



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

”Strategies when facing a silver tsunami”

-an explorative case study on the process of organizing a Village, in the Village-movement.

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Abstract

Title: "Strategies when facing a silver tsunami - an explorative case study on the process of organizing a Village, in the Village-movement.

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The aim of the study was to explore the organization of two Villages in the Village-to-Village network. The network consists of elder care organizations with the core principle of using older adults and volunteers to construct their organizations. A case study was made on two Villages in the USA. Data collections took place by visiting members, volunteers, staff and facilities but also through interviews with several people connected to the field. Data was later analyzed by applying a theoretical framework, based on the assumption that organizations are constructed entities, examining four stages in the process of organizing and finally comparing the cases.

The findings suggest that in order to construct a Village one has to start with the need of the member. In an adapting process the organization work will benefit from finding a common identity and through the resources of the members themselves, and/or volunteers and staff create an environment where the possibility to engage socially will be promoted. The reason for this is that the social dimension of coming together seemed to, both create identities inside the network, and attract people to the network. The need for further research was identified to be: observation of the actual process, research in how to leverage the social dimension into practical use, research in how to adapt the Village model to other ethnicities and lower economic classes and research in how we tell the stories of our organizations.

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Preface

This work is dedicated to L & N:

"May you always ask why!"

A project like this thesis could be perceived as a long and arduous process brimmed with anxiety-induced panic attacks. What I bring with me into the uncharted frontier that is the future, though, bears with it only warm feelings of gratitude. Because without the kind hearts of all who participated in this study, without all of you who gave from not only your knowledge but also your time and effort to assist me in my endeavor, I would have ended up with nothing, or even less. I am deeply grateful.

K! I know I already thanked you a thousand times but this time I will engrave my gratitude in the granite that is science. Without you, and your big heart, I would not have been able to do this. I will pay it forward! Thank you!

Monica! I know I am just one in a long row of students that you have supervised during your years as a professor. Nevertheless you made me feel important and sometimes even smart, a quality and effort I am truly grateful for. Your support has been vital for the completion of this thesis, thank you, from the bottom of my heart!

And last, but more important than my life, S! Without you, I would be a pool of nothingness with nothing to show. You lift me, you make me fly! I am eternally grateful for us!

September 2016, Kungälv, Sweden.

Introduction

The demographic development of our western society, and the challenges that come with it, is often discussed in the media (Bowerman 2014; Ennart 2016; Schück 2015; Yogerst 2009), among politicians (Moderaterna 2016; Socialdemokraterna 2016), as well as in the scientific field (Burgess & Applebaum 2009; Haodong 2016; Rechel et al. 2013). The population is becoming older and healthier and fewer people than before will be paying for the growing number of pensions each year. The traditional way in which we cared for our elders will be too expensive in the future (Vårdanalys 2015:8).

In Sweden the situation, in many ways, is the same as in the rest of the western societies. We face similar problems although at the same time, as in most cases, ones that are particular to our specific context. Examples of our challenges are how the Swedish pension-system was restructured in 1994 and 1998 (Pensionsmyndigheten.se 2016), from a system where the pension was considered as a postponed 'life-salary' into today's system where the amount of years in the labor force determine the pension level. This has led to a situation where 1/3 of all pensions are minimum income based (PRO 2014 June). We are facing a situation where a larger amount of older adults than before will be considered poor. On top of this the urbanization has led to great concerns in the rural areas of Sweden where young people leave for the cities, leaving behind an aging population with fewer people who are able to take care of them (Dir. 2015:73). Municipalities all over Sweden struggle with recruiting nurses and carers for their elder care facilities. Our elder care is in need of new thinking. We need new input on how to address the coming of the 'silver tsunami'¹, i.e the economic, labor-force related and demographic challenges. We need to find more economically viable ways of assuring access to workforce in the elder care.

¹ A metaphor used to describe the growing aged population (Wikipedia 2016a).

With the purpose of studying how to confront the demographic challenges the Swedish government issued two investigations (Dir. 2015:72; Dir.2015:73), due on 2017-03-31. The directives for the first investigation included suggesting steps to take in order to assure a steady access to, among other things, a reliable workforce, but also to inspire new models for elder care. The second investigation studies how to approach the challenges encountered in the rural areas, challenges such as how to assure access to welfare services and keeping qualified labor force in rural communities.

In the fall of 2015, Sweden was hit by the largest refugee-crisis that Europe had experienced since the end of WWII (Dnr 10.5-29723/2015). This put a severe strain on our welfare system, so much so that many of the municipalities could not cope with the effort. This crisis has led to an unparalleled outburst of volunteer work and an increase in organizations that organize such work (Higson 2015). When the system failed to help those in need, in several cases, volunteers stepped in (Dnr 10.5-29723/2015). This situation, once again, put an old discussion regarding volunteer efforts in the Swedish welfare system on the agenda. There are several arguments for and against, but there is an agreement (SOU 2016:13) that the civil society need to be strengthened and that the state needs to provide opportunities for the civil society to contribute to the welfare system. The state presented several suggestions on how to do this in February 2016 (SOU 2016:13). The definition of a civil society in the investigation that preceded the suggestions (Dir. 2014:40) contained: 'public service organizations in a non-profit sector who do non-market services' (ibid:20), for example organizations built on volunteer efforts. The suggestions from the state included increased support to new organizations in the civil society and amendments to facilitate possibilities for such organizations to get public contracts.

The relevance of the present study comes somewhat in between the aforementioned situations, a need for new models and a new way of thinking in the Swedish elder care and volunteer organizations in the welfare system. The

reason for this is that I will give an example of a way of organizing elder care which include organized volunteerism. My hope is that this study will contribute to the field of elder care by giving new input. I hope to inspire new research and new thinking on how to use volunteers in the welfare system by looking into a model from the USA which has implemented this idea, *The Village* model.

In the USA (Bookman 2008), the demographic situation is, in many ways, the same as in Sweden even though the welfare-system is differently organized. The similarities are easy to see: a lower number of people are paying for a higher number of retirees, rural areas are being depopulated, there is a shortage of labor force in the elder care and the institutionalized system for elder care is outdated.

In the USA a lot of effort is being invested in finding new initiatives, so much so that some researchers (Greenfield et al. 2012) even talk about a paradigm shift in the view on elder care. Several studies (Baldwin & Willet 2013; Gupta 2012; Stone 2013; Thomas & Blanchard 2009) describe a demand from older adults for options that would make it possible for them to grow old in their own home and community, together with their family and friends. They do not want to move to an institution when they grow old.

Around the year 2000 (Blanchard 2013) several similar initiatives emerged in the USA. As many times before in their life-time, members of the baby-boomer generation² realized that something was lacking and started a social movement in order to meet their needs. Out of this situation, *aging-in-community* has since become a promising alternative. One *aging-in-community* alternative started in Beacon Hill (Vtvnetwork.org 2016a), Chicago, in 2001. A group of aging baby-boomers wanted to find a way to *age-in-community* i.e grow old in the community in which they lived, and many times had been living in, their whole life. The group saw a future in which they would have only a couple of options that did not go well with their preferred future retirement. Instead of having to move into a nursing home, or staying at home while becoming isolated and dependent on

² Defined as cohorts of people born in the demographic post-WWII baby boom, ca: 1946-1964 (Wikipedia 2016b)

relatives and carers, they wanted to find a new way. The idea was to make it independent, affordable, sociable to age in your own home and community. They started the first member driven, volunteer effort based *Village*. The idea spread into what today is called the *Village-movement*, which consists of about 200 different grassroots initiatives existing all over the USA, with about 190 in development, organized around volunteerism. Neighbors helping neighbors and aging populations keeping their independence while still being able to contribute to society.

Arguments in favor of using volunteers in the elder care, like they do in the Village, include scientific findings (Äldre i centrum 2015) showing that volunteering has positive effects on the health of older adults (Cattan, Hogg & Hardill 2011; Morrow-Howell 2010; Wilson 2000) and on the longevity of their life span (Yang et al. 2016). The solution also has promising characteristics as making it more economically viable, since volunteers cost less, and the use of retired older adults as volunteers would decrease the need for people in the workforce.

My interest in the study focus on the process of organizing the Village model. By doing this I aim to build an understanding on how the model was constructed and hopefully gain valuable insights into to the process in order to possibly be able to apply it elsewhere, and/or to inspire more research.

Aim and research questions

Aim

The aim of this study is to explore two Villages, in the Village-to-village network, and how they have organized, and organize, connections with the help of volunteers, in order to construct their present construction.

Questions

- How do the Villages organize connections between actors in the organization?
- Which connections led to the construction of the two Villages?
- Which differences in the organizing process exist between the two Villages?

Framework

Definition of concepts

The Village: When used in an overall sense this term refers to an organization inside the *Village-to-village network*. At large, these organizations are connected through a network web-page (Vtvnetwork.org 2016b) but are at the same time independent grass-root organizations. When used in the method, results, and discussion chapters *the Village* refers to the individual Villages in which I collected my data.

village: When used in this sense the word relates to a gathering of houses, a clustered settlement for human beings, traditionally built in rural areas and smaller than a city but larger than a hamlet. Often consisting of several neighborhoods (Wikipedia 2016c).

volunteer: A person working out of free will, without getting paid, or freely offering to do something (Merriam-webster.com 2016a).

volunteerism: The act or practice of doing volunteer work in community service (Merriam-webster.com 2016b).

Community: A social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have common cultural and historical heritage. Could be an occupational or other group sharing common characteristics or interests. Often perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists (Merriam-webster.com 2016c).

Aging-in-place: A concept used to describe the ability to grow old in one's own home of choice without having to move into an institution or such (Scharlach, Graham & Lehning 2011).

Neighbor: A person living close to someone else, or nearby (Merriam-webster.com 2016d).

Neighborhood: A section of a city or people who live near each other (Merriam-webster.com 2016e).

Context

Part of the understanding of a phenomenon involve knowing the context in which it exists (Bryman 2011:364). Since we all are part of a social context, we influence our surroundings at the same time as we are being influenced by them. Our context will influence our understanding of the world, our thoughts about it as well as our own behavior.

The Villages exist in the context of the United States of America (USA). The country has a residual welfare system (Shi & Singh 2015) which is to say that the government fills out the gaps which the private sector does not pay for. The state health care system is subsidiary to the private sector and the system, under the canopy of which the elder care resides, at large is subject to market forces. About 200 million out of 321 million USA citizens (Census 2015) have a private health care insurance and about another 100 million are covered by two major health insurance programs run by the government, called Medicare and Medicaid. The latter programs are specially designed for "*vulnerable populations*"(Shi & Singh 2015) i.e poor, uninsured, minority groups etc. Medicare serves the elderly, disabled people and people with end stage renal disceace. Despite the existence of governmental health care systems, the possibility to benefit from these vary between communities. The reson for this is partly that in order to get access to these systems all personal resources have to be exhausted first, and partly because health care providers funded by these programs are not available everywhere. About 60% of the total health care expenditure comes from private financing and access to the best medical care is mostly available only to those who have health care insurances covering the adequate care, or to those who are able to pay for the care themselves.

The USA pension system is based on the individuals contribution to their personal pension funds (About education 2016). Most companies provide an investment plan, or a pension plan, for their employee. Sometimes the company matches the amount saved by the employee (in exchange for a generous tax relief from the

state) but the amounts vary by company. There are also several different pension systems administered by the federal government. The most important is run by the Social Security program. The benefits from these programs are often considered low compared to the salary level beneficiaries had before retirement.

When the need for long term health care increase, for the older adult, there are several different options for an individual who have the adequate insurance or the funds to pay for them. Most older adults express a wish to age in their own home (Blanchard 2013) and there are several companies who provide private payed nursing care at home. For an older adult who cannot afford such care, or who does not have the adequate insurance, there are nursing homes partly funded by Medicare (Thomas & Blanchard 2009). For the wealthiest 7% there are so called CCRCs, Continuing Care Retirement Centers (Stone 2013) where individuals pay a substantial fee to get access, but are then fully covered for all possible care needs. There are also a number of different community approaches to long term care, as for example: Shared Housing, where individuals move in together to share expenses; NORCs, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, where a lot of retired individuals naturally gather in clusters and many times share their expenses. Scharlach (2011) did a survey where he identified 292 aging friendly initiatives all over the USA.

Another important thing to know regarding the context of the USA is that public transport is a scarce commodity in the USA (Scharlach 2011). There are some transport alternatives in the more densely populated areas, in which the Villages I visited exists, but in rural areas transportation is a difficult task to solve.

