# Perceptions and Participation: Exploring the Ties Between Quality of Life and Volunteering

A Quantitative Analysis Examining QoL and Volunteering
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# Abstract

This study examines whether perceived quality of life is associated with community engagement through volunteering. Using the 2024 American National Election Studies (ANES) Time Series data, I built a multi-item quality of life factor and estimated a binary logistic regression predicting past-year volunteering. The model includes quality of life, education, income, race and ethnicity, and home internet access. Results show a modest association between quality of life and volunteering. A one-standard-deviation increase in quality of life raises the predicted probability of volunteering from approximately 20 percent to approximately 22 percent, indicating that practical resources matter more. Reliable home internet is linked to nearly double the odds of volunteering, and higher educational attainment is also associated with greater participation, while income shows a smaller, yet positive, relationship. Patterns by race and ethnicity are mixed: Hispanic respondents and respondents from Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander backgrounds are less likely to report volunteering than white respondents, while the difference for Black respondents is not statistically significant. Because the data are cross-sectional, the analysis cannot determine causality. Overall, the findings suggest that improving digital access and reducing barriers to participation are promising approaches to expanding the pool of volunteers.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Section 1.1: Problem Statement

Volunteering plays a vital role in strengthening communities, building trust, and filling service gaps that government and private sectors often struggle to reach. Across the United States, volunteer participation has shifted noticeably over the last two decades: the national volunteer rate started at 27.6 percent in 2002, rose to almost 30 percent by 2019, dropped to 23.2 percent in 2021, and climbed back to 28.3 percent in 2023 (AmeriCorps & U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). Regular volunteer efforts are linked with higher levels of interpersonal trust, better psychological well-being, and stronger neighborhood ties (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007); when rates fall, communities lose capacity to address local needs, social bonds weaken, and public confidence in institutions can erode, undermining the resilience of our democratic and civic systems.

Economic pressures and demanding work schedules further limit the time available for giving, as many low-income households juggle multiple jobs or face unpredictable hours that make ongoing volunteer roles challenging (Urban Institute, 2013). Digital outreach may expand opportunities for civic engagement, but disparities in internet access persist. Individuals with lower incomes, rural residents, and older adults are significantly less likely to have broadband access or possess digital literacy skills, which limits their participation in online civic life (Hargittai et al., 2019). Moreover, patterns of civic participation vary by race and education: wealthier and more highly educated individuals volunteer at significantly higher rates, and White Americans report higher volunteer rates than Hispanic, Black, and Asian American communities (Beaty, 2024). These disparities suggest that structural barriers, rather than differences in willingness, are at play, indicating that existing engagement channels may not

align with everyone's schedules, needs, or cultural contexts. However, little is known about how individuals' perceptions of their quality of life (QoL) interact with these barriers to shape volunteering rates.

## Section 1.2: Outline of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the problem of uneven and declining volunteer rates in the United States, highlighting the need to understand how structural barriers and personal perceptions interact to shape civic participation. Chapter 2 reviews key concepts and frameworks, beginning with foundational theories of perceived quality of life and social capital, then examining how socioeconomic resources and digital inclusion relate to volunteering. Chapter 3 describes the April 2025 preliminary release of the ANES 2024 Time Series (5,521 pre-election and 4,964 post-election respondents), explains the construction of a six-item factor score for subjective quality of life, and details the specification of a binary logistic regression model predicting volunteer participation. Chapter 4 presents descriptive statistics and regression results, including the effects of home internet access and education, interaction terms, and model checks. Chapter 5 interprets these findings, discusses theoretical and practical implications, offers targeted policy recommendations, and concludes with a discussion of study limitations and directions for future research. Appendices provide the full ANES variable codebook and complete SPSS output for transparency and reproducibility.

## Section 1.3: Social Capital and Understanding Volunteer Motivations

Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, and norms of trust that connect individuals and enable cooperative action. While the term has been used in different ways

across disciplines, most definitions agree that social capital encompasses the value embedded in social networks and the resources people can access through them. As Bourdieu (1986) described it, social capital includes the actual and potential benefits derived from group membership and relationships. Coleman (1988) emphasized the role of social capital in facilitating coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit, particularly in family and school settings. One of the most influential modern definitions comes from Robert Putnam, who defined social capital as "connections among individuals, social networks, the norms of reciprocity, and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). Putnam's work emphasized how civic life depends on informal associations, community ties, and a shared sense of belonging.

Scholars often distinguish between two types of social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital is typically found among close, homogeneous groups, such as families, close friends, or religious communities. These relationships are marked by strong emotional support and mutual aid but may also reinforce exclusivity or social insularity. Bridging social capital, by contrast, refers to connections that span diverse social groups. Unlike bonding ties, these relationships are more outward-facing and inclusive, linking individuals from different socioeconomic, racial, or cultural backgrounds. Such networks facilitate broader access to information, foster mutual trust, and support civic engagement across communities (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). By distinguishing between bonding and bridging ties, scholars highlight the different ways people connect to their communities.

Rather than operating as a single, uniform concept, social capital has been theorized through multiple lenses that emphasize its relational, procedural, and structural dimensions. Three complementary frameworks, including Putnam's civic tradition model, Hyman's community engagement cycle, and Chaskin and Goodman's community capacity framework,

help explain how social capital forms and how it is associated with community volunteering. Together, these models suggest that civic engagement is sustained not only by trust and social networks, but also by repeated participation, material resources, and organizational infrastructure.

Robert Putnam's (2000) theory of social capital popularized the idea that declining civic participation threatens the health of American democracy. He defines social capital as "connections among individuals, social networks, norms of reciprocity, and trustworthiness that arise from them" (p. 19), emphasizing that civic life depends on both bonding ties within groups and bridging ties across diverse communities. According to Putnam, these relationships build trust and reinforce civic habits. His analysis of longitudinal trends in civic group membership revealed a stark decline in participation in organizations such as the League of Women Voters, labor unions, church groups, and bowling leagues. This pattern, he argued, reflected broader cultural shifts toward individualism, television consumption, and time scarcity, which eroded the face-to-face interactions that had long fostered civic trust and cooperation (Putnam, 2000). Contemporary studies continue to support Putnam's findings. For example, a study by McFarland and Thomas (2006) found that social capital in the U.S. had indeed weakened, particularly among younger generations, who participate less in community organizations and face-to-face civic activities. Similarly, Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2002) argue that social capital remains a critical factor in promoting community cohesion and economic development, even outside the U.S., underscoring the broader relevance of Putnam's framework.

Studies in both Europe and the U.S back up Putnam's ideas. In his research on Italy, he found that northern regions, where people often worked together in local clubs, sports teams, and community groups, had stronger local governments than southern regions, where power tended to stay in the hands of a few (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993). In the U.S., he found

that places with more community organizations also had higher rates of voting and volunteering (Putnam, 2000). This suggests that people are more likely to volunteer when they are part of communities where helping out and getting involved are already regular parts of life. However, critics argue that Putnam's framework may romanticize traditional civic forms that predominantly reflect White, middle-class norms. For instance, Baycan (2023) highlights that substantial bonding social capital can lead to group closure, low tolerance, and exclusion of outsiders, reinforcing inequality rather than promoting inclusive civic life. Similarly, inequality-focused scholars such as Uphoff et al. (2013) demonstrate that access to social capital differs significantly by socioeconomic status, meaning that some communities may be structurally excluded from the very networks that facilitate civic engagement. These critiques are particularly relevant to this study, which examines the relationship between structural barriers and perceptions of quality of life and volunteering across diverse populations.

James Hyman's (2002) framework complements Putnam's structural diagnosis by focusing on the process through which social capital is intentionally cultivated in community settings. He outlines a six-stage cycle: **resident engagement**, **agenda building**, **community organizing**, **community action**, **communication**, and **message development**. Unlike Putnam's emphasis on civic decline, Hyman's model highlights how communities can deliberately foster engagement even in contexts where trust is low or institutions have weakened. For example, during the *resident engagement* phase, Hyman emphasizes the importance of low-barrier activities, such as neighborhood clean-ups, potlucks, or holiday events, that create early opportunities for connection. These casual interactions become the basis for deeper collaboration as residents move into *agenda building* and *organizing*, surfacing shared concerns and pooling resources to address them (Hyman, 2002). In further validation of Hyman's approach, Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) found that neighborhoods with higher levels of collective efficacy,

defined as shared trust and willingness to intervene for the common good, saw greater mobilization around public safety and youth development. Likewise, Cohen and Wills (1985) demonstrated that informal support networks, such as those activated in early engagement phases, can buffer communities from stress and increase cooperation. These findings reinforce the idea that early-stage, low-barrier interactions are essential building blocks of long-term civic capacity.

In one case study, Hyman describes how a coalition of residents in a suburban neighborhood used informal social ties to organize around traffic safety concerns. Through a mix of door-to-door outreach and public forums, they built consensus around a set of traffic-calming measures. This led to the formation of a *Community Action Committee* that lobbied city officials and coordinated volunteer labor for implementing signage and speed bumps. As successes accumulated, communication and message development helped maintain engagement and expand the effort to other issues (Hyman, 2002). Hyman's framework thus reinforces Putnam's claim that social capital underlies civic life, but adds that trust and participation can be strategically built, not just inherited, through deliberate cycles of engagement. However, recent work by Rong, Ristevski, and Carroll (2023) highlights that even well-structured engagement strategies can unintentionally exclude residents who face barriers such as time constraints, language access issues, or institutional distrust. In their scoping review of place-based community engagement, they found that residents from marginalized or under-resourced backgrounds are often underrepresented in neighborhood-level participation, even when engagement efforts are well-intentioned. This suggests that frameworks like Hyman's may overlook how engagement opportunities are differentially accessible depending on socioeconomic status or lived experience.

Robert Chaskin and colleagues (Chaskin, 2001; Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001) extend this conversation by introducing the concept of community capacity, which adds an institutional layer to the discussion of civic engagement. They define community capacity as "the interaction of human, organizational, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve community well-being" (Chaskin, 2001, p. 295). This approach highlights that while relationships and trust matter, they are not sufficient on their own. Structural supports, such as accessible meeting spaces, local nonprofits, funding channels, and institutional legitimacy, can either enable or constrain civic participation. Recent work builds on Chaskin's framework. Sirianni (2009) emphasizes the importance of community organizations and local governments in creating the necessary infrastructure to build collective action, particularly in economically marginalized areas. Checkoway and Aldana (2013) emphasize that institutional partnerships such as those between schools, local nonprofits, and government agencies can support civic engagement among underrepresented populations by creating structured opportunities for participation and leadership.

In their analysis of community-building initiatives across several U.S. cities, Chaskin et al. (2001) found that sustained engagement was most successful where internal leadership, shared norms, and institutional partnerships were present. For example, in Chicago's South Side neighborhoods, block clubs and faith-based groups played a crucial role in organizing residents around housing rehabilitation. However, these efforts were only scalable when supported by external institutions, such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and city housing departments. Without access to grants, technical assistance, or reliable space, resident energy often plateaued. This research helps clarify the structural preconditions that allow the trust and participation described by Putnam and Hyman to flourish. Still, Birgel, Decker, Röding, and

Walter (2023) critique many community capacity-building models for lacking attention to the power dynamics that shape engagement in the first place. Their scoping review found that while local capacity is often framed as a grassroots resource, it is heavily influenced by external structures, such as funding streams, evaluation metrics, and institutional gatekeepers. This may favor specific communities over others. This suggests that capacity-building, without accompanying structural reform, may unintentionally perpetuate existing inequalities rather than address them.

Together, these three frameworks create a cohesive model for understanding how social capital operates. Putnam reveals the civic consequences of weakening social ties and the importance of everyday associations. Hyman offers a replicable process for building trust and engagement from the ground up. Chaskin and Goodman expand the scope to include material and institutional factors that determine whether these processes are sustainable. This integrated view reveals that volunteerism is not only linked to personal motivation or group affiliation but also to the broader civic environment, which is associated with how people are connected, supported, and empowered to take action. With this conceptual foundation in place, the following section explores how individuals' perceptions of quality of life may reflect and reinforce the social capital pathways described above. When people feel safe, supported, connected, and empowered in their communities, they may be more likely to access the networks, opportunities, and institutional support that enable volunteerism. In this sense, quality of life is not just an outcome of civic engagement; it may also serve as a key condition for it.

