunteering. Several quantitative studies have verified the relationship between volunteering role-identity and commitment to volunteering activity and /or the volunteering organization (Finkelstein et al. 2005; Laverie & McDonald 2007).

Nevertheless, volunteering role-identity theory focuses on social identity theory (Hitlin 2007; Badea et al. 2010), i.e. the role of a volunteer in an organizational context. According to Hitlin (2007, p.250), identity theory has often neglected the sense of a coherent self that exists abstracted from a variety of situations. He states there is a need for expanding identity theory beyond this. Matsuba et al. (2005, 2007) have shown an association between volunteering behavior and what they call a “helping identity”. This approach does not connect volunteering specifically with the role of a volunteer but with helping in general. This resembles the genre of research on moral identity. Moral identity can be described as the inherent need in the personality to act morally. Monroe (2003), among others, has underscored the importance of identity for moral motivation. She suggests that the ways individuals see the world and themselves in relation to others strongly influence their treatment of others. Research on moral identity has

found connections between moral identity and pro-social action, including volunteering (Aquino & Reed 2002; Hart et al. 1999; Younis & Yates 1999). Some of these studies view any voluntary action as an outcome of moral identity, which is problematic as motives for volunteering vary to a great extent. Thus, volunteering is not always a moral action when morality is defined by the motives of the actors. According to Blasi (1999, p. 12; 2004) moral functioning must be rooted in moral understanding and motivation, in what is good or bad within the understanding of the individual. Moral in the context of moral identity should be tied to subjectivity, as it is a part of an individual's identity. Research into the how's and why's of moral identity has also been called for (Hardy & Carlo 2005).

Hitlin has suggested the concept of "value-identity" (Hitlin 2007, p. 250) a concept originally espoused by Gecas (2000) in finding a more holistic understanding of identity in volunteering. Such value-based identity occurs as an individual reflexively identifies oneself with a value or values to say that one is a certain kind of person (Gecas 2000, p. 96). Hitlin (2007, p. 250) states "values provide an empirical window into this core level of personal identity as it exists apart from and prior to the enactment of specific identities." Values are a common field of study in relation to volunteering. Altruistic, humanitarian, and religious values especially have been linked with volunteering, and are often considered as being components of motivational structures (Bekkers, 2005; Cnaan et al. 2011; Musick & Wilson 2008). Altruistic and humanitarian values are usually also seen as moral values (Aquino and Reed 2002). Nevertheless, the ways by which individuals experience these values or link them to their respective identities and volunteering have been studied less. In general, more research on the role of values in any action has been called for (Hitlin & Piliavin 2004).

Religion and religiousness can be intertwined with volunteering through all the themes introduced above namely: identity, values, morals, life course, life stages and demographics. The connections between religiousness and volunteering have been explained in terms of psychological, social and societal factors. At the psychological level, an individual's religion is considered to be linked with his or her pro-social altruistic values and motives (Cnaan et al. 2011; Yeung 2004). At the level of social ties most religious communities encourage volunteering among their members with their values, norms, practices and social pressure (Park & Smith 2000). At the societal level the national religious culture

can affect cultural values and increase the opportunities and expectations to volunteer. Thus, similar influences as described at the level of social ties can also be applied in religious cultures and societies, and these influences reach non-religious citizens as well (Becker & Dhingra 2001; Ruiter & DeGraaf 2006). In religious societies the differences in volunteering activity between members and non-members of religious communities are smaller compared to more secular societies. Ruiter and DeGraaf (2006) even predict declining levels of volunteering in secularizing societies.

Several studies indicate associations between religiousness and volunteering. Traditional, public religious activity, especially active churchgoing, has been connected with volunteering in several studies (Cnaan et al. 1993; Monsma 2007; Park & Smith 2000; Smith & Stark 2009; Wuthnow 1990; Yeung 2004). Private religiousness has also been linked with volunteering in some studies. These studies indicate that individuals who read the Bible daily, pray, believe in traditional religious beliefs, and hold religious values important volunteer more than those who do not (Monsma 2007; Wuthnow 2004). Both public religiousness such as attending church and private religiousness including praying, belief in God, religious values have been associated with higher rates of volunteering activity in studies among young age groups as well (Cnaan et al. 2011; Gibson 2008; Ozorak 2003). Wuthnow (2004) and Yeung (2004) showed that other forms of private religiousness than traditional Christianity can be linked with volunteering. In their studies meditation and the importance of spiritual growth for the individual was associated with volunteering. Religion or religiousness can predispose to volunteering within one's religious community and according to some studies also in secular fields of volunteering, although results on the relationship between religiousness and secular volunteering vary (Campbell & Yonish 2003; Park & Smith 2000; Ruiter & DeGraaf 2006; Yeung 2004).

Most research on the associations between religiousness and volunteering is quantitative and focuses on either the role of Church membership on volunteering or on the causality between traditional religious activity and volunteering. Research on the relationship between different styles of religiousness or spirituality is scarce as are qualitative studies that aim at a deeper understanding

of these connections. Further research on the relationship between individual religious beliefs and volunteering has been called for (Monsma 2007).

A majority of research on the relationship between religion or religiousness and volunteering has been conducted in the United States (Musick & Wilson 2008), although other studies have been conducted in Canada and Australia as well (Berger 2006; Lyons & Nivison-Smith 2006). It is noteworthy that the role of religious communities in civil society in the United States is very different to that in Europe. In the United States religious communities are an integral part of civil society, and have actually been central in constituting the whole civil society (Musick & Wilson 2008). On the other hand, in European societies religious communities have historically been a part of the public sector and linked with political power. Only recently, religion and religious communities have been viewed increasingly as a part of the civil sector in accordance to societal differentiation (Pessi & Grönlund 2011).

In general, most extant research on volunteerism examines motivation, its relationship with values and religion and also other volunteering related issues within a single national context. This is partly because historical, religious and societal variations make comparisons across countries problematic (Anheier & Salamon 1999, Dekker & Halman 2003, Musick & Wilson 2008). As discussed above, considerable variation exists on both the definition and status of volunteerism in different contexts (Hadzi-Miceva 2007). Structural differences such as economic development and political system and cultural factors such as political factors, economic factors in addition to religion and values, have been examined in the search for patterns (Hodgkinson 2003; Ruiter and DeGraaf 2006; Salamon and Sokolowski 2003). In general, cross-national studies of volunteerism are in their infancy (Musick and Wilson 2008).

In the World Values Survey project (2010) patterns and trends of volunteering have emerged that can be compared across regions and groups of nations. Countries with high levels of individualism exhibit high levels of formal volunteer participation. Inglehart (2003) argues that volunteerism is related to the level of industrialization within a country. Moreover, he states that as a country moves from an agrarian economy with traditional values towards being an industrial economy with secular-rational values, the rate of formal volunteering increases. Informal volunteering, which is the helping out within one's own

community (Carson 1999) is invisible in these data. Informal volunteering has typically been higher than formal volunteering among non-White communities in Western countries including Australia, the US and the UK (Musick et al. 2000).

This research combines the themes introduced above namely: the relationships of volunteering with identity, values, and religiousness. It focuses on the gaps described above, and aims at deeper understandings of these factors within the contemporary societal context of individualism, freedom, and reflexivity. The following table 1 summarizes the gaps and remarks from previous research that direct the focus of this study.

Table 1. Results and gaps of previous research

	Results of previous research which encourage the approach of this study	More research is needed on:
Volunteering and identity	Volunteering is associated with role identity (social identity theory), individual results associate volunteering with moral identity and helping identity.	<i>Understanding the personal ways individuals connect volunteering with their personal identity.</i>
Volunteering and reflexivity	Hypotheses and theories of using volunteering in self-reflection and autobiographical reflection.	<i>Demonstrating the ways in which volunteerism is intertwined with self-reflections and autobiographical reflections. Contextualizing the reflexive processes in individual autobiographies.</i>
Volunteering and values	Volunteering and especially altruistic values are clearly associated. Cultural context influences volunteering in several ways.	<i>Understanding the personal ways individuals connect volunteering with values.</i> <i>Testing and demonstrating the relationship between cultural values and volunteering.</i>
Volunteering and religiousness	Volunteering and different indicators of (especially public, traditional) religiousness are clearly connected.	<i>Demonstrating connections between different styles of religiousness or spirituality and volunteering.</i> <i>Describing personal relationships between individual religiousness and volunteering.</i>

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Volunteering as self reflection

To answer the research questions, the identified gaps in the knowledge and the challenges raised by previous research, a combination of theoretical approaches are used. The views on the cultural context and societal changes in Finland presented in the introduction form the wide theoretical framework for this research. Within this wider framework several theories are combined. The theories used include approaches to volunteering, identity, values, and religiousness. This chapter and the following in section 3.2 introduce the theoretical approaches, which have been used in the individual publications and which form the basis of understanding these phenomena described in this study. They also help the reader to understand the summarized results and the conclusions that are introduced and drawn in this introductory text.

The viewpoint of reflexive volunteering in late modern societal contexts forms the macro theoretical approach to volunteering. In this approach volunteering is viewed as a tool for identity-work. Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) have presented a typology of collective and reflexive styles of volunteering. The typology is embedded in the societal changes towards late modernity. In this typology, “collective volunteerism” is defined as the more traditional type of volunteerism, which is embedded in a culture of collective biographies, continuity, group memberships and collectivism. Volunteering can offer a tool for biographical stability and identity affirmation. The motivational structure also includes a sense of responsibility to a community and is often linked with a religious tradition or some other ideological meaning system. Reflexive volunteerism on the other hand is described as an independent, uncommitted and momentary type of volunteering, in which self-centered motivations and personal needs and interests are central. Volunteerism is embedded in a milieu of self-constructed biographical frames, discontinuity and elective group memberships. Motivations for volunteering can also arise from experiences of biographical discontinuity, crises or re-orientations. Volunteering can be used as a tool for coping with this uncertainty, for self-realization.

Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) thus embed their approach of reflexive volunteering to the current societal situation of late modernity, and suggest the

reflexive styles of volunteering are becoming more common. Despite this it is noteworthy that the division into collective and reflexive types of volunteerism is an ideal categorization that rejects the straightforward discourse of old and new volunteerism. Instead traditional and late modern elements can be combined and negotiated and can also form tensions in the lives of individuals (Hustinx & Lammertyn 2003). Hustinx (2010) pointed out that reflexive biography construction and self-actualization are not an all-embracing way of life nor is the reflexive style of volunteering as prevalent as often suggested. She states that scrutinizing reflexive biography construction in the context of individual life courses could be beneficial in understanding the reflexivity of contemporary life. This approach is adopted as a part of this research (study 1).

The viewpoint of connecting volunteering with individual needs and reflexive processes of the self is not new. Behind this theoretical approach is a holistic and dynamic understanding on volunteering and volunteering motivation. Volunteering motivation is seen as an activity that can be associated with profoundly psychological processes (Clary et al. 1998; Omoto & Snyder 1995; Yeung 2004). This is the understanding regarding volunteering and volunteering motivation that is used and tested in this research and in the individual studies, especially in publications 1 and 2. The psychological processes involved in volunteering can include, establishing values along with personal growth and development. Clary and colleagues (Clary et al. 1998) developed the Volunteer Function Inventory, which builds on the presumption that volunteering serves different functions for different people. Six functions are introduced, these are: 1. Career (volunteering adds skills, work experience, and networks), 2. Social (volunteering provides social connections or rewards from others), 3. Values (volunteering expresses personal values), 4. Enhancement (volunteering provides self-esteem and feelings of being needed by others), 5. Protective (volunteering protects from feelings of loneliness or guilt, or personal problems), and 6. Understanding (volunteering is a means for personal growth, gaining greater understanding of the world, other people and of oneself).

This research combines the approach of volunteering as an arena of reflexive processes and functions with further theoretical viewpoints regarding identity. As defined above, identity is the sense an individual has of oneself, one's defining attributes, abilities, roles, values, worldviews, background, and reference

groups. In late modernity identity is increasingly reflexive, and it changes and develops throughout an individual's life-span (Giddens 1991; Taylor 1989). This reflexive process of constructing identity has been described as negotiating or forming a life story. Identity has even been defined as a coherent story a person tells about oneself (McAdams 1995). The viewpoint of narrative identity is a central theoretical starting point for understanding and analyzing identity in this study, especially in publication 2. McAdams (2001, 2006a, 2006b) describes narrative identity as a life story construed by the individual to make sense of and bring coherence to his/her life and identity. He defines the life story as an "internalized and evolving cognitive structure or script that provides an individual's life with some degree of meaning and purpose..." (McAdams, 2006a, 1) Even though the process of constructing identity can be seen as an innate, continuously reflected narrative, these narratives can also be shared with other people. Narrative methodologies (presented in detail in the following chapter 4 and in study 2) provide a tool for reaching and sharing these accounts.

McAdams (2001) has stated that the construing of narrative identities starts in late adolescence and young adulthood. Moreover, the classic theories of human development and moral development (Erikson 1968; Kohlberg 1975) regard young adulthood as being a time of a maturing identity and when questions of what is right and what is wrong are posed. The construction and revision of narrative identity is influenced by culture, the social setting, and also by the values and beliefs of an individual. According to Taylor (1989) creation of identity through narrative typically involves moral stances, an implicit perspective on the good. The narrator judges oneself and others from this stance. In this way life stories can also provide information on beliefs and values. In this study, life story approach is used to understand the connections of volunteering with personal values, worldviews and identities.

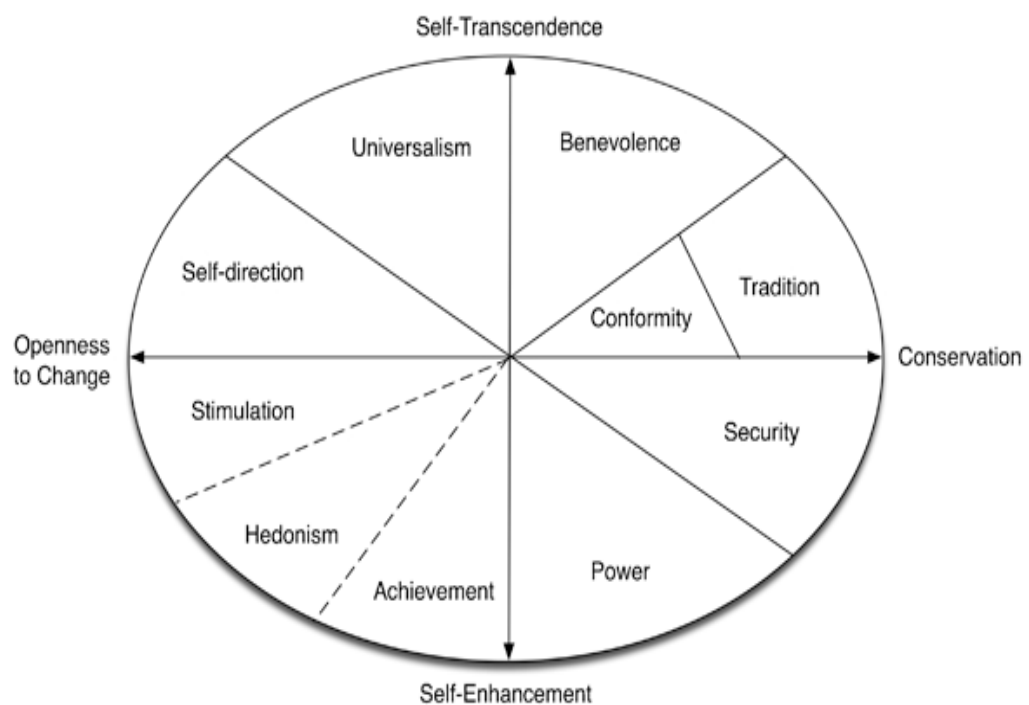
3.2 Values as a window to individuals and to societies

Value-identity is formed when an individual identifies his or herself with a particular value or set of values (Gecas 2000). Hitlin (2007, p. 250) states that, "values provide an empirical window into this core level of personal identity as it exists apart from and prior to the enactment of specific identities" as noted in section 2.2 Acting according to one's identity and values results in a sense of self-

acceptance. The act of volunteering can enhance an individual's process of self-definition and result in self-acceptance. As discussed in chapter 2 on previous research, volunteering has previously been associated with the concept of role identity. This concept focuses on the social identity an individual has or develops throughout volunteering (Grube & Piliavin 2000). The approach of value-identity is more holistic, and is directed towards the core "self" of which different roles are a part. This is the approach that is adopted in this research in relation to identity (especially publication 2).

