Aid or Nuisance? Swedish Police Officers’ Perceptions of Volunteer Activities

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Studies on volunteerism have traditionally focused on the perspective of volunteers in a health sector context. This study aims to contribute to the existing volunteerism literature by exploring paid staff’s perceptions of volunteers. As organizational context is thought to affect staff perceptions, it is deemed important to study a wide range of sectors. In this qualitative study, eight police officers were interviewed. Thematic analysis of interview data showed that perceptions of volunteers and their activities are not shaped in isolation from perceptions of occupational role, implementation process, and organizational culture. To improve police officers’ perceptions of volunteers requires a cultivation of a more change ready organizational culture.

During the 1990’s, due to a strained economy, both the Swedish state and Swedish municipalities experienced cuts in their social budgets which entailed cuts in the public sector (Socialstyrelsen, 2002, translation own). One possible implication of such savings is an increased use of volunteers who may shoulder some of the public services earlier provided by the state. This is usually referred to as coproduction; “the active involvement of citizens in public agencies in the creation and especially the delivery of public goods or services” (Brudney & Kellough, 2000, p. 127). Traditionally, volunteers have been most prevalent in the health sector, but during the last decades other public agencies such as the police have also begun to explore the use of volunteers (Sundeen & Siegel, 1987). In 2006, with hopes of a more efficient use of resources, the Swedish police initiated a volunteer project, which was incorporated as part of ordinary police activities two years later. As of February 2010, close to 700 volunteers were educated and during 2009 they conducted nearly 600 assignments. The volunteers are unpaid and after three weekday evenings of training they are allowed to assist the police during for example soccer matches and festivals. Using a qualitative approach, this study aims to explore how police officers perceive the volunteer activity.

Previous research on volunteerism
With increased volunteer participation in performing state tasks came a rise in the number of studies on volunteers. Considering the intuitively sound notion that a remarkable part of a state’s cost may be saved by making effective use of volunteers this is far from surprising. When it comes to the study of volunteers, the research community has tried, and still tries, to establish the factors affecting volunteer satisfaction (Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003; Finkelstein, 2006; Finkelstein, 2008; Grube & Piliavin, 2000; Penner, 2002), their motive(s) for volunteering (Clary et al., 1998; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Van Vianen, Nijstad, & Voskuijl, 2008), the costs and benefits of volunteers (Wandersman & Alderman, 1993), and the interchangeability of paid staff

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1 The estimated annual value of volunteering in America was $150 billion in 1993 and $239 billion in 2004 (Wandersman & Alderman, 1993; Netting et al., 2004)
and volunteers (Brudney & Gazley, 2002; Brudney & Kellough, 2000; Handy, Mook, & Quarter, 2008).

There is also research studying both parties involved; paid staff and volunteers. The old adage in this realm of research is that staff volunteer relationships are uneasy. Conducting a case study, using a questionnaire, Wandersman and Alderman (1993) investigated staff volunteer relations. They found that role confusion and a lack of structure for volunteers made this relationship delicate (Wandersman & Alderman, 1993). Netting, Nelson, Borders, and Huber (2004) conducted a literature review where they examined theoretical perspectives and studies on volunteer and paid staff relationships. Netting et al. (2004) claim that “resistance of staff to volunteers is not a foregone conclusion” (p. 86). Yet, not all observers agree that staff volunteer relations are strained all the time and regardless of context. Netting et al. (2004) claim that “such resistance may be particularly threatening when older volunteers with experience and credentials bring their expertise to an organisation and assume similar roles as paid staff” (p. 70).

In the same vein, Netting et al., (2004) emphasize that an understanding of the organizational culture enables an understanding of relationships between volunteers and paid staff. According to Shein (1996), organizational culture can be defined as “the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and that determines how it perceives, thinks about, and reacts to its various environments” (p. 236). These implicit assumptions, varying between organizations, define how volunteers are perceived and are projected through acts and behaviour. The organizational culture is also the context in which volunteer staff relations take place and it is thus an important antecedent and prerequisite for how staff perceives volunteers. The content of the specific assumptions of an organizational culture and to what extent volunteers actually can assume similar roles as paid staff varies between organizations, and contexts, and as these affect the staff volunteer relationship it is important to study a blend of organizations.

However, participants in studies involving volunteers have first and foremost been volunteers in the health sector. Finkelstein (2008) studied hospice volunteers, Grube and Piliavin (2000) and Wandersman and Alderman (1993) studied individuals volunteering for the American Cancer Society, and Omoto and Snyder’s (1995) participants were AIDS volunteers. Davis, et al. (2003) desired a variety of volunteer activities represented among their participants but still 73 percent of their sample were engaged in activities related to the health sector. This focus is understandable to some extent as a lot of voluntary work is conducted in this sector. Yet, bearing in mind the importance of organizational culture in mind, it is utterly important to examine coproduction ventures in a variety of organizational contexts, as different contexts entail different cultures. Studying other sectors than the health sector may thus enrich the understanding of coproduction ventures.

One such study made outside the health sector is Gaston and Alexander’s (2001) which explore the organisational and managerial implications of having volunteers (special constables) in the UK police service. Gaston and Alexander (2001) state that relations between volunteers and paid staff within the UK police can be problematic and mention that volunteers’ motives, competence, and efficiency, sometimes are called into question by ordinary police officers. Gaston and Alexander (2001) also argue that
volunteers indeed can be perceived as a threat as they can “be seen as taking away opportunities for paid overtime” for paid staff. Gaston and Alexander’s (2001) article does not answer how paid staff experience having volunteers in their midst either. It does mention the volunteer staff relation, but these relationships are but a part in the puzzle of the staff experiences that this present study aims to search for. It is also legitimate to ask how researchers have been able to study volunteer staff relationships without taking staffs’ experiences into account. The emerging pattern from reviewed articles is that few have spoken directly to staff and have instead chosen to consult personnel managers (Brudney & Kellough, 2000) and “organizations” (Handy, Mook, & Quarter, 2008).

In sum, previous volunteerism research has focused on the volunteers’ perceptions of their engagement. Yet, as the word implies, coproduction is supposed to be a venture conducted in unison by volunteers and paid staff. Hence, paid staff’s perceptions deserve attention. The volunteer staff relationship has also been investigated, and seems to be delicate, depending on among other things how similar roles volunteers and paid staff can assume; more similar roles imply a more uneasy relationship. Yet, within the police, roles can never be similar, which makes the police an interesting object of study. A majority of previous research on volunteerism was also made in a health sector context. Considering the previously mentioned importance of organizational culture, this might entail that certain aspects of coproduction ventures remain unnoticed when conducting studies in similar environments. Thus, a distinctly different organization, such as the police agency, probably has a different organizational culture, which may contribute to the existing knowledge in a positive manner.