## Section 1.4: How Quality of Life Influences Community Engagement

Building on the theoretical framework above, I ask the following question: *To what extent do individuals' perceptions of quality of life associate with community engagement through volunteering?* Quality of life is defined as individuals' overall evaluation of their well-being, incorporating both material conditions and subjective perceptions (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Its key dimensions include life satisfaction, economic security, future expectations, emotional health, and social belonging. Theoretically, a higher quality of life reduces the psychological and logistical barriers to civic engagement because individuals who feel secure and socially connected are more likely to have the time, energy, and emotional bandwidth to participate. For instance, people with stable housing, steady income, and strong social ties are less burdened by day-to-day survival concerns and more capable of turning their attention outward to help others. According to Clary et al. (1998), these individuals are more likely to act on growth-oriented motives such as personal development or altruism. In contrast, individuals facing financial strain or social isolation may lack the autonomy and sense of competence required to volunteer, as suggested by Ryan and Deci's (2024) Self-Determination Theory. Anand et al. (2005) further support this by demonstrating that genuine engagement necessitates both material conditions and the capacity to transform those conditions into action. Therefore, quality of life acts not only as a background factor but as a facilitator that shapes whether people have both the means and motivation to engage in civic life.

Each of these frameworks adds important layers to understanding why quality of life matters. Clary and Snyder's functional approach identifies six motivational functions: values, understanding, enhancement, career, social, and protective. This may explain why people choose to volunteer. Their research finds that when individuals perceive themselves as having sufficient personal stability, they are more inclined to pursue volunteering for values-based or self-enhancing reasons (Clary et al., 1998). This connection implies that quality of life shapes not

just the ability to volunteer, but also the reasons people find it meaningful. High QoL enables people to see volunteering not as a burden, but as an opportunity for purpose, learning, or social recognition.

Complementing this psychological lens, the Capability Approach offers a structural view. Anand, Hunter, and Smith (2005) argue that well-being is determined not simply by having resources, but by what individuals can actually do with them. In this sense, quality of life involves both opportunity and agency. For someone to volunteer, they must not only be motivated but also possess the enabling conditions, such as free time, transportation, or digital access, to make participation feasible. A person with strong civic values may still be unable to act if their life conditions do not support those choices. Therefore, capability expands the definition of quality of life beyond subjective feelings to include the fundamental freedoms people have to engage with their communities.

Similarly, Self-Determination Theory clarifies how motivation depends on the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2024). Autonomy is reflected in personal financial outlook and economic expectations; respondents who anticipate stable finances feel freer to choose volunteering as a meaningful way to spend their time. Competence emerges through life satisfaction and happiness about the country; when individuals feel effective in their own lives and confident in collective conditions, they perceive themselves as capable civic actors. Relatedness is embodied in pride in one's country and lower financial worries; these factors build a sense of belonging and emotional security that encourages people to connect with others through service. Explicitly mapping each quality-of-life indicator to one of these basic needs explains how subjective well-being supplies the intrinsic motivation necessary for sustained volunteering. People who feel in control of their lives (autonomy), who believe they can make a difference (competence), and who feel

connected to others (relatedness) are more likely to participate in community activities, such as volunteering. Quality of life helps fulfill these needs by reducing chronic stressors and enhancing one's capacity to contribute. When people experience persistent economic instability or social isolation, their fundamental psychological needs may remain unmet, thereby diminishing both their motivation and ability to engage.

Empirical studies have shown, for example, that adults reporting greater satisfaction with their personal finances and social relationships volunteer at significantly higher rates than those with lower well-being scores (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007). This evidence supports the idea that quality of life is not only an outcome of community engagement but also a meaningful driver of it. In short, people are more likely to help others when they feel capable, connected, and secure.

In this study, perceived quality of life is measured as a single, standardized factor score derived from six ANES items: life satisfaction, economic outlook, financial expectations, financial worry, happiness with national conditions, and pride in national conditions. Community engagement is operationalized through respondents' self-reported volunteering in the past twelve months (ANES item V242035). To assess the association of quality of life on volunteering, a binary logistic regression estimates the odds of participation (0 = no, 1 = yes) with the standardized QoL factor as the primary predictor and controls for household income, years of education, race and ethnicity, home internet use, and community-meeting attendance. By comparing the size and statistical significance of the QoL coefficient before and after adding controls, the analysis isolates the unique contribution of perceived well-being to civic participation. With the conceptual and analytical approach established, Section 1.5 provides a brief overview of the data source and statistical methods employed in this study.

## Section 1.5: Overview of Data and Methods

I use the April 2025 preliminary release of the ANES 2024 Time Series, which includes 5,521 pre-election and 4,964 post-election interviews with a nationally representative sample of U.S. voters. From this data, I construct a composite quality of life score using principal axis factor analysis on six items that measure subjective well-being. I then estimate a binary logistic regression model to predict volunteering as a measure of community engagement, while controlling for income, education, race, ethnicity, home internet use, and meeting attendance.

## Section 1.6: Significance of the study

This study makes three main contributions. First, it bridges the gap between subjective well-being and civic engagement research by demonstrating how a composite measure of perceived quality of life, encompassing safety, financial outlook, and social cohesion, predicts volunteering. Second, it draws on the nationally representative ANES 2024 Time Series Data, which combines in-person, online, and phone interviews, to extend its findings beyond small-scale or case study samples and capture diverse community experiences. Third, by highlighting the importance of digital inclusion and community meeting attendance alongside quality of life, it suggests concrete policy options, such as improving home internet access and offering more inclusive in-person forums, to increase volunteer participation. Together, these provide scholars with a unified model that links well-being and volunteering, and equip practitioners with targeted strategies to engage residents effectively.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

## Section 2.1: Conceptualizing Perceived Quality of Life

The World Health Organization defines quality of life (QoL) as an individual's "perception of their position in life in the context of culture, value systems, goals, expectations, standards and concerns" (WHO, n.d.). I adopt this umbrella term to capture both cognitive evaluations, including life satisfaction, economic expectations, and pride in collective conditions, as well as emotional states such as worry and affect. Context also includes literal places: rural residents often report higher QoL, and interviews in Denmark find that publicly accessible "third places" (community centers, sports halls, local grocery stores) matter both as meeting spots and as signals of communal vitality (Bundgaard Iversen et al., 2023). Single-item measures fall short; multi-item composites that blend satisfaction, future outlook, and social belonging provide more reliable predictions of health and civic outcomes (Kaplan & Hays, 2022; Zambianchi, 2016).

Social well-being is a core QoL dimension. Keyes's (1998) framework comprises five interrelated facets: social integration (sense of belonging), social contribution (belief that one's actions benefit society), social coherence (perceiving society as meaningful), social actualization (optimism about society's potential), and social acceptance (positive attitudes toward others). Empirical work shows that these facets consistently predict civic and volunteer engagement (Cicognani, Albanesi, & Berti, 2001; Albanesi et al., 2007). Taken together, these findings

underscore the need for a multidimensional, empirically grounded QoL measure that spans cognitive appraisals, emotional states, and social flourishing.

Because ANES lacks a direct social integration item, I approximate that facet via six indicators from the 2024 survey. The six variables used to measure quality of life are: **life satisfaction**, **economic expectations**, **personal financial outlook**, **financial worry**, **happiness with the country**, and **pride in the country**. Exploratory factor analysis will reveal how these items cluster into underlying QoL dimensions. Similar approaches have been employed in studies that construct composite indices of quality of life, utilizing items related to life satisfaction, financial stability, and national sentiment (Anand et al., 2005; Orhan et al., 2020; Zambianchi, 2016). These studies provide precedent for combining subjective and material indicators into a unified measure of well-being, particularly when exploring its relationship with civic behavior.

Positive psychology further enriches QoL theory by focusing on strengths, purpose, and satisfaction rather than only on remediating problems. This literature emphasizes that enhancing life satisfaction benefits all populations, not just those in distress (Seligman et al., 2005; Karairmak & Siviş, 2008). Scholars have begun to integrate digital well-being into QoL, showing that balanced, intentional technology use supports satisfaction and social connection, whereas compulsive or inequitable use undermines them (Tayiz et al., 2025; Gui et al., 2023).

Public-health and inequality researchers add a structural lens. A comprehensive review highlights how psychological well-being mediates the links between socioeconomic disadvantage and physical health, yet it is itself shaped by power dynamics, stigma, and access to resources (Kaplan & Hays, 2022). Strengths-based approaches argue that communities' assets, often expressed through voluntary action, buffer adversity, as seen in mental health gains from grassroots volunteering in under-resourced neighborhoods (Southby et al., 2019).

Critics caution that overemphasizing assets can shift responsibility away from institutions onto marginalized groups (Friedli, 2009; Armour et al., 2025). This relational view demands QoL measures that reflect both individual perceptions and broader social and institutional contexts.

Measurement is essential, and shifts in item selection and weighting can dramatically alter who appears better off and whose needs are prioritized in policy (Maier, Maier, & Maier, 2021). Chaaban and Cunningham (2011) demonstrate that shifting from expert-driven to equal weights in youth welfare indices can significantly reorder rankings, underscoring the importance of letting the data drive scale construction. Multi-item social well-being scales in Italy, Iran, and the United States demonstrate strong internal consistency and predictable correlations; volunteers, for instance, consistently score higher, validating composite approaches (Cicognani et al., 2001; Zambianchi & Ricci Bitti, 2014; Zambianchi, 2016). Pandemic-era studies of student volunteers further link rises in prosocial engagement to improved emotional states and a renewed sense of meaning (Maier et al., 2021).

The interplay between QoL and civic action is reciprocal. Longitudinal studies with older adults find that volunteering produces lasting gains in life satisfaction and social ties. These effects diminish when volunteering stops, suggesting a causal mechanism (Milbourn et al., 2018; Matthews & Nazroo, 2021; Ang & Malhotra, 2024). Volunteers report a sense of mastery from tangible outcomes and deeper social support, both of which bolster their well-being (Thoits, 2011; Pilkington et al., 2012). Pandemic relief efforts led by students echo these patterns, documenting reduced loneliness and restored control through prosocial projects (Maier et al., 2021). Conversely, youth social well-being research shows that preexisting civic involvement predicts higher well-being scores, illustrating how feeling and doing reinforce one another (Albanesi et al., 2007; Cicognani et al., 2008; Zambianchi, 2016).

Ultimately, access to resources, both economic and digital, is significantly associated with participation and benefits. Volunteering is more prevalent in affluent areas, and without attention to power dynamics, programs can inadvertently reproduce inequality (Southby et al., 2021; Armour et al., 2025). Digital divides exacerbate these effects: where home internet access is widespread, individuals utilize online platforms to discover and coordinate volunteer opportunities; where connectivity is limited, even motivated residents may be excluded (Kara, 2019; Totan et al., 2019; Tayiz et al., 2025). These insights reinforce the need to treat perceived QoL as intertwined with structural resources and to control for both digital and in-person assets when examining its association with volunteering.

In sum, the literature calls for a multidimensional, empirically validated approach to QoL, one that captures cognitive appraisals, emotional well-being, social flourishing, and structural context. Building on our multidimensional, data-driven understanding of perceived QoL, the focus now shifts to how digital access and broader contextual factors motivate and shape volunteering behaviors in Section 2.2.

## Section 2.2 Extending Motivation to Digital and Contextual Factors

Civic or community participation typically unfolds through informal or semi-formal channels, such as neighborhood associations, service clubs, faith-based initiatives, and volunteer projects, where engagement is organized at the grassroots level around local needs and shared interests (Talò, 2018). This form of participation relies on everyday social ties and generates both “bonding” social capital within groups and “bridging” social capital across diverse networks (Putnam, 2000). By contrast, conventional political participation professionalizes involvement by channeling citizen energy into formal party structures, electoral

campaigns, lobbying efforts, or holding public office, activities that often require specialized skills, institutional affiliations, and sustained time commitments (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). These distinctions suggest different motivational pathways: perceived QoL may more directly encourage informal volunteering through local ties, whereas formal political engagement may depend more heavily on education, civic skills, and access to organizational resources.

