

## A Decade of Service-Related Research: A Map of the Field

James L. Perry  
*Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis*

Mark T. Imperial  
*University of North Carolina at Wilmington*

*The 1990s ushered in a new era for service as a problem-solving strategy, with a concomitant expansion in the service-related literature. The authors report the results of a bibliographic survey of the literature that assessed the contents of more than 2,500 abstracts. Service-related research has diffused to a wide array of disciplines and policy fields. However, the common interest across disciplines has not translated into a more coherent understanding of service. The most recent research is fragmented across disciplines and outcomes. In addition, much of the most recent research diverges from traditional definitions of voluntarism. Few attempts have been made to synthesize the latest wave of research results and integrate them with previous research and theory. Recommendations are offered to increase convergence among investigators and improve the quality of service-related research.*

The passage of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 marked the beginning of an expansion of citizen service as a problem-solving instrument in American society. The increased attention to citizen service brought with it an exponential increase in scholarly and professional literature devoted to the subject. The present study was motivated by an interest in establishing whether

*Note:* This is a revised version of a paper presented at the annual conference of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, Miami Beach, Florida, October 14 to 16, 1999. The Granmaker Forum on National & Community Service and Indiana University's Institute for the Study of Government and the Nonprofit Sector funded this research. We would like to thank Robert Bringle, Frank Dirks, Lynne Ford, Rob Schumer, and Mary Ischirhart for their assistance in preparing the final report, and we acknowledge the efforts of Ann Marie Thomson, Jonathan Malsey, Michael Katula, and Rebecca Beckfield in collecting and analyzing these data. We also benefited greatly from input from staff members of the Granmaker Forum, particularly Jill Blair, and members of the Forum's Research Task Force. The views expressed in this article are solely those of the authors.

a field of citizen service exists, identifying its organizing components, and determining what generalizations could be made about the growing body of service-related research.

In this article, we seek to map the attributes of recent research about service. The core of the project involved developing a comprehensive database of service-related research published since the adoption of national service legislation in 1990.<sup>1</sup> The inventory of the literature was designed to be inclusive. We developed a list of search terms that allowed us to search points of entry to service as well as different national service programs. We also searched a variety of databases covering the fields of education, sociology, business, public affairs, and psychology.

The inventory revealed that a considerable amount of service-related research has been published since 1990. While we were developing and analyzing the database, it became evident that a distinct field of citizen service does exist, albeit fragmented and disjointed (Perry, Imperial, et al., 1999).

The discussion is organized in two sections. In the first, we seek to draw generalizations about the field of service based on an analysis of keywords associated with research-oriented publications in the database. In the second, we present recommendations on how to strengthen and expand research about service and integrate this fragmented body of research.

### DEVELOPING THE DATABASE

Before discussing generalizations about service-related research, it is useful to have some familiarity with the contents of the database.<sup>2</sup> The database was constructed by searching nine electronic databases using a variety of search terms related to service-related activities.<sup>3</sup> The databases were Academic Search Elite, BookWhere, Dissertation Abstracts International, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Government Documents, Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS), International Political Science Abstracts (IPSA), Sociofile, and PsycINFO. In addition to the electronic databases, active researchers were contacted to identify service-related research publications that might not be in the databases. All citations were merged into a master database, which was cleaned to remove duplicate and other unwanted records. The remaining records were coded and assigned key words. This produced a database containing 2,558 bibliographic records and abstracts of service-related research published between 1990 and 1999 (Perry, Imperial, et al., 1999).

The final step in developing the database was to identify records that were research oriented by examining the methods used by the authors. For this step, we used a broad definition of research methods.<sup>4</sup> This produced a smaller database containing 997 coded records.<sup>5</sup> This article is based on an analysis of this subset of the larger database.<sup>6</sup>

Table 1 briefly summarizes what is and is not contained in the database. Citation was included if one or more of the search terms appeared in its title or abstract and if it was published in 1990 or later.<sup>7</sup> The contents of the database are dominated by journal and periodical articles (474), dissertations (194), and reports from nonprofit organizations (180). Books account for 76 citations.