Considering the research efforts made on volunteers and on staff-volunteer relations, only a few studies take on the perspective of paid staff solely, that is employees who conduct their paid work in the midst of unpaid volunteers. How is this experienced by paid staff? Are volunteers seen as benevolent aides or are they perhaps perceived as threatening? In order to make the most of coproduction ventures, their implications need to be fully understood. Understanding both parties’ perspectives is thus necessary. Yet, at present the volunteers’ side of the story dominates research.

This study is an endeavour to expand the foci within the volunteerism literature concerning both the subjects of study and the organizational context they are active in. Given the importance of organizational culture, this study reaches beyond the mainstay of organizational contexts by studying employees within the police. This study is also an attempt to contribute to the existing knowledge about volunteerism by exploring the perspective of paid employees in coproduction ventures. As research focusing solely on paid staff is sparse, the aim is semi-explorative, while research has been conducted in neighbouring areas.

Method

Participants and selection procedure
There was no viable way of retrieving the valuable information regarding which police officers that had experience from working with volunteers on my own. Hence, volunteer coordinators assisted in the provision of possible interviewees. Potential interviewees included police officers of both sexes, at different levels in the hierarchy, and with varying years of experience as police officer. Included were also both police officers
thought to favour, and to not favour the volunteer activity. To ensure qualitative representation, participants were screened by a phone call after all had received an email informing them of the study and their confidentiality if choosing to take part. After having spoken to twenty-one participants possible to reach, a selection of eight interviewees was made. At the end of this selection procedure, two women and six men aged between thirty-three and fifty-five were chosen for interviews. Their experience of working as a police officer ranged from five to thirty-four years and they also represented more than one level in the organization.

**Procedure**

Interviews were semi-structured and generally, interviews were initiated by an overarching question, from which follow up questions were asked and the rest of the interview unfolded by picking up on themes approached by the interviewee. The initiating question was whether the police agency was considered a suitable organization for having volunteers. As previous research indicates that organizational culture has importance for how volunteer staff relation unfolds, this subject was the other question approached from the interviewer. Interviewees were interviewed once, on average for 45 minutes. Interviews were conducted at the respondents’ office or in a conference room. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim after each interview to allow for improvements or adjusting of the interview guide. After seven interviews, a saturation of themes occurred and no new information was attained from further interviews.

**Analysis**

The transcripts were first examined to uncover how respondents perceived the volunteers and their activities. Secondly, the transcripts were consulted in the search for common themes or patterns emerging from the material. Finally, the possibility to link these themes to each other in a more general model was explored. After transcribing each interview, a memo was written to gather thoughts on possible linkages to theory and possible linkages to interviews already made. After having transcribed all interviews, transcripts were read through once again, this time writing key words in the margin to summarize the subjects that the respondent is reflecting on, such as uncertainty, occupational role, and lack of knowledge. Transcripts were then read again, this time with a chart at hand, noting the frequencies of each key word or subject in the transcripts. Going through the chart, some key words had very low frequencies; these were often found to coincide with other key words, which is why the two were amalgamated. After this procedure, keywords found to have an enough similar meaning were assembled to constitute a joint category. This procedure narrowed 29 key words or subjects down to 15 categories. These categories could then be further amalgamated into three overarching themes. For reasons of validity, this final assembling was confirmed after discussions with my supervisor.

Finally, after having systematically organized and coded the transcripts from narrower key words in the margins to ever more overarching categories, three broad themes emerged: 1) Police officer’s perceptions of and relation to the volunteers and their activities, 2) The volunteer activities’ implementation process and its effects on police officers’ perceptions of volunteers and their activities, and 3) The organizational culture within the police agency and its effects on police officers’ perceptions of volunteers and their activities.
Results and discussion

Results will be presented in the same order as the themes were outlined in the preceding paragraph. Holt, Armenakis, Field, and Harris’ (2007) partition their object of study, change readiness, into content, process, context, and individual attributes. Despite studying a different subject their division is clarifying, which is why it will be employed here (figure 1). Content pertains to the attributes of the initiative being implemented, process refers to implementation, and context relate to the attributes of the environment where the initiative is being implemented (Holt et al., 2007). As studying individual dispositions is not part of this study, individual attributes are not represented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
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<td>1 Police officers’ perceptions (content)</td>
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<td>Perceptions of volunteers</td>
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<td>Views of occupational role</td>
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<td>A volunteer is not a police</td>
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<td>2 Implementation (process)</td>
<td>Resistance</td>
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<td>Unclear message from management</td>
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<td>A vicious circle</td>
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<td>Enthusiasts</td>
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<td>Lack of communication and engagement from management</td>
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<td>3 Organizational culture (context)</td>
<td>Suspicion and categorization</td>
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<td>“Us and them” mentality feeding</td>
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<td>distrust</td>
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<td>Bureaucratic culture</td>
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Figure 1: Overarching themes and categories emerging from the material.

Police officers’ perceptions of and relation to the volunteers and their activities

This section commences with police officers’ speculations concerning why individuals choose to join the volunteer activity. Following this, their perceptions of the volunteers and their apprehensions are commented on. Descriptions of working relationships with volunteers and perceptions of volunteer contribution end this first section.

Why individuals become volunteers.
In general, respondents came across as rather confused about why people sign up to be volunteers within the police in the first place. This lack of understanding leaves some officers suspicious, while others, equally puzzled, are solely grateful and appreciative toward the volunteers. It is expressed that it would make more sense if volunteers engaged in sport communities or neighbourhood watch groups, as these organizations have a least common denominator. In sport communities, people like sports or have children active in the community. In neighbourhood watch groups, people have their
own homes and neighbourhoods as reasons for engaging. For volunteers, some respondents could not see such a gathering factor or social belonging, why volunteers were believed to be enticed by something else. Officer suggestions were that the police have a special standing in society and that the police are a source of power in society. It was also speculated that becoming a police volunteer is a way to get closer to but also to identify themselves with the police without actually having to be one, and that volunteers probably are curious of the police and that they hope to gain some insight into police activities. Aspiring to become a police officer was also believed to be a reason for joining, especially for the younger volunteers. These opinions mirror views of English police officers pondering over why their volunteers joined the volunteer activity (Gaston & Alexander, 2001).