Recent shifts in digital connectivity are beginning to blur these boundaries by enabling volunteers to mobilize online groups around specific causes and allowing political actors to leverage community networks for outreach. Understanding both the traditional distinctions and their evolving digital context is therefore essential for examining how QoL shapes diverse modes of engagement. Maintaining that distinction matters for my study, which asks who shows up to help and connect rather than who seeks office. From the ANES data, four strands of motivation emerge: intrinsic psychological needs, functional motives (i.e., what individuals gain from volunteering), social capital and reciprocity, and real resources and constraints (such as time, money, and digital access) that either enable or hinder these motivations. For Intrinsic needs, I draw on self-determination theory language here because it captures what I observe in both the studies and my respondents: people tend to stick with volunteering when it allows them to choose freely (autonomy), feel effective (competence), and stay connected (relatedness). Positive psychology's emphasis on strengths and flourishing, rather than just addressing problems, also aligns with this framing (Tayiz et al., 2025; Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025). In older adult samples, for example, authors have shown that volunteers gain mastery and a stronger sense of control, and that these feelings are directly linked to better well-being (Ang & Malhotra, 2024). That resonates with my quality-of-life lens: if volunteering

helps people feel competent and connected, it feeds back into the very perceptions I am measuring.

### Section 2.2.1 Volunteer Functions Inventory:

Clary and Snyder's Volunteer Functions Inventory offers a lens for understanding how subjective well-being motivates civic action by identifying six key functions: values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement (Clary & Snyder, 1991). In this study, each quality-of-life indicator aligns with one or more of these functions, revealing the pathways through which perceived well-being translates into volunteering. For instance, high life satisfaction and pride in the country reflect the values function, as individuals whose principles are affirmed by civic work are more likely to act on those convictions (Maier et al., 2021). Economic expectations and personal financial outlook speak to the understanding function, since those anticipating stability tend to feel more open to acquiring new skills and knowledge through volunteer roles (Ang & Malhotra, 2024). The social function is captured by happiness about the country and lower financial worry, both of which foster positive affect and readiness for interpersonal engagement (Tse, 2020). Although career motives are not directly measured by a QoL item, stronger economic expectations can free individuals to pursue volunteer opportunities that build professional networks and competencies (Clary & Snyder, 1991). Financial worry illustrates the protective function: moderate worry may spur volunteering as a coping strategy, but excessive worry can erect practical barriers to participation (Tse, 2020). Finally, life satisfaction and pride also serve the enhancement function by boosting self-esteem and encouraging individuals to seek further well-being gains through service (Yamashita et al., 2023).

By mapping each indicator to a specific motivational function, this framework not only justifies retaining all six items in the composite measure but also clarifies why quality of life matters for volunteering. Values and enhancement motives likely drive individuals who report high pride and life satisfaction, whereas those with moderate financial worry may be motivated by the protective function. Recognizing these distinct pathways highlights the nuanced mechanisms through which subjective perceptions of well-being either encourage or, in cases of extreme worry, hinder civic engagement.

**Section 2.2 Continued:**

Social capital and reciprocity. Putnam's core ideas about networks and reciprocity are evident throughout the social well-being literature: people who feel integrated into their communities, who believe they contribute, are accepted, and can make a difference, are more likely to engage civically (Zambianchi, 2016). Studies on youth and young adults have found that formal group involvement and a sense of community predict higher social well-being, which in turn aligns with more civic and prosocial action (Zambianchi, 2016). Public-health writers take a similar line but from an "assets" angle: volunteering can be a community resource that buffers stress and inequality. The catch, as critics argue, is that if we ignore power and resources, we risk shifting responsibility for change onto those with the least capacity to handle it (Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025).

Resources and constraints (including digital access). Finally, motives only matter if people can act on them. Time, caregiving, work schedules, transportation, and even organizational red tape are all regular deal-breakers in the literature (Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025; Maier et al., 2021). In 2025, I will also have to treat digital inclusion as a resource. Reliable

home internet and basic platform literacy reduce the friction of finding, signing up for, and coordinating volunteer work (Tayiz et al., 2025). On the other hand, digital fatigue, low bandwidth, or poorly designed systems can discourage participation before it even begins (Tayiz et al., 2025). That is why I categorize internet access in the same personal resources bucket as income or education; it reduces participation costs in a world where much volunteer recruitment and communication occur online.

The literature shows that the benefits of feeling better and feeling useful are real, but they are conditional. Without addressing structural barriers, those gains remain out of reach for many of the very groups organizations claim to want to involve. (Ang & Malhotra, 2024; Maier et al., 2021; Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025; Tayiz et al., 2025). Recognizing these prerequisites, Section 2.3 outlines the theoretical models that connect perceived QoL to volunteering by detailing the psychological motivations and contextual enablers driving that relationship.

## Section 2.3: Linking Quality of Life to Volunteering (Theory)

I treat the QoL volunteering connection as a two-way street. People who feel better about their lives are more inclined to step up, and meaningful volunteer work can, in turn, lift how people feel about themselves and their future. The literature suggests that overlapping mechanisms explain this relationship.

Meaning, identity, and “serious” engagement. Lim and Putnam argue that it is not prayer or leisure alone that raises life satisfaction, but embedded networks built around shared identity and regular, meaningful interaction. Praying together beats praying alone, and by extension, doing community work with others is more effective than doing it in isolation (Ibsen,

Elmose-Østerlund, Iversen, Høyer-Kruse, & Lund Pedersen, 2023). Stebbins makes a similar point in a different language: “serious leisure” (the demanding, skill-based, identity-shaping stuff) produces deeper satisfaction than casual, one-off activities (Ibsen et al., 2023). Volunteering that asks something of me, and lets me bring who I am to the table, fits that serious-leisure mold. That is why I expect volunteering to matter more for QoL than mere “membership” or occasional participation, a hypothesis also raised in Ibsen et al. (2023).

Mastery and control studies of older adults reveal that volunteers gain a sense of mastery, as their effort translates into tangible outcomes, accompanied by a feeling that they can still shape their environments (Ang & Malhotra, 2024). That perceived control is a classic eudaimonic component of QoL. When I model QoL as life satisfaction, economic outlook, and pride, I am essentially tapping into that “I can influence my world” dimension.

Social support and reciprocity. Volunteering widens friendship networks and perceived support, and those social ties feed back into QoL (Ang & Malhotra, 2024). Social well-being research finds that civic engagement boosts social integration, contribution, and coherence (Zambianchi, 2016). Lim and Putnam’s network argument and Stebbins’s emphasis on self-expression converge here: it is the mix of close ties and meaningful activities that elevates life satisfaction (Ibsen et al., 2023). Simply put, the “we” matters as much as the “me.”

Capabilities, Functionings, and Multidimensional Well-being. Broader well-being frameworks remind me that QoL is not only about feelings but also about what people can do. Sen’s capability approach (Sen, 1999) and composite indices, such as the CGWBI, argue that well-being encompasses safety, health, community life, and civic engagement itself (Chaaban, Irani, & Khoury, 2016). Sen’s Capability Approach highlights that individuals’ fundamental freedoms depend not just on their inner motivations but on the conversion factors that turn those motivations into actual opportunities (Sen, 1999). In this study, household income,

educational attainment, and home internet access serve as precisely these factors. Income reflects the time and material resources needed to make volunteering feasible; higher earnings can ease scheduling conflicts and cover incidental costs. Education captures human capital and civic readiness, equipping individuals with the skills and confidence to navigate organizational processes and assume meaningful roles. Broadband access represents a modern conversion factor by lowering digital barriers to finding, signing up for, and coordinating volunteer work online. By explicitly framing these controls as capability-enhancing conditions, this approach clarifies why two individuals with identical quality-of-life perceptions may differ significantly in their likelihood of volunteering when structural resources vary. When civic engagement is itself treated as a component of quality of life, then volunteering serves a dual purpose: it is both something people do because they feel well (an input) and something that, once done, contributes to their well-being (an outcome). In other words, higher perceived QoL makes volunteering more likely, and volunteering in turn enhances QoL. This bidirectional cycle, where well-being drives service and service boosts well-being, explains why we describe the relationship as reciprocal.

Volunteering and its effects on well-being depend on people's circumstances. Ibsen and colleagues (2023) note that many studies conflate different types of participation, such as group membership, informal helping, and formal volunteering, and fail to account for factors like education, income, and health. This makes it difficult to determine whether the benefits stem from volunteering itself or from the advantages people already possess. Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, and Robinson (2025) caution that focusing solely on community strengths can obscure power disparities. If someone lacks time, money, or internet access, they cannot volunteer and will not receive any benefits. Research on digital well-being suggests that technology can help people connect and access information when used intentionally, but it can

also cause stress and burnout when overused or applied unevenly (Tayiz, Vangölü, & Özok, 2025). In short, unless people have the necessary resources and support, they may not be able to volunteer or experience the well-being gains that come with it.

According to the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001) and the subjective well-being theory (Diener et al., 1984), positive emotions such as satisfaction, optimism, and pride expand individuals' thought and action repertoires, predisposing them toward prosocial behaviors like volunteering. At the same time, volunteering can strengthen those exact dimensions by offering mastery and networks. My empirical model is designed to estimate the effect of perceived QoL on volunteers' likelihood of participation, treating QoL as the predictor and volunteering as the outcome. I will reserve discussion of the reciprocal impact of volunteering on QoL for the discussion chapter. It also tells me to pay attention to "type" and "intensity" of engagement. Ibsen et al. (2023) make it clear that volunteering is not equivalent to mere association membership or casual participation, and the impact on QoL depends on how deep and identity-rich that involvement is.

Put simply, theory suggests that feeling good about life leads people to volunteer, as it provides them with meaning, a sense of mastery, and social connections, and that volunteering can, in turn, boost those same feelings. Capability frameworks even treat civic engagement as part of overall well-being, while studies on inequality and digital access remind us that not everyone has the same opportunities to participate. The following section examines the data, reviewing empirical studies on QoL and volunteering.

### Section 2.4: Empirical Evidence on Quality of Life and Volunteering

The empirical record primarily supports the theoretical ideas I sketched in Section 2.3: people with a higher perceived quality of life are more likely to volunteer, and sustained volunteering can, in turn, enhance various facets of well-being. What varies across studies is (a) how QoL is measured, (b) which forms of civil society engagement are examined (participation, membership, volunteering), and (c) whether researchers control for the resources and constraints that shape who can volunteer in the first place.

A significant portion of the literature is cross-sectional, single surveys that link self-rated QoL or life satisfaction to whether someone volunteers. Studies of young people and emerging adults consistently show that those involved in formal groups, civic activities, or volunteering report higher social well-being (integration, contribution, coherence, acceptance, actualization) (Zambianchi, 2016). Pandemic-era student research points in the same direction: students who threw themselves into prosocial projects during lockdown reported higher subjective well-being than peers who stayed on the sidelines (Maier et al., 2021). Danish civil society work also finds positive associations: members and especially volunteers score higher on self-assessed QoL than non-engaged adults, even after accounting for background factors (Ibsen et al., 2023).

More substantial evidence comes from studies that track people over time. In older adult samples, researchers have demonstrated that quality of life improves when individuals volunteer and declines when they stop, which strongly suggests a causal relationship between volunteering and well-being (Ang & Malhotra, 2024). Pandemic studies that surveyed the same students across weeks also found QoL gains following prosocial engagement spikes (Maier et al., 2021). These designs do not solve every endogeneity problem, but they do make it harder to argue that QoL selects people into volunteering without any feedback.