For a deeper understanding on values and values-identity, a further theoretical approach to the values of individuals is adopted from Schwartz (1992, article 2). He has formulated a theory of basic human values that are based on large international data (varying from 49 to 66 countries in different studies). Schwartz (1992) has identified 10 basic values that are recognized across societies. They are motivationally distinct, thus each value and value-direction promote action in different ways. The basic values are structured along two polar dimensions: self-enhancement versus self-transcendence and conservation versus openness to change. The 10 basic values are located on these dimensions in the following figure 1.

Figure 1 Theory of motivational types of values by Schwartz (1992)



Each basic value can be further defined with the help of exemplary items (Schwartz 1992, 2007). The basic value of power indicates that an individual holds items such as authority and wealth central. Achievement indicates an individual holds items such as success or ambition central. Hedonism as a basic value refers to an individual's valuing of pleasure and enjoyment in life. These values are all self-enhancement-directed values. However, pointed in the opposite sectors self-transcendence on this polar dimension are the basic values of universalism and benevolence. A person who holds universalism central, values items such as social justice and equality. In general universalism is defined as taking an interest and caring for people and issues, which are not a part of an individual's personal circle of life. Nature conservation, global justice, and development cooperation are often seen as such issues (Schwartz 1992). Universalism has been connected with volunteering activity in the Finnish context (Puohiniemi 2006). Benevolence is also a self-transcendence-directed value that indicates an individual holds items such as helpfulness or loyalty central. Compared with universalism, benevolence is more directed towards an individual's personal circle of life, such as friends and family (Schwartz 1992). As noted earlier, benevolence is the most important basic value for Finns of all age groups (Puohiniemi 2006).

The other polarised opposites are those of conservation at one pole and openness to change at the other. Values of security, tradition and conformity are directed towards conservation. The above-introduced basic value of power is also more directed towards conservation than to openness to change. Security refers to valuing items such as social order and national security. For example, conformity motivates an individual towards obedience and honoring his or her parents. An individual with tradition as a central basic value holds devoutness and humility important. In the opposite direction, is openness to change, which covers the basic values of self-direction and stimulation. The basic values of hedonism and universalism introduced above are more directed towards openness to change than to conservation. Self-direction refers to creativity and independence, and stimulation to valuing an exciting and varied life (Schwartz 1992). These values and the dimension of openness to change have become increasingly common among young age groups in Finland (Puohiniemi 2006). It could be said that self-direction is a logical value direction in the context of late modern, individualistic,

western societies. The theoretical frameworks introduced above are mainly used and described in publication 2.

The values held by individuals are constructed in a dynamic relationship with the relevant groups of people and in general within the cultural context in which the individual grows up. The societal level of cultural values also interacts with the values of individuals. In addition to the theory on basic human values introduced above, Schwartz (1994, 1999) formulated a theory on cultural values. This theoretical approach is utilized especially in publication 4. Cultural values are defined as the implicitly or explicitly shared abstract ideas about what is good, right, and desirable in a society (Schwartz 1999). Cultural values form the basis for cultural norms, and individuals in each culture know what is appropriate for different situations based on these norms. Societal institutions, such as political and religious systems express cultural value priorities in their operation. Both formal and informal socialization are seen as central to the process of transmission of cultural values (Schwartz 1999).

The theory of cultural values (Schwartz 1994, 1999) includes seven types or clusters of values against which cultures can be compared. Schwartz used his theory of cultural values to explore work within different cultural settings among other things. Different indicators, such as the centrality of work, are compatible with certain value types and incompatible with other types. The seven cultural value types described by Schwartz are located on three polar dimensions. The first of these polar dimensions is a dimension or scale that has autonomy at one pole conservatism at the opposite pole. Autonomy itself is divided into intellectual autonomy and affective autonomy. Intellectual autonomy describes the desirability of individuals to pursue their own ideas and intellectual directions independently (curiosity, broadmindedness, creativity). Affective autonomy directs individuals to pursue positive experiences (pleasure, exciting life, varied life). On the other hand, conservatism refers to the emphasis on maintaining the traditional order (social order, respect for tradition, family security, wisdom). The second polar dimension is represented by a scale that goes from egalitarianism at one pole to hierarchy at the other. As noted earlier, egalitarianism is the voluntary commitment to promoting the welfare of others (equality, social justice, freedom, responsibility, honesty), whereas hierarchy emphasizes the legitimacy of unequal distribution of power, roles and resources (social power, authority, humility,

wealth). Egalitarianism is one of the central cultural values held in Finland (Schwartz 1994, 1999). The third polar dimension/scale goes from harmony to mastery. Harmony describes fitting in harmoniously with the environment (unity with nature, protecting the environment, world of beauty). On the other hand, mastery emphasizes getting ahead through the active self-assertion (ambition, success, daring, competence). Harmony is another central cultural value in Finland (Schwartz 1994, 1999).

The approach to cultural values by Schwartz is used in publication 4 and complemented by another approach to cultural influence. Hofstede (2001) developed an individualist-collectivist scale, which has been accepted by other researchers as a valid measure in cross-cultural studies (Schimmack et al. 2005). Individualist cultures are those for which the ties between individuals and groups are loose in contrast to collectivist societies in which people are integrated into close knit groups from birth (Hofstede 2001). Volunteerism is often linked with collective action, as it has traditionally been seen as a form of action by which people work together and form groups (Hustinx & Lammertyn 2003). Nevertheless, volunteering can be popular in collective and in individualistic cultures. For instance, South Korea has a high rate of volunteering and very low individualism score, but countries with higher individualism scores such as Canada, US and UK also have high levels of volunteerism. This highlights the multifaceted relationship of volunteering with both individual and cultural values.

Religion or religiousness are not included as values in the above introduced value-theories. The values or value directions through which religion or religiousness interact are different in different cultures. In Finland, religiousness is primarily positioned close to the value directions of self-transcendence and conservation (Puohiniemi 2002). Nonetheless, a theoretical approach that is separate from the value theories has been used in this study to enable a nuanced analysis on the relationship of religiousness to volunteering. How individuals identify and reflect upon religion and religiousness are scrutinized in publication 3 and have been studied by using the different trajectories of religious identification described by Hervieu-Leger (1998). She constructed four dimensions of religiousness upon which individuals could identify within the context of late modern western society. The four dimensions were: communal, ethical, cultural and emotional. These dimensions form combinations, types or religious

identification that stress different dimensions, different orientations to religious identification (Hervieu-Legér 1998). The associations between these dimensions with volunteering are investigated in study 3. The theoretical approaches of each individual study are summarized in the following table 2.

Table 2 Theoretical frameworks of four individual publications.

Publications	1	2	3	4
Focus of the study	Volunteering in relation to reflexive processes of self-images and life courses.	Identities and values carried out in volunteering.	Associations between changing religiousness and volunteering.	Associations between cultural values and volunteering.
Common meta-level theoretical background (utilized especially in this introductory publication)	Late modern individuality and reflexivity, which influence volunteering, values, and religiousness, and how they are viewed by individuals (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991; Welzel 2010).			
Main theoretical approach	Late modern reflexive volunteering (Hustinx & Lammertyn 2003).	Narrated identity (McAdams 2001, 2006), values-identity (Hitlin 2007), basic human values (Schwartz 1992).	Late modern religious identification (Hervieu-Leger 1998).	Cultural values (Schwartz 1994, 1999) and individualism (Hofstede 2001) of different societal contexts.

The key themes of this study, values and identity, are combined in the central theoretical perspectives of this study. The viewpoints of self-reflection and identity provide information on how individuals use and reflect upon volunteering in relation to their life histories and self-images. In addition, they provide a method for understanding the values of an individual. This can be seen in the approaches to values and religious identification used in this study. First, the theoretical viewpoint of value-identity (Hitlin 2007), which is especially used in publication 2, provides a method to understand the core values as a part of an

individual's identity. Second, the theory of religious identification (Hervieu-Léger 1998) combines identification and religiousness. Religiousness is not merely one value or a value-system. Nevertheless, values are a central element of religions and religious identification. The theory of religious identification combines the viewpoints of identity and identification with different individual and communal aspects of religion, thus recognizing both social and personal dimensions of identity.

4 Methodological choices and their evaluation

4.1 Research designs of individual studies

Quantitative and qualitative approaches are combined in this study. Qualitative methodologies were used in studies 1, 2 and 3. Study 3 combined qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and study 4 was based on quantitative methodologies. The three different qualitative analyses in studies 1, 2, and 3 also represent different approaches to data usage. The following table 3 summarizes data and methods of all individual studies in this research project.

Table 3 The methodological approach of four individual studies

Publication	1	2	3	4
Focus	Volunteering in relation to reflexive processes of self-images and life courses.	Identities and values carried out in volunteering.	Relationship between changing religiousness and volunteering.	Relationship between cultural values and volunteering.
Data	24 life course interviews to volunteering young adults.	24 life course interviews to volunteering young adults.	Survey data of 1000 young adults in Finland; 24 life course interviews to volunteering young adults.	Survey data of 9000+ students, app. 600 in each 13 countries, including 589 Finnish students.
Method	<u>Qualitative</u> : holistic content analysis, finding and abstracting functions of volunteering in self-reflection in interviews (thematic analysis).	<u>Qualitative</u> : holistic content analysis, searching for imagoes (actors of narrations) and moral judgments, identifications and differentiations in interviews, forming value-identity types, grouping interviewees accordingly (classification).	<u>Quantitative</u> : cluster analysis on religiousness <u>Qualitative</u> : content analysis of religiousness types, grouping interviewees accordingly, analyzing the associations between religiousness types and volunteering (classification and thematic analysis).	<u>Quantitative</u> : component analysis on volunteering motivation, Heckman selection model on the influence of cultural values on volunteering motivation, controlling and searching for connections with background variables.

Thus, qualitative data (24 interviews) and analysis are used to understand how volunteering is reflected upon in relation to the self and life-courses. In addition, the association between personal value-identities and volunteering, and the relationship between different styles of religious views and volunteering are analyzed. The first set of quantitative data (survey, N=1000) and analyses were used in selecting interviewees, in designing the interview themes (studies 1, 2, and 3), and in contextualizing an overview of religiousness among young Finnish

adults for qualitative data and analyses (study 3). The second set of quantitative data (survey, N=9000+) and analyses were used to understand and contextualize an overview for the other three studies (1, 2, and 3) on the relationship between cultural values and volunteering motivation of individuals. Quantitative and qualitative data and analyses are described in the following.

Quantitative approach: Survey data and analyses

Two sets of data (n=1000, n=9612) were used. The first data set (n=1000) was gathered by the Church Research Institute by means of a telephone survey among young adults aged from 20 to 39. These respondents were living in the metropolitan region of Finland when they were surveyed. The survey was conducted in 2004. The respondents of the telephone survey were chosen randomly and formed a representative sample of both sexes, of those age groups within the age category (20-39), and the respondents were from all three cities (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa) that comprise much of the urban conurbation in the greater Helsinki area. Respondents were questioned mainly about the Church, their religious beliefs and views and the importance of different activities and themes in their lives. In addition, questions on volunteering were included (for a detailed description see publication 3). The questions on volunteering were designed by a research group, including the author of this study. Moreover, the questions were designed to enable comparisons to be made with previous research on volunteering. Other questions of the survey questionnaire were designed by researchers of the Church Research Institute, although the author was invited to comment upon them, and could thus influence them to some extent.

The results of the survey were analyzed using SPSS statistics software. The respondents were clustered into four religiousness type clusters by means of cluster analysis using propositions related to religious beliefs and interests. The statistical analysis test used for the clusters was the K Means Cluster for large data of more than 200 respondents. Variables that represent the traditional religion (Christianity) and variables that represent spirituality, or a non-traditional open belief are not mutually exclusive. This is why in the cluster analysis a solution of four clusters turned out to be the most applicable. In an analysis of three clusters the respondents who had indicators of spirituality became obscured among the less spiritual respondents. In the solution of four clusters spirituality occurred

together with religiousness, but could still be differentiated from the other two clusters that also represented religiousness types. The propositions used provide a rough measure of religiousness. They mainly differentiate between religiousness and non-religiousness, and an interest in spiritual questions to some extent. A more nuanced way of approaching religiousness is provided by interview data in publication 3. Interviewees for the qualitative part of the study were chosen from among the 29 percent of respondents who reported they had volunteered, and evenly from all religiousness clusters (for details of this see publication 3).

The other set of quantitative data (n=9612), which was used in study 4 was collected by an international research team from 13 countries. The countries included were Belgium, Canada, China, Croatia, United Kingdom, Finland, India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, and the U.S.A. In each country, a member of the research team distributed questionnaires to approximately 600 university students. As the study was cross-cultural, a comparative sample from each cultural group needed to be collected (Schwartz 1994, Hofstede 2001), and university students offer that comparison. Data were collected in the 2006-07 academic year for all countries, except for New Zealand, where data were collected in the 2007-8 academic year. Questionnaires were issued to students during university classes. At the time of the survey the students were studying a range of disciplines, which included: business, engineering, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. The surveys were anonymous with voluntary participation. Although it was not possible to provide a randomly selected sample, the very high number of respondents and their diverse backgrounds justifies the inclusion and interpretation of these data in this study.