Finally volunteerism in the USA, (Wilson 2000), is a common way to engage in the civic society (Morrow-Howell 2011). There are numerous opportunities for volunteering, often in the form of charity-work but also in different 'quasi-welfare' organizations, such as federally sponsored service programs. Many times

there is an organization behind the opportunity which focuses on alleviating some kind of need.

Delimitations

This study is a case study which means I focus on the two Villages to gain a deeper understanding of the cases in their context. I do not intend to give a general picture valid for the entire movement. Also I will not compare my findings to other ways of organizing similar initiatives due to the limitations of the study.

Relevance for social work

One of the core objectives of social work is to promote social change on both the individual level as well as on the societal level (Payne 2008:312). Considering the demographic challenges, mentioned in the introduction, social work and social workers stand to face the situation of an emerging 'new society'. Working for societal change will be mandatory to be able to cope with this new situation. The present study aims to give new input on the construction of one field of social work. There might be an alternative way of organizing elder care to what we have seen before. Learning from one context may give valuable lessons which then could be applicable to other circumstances. Thus, I find the study to be highly relevant for social work, both globally and in Sweden.

Literature overview

In this chapter I will be doing an inventory of research that has already been done on the Village. In order to gain a deeper knowledge of the cases I studied I chose to focus exclusively on research done on the Village model. This inventory is used to lay out which parts of the puzzle that were already in place and which were missing.

I used the web-page of the Gothenburg university library in order to find research. Words used in my search were: *Village, the Village, the Village-movement, Village-to-village network, aging-in-place, aging-in-community, volunteerism in the Village, Volunteers and Volunteerism.*

In order to cover the field to the largest extent possible I have looked through the references section in each article in order to find relating research. I only managed to find one more article this way. A couple of references were to lectures from a university but in the resume of the lectures I found the same data as in a later article, so I did not include those resumes. I realize that this overview might not be complete. I had a limited possibility to look for books published in the USA for example, due to the limits of the study. Accordingly, this overview consists of mainly scientific articles published online.

I have not been able to find any research on a Swedish Village, resembling the Village, and as far as I know this study is the first study made on an American Village by a Swedish person.

The first Village, officially called a Village, was established in 2001 (Thomas & Blanchard 2009), consequently the earliest research I managed to find on the Village-movement did not appear until 2008 when Ann Bookman (Bookman 2008) wrote an article on a study of three new models for aging-in-place. The old way of aging-in-place meant that the older adult often had problems accessing

appropriate services. The cost for the services were relatively high and in the old models the older adults often became passive recipients of care rather than being contributing members of the society. In her article Bookman argued that there was a need for a new theoretical way of looking at the processes of aging and the formation of social capital. One of the three models she examined was the Village. Her argument was that new ways of organizing aging-in-place and the agency of active older adults ought to change the traditional views on aging and organization of elder care. Bookman pointed out that the Villages had some organized volunteerism with members helping members and others. She wrote about an online network, which was used to facilitate connections between members and as a community building platform. Her final appeal was that the international scientific community should work together to find solutions for the aging community, so that the next generation will have possibilities and choices that are not hindered by economical or segregating obstacles.

The Village model, among other aging-in-community initiatives, started to generate interest as a promising alternative to the traditional way of aging-in-place. Authors Thomas & Blanchard (2009) stated that, according to a survey made by the AARP³ in 2000, 92% of the americans age 65+ wanted to age in their own home but that this desire often came with challenges. For example: feelings of loneliness and a growing incapability to take care of oneself when growing older. They suggested aging-in-community as a method of shifting emphasis from, aging in your own home without means or demands to contribute to society towards continuing to be a valuable asset to both the community and the society.

In 2010 Scharlach, Lehning & Graham (2010) conducted a survey on behalf of the School on social welfare at Berkley University, CA. This was the first effort to collect empirical data on the demographics of Villages. The survey aimed to give an overview of the Village model and was conducted on 29 out of 50 Villages that were up and running at that time. It showed, among other things, that the

³ A non-profit advocacy organization for issues regarding older adults in the USA (AARP 2016).

populations in these Villages were predominantly of white ethnicity and of middle-class background. The authors also published an article, Scharlach et al. (2011), based on the surveys. In this article they made a first attempt at creating an evidence-base on how to implement the Village model. In their study they identified that though these Villages share many characteristics, at the same time they seem to be different in equally many other ways. The authors call for further research in, among other things, more detailed examinations of operational characteristics, services provided and challenges faced, by the Villages.

The articles above were some of the first overall attempts at describing the Village model. In 2011 another article was published that also focused on the Village yet from another perspective. In an effort to put the model into a theoretical framework McDonough & Davitt (2011) examined the conceptual underpinnings of the Village model by applying a community-work and empowerment lens. They described several important features of the model, such as the ability to convey a sense of community by applying a volunteer-first model and a shared philosophy based on an interdependence of human existence. They also described the empowering traits of the approach. For example how volunteers often were members and that they were encouraged to contribute despite personal obstacles such as a disability or frailty. The authors also acknowledged the models ability to build social capital by allowing members to join in planning and organizing the Villages etc. With regards to the present study this article is also interesting in the way that it describes the roles of social workers in the Village model. The authors describe how the main function of the social-workers is to act as a community organizer who fosters commitment to the Village. They also point towards their bridging function between members and resources outside and inside the Village, the advocating function where the social-worker acts as an ombudsman for the member, facilitating contacts with various services and persons, and lastly the function as an assessor where the social-worker continually assesses unmet needs in order to empower and collaborate with the members.

McDonough & Davitt (2011) highlight challenges for the social-worker in the Village model and how they address these challenges. In order to avoid unhealthy relationships between members and volunteers they suggest the need for policy building, best-practice development and training volunteers in critical consciousness. They also point out the need for fostering clear communicative skills and facilitative leader practices.

Andrew Scharlach (2012) continued with the first overview of aging-friendly initiatives in the USA. He did a structured internet survey and defined 292 aging-friendly initiatives in the USA at the time. 1/6 out of these initiatives were so-called consumer driven approaches, typically the Village model. Consumer driven meant that the driving factor behind the Village was the needs of its members. The needs determined what the members wanted/needed to consume, ergo consumer driven. Depending on what the member needed or wanted, in return for membership fees and/or engagement the member could receive, for example; support, services and possibilities to engage socially in order to build social capital. Scharlach defined aging-friendliness as a comprised concept of five ideas taken from development psychology. The concept was used to describe what was needed for an older adult in order to be able to continue living his/hers life of choice while still receiving support when needed. Out of these five ideas I find two that are relevant to this study. No:1 *Connection*: to be able to maintain social connectedness and maintain, or develop, important relationships. No:2 *Contribution*: to be able to influence one's own environment.

Greenfield et al. (2012) wrote about a growing paradigm shift in views on aging. From the traditional aging-in-place in your own home to instead aging-in-community, i.e being an integrated and contributing member of one's community. In the article the authors explore the Villages, and NORC⁴s, practical strategies in regard to addressing and engaging community to support aging in place. They propose three categories of activities and services which could possibly contribute

⁴ Se Context section above.

to the two models reaching their long-term goal of promoting aging in place. They suggest five areas in which the authors believe researchers should focus when it comes to "systematically advance research that will inform theory, policy and practice on the NORC program and Village models"(ibid:280).

One of these five areas is particularly relevant for this study. In correspondence to what this study aims to do they specify that there is a gap in understanding of how the models go about implementing the models in practice.

Poor, Baldwin & Willett (2012) wrote an article on the Village in the Journal of the American Society on Aging. There they presented the Village and the characteristics of the model. In one section of the article they explained how the Village to Village network (Vtvnetwork.org 2016b) is used. They describe a membership-driven, peer-to-peer, web-based networking tool that the Villages use to exchange best practices. In the network the members can connect with other Villages and glean from the expertise and experience of other members via webinars, documents, forums and more. The same paper did a themed issue on aging-in-community the year after. In the issue Blanchard (2013) discussed the development of community-based alternatives to aging-in-place such as the Village. She describes how the baby-boomers are driving the expansion due to characteristics such as self-empowerment and holistic approaches to health and well-being. She also argued that consumer-driven aging-in-place would have the best possibilities to answer to their needs thanks to the empowering, consumer-choice options and ability to meet the needs of the whole person. Baldwin & Willett (2013) continued to write about how the Village model promotes health through its emphasis on volunteering. By organizing members, and volunteers, it gives the participants opportunities to make a difference while at the same time promoting their own health. Stone (2013) argued that the Village is one, out of several, realistic options for aging in community even if she expressed doubt on how the model would be able to address the increasing pressure on health-care solutions from aging members since services were predominantly volunteer-based efforts. Gitlin, Szanton & Hodgson (2013) argued that in order for the Village to

be a successful option for aging-in-place it has to continue experimenting and integrating solutions for older adults with complex health-issues. They suggested that the Village could be a foundation for such research.

The Village also started drawing international attention. UK based Thompson (2013, Part 1&2) wrote an article, in two parts, in which the objective was to "learn lessons from North America on housing an aging population". She found the Village to be a highly interesting model, possible to implement in the UK. For the study she visited three Villages. In the article she described certain specifics in what they offered and how volunteers were engaged. Beacon Hill, which was the 'original' Village had, for example, social groups and fitness programs. Some services were provided by volunteers who were members themselves. Volunteers assisted with transporting to medical appointments and shopping, light gardening and household chores. Thompson also mentioned that Australia had two Villages, as had Canada and the Netherlands. In Capitol Hill Village, 50% of their members worked as volunteers. They held orientation days quarterly for members and volunteers, so that everyone would be up-to-date with what was happening in their Village and what was important for everyone to know. In these meetings they discussed new ideas and development-issues. North West Neighbors were highly dependent on volunteers and a solid social network. Thompson learned that scale was an important factor for success. In order to be able to have a person-centered focus while at the same time having economic viability a Village could not be too large, nor too small. Volunteers had to take a three hour-training course prior to working in the Village.

Graham, Scharlach & Price Wolf (2014) did a study on five Villages in which they aimed to assess how the Village members perceived how the model impacted them in areas of independence, social engagement and well-being. Their study suggested that the Villages model was a promising alternative since the perceived benefits for its members were tangible. The members who seemed to have the greatest benefits from the model were the ones who participated and got involved

in the Village programs, programs such as volunteering, engaging in social events and more.

All science stands on the shoulders of those scientists and scholars who came before. This study aims to help fill the gap that Bookman (2008) is pleading for. By applying a theoretical lens on the construction of a Village organization I want to point to one future possibility for the aging community by shedding light on how organizing is performed in practice, research asked for by Greenfield et al. (2012). By using a theoretical description on the formation of an organization such as the Village I want to continue the research on detailed examination of operational practices, called for by Scharlach et al. (2011) and hopefully contribute to the building of an understanding of a best-practice development as McDonough & Davitt (2011) demands.

Theoretical framework

Social constructionist view

No man is an island (Donne 1624).

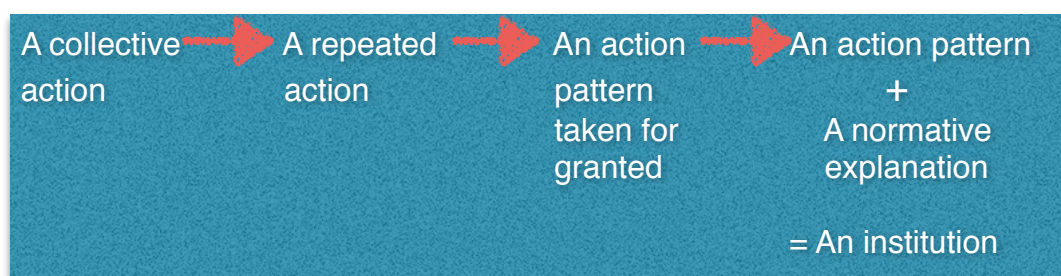
From the day we are born we interact with other humans. In this interaction we learn and we teach. I learn that when mom looks a certain way she is happy with me and she learns that I am hungry when I behave a certain way. This constant exchange moulds our understanding of the world (Payne 2008:240). To some extent it even create 'our world'. For example, all humans are involved in creating what we unanimously call 'the social', from *socius*, greek for 'not alone'(Czarniawska 2014:2). With words we collectively create entities of abstract understanding so that we can communicate this understanding with our fellow humans. In this study I am not interested in arguing for the ontological constructionist view, the view that reality, 'the world', is created through human interaction. Instead I agree with Czarniawska (2014:6) that it is beneficial to a study of organizing to look at the process of constructing 'organizations'. Why? Because the processes in which we organize organizations are constantly adapted. An organization is not a static entity with fixed concrete representations in the natural world. It is instead an example of an 'abstract entity' created through peoples words and actions. Every small interaction, word and/or act, of everyday life between people inside, and outside of, an organization create our understanding of that entity. These constructing processes will then lead to humans creating physical representations of that entity i.e houses, documents etc. in 'the real world'. But a house is not an organization, people can move out, signs can be changed. If we want to explore, understand, or perhaps change the outcome of an organization, we need to look at those everyday interactions and actions. We need to look at the process of organizing. By doing so we also gain knowledge about how people perform in a certain context. Why they have come to act the way they do. What thoughts, interpretations and actions has led to the present construction.