One of the most valuable contributions from Ibsen et al. (2023) is the emphasis on distinguishing between “participation,” “membership,” and “volunteering,” while

acknowledging their overlapping nature. Many earlier surveys throw all civil-society activity into one bucket. When you disentangle them, volunteering tends to carry the strongest QoL association, likely because it demands more commitment and embeds people deeper in identity-rich networks (Ibsen et al., 2023). Youth studies echo this pattern: mere attendance does not predict social well-being as strongly as active, prosocial engagement (Zambianchi, 2016).

Results also depend on how researchers define and measure QoL. Some use single life-satisfaction items, while others, such as the Danish study, combine life satisfaction with satisfaction in social relations and future expectations (Ibsen et al., 2023). Social well-being research utilizes multidimensional indices (Zambianchi, 2016). Broader indices, such as the Composite Global Well-Being Index (CGWBI), a multidimensional human development measure spanning ten domains: safety and security; health; education; housing; environment and living space; employment; income; life satisfaction; community and social life; and civic engagement, constructed using both subjective survey data and socioeconomic indicators(Chaaban et al., 2016). The idea is that positive associations appear even when QoL is strictly subjective. However, the size and significance can shift when domains like financial security or national pride are included. Studies that combine subjective and objective indicators at the neighborhood level reveal similar complexities and argue for tailoring indicators to context (Orhan, Kahraman, & Güngördü, 2020).

Research indicates that mastery, social support, identity, and capabilities are all linked to the quality of life through volunteering, as observed in real-world data. Older adults report greater personal mastery after volunteering (Ang & Malhotra, 2024). Students describe rebuilt routines, reduced loneliness, and renewed purpose during lockdown volunteering (Maier et al., 2021). Youth engaged in civic groups display higher social integration and contribute more

(Zambianchi, 2016). Danish volunteers spend more time, feel more attached to their associations, and rate those memberships as more important to their lives than ordinary members do, which fits both Lim and Putnam's network argument and Stebbins's serious-leisure logic (Ibsen et al., 2023). One longitudinal piece that drives home the "conditions matter" point is the MIDUS study of 2,677 volunteers.

Studies that bother to control for income, education, health, or social background still find favorable QoL volunteering links, but they also show uneven access. Volunteering is more prevalent in affluent communities (Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025). Digital divides add a new layer: mindful, balanced tech use can support well-being and facilitate engagement, but overuse or poor access undermine both (Tayiz et al., 2025).

I also have to account for the fact that "community" now lives online. Online communities allow people to choose when and how to participate, interact in a many-to-many manner, and even remain anonymous if desired (Han, Jun, & Kim, 2019). When members engage, helping, sharing information, and coordinating action, they start to see the group as effective, not just themselves. The literature refers to this collective efficacy as a belief that "we can accomplish things well together" (Han et al., 2019). That belief, in turn, feeds into classic social well-being dimensions, such as feeling integrated and believing that one's contributions matter, and it also predicts whether people stick around and advocate for the group (community loyalty) (Han et al., 2019). This gives me one more reason to model digital access and engagement separately: if people never get through the digital door, they never reach the efficacy and belonging payoffs that boost QoL. Public-health researchers warn that if programs ignore these structural and digital barriers, they risk reinforcing the very inequalities they aim to reduce (Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025). That warning is consistent with my finding that perceived QoL's boost to volunteering is modest once I account for resources like income and internet access.

What do I take from this evidence? First, the positive association is remarkably consistent across age groups and national contexts, encompassing older adults, students, and general adult samples; however, effect sizes vary depending on the measurement and controls. Second, directionality matters: longitudinal work shows volunteering can genuinely enhance QoL, not just vice versa. Third, the depth and form of engagement (volunteering vs. passive membership) make a difference; fourth, resources, both material and digital, filter who receives these benefits. Finally, the more carefully researchers specify QoL domains and engagement types, the more precise the story becomes. That is why I rely on a composite QoL measure and include digital inclusion and meeting attendance in my models: it aligns my analysis with what the empirical literature says drives both participation and well-being.

One recent take I like uses STEM backgrounds and information-processing skills as a proxy for human capital. Adults with STEM training or stronger literacy/numeracy skills have better access to formal volunteer roles, partly because organizations perceive them as “capable” and partly because these skills enhance political efficacy and confidence (Yamashita et al., 2023). The flip side is that lower skills can quietly exclude people, either because they feel less capable or because the volunteer market screens them out. That maps onto what I am seeing: education and internet access narrow the gap far more than a simple desire to help story would suggest.

Another relevant aspect is the work on social cohesion and volunteering. Davies and colleagues point out that many studies assume a relationship between cohesion and volunteering, but almost no one actually tests which causes which, and worse, some definitions even incorporate volunteering into the definition of “cohesion,” making the whole thing tautological (Davies, Abrams, Horsham, & Lalot, 2024). They separate the two and use longitudinal data to show that it can run both ways: higher cohesion (stronger social relations, belonging, and orientation to the common good) predicts later volunteering, and volunteering

itself can boost feelings of connectedness and community belonging (Davies et al., 2024). I like this framing because it reinforces my decision to keep cohesion-type variables (e.g., meeting attendance, trust proxies) distinct from volunteering in the model.

### Section 2.5: Gaps in the Literature and Conceptual Modeling

Although numerous studies have explored the link between quality of life (QoL) and volunteering, gaps remain in how these constructs are conceptualized and measured. QoL is often defined broadly in the literature, with some studies relying on single-item life satisfaction measures and others using multidimensional indices incorporating emotional, economic, and social factors (Orhan et al., 2020; Zambianchi, 2016). These variations reflect the complexity of the construct but also present challenges for comparability across studies. Some measures even include civic or political participation as indicators of QoL, which complicates efforts to examine engagement as a dependent variable. To avoid such overlap and maintain conceptual clarity, this study operationalizes QoL as a composite of six subjective indicators: **life satisfaction**, **economic outlook**, **financial expectations**, **financial worry**, **pride in national conditions**, and **happiness with national conditions**. These were selected based on their coherence in factor analysis and alignment with multidimensional models of well-being.

Similarly, volunteering is measured in diverse ways across the literature. Some studies conflate volunteering with broader forms of civic engagement, including political participation or social cohesion, while others focus more narrowly on active, time-bound volunteer work. These differences can obscure distinct mechanisms linking QoL and engagement. For example, while generalized trust may support civic participation, it does not capture the behavioral dimension of volunteering itself. This study focuses specifically on self-reported volunteering activity in the past twelve months to isolate a clear and commonly studied form of community

engagement, aligning with prior research that treats volunteering as a behavioral outcome rather than an attitudinal or relational one (Davies et al., 2024; Talò, 2018).

While the direction of association remains unclear, some longitudinal studies have observed that individuals who volunteer tend to report improved well-being over time. However, most research does not formally test the pathways through which this association might occur. Concepts like “mastery” or “belonging” are frequently invoked as explanatory mechanisms, but they are often discussed in theory rather than examined through direct measurement or mediation analysis. One exception is the MIDUS work: over twenty years, volunteers who felt “a lot” of respect for what they did kept volunteering and reported higher daily positive affect and overall well-being; those who felt little respect did not see the same payoff (Tse, 2020).

We already know that volunteering is higher in wealthier areas (Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025). Adding the tech layer makes it even clearer: balanced, mindful tech use can help people connect and feel better, but overuse or lack of access can harm both well-being and engagement (Tayiz et al., 2025). Public health professionals warn that ignoring these barriers would recreate the same inequalities we claim to want to address (Armour, Yarwood, McLaughlin, & Robinson, 2025). In my models, once I control for income, education, and reliable home internet, the QoL “boost” to volunteering gets smaller. That aligns with what the literature suggests but rarely directly demonstrates.

Fourth, almost nobody brings the online piece into the QoL volunteering story. “Community” now includes busy, many-to-many online spaces. Engagement can foster collective efficacy, social contribution, and loyalty, which, in turn, contribute to social well-being (Han et al., 2019). However, not everyone can or wants to plug in. Most studies treat

engagement as if it is only an offline phenomenon. I flag that and treat digital inclusion as a moderator, rather than pretending it does not matter.

Finally, skills and signals are missing. Using Schuller's "three capitals" concept (human, social, and identity), recent work shows that STEM backgrounds and strong literacy/numeracy skills act as gateways into formal volunteering. Organizations read those people as "capable," and the skills boost confidence and political efficacy (Yamashita et al., 2023). Flip it around, and low skills quietly shut doors; people either shut themselves out or get shut out. That matches what I am seeing: education and internet access close the gap more than a simple wanting to help story would suggest.

From all of this, my model stays modest. I estimate the direct path from perceived QoL to volunteering. I treat income, education, and digital access as moderators, not just background controls, because the evidence says they decide who can turn good intentions into action. I keep cohesion separate from volunteering to avoid definitional overlap, but I still acknowledge (following Davies et al.) that the two probably feed each other over time. I assume there are mediators, such as meaning, mastery, or belonging, sitting in the middle, even if my data only allows me to hint at them. I am also clear about what I cannot do here: I cannot test the reverse path in this cross-section, I do not have a "felt respect" item, and I cannot model the intensity of volunteering the way I would like.

Bottom line: I tightened the definitions I can control, separated concepts that should not be combined, and placed resources and digital access where they belong, in the pathway that enables or blocks volunteering. That is the cleanest way for me to answer how far perceived QoL goes in explaining who shows up to volunteer.

## Section 2.6: Conceptual Framework

The literature consistently links higher perceived quality of life (QoL) to greater civic engagement, especially volunteering. While the strength of that link varies depending on how QoL is measured and whether structural factors are controlled, the relationship holds across age groups and national contexts. Longitudinal research also demonstrates that volunteering can enhance well-being over time, rather than the other way around (Ang & Malhotra, 2024; Tse, 2020). Nevertheless, that cycle is uneven. Structural resources, such as income, education, and internet access, shape who can act on a desire to help. Digital connectivity offers both opportunities and barriers; well-designed, accessible platforms reduce friction, but digital exclusion or overload can block engagement (Tayiz et al., 2025). In short, QoL may motivate volunteering, but access determines who shows up.

These findings directly inform the approach I took in building my model. I treat QoL as the main predictor, measured through a composite of six ANES items aligned with multidimensional well-being research. I continue to volunteer, recognizing that digital access, education, income, and race are not just background traits, but rather enabling conditions that shape our lives. I intentionally avoid collapsing social cohesion into volunteering, following Davies et al. (2024), who warn that combining the two concepts makes it difficult to determine causality. Cohesion and volunteering are likely to reinforce each other over time; however, for this analysis, they are considered separate.

This framework also draws from the “three capitals” model (Yamashita et al., 2023), which helps explain who even feels able to engage. Human capital (skills, education, digital fluency),

social capital (trust, networks), and identity capital (the belief that one's contributions matter) are all associated with participation. Respect and recognition also play a quiet yet crucial role; volunteers who feel their work is valued are more likely to continue and report higher levels of well-being (Tse, 2020). Taken together, this model assumes that QoL can drive engagement, but only if structural conditions allow that motivation to translate into action.

# Chapter 3: Data and Methodology

## Section 3.1: Introduction

This chapter outlines the data sources and the methodology employed to examine the relationship between residents' perceptions of quality of life (QoL) and community engagement through volunteering. The research utilizes secondary data from the 2024 American National Election Studies (ANES) Time Series Study, which provides a representative sample of U.S. voters. The methodology includes descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and binary logistic regression to test the hypothesis that perceptions of QoL associate with volunteering behavior.

## Section 3.2: Data Source

The primary dataset used in this study is the 2024 ANES Time Series Study, which includes pre- and post-presidential election survey data collected from U.S. eligible voters. The study

incorporates both fresh cross-sectional samples and panel data from the 2016-2020 ANES respondents.