As the survey in study 4 was international, the questionnaire had to be translated and adapted to each country's language and culture. In some cases, it was very difficult to translate the questionnaire culturally. For example, we asked if people volunteered through religious organizations, such as churches. In Israel and India not only do most people not attend church, in most cases, synagogues, mosques or temples do not encourage volunteering in the same way as is done in other countries. The English version of the questionnaire, with minor cultural amendments, was used in Canada, England, India, New Zealand and the USA. In all other countries the questionnaire was translated, piloted, and reviewed by a panel of experts before it was used in the field. In Finland the questionnaire was

translated and data were collected by the author of this dissertation and also by docent Anne Birgitta Pessi, a senior colleague.

In order to minimize errors caused by translation, concepts should be measured by more than one question (Hofstede 2001). Therefore, we adopted a multiple indicator strategy in our survey, especially in regard to the motives for volunteering. For example, career motivation linked to the cultural feature of individualism could be indicated through high scores for one or any combination of the three statements on the survey in regard to the reasons for volunteering. These statements were the following: “8. To put on CV when applying for job;” “9. Help to get a foot in the door where one wants to work” and “10. To make business contacts.” The survey instrument combined existing published questionnaires related to motives of volunteering, such as the motivation to volunteer questionnaire used by Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen (1991) and the benefits and rewards of volunteering used by Gidron (1978). Moreover, we measured motivation by asking respondents to rate 15 possible reasons for volunteering on a Likert scale from 1 (unimportant) to 5 (very important). The survey instrument also included items related to volunteering habits: participation in the past 12 months, number of hours of volunteering per month, and the frequency of volunteering (weekly, monthly, or occasionally).

Principal component analysis was used to determine the set of dimensions in the data by imposing five components. The results reported in publication 4 are based on a principal component extraction with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization, which does not allow the extracted factors to be inter-correlated. Gender, age in years, and household income were controlled. The education variable was excluded since all of the respondents were university students. Dummy variables were used to analyze business and all other educational programs. The business program was used as a reference as it was considered that the students of business programs were likely to be more competitive and career-oriented than most of the other study programs (Astin & Sax 1998; O’Brein 1993).

High schools and universities in some countries have ‘volunteering’ as a recommended component of some courses or even a formal prerequisite for graduation. This requirement not only raises the awareness of volunteering among members of their cohort but also gives them opportunities to volunteer thereby

raising their rates of participation (Sundeen & Raskoff 1994). Thus, such volunteer requirements in high school and university were also controlled for in the study design. The personal value systems of individuals were also studied by means of two additive scales: material values and nonmaterial values, the scores of which were included in the study data. Principal component analysis was conducted to extract two components: material values and non-material values with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization procedures. The Heckman selection model was used to analyze five hypotheses regarding cultural values and motivations in volunteering with the above introduced variables controlled for.

Qualitative approach: Life story interviews and methods of analyses

All qualitative analyses in this study (studies 1, 2 and 3) are based on the same life course themed interviews, which were carried out during the winter of 2004 to 2005 on 24 volunteers aged 21 to 36 who were living in the metropolitan region of Helsinki, Finland at the time. The interviewees were recruited through the telephone survey (n=1000) mentioned above. Of all respondents to the survey 290 (29%) reported that they volunteered. Interviewees were recruited from among them. A cluster analysis on religiousness was applied to the survey data (for a detailed description see publication 3). Four clusters were identified (named as the 1. religious, 2. the uncertain religious, 3. the spiritual religious, and 4. the nonreligious). Six volunteering interviewees (three women, three men) were recruited from each of the four religiousness clusters in order to seek for any associations between different kinds of religiousness and volunteering (publication 3). The number of interviewees from each religiousness type cluster was not weighted according to the number of respondents in each cluster. Thus the religiousness of interviewees does not proportionately represent the variation of religiousness in the whole population of Finnish, urban young adults or indeed that of the respondents of the survey. The chosen interviewees were volunteers in different categories of activity, which included: sports, education, social work and religious volunteering.

The themes of the interviews were volunteering, which included the sub-topics of the following: starting to volunteer, different stages in activity, organizations, motivation, rewards, role models. Different stages of the lives of the interviewees, ranging from childhood to hopes and aspirations for the future

were also covered. The themes were designed to encourage a narrative response. The interviews covered the lives of the interviewees in a broad fashion, and did not focus merely on their paths to volunteering. Volunteering, and the understanding of it formed the contextual background and also the first theme of each interview. The interviewees recounted only those life events that they had decided to share in the interview and these were purely of their own choice. However, themes related to reference groups of family, friends, spouse, and/or children, and also to the societal context Finnish society, politics, channels of influencing, and religiousness were discussed on the initiative of the researcher. This took the form of prompting by the interviewer, when these subtopics were not spontaneously discussed by the interviewees. The themes discussed in the interviews were dealt with in different order, and also different relevant themes were discussed in the interviews depending on the interests of the interviewee. For example, some interviewees linked their volunteering strongly with childhood experiences. In these particular cases childhood, parents, and schools were discussed at length. In other interviewees childhood was passed over quickly when the interviewee did not see it as meaningful in the context of volunteering. The frame of the interviews is attached as appendix 1.

The collection of interviews included some traits of narrative methodologies but can not be claimed to represent purely a narrative research approach. The interviews can be defined as life course or life story themed interviews. Interviewees were first asked about their volunteering after which the interview was directed to construing their life paths and finding associations between life stages, individual events, role models and their current volunteering activities. In this type of methodology narrations are seen as a natural way of communication for people in all kinds of situations. In this sense all thematic interviews have traits of narrative speech. Therefore, people could answer questions automatically with longer or shorter narrative answers. Most people also have an inherent need to create logical continuums in their lives. This is also a precondition for having a stable sense of identity. An individual must have a sense of being the same person, at least to some extent, and leading a continuum of one's life instead of discrete, random situations and events. As mentioned above (chapter 3), the reflexive process of constructing identity is often described as negotiating or forming a life story to make sense of one's life, to bring coherence to one's identity. McAdams uses the concept of narrative identity, and defines the life

story as an: “internalized and evolving cognitive structure or script that provides an individual’s life with some degree of meaning and purpose” (McAdams, 2006a). Even though this process can be seen as innate, the narrations can also be shared with other people. Narrative methodologies are a way to use these individual narrations in understanding different aspects of personality and to reach a deep level of personality at the level of identity (Bauer et al. 2008; McAdams 2001).

The life course themed interviews were built on these viewpoints, and thus the interviewees were encouraged to build continuums in their life stories, and narrate their lives and individual incidents and times within the frames of their lives. Encouragement was given by asking follow up questions such as “why do you think that is?” or “do you think that has something to do with your current volunteering?” In some interviews such questions had the effect of making the interviewees put forward causalities to their life events or shorter-term narrations. In other interviews they did not, thus not all volunteers linked their life courses and experiences to their volunteering. For some it was not natural or interesting to form narrations in general. In such cases, the method of interviews also left some room for these interviewees. Consequently, their views on volunteering are also included and discussed in the results of this study. The chosen method of life course themed interviews with encouragement to forming life stories and narrations in general offered the interviewees the broadest spectrum to express deeper level connections of volunteering with their lives and their individual analysis of their lives without forcing a response. All of the analyses in this study focus on the level of self-reflection each interviewee presented. If an interviewee presented volunteering as a natural consequence of something, and did not reflect volunteerism in relation to his or her life history or to religiousness this was accepted. Thus, the analysis focused on the level of self-reflection provided by the interviewees themselves, whatever that level to their self-reflection was.

The interviews lasted from 50 minutes to over two hours. Each was recorded and the recordings were transcribed. However, one recording of the 24 interviews failed, and notes of the interview were made immediately after the interview on the central themes. The interviews were read through several times after which they were subjected to analysis in three different routes for the three published studies (1, 2 and 3). The analysis for study 2 was done first, followed by

the analyses for study 1 then study 3. Separating the analyses entirely was impossible, but different research questions and different methods of analysis for different publications clarified the analyses. All three analyses have nevertheless influenced one another. The analyses used in studies 1 and 2 especially reflect and complement each other. This is not seen as a negative influence but rather as a benefit of having the opportunity to thoroughly investigate study data. The three qualitative analysis methods are presented in the following statements.

Publication 1, research question: How is volunteering associated with reflexive processes related to self-images and life courses by young adults?

All interviews transcriptions were read through several times to form an understanding of central life phases, events and themes in relation to volunteering for each interview. Stages of volunteering career, the connections of volunteering with phases of one's life and the evaluations of interviewees on central life events and phases in relation to volunteering were then individually collected from each interview and summarized. Different stages of life, crises and people and communities who had influence on the interviewee were included in the summaries. The summaries and the entire interviews were used to extract different ways volunteering was associated with self-reflections. These were subsequently categorized into three central functions. Several functions could manifest in one interview. The same functions could be used in different life stages or the interviewee could detail different functions with regard to different life stages. Thus interviewees were not categorized according to the functions they used. The functions of volunteering in self-reflection resemble each other and do not form discrete categories but rather a continuum. The three main categories of functions are introduced in publication 1 and summarized in the following chapter on results of this introduction. In publication 1, the means by which the three functions of volunteering were used in reflecting different stages of life is also contextualized.

Publication 2, Research question: How is volunteering associated with identities and central values as parts of identities among individual young adults?

For the second publication each interview text was analyzed individually. At the beginning of this analysis each text was read through several times to build a

holistic understanding of the different aspects of the interview. In 17 of the interviews, volunteering was found to be intertwined with the narrated identity and moral evaluations. On the other hand, in seven of the 24 interviews it was not. In these seven interviews the constructed narrated identities were associated with different activities, different arenas and different roles, but not volunteering *per se*. Thus volunteering was not seen by them as being a part of who they were. The roles and behaviors they expressed in volunteering were not relevant to the image they presented of themselves. They viewed volunteering as a hobby or something they had drifted into. They combined different motives, usually social motives and learning motives, but motives that were not used or articulated by the volunteers as being associated with values or identity. Volunteering was not considered to have served as a tool of carrying out or expressing one's values when the individual started. Stopping volunteering was no threat to their identities. Data from these seven interviews were excluded from the deeper analysis of value-identities. Therefore, the analysis was focused on the interviews in which volunteering was considered to be integrated in the narrated identity and values.

Self-representations, which are characters in the life stories of the interviewees were sought in each of the 17 interviews. They are called imagoes (McAdams 2006b). Imagoes are negative or positive, archetypal images of the self which arose in the narrations, and there can be several imagoes in one narration. They represent different aspects in the narrator's character, and often reflect the social setting, (including culture, society, people who are close) in which the narrator finds her or himself. The positive imagoes presented by the interviewees were interpreted as statements about their narrated identity. On the other hand, negative imagoes were interpreted as rejected identities. This highlighted either what the interviewees no longer identified with or what they never identified with at all. A narration or a description of one's life is always subjective, and is best used as a tool for understanding the ways individuals interpret their lives, understand their lives and also reflect upon their identities (Polkinghorne 2004; Roberts 2002). As an individual construes a life story, he or she integrates a reconstructed past with an imagined future. How an individual interprets his or her past or reflects upon his or her future is a statement about identity at that particular time.

The construction of a narrative identity is influenced by the values and beliefs of an individual. According to Taylor (1989), the creation of identity through narrative typically involves moral stances, referencing an implicit perspective on the good. The narrator self-judges and also judges others from this stance. In this way life stories can provide information on an individual's beliefs and values. How the interviewees presented the different imagoes as negative or positive, the ways they judged or evaluated their own or others' choices and lifestyles, how they judged society, or their own goals in life, were interpreted as statements about the values held by the interviewees.

A holistic understanding of each individual was formed with the help of imagoes, values and the meaning of volunteering in the narrated identity. Summaries of the imagoes, core values and counter-values of interviewees were used to aid the analyses. The interviewees were grouped according to their central values into five identity types related to volunteering. These five types overlapped to some extent. How the interviewees used volunteering in their own identity work was similar, and interviewees of different groups also shared some comparable values. Even so, the most central values were distinct in each identity type group. The five identity groups are presented in publication 2 and summarized in chapter 5. Excerpts of narratives construing identities are also demonstrated for each group in publication 2.

Publication 3, research question: What is the relationship between different types of religiousness and volunteering among young adults?

Quantitative data, qualitative data and their analyses were combined in publication 3. The quantitative data utilized in that study was used to contextualize an overview of the religiousness of young adults living in the metropolitan region of Helsinki, Finland. The qualitative data were utilized to find the subjective meanings of religiousness and their relationship with volunteering within the contexts of individual lives. As mentioned above, six volunteering interviewees (three women, three men) were recruited from each of four religiousness clusters to seek associations, between different kinds of religiousness and volunteering. Each interview was initially read-through several times to form a picture of the religiousness of the respective interviewee. Religious activity, beliefs, opinions and attitudes in relation to religion were

summarized for each interview. Traits of identification (Hervieu-Leger 2004) were then sought in each interview. After this, five types of religiousness were classified and interviewees were categorized into one of these groups/clusters. Each interview was again analyzed individually to understand any possible associations between an individual's religiousness and volunteering. Three types of associations between religiousness and volunteering were found, these were: overlapping association, supporting association and no association. The religiousness of the 24 volunteers and the different connections between the different types of religiousness and volunteering are presented in publication 3 and summarized in the following results chapter.

4.2 Evaluation of the mixed methods approach

The validity of this study has already been evaluated and discussed in each of the four publications. This chapter focuses on evaluating the mixed methods research approach used throughout this study. Mixed methods research aims in fitting together the insights provided by both qualitative and quantitative research. It draws upon the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of the different methods (Greene et al. 1989; Greene 2005; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004; Reams & Twale 2008). Mixed methods approaches have generated some epistemological and philosophical debates, but the choice of the mixed methods approach used in this study was mainly pragmatic. Different approaches have been used to provide details and scope in the research data and to investigate fully different aspects of the phenomenon of volunteering. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches have been used to enable this. Thus, this study combines different data and methods in a way that is beneficial to meeting the aims of the research.

Quantitative data is used in interviewee selection in this study (see publication 3 for details). This has benefitted the study by providing a set of interviewees, who all volunteer but who differ in their worldviews from each other. This has been a fruitful approach by which to investigate the values and religious worldviews in relation to volunteering. On the other hand, selecting 24 interviewees in such a manner differs from the more traditional approach of interviewing until the interview material becomes saturated, which means that new interviews no longer provide new information.

Despite the slightly unconventional manner of interviewee selection used in this study, saturation was indeed observed while collecting the interview data. Moreover, the data were saturated in relation to the key themes such as, volunteering motivation, the values related to volunteering, and the role of religiousness in volunteering. Despite this, the data were not saturated in relation to several other themes. The interviews focused on the life experiences of individuals and the role of volunteering in them. It cannot be said that new interviews would not have provided new information about the role of volunteering in individual lives. Each life story and its reflections is unique, and in the author's opinion the variation is nearly endless. Despite this, publications 1, 2, and 3 show reoccurring associations between religiousness and volunteering (publication 3), values and volunteering (publication 2), and how one perceives volunteering in reflections of the self and one's own life history (publication 1) in the interviews. From this viewpoint, the benefits of finding a heterogeneous group of volunteering interviewees can be evaluated to be more beneficial than limiting.