Theory about organizing

Given the social constructionist perspective a suitable way to explore the organizing processes would be to find a way to discern the constructing processes. Barbara Czarniawska (2014) meant that traditional organization theory had been focusing on nouns rather than verbs. For example which parts make up the organization? How many workers are involved? What position do they have? According to her (ibid:14); it is a very 'natural science' way of looking at organizations. Her suggestion was instead to look at the constructing processes of organizing, the verbs; How do people organize the organization? What do they do? Organizations consists of 'actors' i.e workers, suppliers etc. The actors are connected through myriads of connections on multiple levels. An organization needs to apply different strategies in order to handle these connections.

Action net theory

Czarniawska (2014) suggested that an organization is the result of connections, rather than the other way around. Connections and actors, in an organization, do not appear because there is an organization. Organizations appear as a result of organizing connections. Thus, when analyzing an organization she proposed that a researcher should start by locating the actors inside the organization and then focus on what make them an actors. Her term 'action net' attempts to describe how connections between actions, when stable enough, construct the identities of the actors involved. To describe how such action-nets are formed she uses the analogy of an institution (ibid:22), as in an action-pattern or institutionalized behavior. For example, the institution of banks, or air-travel. I borrowed her figure below to explain the process:



(Czarniawska 2014:22)

If an action pattern exists which is not questioned, and upon questioning is answered with a normative explanation, an institution has been established; i.e an action net, an organization.

Organizing performed

In the study I went into an, for me, unexplored field. By using Czarniawska's (2014) theoretical lens I had a foundation for understanding the constructing processes, I needed to examine traces of an action net. In order to discover these traces I needed to apply an understanding of how organizing is executed. Latour (2005) suggested that to be able to study a social entity, such as an organization, one has to look at the performative definitions rather than the ostensive, i.e how organizations are performed, what actors do, rather than how the organization appears. This theoretical perspective gave me a key to a further understanding of the process.

To be able to discern the performative process I will, in the analysis of the empirical material, take inspiration from Kastberg (2015). He used a concept borrowed from Callon (1986). The concept was described as four stages of translating, four dimensions of constructing a network in which he aimed to distinguish which actors, human and non-human actants that were involved and how they worked together. By examining the result of the organizing process the goal was to create an understanding of how the result came to be and how the network was constantly mounted, invented and reinvented by its actors. The four dimensions are as follows:

PROBLEMATIZATION

This is a process during which different actors come together around a shared problem. The initiator promotes a certain way of dealing with the problem and tries to persuade other actors to see the solution in the same way, to create a strong network of allies to the cause. One of the key elements of this analyzing-process

is figuring out which actors are involved and in what way they are expected to contribute.

INTERESSEMENT

During this process actors are tied to the network. We look for the reasons to why actors come to participate and become part of the network.

ENROLMENT

In the enrolment process the identities of the participants are negotiated and established. Which actor does what and how do the different actors cooperate? We look at how actors negotiate their own function in the network and in what situations they act to strengthen it.

MOBILIZATION

Finally the process of mobilization aims to capture in what ways, and to which extent, the actors create a common identity and how they become active supporters of the network.

Research methodology and process

Transparency

This study has a qualitative approach to science. That means that I am interested in acquiring knowledge about a societal phenomenon (Ahrne & Svensson 2015:9), I want to understand a social process (Bryman 2011:341). For a scientist transparency is a keyword when it comes to designing and conducting qualitative research (Ahrne & Svensson 2015:25). The reason for this is that when I as a scientist do qualitative research I look for qualitative aspects of the phenomenon which is being studied (ibid:9). In many cases qualitative aspects of human life, for example: how people perceive life, reasons to why they do what they do and what they think about it (ibid:8). Human life is a complex research object. Every case and every individual has their own story to tell. This does not mean that there is no common ground, all humans around the world share similar experiences. If we did not, we would not be human. In order to find that common ground I, the researcher, need to try to see the world through the eyes of my fellow man. Since everyone's experience is unique I need to interpret and translate what I see and hear (Backman et al. 2012:323). Then I need to describe it with my own words, to explain my understanding. I also carry preconceptions and preconceived ways to see the world. My lens is colored by my experience. So I need to try to be objective. Many would argue that objectiveness is impossible to achieve (ibid: 325). Objectivity is to see the world without lenses, but we all have lenses. Then how can we conduct qualitative research? From experience I know that for me to understand another individuals point of view, it is often helpful when I get a good explanation of the reasons behind that individual reaching that point of view. I get a better understanding of someones outset if I know their background and experience. As a consequence, in qualitative research it is important to be transparent if I want to claim credibility (Bryman 2011:374). In my study I need to explain where I am coming from, what my preconceptions are and how I reached my conclusions. It is also an ethical issue (Ahrne & Svensson 2015:9). If you know how I reached my conclusion you may agree or you may not agree.

That is up to you, but if you know my arguments, and my bias, you may be persuaded to see the world the same way as I do but you will most likely not be coerced to do so. You might also see flaws in my argumentation and criticize it. That is how the scientific discussion continues. Good science is criticizable science (Ahrne & Svensson 2015:25).

Below follow a description of my preconceptions, how I have conducted the present study and how I reached my conclusions.

The researcher instrument

Scientific work is never conducted in an isolated context. We all influence our surroundings just by acting in a social context. This also means that I as a researcher have to be aware of that influence. Some scholars even say that the researcher is an instrument (Lalander 2015:103). In this reciprocal, social exchange I affect the outcome of every meeting simply by acting. How I choose to act or even being who I am may affect those I meet. For example if I come from an academic background and while interviewing someone from a lower working class I use 'difficult' words. I might do this unintentionally, but if I do not take this into consideration I may not understand why I get a feeling that the informant is keeping a distance and misinterpret what they say. This can be a sensitive matter when it comes to science. Since we want the results to be credible (Bryman 2011:354) and we want the study to adhere to an ethical scientific code (ibid:374), the way we act matter. If we want to understand our informants we must make an effort to understand the relationships we build with them and also bear in mind which preconceptions we bring to the field.

To do this I tried to remain vigilant in the study and kept in mind the possibility of unbalance in power relations between me and the participants, since such unbalance may influence every meeting (Svensson & Ahrne 2015). Even if most of the participants were middle-class, as me, I figured being American middle-class may not be the same as being Swedish middle-class. Sometimes participants

even came from higher classes than me. To avoid letting these circumstances influence my understanding, and/or the participants attitude towards me I kept an open attitude. I made an effort to build rapport in every meeting. By reflecting over my own body language, tone of voice, choice of words and by frequently mirroring the participant I aimed to create a feeling of likeness, and thus a relaxing environment where the participant would be the center of attention. I also remained curious about the participants throughout the interviews/observations and were attentive to detect traces of misunderstandings, insecurities and/or deviances in order to adapt my behavior accordingly.

Preconceptions

My preconceptions and bias in the field of this study comes from a Swedish context. I was born and raised in Sweden and I carry experiences and preconceptions solely from being brought up in this country. Things I view as normal are views of the world that have been formed for the reason that I was born in this part of the world. It is important to remember that preconceptions influence any two-way relationship and these preconceptions may influence the way I interpret the empirical material (Svensson 2015:212). To avoid preconceived interpretations of the material I frequently reflected over differences from my own context to be able to detect my own preconceptions. Instead of drawing conclusions based on experience I tried to compare my findings to earlier research. I also triangulated my findings to other sources, such as the website of the organizations and also to empirical material from interviews with people outside of the Villages.

For the curious reader who want to learn more about the Swedish context I come from, I included references to a website (Sharing Sweden 2016) in Attachment 3.

Experience

To remain transparent I will also describe my personal experience in the field of interest for this study.

I was brought up in a religious environment and volunteering was a natural way of committing and contributing to the community. I still engage in volunteer-work and have also organized community-activities. I have personal experience in the field of elder care since I have worked as a manager in a home for the elders in the municipality's regime, and I also worked as a 'vårdbiträde'⁵ in the municipalities home care services during my high school years. Lastly, I grew up in a religious commune, and have been living together with people, in communes, during long periods of time.

Choice of method

In an explorative study approach the ideal is to start investigating the field of the study as open-minded as possible. To try to engage with an inductive approach (Ahrne & Svensson 2015:13) and extract theory from the empirical material, rather than starting with a theory and then testing it on the empirical material. According to Kvale (1997) the aim of an explorative study is to reach a multifaceted understanding of a phenomenon. The aim is to reach an understanding rather than to get an explanation, to depict rather than to copy. The advantages for this study in using an explorative approach were evident from the aspect that I was not able to choose whom to meet, the reason for this will be explained below. I also did not have the possibility to visit the field prior to the study since the field was geographically situated in another part of the world. The only preparation I was able to do was through literature and the internet. Given the boundaries mentioned, and the fact that I also had a limited time-period in which I had to conduct my research, I had to try to get as much empirical data as possible in a relatively short time. In ethnographic studies (Bryman 2011:378) scientists use an explorative approach since the nature of their field often is unexplored. To cover as many aspects as possible the approach use a wide variety of methods while in the field. Though traditionally an ethnographic study is

⁵ Carer with basic education. I would describe it as in-between the position of an orderlies and a CNA in the USA (Nursingassistantguides.com 2016)

conducted during longer periods of time (ibid:365) I found the approach applicable on this study in the sense that I would be able to use various data-collection methods while approaching the field with an inductive and explorative mind-set.

The methods I used were: interviews, observation, document studies and web-searches. The methods will be described in the 'Data collection' section below.

Choice of, and access to, the field

The time-limit for the study was 10 weeks. That meant I only had about two weeks to collect data. Since I live in Sweden, and am a student, my boundaries were also economical. I had the intention to investigate how the Village organize volunteers, and given the time-limit, I decided the most productive approach would be to visit a Village in order to get valid data. A case-study is often planned to be intense by nature (Bryman 2011:74) and the aim of a case study is to capture the complex nature of a case (David & Sutton 2016:151). Considering my limitations I knew a case study on a Village would give valuable insights on the qualitative aspects of the organizing processes during a relatively short time, and a visit would also be a possible for me to do. In order to get access to the field I needed to find an affordable way for me to conduct a study in the USA. I had the possibility to stay for free⁶ in the USA so I tried to find possible Villages to research in the area where I could stay. I found three Villages, via the Village-to-village network (VtVNetwork.org 2016b). I wrote an e-mail to the official address of each Village, in November 2015, explaining my interest in them and my intention to do a case-study on a Village in the Village-movement; on organization and volunteer-work. I got an answer from three of the Villages. Two of them said they wanted to participate and one informed me that they unfortunately could not plan ahead to the weeks, in March 2016, when I was able to visit so I did not continue investigating my possibilities to visit them. In retrospect this turned out

⁶ In order to keep the confidentiality of those who participated in the study I choose not to reveal how I got free lodging.

to be beneficial to the study due to my limited time period. I do not believe I would have had time to visit the third Village even if they would have made time for me.

I am aware that this way of getting access to the field, a convenience sample (Bryman 2011:194) has its limitations. I had no way of ensuring that my sample of the field would be representative to the Village model but since my focus in the study was to give an example of the process of organizing a Village, I figured the samples would give valuable insights nevertheless. As with all science I also see this study as a stepping stone towards further research and as such a convenience sample would work (Bryman 2011:195).