## Sample Structure

- **Fresh In-Person Sample:** This sample comprises 1,042 respondents who were interviewed face-to-face before the election and 925 of the same respondents who were re-interviewed after the election.
- **Fresh Web Sample:** This includes 2,308 respondents who completed the survey online prior to the election, and 1,969 of the same respondents were re-interviewed after the election.
- **Panel Sample:** In addition to the newly recruited participants in 2024, the ANES study also re-interviewed a group of respondents who had previously participated in both the 2016 and 2020 ANES waves. This longitudinal group is referred to as the panel sample. Of these returning participants, 2,171 completed the pre-election survey, and 2,070 completed the post-election re-interview in 2024. This panel design enables the analysis of individual-level changes in attitudes and behaviors over time across multiple election cycles.

The final dataset used for analysis included 4,145 cases after listwise deletion of missing data for key variables. The data was collected using a mixed-mode design (face-to-face, internet, video, phone, and paper-and-pencil) to capture a broad spectrum of participation across demographics and technological access.

## Section 3.3: Variables

### Dependent Variable (Volunteering Behavior):

The dependent variable in this study is whether an individual has volunteered in the past 12 months **(Question: In the past 12 months, did you spend any time volunteering for any organization or association?)**. This is a binary variable coded as 1 for those who volunteered and 0 for those who did not. Volunteer behavior was measured using a direct survey question asking respondents about their participation in formal and informal volunteering activities.

### Independent Variable (Perceived Quality of Life):

The primary independent variable is residents' perceived quality of life, operationalized as a composite factor score derived from exploratory factor analysis of six survey items, each measured on a Likert scale. These items are: **life satisfaction** (1 = Not satisfied at all to 5 = Extremely satisfied), **economic expectations** (1 = Get worse to 3 = Get better), **personal financial outlook** (1 = Much worse off to 5 = Much better off), **financial worry** (1 = Not at all worried to 5 = Extremely worried), **happiness with the country** (1 = Not at all to 5 = Extremely), and **pride in the country** (1 = Not at all to 5 = Extremely). Higher factor scores indicate greater overall subjective well-being.

The factor analysis yielded a single factor score, which was used as the measure of perceived QoL. Higher values on this factor score represent better perceptions of QoL.

**Control Variables:**

Several control variables were included in the model to account for demographic and socio-economic factors that might be associated with volunteering behavior. These include:

- **Income:** An ordinal variable representing household income. Scale of (1-28). Range: Under $5,000 to $250,000 or more.
- **Education:** Ordinal variable indicating the highest level of education completed. Scale of (9-16). Range: High School graduate to Doctorate.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Categorical variable representing race/ethnicity (White, Black, Hispanic, Other).
- **Internet Access:** A binary variable indicating whether the respondent has internet access at home.

**Section 3.4: Methodology**

**Descriptive Statistics:**

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the sample's characteristics and provide an overview of the key variables. These statistics included frequencies, means, and standard deviations for both the dependent and independent variables.*

***See (Table 1) Below***

**Factor Analysis:**

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on six items related to perceived QoL (life satisfaction, economic outlook, financial worry, happiness with the country, etc.). The purpose of this analysis was to reduce these items into a single composite score. The analysis was based on principal axis factoring with varimax rotation to extract the underlying factor structure. The factor score derived from the EFA was used as the measure of perceived QoL in the logistic regression model.

**Logistic Regression Analysis:**

A binary logistic regression model was used to examine the relationship between perceived QoL and volunteering behavior. Logistic regression was chosen because the dependent variable (volunteering) is binary. The model also controlled for income, education, race/ethnicity, and internet access. The regression model allows for the estimation of odds ratios to determine the likelihood of volunteering based on the independent variables.

The model is specified as follows:

$$P(\text{Volunteering} = 1) = \frac{1}{1+e^{-(\beta_0+\beta_1 \text{QoL}+\beta_2 \text{Income}+\beta_3 \text{Education}+\beta_4 \text{Race}+\beta_5 \text{Internet})}}$$

Where:

- **P(Volunteering = 1)** is the probability of a respondent volunteering in the past year.
- **QoL** is the perceived quality of life score.
- **Income**, **Education**, **Race**, and **Internet** are control variables.

## Section 3.5: Weights and Sampling

The dataset is unweighted for this analysis. While the ANES provides post-stratification weights to adjust for sample design and non-response, no weights were applied in this study. This decision was based on the research aim, which focuses on understanding relationships in the observed sample rather than producing population estimates. However, for those wishing to generalize findings to the broader population, applying the provided weights and using complex sampling procedures would be appropriate.

## Section 3.6: Summary

This chapter outlined the dataset and methodology used in this study. The 2024 ANES Time Series Study provides a strong data source for examining the relationship between perceived QoL and volunteering behavior. The methodology included descriptive statistics, factor analysis to construct a composite QoL measure, and logistic regression to assess the likelihood of volunteering. The next chapter will present the results of the logistic regression analysis, providing insights into how perceived QoL, along with key socio-economic variables, is associated with volunteer participation.

# Chapter 4: Analysis and Results

## Section 4.1: Sample and Key Variables (Descriptives)

Most people in this dataset are online (97%), predominantly White non-Hispanic (72%), and approximately a quarter reported volunteering in the past year (27%). Income and education skew relatively high (mean household income category ≈ 18 ($65,000-$69,999) on the 1–28 ladder; mean education ≈ “some college”)

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How satisfied is R with life | 5195 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3.59 | .976 | .953 |
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | 5207 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2.09 | .754 | .568 |
| R how much better or worse off financially next year | 5222 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3.23 | .902 | .814 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | 5242 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3.71 | 1.163 | 1.352 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | 5266 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.01 | 1.007 | 1.014 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | 5259 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2.04 | 1.064 | 1.133 |
| Has R in past 12 months: done any volunteer work | 4760 | 1 | 0 | 1 | .27 | .444 | .197 |
| Total (household) income | 4965 | 27 | 1 | 28 | 17.70 | 8.467 | 71.695 |
| Highest level of education | 4927 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 11.76 | 2.004 | 4.014 |
| Does R use Internet at home | 5257 | 1 | 0 | 1 | .97 | .179 | .032 |
| R self-identified race/ethnicity | 5454 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 1.61 | 1.196 | 1.430 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 4145 | | | | | | |

***(Table 1: Variable Selection)***

- Life Satisfaction: Mean = 3.59 Median = 4.00 Mode = 4 (Scale 1-5)
- Happiness with the country: Mean = 2.01 Median = 2.00 Mode = 1 (Scale 1-5) (Lots of "Not Happy")
- Pride in the country: Mean = 2.04 Median = 2.00 Mode = 1 (Scale 1-5)
- Financial Worry: Mean = 3.71 Median = 4.00 Mode = 4 (Scale 1-5) (Leaning Pretty Worried)
- Volunteering Last 12 Months: 27% "Yes"

## Section 4.2: Frequencies

The frequency tables confirm the spread I mentioned. Most folks land in the middle on money expectations and are split on whether the economy is getting better or worse. Only tiny fractions refused or were unsure.*

***See Appendix A for a complete list of frequency tables***

## Section 4.3: Building the Quality of Life Factor

I selected six items from the ANES 2024 survey that capture different dimensions of perceived quality of life: (1) overall life satisfaction, (2) expectations about the national economy, (3) expected personal financial situation in the next year, (4) worry about personal finances, (5) feelings of happiness when thinking about the country, and (6) feelings of pride in

the country. These items reflect both individual-level well-being and broader affective evaluations of collective conditions.

To ensure comparability across variables with different scales and response formats, I standardized each item by converting it into a z-score (mean of 0, standard deviation of 1). This transformation enabled me to account for variation in scale length and treat each variable as contributing equally to the analysis.

I then conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring with a varimax rotation, which assumes the underlying factors may be correlated. The goal was to assess whether these six items loaded onto a familiar latent construct representing perceived quality of life, or whether they reflected distinct but related dimensions. I examined factor loadings, eigenvalues, and the scree plot to determine the number of meaningful factors to retain.

Checks:

- KMO = .641 (fine for an exploratory factor)
- Bartlett's $\chi^2(15) = 5933.45$, $p < .001$ (items correlate)
- One clear factor (eigenvalue = 2.28) explains approximately 28% of the variance after extraction. The "country" items load the heaviest (.79 for happy, .75 for proud). The financial worry and life satisfaction items load modestly (.34-.42).

The exploratory factor analysis revealed that all six items loaded onto a single, clear factor, with an eigenvalue of 2.28. This factor explains approximately 28% of the total variance, suggesting that the items share a common underlying theme related to how people perceive their quality of life. Two items loaded the strongest: happiness with the country (.79) and pride

in the country (.75). These results show that national-level feelings were most closely tied to the overall factor.

The other items had more modest loadings. Financial worry, life satisfaction, and personal financial outlook ranged from 0.34 to 0.42. Although these were lower, I kept them in the model because they capture important aspects of personal and financial quality of life. Life satisfaction, for example, directly asks how satisfied people feel about their lives overall. Economic expectations (expectations for the national economy over the next 12 months) and personal financial outlook (how much better or worse off someone thinks they will be next year) provide insight into how people perceive their future stability.

Including all six items, even those with moderate loadings, helps create a more complete and balanced measure of perceived quality of life. It combines both national and personal perspectives, which better reflect how people form judgments about their overall well-being.

***(Table 2: Total Variance Explained)***

**Total Variance Explained**

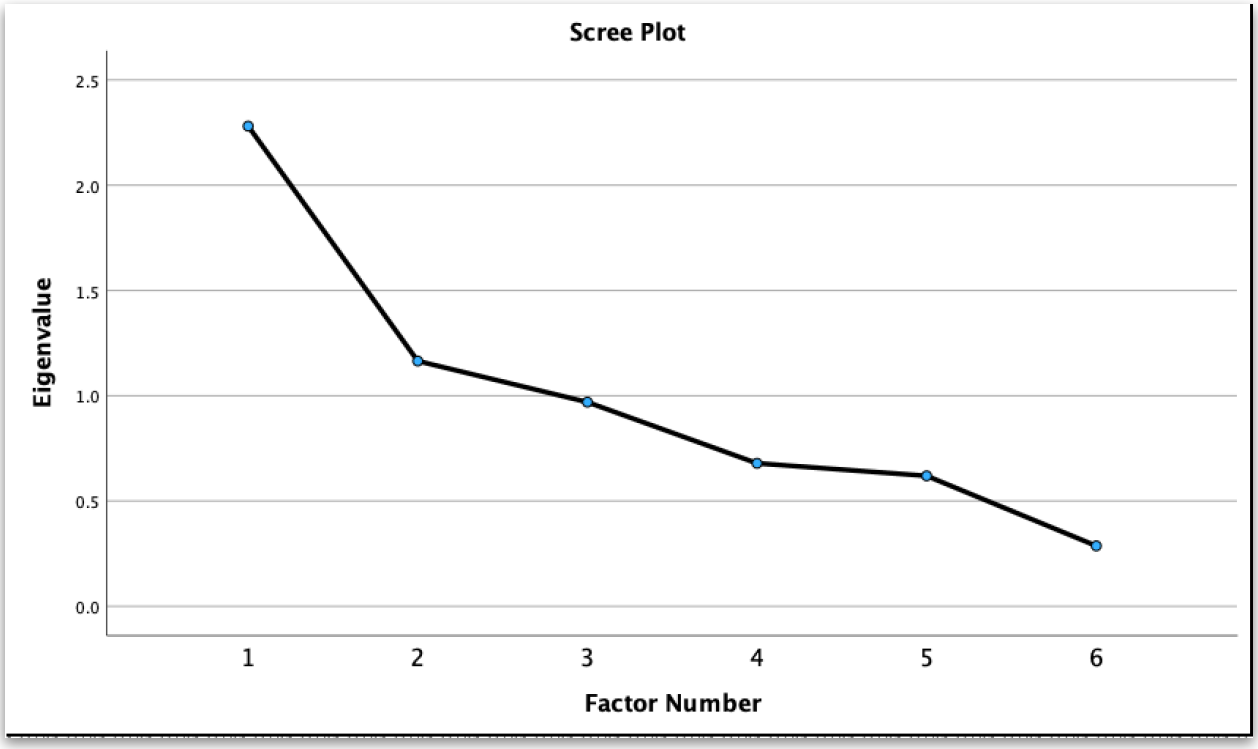
| | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Factor | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 2.280 | 38.006 | 38.006 | 1.699 | 28.316 | 28.316 |
| 2 | 1.165 | 19.411 | 57.417 | | | |
| 3 | .970 | 16.159 | 73.576 | | | |
| 4 | .679 | 11.318 | 84.893 | | | |
| 5 | .619 | 10.325 | 95.218 | | | |
| 6 | .287 | 4.782 | 100.000 | | | |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Although two factors had eigenvalues greater than 1.0, I chose to retain only one factor based on theoretical fit and my goal of identifying a single, interpretable construct. The first

factor had an eigenvalue of 2.280 and explained 28.3% of the variance after extraction, which I considered sufficient for capturing the shared meaning across the six items. I was primarily looking for a factor that accounted for at least 25% of the variance and aligned with my conceptual definition of perceived quality of life. The second factor dropped off considerably in eigenvalue, and the scree plot supported a one-factor solution. Including only the first factor also helped keep the model more straightforward and more focused, consistent with my overall research design.