**Perceptions of volunteers as individuals.**

Police officers described that it is not unusual for volunteer assignments to be scheduled during nights, weekends, and holidays, times when people normally spend time with friends and family. Hence, some police officers feel (admitting that they are generalizing) that police volunteers are odd or slightly strange individuals without a normally functioning social life.

Who wants to spend Valborg walking around as a police volunteer? Well, then you’re probably not invited to any party, I mean, go to a Valborg-party or hanging by the Valborg bonfire in some yellow vest? To me, the choice is obvious!

Officers emphasizing the oddity of volunteers blame recruitment policy for letting everyone through their controls and tell of cases where volunteers have had to be detached. Not all mention these negative characteristics when talking about the volunteers. In stark contrast, volunteers are also said to be alert and competent individuals willing give the police some of their spare time. There are even proclamations of being “lifted” by volunteers, as they are so enthusiastic and positive.

**Apprehensions.**

Emerging from interviews is that for some police officers, using volunteers can be perceived as threatening to police officers’ prestige and power. There was a discernible apprehension that having volunteers will lower the status of police officers, or to some extent erase the previously well-defined line between ordinary citizens and the police. Ordinary citizens “joining” the police, make it less prestigious to be part of the police agency. One way of reasoning was that it might be harder for volunteers to form good relations to certain officers as they may strive to uphold this separation by not letting volunteers in, thus keeping them from “joining”. Research shows that perceived threats to prestige, status, and power are among the most common reasons for resisting new ideas or changes (Oreg, 2006; Visagie & Botha, 1998). This perceived need of a clear separation of us and them will be further elaborated under section three where organizational culture is covered.

Concerns regarding job security were also conveyed. Even though not mentioned as a personal fear, others were thought to possibly harbour a fear that volunteers are “coming to do our jobs”. The perception that volunteers can put the jobs of employees at risk is common (Brudney & Kellough, 2000; Oreg, 2006).
Another apprehension mentioned was that of feeling exposed or of being perceived as weak when using volunteers. There was also a lingering impression from some of feeling questioned when volunteers are brought in. This may be explained by the more general adage, that novelities can be perceived as a critique of the status quo (Rollof, 2004). This makes it imperative for management to make clear whether the initiative is meant to correct or improve the current state of affairs (Self & Schraeder, 2009). It was also speculated that bringing in volunteers might make it appear as though the police fall short of complete success: “Making use of volunteers may be an expression of us not making it on our own and of us needing muscles from elsewhere.” This sense of shortcoming is also reflected below:

The police is mandated in law to provide service to the citizens and receive I don’t know how many billions a year… and for us not to be able to deliver that service but to have to consult free workers… well, this is what we come to in this discussion.

*Police officers’ views of their occupational role.*

In part, police officers’ perceptions of volunteers seem to be a matter of how they view their occupational role; whether realizing the need for assistance or not. Those willingly accepting that the police cannot do everything on their own and that they need assistance from society in large favour volunteers to a larger extent. The majority of respondents are quite convinced that help is needed from elsewhere:

We are starting to realize, more and more, that we cannot perform all of our duties all by our selves because we do not have the resources needed… so we have to use other resources and this is where the volunteers come in.

Not as welcoming to volunteers are those who claim that the police should manage on their own and that so far they do, and within the foreseeable future they will too. This is in line with Self and Schraeder (2009) stating that one reason for individuals to resist change, in this case resist using volunteers, is a belief that the change itself is inappropriate for the organization.

This division of opinion regarding assistance or not, is also a reflection of a division of the tasks conducted by police officers. Those realizing and mentioning in interviews, that keeping the streets safe is a task too overwhelming for the police alone were often also those working proactively to obviate crime, as they are used to cooperate and coordinate their actions with other actors in society. Yet, officers working reactively, acting on crimes already perpetrated, painted a picture during interviews of not cooperating as much with other actors as their tasks involve pure police matters, such as arresting criminals. Thus it was hardly surprising to learn from interviews that police officers working to obviate crime found it easier to make use of volunteers as they are seen as just another actor, while reactive police officers had a harder time figuring out how volunteers could help in their activities.

*Working relationships to volunteers.*

It is also interesting to note that those who recognize a need for assistance characterize their working relationship with the volunteers distinctly different from those who are convinced the police can manage on their own. The former speak of working *together* with the volunteers on tasks and during interviews describe their relation with
volunteers as utterly important. The latter reportedly have absolutely no relation with volunteers and characterize their working relationship as telling the volunteers what to do and then they do it. In contrast, others say that when working with volunteers, “you can’t walk around acting like a sheriff and tell them do this, do that…” Furthermore, some officers seem far too busy to take care of volunteers while others really wanted to emphasize that it is important to always tell their volunteers how valuable and appreciated they are and try to create a good working climate for their volunteers.

Independently of how police officers characterize their working relationships, all seem to place a value on having local volunteers, from the community they are meant to be active in. Police officers also wish for volunteers that regularly take on assignments. It is believed that having regularly showing volunteers, which eventually leads to a personal connection, will make cooperation with the volunteers more efficient:

> the more we get to meet them, the more we know what to expect from them and how they work… this also enables them to know what is expected of them… and I do not have to worry that the volunteer does not know what to do or does something wrong… the more I work with them the more I can trust them.

This is hardly surprising to those familiar with social exchange theory, prescribing that trust develops over time through the repeated interactions and social exchanges between the parties involved (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner, 1998, emphasis own).

**A volunteer is not a police.**

There is agreement among interviewees that volunteers shall not conduct pure police tasks. Some officers told of occasions where volunteers had misunderstood their role and had tried to act as police officers. This was said to create irritation among police officers, because they misunderstand their role and thereby possibly putting themselves at risk, create additional work for police officers. However, this does not seem to be a regular event. Officers did not blame only volunteers for instances like this. Rather, it was perceived as those planning volunteer assignments misunderstand how to use volunteers. This prevalent confusion regarding the volunteers’ roles within the police agency implies an unclear communication from management, which is why it will be further discussed under the next section covering the implementation process.