Due to the fixed time span during which I was able to go to the USA I needed to schedule the days for my visit so I could book airplane tickets and find participants from the Villages that would be able to take the time to meet with me. Via e-mail I once again contacted both of the Villages and the two contacts who initially had agreed to meet with me. From here on I will call the two Villages ,A and B. In Village B the contact I got, henceforth called H⁷, was eager to assist me in finding research objectives and people whom I could interview. H became what is traditionally called a gate-keeper and sponsor (Bryman 2011:384) in ethnographic studies. This means that the help from H opened up the field for me in ways I could not have done myself. H assisted me in planning my visit, contacted and engaged participants for my study, made an itinerary and booked two families with whom I could stay during the collection of data⁸.

I arrived in the geographical area, where I was collecting my data, on a Sunday evening and the itinerary for my data collection stretched up until Friday morning. I got to stay with two families during 5 nights, and daytime I traveled around in

⁷ This 'lettre de plume' is not connected to the name of the person in order to ensure confidentiality.

⁸This turned out to be convenient for me since the free lodging I was able to get myself turned out to be 2 1/2 hours driveway from the objectives of my study.

the area and met people for interviews and observations. I had a car so I drove around most of the time but a couple of times I got to ride with a person I interviewed and/or observed.

Selection of participants

Since I had to do my study abroad (there are no Villages in Sweden yet, that I know of) I needed to start planning my study during the course of my other studies⁹. I had to do this to make sure I would find participants, have time to plan the trip, plan economical issues etc. In order to find suitable objects for the study I also needed to reach out and make contacts while still being very much in a planning state of the research study. At the same time I had to present the overall objectives of my study to my contacts in the USA in order for them to be able to know whether they could participate and give valuable insights into what I was looking for. I had a vision of what I was looking for in the Village-movement but in a research process the preliminary objectives of the study seldom are the same as the final objectives. Especially when it comes to an explorative study, where the material leads you to formulate new thoughts and the researcher uses the findings to hone the objectives along the way. As a consequence the objectives I sent to my contacts in the USA were a bit different from what I focused on when I started working on the study full-time. On top of this the overall objectives I sent in December were kept relatively general since I felt I needed to keep the objectives open until I had time to start working on the study. H on the other hand needed to start looking for people who could assist me in providing data to my study already in December. While doing this H wanted to know about me and my study so the person agreeing to participate would know what they agreed to participate in. I sent the information H asked for but I was not aware how H would plan my visit. Due to a misunderstanding between us H composed a letter to the participants about me and my study based on the initial objectives I sent. This turned out to have a slightly different focus from what I ended up focusing

⁹ I attended a university program in social work, 7 semesters long, out of which the thesis is due on the 6th.

on when coming to the USA. In the end I based the interviews and observations on my final objectives so I don't think this affected the outcome in a larger sense. I am, though, aware that the selection of interview objects, and their areas of expertise, may have been affected by these circumstances. Since H volunteered to find participants for me I was not involved in selecting the people I got to interview/observe. The only time I influenced the selection of participants was in my initial letters. H was very attentive to my overall objectives but because of the aforementioned circumstances, concerning the objectives, I realize that the selection of participants might have been more adapted to the objective of the study if I had been able to start working on the objectives earlier. The information I collected ended up coming from a wide variety of people in the field of elder care. On the other hand, given the inductive nature of the study, I might not have reached the conclusions I did, had it not been for the given circumstances.

The participants

Most of the participants that ended up contributing to the study were involved in work regarding elder care or aging-in-community. A couple were not directly involved but had connections to social work. H contacted people from different parts of the field. Working professionals (payed staff or consultants), volunteers (people doing volunteer-work), residents (people living in the actual village where Village B is situated) and people involved in research and advocating for aging-in-community both active and retirees (retired individuals). I also got to visit several different elder care facilities.

Below, in table 1-3, follow a brief description of the individuals I met in each Village, their occupation and connection to the field and the facilities I visited.

Table 1: staff and volunteers from the two Villages.

Participants inside the Villages	Connection to the field
In Village A	
1 hired professional	Executive director in the Village, also engaged on the national board of the Village-to-village network.
1 hired professional	Volunteer coordinator in the Village, also working as a nurse and a spokesperson for new technology in the field of eldercare.
1 volunteer	Treasurer in the Village, "working" 20 h/ week.
1 volunteer	Involved in the start-up process of the Village.
1 volunteer	Involved in the start-up with PR.
In Village B	
1 hired professional	Executive director in the Village.
1 hired professional	Administrative coordinator in the Village, also resident and volunteer in the Village.
2 hired professionals	Administrative assistants in the Village.
14 volunteers (most were residents as well)	These participants I met over lunch and dinner and had informal talks regarding the eldercare system, aging, volunteering and more.
ca 45 residents	In front of these residents I gave a speech last evening of my visit, on my study and Sweden. I also answered a lot of questions.
National level	
1 hired professional/ volunteer	This person was involved in the national Village-to-village board, I did a Skype® interview after returning to Sweden.

Table 2: People I met outside of the Villages.

Participants outside the Villages	Connection to the field
1 hired professional	Consultant in research on technological inventions to prevent fall-injuries among older adults. Physical Trainer for older adults and more.
1 hired professional	Leader of an initiative emanating from the university where they look at the positive aspects of aging. They aim to synthesize different initiatives to promote positive perspectives on aging. This person is also involved in a project where they promote volunteer initiatives for older adults.
1 retiree and volunteer	Author of several books on the subject of aging in community.
1 part-time retired part time professional	Consultant in city-planning after having had a career in the city doing the same up until retirement.
2 hired professionals	Professors at the university, in the program of social work.
1 scholar	Student of social work
1 hired professional	Coordinator of volunteer initiatives and work in the disabled community.
1 volunteer	Involved in starting up an aging-in-community initiative. Background in the hospice movement and gerontology.

Table 3: Facilities I visited.

Facilities visited	Brief description
3 senior centers.	<p>A senior center is a facility for older adults where they can meet friends, exercise, engage in activities such as dance-classes, education-programs and arts and crafts. The center is funded by the county in which it is situated. Since tax money pays for it the quality, and service vary depending on how wealthy the county is. In 1 of the centers the County department for aging had their offices in the building. Social workers and volunteer coordinators were among the staff.</p> <p>1 center was situated in a city which had been struggling with a lot of criminality and segregation but in recent years worked hard on changing a bad reputation. The area in which the senior center was situated was predominantly black and with low income.</p> <p>1 center was situated in a county that was predominantly white and asian, middle income.</p> <p>1 center was in a small city. It also served a population which was predominantly low-income.</p>
2 CCRC, Continuing Care Retirement Communities, Stone (2013:65-66).	<p>In order to move in to the CCRCs I visited, the applicant needed to be able to live independently for at least 3 years. A resident will usually remain in the CCRC until the end of their life, and be covered for whichever need of medical care that might arise. The CCRCs consisted of cottages for independent living, apartments for assisted living and ultimately rooms in which the person can receive nursing home care. As a residents health deteriorates they progress in health-care status and move accordingly into a facility with more care. The cost of moving into a CCRC, and the monthly fee is substantial compared to other care-facilities.</p>
1 daycare facility	<p>For disabled people of all ages.</p>
1 gated community	<p>A wealthy community in which they were starting up a community care initiative with inspiration from one of the Villages.</p> <p>On the premises the community had invited a so called Concierge Care company. The company provided tailor made care for individuals who wanted to age-in-community and who could pay for 24 hour care. Their facilities consisted of single homes, where an individual in need of care could move in and the care would be adjusted according to the need of each individual.</p>

Communicating in advance

When I started the course, in which I wrote this study, I wrote a letter¹⁰ to the participants H had connected me with thus far. In the letter I explained my interest in the Village-movement. I described the overall objective with the study, my preconceptions, how the study would be executed, ethical considerations and my contact information. I also included questions to eventual participants whether it would be okay for me to ask follow up questions via Skype or e-mail if I needed additional information after returning to Sweden. The letter also contained questions that I intended to include in my interview form so that all possible participants could prepare on the topics we would address during my visit. Finally I included an itinerary that H had arranged for me and also a short bio of myself so that the participants would be know which preconceptions I brought into the study. A couple of days later I sent another letter to the professors at the university¹¹, clarifying that I knew that their area of expertise was not eldercare and that I was interested in their overall opinion on the situation and the American system.

Ethical considerations

To make sure the informants of my study are protected from possible harm, I adhered to ethical principals demanded by the Swedish council of scientific research (Vetenskapsrådet 2002). In the letter, written in advance to the participants, I explained my ethical considerations In the study. The information included the ethic principals stated below:

INFORMED CONSENT:

The right to be informed about the overall objective of the research, and the right to choose wether to participate or not.

¹⁰ Letter enclosed at the end, Attachment 1.

¹¹Letter enclosed at the end, Attachment 2.

In order for the informants to choose whether to participate or not. I told them that they participated voluntarily and at any time were free to withdraw from participating without expressed reason, up until the moment when the empirical material had been processed and anonymized.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

The right to remain anonymous and have my personal information protected.

I told the informant that I, to the longest extent possible will assure anonymity and confidentiality on my behalf. Information in which it is possible to trace who the participant is will be destroyed at the completion of the thesis.

THE RIGHT TO USE:

The information will not be used in any other context than that of the study it was intended for, and the participants have the right to gain knowledge from the results produced by the study.

I told the participants that they will receive a copy of the study so that they will be able to gain from the results.

When meeting the participants I also made sure they had understood their rights, by either handing them a printed copy of the letter, which included the ethical considerations, or asking them if they had read the letter in advance. I also repeated the ethical considerations. In some cases it was not possible and I had to rely on them having read the letter. Before every interview or meeting, where I had the possibility to record the interview, I asked the participant for permission to record them. All interviewees gave me permission.

Part of adhering to an ethical conduct is being transparent in showing how I reached my conclusions. The present text is the result of this consideration. This part also consists of being true to the source and recollect citations and other

information correctly. I did this to the best of my ability. If I missed information, or recollected it the wrong way, another part of an ethical conduct is giving the participants possibility to read the information, and comment on it in retrospect, and to assure this I will send them the completed thesis.

Data - collection

To gain an understanding of people's way of looking at the world we have to study how they express themselves (Ahrne & Svensson 2015:13). This could be done through listening to what they say, seeing what they do or studying what they express through texts, art etc. Below I described the methods I used to try to understand the participants view.

Interviews

Since the aim of this study was to explore a phenomenon and I used an inductive approach I needed to be flexible while collecting the data. Because of this I initially decided to use the method of semi-structured interviews (Bryman 2011:206). This method was suitable in this aspect since it would allow me to keep focus while interviewing but at the same time have the possibility to be spontaneous and pose follow-up questions. Being a non-native English speaker I felt I had to prepare in advance in order to avoid misunderstanding of questions and topics. In preparation for the study I prepared several questions for the participants, based on my overall objective. As mentioned above I also sent these questions in advance to possible participants. This was done in order to assure that ethical considerations were adhered to but also so that the participants could prepare on the topics so I would be able to get as much data as possible during the short time I visited. I also prepared a couple of questions, based on the questions I sent in advance, to use as a frame structure in the interviews. Quite early during the data-collection process I realized that the interviews would cover much broader perspectives than what I planned for. Because of this I left the interview-form early on and instead relied on the preparations I had done. The semi-structured interviews turned into un-structured interviews (Backman et al. 2012).

This type of interview let me follow spontaneous ideas while interviewing. In the interviews I listened for subjects to pursue further in the conversations. I frequently mirrored what the participants said in order to build an understanding. As the week, in which I collected my data, went along I recognized several topics from the interviews I had done before. In these cases I tried to build a deeper understanding by posing questions built on what I learnt before. As the week progressed I developed and adapted my questions according to the information I got.

I decided in advance to record interviews and talks. For this I used my iPhone and the recording function that came with it. I also brought my computer and each night I did a backup on the recorded files.

Observation

Often in ethnographic studies you use observations and participant observations to collect empirical data (Lalander 2015:93). This is a traditional way to approach a field where you try to understand another persons point of view. In my case I was not able to do as many observations as I would have preferred, because of my time-limit. Though I did stay in Village B for three days and while staying there I met several of the residents, and also the staff, I was not able to observe them enough while they were working. This would have given valuable insights into their work. In Village A I only got to interview the staff, a couple of volunteers and board members, I did not meet any members of the Village. Part of this had to do with my intense schedule. One person in the staff in Village B I interviewed while working but for only 30 minutes and most of the time I did an interview at the same time. During the days I visited the Villages I perceived the amount of information I received to be somewhat overwhelming. Since being a unexperienced researcher I found it difficult to keep the kind of structured observation notes which is needed (Bryman 2011:395) to be able to remember detailed conversations or happenings. I tried to do mental notes (ibid:399) and then summarize what I learnt in the evenings, when I had time for myself. But I

wish I would have had time to be better prepared and that I had done more structured observations. The reason for that is that such observations would have made it possible to, not only, listen to the participants telling me what they did, but also study and observe it in a scientific manner. This would have increased the credibility of my findings since that would have made it possible for me to verify or falsify their statements.