***(Table 3: Eigenvalue Test/Scree Plot)***



***(Table 4: Factor Analysis Loading)***

| Factor Matrix[a] | |
|---|---|
| | Factor 1 |
| How satisfied is R with life | .340 |
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .416 |
| R how much better or worse off financially next year | .321 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | .338 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .792 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .753 |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

In interpreting the factor analysis results, although items such as life satisfaction, personal financial outlook, and financial worry loaded more modestly (ranging from 0.34 to 0.42), theoretical grounds support their inclusion in a single composite. The World Health Organization defines quality of life as an integrated construct that encompasses both personal feelings and community perceptions; therefore, retaining both individual-level and national-

level items preserves this holistic view. When the six items were split into personal versus community-focused factors, the two scores remained highly correlated ($r = 0.62$), and the unified factor continued to capture the core of perceived well-being straightforwardly. By keeping all items together, the composite measure reflects the full range of subjective evaluations that drive civic engagement, from personal satisfaction to collective pride. With this measure established, I next examine how perceived quality of life predicts the likelihood of volunteering using binary logistic regression.

## Section 4.4: Binary Logistic Regression (Who Volunteers)

To assess the relationship between perceived quality of life and volunteering, I ran a binary logistic regression predicting whether respondents had volunteered in the past 12 months (1 = yes, 0 = no). The final model included the quality of life (QoL) factor score, income, education, race/ethnicity (entered as dummy variables), and internet use at home. The overall model fit was statistically significant, $\chi^2(9) = 240.16$, $p < .001$, with a Nagelkerke $R^2$ of .081. The model correctly classified 71.6% of cases, which is essentially the same as the null model's 71.8%.

Internet access at home remained a significant predictor, with nearly double the odds of volunteering (OR ≈ 1.98, $p = .038$) when controlling for other factors. Education had a positive association (OR ≈ 1.218 per unit, $p < .001$), and income showed a more minor but positive effect (OR ≈ 1.022 per unit, $p < .001$). The QoL factor produced an odds ratio of 1.129 for a one-standard-deviation increase, indicating a modest association with volunteering. For someone with a baseline volunteering probability of 20 percent (odds = 0.25), a one-standard-deviation increase in QoL raises the odds to 0.28 and the probability to approximately 22.0 percent, representing a 2.0-point absolute increase and a 10 percent relative gain. Racial and ethnic

differences were mixed: Hispanic respondents had significantly lower odds than white respondents (OR ≈ 0.70, p = 0.006), whereas the difference for Black respondents was not statistically significant (OR ≈ 0.85, p = 0.254).

***(Table 5: Binary Regression)***

**Variables in the Equation**

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1[a] | REGR factor score | .121 | .042 | 8.399 | 1 | .004 | 1.129 |
| | Total (household) income | .022 | .005 | 19.179 | 1 | <.001 | 1.022 |
| | Highest level of education | .197 | .020 | 98.904 | 1 | <.001 | 1.218 |
| | R self-identified race/ethnicity | | | 20.356 | 5 | .001 | |
| | White, non-Hispanic | -.157 | .138 | 1.300 | 1 | .254 | .854 |
| | Black non-Hispanic | -.362 | .132 | 7.520 | 1 | .006 | .696 |
| | Hispanic | -.624 | .207 | 9.066 | 1 | .003 | .536 |
| | Asian or Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic | -.245 | .560 | .190 | 1 | .663 | .783 |
| | Native American/Alaska Native or other race, non-Hispanic | .307 | .187 | 2.702 | 1 | .100 | 1.360 |
| | Does R use Internet at home | .684 | .330 | 4.283 | 1 | .038 | 1.982 |
| | Constant | -4.348 | .391 | 123.652 | 1 | <.001 | .013 |

# Chapter 5: Discussion, Policy Recommendations, & Conclusion

## Section 5.1: Revisiting my Research Question and Main Findings

I set out to answer: To what extent do residents' perceptions of quality of life associate with community engagement through volunteering? People who feel better about their lives are more likely to volunteer, but the effect is small once resources are taken into account. In

practical terms, a one-standard-deviation bump in quality of life nudges the chance of volunteering from about 20 percent to about 22 percent. Resources matter more. Reliable home internet is associated with nearly twice the odds of volunteering, even after controlling for other factors. Education exhibits a steady relationship with participation, with each step up in schooling associated with higher odds of involvement. Income has a smaller, positive association. These patterns align with everyday experience: it is easier to find, sign up for, and manage volunteer roles when you have connectivity, relevant skills, and some financial and time cushion.

The results, broken down by race and ethnicity, reveal uneven access and opportunity. Hispanic respondents are less likely to volunteer than white respondents after accounting for resources and quality of life, and Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander respondents also show lower odds. In contrast, the difference for Black respondents is not statistically significant. The practical takeaway is to lower the cost of participation rather than relying solely on morale. Make roles easy to find online, expand broadband access, allow quick mobile sign-ups, and design short, flexible tasks. Recruit outside the usual circles and share information in multiple languages and formats, making opportunities visible to a broader audience. Two limits matter for interpretation: the data are cross-sectional, so we cannot determine whether volunteering improves quality of life or vice versa, and the model only classifies volunteers slightly better than a simple baseline, which means that many unmeasured factors still matter. Overall, feeling good about life helps somewhat, but practical supports and access are the more significant factors.

**Section 5.2: Theoretical Implications:**

These results offer insight into the relationship between quality of life, social capital, and community engagement. Social capital theory emphasizes the importance of trust, shared norms, and strong social relationships in encouraging people to participate in civic life. The findings suggest that while a positive quality of life can contribute to volunteering, its influence is more limited when broader structural resources are taken into account. How people feel about their lives may spark an interest or openness to engage. However, the ability to follow through depends heavily on the circumstances and opportunities available to them. In other words, the relationship between quality of life and engagement is not purely about attitudes; it is also about whether people have the capacity and access to act on those attitudes.

This perspective alters our understanding of the role of well-being in fostering social capital. Quality of life may help create the mindset and willingness to connect with others. However, the actual building of social capital relies on the environments and supports that make participation possible. A person with high life satisfaction but limited access to transportation, digital tools, or community events may still struggle to engage. Likewise, someone with strong resources but a lower quality of life may participate if other motivations, like personal values or community identity, are strong enough. These findings highlight that social capital is shaped by both individual outlooks and the tangible conditions in which people live. This combined influence explains why communities with similar levels of well-being can have very different rates of civic engagement, and why improving resources alongside well-being is the most effective way to strengthen participation.

### Section 5.3: Policy Recommendations

While perceived quality of life had only a modest direct effect on volunteering in the regression model, other significant predictors, such as having home internet access, were strongly associated with civic participation and closely tied to broader experiences of well-being. These findings suggest that although improving the subjective quality of life may encourage volunteering, it is often the presence of enabling conditions, such as digital access and inclusive civic spaces, that make participation possible. These structural supports contribute to core dimensions of quality of life, including financial confidence, social connection, and pride in one's community.

The following three policy recommendations aim not only to increase volunteering directly but also to improve the underlying conditions that support residents' perceptions of their lives and communities. Each recommendation is grounded in this study's findings and includes a realistic timeline for implementation.

### 1. Expand Home Internet Access Through Local Partnerships and Federal Renewal Efforts (Within 12 Months)

***Summary:***

Access to reliable internet at home was associated with more than twice the odds of volunteering, even after controlling for income, education, and other factors. Beyond enabling online civic engagement, internet access reduces financial worry, improves confidence in the future, and connects residents to employment, education, public benefits, and social networks. These connections strengthen life satisfaction and perceived quality of life.

***Background:***

The now-expired federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) provided low-cost broadband to low-income households and served as a proven model for future federal

investment. In the absence of ACP funding, local governments can implement interim solutions by subsidizing broadband through general funds, securing philanthropic partnerships, and installing Wi-Fi hotspots in high-traffic community locations such as schools, libraries, and senior centers. Community-based organizations can also enhance digital literacy and provide residents with devices to ensure they can fully utilize internet access.

***Implementation Plan:***

The first step in implementation is to identify high-priority neighborhoods with low broadband subscription rates using local and FCC data. Local governments can then negotiate partnership agreements with multiple internet service providers to offer reduced-cost plans for eligible households. In parallel, public Wi-Fi hotspots should be installed in targeted community locations, ensuring access for residents who cannot yet secure service at home. Collaboration with nonprofit organizations will be essential for providing digital literacy training and distributing affordable or refurbished devices to residents in need.

***Implementation Challenges:***

Sustaining funding beyond the first year of implementation is a central challenge, as many broadband initiatives face budget shortfalls once initial grants or allocations expire. Coordinating with internet service providers can be difficult when companies have differing infrastructure capacities, pricing structures, and service priorities. In rural or geographically isolated areas, the high cost and technical complexity of broadband installation may delay progress. Additionally, even where access is expanded, residents may face barriers to adoption if digital literacy programs are not accessible, culturally relevant, or well-publicized.

***Success Metrics:***

The success of this policy can be measured by the percentage increase in broadband subscriptions in targeted areas within the first 12 months of implementation. Tracking the

number of new public Wi-Fi hotspots installed and their average monthly usage will provide additional insight into reach and accessibility. Civic engagement outcomes should be evaluated by measuring growth in volunteer registrations from households that have gained subsidized internet or devices. Finally, progress can be assessed by reductions in the proportion of residents who report internet cost or lack of access as barriers to civic participation.

**2. Revitalize Community Meeting Spaces as Anchors of Local Belonging (Within 5 Years)**

***Summary:***

The analysis points to two practical levers for growing volunteering: improving quality of life (QoL) and reducing barriers to participation. Revitalized community spaces can do both. They offer low-friction spaces where people can build social ties that support volunteering, and they provide digital access and simple sign-up pathways that are linked to higher participation.

***Background:***

Community centers, libraries, schools, and multipurpose civic halls are hubs of local life. They support components of the QoL measure used in this study, including pride, social connection, and a shared sense of place. They are also natural sites to close digital gaps by offering reliable wireless internet (Wi-Fi), shared devices, and help with online forms. Funding can be obtained from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), state or local capital budgets, and partnerships with libraries, parks, and nonprofit organizations. CDBG can support public facility rehabilitation, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility upgrades, and program costs when projects primarily benefit low and moderate-income residents.

***Implementation Plan:***

In years 1–2, use community input to select priority sites. Complete essential repairs, ADA improvements, lighting, and safety work. Install reliable broadband, public Wi-Fi, and a small device bank for on-site sign-ups. Pilot quarterly volunteer fairs and a monthly “Get

Involved" night with on-the-spot enrollment. In years 3–4, add flexible rooms for classes, child care during events, and multilingual outreach. Equip spaces for hybrid participation, allowing residents to join from home. Launch a simple citywide events calendar and a volunteer portal with quick response (QR) codes posted in each facility. In year 5, move from pilots to sustained programming, secure multi-year operating support through CDBG cycles and local budgets, and formalize partnerships with community-based organizations to co-host regular events.