**Perceptions of volunteer contribution.**

The division concerning the perceived need or no need for assistance also affects how police officers view volunteer contribution. Naturally, those welcoming assistance also welcome volunteers. Interviewees appreciating volunteers, which are a majority, deem them to be of great aid and their activities are perceived to be very useful as a complement to the police. Some even claim that volunteers are better suited than the police themselves to perform some tasks. Volunteers are also said to be used to conduct preparatory work of non-police character, and in some cases, volunteers perform tasks that reportedly would not have been done unless the volunteers performed them due to the police’s declared high work load. Whether volunteers supplement or substitute paid staff is an ongoing discussion in academia. With the present organization of volunteers within the Swedish police it is legally impossible for them to perform core police duties. However, police officers also conduct other tasks. In these instances, it seems that
volunteers at times substitute paid staff. This stands in contrast to the findings of Brudney and Gazley (2002) who claim that volunteers are supplementing rather than substituting for paid staff.

Negative opinions of volunteer contribution exist, but are much less common; opinions here were that volunteers are believed to contribute nothing, they make no difference, and they cost more, (in time spent on them), than the good the police receive in the long run. Still, it should be noted that regardless of opinion, the police volunteers per se are seen as a good idea, as it is easier to control their work compared to other volunteer organizations that are not compelled to comply with the police’s wishes concerning suggested activities. Thus, it is not the presence of volunteers within the police that some turn against. Rather, it is perceived that volunteer activities are run in an inefficient manner. This will be further discussed under the next section covering implementation.

In sum, the interviewed police officers’ task assignment influences how they experience the volunteer activity, their relations to volunteers, and their perception of volunteer contribution. Police officers who mainly work with obviating crime and hence are used to working with external actors, are more accepting and positive when assessing the volunteer activity. Some police officers are also worried that using volunteers signals shortcoming and that using volunteers might change society’s perception of the police, in a negative manner.

The volunteer activity’s implementation process and its effects on police officers’ perceptions of volunteers and their activities
This second section describes a perceived lack of communication from management regarding the volunteer activity, which seems to result in a dense knowledge-gap on behalf of employees. The perceived organizational immaturity for accepting volunteers and the enthusiasts’ strife for making up for this lack of maturity is also brought to the fore.

Resistance.
One emergent feature from interviews is the apparent lack of knowledge and understanding regarding what activities the volunteers are meant to do and where in the organization they fit in. Across work places, where the interviews took place, it is also acknowledged that it is not unusual for police officers to be unaware of the volunteers. However, work places where all employees are believed to know about the volunteers also exist. When discussing the varying levels of resistance to using the volunteers that surfaced during interviews, it was not uncommon to mention this lack of knowledge as a root cause for it.

Another cause for resisting seems to be an experienced lack of time and energy to embrace yet another project: “the volunteers are not the only thing we work with; there is a steady incoming stream of proposals from all directions, everyone claiming theirs are the most important”. Mentioning a high work load as reason for not caring seem counterintuitive as volunteers according to some police officers do tasks that they do not have time to do themselves. It is however possible those officers using their work load as a reason for not engaging are active in areas where volunteers are not allowed to assist.
Unclear message from management. Practically all interviewees put emphasis on the fact that when it comes to the volunteer activity, the police agency have not thought things through properly. Questions without answers keep reoccurring: What should the volunteers do? Where can we use them? There is a lack of realization of what the police agency is trying to achieve with the volunteers and more than half of interviewees do not know why the police agency initiated the project in the first place. What is also striking is that police officers do not seem to know for sure where the volunteer activities are headed or even where they are supposed to be headed. One officer reasoned that the police agency probably fills the ranks with volunteers because it is right in time, a la mode, but that the next step; what the volunteers should do, what is our aim, have not been considered.

The descriptions above concerning the lack of knowledge, mirrors Carter’s (2008) illustrative thought experiment involving people going through change: “Imagine you are blindfolded and led down the hallway. You don’t know exactly where you are going and you can’t see if the new place is better than the old. You will most likely follow slowly, if at all.” (p. 22). Yet, removing the blindfold permits a vision of where one is headed, which inclines individuals to follow more easily. Removing the blindfold almost always equals communication and properly timed information (Kharim & Khatavala, 2005).

Related to what volunteers should do are the declarations of interviewees that there has to be a distinct difference between volunteers and police officers:

> It has to be decided what these kind of individuals can do, what can we use them for, what tasks can we assign them, what is appropriate to use volunteers for… it is not for police duties because those are supposed to be performed by us.

Interviewees convey a clearly perceived need for clearly defined areas in which the volunteers should operate. Most police officers state volunteers’ security, both physical but also as in protecting them from being used as “grey labor”, as a rationale for this need. Netting et al. (2004) support this notion claiming that their experience indicates that “the roles played by volunteers must be clearly defined” and that “relationships can be tense if roles are not clarified” (p. 83). At present, the demarcation of such roles or areas is either unknown or not believed to exist within the police agency.

Organizational immaturity. A telling quotation from one interviewee was: ”Unless the volunteer activity is evolved, it will become extinct.” As the number of conducted interviews increased, so did the awareness of frustrations with the volunteer activity. Officer frustrations concern a perceived lack of dedicated resources, both human and purely economic in nature: “we need managers that realize that we need to dedicate resources to this, which is not the case today, it is not allowed to cost at all.” This is in line with Netting et al. (2004) saying that volunteers require the commitments of both time and resources if volunteer programs are to be of any quality. There seem to be an imbalance in that the police officers are expected to engage fully in the volunteer activity, without being provided with either time or money to do so. There are also expressions close to shame when officers tell of volunteers that spend nights on buses and subways then do not even get remunerated for tickets.
It is further expressed that the organization surrounding the volunteers does not suffice. The police agency are said to believe that it is enough to pay for the volunteer coordinators, a belief that is not supported by all. A better organization and more structure surrounding the volunteers are deemed necessary if volunteer activities are to improve: “there is a total lack of organization for accepting volunteers”. In line with this are police officers’ wishes for more resources to recruit volunteers motivated by the need for more volunteers, better control of volunteers, and a need for a more rigorous recruitment process. Police officers to meet up with the volunteers, provide them with their material, inform them, and have feed back meetings are also said to be hard to come by as police officer’s schedules are planned so far in advance. Yet, there are also those experiencing a marked improvement over the last year with more and more police officers considering using volunteers. Thus some officers believe that more time is the only thing needed, while others believe that more resources are also needed. At present, improvements of the volunteer activity appear to hinge on enthusiasts pushing things forward.