The database excludes some research because of the goals of the project and choices that were made to limit the size of the database. The most significant exclusion is service-related research published prior to 1990. Although national service legislation was passed in 1990, high-quality and influential research was obviously published before that year. Also, we did not search explicitly for mentoring and experiential education to limit the size of the database. Nevertheless, the database contains a large number of sources whose abstracts refer to mentoring and experiential education. Only research published in English and comparative research with an empirical component focusing on the United States were included in the database.

In addition to the systematic restrictions we placed on the scope and size of the database, there are likely to be other, less predictable exclusions of research. For example, nonserial reports and documents issued either by smaller organizations or by sources that do not regularly issue reports are probably less likely to appear in the database.

### OBSERVATIONS ABOUT RESEARCH ON SERVICE

A great deal can be learned from an analysis of the 997 records in the database. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of records by year of publication. The trend is clearly toward increased attention to citizen service in the years following the passage of the National and Community Service Act of 1990. The increase in publication activity follows the classic S-shaped diffusion curve (Rogers, 1995), indicating a gradual increase in research activity followed by

Research about service published since 1990 that appears in one or more of the nine databases searched and refers to one or more of the search terms.

Research about service published before 1990.

Ad hoc, state government, and small-scale evaluations are not likely to be included.

Research that was not in the bibliographic databases but was nominated.

No explicit search on the terms *mentoring* and *experiential education*.

Abstracts provided by the bibliographic services and keywords developed by the research team.

Comparative studies that do not include the United States or samples of subjects from the United States.

Use of index services means that the contents are largely journal articles, dissertations, and reports from major nonprofits and federal agencies.

Research about military service was retained, but it was not explicitly an object of the search.

Comparative studies that include the United States or samples of subjects from the United States.

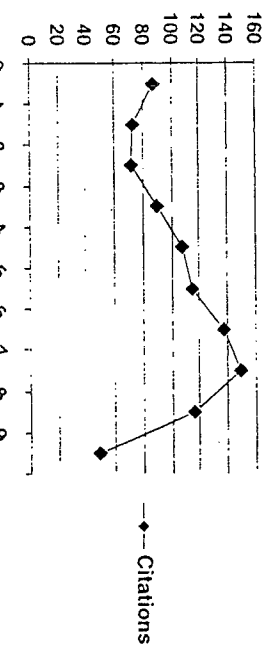


Table 2. Citizen Service Categorized by Policy Area

Policy Area	Number of Citations
Community development	178
Education	414
Environment	37
Health care	60
Human needs	100
Military	26
Public safety	21
Restitution	9
Youth development	63

Note: Community development includes community-based volunteer programs. Youth development includes youth corps programs.

health care (e.g., serving mentally disabled homeless, addressing at-risk pregnancies through service programs), youth development (e.g., youth corps, youth mentoring), the military (e.g., the attitudes of soldiers toward their missions), and public safety. Public safety research is focused primarily on the use of volunteers for crime, fire fighting, and disasters. Because we did not search explicitly for the use of service as an alternative sentencing strategy, a small number of the public safety sources (9) focus explicitly on restitution.

The multidisciplinary scope of service-related research is a strong indicator that a distinct field of research may be emerging, albeit one that is fragmented and disjointed. For example, the 474 journal articles in the database represent 278 journals, many of which are specialty journals rather than the prominent journals in the fields.<sup>8</sup> The journals most frequently represented in the database are *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* (26), *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (17), *Educational Gerontology* (9), and *Equity and Excellence in Education* (8). Two hundred four journals or periodicals published just 1 article.<sup>9</sup>

Although the multidisciplinary nature of the field ensures that a wide range of perspectives are considered, researchers in different disciplines tend to be interested in different research questions. For example, psychologists are most concerned with individual (i.e., servers) phenomena such as changes in server motivations, attitudes, or competencies. Educators are most concerned with issues of appropriate pedagogy or the design and implementation of effective educational programs (i.e., service delivery). Sociologists and political scientists are most concerned with impacts on society (i.e., the served), typically manifest in sociologists' interests in building cohesive and supportive communities and political scientists' interests in citizenship and civic engagement.