In addition to using quantitative data in interviewee selection (see publication 3 for details), the results of the quantitative analysis were also beneficial in designing the interview themes. The information obtained from the quantitative data and their analyses added further insight to the researcher's understanding about the themes of the interviews. It also raised further questions, the answers to which were later analyzed in the qualitative research. The same data were also used in the discussion of study 3, which drew mainly from qualitative data analysis. The in-depth understanding provided by the qualitative analysis in this article (article 3) was set in the context of a broader picture of the religious views held by young adults living in late modern Finland as provided by quantitative data.

In addition, publication 4 utilized different quantitative data and used an entirely quantitative approach. As the three other articles are based on the same primary data (a life course themed interview of 24 volunteers) that are qualitative, one large multi-national study providing quantitative data may not appear fully compatible with the rest of the study. However, this quantitative analysis provides a complementary and contextualizing perspective to the phenomenon of volunteering and values studied in all the previous three publications mentioned above. Publication 4 also paints a wide picture of the associations between cultural values and volunteering, using data obtained from thousands of

respondents in 13 countries. This provides a frame for the other three publications. The study also provides a rather unique opportunity for investigating the relationship between volunteering and cultural values. It is by such means that the role and position of volunteering in Finnish society can be put into context with other cultures.

In addition to combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, the methods of analysis between the three previous publications (1, 2, and 3), which use qualitatively derived data also differ. As described above in section 4.1, the analyses used in these three publications resemble one another, and the processes of these analyses can not be separated from each other entirely. This similarity can be both a benefit and a challenge. After analyzing the same interviews with one method, the researcher must start anew with a different research question. This is problematic, as the researcher at that point can not pretend to look at the interview material with fresh eyes. In this study the analyses of publications 1 and 2, are very similar/identical. Although study 2 focuses on narrative identities, the ‘what’ of value-identities, study 3 focuses on the functions of volunteering in the interviews, the ‘how’ of using volunteering in reflections about the self and life stages. It could be stated that the analysis used in study 2 sought for the characters in the life courses, whereas the analysis used in study 1 sought for how these characters used volunteering in their self- and autobiographical reflections. The benefit of such close methodological approaches used to analyze the same interviews is in providing two detailed views of the same in-depth processes of individuals from slightly different angles. This approach increases the likelihood of understanding the subtle processes in a way, which might not have been otherwise possible. Moreover, the two studies provide two rather different sets of results. One (study 2) grouped individuals under different value-identity types. In comparison, the other (publication 1) identified three different functions of volunteering in self-reflection that could be used across interviews, thus not categorizing interviewees as in study 2.

Study 3 uses the same interviews as in the previous two studies but with the focus of analysis on religiousness. The religiousness was a theme that had already occurred in the analysis of study 2 as one value-identity type. Study 3 provides a closer look into the variety of roles religiousness can have in relation to volunteering. In study 3 interviewees were grouped as in study 2 but this time according to their religious views, and the main analysis of the study focused on

the relationship between the different types of religiousness with volunteering. The interview data in study 2 were used to ascertain what were the value-identities in volunteering and also which personal value-identities are connected with volunteering. In study 1 the interview data were analysed to find how volunteering is used in self-reflection. The interview data in study 3 were analysed to find what kind of associations there are between different types of religious or spiritual views and volunteering.

These three approaches complement each other and provide a multifaceted picture of the personal processes of individuals and their values and religiousness in relation to their volunteering. The approaches also provide information about what roles volunteering can have in relation to such personal processes. Using the same interview data in three different studies each having a different qualitative methodology applied has benefitted this study with a truly holistic in-depth investigation into the relationship between volunteering with those of personal processes of individuals. Such approaches have been scarce in research related to volunteerism, and the results of this study provide valuable novel information. Furthermore, the approaches introduced in this study provide methodological tools for future research. Combined with the novel theoretical approaches in this study, it can be summarized that the research strategy used has provided the field on volunteerism studies with both new information and several new tools to be utilized in understanding the phenomenon of volunteering further.

Having described the benefits of the diverse in-depth analyses provided by qualitative data, the limitations of such approach must also be discussed. A majority of results of this study are based on only 24 interviews made among one age group and in one part of a single country. As such these data are not generalizable countrywide or internationally. For example, the societal analysis of this study is based mainly on a specific group of people, 24 volunteers, albeit backed up by several other studies on Finns perceptions on the changes in the Finnish welfare model. Other individuals can have very different views. Individuals who volunteer represent a group of people who are likely to hold more pro-social and self-transcending values. Individuals with values directed more towards self-enhancement might view the changes in the Finnish welfare model differently.

In general, comprehensive methodical approaches can provide tests for consistency, when similar questions are investigated through different

instruments. They can also provide complementary conclusions as different approaches clarify each other (Greene et al. 1989). The results of this study are consistent and logical despite the different sets of data and different methods of analyses. Moreover, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches and different qualitative methods has provided complementarity to the results. Multi-method approaches can also be used to develop the future research design as the results obtained from using one method can be used in designing the analytical procedures to be taken (Greene et al. 1989). This was indeed done at the beginning of this study as the quantitative results were used in selecting interviewees. The results of the quantitative analysis were also beneficial in designing the interview themes. Moreover, the results obtained in study 2 were used to plan the research design for study 4. The insights received on values and volunteering in study 2 contributed to the research questions and tests of study 4.

The fourth key benefit of multi-method approaches is that it can help discovering paradoxes or contradictions, which can raise new research questions or challenge existing results obtained through another method (Greene et al. 1989; Reams & Twale 2008). In this study, the results of different analytical methods that evaluated religiousness and its values also raised key research questions for the introductory text. The question about the role of volunteering as a mirror or an arena between cultural and personal values was raised as a result of mixing different approaches and data at different levels of association between values and volunteering. The fifth and final benefit of a multi-method approach is expansion, which provides richness and detail to the study (Greene et al. 1989; Reams & Twale 2008). Combining data and methods in such ways have resulted in both range and depth.

Multi-method approaches are viewed as time consuming and challenging for the researcher, as one collects different sets of data, and needs to master different methods and produce different analyses (Driscoll et al. 2007; Yeung 2004). This is true and the research design of this study was not the easiest the author could have chosen. Despite the challenges and the work that was done to overcome them, the benefits of this multi-methodological approach has provided this study clearly outnumber the disadvantages and make the work worthwhile.

In addition to using diverse methods and obtaining multifaceted data, another central theme of evaluation of this study is the subjective role of the researcher, which is highlighted in the qualitative approaches. The insights of the

researcher are central especially in the holistic analysis. It has been stated that in qualitative research the results are more easily influenced by a researcher's personal biases or idiosyncrasies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004, p.20). During the analyses of all four studies, the author has also been a practitioner in the field of volunteering. The author worked as a trainer and consultant with congregations and religious organizations seeking to develop their voluntary work in the context of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. She has also been an active lecturer and an expert-member of several boards and advisory boards in different non-profit organisations. Finally, the author worked as the director of civic engagement in one non-profit organisation, in which she directed voluntary work as one of her main duties. In addition to these expert-roles, she has also been a volunteer during this research process. For example, she worked voluntarily as an elected lay member of the synod of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church.

These activities have provided numerous benefits to this research, but have also set challenges for the analysis of this study. In particular, the author's volunteering is a potentially confounding factor to the analysis. Consequently, she has repeatedly had to acknowledge and try to detach herself from her own perspectives, values, and experiences in relation to volunteering to be able to note the different views in these study data. In particular the results, which indicate volunteering is not always attached with a personal reflection of the self or values, and / or religiousness (publications 1, 2, 3). These outcomes were difficult to accept, as her personal experience has been rather different. The author continuously had to reflect upon the impartiality of her analysis so as to avoid favouring some results as better or more right than others. Having taken due cognizance of this factor at a rather early point and throughout the analysis, the author believes that the threat of biased analysis has been circumvented.

On the other hand, the researchers work in the field of volunteering has provided her with very beneficial opportunities to test and mirror the results of this study. Moreover, she has lectured on the threads of the analysis of this study, and asked for reflections, she has discussed this study and its results with numerous volunteers and professionals in the field of volunteering, and used the knowledge and insights gathered in her work to reflect further upon the results of this study. It could be said that her role as a practitioner has provided this study with a mirror of every day reality. Testing the results of her analyses in the field and among volunteers and professionals of voluntary work has provided her with

the confidence that she is on the right track, and has also forced her to articulate these results in an understandable manner. This has benefitted the analyses and the presentation of the results by adding clarity.

5 Results

5.1 Key results of the four studies

All four individual studies provide a window to a deeper understanding of volunteering characteristics of young adults in Finnish society, seen from different perspectives. A summary of data, method and theoretical viewpoints was given in table 3 (section 4.1). The key results of all four studies are introduced in the following table, and are discussed further in the following sections.

Table 4 Main results of individual articles.

Study	1	2	3	4
Focus of study	Volunteering in relation to reflexive processes of self-images and life courses.	Identities and values carried out in volunteering.	Relationships between changing religiousness with volunteering.	Realtionships between cultural values and volunteering.
Main results	Three functions of volunteering in self-reflection found and contextualized in life phases and situations.	Five value-identity types and how they are connected with and expressed in volunteering.	Two types of associations between religiousness and volunteering. Changes in religiousness lessen the motivating power of religion in volunteering.	Relationships between a) individualistic cultural contexts and individualistic career motivations and b) egalitarianism as a cultural value and altruistic motivations.
Central input to the field of research	Demonstrates how volunteerism is intertwined with <i>self-reflections and life stages</i> . Contextualizes these reflexive processes in <i>individual lives</i> , life stages, situations and with influential people.	Demonstrates that volunteering is connected with <i>personal identities, which are intertwined with core values</i> . Demonstrates the <i>variety of core values</i> that are associated with volunteering.	Demonstrates connections between <i>different styles of religiousness or spirituality</i> with volunteering. Describes <i>personal relationships</i> between individual religious beliefs and volunteering.	Demonstrates <i>connections of volunteering motivation with cultural values</i> . Contextualizes the results with <i>cultural features</i> in 13 countries.

The key results of individual articles are given in the following sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 in a combining, summarizing manner.

5.2 Volunteerism intertwined with personal identities

As mentioned in chapter 2, previous research has linked volunteering with volunteering role identities, helping identities, and moral identities. One central

aim of this research was to investigate the connections between volunteering and personal identities. The concept of value-identity (Hitlin 2007) was utilized in determining the core level of identity (publication 2). In addition, the holistic approach of viewing volunteering in the context of individual life stories was used in order to understand the role of volunteering in these life stories and the individual processes that give meanings to volunteering in individual life contexts (publication 1).

Study 1 demonstrates how volunteering can be used in the arena of identity work as three functions, which are: the strengthening function, the reorientation function, and the communal belonging function of volunteering. All three are fully described in publication 1. “The strengthening function” means that volunteering can be used in situations in which the identity of an individual is threatened, or is eroding, or needs affirmation for some other reason. Thus the desired identity is maintained or even enhanced through the act of volunteering. “The reorientation function” means volunteering can be used in relation to reflecting and demonstrating personal change and reorientations in life. Such reorientations can be slow developmental or maturing processes or a more sudden reorientation, such as a crisis or a sudden life change. “The communal belonging function” describes how volunteering can be used or reflected upon in relation to social identity, community membership and belonging. It can be reflected upon in regard to either personal or social emphases. It can also be used in reflecting upon one’s self-image in relation to communities of other people from a personal emphasis point of view and also in reflecting the role of communities in bringing meaning and security to an individual’s life. Personal emphasis used communities as a means to attach to something the group represented, or simply by adding something to one’s identity through belonging. Volunteering can thus be interrelated with deep, individual reflections of identity. Individuals give personal meanings for volunteering and connect them with biographical stages and changes and their self-images.

Not all interviewed volunteers used volunteering in such manner. In addition to the three functions presented and described above and in publication 1, several interviews revealed that volunteering was also related to autobiographical changes but not as a tool for identity-work. In these cases volunteering was described as a relatively neutral consequence of some event or chain of events in

the life of an individual. Volunteering was related to biographical changes, although personal processes or reflections were not involved in these descriptions. Thus autobiographical changes and volunteering were interrelated in several interviews even when self-reflection was not involved. These changes were similar to those life changes identified among the volunteers who applied the three functions in their self-reflections. Starting volunteering followed some new phase or change in life, but was not reflected in identity or to biographical changes *per se*. These changes included having children, committing to a religious worldview, developing a hobby or related to a meaningful relationship. Sometimes volunteering just happens to be the most appropriate way to act in a new circumstance: a way to spend time with one's children or take care of ones own relationship with a spouse. This reminds us that volunteering is not always as psychological nor as self-reflective for the individual as described in some theories. Not all people reflect on their life and choices continuously, at least consciously or in an explicated manner despite the late modern context they live in. Similar notions to those expressed above were put forward by Hustinx (2010).

Descriptions of starting volunteering as a consequence of a biographical change also appeared together with one or more combinations of the three functions of self-reflection. This was the case in seven interviews. Some interviewees portrayed earlier volunteering in ways, which can be described as un-reflexive. However, the same individuals explained later volunteering in their adulthood by more self-reflexive means. A reflexive orientation to life choices and to the self is natural in later life. As things get more complicated and the freedom and risk of late modernity and responsibility for one's choices become more concrete, self-reflection is a way to deal with these circumstances. A 15-year-old is likely to start volunteering after being asked by a teacher or a friend. In contrast a 30-year-old with a career and a family makes more self-directed choices with personal time and resources, and volunteers for well argued reasons, strong inner needs or a suitable life phase. Moreover, the un-reflexive but autobiographically related descriptions of volunteering were different later in life. The interviewees described volunteering in their youth as a way to try something new or be with friends. On the other hand, descriptions of volunteering in adulthood were related to the needs of the volunteer's children, taking care of a marriage or related to career or an important hobby. Life phase influences not

only the level of self-reflection but also the orientation and actual resources of time and energy one has for volunteering (Hustinx 2010; Musick & Wilson 2008).

Individuals need tools for coping with the qualities of late modern societies. Volunteering can be one field that offers such tools. The results of studies 1 and 2, show the creative and personal ways young adults use the tools they have including volunteering to negotiate coherent identities and life courses. The ability to negotiate a coherent identity and a continuing, logical life story with oneself is also a central need especially in late modernity (Giddens 1991). The results show how young adults combine the past and future and how they deal with crises and new life phases. In contrast to insecurity, late modernity can offer feelings of ownership and coping in the lives of individuals through self-reflection and self-realization. Individuals use social and societal arenas of late modern society in the processes of reflecting the self and one's biography. Communal pathways of action become tools for deeply personal questions. Volunteerism is a social and societal field of action, which is made possible by the personal motivation and input of individuals. It serves as an ideal arena for the processes in which an individual negotiates his or her identity and biography in relation to others and society as a whole. Thus volunteering is an arena of individual well-being on many levels increasing control, self-understanding, and ownership in addition to being a societal activity.