Documents

This study was not a traditional document study (Bryman 2011:395) in the sense that I did not study the documents themselves. I studied documents but then with the only purpose of finding data to broaden my view of the phenomenon I studied. Out of Scott's four criteria of authenticity (Bryman 2011:489) only the first two were relevant to this study: 1. if the document was authentic and 2. if it was credible. I got several documents from the Villages I visited. From several of the documents I collected data. To assure that both of the aforementioned criteria were followed I verified their authenticity and credibility by comparing them to websites of both Villages and also to information I got in the interviews.

Web search

The Village-to-village network web-site, Vtvnetwork.org (2016b), was used frequently to double-check information in the interviews and to find history about the Villages and other information related to the Villages and the Village model. I will explain more about the network in the Result & Analysis section.

Adapting to the circumstances

The mix of several different methods in during data collection meant that I needed to adapt and adjust my method to each situation. Several of the meetings I had planned for me ended up being spontaneous leisure talk so I had to adapt and adjust my methods accordingly. For example I met several people for lunch or dinner meetings. In these cases I did not feel comfortable asking if I could record the conversations. After each session I wrote down parts of the conversations in

order to remember what was said. Naturally those notes did not end up as detailed as the interviews which I transcribed. In some cases I also did not feel comfortable to ask the people I met if I would be allowed to use the information I got in the study, and I also did not have the possibility to ask for informed consent. Because of this I did not include that information in the study, I only used it to build my own understanding.

Analysis

Transcription

When I got back from my data-collection week I started transcribing interviews and structuring my material. I ended up with 14 recorded interviews, 10 hours long in total. Considering the short time I had to write the study I needed to find a quick way to transcribe the data. Being a Swedish speaker it took a long time for me to write the transcriptions since I was not used to writing large amounts of texts in English. I started transcribing by keyboard but eventually learnt about a dictation function on my computer. It allowed me to listen to the interviews, repeat the words out loud and the computer would then write down what I said, in perfect English spelling. This made the transcription-process easier and above all, faster. During transcriptions I left out in-between sounds, words and syllables such as 'ehm', 'like' and 'well'. Since I was not interested in rendering an exact transcription of sentences it was beneficial to my study to omit unnecessary sounds and instead focus on the contents of what was said. This made the transcription process faster.

To make citations easier to read I turned them into sentences, i.e put a capital letter in the beginning of the sentence as well as ended them with a dot.

Structuring the data

I used thematized structuring during my collection of data (Bryman 2011:528). This process began early in the interviews when I returned to reoccurring topics during my data-collection week in order to gain a deeper understanding. The

process continued after the transcription was done when I, with the research questions in mind, started selecting sections of the interviews which included topics relating to the objectives of my study. I started with 90 pages of written interviews so the first selection was rudimentary, yet selective. I cut away portions of the text which I felt covered areas that were not connected to the study, in order to get a better overview. I pasted cut-out sections into a new document and the first cut left me with about 50 pages. From that I started organize reoccurring themes in the text. In yet another new document I cut out citations and put them together into sections with initial corresponding themes. This document became 19 pages long and became a condensed collection of subjects relating to my aim.

Initial themes

The initial themes were as follows:

Reasons for Villages, reasons to volunteer, reasons for volunteering, getting members, challenges - and how to address them, practical handling, the two Villages - differences.

Analytical tool

After coming this far in the analysis process I looked for an analytical tool to be able to discern the organizing process described by Czarniawska (2014). Callon's (1986) process of translating became a suitable tool since his four stages were compatible with the theoretical lens of Czarniawska. Compared with her narrative approach (described below) I was able to discern representations of the organizing process.

Story telling

Czarniawska (2014:33) meant that to be able to examine the organizing actions that form action-nets one has to introduce three time dimensions of storytelling. The present, in which actions inside of an organization, to an observer, appear highly fragmented; to the recent past, in which actions seem somewhat structured but still are open to interpretations; and finally the fully structured past that

manifests itself as a 'fully developed story with a point' (ibid:33). Czarniawska describes the sense-making function of these stories. She writes how they can be used as 'interpretive templates' on the present. The constructing action of organizing is made through telling stories, narratives, which give sense to the present construct. In order for them to do so one has to put the story into a frame (ibid:39), a category. One could say that the abstract entity, organization, serves as such a frame. When something happens inside the organization, which requires a response, it is fitted into the frame of the organization and interpreted through an interpretive template, and thus give meaning to the present construction.

Under each initial theme I looked for interpretive templates. Stories participants told me when they answered my questions since these stories served as sense-making narratives and in the process of explaining them the participants also told me about the processes that had led to their present situation i.e their constructing action. This way the narratives served as representations of the organizing process. When I found traces of interpretive templates I went back into the empirical material and listened through the interviews once again to be able to recall the entire story and recollect them as correct as possible.

In the written analysis I included citations as examples of the interpretive templates. Other times I needed to synthesize information from different sources in order to recollect the narratives.

Comparative analysis

In an explorative case study it is sometimes difficult to detect correlations and causalities (David & Sutton 2016:154) within a case since cases often are complex entities, as was the case in this study. To get around these difficulties I applied Callon's (1986) four stages on each Village and looked for critical aspects in every stage. After I had done this I focused the lens on disparities between the Village. The disparities were then compared and discussed in order to find

important features in the organizing process and to build an understanding of these.

Reflections, on methodology and process

I realized early on in the analysis that it would have been beneficial to the study if I already from the start would have taken into consideration the way I wanted to analyze the material. As Kvale (2009:230) points out this could have made the codification of the material easier. The first major self-critique I have when reflecting over the method of the study is how I handled the vast material I got. To me this was also an ethical issue since I felt the study was a matter of giving back to the participants. Being an unexperienced researcher, with a limited time-frame, most of the work I put into the study ended up being how to find an analytical tool to analyze the empirical data and figuring out how to distinguish which narratives to use in my analysis. The inductive, explorative approach I had envisioned resulted in a large amount of data, suitable for a bigger study. I believe a deductive approach would have made the analyzing process more efficient and the analysis of the material more profound.

The second major self-critique I have is the fact that the study only examines what people were saying about their work. During my collection of the data I did not have time to actually observe participants in their work, at least not to the extent I would have needed in order to tell if they did what they told me. Thus my understanding of the phenomenon may be biased. To work against a biased view I tried to verify my findings in other scientific reports. The fact that I also talked to people outside of the Villages might also ameliorate the credibility of the study. But ultimately the only way to gain better credibility would be to go back and do more participant observations for a longer time. An important input for further research on the field.

The results of the study would have benefited from being compared to other ways of organizing volunteers. Due to the time limit in the study I did not have time to

do the comparative work I needed to have done to cover the field in these aspects. I chose to leave the work of comparing the findings in this study to future researcher and see my contribution as a case study of the Villages.

As I needed to prepare in advance for the study I also wanted to prepare the participants in order for them to be able to say if they wanted to participate or not. I did this to adhere to 'good science' and informed consent. In retrospect this could have been done differently. I perceived a pride in the participants work. They wanted to tell me about their work and they wanted to share their knowledge. Since I did not know what I would meet or whom I would interview, to be on the safe side I sent a promise to the participants that I would assure full confidentiality to the longest extent possible, on my behalf, for the participants. This may have influenced some of the participants to reveal more than they intended to initially. Being a scientist and following this protocol I took away some of the information in the study in order to try to assure confidentiality of the participants. If someone wanted to though, they might find out which Villages I visited, and consequently figure out at least some of the participants. I reflected on the possibility of harm coming to those who shared their knowledge because of this and I have come to the conclusion that the topics on which this study is based are not necessarily harmful for the participants. But since I made the promise in advance, I wanted to, and needed to, keep to my protocol. And since I cannot be sure that no harm will come to the participants I also think the protocol filled its purpose.

Since being a non-native English speaker I chose early on to write the study in English. I did this to avoid as many misunderstandings as possible. I also knew I needed to send the study to the participants after it was done so if I would not have written in English from the start I also would have needed to translate it afterwards. Writing in another language brings with it different kinds of challenges. First I cannot be sure to grasp the full meaning of the language since their might be nuances only native speakers understand. Second I might have

asked questions that were misunderstood without me knowing it. The credibility of the study may lessen because of this. I had help from trained English speakers to read the text. They helped me work the language in the text and I also had the text proof read in order to get the language as accurate as possible. I will also send the study to the participants so they will be able to give feedback on all aspects of the study.

Since I sent the letter in advance to the participants, and do not know whether each of the participant read it, I reflected on the possibility that participants did not read the ethical considerations I set out to follow. This may have interfered with the ethical protocol I adhered to in my study. I told several of the participants the information again, before I started interviewing, but given the nature of some of the interviews the information about the ethical aspects may have been sidelined. I will still follow the protocol on my behalf and I also intend to send the study to the participants, upon completion, to give them the possibility to give feedback on the results, and their own involvement.

Results & Analysis

Introduction to Results and Analysis

When doing research on organizations Czarniawska (2014:17) suggested that one should look at the process of organizing connections between actors and how that constructs organizations. I will look at the process through Callon's (1986) four stages of translating the process: problematization, interessement, enrolment and mobility. It is important to understand that in reality the stages are often overlapping. Also, Callon's (1986) description of the process had the initial function of describing how a network developed from its initiators. Since my informants, to the largest extent, were not involved in the initiating group, the information presented here has another focus. I lean on Czarniawska's (2014) statement that an organizing net is performed continually. An organization is not a static entity but rather the result of an ongoing process. By using story-telling, as suggested by Czarniawska (2014), I aim to describe how the organizing process has led, and leads, to the construction of the present-day Villages.

Scharlach et al (2010) stated that all Villages are different but have similar characteristics. This was evident to me as well. There was even is a saying in the network *When you've seen one Village, you've seen one Village* (Vtvnetwork.org 2016c). Consequently the Villages I studied had evolved differently and were in different phases regarding the organizing processes. To be able to discern differences between the process in each of the two Villages I will divide the analysis into three. One section per Village and one were I compare the Villages.

I continue with my designated name for each Village, correspondingly: *Village A* and *Village B*.

Problematization

The core task at this stage is mapping out reasons why actors got involved. This part of the process explores the 'problem' around which the Villages were constructed and how the solution was presented.

For the reader to understand how the solution to the problem was presented to me I will start with recollecting narratives about the 'problem' of each Village. After that I will describe the actants and their roles in each Village, as they were constituted at the time of my visit, before I continue with the Comparison section.

Village A - problem

The story of how Village A was started was narrated to me by the executive director (ED). I also studied their information on their web-site and compared it to the statements made by the ED.

Village A was started as an initiative from a local church.

A group from there [...] started asking what are we going to do for our older adults [...] people want to stay in their homes. (ED)

The group wanted to find a way to help them grow old in their own homes for as long as possible while still remaining independent. They also wanted the solution to the problem to be safe and economically sustainable for the individual, compared to existing alternatives.

There are a lot of people who can't afford to move to assisted living or to continuing care retirement community so I feel like the Village helps tap into those people [...] it helps the people sustain their own resources for a longer period of time. (ED)

This is what I interpreted to be 'the problem' around which they gathered. In the process they heard about the original Village in Beacon Hill and liked the idea. It took them several years to figure out how to start a Village of their own. Parts of it had to do with deciding which, out of the following four, business models they were going to use.

The grassroots - a stand alone nonprofit organization, administered by paid staff and volunteers. Members were often part of the boards in these Villages.

Parent sponsored village - existing social services or other aging service organizations supported a Village by providing administrative functions such as back offices, legal & financial management etc.

Hub and spoke - smaller Villages, spokes, were supported by a hub i.e a central Village that handled back office work such as IT, accounting, database etc.

Village with TimeBank - a Village used a "time-bank" where one hour volunteered could be banked as a time-dollar to be used later to buy services in the Village.

(borrowed from *Sustaining the Village movement report*, Capitalimpact.org (2015))

At first they wanted to start a Hub and spoke model but could not persuade neighborhoods in their designated area to adopt their idea, so eventually they started as a grassroots model. In spring 2016 they had been officially up and running for about three years and they had about 60 members.