Few attempts have been made to synthesize this cross-disciplinary research (Cooper & Hedges, 1994), as reflected by the virtual absence of research syntheses or meta-analyses (8) in the database. For the most part,

research performed in one discipline is often neglected in other disciplines even though a complete picture of service-related research would require examining all aspects of the service process. This is problematic because many of the important questions confronting practitioners and policy makers are inherently transdisciplinary and cannot be answered without examining research from a variety of disciplines. Moreover, the fragmented and interdisciplinary nature of the field has led to conflicting terminology, further complicating efforts to aggregate research findings across the disciplines. For example, a psychologist's definition of the term *service* may not coincide with that of an educator, sociologist, economist, or political scientist. In fact, there is even some question about the meaning of service and what constitutes service-related research (Bates, 1996; Coles, 1993).

Although the multidisciplinary nature of service-related research often creates conflicting definitions and terminology, the research tends to cluster into several different areas, as reflected in Figure 2. Some researchers focus primarily on the attributes of the service experience, for example, whether service is voluntary or mandatory, full- or part-time, or stipended or nonstipended. Other researchers are more concerned with the attributes of servers, such as race, age, gender, income, motivation, or level of commitment. In both cases, researchers are often interested in how each group of characteristics influences the outcomes of the service experience. Given the complexity of many service programs, it is not surprising that researchers focus on a diverse range of impacts, including those on the server, the served, institutional sponsors, the community, and society at large. Another body of research looks at how intermediating factors such as implementation structures or service delivery systems influence outcomes. Although the diversity of research is encouraging, the dearth of meta-analyses and comprehensive studies designed to examine multiple factors limits the overall value of the accumulated research. The following discussion describes the clusters of research in more detail.

#### ATTRIBUTES OF SERVICE

One area of vigorous debate concerns the attributes of service. In part, the debate reflects the tension between modern perspectives of service as contrasted with traditional views of public work and community activism. As a result, it is unclear where the boundaries between volunteerism and service lie.

Volunteering has traditionally been associated with unpaid, other-oriented service, but more recently, volunteering has come to be viewed more broadly to include self-oriented, stipended service (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996). Further complicating the definition of service-related research is the fact that it is a moving target. There are a host of new forms of service, such as stipended service, community service as restitution, and mandatory service-learning programs that have received relatively little attention from researchers. Similarly, despite the proliferation of service-related programs in the

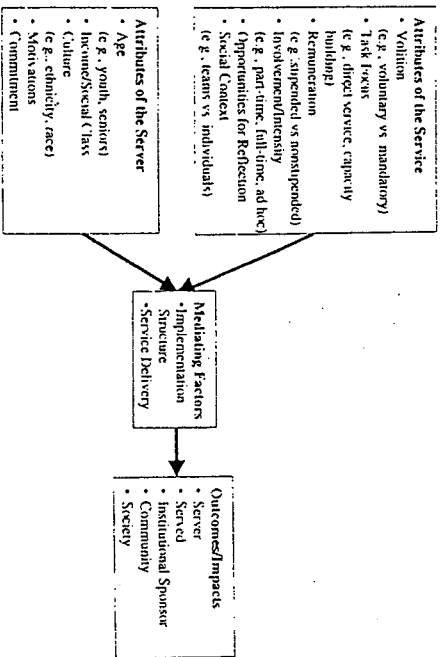


Figure 2. Framework for Organizing Service-Related Research

years following the passage of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, a relatively small portion of the database examined specific national service programs such as AmeriCorps (61), VISTA (14), the Foster Grandparent Program (6), and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (6).

Important issues raised by new programs, such as the differences between stipended and nonstipended service, remain relatively unexplored. For example, only 16 studies in the database (about 1.6% of the total) address stipended service. The lack of research about these new forms of service is particularly important given their centrality as instruments of national service since 1990. The changing meaning of volunteerism, and by extension service, is reflected in the Public/Private Venture's Spectrum of Service Project, a national demonstration funded by the Ford Foundation that is exploring ways of uniting the efforts of volunteers and paid service providers (Jucovy & Furano, 1998). The project is identifying strategies that service providers use to combine paid and unpaid servers.

Given the difficulty of distinguishing between volunteerism and service, we adopted a broad view of the service-related literature to understand the attributes of service. One source that we found particularly helpful in conceptualizing the attributes of service was Cnaan and colleagues' (1996) study. They discussed the different ways that the term *volunteer* is used and identified 11 definitions in the literature. From these 11 definitions, they identified four dimensions of volunteering: free choice, remuneration, structure, and intended beneficiaries. The categories within each of these dimensions are presented in Table 3.