In addition to the functions of volunteering in identity work that were presented above and in study 1, the individual studies sought for the contents, the 'what' of such identity work. Study 2 describes five identity types with different central values, which were found by analyzing the narrated identities. These identities were expressed in volunteering and are: influencer identity, helper identity, faith based identity, community identity, and success identity. The central values are further discussed in section 5.2. Volunteering was defined and given meanings through these value-identity frames (Hitlin 2007). For instance, volunteering to work among children could be presented as an arena of benevolence as in helping the children, or as an arena of religion by spreading the gospel or following one's calling, or as an arena of activity and performing by being an active and diligent person. The central value-identities of the volunteers defined the values that the individual connected to the act of volunteering. Thus, volunteering activities, which would seem similar to one another to an outside

observer, represented different values, and thus had very different meanings for different volunteers (publication 2).

The personal ways volunteering were associated with the value-identities of individuals described in study 2 are highlighted by the fact that the value-identities were often reflected through childhood experiences. For instance, volunteers with helper-identities often had been in vulnerable positions themselves. Moreover, they had either been the recipients of help, or had helped others in vulnerable positions. They associated some of their own childhood experiences with later volunteering activities. Their value-identities tied the different experiences and choices together as a meaningful and logical self-image. As mentioned above, this is not the case for all volunteers. For some of the interviewed volunteers, volunteering was just a hobby or something they had drifted into, a separate field from the processes of their personal value-identities. Nevertheless, one key result of the approach of the current study was in demonstrating that volunteering can also be intertwined with the deep personal processes of personal identity. The approach also demonstrated some of these processes in publication 1, and the values that are central in these personal identities in publication 2.

It is noteworthy that despite the individualistic nature of self-reflection or identity-work, the substance of the values or value-identities of the young adult volunteers could also be described as traditional or conservative. As noted in section 1.1, active monitoring of one's values and identity and the perception of choice are prevalent in late modernity. However, the values of individuals do not change rapidly in relation to those held by earlier generations. The reflexivity of late-modernity was thus manifested specifically in the ways that young adult volunteers reflected on their own values, but not automatically in what their values were. The values that were central in personal identities of young adult volunteers are demonstrated in the following section 5.3 and in publication 2. The religiousness of young adults could also be defined as being traditional or conservative despite the feelings of the young adult volunteers that their worldviews were freely chosen. The different styles of religiousness are described in section 5.4 and publication 3. It is noteworthy that the method of life story themed interviews that was used in this study underlines reflexivity and

contemplation. Despite this emphasis, volunteering was seen as an expression of concrete action for most young adult volunteers.

5.3 The values of volunteering

The previous section focused on the ‘how’ of volunteering in relation to personal identities. This chapter demonstrates the ‘what’ of the same theme. As described above, volunteering can be intertwined with personal value-identities and with reflecting on and expressing such identities. In article 2, five types of value-identities carried out in volunteering are presented. These five groups are: influencer identity, helper identity, faith based identity, community identity, and success identity. The central values and value directions as described by Schwartz (1992) are summarized in table 5: for a detailed description see publication 2.

Table 5 Central motives, values and value directions of identity types

Identity type	Central motives in the interviewees own words.	Central values in identity in the interviewees own words.	Central values and value directions as analyzed according to the value theory by Schwartz (1992).
Influencer	Making the world a better place, doing what is right, influencing, fighting injustices, having fun.	Being critical, solidarity, justice	Universalism, self-direction (Self-transcendence, openness to change).
Helper	Helping others	Helping others, caring, empathy	Benevolence (Self-transcendence, conservation)
Community	Being with one’s family, giving something to one’s community, being a part of a community	Communality, responsibility, loyalty, family values	Tradition, conformity, benevolence (Conservation)
Religious	Spreading the gospel, doing God’s work, love for one’s neighbour, being with other Christians, following their calling	Christian values, helping others	Benevolence, tradition, conformity (Self-transcendence, conservation)
Success	Getting the feeling of accomplishing, fulfilling ones responsibility of helping others, making contacts, succeeding	Responsibility, independence, getting ahead	Power, achievement, security (Self-enhancement, conservation)

Despite the distinct modular categories presented in the table, it is noteworthy that the five types of value-identities also form a continuum. All five identity types had similarities in their approaches, and some volunteers had traits that were typical of other types as well. Nevertheless, the core values were distinct in each category even though some values could be shared with other types of value-identities.

The range of value-identities linked with volunteering is wider than has been acknowledged in most previous research (Musick & Wilson 2008; Rochester et al. 2010). This highlights the flexibility of volunteering as an arena for expressing and reflecting on a variety of values. Despite the range of values associated with volunteering, the results of study 2 also demonstrate similarities among different value-identity types. The young adult volunteers with different value-identities in volunteering criticized the selfishness and inequality they saw in society, and saw volunteering as an arena for asserting counter-values in relation to these negative traits.

Associating volunteering as an arena of counter-values to selfishness and greed in the Finnish context is highlighted in the results of study 4. That same study provides a novel view that of cultural values for understanding cross-cultural differences in volunteering. Cultural contexts influence the motivation for volunteering in individuals or at least the way in which motivation is acknowledged and explicated. In study 4, Finnish university students hold the 'helping' motives extremely central to their volunteering. "Helping" was more central than any of the other motive categories that were suggested: social motives, learning motives, protective motives, or career motives. Helping was rated central in other countries as well. It was the most central reason for volunteering for students in all of the 13 countries involved in the study. Nevertheless, Finnish students rated helping motivation higher than students in any of the other countries involved in the study.

Study 4 also found that egalitarian cultural contexts as defined by Schwartz (1994, 1999) were associated with altruistic volunteering motivation. Altruistic motivation is thus rated to be more central by students who live in countries that have egalitarianism as a central cultural value compared to countries with other dominating cultural values. In study 4 Finland represented a country that has

egalitarianism as a central cultural value. In relation to these other countries, individualistic cultural contexts as defined by Hofstede (2001) were found to be associated with self-directed career motivation. Study 4 thus demonstrates that cultural values influence the ways individual volunteers understand and explain their motivation for volunteering. Cultural values are mediated and reproduced in the societal context in different ways. For instance, in the Finnish context the welfare state model has been embedded in the value of egalitarianism. The special relationship between Finnish culture and volunteering and the will to help of Finnish volunteers is further discussed in chapter 6.

The results of studies 2 and 4 offer new insights on the associations between personal and cultural values and volunteering. In addition, they raise relevant questions about values studies in general. Finnish value studies have found that young age groups are more directed towards hedonism than are older age groups (Puohiniemi 2006). Despite this they are highly interested in volunteering (Grönlund & Pessi 2008; Pessi 2008). The fragmented societal context may reflect on the use of values in young age groups (Cnaan et al. 2010; Helve 1999). A hedonistically driven individual can participate in volunteering and with other value priorities along-side his or her main value orientation. Values of an individual are never one-dimensional, and these dynamic uses of different value orientations in different situations should be taken into account, at least when studying individuals of younger age groups. It is possible that conventional research approaches have partly failed to understand the nuanced interactions between values and helping in late modern western societies.

5.4 Associations between religiousness and volunteering

As already mentioned, religiousness can be a strong motivating force in volunteering. Study 2 shows how volunteering can be intertwined with an identity grounded in religion and faith. The faith based identity in volunteering differed from the other value-identities described in publication 2. The values of volunteers with such faith-based identification were more heterogenic compared to the other groups. The values each volunteer defined as religious varied. However, what was common to most of the volunteers in this identity group was that religion was intimately intertwined with volunteering and with everything else, i.e. their whole lives. The motivating force of such religious identity was

extremely strong. Volunteers who were grouped into other value-identity groups could be religious to a certain extent, but their religiousness was not as all-encompassing compared to that of the group of volunteers with a faith-based identity.

The connections between religiousness and volunteering were studied in detail in study 3. Volunteers with a strong religious faith and ties to religious communities were found to be more motivated to volunteer because of religiousness compared to those volunteers who had a more individual, uncertain, or spiritual styles of religiousness. Communal and emotional identification as defined by Hervieu-Legér (1998) are typical for traditional religiousness and this motivated volunteering the most. The motivating forces of communal and emotional religiousness could be all-encompassing. They were very exceptional compared to any other motives, especially when the two appeared together. Volunteering was seen as being closely intermeshed with faith in many ways through identity, values, community, having a calling, and serving God.

The quantitative part of the study also revealed that such religious commitment as described above was not very common among the respondents (N=1000) of the study. Private, uncertain, and even indifferent relationships with religion or other worldviews were more common, and they are generally becoming more common in late modern Finland (*Monikasvoinen kirkko* 2008; Mikkola et al. 2007). Such less communal and less emotional but a more abstract or individual type of religiousness was found to have motivated volunteering indirectly in the qualitative analysis. The ethical and cultural identifications as defined by Hervieu-Legér (1998) to that of Lutheranism or some other religion or spiritual worldview could support other motives such as the will to help. They reinforced the volunteering motivation that was associated with personal values such as benevolence. Such types of religiousness could also direct the choice of volunteering community or the field of volunteering. Nevertheless, their motivating force appeared significantly weaker compared to communal and emotional identifications as defined by Hervieu-Legér (1998).

There were also volunteers among the interviewees whose volunteering had no acknowledged connections with religiousness (study 3). Five volunteers had some type of religious or spiritual identification but this identification was not related to volunteering in any acknowledged way. Although they valued the

Evangelical-Lutheran Church, its values, the work it does, and were members of it; their volunteering activities were caused by different motives to those of religiousness. Some volunteers in this group identified with the ethical and the cultural dimension as defined by Hervieu-Leger (1998), some of them also identified with the communal dimension. The emotional aspect of Christianity was nevertheless unfamiliar to most of these volunteers. Many of them were somewhat uncertain about their own personal beliefs and the relationship to the teachings of the Church. Articulating what they actually believed in was difficult for them and not thinking about religious questions or about one's own belief was also typical. Some of them could be said to represent the "belonging without believing" type of Christianity (Davie 2000). They did not want to leave the Church or relinquish their membership of it. For instance, they wanted to get married in a Church and have their children baptized and give them a Christian upbringing, because it was a part of Finnish society to do so. When religiousness is not associated with everyday action at all, it can be described as compartmentalized. Thus, it is seen as a separate component, a differentiated dimension of life that is possibly utilized in some special context, in religious ceremonies. This has been referred to as a "museal performance" by Riis (1994) who described the performances of the Church as "Christmas decorations, important but usually stored in a box". Religiousness could also be compartmentalized for "future use", as some interviewees considered that religion might become more important in old age.

In addition to those volunteers who had a religious identification that had no apparent connection to volunteering, there were atheistic or agnostic volunteers (six interviewees, study 3). Thus, when religion was defined substantively it could not be linked to volunteering since these volunteers were not religious. Nonetheless, a vague connection between religion and their volunteering can be seen to form through cultural values. Finnish society has developed in close integration with Lutheran Christianity. Therefore, religion can be said to have influenced the opportunities and traditions of volunteering through promoting its values and by the actual work it has done and still does to support helping others and promoting a common responsibility. The cultural influence of the Evangelical-Lutheran form of religiousness and the important role of the Church were also acknowledged by some of the interviewees. Nevertheless, they did not identify with the religion in other dimensions as defined by Hervieu-Leger (1998)

or they were doubtful in their relationship to religion. They saw Finland as a Lutheran country, and pointed out that even if one left the Church, he could not get rid of the culture.

Some of the agnostics or atheists had other values and worldviews, which were associated with volunteering in a reciprocal manner as religion was for the religious volunteers. For example, some interviewees identified with global justice and human rights in a similar manner as other interviewees identified with religion. For example, one volunteer identified with the principle of global justice on the ethical and communal dimensions of identification. The differentiation between “us-and-them” was articulated in a similar manner in the cases of the religious volunteers. One volunteer opined that “a majority of people have the wrong values”, and contrasted these with the right and moral values and understanding he shared with others involved in the work for global justice. Furthermore, the identification with the emotional and with the cultural dimensions were experienced through having feelings of belonging with like-minded peers and by describing the knowledge and ways of thinking within the global justice movement.

Ideals and belief systems including global justice can thus take on similar functions as traditional religions in promoting volunteering. This is the case at least at the psychological and social levels, which have been used to explain the influence of religion in volunteering. At the psychological level, another ideology can provide the belief in one’s cause and the values promoted, and motivate action. At the social level social pressure, expectations, norms, and commitment to one’s community can also promote action in a similar manner as in the case of traditional religions. The concept of functional religions should be studied further, at the societal level. However, it is plausible to assume that functional religions use similar functions as those of religion in promoting volunteering at the societal level. For other belief systems to take on the functions of religion in volunteering, their values and social structures would also have to encourage volunteering. This is not the case for all ideologies. It can also be questioned as to what belief can have such a powerful effect on individuals as that of religion. Personal belief in a higher power can be assumed to provide such commitment to values, practices and others with the same belief. Such powerful functions can be difficult to attain by secular ideologies.

6 Values and volunteering in late modern Finland: Discussion and conclusions

6.1 Volunteering is an arena of values: Personal views as mirrors of society

In this chapter the results of this study are discussed from the viewpoint of their societal context in late modern Finnish society. Section 6.1 describes how the personal views of individual volunteers mirror the role of volunteering within this societal context, and demonstrates which values are ascribed to volunteering in Finnish society. Section 6.2 builds on section 6.1 and discusses the societal role of volunteering in relation to the public sector, the private sector, political decision-making and their values in contemporary Finland. Section 6.3 draws political and practical implications from the results of 6.1 and 6.2, and section 6.4 evaluates the entire study and discusses implications for further research.

This study has outlined different personal values and combination of values that volunteering can intertwine with in the lives and identities of individuals. These included the basic human values of universalism, benevolence, tradition, security, conformity, obedience and achievement as defined by Schwartz (1992). These basic human values range from being conservative to a state of openness to change and from self-transcendence to self-enhancement. However, self-transcendence oriented values were more emphasized than the self-enhancement oriented values (publication 2). Different religious views were also incorporated into volunteering, and volunteering was viewed as an arena of religious action (publications 2 and 3).

A majority of the theories which have been used in the separate publications and were introduced in chapter 3 focus mainly on the level of the individual. Nevertheless, the dynamic relationship between an individual and society is also acknowledged throughout the study. Such an approach reflects the viewpoint of social constructivism. Social constructivism applies philosophical constructionism to social settings, and views cognitive functions as being products of social interactions. The identities and worldviews of individuals, which have been introduced in the results of this study, are thus viewed as being constructed over time through the participation in different cultures of different groups of people.

These groups of people, such as families, construct knowledge, and collaboratively create small cultures of shared artifacts with shared meanings. Individuals learn how to be a part of the culture in question on many levels. Thus, individuals construct a knowledge base through interactions with each other and their environment. The views that individuals have on volunteering in general and in specific instances are viewed as flexible and changeable. They are dependent on the social, cultural, and historical context. Language and culture form the framework for the construction of knowledge and reality by which individuals experience, communicate, and understand reality (Berger & Luckmann 1966; Vygotsky 1978).