Village A - solution

Village A was not a facility. In their web-page I read that it was a non-profit, member-led organization aimed towards serving older adults who wanted to age independently and safe in their own home. The Village served members spread out in a fairly large area and focused on neighborhoods in two adjacent cities and parts of three counties in the region. Members came from predominantly white and middle-class backgrounds. Prior to my visit they had also begun expanding to

include an area, in one of the cities, with a lower income-class and more diverse population than before.

We just received a grant to help the subsidies of membership because we want to tap into the lower income group. (ED)

The information below was synthesized from the web page, information material and talks with the staff.

A person could become a member of the organization by paying a membership-fee. Village A had two different kinds of memberships:

-Full membership available to residents in their focus area of ages 62+. The full membership ensured full access to all services and support available. The services were designed to aid members age in their home for as long as possible and included:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>home maintenance tasks</i> | Such as light plumbing, putting up shelves, light gardening etc. |
| <i>transportation</i> | To and from meetings with, for example, doctors and nurses. |
| <i>friendly visits/check-in calls</i> | For members who might need a social call or just a check up now and then. |
| <i>convenience services</i> | Running errands, picking up mail, preparing meals etc. |
| <i>technology assistance</i> | Installing a TV, connecting cables, light computer support etc. |

They used a volunteer-first policy. That is to say that most services were provided by volunteers but if there were services that the volunteers could not provide, or if volunteers were not available, they also kept a list of vetted service providers i.e

companies that the organization had pre-emptively done back-ground checks on so they could vouch for their professionalism. Volunteers were both members and non-members.

They also arranged social meetings and educational programs for the members, and the staff were available for questions and were ready to assist in whichever way they could.

-Associate membership was open for anyone interested in exploring what the Village was able to offer them. This membership gave access to a limited amount of services for the member but ensured access to the list of vetted service providers, social as well as educational meetings and advice provided by the staff.

The central decisive body of Village A was a board consisting of both members and non-members. The reason for this, staff told me, was that they wanted to be able to get input from the outside. There were two employees hired by the board, their roles are described below:

Executive director, employed 30 hours/week.

In charge of running the Village daily. The ED's tasks included administrative work, assessing the needs of new members, keeping contact with the members, holding PR-meetings for the Village and facilitating and managing contacts between volunteers, members and vetted service providers. With a work load widely surpassing the 30 hour/week, while having no working facility or office, a lot of this work was done from home or on the run via telephone and/or the computer.

Volunteer director, employed 5 hours/week.

The volunteer director was hired mainly to facilitate and coordinate contacts between volunteers and members. Most of the contacts were managed via phone

or e-mail but the Village also kept a database of members, volunteers and service providers to facilitate connections between members and volunteers.

Village B - problem

The story of how Village B was started was also narrated to me by the ED but I also talked to several residents in Village B who told me some of the information and I also studied information on their web-site, in a cook book and in other texts. The information below was synthesized from these sources.

Village B started as an existing neighborhood. The community was founded a couple of decades before Beacon Hill Village and it was early on modeled after an old time village. The founder had the initial intention to build a village for all generations. Even if there still were some families with kids living in the Village when I visited the population was predominantly white and middle-class retirees aged 65+. The Village grew out of two initial initiatives by residents. The first one was an organization formed by residents of the village to meet the needs of residents who grew older and needed assistance to be able to stay in their homes. The organization was focused on helping residents of their own community. It was volunteer-based from the start, residents helping residents. After a couple of years another group of residents formed a corporation to be able to provide nursing services for the residents. These two groups eventually joined forces. When I visited them they were a grassroots model Village, run as a non-profit organization. With about 2000 residents they were considered one of the largest neighborhoods in the Village-movement (see below).

Village B was formed around the 'problem' expressed on their web-page:

[Village B] exists to provide information, services and activities that foster the health, well-being and independence of the residents of [Village B].

Village B - solution

In Village B they did not have a membership-fee. Instead they did an annual appeal to all residents, and other, in which they raised money to cover all expenses.

Services for the residents were:

<i>transportations</i>	Limited to transports for health reasons, i.e doctors appointments, and grocery shopping.
<i>minor nursing services</i>	A registered nurse on location in the Village, 3 h/week-day, free of charge for the residents.
<i>minor home repairs</i>	Light repairs or maintenance work.
<i>computer support</i>	Minor computer tasks, such as connecting wires and light trouble-solving.

Activities and services aimed towards enhancing health and wellness

<i>support groups</i>	Aimed towards different groups in need of support (e.g while I was there they had a brain-injury group).
<i>movement classes</i>	Different classes of light training designed to improve the overall fitness of the adult (light yoga, light cardio, line-dance etc.).
<i>equipment loans</i>	They had walkers, crutches, shower-stools etc. that residents could loan free of charge while recovering from an operation for instance.
<i>friends/companionship</i>	A resident in need of social support or perhaps a friendly visit got connected with a volunteer who came to visit.

On top of this they also did social events and educational programs most of which were coordinated, and run, by residents i.e volunteers.

Village B also had a volunteer-first policy which worked basically the same way as in Village A. However they did not keep a list of vetted service providers. Instead they had a list of resident-recommended service providers.

The central decisive body of Village B was a board. It consisted of residents only. The board had 4 employees, whose roles are described below:

Executive director, hired full time. The director was also, at the time I visited the nurse on location. The ED was in charge of leading the everyday work with all parties involved. The job also included nursing tasks and a lot of the time the director was involved hands on in coordinating volunteer-member efforts. Development issues were also on the agenda. The director answered directly to the board.

Administrative coordinator working 2 days/week

The administrative coordinator did most of the accounting, kept track of donations, paid bills and entered data into a database for statistics.

2 Administrative assistants working 2 days/week.

The two administrative assistants did most of the coordinating. They answered questions, connected volunteers with residents and coordinated social events. The ED described them as their 'directors of first impressions'.

Village B had one building in which the staff offices were situated. Next to that house was a gathering-house. These facilities contained several rooms used as resources for the Villagers. In these rooms they had meetings, exercise-classes, education-classes etc. In one of the rooms they also keep the equipment which was available for the residents to loan (the walkers, crutches etc.)

Comparison

As we saw in the descriptions above, the common goal and the problem, of both Villages was assisting older adults who wanted to age in their own home and community, independently and safe. The stories of why people came together appeared as narratives, giving meaning to the present as described by Czarniawska (2014:33). To recollect the reasons why actors chose the Village model I selected four narratives, which stood out, from what the participants in both Villages told me. The first narrative had to do with the most frequent topic of all conversations I had, that of economy. A lot of the participants from both inside and outside the Villages talked about how the structures for taking care of older adults in the USA, in many ways, were sub-standard or too expensive.

Here we don't have good options [...] our long term health system is broken in many ways [...] people are afraid of the institutions poor quality systems [...] and it's very expensive [...] Long term care that are substandard. (University employee)

Consequently a frequently offered explanation to why participants chose the Villages were that it was seen as an affordable way to be able to grow old in your own home. The second narrative was about how in the USA relatives often live far apart.

...what their family demographics are, if they have people who are close by or they have people who are across the country. (Staff Village A)

Several of the residents I met in Village B for example had moved to the area from other parts of the USA with the outspoken purpose to grow old and die in the, comparably, better climate than what they were used to. This of course led to a situation where their relatives lived far away and were not able to assist them when they grew old. The third narrative was about participants expressing that

older adults simply did not want to be a burden to their families, economically or emotionally.

What people fear the most that family that family is going to stick me in an institution. They don't want to be a burden on their family but they don't also want to be stuck in an institution either. (ED-Village A)

Staff also talked about how members many times told them that they felt embarrassed asking for help and did not want to be seen as helpless and because of that be 'put away' in an institution. And last, the fourth narrative was about participants telling me that as they grew old they had a feeling of being left outside of the society, even if they still had a lot to give.

As you retire you kind of hate having that feeling that you're not worth something... the urge to be of some use is very strong. (Participant involved in initiating Village A)

The participants described a general ageism and a societal view on older adults as being unproductive. The expressed solution to the problems expressed in the narratives was the most prominent feature of the Villages, the volunteer component.

We are organized around volunteer services, and volunteer services is at the heart of what we do and that is true for every village. (ED-Village B)

Thus I go back to look at how I perceived the Villages had constructed the solution to their 'problem' and what connections led to the construction of the action-net. The solution in the narratives above was what brought actors to choose a Village, the volunteer effort. Both Village A and B had similar goals and to reach those goals they would to a large extent use connections that already existed; neighbors or people living in the same neighborhood. Through these connections

they addressed the problems. By using resources members/residents themselves possessed the members would become actors in the action net that became the Village. If a member would drive someone else to the doctor, the member could, in return, get someone to help them when they were in need. The performed action became an organizing action at the same time, since helper expected help in return. Thus an action net would start to form, the solution to the problems in the narratives. The solution was cheap, members did not have to rely on relatives for help, the older adult regained independence, since the person helping was in the same situation as the helper and it gave a sense of being part of something bigger. The action net eventually evolved into involving volunteers outside of the Village as well, as we will see under *interressement*, and the construction continued but I perceived the fundamental process to be what I described here.

The Villages grew out of two different kinds of initiatives. The difference between the Villages were that Village B grew out of member participation and involvement. Village A on the other hand rather used that same component in their solution, but instead grew out of an initiating group-initiative. Thus I understood that the reasons for constructing an entity as a Village may differ. The narratives suggested that the demographic situation, the structural challenges, the older adults feelings of being a burden to their families and being left outside the society, inspired people from different places to find similar solutions for solving similar problems. This corresponds to what was mentioned in the introduction, how Blanchard (2013) wrote that similar initiatives for aging in community in the USA spawned around the same time. I believe it would be hard to find out which was the chicken and which was the egg in the situation i.e who was inspired by whom. It would also be impossible to generalize from two cases. But, the narratives about how the volunteer-exchange system, in Village A & B, made members and residents feel needed and valuable correlates well to the findings by Scharlach (2012) where he defined the Village model as an aging-friendly initiative, i.e it promoted the older adults relationship building possibilities and their ability to contribute to society. Then there was the fact that both Villages,

even though evolving from different initiatives, still offered similar services. This could indicate that they copied each other or that initiators from Village A imitated the approach of Village B. The findings of Scharlach et al (2011) showed that Villages shared many characteristics, but were different in equally many other ways. My tentative interpretation is that the similarities could point to a similar process of problematization as we saw in the examples above. The narratives also suggested that the choice of the solution, with its use of volunteer efforts, came as a consequence of systemic and structural challenges in the context where these Villages existed.

Interessement

In this part of the organizing process I examine how the Villages were involved in finding new 'allies'/actors and strategies for tying them to the cause. Due to the way the Villages were constructed it is important to understand that this was an ongoing process. New actors were tied to the network all the time. Older adults ended their engagement, volunteers found other things to do and staff quit. So the interessement process was performed over and over again.

Village A

Village A formed about three years prior to my visit. When talking with staff, and board-members in the Village, they expressed a wish to expand and get more members since they had managed to reach 'only' about 60 members. To get people interested in their idea and their solution to the problem, and to find more members, the staff told me that they did a lot of outreach to promote the Village model. They put ads in papers and met people in different arenas where older adults meet, such as the senior centers that I visited. Since part of the solution was to use volunteers this meant that they, at the same time, looked for volunteers, and talked about opportunities for them to volunteer for the Village. The ED talked about this process as the business side of the work.

You have to tell people you're there and you have to tell them what you do and tell them how we're different. What makes us different, why would you want to be a member. (ED-Village A)

It was about selling the idea, about getting actors involved in the organization and finding allies to the cause. The staff talked about how they perceived a resistance towards the idea in the attitude of those who not yet needed assistance. They were questioned about why someone should pay a member-fee for something that they would not use. The challenge was to make people see the discrepancy between the relatively moderate cost of a membership, and that, actual and emotional, of a possible future where they would have to move into a nursing home etc. According to the staff the problem was that, even though they did the promoting work, new members seemed to come predominantly from a word-of-mouth approach.

What they're seeing is that membership is really friends talking to friends about being members. (ED-Village A)

Members joined because their friends had joined before them. So to get the word out they said it was important to do the promoting work on one hand, since they knew they would find more volunteers this way, on the other hand new members seldom came from this. They described the outreach work to be time-consuming. With limited staff hours in which they had to cover administrative work, facilitating work between existing members and volunteers, board meetings etc, there just was not enough time.