A vicious circle.
The present state are described by police officers to manifest itself as a viscous circle: too few volunteers render volunteer coordinators unable to guarantee police officers volunteer presence when wished for, which in turn leaves police officers less motivated to spend their time planning interesting and appropriate assignments. Yet, volunteer assignments of poor quality are believed to jeopardize both volunteer interest and commitment. There is agreement in that the quality of assignments is imperative. It was also expressed that the understanding of assignments is too low, that those responsible for the volunteer activity take it too lightly and swiftly, and do not always realize the consequences of having volunteers on assignments. A perceived shortage of volunteers is also said to make it hard to try new or different assignments as it is impossible to try them in practice without volunteers. Increasing both the numbers of volunteers and the quality of assignments would also assist in creating the much sought after regularity mentioned earlier.

To break the vicious circle, aimed recruitment and profiled educations and assignments were suggested; suggestions already pursued successfully in some places. A caveat mention to this approach is that such a modus operandi craves more resources and organization - goods perceived to be low in stock. Yet, this catch 22 was also phrased in a more positive way: slow recruitment of volunteers is a good thing at the moment as the present organization would not be able to handle more volunteers.

Enthusiastic police officers.
Interviewees seem to act in one of two ways of acting when encountering the lack of clarity regarding the volunteers. People either become uncertain and resist due to a lack of understanding of tasks and aim, or, they enthusiastically ponder and contemplate the potential opportunities of this change. Perhaps needless to say, their choice depends on whether perceiving a need for assistance in conducting their responsibilities or not. The impression is that most enthusiasts really do realize this need. Enthusiasts are important as they seem to influence others in their vicinity in a positive manner. This echoes previous research showing that both supervisors and peers are important as mediators of change: “When leadership announces a change, an employee often turns to his or her immediate supervisor for an explanation of the meaning of the change” (Self & Schraeder, 2009, p. 173) and Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1999) found that employees in a hospital trusted the perceptions of their peers but not the top management.
Lack of communication and engagement.
No matter how important enthusiasts may be, it is revealed in interviews that they cannot and should not replace a thorough implementation process:

Enthusiasts can push things forward quite a bit, but there is also supposed to be a structure for how we work to make sure that things are implemented, but there is none. It is not enough to say that it is each employee’s responsibility to bear in mind that we have to use volunteers. There ought to be a plan… or there should have been ways to work with this in place from the beginning… we need constructive alignment in this work.

Some interviewees indicated that top management pretty much “dropped the ball” after deciding to incorporate the volunteer activity, thus failing to implement their decision: “It is supposed to be more of a deep process… more than just making a decision that is delegated.” Moreover, management is not believed to be particularly interested in knowing whether the volunteer activity really works or not. Rather, the perceptions is that just as they decided to use volunteers, they have decided that it works fine, and leave it at that. Questions regarding how the police agency continuously work on incorporating the volunteers, how they work to develop the volunteer activity, how follow-ups are conducted, if at all, contribute to this impression.

The perceived shortcomings in the implementation process are probably not unique to the volunteer activity: “this is one part of the police agency’s large problem… both how to implement things and to have a good structure …” The quotation suggests that implementation processes and structure are part of a more overarching problem. In the next section, the context in which these problems occur will be examined, namely the organizational culture.

In sum, emerging from interviews is a perceived lack of communication regarding the volunteer activity, resulting in a knowledge gap concerning use, role, and aim of volunteers. However, individuals nurturing an enthusiasm for the volunteer activity have engaged in sense-making by own initiative, leading to successful assignments and positive experiences of the volunteers. A prevalent opinion is that more resources need to be spent on developing the organizational arrangements for the volunteer activity.

The organizational culture within the police agency and its effects on police officers’ perceptions of volunteers and their activities
This third and last section discusses occurring features and suppositions common to the police profession. The organizational structure within the police and its bearing on organizational culture will also be described.

Suspicion and categorization.
A shared perception is that police officers are inherently suspicious towards other people; “it becomes part of the profession”. This was believed to spring from experiences in education, training, and work life. Police officers are said to be trained to notice what is unnoticeable to others and many interact with parts of the populace foreign to most. Suspiciousness might thus serve police officers well and might even function as a safety precaution. Another purported characteristic is a tendency to always categorize individuals. This way to quickly sort incoming stimuli is human nature, yet
for a police officer this may once again be a developed behaviour to ensure some level of security: “when standing talking to an individual… in a matter of milliseconds we need to able to make a judgement regarding this individual, is it a dangerous individual or not”. This constant scrutinizing of individuals may serve police officer’s good in some situations, but be detrimental in others. Police officers are also said to embody an apprehension concerning the people they meet that are not police officers. This may be problematic in contact with volunteers. Some even mentioned a norm within the police agency stipulating how police officers, civilian employees, and volunteers are supposed to behave. This is in line with Netting et al. (2004) who argue that tensions between paid staff and volunteers are sustained by certain myths that they hold about one another. These perceived differences between police officers and volunteers possibly make police officers reluctant to work with volunteers.

“Us and them” mentality feeding distrust.
Related to the categorization above is the prevalence of an “us and them” mentality which seems to be part of the police agency’s culture. From what is understood from interviews, “us”, in this case is constituted by police officers and “them” seem to be everyone else. Some believed this division towards the volunteers to be intentional while others perceived it to be subconscious, a part of the elusive culture. Yet, another opinion was that no differences exist and that “we are all fellowmen”. This division of opinion, once again, seems to depend at least in part on whether officers are used to cooperate with other actors or not and whether they perceive a need for assistance from others in their work.