Symbolic interactionism has applied a similar approach to social interaction of individuals. The basic premises of symbolic interactionism are the following: 1) that people act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things, 2) that the meanings of these things are derived from or arise out of the social interaction that one has with others and society, 3) that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters (Blumer 1969). Thus the actions of individuals and human interaction in general are mediated by symbols and interpretation, and the people act as they do because of how they define situations. Research that uses symbolic interactionism has focused on the meaning making processes in social interaction. For instance, research has focused on how individuals construct and present identity (Marshall 2010; Perinbanayagam 1985).

Causalities between society and the individual are not within the scope, nor are they the focus of this research. However, the viewpoints of social constructivism and symbolic interactionism provide a frame in which the views of individuals are discussed in relation to their societal context. As the views and meanings presented by individuals are seen as socially constructed and depend on their cultural contexts, they provide knowledge about the society that these individuals belong to. The constructions on identity, values, and religiousness the young adult volunteers present are thus viewed as mirrors of their social and societal contexts. How they use volunteering in these constructions reveal the meanings that are ascribed to volunteering in the social settings of these volunteers, which includes their families, volunteering organizations and to Finnish society in general. The identities and values that volunteering are

associated with and the meanings, that are given to volunteering reveal the values and norms related to volunteering in this societal setting. This is because the societal context defines the available categories from which individuals can choose from in their meaning making processes. These meanings, values and norms, which are related to volunteering as a societal category will be analyzed in the following section.

The results of this study on the variety of individual values and views ascribed to volunteering (publications 1, 2, and 3) show that volunteering can take on a variety of meanings and interact with different personal values within the Finnish context. Its position or role is not societally fixed or unambiguous, but sufficiently flexible and open to incorporate different meanings and values. In other words, the results show that volunteering as a societal concept is broad enough for the individual to incorporate his or her personal meanings. As such, volunteering seems to provide a fruitful arena for self-reflection and identity work. Individuals with different emphases on values can carry out and reflect upon their values and identity through volunteering. The voluntary sector as a category of society manages to incorporate the different sub-cultures of volunteering and their incorporated and inherent values.

Despite this flexibility and the different emphases of personal values ascribed to volunteering by individuals, there are also shared meanings and definitions attributed to the voluntary sector by volunteers with different personal values and religiousness. These shared meanings, as discussed in relation to social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, can be viewed as mirrors held up to the role of volunteering in Finnish society. The values and the counter values regarding volunteering described in this study (publications 2 and 3) highlight how volunteering is the antithesis of the values of hedonism and power as defined by Schwartz (1994 and 1999). Selfishness, greed, materialism, work-centrism, superficiality, irresponsibility, and passivity were rejected in general, and volunteering was presented as diametrically opposed to these values or features.

These views, the personal values and counter values in relation to volunteering are connected with the egalitarian cultural values that were defined by Schwartz (1994, 1999). These cultural values refer to a voluntary commitment to promoting the welfare of others. It may seem obvious, that volunteering is connected with such a commitment, but there are also differences among

countries that have different cultural values. Volunteers in countries with a particular set of cultural values that do not emphasize egalitarianism will not identify with altruistic motives as much as those individuals of countries who do. As the results of this study demonstrate (study 4), Finnish volunteers rated altruistic motives highest compared with volunteers in 12 other countries. The values that volunteering intertwines with in the lives of individuals can in other contexts be those of mastery, for example. Mastery as defined by Schwartz (1992) refers to an emphasis on getting ahead through active self-assertion, an emphasis on ambition, success, daring, and competence. These values may be more associated with volunteering within contexts in which career motivation are central for volunteering, such as that which often occurs in the United States.

Thus, the results of this study show that the role and position of volunteering are exceptionally intertwined with egalitarian cultural values within the Finnish context. This highlights and explains the results of a variety of Finnish studies, which show altruistic motivation to be extremely central for Finnish volunteers (Grönlund 2006; Grönlund & Pessi; Pessi 2008; Yeung 2001; Yeung 2004). Volunteering has a shared societal meaning as an arena for expressing egalitarian values (publications 2 and 4). This value base is strong and is shared enough to provide a well-recognized frame for individuals who might emphasize different sets of personal values. A sector of no values could not be used in such manner.

This can be seen as extremely beneficial for Finnish society. Volunteering in general enhances trust and belief in solidarity and reciprocal help among individuals and within a society. These are central benefits and indicators of the wellbeing of societies. Volunteering increases the feelings of happiness and meaningful life, even health, among those individuals who volunteer (Frey & Stutzer 2002; Yeung 2004). These benefits can be highlighted by the fact that volunteering is regarded as an arena of altruism and egalitarian values: Individuals help each other primarily because they care about others and because it is the right thing to do (publications 2, 3 and 4). This focus , increases the positive connotations associated with volunteering unlike the more self serving agendas. As noted above, this egalitarian view of volunteering has also been noted in previous research (Pessi 2008; Yeung 2001). However, the results of this present study highlight the way these altruistic and egalitarian meanings that are ascribed

to volunteering are integrated with personal values and identities of individuals. The results of this study indicate that individual volunteers use this cultural category of egalitarianism in their personal identity work for reflections, on values, worldviews and the self. This also makes the values and meanings attributed to volunteering as a societal category, personal and sensitive.

6.2 Volunteering is an oasis of egalitarianism within the context of contested values

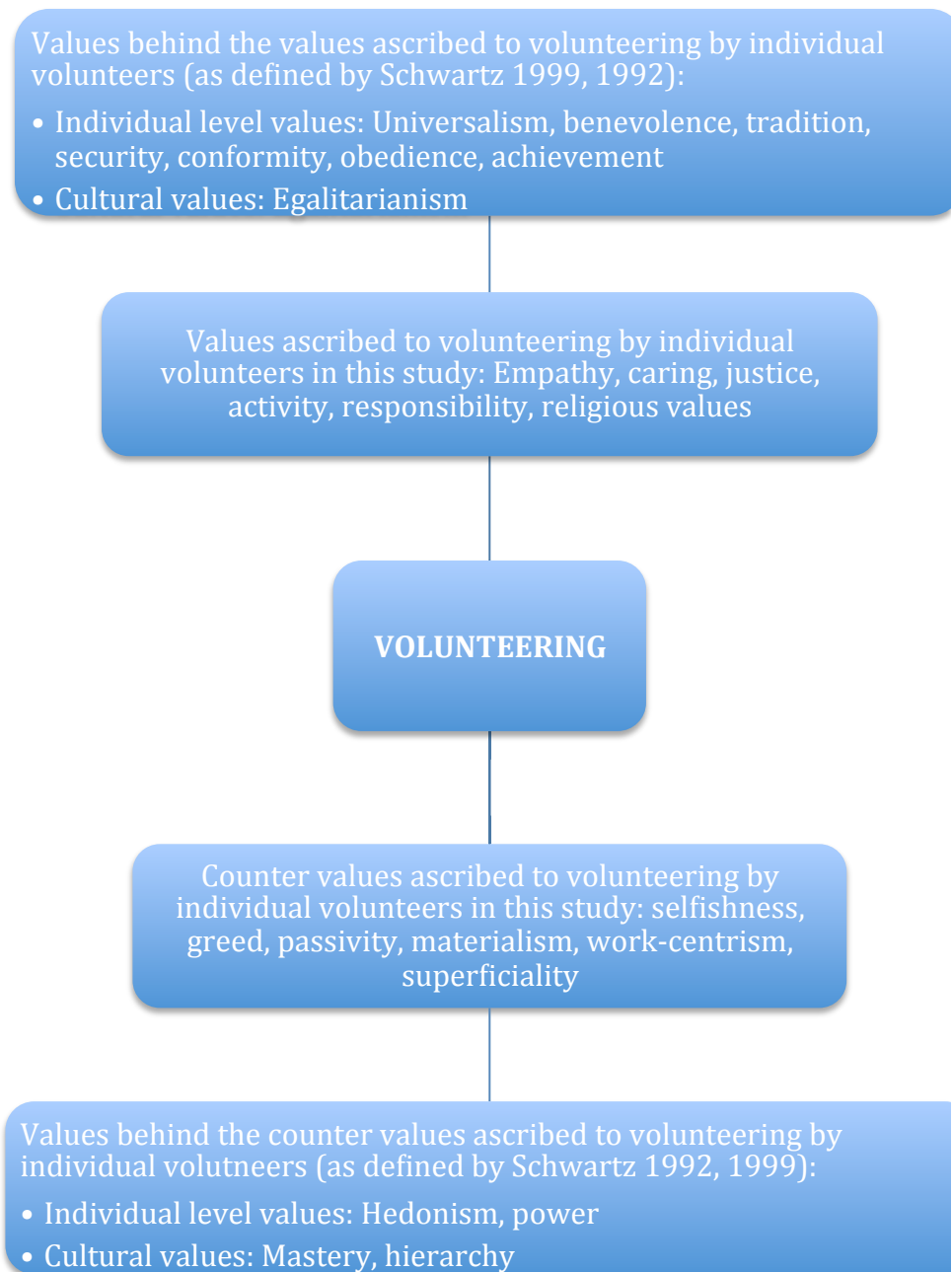
The role of volunteering as an arena of egalitarian values in Finnish society will be discussed below. This social role will be analysed in relation to the public sector, the private sector, political decision-making and their values in contemporary Finland. This analysis continues to build on the viewpoints of social constructivism and symbolic interactionism.

The egalitarian cultural values associated with volunteering detailed in the results of this study are generally also those of the central cultural values of Finland. The other central cultural value of Finland, according to Schwartz (1994, 1999), is harmony. Harmony refers to fitting in seamlessly and in accordance with the environment (unity with nature, protecting the environment, world of beauty). In the theory of cultural values (Schwartz 1994, 1999), egalitarianism is located at one pole of a cultural value dimension with hierarchy at its other pole. Hierarchy means an emphasis on the legitimacy of unequal distribution of power, roles and resources, in addition to an emphasis on social power, authority, humility, and wealth. On another value dimension harmony is at one pole and mastery is at the opposite pole. Mastery is defined as an emphasis on the individual getting ahead through active self-assertion, emphasis on ambition, success, daring, and competence (Schwartz 1994, 1999).

At the level of individuals the self-enhancement directed basic value of power, which resembles the emphases of the cultural value of mastery, indicates that an individual holds items such as authority and wealth as being central. This is the least popular value for all age groups in Finland (Puohiniemi 2006). The counter values to volunteering found in the results of this study (publication 2) align with the cultural values of mastery and hierarchy, both of which are the opposite values of two central cultural values (egalitarianism, harmony) of Finland according to Schwartz (1994, 1999). The position of volunteering in

relation to these central cultural values, their counter values on the polar dimensions as defined by Schwartz (1994, 1999) the individual level values reported in study 2 and their counter values as defined by Schwartz (1992) are summarized in figure 2.

Figure 2 The values and counter values of volunteering



Thus, the core values that volunteers ascribe to volunteering in the results of this study (publications 2 and 4) align with the central cultural value of egalitarianism, whereas the counter values (publications 2) align with mastery and hierarchy. Mastery and hierarchy are also counter to those of the central Finnish cultural values of egalitarianism and harmony. The micro- and macro-levels of society, the individual and the broader societal contexts are brought together by mediating structures as has already been mentioned (section 6.1) in relation to social constructivism. These mediating structures consist of groups of people

such as families, organizations such as the school and the workplace, and societal regimes such as media, law, and political decision-making. These mediating structures reproduce and influence cultural values as was described in the introduction of this study (sections 1.2 and 6.1).

An individual learns the values of different contextual backgrounds such as family, school, and friends in childhood and youth. According to a social constructivist viewpoint the values of each family as a micro culture differ from each other to some extent but they all interact with the cultural values of the larger cultural frame. Individuals and the microcultures they form with others also influence and change cultural values. Nevertheless, cultural values change very slowly, usually only over generations (Schwartz 1994). No significant change has been detected in Finnish cultural values since the 1980's (Helkama & Seppälä 2006). The results of this study are contextualized below in an overview of the societal situation of Finland during the lives of the young adults, from whom the data of this study have been gathered.

Within the childhood and youth of the young adults of this study, the social democratic welfare state was rooted in and promoted the cultural value of egalitarianism. For example, all children had equal rights to the same public education and health care despite the income of their parents, and income differences and social injustice in general were balanced with cumulative taxation. The influence of the welfare state was also available to families in which usually both mothers and fathers worked outside the home. For example, childcare was provided by the public sector. During 1970's and 1980's the voluntary sector primarily complemented the welfare services that were provided by the public sector, and volunteering was highest in recreational and expressive volunteering (Yeung 2004). Thus, the basic value of egalitarianism was facilitated and reproduced strongly in the society in which the young adults in this study were growing up. Therefore, it is not surprising that it is so accepted and is an integral part of the values of Finnish volunteers in the results of this study (publications 2 and 4).

In the early 1990's, when most of the young adults of this study were teenagers, Finland experienced a severe economic recession. Welfare services provided by the public sector were cut back severely, and the voluntary sector, the Lutheran Church, and individual citizens played a significant role in providing

welfare services (Yeung 2004). Despite the economic growth that occurred after 1995 most public welfare services were never returned to the level they were before the recession. Income differences and poverty have increased continuously and social problems have become more severe among a segment of Finnish citizens since 1995 (Vaarama et al. 2010). The voluntary sector and the Lutheran Church provide food, clothing, and other forms of help for this segment of people of which a majority has been permanently marginalized (Juntunen et al. 2006). Since the beginning of the new millennium inadequate care for the elderly and the mentally ill have been debated in public discussions. For example, in 2010 a majority of the care provided for the elderly was provided by their family members, whereas public sector provided only a fifth of the needed care (Vaarama et al. 2010).

Since 1995 to the present the rhetoric of political decision-making has also changed. Competitiveness and productivity have become central political concepts, which direct political decision-making (Saari & Pessi 2011). This has become the norm in the new welfare mix. Public welfare services have been extensively outsourced to the private sector and to civil society organizations through open tendering. Thus, the public sector controls and finances the services, and thus the organization that provide the best offer (price, quality) for carrying out the service is chosen to provide the actual service. Outsourcing, competitiveness and productivity are increasingly regarded as a means to provide wellbeing in the context of increasing welfare needs. The need for competitiveness and productivity are also argued with global financial interdependencies.

A majority of Finns oppose the recent developments. The support for a tax-funded welfare state is still strong, and Finns continue to expect the public sector to take on the main responsibility of welfare provision. In the opinion of a majority of Finns, the role of the private sector, family, church and civil society should only be to complement welfare services provided by the public sector. Finns in general have become increasingly critical towards the market economy and they increasingly support values that limit its power. They support the ideal of a welfare state and the values of communality and solidarity (Pessi & Grönlund 2011; Pessi & Oravasaari 2010; Vaarama et al. 2010).