Cnaan and colleagues' (1996) analysis is helpful in highlighting just how diversely volunteerism is perceived. It also calls attention to qualitative

Table 3. Dimensions of Volunteer Activities

Dimension	Category
Free choice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Free will (the ability to voluntarily choose)</li> <li>2. Relatively uncoerced</li> <li>3. Obligation to volunteer</li> </ol>
Remuneration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. None at all</li> <li>2. None expected</li> <li>3. Expenses reimbursed</li> <li>4. Stipend/low pay</li> </ol>
Structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Informal</li> <li>2. Formal</li> </ol>
Intended beneficiaries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Benefit/help others/strangers</li> <li>2. Benefit/help friends or relatives</li> <li>3. Benefit oneself (as well)</li> </ol>

Source: Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996).

distinctions that are implicitly made between volunteering and service. Volunteering is often associated in public discourse with the lower end of each of the four dimensions; that is, a volunteer is someone who freely becomes involved, without remuneration, in informal activities on behalf of strangers. Service is frequently associated with characteristics on the opposing ends of several dimensions. For instance, formality, some type of remuneration, and the prospect for self-development mark many service programs.

Two attributes not included in Cnaan and colleagues' (1996) framework that figure prominently in qualitative distinctions between volunteerism and service are the intensity of the voluntary activity and the nature of the public problem to which it is directed. The literature tends to use *service* rather than *volunteerism* to refer to more intense voluntary activity characterized by larger commitments of time. An implicit and sometimes explicit distinction is also made between service and volunteerism based on the nature of the problem. Traditional volunteerism is often project based and directed toward tractable problems. Service programs usually focus on more difficult problems involving issues such as literacy, youth violence, homelessness, and welfare dependency. The "tractability of problems" is to some extent in the eye of the beholder, but it is used by some to distinguish between volunteerism and service. Dr. Linda Forsyth (personal communication, November 29, 1999), former executive director of the California Commission on Improving Life Through Service, uses both the intensity and nature of a problem as the bases for distinguishing between service and volunteerism: "Service is differentiated from volunteerism in terms of frequency, duration, training needed to provide the services and criticality of failure to succeed in achieving stated objectives of the service activities." Thus, Dr. Forsyth sees service as one end of a continuum of voluntary citizen action in which it is an explicit strategy for solving public problems.

## ATTRIBUTES OF THE SERVER

A great deal of research also focuses on the attributes of the server. Although the research illuminates the behavior and orientations of some demographic groups, it neglects others. Table 4 summarizes the frequency of references to age, gender, race, income, and other demographic characteristics. The ages of servers are mentioned in 353 abstracts. The ages of the served are referred to in 143 abstracts. Not surprisingly, the groups most frequently addressed in the research on servers are those aged 6 to 18 (133) and 18 to 23 (189). The group of servers next most frequently mentioned in the abstracts are those aged 50 and older (48). Among populations served, children and adolescents aged 6 to 18 (105) are by far the most frequently cited group.

A modest amount of research self-consciously focuses on gender (88). This literature specifically refers much more frequently to women (25) than men (14). This is not entirely surprising in light of the higher propensity of women to volunteer. However, it suggests a potential research gap.

Most of the research (32) that self-consciously addresses race focuses on African Americans. Only 11 of the abstracts refer directly to Hispanics, and 8 look at minority populations in general terms.

Although the research on volunteerism is voluminous, some scholars do not perceive it to be definitive with regard to understanding what motivates individuals to volunteer or become involved in service programs or why they maintain these commitments (Pearce, 1993). This assessment may underestimate how much we actually know about motivation and commitment. For example, the database contains 170 studies addressing the motivation question, including a number of studies done by psychologists. There are also a number of studies examining the motivations of elder volunteers. However, even if one concludes that a great deal is known about volunteering, the factors influencing these commitments may differ from those that influence service.