One narrative that kept reoccurring when talking to staff, board members and initiators was a typical catch-22. It also had to do with acquiring both members and volunteers. One of their biggest challenges was engaging volunteers to have them available when a member needed help.

But it's then a matter of a matter of recruiting, retaining and then making sure they have things to do. (ED-Village A)

The catch-22 lay in the fact that to be able to acquire new members they needed:

...a cadre of trusted and trained volunteers (From the information material given to new members and volunteers).

If they did not have volunteers ready to provide services when members needed them, they would not be able to do what they had said they could. But the fact that they only had 60 members made the equation difficult to solve. Finding volunteers was about PR. But after getting people interested the staff talked about several obstacles. The first one was about getting trusted volunteers. Here the question of trust and liability stood out as a structural obstacle. In order to have an organization built upon volunteer efforts they had to make sure the volunteers did a good job. Staff and board-members described the situation of 'risk, liability and insurance'. The legal system in the USA held corporations liable in the case someone conducts a misdeed, or an accident happens, while working for them. Legal fees and, in cases where corporations were held liable, penalty payments were substantial. This, in turn, led to a situation where corporations needed to be insured 'to the teeth' for all eventual risks in order to run a company. This was not a problem specific to the Village. The ED talked about it being a problem for all volunteer-organizations. Because of this situation the Village needed to make sure that anyone who signed up as a volunteer for them was trustworthy. To do this the staff ordered background-checks on volunteers and the Village payed for these. Second, once a volunteer had been approved they needed to go through a training to be able to volunteer for the Village. The training session lasted a couple of hours during which the volunteer learnt things about the Village, and what was expected of them while volunteering for the Village. This was a logistic puzzle and also took a lot of time. A catch-22 since even if the volunteers got cleared for working and successfully went through a training for the Village, if the Village

had too few members to be able to provide volunteer opportunities they still had a hard time keeping volunteers tied to them. They talked about volunteers being on the hunt for opportunities and if the Village could not provide that, they risked losing the volunteers to another organization even before they started volunteering for the Village. The staff talked about a distinct time-frame in which they needed to have an opportunity for the volunteer, of about two weeks.

Village B

The narrative regarding the interestment process in Village B was different. The ED told me they did not have a problem getting volunteers since they had a long history that attracted people from all over the USA and facilities that were attracting residents as well. The village itself was situated in a mild climate, houses were situated in a beautiful scenery and the area appeared to be safe and secure. When residents moved into the Village residents automatically signed up for volunteering. The director described it as a huge volunteer tradition. People wanted to volunteer, and a lot of the residents were also volunteering in other areas of the society. The challenge in Village B was rather about having different, and enough, opportunities to give the volunteers something to do inside the Village.

We need more volunteer opportunities to develop [...] I need more people who are willing to put skin in the game. (ED-Village B)

In Village B they had around 200 volunteers but the opportunities available for them were limited. The reason for this was that the services provided by the Village were specified. A volunteer could drive residents to meetings, help out as a handy-man, fix minor computer tasks, make social visits, volunteer on the board or engage, or get engaged with, other people in different social events. These activities did not fit all residents. Consequently the ED told me that they tried to create more opportunities. To get more residents, actors, involved the ED said they wanted more residents to engage in activities themselves. But a lot of the

times the threshold would be too high for someone to get involved, it might be due to insecurity of not knowing anyone who would accompany them to the activity. In the process of engaging people the ED talked about using the 'social dimension'. One participant described the social dimension like this:

Your organization of the volunteers begin to take the social dimension of its own [...] the leadership takes its place, they begin to having a social role, [...] have a dynamic of its own [...] they develop social structure. (Participant involved in initiating Village A)

From what they told me I interpreted the social dimension as something that gave the actors an identity inside the action net. The reason for this was that several residents of Village B talked about how different social events attracted different people. The people that were attracted, most of the time, had things in common. For example they had social clubs for stock trading, cooking, golf etc. So to get more actors involved the ED would use the 'social dimension'. I was told an example of how this was done in the creation of a social event. At first the director would take a leading role by asking people to help out in starting a group, or asking residents in helping out by doing small chores. Then after involving one, or a couple of volunteers, the director would hand over the responsibility to the volunteer, step by step, meeting by meeting. The ED told me that once a resident got involved, the 'social dimension' took over and the volunteer would develop an identity within the group, an actor was created, and the ED could withdraw from the leading role. Other times it was just a matter of trying things out.

We try things and if it's meaningful people will come. (ED-Village B)

The social dimension would become a contributing factor and the temporary event would be a reoccurring event. The ED told me that that was how they started the movement classes. They decided to try for a set time-period and then evaluate.

When the word spread, and residents found it to be meaningful, they came and they would continue.

Comparison

I continue describing how I perceived the construction process. The central actor in the Village action-net was the volunteer. But not all residents/members could be counted on for volunteering. Already from the start we must assume that there would be people who could not volunteer. In their target groups there would be people, for example, who would be too frail to be able to contribute. So to make use of the volunteer-component in the Village-solution the initiating members would need to formalize the organizing action, to make use of the volunteer efforts, i.e. decide how to use volunteers in an organized way to benefit all members in their organizations. This action would also expand the action net. Czarniawska (2014:42) described how leaders organize through words. They translate, edit and inscribe words and through these actions they organize. In the case of the Villages these organizing actions also created new actors as allies to the cause. As I have described above the initiating members identified problems and solutions but in order to formalize the solution more actors had to be brought to the table. A lot of the participants talked about how starting a non-profit businesses (as the Villages were) in the USA is a complex task. The paperwork had to be done properly in order to get a status of non-profit. I learnt there were complex IRS¹² regulations regulating how to get such a status but basically they were not allowed to make a profit. Then they had the situation of 'risk, liability and insurance'. To be able to use the solution of members helping members the initiators had to interpret and translate the needs of the future, and present, members into corporate bylaws i.e. inscribed words (Czarniawska 2014:44). As we can see the formalization action created actors. A board needed to be established to translate, edit and inscribe member needs through words into actions, strategies and so on. Initially, from my understanding, the boards were members of the initiating groups. When I visited them the Villages had boards which consisted of

¹² The agency responsible for taxation issues in the USA (IRS 2016).

members and, in the case of Village A, both members and non-members. This corresponds to findings by McDonough & Davitt (2011) who described the Village model's ability to build social capital¹³ by involving members in the decision making of the Villages.

When looking at the Villages interessement process I perceive different phases of development. As described above, staff in Village A expressed that they wanted to expand. They talked about challenges in 'recruiting' volunteers, how to get more members, the challenge of having too few resources and different strategies to overcome these problems. They talked about reaching out to create more connections between new actors and the Village. Members and staff in Village B talked rather about how to create new opportunities for the members already 'recruited'. They talked about a social component that could be used to draw people together from connections that already existed, in the form of being neighbors in the same neighborhood. From what the staff told me in Village A, I understood that they believed that was a tipping point of when a Village would have just the right amount of volunteers for the right amount of members. This corresponds to what Thompson (2013, Part 1&2) describes, that a Village cannot be too big, nor too small in order to have economic viability. Interestingly Village B, which was considered to be one of the biggest entities in the Village-movement, did not have any membership fees, nor did they vet their service providers (which costed money in Village A). On the other hand they told me that they had a long history and facilities that attracted people to move to their Village. And the ED of Village A also talked about how the word-of-mouth, the reputation, was what attracted most members.

Enrolment

In this stage of the analysis I look at how the identities of the actors inside the organization were negotiated and their functions were being debated and

¹³ Defined as resources in the form of relationships and connections to people, could also be connected to cultural, and economic capital (Rostila 2012)

delegated. Callon (1986:11) described the process as a "*veritable battle*" being fought over who does what in the actors network.

Village A

Village A adopted a concept, as apposed to evolving one of their own. They seemed to be adapting their approach. Adapting in the sense that did not have to do with establishing what different actors was supposed to do in the network but rather negotiating the function of those actors that were already involved in order to reach out to new actors. One narrative implying that identities and functions were being negotiated among staff and board members was the story about the agreement signed between the board and the ED around what would be the ED's responsibilities.

I had of course like an agreement, that I signed but it was basically you're in charge of everything. It's like you're doing all of it. (ED-Village A)

The ED talked about how this had become a problem. Since the board did not put down in detail what the ED was supposed to do in the initial document, they had difficulties when trying to determine what the ED could do differently. The director was free to choose what was important work. This meant that time-consuming administrative work often was left out in favor of outreach-work which was perceived as the more rewarding and fun work. When I met the staff they told me that the board were in the process of doing something about the situation. A couple of days prior to when I met them the ED had been audited in order for the board to be able to evaluate the mandate of the position. The director also talked about a dialogue going on between the board, members and staff. They were developing a committee structure, changing board members so that it would be a 'working board' (board members would engage in the day to day work in the Village) which was supposed to benefit the exchanging of ideas for the whole Village to profit from.

Village B

The ED's narratives about the challenges in the enrolment process in Village B had to do with making resident-actors see the solution, in the form of the Village model, the same way. This was described as a constant negotiating dialogue. Since they had 200 volunteers, the ED said they also had 100 different opinions about how the work should be executed. One example was drivers who did not think people who could afford private chauffeurs should be allowed to ask for a volunteers to drive them. Someone else questioned having people with dementia living in the village. The response from the staff to this constant negotiating was described by the ED with a quote:

If you want people to build boats, make them fall in love with the ocean. (ED-Village B, Quote by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry 2016)

The question of making volunteers adapting or trying new things, described by the ED, had to do with making them curious and envisioning the solution. The role of the ED implied a clear facilitative function of creating possibilities and negotiating initiatives. For example, by steering new initiatives towards the structure that already existed, a new social group could be allowed to use existing resources such as the gathering house, and to call upon new actors to involve as in the example above with the movement classes. How to do this practically was described by the ED as 'eating crow':

You can move so much forward by saying I probably made that bad thing happen, let me figure out how to fix it, even if you didn't make it happen.
(ED-Village B)

And also, while negotiating, trying to find common ground and agreeing to try things out. Another important thing was described as conveying gratitude. This was mentioned several times by participants from both Village B, and others, as means of letting volunteers know that they were appreciated. I perceived this to be

somewhat central to the general idea of how to meet residents in the Village, and an important part of the negotiating of identities. The conveying of gratitude even took the form of special events, which were called volunteer appreciations. Basically it was about gathering volunteers, throwing a party for them and officially expressing gratitude to them, boosting their function.

Database

In their organizing work the staff in both Villages had a 'helping hand', a database. Latour (2005:37) insists that actors inside an organization do not have to be human. In the case of the Villages the database was an important actant in the organizing work that was being performed every day. The staff in Village B told me how they put information about members, volunteers and providers in the database. As an example of how the organizing worked the administrative assistant in Village B told me how they registered which volunteer-drivers were 'on duty' each week. They would then get calls from members who needed assistance with driving and it was an easy task of connecting volunteer and member. Latour (2005) writes that non-human actors are actors in one sense but only when they are at use. One could call it an intermediary actor since the moment the use of the object disappears the actor also disappear. An example of this is what the administrative assistant told me happens when Village B sometimes runs out of volunteers. The example they told me was again about drivers and times when they were not able to connect members with volunteers in the database, since the ones that signed up that week were already booked. In this case the administrative assistants had to rely on the human actor, who knew which of the other volunteers usually were keen on stepping in on a short notice. The database actor here disappeared completely. But as an important actor they described the database to be otherwise indispensable. They also told me how they used statistics from the database to leverage different aspects of their work. For example this was used to evaluate the progress of new ideas, like when they started the movement classes.

Village-to-Village network - VtVN

In 2009 another actant was brought to the table. The needs of an individual Village spawned the creation of a network, a web-based actant which was described by Poor et al. (2012). The Village-to-Village network (Vtvnetwork 2016d) began as a partnership between the Beacon Hill Village and another non-profit organization, Capital Impact Partner (Capitalimpact.org 2015). It formed as a resource for existing Villages, to meet the growing interest, nationwide, in the Village concept. In 2015 the VtVN developed into an association supported by and existing for its members, the Villages in the network. The main focuses for the network are:

...development of new Villages, the sustainability of operating Villages and advancing the Village-movement. (Vtvnetwork 2016d)

Consequently the VtVN was an important actant in both Villages since it connected Villages from all over the USA, 205 Villages and 105 in development, 2016-07-31. Via the VtVN Villages could connect through different forums .They could ask questions via web-forums, get access to documents, join webinars, watch videos, take part of and explore different surveys, join conferences and much more. The board of the VtVN consisted of members from all over the USA, and members of the board were all involved in Villages or similar initiatives in their daily work.