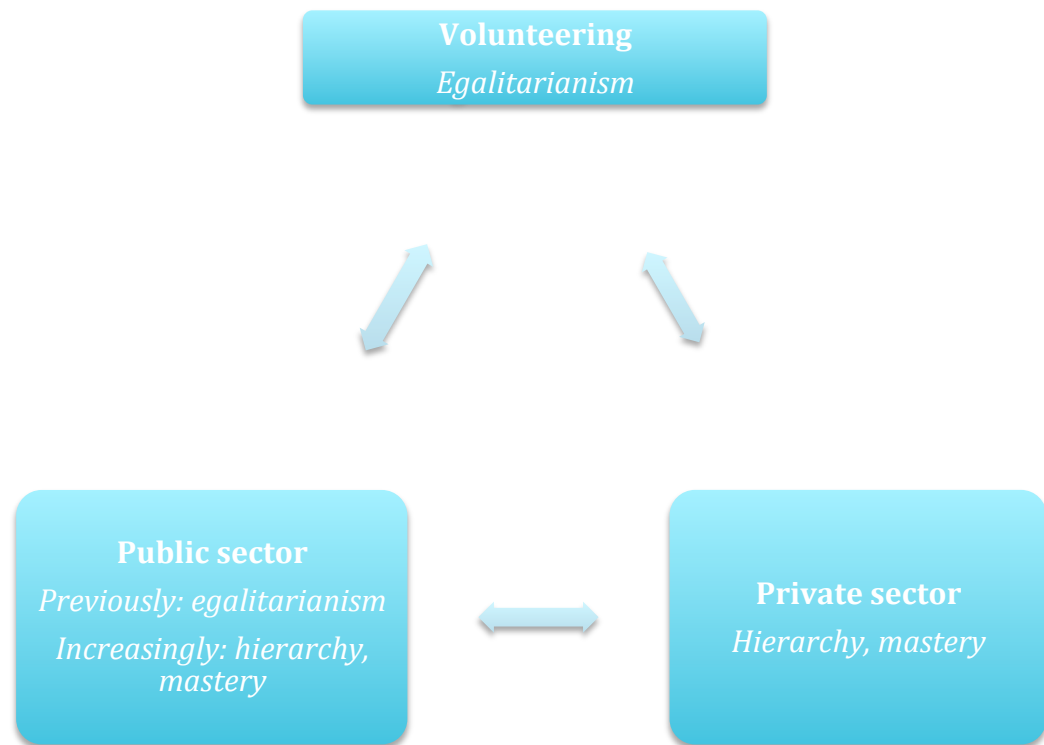
The results of this study show that similar views were also put forward by

the individual volunteers of this study particularly as they reflect these issues in the context of volunteering, values and religiousness. Several interviewees criticized the poor situation of the elderly or in general the situation of the weakest and most vulnerable in Finnish society, and saw this as an indicator of hardening societal values (publications 1, 2 and 3). The unfairness of the current set of societal values and activities were highlighted by idealizing and comparing it with other cultures, Finnish society in the past, or sub-cultures. These other contexts were described as communal and caring as opposites to the society of hard values that the interviewees live in now. The criticism of these interviewees towards these hard values of society was not clearly directed towards single political parties or decisions in most interviews. Rather the notions were abstract, stating something has gone or is going in the wrong direction in Finnish society. This abstract level indicates that the interviewees comment on societal changes, and reflect upon them in terms of their personal values and the values they would expect from the society they live in.

The current implementation of actions in welfare and the rhetoric of competitiveness and productivity draw from different cultural values compared with the earlier “welfare state”. Competitiveness and productivity refer to the cultural values of mastery and hierarchy as defined by Schwartz (1994, 1999). Both these values of the market sector are the counter values to the traditional cultural values of Finns of egalitarianism and harmony, which were also originally behind the social democratic welfare state. Thus the political decision-making seems to have aims and rhetoric that contradict the core values of a majority of Finns and the cultural values of the Finnish context.

The following figure (Fig 3) summarizes the values ascribed to the three societal sectors that provide welfare within the Finnish context. The fourth sector of family has not been included in the figure despite its increasing role in welfare provision. Although it often included in models, the author considers that the diversity of values of different families renders its inclusion here as one entity as problematic.

Figure 3 Values of different societal sectors in welfare provision



As summarized above, the public sector of the state and its municipalities has previously represented the core cultural values of egalitarianism, which formed the foundation of the welfare state model. The public sector and civil society share this value. The private sector of private enterprises and other businesses represent the values of the market economy, which are based on hierarchy and mastery. Due to the changes in welfare provision in Finland, the boundaries between these three segments and their values have become increasingly blurred. The values of the private sector especially, have started to dominate the public sector through the central politically promoted aims of competitiveness and productivity via outsourcing and open tendering (Saari & Pessi 2011). The public sector no longer appears to act according to the cultural value base of egalitarian values, but increasingly operates with the logic of the private sector, that also reflect its values of mastery and hierarchy, which are counter to the values of egalitarianism.

The results of this study indicate that within the context of changing or contested values described above volunteering and the civil society receive a significant position in the views of individual volunteers. With the strong egalitarian connotations attached to it as a cultural category, volunteerism seems

to have become an oasis of egalitarian values, values that are being challenged in other sectors of society. Society, political decision-making or the welfare state in Finland do not seem to be operating according to their egalitarian roots of social justice, equality and responsibility; but rather according to the opposing values of mastery and hierarchy that promote competitiveness. Within this context volunteerism or civil society seem to be regarded as a societal arena, which can truly be trusted, and which operates with the cherished cultural values that the individual volunteers share. Individuals have been socialized with these values and in society, which acts according to these values. Individuals can not adapt to new cultural values or operational logics very fast. The results of this study indicate that volunteerism has become an oasis of appreciated and shared egalitarian values within a societal context in which these values are perceived as being under threat. By participating in volunteering, an individual can take part in and strengthen this value base. In this way the personal can become political: volunteering that is intertwined with personal values and worldviews can become a societal statement and a channel of influencing for these values. The relationship between democratic models and volunteering has been discussed by Stadelman-Steffen & Freitag (2011).

Finnish welfare provision has changed from a strong welfare state towards welfare pluralism. Private sector, families, and civil society increasingly participate in welfare provision. As mentioned in the introduction of this study (section 1.2), the position and role of volunteering vary within different contexts according to the societal responsibilities ascribed to the other three sectors (Salamon and Sokolowski 2003). A shift in the Finnish welfare model from welfare state to welfare pluralism changes the position of volunteering within the societal context in Finland. The private sector and volunteering have previously only complemented the public sector in welfare provision, but are now increasingly taking responsibility for meeting central welfare needs through outsourcing, open tendering and cutbacks in public welfare services. Therefore, the role of volunteering within this societal context needs evaluating. Is the societal position of volunteering starting to shift from its traditional expressive, complementary and experimental role towards a more central role in welfare? The former is typical of social democratic welfare models, whereas the latter is typical of liberal and corporatist welfare models (Salamon and Sokolowski 2003).

The interest of young adults in service oriented volunteering can be analyzed as a result of this societal situation and related societal discussion. Helping the elderly, the handicapped or any of those in a disadvantaged position was the second most popular field of volunteering among young adults in the Helsinki metropolitan region (Grönlund 2006). Almost 70 percent of respondents answered they might personally volunteer in this field. Volunteering for sports or arts/culture was noticeably less popular among the respondents. It can be assumed that the respondents of the survey were aware of the poor situation of the elderly and in general those in need. This seems to have influenced their answers. The apparent need to provide help especially among the elderly seems to have superseded recreation and leisure in its appeal for respondents. The positive attitudes of young adults towards helping those in need by volunteering can thus be analyzed from the perspective of them recognizing the increasing needs for volunteering in the new welfare model in which public welfare services have been cut back. This could be construed as an acceptance of the new welfare role of volunteering, and an acceptance of the cutbacks in public welfare services. However, if the phenomenon is analyzed in relation to values cultural and individual, then this analysis and its conclusion take a different turn.

Mastery and hierarchy, the cultural values within contexts of liberal and corporatist welfare models differ radically from the egalitarian values of volunteering and the social democratic basis of the Finnish welfare state model. The former were criticized and viewed as being counter to the values ascribed to volunteering in this study. In addition, the recent developments in public welfare services were not simply accepted. Quite the contrary, volunteering was viewed as an opposite measure to the greed and selfishness these developments represented (publication 2 and 3). Volunteering was regarded as a channel of influencing and an arena of fighting against selfishness and greed.

Thus, the central cultural values in Finnish society of egalitarianism and harmony (publication 4) and the personal values that young adults ascribed to volunteerism (publications 2, 3, and 4) are similar, and they represent the converse of the current societal emphases of competitiveness, productivity and the values behind them (hierarchy, mastery). Finns generally oppose many of the consequences of competitiveness and productivity, and support the tax-funded

welfare state model (Vaarama et al. 2010). The political changes since 1995 to when this study was published did not change the cultural values within the Finnish context as cultural values change extremely slowly (Helkama & Seppälä 2006; Puohiniemi 2006; Schwartz 1994, 1999). This has led to a mismatch between recent political decisions and rhetoric and the expectations of many Finns in relation to the welfare state. Moreover, the role of volunteering as a fixer of the eroding welfare state does not seem compatible with the values ascribed to volunteering as a societal category in this study. Rather the results of this study indicate that volunteering is viewed as a counter force against the values behind the erosion of the traditional welfare state. Volunteering can be seen as an oasis of egalitarian values in a society that seems to be moving towards the cultural values that oppose those held by many of its citizens.

These current values and the position of volunteering in Finnish society may be jeopardized if the voluntary sector is forced to replace welfare services that were previously provided by the public sector. Such new role that would result from political decision-making is based on the counter values of volunteering. It would be incompatible with the current role ascribed to volunteering as a societal category. This could drastically influence the volunteering motivation of individual volunteers, and even reduce the extent of volunteering. Due to the personal nature of volunteering and its values (publications 1, 2 and 3; and in 6.1), the consequences of a value clash between the values of volunteering individuals and the societal position and role of volunteering could be severe.

This does not mean that the voluntary sector should or should not cooperate with the public or private sectors or take on the responsibility for the needs of Finnish society and its citizens: quite the contrary. The question is not, who is responsible for providing welfare. On the contrary the questions are the following: What is the nature of the responsibilities of the different sectors, and what are the roles of the different sectors (2011; Pessi 2009; Pessi & Saari 2011)? If the increasing governmental interest in using the voluntary sector is carried out in the right way, there are several opportunities for increasing the level of volunteering, its positive consequences, and the beneficial pro-social values related with it in Finnish society. This is also needed in the context of increasing welfare needs. It can be assumed that a majority of Finns would appreciate societal efforts to increase volunteering and altruistic activity, which complement the public welfare services in their own roles. The voluntary sector can continue to have a value in

its own right and also become more central in society as a welfare provider.

Inclusivity is a general principle of volunteering: everyone has the right to volunteer. Another general principle is free will, so that people can volunteer as an expression of their own values and belief systems if they want to, and one can always refuse to volunteer. The nature of volunteering activities and their values are also distinctive, not alternative to employees, and in its distinctive role volunteering has economic, social, cultural and environmental impact (Kearney 2001). These principles are highlighted within the Finnish context by the actual freedom to volunteer as there are no strict norms or expectations to volunteer in Finnish culture. This freedom should not be jeopardized. Volunteering is and should continue to be truly an individual choice and to have a value in its own right. If the increasing role of the voluntary sector in welfare provision is such that it supports altruistic motivation without threatening or replacing public welfare and responsibilities that Finns think should belong to the public sector there are several possibilities.

More Finns are interested in volunteering than actually take part in it at any one time (Grönlund & Pessi 2008; Pessi 2008). Young adults clearly have some interest in expressing their altruism and different values in volunteering in order to fight against selfishness and for better values (publications 2 and 3). It can be assumed that a majority of Finns would appreciate societal efforts and political decisions to increase volunteering and altruistic activity, which complement the public welfare services. Although it is not the role of volunteering and not compatible with the values of volunteering, to replace public responsibility for welfare, volunteering could and ought to be used more in providing services that are not at the core of public welfare provision. This would provide the benefits of volunteering to a larger group of individuals who either volunteer or who receive services from volunteers. This would also increase the benefits of volunteering to society in general through increasing trust, the ethos of helping, and the beneficial egalitarian cultural values. Political and practical implications are discussed in the following section.

6.3 Political and practical implications

A central implication based on the results of this study is that the voluntary organizations and civil society in general should hold onto their egalitarian values

and the complementary experimental role played by a truly voluntary activity. The results of this study have also highlighted these values and roles as constituting a central benefit in the eyes of individual volunteers (publications 1, 2 and 3). The voluntary sector should not take over responsibilities from the public sector but rather complement the public sector and continue to be innovative, flexible and experimental in its work. The voluntary sector should thus stay closer to the role and operational logic that volunteering provides in social democratic welfare models as described by Salamon and Sokolowski (2003). It should stay closer to the egalitarian values it shares with Finnish citizens, and with the traditional welfare state. The voluntary sector inevitably also draws things from the public and private sectors, such as professionalism or strategic thinking, and cooperates with the public and private sectors. Such cooperation takes many forms that include: corporate volunteering and joint projects between voluntary organizations and municipalities. However, organizations of the voluntary sector should be careful not to let the current values or operational logics of these two sectors to 'sneak in' surreptitiously. The unique role of the voluntary sector benefits society and its citizens the most when it holds on to its own core position, role and duties. It strengthens altruism, willingness and a belief in reciprocal help and thus adds to communality and trust towards other people. Volunteerism also indirectly benefits societies through the positive influence that such value-based activity has upon the volunteering individuals and the individuals who benefit from the input of these volunteers.

The results of this study also emphasize the importance of acknowledging the level of values in the concrete activities of volunteering organizations. As values are a central part of the motivation and meaning behind volunteering for many volunteers (studies 1, 2, and 3), they should be highlighted as a central strength. The results of this study encourage organizers of volunteering to use interviews and discussions to recognize the needs and values of individual volunteers at different stages of their volunteering careers. Narrative approaches can be used in these interviews to search for motives, meanings and to make volunteering more rewarding for the individual, as personal values and worldviews become more recognized and integrated with both volunteering and identity. Nevertheless, this should be done in a way that respects the individuality of the volunteers. There are substantial differences in the needs and expectations of individual volunteers, and not all volunteers wish to highlight or explicate the

aspects of values, worldviews or identity in their activity (publications 1, 2, 3).