It is known that the motivations of those who serve are quite varied. Some who engage in service are indeed altruists, people who are interested in giving to others. Others bring more self-interested motivations to service. They are interested in learning job skills, making contacts, or resolving problems that directly affect them. Although the motivational states that people bring to service and that describe them during their service can be described, little is known about the dynamics of changes in motivation over time. Because most research is cross-sectional (i.e., focusing on a point in time) rather than longitudinal, it is not possible to say much about how the motivations of servers change over time. However, some general (Pearce, 1993) and theoretical (Hirschman, 1982) evidence and rich descriptions of service (Coles, 1993) exist that suggest that motivations do indeed change over time. The idea of motivations changing over time is inherent in the concept of transformational service.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics Appearing in Service-Related Research

Demographic Characteristic	Number of Citations
Age of server: Total	353
Age of server: 6 to 18	133
Age of server: 18 to 23	189
Age of server: 23 to 35	15
Age of server: 35 to 50	7
Age of server: Over 50	48
Age of served: Total	143
Age of served: 0 to 6	9
Age of served: 6 to 18	105
Age of served: 18 to 23	7
Age of served: 23 to 35	3
Age of served: 35 to 50	1
Age of served: Over 50	31
Gender	88
Male	14
Female	25
Race	64
Black	32
White	18
Hispanic	11
Asian	1
Native American	4
Minorities: General	8
Income	40
Culture	44
Disabled	24
Demographic characteristics: General	175
Demographics: Total	608

Note: In some studies, multiple demographic characteristics were examined, so the sum of categories does not equal totals.

## SERVICE OUTCOMES

The bibliographic analysis also revealed the wide range of outcomes and impacts that can result from service activities. Table 5 indicates that the range of outcomes and impacts investigated is quite diverse. This should not be surprising because service programs are often designed to achieve a variety of program outcomes (Perry, Thomson, Tschirhart, Mesch, & Lee, 1999). Most of the research in the database appears to be focused on servers. Among the outcomes associated with servers are academic performance (55), attitudes (60), career development (37), personal development (50), and self-esteem (47).

The fact that most research focuses on individuals (i.e., servers) should not be surprising. Many of the desired impacts of service are implicitly directed at servers. Individuals also present discrete units of analysis for which instru-

Awareness	18
Behavior	40
Boredom	2
Career development	37
Character	5
Citizenship	51
Civic responsibility	23
Community	31
Corporate	2
Crime	11
Depression	3
Empathy	11
Fibrics	19
Health	4
Institutional sponsor	20
Interpersonal relations	25
Job satisfaction	24
Leadership	24
Personal development	50
Racism	1
Respect	8
Responsibility	16
Satisfaction	19
Self-awareness	12
Self-esteem	47
Skills	22
Social responsibility	23
Society	7
Stress	9
Substance abuse	20
Violence	12
Well-being	7
Total unique citations containing outcomes search terms	409

facilitates the reductionist approach used in most academic research. Researchers view service-related activities as interventions and examine whether participating in the activities leads to changes in individuals. In this case, the impacts with which researchers are concerned are changes at the individual level. The underlying assumption of much of this research is that the cumulative effect of individual-level changes leads to some community-level benefit (e.g., improved citizenship).

Another smaller cluster of research is concerned with the impacts of service-related activities on the larger community. This research is primarily targeted

are referred to 31, 2, and 7 times, respectively.

There is also a great deal of research focusing on mediating factors related to the implementation process. Almost 300 studies focused on some sort of implementation issue, such as program design (43), implementation structures (23), funding (47), staffing (4), contracting (3), or the role that incentives play (19). Others focused on implementation challenges, which were defined generally (26), as environmental factors (15), as legal issues (10), as politics (5), and as liability concerns (2). Numerous studies were also devoted in some way to evaluating the implementation process (36).

Research examining how mediating factors such as implementation structures and service delivery influenced the ability to achieve desired outcomes is relatively rare. Only one third of the implementation studies (100 of 300) refer to one or more of the impacts noted in Table 5. Of the 36 studies claiming to evaluate the implementation process, only 11 examined one of the impacts noted in Table 5. Moreover, only a few studies examining implementation structures (1) and program design (18) simultaneously examined one or more service outcomes.