***Implementation Challenges:***

Competition for CDBG funds is high, and upgrades must be balanced against other priorities like housing and infrastructure. Renovations can disrupt momentum if programming pauses. To maintain inclusion, schedule events at convenient times, provide childcare when possible, ensure multilingual outreach, and coordinate with public transportation. Clear roles across departments and nonprofit partners are necessary to avoid gaps in scheduling, maintenance, and program delivery.

***Success Metrics:***

Success can be tracked through completed facility improvements, including accessibility and connectivity; measures of access such as unique Wi-Fi logins, device checkouts, and the number of residents assisted with online volunteer sign-ups; engagement indicators including counts of civic events hosted, average and repeat attendance, and the number of partner organizations co-hosting; volunteering outcomes such as registrations initiated on-site or via posted QR codes and completion and retention at 30 and 90 days; and short resident surveys that track changes in pride, connection, and perceived opportunity among facility users.

**3. Implement Local Quality of Life Surveys to Inform Civic Strategy (Within 6 to 12 Months)**

***Summary:***

While this study used nationally representative data from the American National Election Studies (ANES), such datasets lack the local specificity needed for targeted civic engagement planning. The quality of life factor in this study included dimensions such as life satisfaction, financial confidence, and pride in one's country, which are not routinely measured at the city or neighborhood level. Implementing locally focused surveys would enable municipalities and nonprofits to better understand community conditions and tailor strategies that address specific needs and opportunities.

***Background:***

Local governments and community organizations often rely on broad demographic or economic indicators to guide civic planning. While these measures provide important context, they do not capture residents' lived experiences, perceptions, and social connections, which can directly influence civic participation. A locally administered quality of life survey can provide timely and actionable insights into how residents view their community, the barriers they face to engagement, and the factors that contribute to their sense of belonging. By tracking these perceptions annually, leaders can evaluate the effectiveness of outreach programs and adapt strategies in response to changing conditions.

***Implementation Plan:***

Municipalities and nonprofit partners should collaborate to design a brief, standardized quality of life survey that is easy for residents to complete. The survey should be distributed both online and in print to ensure accessibility for all populations, including those without reliable internet access. Topics should include overall life satisfaction, financial stability, perceptions of safety, social connections, and opportunities for participation. Results should be analyzed at the neighborhood level to identify geographic disparities and inform resource

allocation. Findings should be made public through community reports and presentations, allowing residents to see how their feedback shapes policy and programming.

***Implementation Challenges:***

Developing a survey that is both comprehensive and concise can be difficult, as longer instruments may discourage participation while shorter ones may omit important dimensions. Achieving representative participation across demographic groups requires intentional outreach and multiple distribution channels. There may also be skepticism among residents about how the data will be used, which means trust-building and transparency will be critical. Funding for survey administration and analysis must be secured on an ongoing basis to maintain annual implementation.

***Success Metrics:***

The success of this policy can be measured by survey participation rates and the diversity of respondents compared to the community's demographic profile. Tracking changes in reported quality of life scores over time will indicate whether conditions are improving in key areas. Another indicator of success is the extent to which survey findings are referenced in local strategic plans, budget decisions, and program designs. Follow-up surveys should assess residents' awareness of how their input has influenced policy, which can further strengthen trust and encourage ongoing participation.

## Section 5.4: Limitations

When interpreting these findings, it is essential to acknowledge several limitations in my approach and data. First, all of our quality-of-life metrics are based on respondents' self-reports, measured at a single point in time. While the six-item composite captures both satisfaction and

outlook, it remains vulnerable to temporary mood swings or the desire to appear more upbeat than one truly feels. In future work, it would be ideal to triangulate these survey responses with more objective indicators, such as actual volunteer site log-ins, neighborhood crime rates, or school attendance statistics, to see how closely people's stated well-being aligns with real-world outcomes.

Second, although I controlled for income, education, race, and internet access, the models inevitably overlook other important barriers that may prevent many from volunteering. Caregiving responsibilities, physical disability, a lack of reliable transportation, or irregular work shifts can all hinder willing volunteers from attending. Adding targeted survey questions about child- or elder-care duties, travel times to the nearest community hall, and the physical accessibility of venues would help us disentangle the resource constraints that prevent people from converting good intentions into action.

Third, using the ANES pre- and post-election surveys shows that feeling better about one's life and volunteering tend to move together over time; however, this does not prove that one causes the other. To nail down cause and effect, we would need closer check-ins, such as asking someone how they feel right before they start volunteering, then again a month later and six months later, to see exactly when and how the boost in well-being kicks in.

Fourth, my "digital inclusion" variable captures only whether respondents have dependable home internet. It does not illuminate their comfort level with web platforms, their frequency of online searches, or whether they know how to navigate sites. Future surveys should probe digital literacy more deeply, maybe by asking how often people attend smartphone or computer classes, or how confident they feel setting up an online meeting. This can help to distinguish connectivity from the digital fluency needed to find and commit to volunteer roles.

Finally, although the ANES sample is nationally representative, it masks important local differences in how civic life operates across urban, suburban, and rural settings, as well as in high-poverty versus affluent neighborhoods. Our six-fold boost from meeting attendance could look very different in a small town with one community hall compared to a large city with dozens of civic organizations. Follow-up work should stratify by community size and socioeconomic context, perhaps oversampling underrepresented regions, to test whether the same outcomes hold true everywhere.

### Section 5.4.1: Methodological Limitations

Several statistical indicators suggest caution in treating the six-item composite measure of perceived quality of life as a purely one-dimensional construct. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.641, which falls just above the acceptable cutoff of 0.60, indicating only borderline factorability. The single-factor solution accounted for 28 percent of the total variance, which is better than chance but lower than ideal for psychological scales, suggesting that the items may tap into related yet distinct aspects of well-being. Factor loadings were also uneven: pride in and happiness about the country loaded very strongly (0.75 to 0.79), while more personal items, such as life satisfaction, financial outlook, and financial worry, loaded more modestly (0.34 to 0.42).

Despite these issues, we retained the single-factor model because it makes practical sense and keeps the analysis simple. The World Health Organization defines quality of life as a combination of personal feelings and community perceptions; therefore, combining all six items into one overall score reflects this holistic view. When we tested a two-factor solution that separated personal from collective items, it explained only a small additional amount of variance, and the two factors remained closely related ($r = 0.62$). That suggests the one-factor

approach captures the essence of perceived well-being. Future research could include more items or explore alternative models, but for now, the single composite score provides the most straightforward measure of overall quality of life.

This study is also limited by the absence of key control variables that may significantly influence volunteering. Notably, we do not include measures of physical health or disability, which can pose significant barriers to participation. Caregiving responsibilities, such as caring for children, older adults, or family members with special needs, are likewise unmeasured, yet they often constrain available time and energy for volunteer work. Finally, we lack data on work schedule flexibility, as irregular or inflexible hours can prevent individuals from engaging in civic activities even when motivation and resources are present. Future research should incorporate indicators of health status, caregiving load, and schedule flexibility to account for the structural constraints on volunteering more comprehensively. By outlining these limitations, I aim to clarify where this study can confidently highlight and where further research is needed to fill the gaps. Each of these next steps would sharpen our understanding of how subjective well-being and real-world resources come together to create lasting civic engagement.

## Section 5.5: Conclusion

In examining whether a stronger sense of well being is associated with volunteering, my analysis provides a clear answer. Residents who feel more satisfied with their lives are more likely to step forward and volunteer. Nevertheless, translating motivation into action depends on practical supports. When someone lacks dependable broadband, a nearby community space, or the flexibility to adjust their daily routine, even highly motivated individuals cannot turn intention into participation.

That connection between inner drive and external barriers runs through every chapter of this research. It tells us that heavy calls to “get involved” are not enough on their own. We should dismantle the logistical hurdles that hold people back, subsidize internet service, and restore and revitalize our community halls. The results point most clearly to digital access and education as supports linked with higher participation; other potential barriers were not measured in this study.

This capstone advances our understanding in three interconnected ways. First, by weaving together a concise, six-item measure of perceived quality of life with controls for income, education, race, and internet access, the author makes the case that psychological motivation and material opportunity operate in tandem. Second, by quantifying the relative contributions of quality of life and practical supports such as education, income, and home internet access, it highlights how both motivation and capacity shape participation and underscores the role of inclusive, face-to-face gathering places alongside digital connections. Third, by tracing every policy recommendation back to the core predictors in my statistical models, it offers a data backed blueprint that local governments, nonprofits, and civic coalitions can adopt immediately.

Looking ahead, I imagine neighborhoods where public Wi Fi is as reliable as street lighting and where each town hall is packed with monthly community gatherings. In that environment, perceived quality of life and civic engagement would not just coexist; they would amplify each other, generating a commonality that lifts us all. The question would no longer be who has the time or resources to help, but rather, how can we build systems so that everyone can find their place in the collective effort to strengthen our communities? By pairing targeted investments with an unwavering commitment to equity, we can transform the widespread goodwill that already exists into reality, unlocking the full potential of volunteering to create healthier, more connected communities.

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# Appendix A

## *(Frequency Tables)*

**Frequencies**

| | | How satisfied is R with life | Economy better or worse in next 12 months | How much better or worse off financially next year | How worried is R about current financial situation | How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | Has R in past 12 months done any volunteer work | Total (household) income | Highest level of education | Has R in past 12 months attended mtg about issue facing community/schools | Does R use Internet at home | R self-identified race/ethnicity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | Valid | 5195 | 5207 | 5222 | 5242 | 5266 | 5259 | 4760 | 4965 | 4927 | 4761 | 5257 | 5454 |
| | Missing | 326 | 314 | 299 | 279 | 255 | 262 | 761 | 556 | 594 | 760 | 264 | 67 |
| Mean | | 3.59 | 2.09 | 3.23 | 3.71 | 2.01 | 2.04 | .27 | 17.70 | 11.76 | .11 | .97 | 1.61 |
| Std. Error of Mean | | .014 | .010 | .012 | .016 | .014 | .015 | .006 | .120 | .029 | .004 | .002 | .016 |
| Median | | 4.00 | 2.00 | 3.00 | 4.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | .00 | 20.00 | 12.00 | .00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Mode | | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 27 | 13 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Std. Deviation | | .976 | .754 | .902 | 1.163 | 1.007 | 1.064 | .444 | 8.467 | 2.004 | .307 | .179 | 1.196 |
| Variance | | .953 | .568 | .814 | 1.352 | 1.014 | 1.133 | .197 | 71.695 | 4.014 | .094 | .032 | 1.430 |
| Range | | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 27 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Minimum | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Maximum | | 5 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 28 | 16 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Sum | | 18628 | 10891 | 16890 | 19426 | 10565 | 10733 | 1283 | 87866 | 57947 | 500 | 5082 | 8789 |

**How satisfied is R with life**

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Not satisfied at all | | 142 | 2.6% |
| 2 Slightly satisfied | | 490 | 8.9% |
| 3 Moderately satisfied | | 1674 | 30.3% |
| 4 Very satisfied | | 1961 | 35.5% |
| 5 Extremely satisfied | | 928 | 16.8% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 26 | 0.5% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 2 | 0.0% |
| | -5 -5. Break off, sufficient partial | 52 | 0.9% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 246 | 4.5% |

**Economy better or worse in next 12 months**

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Get worse | | 1263 | 22.9% |
| 2 Stay about the same | | 2204 | 39.9% |
| 3 Get better | | 1740 | 31.5% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 33 | 0.6% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 34 | 0.6% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 247 | 4.5% |

**R how much better or worse off financially next year**

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Much worse off | | 217 | 3.9% |
| 2 Somewhat worse off | | 584 | 10.6% |
| 3 About the same | | 2601 | 47.1% |
| 4 Somewhat better off | | 1398 | 25.3% |
| 5 Much better off | | 422 | 7.6% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 36 | 0.7% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 15 | 0.3% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 248 | 4.5% |

