



Research Questions

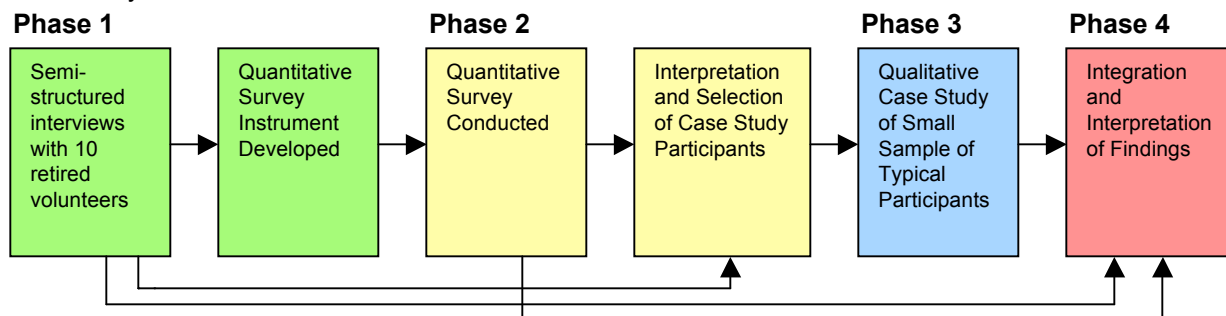
- 1) To what extent do retired volunteers use the skills and abilities that they have developed through their paid work experiences and to what extent do they develop new ones?
- 2) Do retirees' identities, which are developed during their paid-work careers, change during their late-life volunteer roles?

Methodology

The methodology is a mixed-method research design that combines a survey with in-depth interviews (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) for developmental and explanatory purposes.

There are four phases in this study, as diagramed below. Phase 1 uses semi structured interviews to unpack key concepts and develop the Phase 2 survey. In Phase 2, the quantitative survey is administered and the results are used to select Phase 3 participants. Phase 4 integrates the findings from the first three phases.

In Phase 1, snowball sampling is used. Phase 2 uses a sampling frame obtained from Associations Canada, an on-line directory of about 20,000 listings of non-profit Organizations. Several typical participants in Phase 2 will be interviewed for the Phase 3 case study.



Rationale

- With changing demographics there are greater numbers of retirees with longer life spans and their opportunities for life-long development will become more critical. By expanding Super, Savickas and Super's (1996) theory, this research can shape our view of older adults beyond their paid work careers.
- The need for services from non-profit agencies continues to rise as governments cut back funding to these organizations (Foster-Dey, Grimm & Deitz, 2007; Gottlieb, 2002). More volunteers are needed and retention of volunteers is critical. This research will contribute to policy on volunteer recruitment and retention among non-profits through better understanding of the needs and preferences of retired volunteers.
- Volunteers need to be studied because of the pressures faced by non-profit agencies. This research examines a key segment of volunteers: retirees, who on average contribute the most volunteer hours to organizations (Hall, Lasby, Gumulka & Tyron, 2006).
- This research will help workplaces, their human resources departments and career counsellors to better integrate career development, life-long learning and retirement planning (Super, et al. 1996).

Theoretical Framework

- Using Super, Savickas, Super's (1996) life-span, life-space approach, this study views retirement as a phase of career development.
- This study draws on the life course perspective (Giele & Elder, 1998) to examine development over time and how development is impacted by psychological and sociological factors.

References

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Acknowledgements

Travel for data collection and conference presentations is partially funded by a Social Economy Centre Graduate Student Thesis Scholarship. Thank you to the Social Economy Centre of the University of Toronto and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Toronto. Thank you to my thesis supervisor Dr. Jack Quarter, OISE, University of Toronto (jquarter@oise.utoronto.ca).