Mediating factors are important because service programs often have numerous competing goals, and the administration of these programs can influence their abilities to achieve specific goals (Perry, Thomson, et al., 1999). Many service programs also tend to be collaborative in nature, requiring the coordination of different individuals and organizations (i.e., interorganizational networks) if they are to be effective (Thomson, 1999). Thus, there is every reason to believe that a wide range of mediating factors will influence a service program's ability to achieve its desired impacts. More research is needed that looks at all elements of a service program, including the relationships between the attributes of the server and the service activity, and how the impacts of these activities on the server and the surrounding community are mediated by factors such as the implementation structure and the program's administration.

#### WHAT DOES THE SYNTHESIS SUGGEST ABOUT ENHANCING RESEARCH ON SERVICE?

Our review of service-related literature suggests that a field of citizen service may be emerging. However, the field's continued development faces several obstacles. Two key issues for enhancing research emerged from our review of service-related literature. The first involves identifying some of the

steps that can be taken to better integrate research in this sector. The second focuses on ways to improve the overall quality of service-related research.

## BUILDING AN INTERDISCIPLINARY FIELD

Our review of the literature illustrates just how rich and diverse the field of citizen service is today. However, its fragmentation and conflicting terminology are barriers to the development of theory and practice. Few attempts have been made to aggregate research findings, as exemplified by the fact that only 8 meta-analyses were found in the database. Moreover, although 123 studies contained some form of literature review, there were few interdisciplinary, comprehensive reviews. This is an important part of the development of any field because such reviews help make a vast literature more accessible. Literature syntheses and meta-analyses are also important parts of theory building and critical ways that knowledge is accumulated within a field or profession.

Another impediment to developing a coherent body of service-related research is that outcomes are defined in many different ways. This phenomenon is in part attributable to the diffuse goals of service programs. Outcomes are diffuse for other reasons, among them the absence of standardization of outcome measures and expansive claims of the effects of service. It would be helpful to focus a literature review on outcomes that have been used in service research, their measurement, and their plausibility. Such a review might seek input from opinion leaders about the outcomes that are sought through service.

Our review also suggests that much could be done to improve the infrastructure and support for those engaged in service-related research. This could include journal symposia and edited volumes targeted at integrating research across disciplines. A recent symposium in *Law and Contemporary Problems* (Clofelter, 1999) that featured a diverse group of scholars is one model for building conversations across disciplines. Additional financial support would also be helpful, but interdisciplinary research often does not fit well into established funding mechanisms such as the National Science Foundation, which tend to be oriented toward traditional academic disciplines. Accordingly, foundations could play an important role in funding high-quality, interdisciplinary citizen service research.

Most well-developed fields of research have professional associations that bring together researchers and practitioners in a manner that integrates a field by expanding social networks, disseminating research, and developing a common language among researchers. Existing associations such as the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, the American Society for Public Administration, and the American Educational Research Association provide opportunities for researchers and practitioners to share their service-related research and experience. The National Conference on Community Volunteering and National Service, which is presented annually by the Points of Light Foundation in partnership with other national

Learning Conference organized by the National Youth Leadership Council. Some of these associations and conferences may need to make changes to encourage practitioners and researchers from different disciplines to gather to exchange the results of their service-related research.

## IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF RESEARCH

Another finding was that a relatively small proportion of the total research was of high quality. Only 34 researchers used experimental or quasi-experimental designs, and 12 used panel designs. Well-done qualitative research was also in short supply. Many of the case studies in the database were atheoretical descriptions of programs. Qualitative studies strategically designed to integrate levels of analysis or develop theory are relatively rare.

The quality of the research may largely be due to the lack of well-developed research infrastructure. High-quality research, whether it is qualitative or quantitative, requires resources. Longitudinal or panel data for doing comparative or time-series research are in short supply. The field is also driven by practice, and much of the research demonstrates a clear preference for examining success stories rather than focusing on a wider range of programmatic experiences.

One of the barriers to doing high-quality research is the lack of good longitudinal data and the resource-intensive nature of gathering and maintaining the data over time. There are several steps that could be taken to encourage more longitudinal research. A new panel data set could be designed so that researchers from different disciplines could better examine their research questions. The Corporation for National Service has recently taken one step to fill the need for high-quality data by initiating a longitudinal study of AmeriCorps and adopting a policy to share its evaluation data with external users. Existing longitudinal databases, such as the National Longitudinal Surveys, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, the National Education Longitudinal Study, and the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, might be alternative resources for longitudinal research. Foundations and other funding bodies could provide support or encourage researchers to conduct long-term research projects that track programs over extended periods of time.