## How worried is R about current financial situation

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Not at all worried | | 349 | 6.3% |
| 2 Little worried | | 408 | 7.4% |
| 3 Moderately worried | | 1224 | 22.2% |
| 4 Very worried | | 1716 | 31.1% |
| 5 Extremely worried | | 1545 | 28.0% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 29 | 0.5% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 1 | 0.0% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 249 | 4.5% |

## How happy R feels about how things are going in the country

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Not at all | | 2152 | 39.0% |
| 2 A little | | 1361 | 24.7% |
| 3 Somewhat | | 1391 | 25.2% |
| 4 Very | | 292 | 5.3% |
| 5 Extremely | | 70 | 1.3% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 8 | 0.1% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 2 | 0.0% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 245 | 4.4% |

## How proud R feels about how things are going in the country

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Not at all | | 2176 | 39.4% |
| 2 A little | | 1281 | 23.2% |
| 3 Somewhat | | 1323 | 24.0% |
| 4 Very | | 369 | 6.7% |
| 5 Extremely | | 110 | 2.0% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 13 | 0.2% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 3 | 0.1% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 246 | 4.5% |

## Has R in past 12 months done any volunteer work

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 No | | 3477 | 63.0% |
| 1 Yes | | 1283 | 23.2% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 2 | 0.0% |
| | -7 -7. Insufficient partial, interview deleted | 40 | 0.7% |
| | -6 -6. No post interview | 472 | 8.5% |
| | -5 -5. Sufficient partial, breakoff | 1 | 0.0% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 246 | 4.5% |

## R self-identified race/ethnicity

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 White, non-Hispanic | | 3946 | 71.5% |
| 2 Black, non-Hispanic | | 508 | 9.2% |
| 3 Hispanic | | 582 | 10.5% |
| 4 Asian or Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic | | 197 | 3.6% |
| 5 Native American/Alaska Native or other race, non-Hispanic | | 33 | 0.6% |
| 6 Multiple races, non-Hispanic | | 188 | 3.4% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 63 | 1.1% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 1 | 0.0% |
| | -4 -4. Error | 3 | 0.1% |

## Total (household) income

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 1. Under $5,000 | | 405 | 7.3% |
| 2 2. $5,000-9,999 | | 51 | 0.9% |
| 3 3. $10,000-12,499 | | 108 | 2.0% |
| 4 4. $12,500-14,999 | | 37 | 0.7% |
| 5 5. $15,000-17,499 | | 75 | 1.4% |
| 6 6. $17,500-19,999 | | 31 | 0.6% |
| 7 7. $20,000-22,499 | | 104 | 1.9% |
| 8 8. $22,500-24,999 | | 45 | 0.8% |
| 9 9. $25,000-27,499 | | 92 | 1.7% |
| 10 10. $27,500-29,999 | | 29 | 0.5% |
| 11 11. $30,000-34,999 | | 171 | 3.1% |
| 12 12. $35,000-39,999 | | 149 | 2.7% |
| 13 13. $40,000-44,999 | | 199 | 3.6% |
| 14 14. $45,000-49,999 | | 124 | 2.2% |
| 15 15. $50,000-54,999 | | 233 | 4.2% |
| 16 16. $55,000-59,999 | | 102 | 1.8% |
| 17 17. $60,000-64,999 | | 204 | 3.7% |
| 18 18. $65,000-69,999 | | 98 | 1.8% |
| 19 19. $70,000-74,999 | | 156 | 2.8% |
| 20 20. $75,000-79,999 | | 142 | 2.6% |
| 21 21. $80,000-89,999 | | 262 | 4.7% |
| 22 22. $90,000-99,999 | | 194 | 3.5% |
| 23 23. $100,000-109,999 | | 331 | 6.0% |
| 24 24. $110,000-124,999 | | 268 | 4.9% |
| 25 25. $125,000-149,999 | | 260 | 4.7% |
| 26 26. $150,000-174,999 | | 297 | 5.4% |
| 27 27. $175,000-249,999 | | 416 | 7.5% |
| 28 28. $250,000 or more | | 382 | 6.9% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 290 | 5.3% |
| | -5 -5. Break off, sufficient partial | 10 | 0.2% |
| | -4 -4. Error | 11 | 0.2% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 245 | 4.4% |

## Highest level of education

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9 High school graduate - High school diploma or equivalent (for example: GED) | | 905 | 16.4% |
| 10 Some college but no degree | | 944 | 17.1% |
| 11 Associate degree in college - Occupational/vocational program | | 393 | 7.1% |
| 12 Associate degree in college - Academic program | | 308 | 5.6% |
| 13 Bachelor's degree (For example: BA, AB, BS) | | 1328 | 24.1% |
| 14 Master's degree (For example: MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA) | | 782 | 14.2% |
| 15 Professional school Degree (For example: MD,DDS,DVM,LLB,JD) | | 141 | 2.6% |
| 16 Doctorate degree (For example: PhD, EdD) | | 126 | 2.3% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 13 | 0.2% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 1 | 0.0% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 247 | 4.5% |
| | 1 Less than 1st grade | 3 | 0.1% |
| | 2 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th grade | 5 | 0.1% |
| | 3 5th or 6th grade | 10 | 0.2% |
| | 4 7th or 8th grade | 24 | 0.4% |
| | 5 9th grade | 28 | 0.5% |
| | 6 10th grade | 44 | 0.8% |
| | 7 11th grade | 58 | 1.1% |
| | 8 12th grade no diploma | 98 | 1.8% |
| | 95 95. Other {SPECIFY} | 63 | 1.1% |

## Does R use Internet at home

| | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 No | | 175 | 3.2% |
| 1 Yes | | 5082 | 92.0% |
| Missing | -9 -9. Refused | 14 | 0.3% |
| | -8 -8. Don't know | 1 | 0.0% |
| | -1 -1. Inapplicable | 249 | 4.5% |

# *Appendix B*

## *(Factor Analysis Tables)*

**Covariance Matrix**

| | How satisfied is R with life | Economy better or worse in next 12 months | R how much better or worse off financially next year | How worried is R about current financial situation | How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | How proud R feels about how things are going in the country |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How satisfied is R with life | 1.003 | .141 | .172 | .371 | .198 | .189 |
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .141 | 1.001 | .297 | .137 | .296 | .281 |
| R how much better or worse off financially next year | .172 | .297 | 1.005 | .218 | .176 | .157 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | .371 | .137 | .218 | .999 | .197 | .169 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .198 | .296 | .176 | .197 | 1.002 | .713 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .189 | .281 | .157 | .169 | .713 | 1.001 |

**Correlation Matrix[a]**

| | | How satisfied is R with life | Economy better or worse in next 12 months | R how much better or worse off financially next year | How worried is R about current financial situation | How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | How proud R feels about how things are going in the country |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Correlation | How satisfied is R with life | 1.000 | .141 | .172 | .371 | .198 | .189 |
| | Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .141 | 1.000 | .296 | .137 | .296 | .281 |
| | R how much better or worse off financially next year | .172 | .296 | 1.000 | .217 | .176 | .157 |
| | How worried is R about current financial situation | .371 | .137 | .217 | 1.000 | .197 | .169 |
| | How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .198 | .296 | .176 | .197 | 1.000 | .712 |
| | How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .189 | .281 | .157 | .169 | .712 | 1.000 |
| Sig. (1-tailed) | How satisfied is R with life | | <.001 | <.001 | <.001 | <.001 | <.001 |
| | Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | R how much better or worse off financially next year | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | How worried is R about current financial situation | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 |
| | How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| | How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | |

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .641 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 5933.449 |
| | df | 15 |
| | Sig. | <.001 |

| Communalities | Initial | Extraction |
|---|---|---|
| How satisfied is R with life | .163 | .115 |
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .159 | .173 |
| R how much better or worse off financially next year | .128 | .103 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | .173 | .114 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .524 | .627 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .515 | .567 |

| Factor Score Coefficient Matrix | Factor 1 |
|---|---|
| How satisfied is R with life | .109 |
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .125 |
| R how much better or worse off financially next year | .109 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | .111 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .449 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .342 |

| Factor Score Covariance Matrix | | |
|---|---|---|
| Factor | 1 | |
| 1 | | .774 |

## *Appendix C*

***(Reliability Tables)***

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .740 | .740 | 6 |

**Inter-Item Correlation Matrix**

| | Economy better or worse in next 12 months | Are things in the country on right track | Trust election officials | How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | How worried is R about current financial situation | How proud R feels about how things are going in the country |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | 1.000 | .294 | .222 | .294 | .138 | .282 |
| Are things in the country on right track | .294 | 1.000 | .337 | .559 | .176 | .521 |
| Trust election officials | .222 | .337 | 1.000 | .354 | .245 | .317 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | .294 | .559 | .354 | 1.000 | .198 | .716 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | .138 | .176 | .245 | .198 | 1.000 | .170 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | .282 | .521 | .317 | .716 | .170 | 1.000 |

**Item-Total Statistics**

| | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economy better or worse in next 12 months | .0012072 | 12.186 | .352 | .128 | .737 |
| Are things in the country on right track | -.0042834 | 10.865 | .572 | .371 | .675 |
| Trust election officials | -.0000814 | 11.700 | .431 | .190 | .716 |
| How happy R feels about how things are going in the country | -.0017618 | 10.404 | .658 | .572 | .649 |
| How worried is R about current financial situation | .0003973 | 12.790 | .259 | .079 | .761 |
| How proud R feels about how things are going in the country | -.0033810 | 10.642 | .615 | .538 | .662 |

## *Appendix D*

### *(Logistic Regression Tables)*

**Case Processing Summary**

| Unweighted Cases[a] | | N | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Selected Cases | Included in Analysis | 4145 | 75.1 |
| | Missing Cases | 1376 | 24.9 |
| | Total | 5521 | 100.0 |
| Unselected Cases | | 0 | .0 |
| Total | | 5521 | 100.0 |

**Dependent Variable Encoding**

| Original Value | Internal Value |
|---|---|
| 0 No | 0 |
| 1 Yes | 1 |

**Categorical Variables Codings**

| | | | Parameter coding | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| R self-identified race/ethnicity | 1 White, non-Hispanic | 3070 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | 2 Black, non-Hispanic | 351 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | 3 Hispanic | 411 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | 4 Asian or Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic | 141 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 |
| | 5 Native American/Alaska Native or other race, non-Hispanic | 24 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 |
| | 6 Multiple races, non-Hispanic | 148 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 |
| Has R in past 12 months: attend mtg about issue facing community/schools | 0 No | 3694 | .000 | | | | |
| | 1 Yes | 451 | 1.000 | | | | |
| Does R use Internet at home | 0 No | 97 | .000 | | | | |
| | 1 Yes | 4048 | 1.000 | | | | |

**Classification Table[a,b]**

| | | | Predicted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Has R in past 12 months: done any volunteer work | | |
| | Observed | | 0 No | 1 Yes | Percentage Correct |
| Step 0 | Has R in past 12 months: done any volunteer work | 0 No | 2976 | 0 | 100.0 |
| | | 1 Yes | 1169 | 0 | .0 |
| | Overall Percentage | | | | 71.8 |

**Variables in the Equation**

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 0 | Constant | -.934 | .035 | 732.854 | 1 | <.001 | .393 |

| Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Chi-square | df | Sig. |
| Step 1 | Step | 519.756 | 10 | <.001 |
| | Block | 519.756 | 10 | <.001 |
| | Model | 519.756 | 10 | <.001 |

| Model Summary | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Step | -2 Log likelihood | Cox & Snell R Square | Nagelkerke R Square |
| 1 | 4411.610[a] | .118 | .169 |

| Classification Table[a] | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Predicted | | |
| | | | Has R in past 12 months: done any volunteer work | | Percentage Correct |
| | Observed | | 0 No | 1 Yes | |
| Step 1 | Has R in past 12 months: done any volunteer work | 0 No | 2847 | 129 | 95.7 |
| | | 1 Yes | 895 | 274 | 23.4 |
| | Overall Percentage | | | | 75.3 |

## *Appendix E*

***American National Election Studies 2024 Time Series Study***

(ANES) Variable Code Book