The perceived “us and them” mentality however, does not seem to be limited to police officers and volunteers. The working relationship between police officers and management, might also add to the prevalence of this mentality. Another characteristic of the police seems to be working units conducting their tasks in isolation, even between units working at the same office. This seems to exist both vertically and horizontally within the agency as it is described how the top management increasingly isolates itself: “If employees perceive isolation from the management, well, they take impression from that which affects their way of acting in turn… so then their views are that you can’t let everyone in.” Thus, police officer’s suspiciousness not only seems to be aimed at the citizenry or at volunteers. To some extent, there is also distrust towards the top management, towards the decision unit that has decided that volunteers are to be incorporated in the day-to-day police activities. A view shared by some interviewees is that the decision whether to incorporate the volunteers or not was already decided in advance. There was a trial project period, before incorporating them into regular police activities but no matter how this fell out or what views police officers expressed about it; the volunteer activity would still become incorporated eventually. Management actions are perceived by some to be a play to the gallery. There are also concerns of whether the management’s intentions are good and whether a hidden agenda exists with the volunteer activity. This perceived distrust towards management was also evident when interviewees questioned their honesty:

Reading about what the volunteers have done, what activities they’ve had… everything is said to be great and to work so very well, but it is not the truth… they say what they believe the most senior management wants to hear, and if one positive nibble is found, it gets magnified, whilst the negative ones…they just disappear…
Oreg (2006) studied the relationship between trust in management and resistance to change and found that employees’ lack of trust in management was related to resisting changes. Cynicism, defined as a disbelief in management motives, has been found to be negatively correlated with management trust, and was also found to be a predictor of resistance to change (Stanley, Meyer, & Topolnytsky, 2005).

It is also apparent from interviews that police officers feel guarded, from more than one direction. Sources of control mentioned were the pressure from mass media, the public watching their every step, all the laws and decrees police officers need to abide by that stipulate how police officers are supposed to act, and the relatively new code of ethic, “yet another inference rule that decides how and what we are supposed to think, what views we are supposed to have, at least externally, and what we are allowed to say to one another”. Moreover, according to some, the very clear hierarchy within the police agency inclines supervisors to act in a controlling way: “you know your place”. All these features contribute to perceptions of being controlled. Research shows that an organization’s level of control (through culture, structure, and policies) of employees affects perceptions of trustworthiness (Whitener, et al., 1998). Hence, trust in management is a sensitive but important issue within the police.

Probably adding to the lack of trust are some police officers’ perceptions of a lack of openness in their work climate and that not all things are allowed to be expressed. Thus, instead of voicing dissent with initiatives that are not thought well of, it is said that they just get ignored completely in an attempt to quiet them down to make them disappear, which indicates passive dissent. This can be likened to anti-change behaviour; behaviour that covertly impedes the rate of change (Giangreco & Peccei, 2005). It is also possible that this kind of behaviour is an expression of the fact that all changes are ignored when first presented (Rollof, 2004). Another opinion expressed is that the culture has taken a positive turn during the last decade. Supervisors nowadays are said to listen to their co-workers and deal with conflicts if they occur and these days; “one dares to tell one’s opinion”.

**Bureaucratic culture.**

Interviewees characterize the police agency’s structure as a clear hierarchy with isolation of working units. Wordings used when describing the culture are suspiciousness, feeling guarded and controlled, “us and them” mentality, and lack of trust towards management. This reveals a great deal about the organizational culture. Wallach’s (1983) description of bureaucratic cultures is illustrative and seems to fit quite well with descriptions above:

Bureaucratic cultures are hierarchical and compartmentalized. There are clear lines of responsibility and authority. The work is organized and systematic; these cultures are usually based on control and power. The companies are stable, careful, and, usually, mature. A high score on bureaucracy means the organization is power-oriented, cautious, established, solid, regulated, ordered, structured, procedural and hierarchical (Wallach, 1983, p. 31).

Thus, the organizational culture within the police agency may hinder the integration of new initiatives, such as the volunteer activity, into the organization and influence perceptions of volunteers in a negative way. Yet, despite coexisting in the same
overarching organizational culture, some employees do not display tendencies of the “us and them” culture and do experience an improved leadership.

End discussion

The present study set out to expand the foci within the volunteerism literature concerning both the subjects of study and the organizational context they are active in. Given the importance of organizational culture, this study reached beyond the mainstay of organizational contexts by studying employees within the police. This study was also an attempt to contribute to existing knowledge about volunteerism by exploring the perspective of paid employees in coproduction ventures.

The main results from this investigation show that perceptions of the volunteer activity are closely related to perceptions of its implementation process, and occupational role. It is also clear that the organizational culture influence the implementation process, occupational role, and perceptions of volunteers a great deal. Hence, large parts of this study have been devoted to implementation and organizational culture.

The uniqueness of the police profession merits comment. Being a police officer is unlike any other profession. Police officers are the only individuals allowed to use force during peace time. As such, it is for the good of the citizenry that a certain amount of control is exerted over them. The mass media is one way of exerting this control, the hierarchy within the police agency another. There is nothing inherently bad with hierarchies, perhaps there might not be any alternative way of organizing the police agency. As mentioned above, organizations with bureaucratic cultures are said to be cautious, established, solid, regulated, and ordered (Wallach, 1983). These features are well suited, even desirable, for an agency with their mandate, for sakes of security, as they make the pace of change slow and careful. This is in line with Messe, Aronoff, and Wilson (1972) claiming that security seeking cultures are likely to develop a hierarchical structure. Yet, if the hierarchy leaves employees feeling too controlled it affects the organization’s trustworthiness (Whitener et al., 1998). A culture too static also denies movement towards a change ready environment.

The literature on organizations and organizational structure suggest that the way an organization structures its units and subunits affect its culture. Whether organizations are hierarchical or decentralized affects organizational culture as these choices either hinder or encourage certain values (Bolman & Deal, 2003, translation own). Hierarchies appreciate the possibility to control the process and thus keep power concentrated, as opposed to decentralized networks where power usually is placed nearer employees (Bolman & Deal, 2003, translation own). In the case of the police agency, their organizational culture seems to hinder the efficient integration of volunteers. Yet, the existence of successfully integrated volunteers experienced in a positive way may indicate the prevalence and importance of subcultures. Subcultures are often closely related to organizational units (Abrahamsson & Andersen, 2005, translation own) and subcultures also influence how volunteers are perceived and experienced. This is neatly captured in Miles’ law; where you stand depends on where you sit - views and perceptions of an employee, depends on where in an organization the employee is situated (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 307). In the same vein, social network theory argues that individuals are embedded within social systems or networks that function as
reference points for the formation of attitudes and behaviour (Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Tsai, 2004; Oreg, 2006).

Even if there is nothing inherently bad with strong hierarchies, such a structure has consequences; the very clear chain of command within the police may mistakenly leave an impression that thorough implementation processes are superfluous. Middle managers able of selling the concept of volunteers to their co-workers were perceived to be very important to their successful use. Yet, this ability was not believed to be as important for managers higher up in the organization, as they can use and rely on their authority. This is reflected in the belief that management has to force the use of volunteers on police officers.