Based on our compilation and review of abstracts, we observed a tendency of the citizen service literature to focus on "successful" programs. This was particularly true in the larger database of 2,558 records, and it was one of the main reasons we focused the analysis on the research-oriented subset of 997 records. This success bias is understandable given the interests of program leaders in sharing success stories with others committed to service and of journals and other outlets in publishing research about successful interventions rather than failures. Although much can be learned from a successful program, often, more can be learned from examining programs that vary in their

early 1990s has created challenges and opportunities for voluntary action scholars. A major challenge is integrating the new understandings and practices associated with service into our traditional understanding of volunteerism. Practices such as mandatory service, stipended service, and using service as an integral tool for solving difficult public problems signal the emergence of a field of citizen service with boundaries different from those that defined voluntary action research during the 20th century.

On the basis of our research synthesis, it is reasonable to conclude that much has been learned about citizen service, but many questions remain unanswered. Among the areas about which a good deal is known are the psychological aspects of service. There is relatively good evidence, for example, that service learning favorably influences citizenship-related cognitive understanding (Perry & Katula, 2001). At the same time, not enough research has been done to permit the conclusion that all forms of service, not just service learning, produce similar effects on civic attitudes and other salient individual outcomes.

In a similar vein, the research indicates that service and volunteering during one's youth positively influence giving and volunteering later in life. The correlation between volunteering and later giving, and volunteering over time, is consistently positive. Although the relationships are consistently positive, the research does not shed much light on the mechanisms that account for the consistent correlation, in other words, why giving and volunteering are sustained over time.

The field has significant needs for cross-level (e.g., connecting individuals to community change) and program evaluation research (e.g., the effects of specific programs on organizations, communities, and society). Given the centrality of active citizenship in most theories and proposals for service (Barber, 1998; Buckley, 1990; Moskos, 1988), the paucity of research about citizenship outcomes, particularly behaviors, is noteworthy. Part of the explanation for the paucity of behavioral research resides with the dominance of attitudinal research. The psychology of service is in many respects the most easily accessed outcome of service. Attitudinal outcomes such as self-esteem and civic responsibility interest many scholars and practitioners. They can also be readily measured. Acknowledgement of these strong incentives to study the psychology of service, largely to the exclusion of other types of outcomes, can serve as a starting point for the scholarly and philanthropic community to launch alternative research programs.

more careful attention to the controversy about how service inculcates citizenship values and behaviors. Markus and colleagues' concern is sufficiently widespread and central to service as a social enterprise that it merits attention in future research. In general, researchers must be more self-conscious about different types of service as mediating variables.

The challenge posed by the fragmented research we have identified across disciplines creates an opportunity to enrich voluntary action research. The expanded interest in citizen service has attracted new participants to research about volunteerism and recruited potentially new and powerful intellectual perspectives. Recognition of these developments and efforts to build on them can pay enormous dividends for the understanding of voluntary action.

## Notes

1. For more information on the database and its contents, see Grantmaker Forum on Community & National Service, 2000; and Perry, Imperial, and colleagues, 1999.

2. A detailed discussion of the development of the database can be found in our final report (Perry, Imperial, et al., 1999).

3. The search terms were divided among four categories: volunteer, service, service programs, and civic programs. In the volunteer category, the terms were *voluntarism, voluntarism, volunteer and corporation, volunteer and employer, volunteer and religion, volunteer and school, and volunteer and student*. The search terms in the service category were *service-learning, service learning, voluntary service, volunteer service, citizen service, service and faith, service and religion, and service and corporate*. The search terms in the service programs category were *National Service Trust Act, National and Community Service Act, youth corps, AmeriCorps, VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), Learn and Serve America, America Reads, Foster Grandparent Program, Senior Companion Program, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, youth development, service program, public service program, corporate social responsibility, employer and service, and community*. The search terms in the civic programs category were *civic engagement and character education*.