The central societal role of volunteering as an arena for exercising beneficial values, communality and trust is something that the public sector and political decision-making should also secure. The possibility to outsource welfare responsibilities to the voluntary sector and to families is tempting as resources of the public sector are becoming increasingly limited and the welfare needs are constantly increasing. Nevertheless, the cost of this short term saving will be expensive in the long run, if it results in reducing the extent of volunteering or its values and their resulting benefits to society. Thus, the likelihood for the voluntary sector to continue as independent and value-based as possible should be buttressed and even underlined against the changing societal context and welfare mix in Finland. The voluntary sector, voluntary organizations and volunteering individuals have a unique position in maintaining the beneficial values of individuals *per se* and as an integral part of Finnish culture. This should not be jeopardized when the previous roles and values of different sectors of society are contested. Voluntary sector organizations are increasingly dependent on public finances (Särkelä 2011). This should not influence the freedom and possibilities of voluntary organizations to direct and develop their work. Moreover, the position of voluntary organizations in relation to taxation and competition legislation should be supported and secured. The operation of the voluntary sector should not be hindered to benefit private businesses.

Instead of complicating and damaging the position of voluntary organizations, the societal benefits of volunteering should be increased by political actions. Volunteering should have a clear recognized administrative standing in the Finnish government and a minister should be appointed to be responsible for the different issues related to volunteering. It should also be reflected upon whether specific education should be offered in educational institutions for organizing volunteering. Organizing volunteering requires specific skills related to management, leadership, motivation, marketing and finances, just to mention a few areas. Programs aimed at educating organizers of volunteering exist in several other countries, but are still in their infancy in Finland.

One concrete and central way to influence and increase the future role of volunteering and its benefits in Finnish society is by promoting the role and visibility of volunteering in schools and other educational institutions. An

initiative that promotes volunteerism related contents in general education has been formulated by several Finnish non-profit organisations for the minister responsible for educational issues (Vetoomus opetusministeri... 2010). At the time of writing this dissertation, this was being being discussed in the Finnish context. Furthermore, the need for increasing the visibility of volunteering in schools is acknowledged in the latest governmental program (Hallitusohjelma 2011, p. 24), Children and young students should be acquainted with volunteering and volunteering opportunities early on to have adequate knowledge about these activities later in life. Young people themselves indicate they would take part in volunteering, if someone had invited them to come along (Grönlund & Pessi 2008).

One concrete way to increase the contacts between young people and volunteering opportunities are specific volunteering programs in educational institutions. In other countries the effectiveness of such programs vary (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2010). Although most experiences are positive, some research shows a danger that compulsory volunteering programs negatively influence future volunteering when the programs are not carried out well. If instrumental rewards and selfish gain such as work experience or academic credits are highlighted, such programs can influence the currently strongly held view of volunteerism as an altruistic activity. This could jeopardize such individualistically held connections between personal values, worldviews, identity, and volunteering that were detailed in the results of this study (publications 1, 2 and 3). On the other hand, when such programs are planned and carried out well, without compulsory elements or highlighting selfish gain too much, they offer significant societal advantages in citizen education. In general a well-executed program helps securing the benefits of volunteering to both individuals and Finnish society at large.

In the light of the results of this study, volunteering in Finnish educational institutions could increase the overall extent of volunteering, as more individuals had learned from their volunteering opportunities early on. In addition, volunteering could actually serve as an arena in which identity and pro-social values could be acknowledged and fostered. The associations between volunteering and an individual's religiousness or other worldviews could be explored. Moreover, suitable roles and arenas of responsibility for the future could

be sought. This would benefit young adults personally and it could also build an interest and responsibility in respect of social issues and pro-social action.

Previous research has detected positive connections between service learning and future volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2010). Education that aims at moral citizenship and pro-social values and behavior can especially benefit from acknowledging the individual processes for young adults involved in volunteering.

Volunteering opportunities should also be guaranteed to all groups of people. Individual studies indicate that immigrants or unemployed individuals have difficulties in finding their place in voluntary organizations (Grönlund & Pessi 2008; Harinen 2005; Yeung 2001). Individuals, especially those in underprivileged positions, should be informed about volunteering opportunities and encouraged to take part in volunteering activities. Public officials should be informed more about the benefits of and the possibilities for volunteering to be able to guide individuals towards these options. The benefits to volunteers of volunteering, such as well-being, self-esteem, social contacts, influencing and also work experience are highlighted in groups of people who have challenges or difficulties in taking part in other sectors of society such as work or education. These benefits add to self-confidence and an engagement in the values of volunteering, which are central in all societal and private arenas.

To conclude, the aspects by which volunteering is associated with values at the cultural and the individual level should be taken into account when changes in the societal roles of volunteering and voluntary organizations are suggested. International experiences and models can be used as a guide for the Finnish model but with caution. The values ascribed to volunteering are especially egalitarian and altruistic in the Finnish context, models from other contexts and societies should not be copied directly. If carried out well, value- and identity-based volunteering can be an extremely powerful positive force in society. Societal and governmental reinforcement can increase the popularity of volunteering and strengthen those positive values that are connected with it. On the other hand, if changes in the role of volunteering and voluntary organizations in Finnish society and welfare provision are not carried out well, this might adversely affect views on volunteering and harm volunteering motivation. This will be the case, if societal changes or governmental expectations are introduced or argued in a

manner that can be experienced as a threat for public welfare services, as discussed above (section 6.2). If volunteering is increasingly viewed through instrumental rewards, self-gain, or societal norms and expectations, its association with altruistic and egalitarian individual values and identities can also change. It can be asked whether any other volunteering motivation can be as rewarding and bring such force and commitment as the intrinsic feeling of expressing one's identity, values and / or religiousness. Furthermore, acting according to these inner motives and influencing society according to them strengthen this experience further. Such motivation currently exists among young adult Finnish volunteers, and it should not be jeopardized without due consideration.

6.4 Evaluation of the study and implications for further research

This study combined different theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches and disciplines. Theories from volunteerism research, especially the theories of volunteering motivation and reflexive styles of volunteering have been used extensively, but they have been complemented with theoretical perspectives from the fields of psychology, sociology, social psychology and sociology of religion. This study used a diverse set of approaches. Such versatility of methods is not valuable in itself, but is a result of finding the best tools to meet the aims of this research optimally, and answer the questions that arose in the analyses of the study data. The evaluation of the methodological strategy has been scrutinized in all the separate publications and in chapter 4, and will not be extensively discussed here. Instead, this section will focus on evaluating the input of this research has on different disciplines. In addition, it will indicate areas and questions that need further research.

First and foremost the author defines this study as belonging to the genre of volunteerism research, and will discuss the contribution of this research project to that field first. The principal aim at the beginning of this study was to understand volunteering young adults in a deeper and more holistic way compared to most existing research at the time. The field of volunteerism research has been dominated by studies based on survey data, and focus on social demographic factors and motivational factors. In order to truly reach a deeper understanding of the processes of individuals in volunteering, psychological theories and qualitative methods were used. Their application in this research resulted in novel approaches

in the field of volunteerism research. The use of narrative methodologies, narrated identities (McAdams 2001, 2006) and value-identities (Hitlin 2007) are exceptional in this field. This study has shown their benefits in adding to the understanding of the personal ways by which individuals use volunteering in relation to their respective personal identities, personal values religiousness, and self and autobiographical reflections. Further use of these approaches in such research are recommended especially in relation to different age groups, backgrounds and activities. For example, research on the role of volunteering in the lives of the elderly or immigrants might benefit from using these methods. Hobbies or political activities could also be studied in relation to narrated identities, value-identities, personal values and religiousness. The findings of this research should also be tested using larger groups of respondents. Applying the results of this study in relation to values and identity has already been used in investigations with good results (HelsinkiMission kysely vapaaehtoisille 2011). The outcomes of that study underline the centrality of the values and identification inherent in volunteering motivation and also in the choice of the volunteering organization. However, further applications of these and other results of this study are required to build on that knowledge.

Values are a common field of study in relation to volunteering. Much of the literature in this subject is quantitative. A different perspective was chosen in this study with the above-mentioned approaches of narrative methodologies, and the concepts of narrative identity and values-identity. They enabled a deeper investigation into the views and reflections of individuals in relation to values and volunteering, and these reflections were also contextualized in the life courses of the volunteers. Providing insights into the variety, depth and societal nature of these reflections is in the author's opinion the clearest contribution of her research to understand values in volunteering. The theory of basic values by Schwartz (1992) provided a theoretical tool in categorizing the values individuals reflected upon in relation to volunteering.

Despite their advantages the approaches introduced above were not adequate to reveal the different aspects of volunteering that the author was interested in. The cultural context obviously had an influence on the meanings ascribed to volunteerism by individuals. Thus, sociological approaches were needed to complement the theoretical approach. The theories of cultural values

described by Schwartz (1994, 1999) and those of individualism and collectivism discussed by Hofstede (2001) provided a set of tools with which the hypotheses of the influence of cultural context on individuals' views about volunteering could be tested. In addition, theoretical considerations on the different roles of volunteering under different welfare models described by (Salamon and Sokolowski 2003) were useful in understanding the views of individuals in the context of late modern Finland. The approach of testing the associations between the cultural contexts and volunteering motivation of individuals with cross-national data is novel. Cross-cultural research in general is surprisingly rare in the field of volunteerism research. Study 4 provides such a novel approach and gives the impetus for further research on the influence of cultural values and individualism versus collectivism of different contexts on volunteering. In this introductory publication, the viewpoints of social constructivism and symbolic interactionism (Berger & Luckmann 1966; Blumer 1969; Vygotsky 1978) were found to be useful in describing and discussing the roles and positions of volunteering in Finnish society through views of individual volunteers.

A central contribution of this study to the field of volunteerism research is in how it combines this complex of theoretical and methodological approaches to understand a group of volunteers within one context. This provides a more multifaceted picture and deeper understanding, as the same phenomenon was scrutinized from different angles. The different theoretical and methodological approaches also complement each other and minimize error, as discussed in chapter 4. Similar approaches are encouraged for further research.

Even though this study is principally about volunteerism research, it also investigates the field of research of "religion and society", and will be examined at a faculty of theology. The evaluation of the author's research in this field is discussed next. Research on religion and society can be divided into two main disciplines. The first discipline focuses on research about churches, their administration, and religious beliefs and activities. The second, focuses more on the relationships between churches or religion within their respective societies. The latter type of research is practiced by sociologists and also by theologians. The methods and theories that are used in both research fields consist of theories and methodologies that are practiced in the social sciences. These approaches have also been developed further to benefit the field of research (Davie 2007).

This research combines aspects from both of these disciplines. In the beginning of this research a central aim was to understand the roles of different worldviews (religious, spiritual, and irreligious) have in volunteering. The inclusion of volunteers from different fields of volunteering instead of only interviewing volunteers associated with religious organizations was done to investigate the influence of different worldviews. This aim is a classical approach of the sociology of religion: research on understanding religious beliefs and religious action. It should be emphasized that religiousness in this approach was defined broadly and openly to understand the personal worldviews of individuals. For a detailed description see chapter 4 and publication 3.

A central contribution of this study in the field of the sociology of religion is in providing knowledge about the roles different defined worldviews including religious, spiritual, and irreligious worldviews have in the lives and actions of young adults in a late modern western context. These results can be applied to other phenomena than simply volunteering. The changing role of religion can be applied and further studied in relation to these different activities. The functional definition of religion allows the analysis of other meaning systems, namely what types of worldviews, ideologies or value orientations are replacing religion as motivating forces in different actions? Such approaches need further research. Religious identification (Hervieu-Léger 1998) provides a fruitful tool to investigate the role of different worldviews and different values on volunteering and other actions.

Values proved to have a central position in this study. This was not anticipated when the research was started. Values were also found to be central in relation to religion and religiousness. As discussed above and in publication 3, they could form a connection between religion and volunteering. On the other hand, a percentage of interviewees found it difficult to identify with religion because of a value clash. For example, how the Finnish church had acted in relation to sexual minorities made it difficult for some volunteers to relate to religion. Thus, values can become both a positive force and a hindrance in the relationship that young adults have with religion. Values are also closely intertwined with the identities and life histories of individuals. Consequently, the extremely personal way that certain individuals relate to their values make values a sensitive component in their relationships with religion and religious

organizations. The role of values in relation to the societal role and position of the majority Evangelical-Lutheran church in Finland should be studied further.

Several other questions in relation to the sociology of religion could have been studied in this research. The religious context of each culture influences how individuals reflect upon their own religiousness. Religion could have been analyzed in a similar manner as values were analyzed in relation to the societal and personal levels in chapter 6. The role of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the new welfare mix, especially in relation to the views and expectations of Finns could also offer new insights into the cultural position of the Church within the Finnish context. These viewpoints and questions need further study.

Further research into the views of Finns on the role of volunteerism in welfare provision and in the shift of the welfare model towards a welfare mix is also required. Specifically, research on the views of citizens on the current developments toward highlighting individual and voluntary responsibilities in welfare is needed. The view point about personal and cultural values also offer several opportunities in investigating the possible results of these changes in welfare provision.

All in all, the associations between cultural contexts and volunteering should be studied further using both quantitative and qualitative data. What are the relationships between cultural contexts, socio-political models and individual actions, and how do they react to changes? Such questions are central for understanding the relationships between individual citizens and the societies they live in in relation to volunteering. They are also central in relation to numerous other themes such as political participation. Research on the relationship between cultural contexts and volunteering are also needed in other cultural contexts that have different cultural values and socio-political models to those described in this study.

A central contribution made by this study in the field of value studies is in how it highlights the nuanced ways that both personal and cultural values are intertwined with personal identity, with reflections on identity, life history, and actions. Through action personal and cultural values of young adults also interplay with their societal stances. The author suggests that quantitative research on values might not reveal complex mechanisms by which the young age groups view, use, and reflect on values. As Mikkola (2003) has stated, “a change in

values is multi-leveled, porous and qualitative”. Further research on the values of young age groups and especially in-depth, holistic approaches on how young people use and reflect on them in relation to fragmented societal contexts is also encouraged.

Studies on young age groups values and attitudes within the Finnish context have repeatedly found a strong sense of altruism (Pessi 2008). The altruism in young age groups, and very possibly in general, seems to be held even deeper and more personal than has been hitherto acknowledged. Such personal and deep commitments provide individuals with strong commitments to their respective causes. This may not appear as strong a commitment to a certain organization or to volunteering as such, when the values involved can be expressed and reflected upon by other means such as in paid employment (publication 2). Nevertheless, a commitment can be expressed through volunteering, and as such it binds individual values and identity together with active orientation to society and societal questions. Even though young age groups in Finland are not very interested in political participation, they are interested in influencing society by other means, such as through volunteering (Grönlund & Pessi 2008; publication 2). Young age groups seem to offer an especially complex and intriguing field of study in how they use volunteering in relation to their values, worldviews and identities. In general, the relationship between young adults and volunteering should be further investigated. Research approaches should involve quantitative and qualitative methods to understand volunteering in this life stage and its developmental tasks better.

Finally, this study has provided results that reveal new aspects of religiousness, values, identities, and reflections of young adults within the context of late modern Finnish society. Several practical and political implications have been drawn from these results for both political decision-makers and the practitioners within the voluntary sector. Volunteerism research is multi-disciplinary, but different disciplines are rarely combined in one body of research. Interaction with other disciplines has been called for so that volunteerism research could become more mainstream, and could learn from and influence other disciplines. (Davis Smith 2011). These aims have been met in this study.

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