To implement change, communication is key. Successfully communicating information about future changes is vital (Ashmore, 1992). This was also expressed during interviews: “If you can’t communicate the message in the right way then you can’t implement it either…. As the flow of information within the police agency are said to reach all levels from the top down this should enable an efficient implementation process. Indeed, decisions seem to reach all levels in the organization, but whether all levels really execute the decisions that reach them, seem to be a different matter. Unless the tasks, in need of being performed for the decision to be executed, reaches an employee really wanting or agreeing with them, they will not get done, or will be done in a haphazard way. Unless finding employees believing the decision at hand to be sensible work will not commence for sure. Ideally, a proper implementation process have succeeded in aligning all hands to the deck, as this process is meant to prepare, provide employees with skills and structure, and inform employees of why the decision made is the right one and how to carry it out (Carter, 2008).

Yet, there is a presumed difference between information and communication, where the latter implies a dialogue and the former a monologue. Emerging from interviews is the nearly impossible venture to get information from the bottom to reach the top. This, in addition to the impression that management does not do follow-ups or evaluations, seems to entail that management informs, rather than communicates. Moreover, the police agency orchestrated an information campaign regarding the volunteers in the spring of 2008, when volunteer activity was made part of ordinary activities. The aim was “to give all employees a glimpse of the volunteer activities”. Yet respondents perceived the information received as somewhere in between “very sparse”, “unclear”, and “there was some information that they would start using volunteers, but after that we did not hear anything”. Wanberg and Banas (2000) have shown that when receiving information about change, employees are also more open to change. Moreover, the higher the perceived quality of implementation information received about a change initiative, the less the perceived resistance to change (Lewis, 2006).

In discussing the results from their study on the relations between commitment to change and trust in the supervisor, Neves and Caetano (2009) ascertain that in order to build a strong commitment to change “managers should emphasize strategies such as open communication with employees, which includes not only justifying the decision for change but also providing employees with the possibilities of actively contributing with their opinion on how the process should take place” (p. 637).
Neves and Caetano (2009) also claim that organizational changes occur so frequently these days that organizations simply have to develop new strategies to implement them to ensure that their employees remain committed and stay in the organization. Yet, where would a police officer fed up with his or her employer turn? Relocation is an alternative, but he or she would still be within the same agency and hierarchy, and within the same, or at least similar, culture. Assuming that police officers are less mobile than other groups of employees on the labour market, the police agency might not recognize this alleged need of developing new strategies to implement change, as they do not have to compete for their employees with other employers.

Using Chin and Bennes (1961) classification of change strategies (rational-empirical, normative-reeducative, and power-coercive), Szabla (2007) explored the relationship between leaders’ employed strategies to lead change (as perceived by respondents of a change) and respondents’ reactions. Reviewing Szabla’s account of these strategies, the power-coercive seems to be most fitting regarding the police agency’s implementation of the volunteer activity, considering that the volunteer initiative was believed to have to be forced on police officers. This fit seems even more plausible when also considering the following characteristics of the power-coercive strategy: Using power stemming from position in an organizational hierarchy to implement changes, not consulting the employees, and simply announcing the change to employees. Szabla (2007) concludes that previous research and theories all lead to the same conclusion; power-coercive change strategy methods cause employees to resist change. Thus, the need for alternative implementation strategies within the police agency seems stressing. Not necessarily because their employees otherwise leave for another employer but because the current strategy leave employees uncooperative.

However, it should be noted that not all police officers feel that this chain-of-command and power-oriented part of the culture is problematic. This might be explained by the fact that police officers are used to working in this structure. Considering also that their job sometimes is fraught with dangers, decisions need to be made fast and without doubts regarding who has the right to call them. Yet, these situations happen in the streets - implementation processes do not. Different situations call for different approaches. Troublesome as it may be to combine different approaches for different issues; they are in dire need. In this vein, the police agency’s initiative to involve employees in creating the police’s code of ethics is applaudable. Unfortunately in this case, suspicion towards the management left employees not taking it seriously.

Hence, following the previous reasoning, it seems that implementation and culture have a reciprocal relationship; successful implementation processes are impeded by the culture, and faulted implementation processes affect the organizational culture in a negative way. Not only organizational culture and implementation processes have a reciprocal relationship, so does perceptions of occupational role and organizational culture. The culture prompts employees to act in a certain way when performing their professional role, but the specifics of the occupation also affect the culture. It is also clear that the organizational culture, the implementation process, and how one perceives one’s occupational role affect how contents of the change initiative are perceived (this is outlined in figure 2 below). In a culture oozing distrust towards those implementing changes, it seems to make no difference what management says or does; employees have already decided in advance that initiatives coming from management’s direction are no good, independently of their content. A very clear hierarchy also implies that this
is the only direction suggestions originate from, which is why new initiatives are viewed with suspicion, which, in turn, reinforces an environment that is not ready for change.

The distrust towards management is also reinforced by insufficient communication during the implementation (of an initiative not wished for in the first place), which leaves employees uncertain of why management feel that a new initiative or change is deemed necessary, how the change is supposed to take place, and what repercussions it has for them. This uncertainty inclines individuals not to embrace changes. Yet, this uncertainty seems to be perceived and handled differently depending on how individuals view their occupational role. Those perceiving status and prestige as important features of one’s profession will probably dig their heels in more deeply resisting change, as a change might threaten these values, while those not feeling that their profession provides them with these features have less to lose.

Thus, when asking for paid staff’s perceptions of volunteers the perceptions communicated might not concern the volunteers, the content of the initiative, at all. Instead, views of management’s way of implementing the initiative might be stated, which, in turn, is affected by the organization’s culture (also see figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Relations between organizational culture, perceptions of implementation process, perceptions of occupational role, and perceptions of content of an initiative. Arrows do not indicate causality, rather how the various components influence each other and how all components influence perceptions of the initiative’s content.

The content of the initiative does not shape perceptions of it alone (figure 2). Rather, perceptions of the implementation process and occupational role also influence opinions of content. Thus, improving the implementation process may not suffice, or be the best way to improve perceptions of content (as seen regarding the police’s code of ethics). As occupational role also weighs in, and the implementation process has no bearing on this feature, changing the organizational culture may be a more efficient enterprise to pursue, as the implicit assumptions inherent in the organizational culture seem to affect both implementation process and occupational role. Changing the organizational culture is not an easy endeavour as this change occurs incrementally. Yet, cultivating a culture more welcoming to change is of the essence, as the alternative might be an organization with employees ignoring initiatives with uncomfortable content. As cultivating a change ready culture is no quick fix, it might prove successful to combine this endeavour with also making implementation processes more efficient. This way of proceeding might
create benevolent synergy effects, in that implementation processes indirectly, via organizational culture, also affect perceptions of occupational role.