4. The search terms used for the methods screen were *empirical, evaluation, census data, case study, content analysis, cost-benefit analysis, experimental, quasi-experimental, focus group, game theory, interview, literature review, longitudinal, panel study, simulation, survey, and meta-analysis*.

5. The largest number of records (475, or 48% of the total) are journal or periodical articles. Although many of these records were peer reviewed and therefore met one quality threshold, we were unable to code individual articles for the presence or absence of this attribute. The status of a journal as peer reviewed masks the fact that some articles appearing there might not have been peer reviewed. At the same time, some peer-reviewed journals have high acceptance rates, suggesting that peer review alone is not a highly reliable indicator of quality. Dissertations are the second most frequent type of publication in the database. The 194 dissertations in the database



6. The database is maintained using ProCite, a bibliographic software package that facilitates searches and the incorporation of additional bibliographic records in the future. Interested researchers should contact the Grantmaker Forum on Community & National Service to obtain the database.

7. We used 1990 as the earliest year of publication because the National and Community Service Act was passed in that year, and the Research Task Force of the Grantmaker Forum on Community & National Service was interested in the recent research on citizen service.

8. The term *journal* is used somewhat loosely; many of these include nonscholarly periodicals, particularly in the area of education.

9. It turned out that the other 272 articles were published in 76 journals. Four journals published 6 articles, 5 journals published 5 articles, 10 journals published 4 articles, 17 journals published 3 articles, and 36 journals published only 2 articles.

## References

- Barber, B. (1998). *A passion for democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bates, S. (1996). *National service: Getting things done?* Chicago: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.
- Buckley, W. F., Jr. (1990). *Gratitude: Reflections on what we owe to our country*. New York: Random House.
- Clotfelter, C. (Ed.). (1999). *Amateurs in public service: Volunteering, service-learning, and community service*. *Law and Contemporary Problems* [Special Issue], 62(4).
- Chaan, R. A., Handy, F., & Wadsworth, M. (1996). Defining who is a volunteer: Conceptual and empirical considerations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 25, 364-383.
- Coles, R. (1993). *The call of service: A witness to idealism*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Cooper, H., & Hedges, L. V. (Eds.). (1994). *The handbook of research synthesis*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Grantmaker Forum on Community & National Service. (2000). *The state of service-related research: Opportunities to build a field* [Online]. Berkeley, CA: Author. Available: [http://www.gcns.org/pubs/CFENS\\_ResearchMonograph.pdf](http://www.gcns.org/pubs/CFENS_ResearchMonograph.pdf)
- Hirschman, A. O. (1982). *Shifting involvements: Private interest and public action*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Jacovy, L., & Furano, K. (1998). *Limiting the efforts of volunteers and paid service providers*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.
- Markus, G. B., Howard, J. P. F., & King, D. C. (1993). Integrating community service and classroom instruction enhances learning: Results from an experiment. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15(4), 410-419.
- Moskos, C. (1988). *A call to civic service*. New York: Free Press.
- Pearce, J. L. (1993). *Volunteers: The organizational behavior of unpaid workers*. New York: Routledge.
- Perry, J., Imperial, M. T., Thomson, A. M., Masey, J., Katula, M., & Beckfield, R. (1999, August 19). *A review of service-related research 1990-1999: Final report, Volumes 1 and 2*. Bloomington: Institute for the Study of Government and the Nonprofit Sector and School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University.
- Perry, J., & Katula, M. (2001). Does service affect citizenship? *Administration and Society*, 32(3), 332-367.
- Perry, J., Thomson, A. M., Tschirhart, M., Mersch, D., & Lee, C. (1999). Inside a Swiss army knife: An assessment of AmeriCorps. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 9(2), 225-250.
- Rogers, E. (1995). *Diffusion of innovations* (4th ed.). New York: Free Press.

James L. Perry is a chairwoman's professor and associate dean in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. He is codirector of the Institute for the Study of Government and the Nonprofit Sector. His recent research focuses on service motivation and national and community service.

Mark T. Imperial is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. He recently completed a report for the National Academy of Public Administration entitled *Environmental Governance in Watersheds: The Importance of Collaboration to Institutional Performance* (October 2000). His teaching and research interests are primarily in the areas of public administration and environmental policy.