When considering incorporating volunteers in an organization, besides having a change ready culture, it is of utmost importance to identify varying views of occupational roles within the organization, as these probably imply varying prerequisites and varying suppositions regarding volunteers. The police profession may be one of the more difficult contexts to integrate volunteers in. According to Hogg and Terry’s (2000) writings on social identity and self-categorization “subjective uncertainty may produce a prototypically homogenous and cohesive organization or work unit with which members identify strongly” (p.124). Adding the uncertainty from at least some police officers’ working environment, the uncertainty that unclear implementation processes produce, and the alleged suspicion against citizenry and management, it is no wonder if the police agency is cohesive. Bringing volunteers in might increase this uncertainty even further by threatening the police’s group entitativity and group prestige (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Deferring to self categorization measures then becomes a way to reduce this uncertainty which reinforces the otherness of the volunteers. Yet, police officers’ experience varying uncertainty levels - identifying those with lower levels is vital as they in their occupational role presumably are more welcoming to volunteers than others. Identifying key individuals and key areas to deploy volunteers in, in agreement with employees is a better strategy than coercion. Planning for a coproduction venture where volunteers are brought in should also be a coproduction venture in itself.

Limitations and directions for future research
Police officers and their perceptions of volunteers, as objects of investigation in this study, are quite complex and dynamic. Hence, a qualitative approach is arguably best suited to obtain a more thorough understanding of how police officers perceive volunteer activities. In the words of Netting et al. (2004):

the relationships [which is one aspect in this study] between volunteers and paid staff can be viewed as a highly interpretive venture in that the intent is to understand how dynamics, interactions, motivations, and attitudes come together within some type of setting (p.73).

To gain this insight, interviews with police officers were conducted. The study was mostly empirically guided as research focusing solely on paid staff is sparse. The literature search was mainly made after the interviews were conducted, as it was guided by the contents in interviews. Before conducting interviews however, a search for studies on staff perceptions was made. The sparse result prompted the aim to be semi-explorative.

Certain methodological issues merit some comment. First of all, results in this kind of research are undoubtedly open to various interpretations depending on, among other things, the interpreter’s preconceptions. My preconceptions of volunteerism are surely coloured by ten years of experience from working as a volunteer (not within the police). Yet, this preconception would arguably be more troublesome if investigating volunteer perceptions. Yet, systematic analysis, coherence, and openness regarding the research process make claims of validity more trustworthy.
Ideally, there would have been no reliance on the volunteer coordinators for provision of lists with the names of potential participants. Not having full insight and control over the selection is of course problematic as there is always the possibility that the lists were not impartial. Conducting the screening phone calls was one way of countering this potential impartiality but also enabled qualitative variation regarding the respondents.

During interviews, some interviewees referred to views or beliefs of other police officers concerning certain issues. Of course, being a secondary source, this information is less reliable than information received from a primary source. However, disregarding this information without even considering it implies a risk of losing valuable insights. Firstly, the person referring to an opinion of others may actually personally harbour this opinion, but, due to social desirability, might not feel comfortable expressing it. It is here worth mentioning that nearing the end of the interview, some interviewees did express opinions previously said to be harboured by others. Secondly, the secondary information given might actually be a correct one, which enables a wider understanding of experiences. Source criticism is always imperative, so when secondary information was used, its congruence with primary information was also assessed and assured.

The fact that respondents were not from all districts limits the generalizability of this study. However, it is believed the experiences and perceptions uncovered in this study ought to be common to police officers from all districts due to the centralized nature of the police agency. This implies a common implementation process and organizational culture. Also, respondents represented varying, ages, levels in the organization (both horizontally and vertically to capture varying institutional prerequisites), working conditions, and years of experience.

What is presented in this study is a static cross-sectional view of employees experiencing the volunteer activity. There is an inherent inertia in organizations, especially in solid and stable organizations. The negative perceptions and experiences of the volunteer activity some feel might be an expression of a reaction to the change process, not the volunteers per se. So how do we differentiate between resistance due to “normal” behaviours when encountering change such as inertia and passivity, and resistance due to a failed implementation process? Answering such questions requires a longitudinal research design as the very concept of change is dynamic. By studying perceptions over time, our understanding of how for example implementation processes affect perceptions of paid staff is increased. Mastering this knowledge may imply a more effective use of volunteers, as employees may be more or less cooperative during different phases of volunteer introduction.

The quality of the resistance encountered towards the volunteer activity (or perhaps toward the implementation process) was not ascertained. Piderit (2000) views resistance to change as a multidimensional attitude, involving feelings (affective dimension), thoughts (cognitive dimension), and behaviour (behavioural dimension). This division also “allows for the possibility of different reactions along the different dimensions” (Piderit, 2000, p. 787). Exploring and scrutinizing the resistance encountered in this study might lead to a provision of valuable insights to how police officers’ resistance is spread across these dimensions. Armed with this knowledge, it may also be easier to counter this resistance by more precise measures.
There also seem to be a new volunteer behaviour on the rise, influenced by corporate social responsibility (CSR), where employers let their employees engage in voluntary work without making deductions on employees’ salary (Brevinge, 2010). Hence, employers pay their employees to volunteer. This implies volunteering without the usual feature of volunteering: not being remunerated. Whether this alteration, the fact that volunteers are paid, also alters paid staff’s perceptions of volunteers, is not known.

Despite the earlier mentioned limitations, the results in this study concur markedly with another assessment of the Swedish police agency. In a 2009 report investigating problems regarding attitude and treatment within the Swedish police, Westin and Nilsson identify the “us-and-them mentality suggested above too: “a police culture that provides identity by employees expressing their distance to others within or outside the agency needs to be opposed to” (p. 4). The police agency are also said to be in need of an increased transparency, improved internal communication, improved feedback to employees, and an increased mutual trust between supervisors and co-workers (Westin & Nilsson, 2009). In line with the previous discussion, these observations seem to coincide with the model outlined in figure 1, that improving the implementation process alone is not enough to improve perceptions of initiative content - the context where implementations take place, the organizational culture, also needs altering.

References