Comparison

Staff and members of Village A described their situation as being in a start-up phase. When reflecting on this I realized that one sign pointing to this could be that they did not talk a lot about the enrolment part of the process. Our talks revolved more around the interessement part of the process which was an earlier stage in Callon's (1986) constructing process.As apposed to this I would say that Village B talked more about enrolment. This might have to do with the fact that they were an established neighborhood.

Czarniawska (2014) wrote about how connections inside a network had to be loose in order to keep an action net stable. The negotiating of identities of actors by the ED in Village B could be seen an example of handling loose connections. According to what the ED told me the role of an actor inside the Village action net had to be changed sometimes in order for the organization to work. If a volunteer became too old or wanted to do something else a new volunteer had to fill his or her place. This did not mean that a new function of the actor had to be assigned every time. But as an example the connection between members of a social group had to be loose, in order to be able to change leader. If the connections were rigid the social group would cease to exist the moment the leader disappeared, unless the group had the ability to negotiate the function of another actor to take the leader role. I perceived the facilitative function of the ED to be an important factor in the identity-making of actors inside Villages B. Partly by initiating initiatives, as mentioned in the interestment section, but also when it came to change. The ED in Village B talked about focusing on building consensus. There was never a single right answer, or a second or a third. The facilitative function which was described by the ED to be an important trait of the role correspond to what McDonough & Davitt (2011) pointed out as an important skill for a social worker inside the Village organization. However the situation in Village A indicates that the role of the social worker needs to be established early on, in order to avoid spending energy on processes that will not lead forward. The involvement of the board members might be one way to promote communication as suggested by McDonough & Davitt (2011). It is reasonable to believe that once the leadership get involved in the day-to-day work the communication between staff and board about their common approach, and what responsibilities each actor will have, will advance.

The differences in approach to the process of enrolment, between the ED in each Village, meant that their leadership qualities and focuses would have to be different. In Village A I perceived the process to be more of an outreaching,

adapting and negotiating process. A leader would have to be outreaching, willing to adapt and quick to change in order to try a new way of doing something. In Village B the leadership rather operated a stable construct. The negotiating of loose connections indicated a stable action net, the facilitative functions upheld status quo in the sense that engagements were focused on bringing meaning to the engaged actor, an identity, inside the Village.

I noticed an interesting difference between the two Villages in how they described their use of the database. In Village A, which were in an expansive phase staff told me they rarely used the database when it came to keeping contact with members or connecting members and volunteers. They told me they relied much more on the human actors in the organization, what they remembered and their sense of who might work together with whom and so on. The participants in Village B told me that the database was indispensable. They said that the volume of the information they put in was too vast to keep in the minds of the employees so the database was an important actor in their organization. These differences might thus be a natural consequence of size. When Village A expands they may need to use the database actor more to be able to handle the growing amounts of information. Interestingly the VtVN also grew out of a need to handle an increasing amount of information. But since Bookman (2008) wrote about the network in her article already in 2008, it formalized in 2009 and became what it is today in 2015, it would be reasonable to believe that the needs of the VtVN in the individual Villages existed before the formalization of the network. I believe it would be interesting to continue investigating how the implementations of the technical intermediaries, the databases and the web-based VtVN could be leveraged into the intersement process for Villages in development, such as Village A.

Mobilization

In the last process of organizing we examine to what extent actors created a common identity and in what sense different actors allowed themselves to be representatives, or represented by others, for the Village.

Village A

I perceived a common identity to be an important area for future improvement in Village A. The struggle of finding the social component was obvious. The staff told me about how they invited members and volunteers to social events and how they could have many members and volunteers coming to their events for a couple of months but then suddenly the number of attendees would decline.

I think everyone likes to come together [...] like the volunteer appreciation thing my house was like great. But like lunches for some reason, I don't know why [...] I get like a couple of months are really rocking and then, again like this last one was six people. (Staff Village A)

They found it hard to get people to feel a social connection since they could not get the continuity and building relationships took time. As an explanation for this they said that they still were too few members in the Village. They described it as a matter of, on one hand, not wanting to wear out the relationships that already were formed, and on the other hand finding new people to form relationships with.

Again this is critical mass issue, we have great ideas, but we can never get enough people to make it worth our time for one, but also their time. (ED Village A)

To confront these issues they said they, among other things, needed people of the board to get involved in the every-day work. They said they wanted a leadership who 'walked the walk'. Their current president of the board volunteered for the Village and the staff expressed a lot of appreciation for this.

Village B

It was evident in Village B that they had developed a common identity. In talking with participants I perceived a pride in their stories. The village, in which the Village was constructed had its own history and a lot of times the stories of the two intertwined. As for physical representations of their history the village itself was built and developed as a community. They had several restaurants on the premises, of which at least one were run by an award-winning chef. They also had a boutique with several expensive clothing-brands, a book-store and a cafe where a lot of the residents told me they regularly met. I received a cook-book where some of the residents had gathered recipes from residents in the neighborhood and put them together in a collection. In that book a story of the neighborhood and its creator was included. People in the village sold post cards, had their own tea and residents talked a lot about how people moved in to their village from all parts of the USA. In my last evening of the visit I was invited to do a talk in front of 40-50 residents about my study and my thoughts about how I perceived their Village. The people I met expressed a lot of pride in being part of the Village.

We enjoy a wonderful reputation. And I take that very seriously. I feel that we are in a position of service. (ED-Village B)

Comparison

Czarniawska (2014:22) used the analogy of an institution when describing how an action net evolved. When a normative explanation is used as an explanation to an action pattern she meant that an action-net, as in institutionalized behavior, was established. In Village B I perceived this to be clearly visible. The residents I talked to seemed to take the function of the staff as a natural way of helping each-other and getting help. When in need you called the staff, and they would connect you to someone who could assist you with what you needed. Czarniawska (2014) meant that once an action-net was established this constructed the identity of the actors. A sign of this trust in the functions of the action-net I perceived might be

that Village B did not have any membership fees. They instead made an annual appeal for contributions and former residents had left bequests to the Village for them to cover all expenses. Only 10% of revenues 2015 came from grants and other received funds. Giddens (1991) wrote about how we humans create our self-identity. He meant that we choose parts of our history to emphasize who we are. By doing this he meant we constructed stories that constituted the different parts of our auto-biography. The history and common identity of Village B was evident. The action net was established at large.

In Village A I looked for a history. Among the information found on their web-site they had stated their values and their vision for the future. Among them was the value of 'inclusiveness'. Village members are, as Scharlach et al. (2010) showed already in 2010, predominantly of white ethnicity and of middle-class background. Village A was no exception. Interestingly they did receive the grant in 2015 earmarked for tapping into low-income populations and populations with other ethnicities. As 'inclusiveness' was part of their values I noticed that perhaps this was a part of their history that they wanted to be included in their auto-biography? In their news-letter, distributed three times per year, they told stories of volunteers, members, staff and board members. But apart from the story told to me by the ED, mentioned in the problematization section above, I did not manage to find these stories in their presentation material, or in their web-site. I do not know if the history is something they talk of in their presentations. But since McDonough & Davitt (2011) stated that the Village model has promising features when it comes to conveying a sense of community the stories they tell might be worth exploring if they want to expand.

In the process of creating a common Village identity I perceived that they had good help from the VtVN, the network between Villages. On their website the network regularly worked to convey a sense of community. An example of this was in the header of the website where they had a banner in which several different slogans were displayed repeatedly. It started with:

I'm part of a village because:

Which was followed by:

I've made wonderful friends; I like to do my own shopping; I love my best friend; Coffee tastes better with friends. (www.vtvn.org/homepage)

Concluding discussion

The aim of this study was to explore two Villages and how they had organized connections in order to construct their organizations. With the help of Czarniawska's Theory of organizing (2014) and Callon's (1986) four stages of organizing, I studied narrated representations of the process. I asked how the Villages organize connections in their organization, which connections led to the construction of the two Villages and if there were differences in the organizing processes between the Villages. I set out to apply a theoretical lens on the construction of a Village, shed light upon how organizing is performed in practice and continue the detailed examination of operational practices inside the Village.

My findings tell a story of two Villages that were different in many ways but had the same goal, of helping their members grow old in their own home and community safe, secure and independent. In order to reach this goal they had both decided to use volunteer efforts and staff. Connections between members, together with a formalized use of volunteers, constructed an action net. More actors in the form of hired staff were used to facilitate connections in the action net. A technical actant, a database, was used as an 'helping hand' in the organizing work. The staff were also able to connect members/residents to outside actors in the form of services provided by outside corporations, should the need arise. The Villages were also connected in a nation-wide network via a web-page based network.

The organizing challenges were different in the two cases. When reflecting on the overall process, the challenges faced seemed to be connected to where the Villages were along the overarching development process.

Village A had problems associated with being new, such as finding a way of getting momentum in their model to attract more members. They struggled with not having enough resources and tried to find a way to, on one hand, adapt to the amount of resources they had, and on the other hand acquire more resources and/

or actors and re-designating the role of actors already existing. To acquire more members would result in more resources but there was a Catch-22. To be able to do what they said they could, they needed just the right amount of volunteers for the amount of members they had, and the process of engaging them required resources. By trying to negotiate the identities of the actors involved they were venturing into finding new ways of solving the Catch-22. Village A also took steps towards build a common identity. They arranged social meetings, and they tried to create a common identity through telling their history.

Village B was an established action net in the way that connections inside the Village were established as a norm. Their struggles were rather to engage more of the actors that already existed in the action net. To build momentum they used the social component. Staff used it to kickstart the social process, and once it took off they could withdraw to do other things, as facilitate the day-to-day work. The staff's facilitative functions and practical approach to volunteers and members meant encouraging members by conveying gratitude, letting the voices of the members be heard and trying to reach consensus. The Village had a strong identity, founded on a history of the neighborhood in which they were situated.

By comparing the organizing process in the two Villages, I discerned several key components in their way of organizing:

- The action net was formed as an answer to members/participants needs. The connections between members/participants were the driving factor behind the construction of the action net.
- A common identity, based on a shared history, was perceived as an important factor that helped create an interest in the model.
- The ability to leverage resources, provided by volunteers, resulted in possibilities to expand and to build momentum in the expansive phase.

- The social component, was perceived to be an important factor in creating identities within the action net, and also contributed to attracting members and volunteers to the Village.
- Different phases of the organizing process required different approaches from the leadership and staff. Their approaches needed to be adapted according to which part of the development process they were in.

The emergence of the Villages seems to have happened just in time. With the coming of the 'silver tsunami' the demographic challenges are uncontested and older adults in the Villages I visited were very much aware of the situation. They also did not want to sit around and wait for someone else to solve the situation for them. Instead they chose a solution where they could participate in taking the situation in their own hands. The solution seemed to be tailor made for the needs of predominantly white, middle-class, Americans and one obvious question arises; Why did the solution attract people of this specific background? Could it be that something was missing in the systemic approach to this population? Or, were other ethnicities and/or classes intentionally or unintentionally excluded? These questions points to an area for further investigation, will the grant given to Village A increase the appeal of the Village model for other ethnicities and classes? Such research might be one step towards meeting Bookman's (2008) appeal for finding solutions that are not hindered by segregating obstacles.

The findings in the organizing process suggest that the social dimension was a driving factor. I believe this strengthens the findings of McDonough & Davitt (2011), that the Village model has the ability to convey a sense of community and to build a social capital. The findings of this study suggest that the social dimension even created identities within an action net. Consequently, it might be an important lesson learned from the Villages that the social component could be used to drive the construction of an organization. What qualities from leaders and initiators would be needed to make use of this knowledge? McDonough & Davitt (2011) described several of the leadership qualities I found to be important in the

cases of my study. I perceived an adaptation of leadership approaches in the Villages, which might further suggest that an organization prepared for a change in its organizing processes would be better prepared for further development of its organization.

Finally, the findings of the study highlight the issue of how we tell our own stories. How can they be used to attract people? What stories of people, organizations and those we aim to help, do we tell today? Would a change in the stories we tell, attract more people to our own organizations?

To conclude I return to the Swedish challenges mentioned in the introduction of the study, the need for new solutions. I believe we have an inspiring example of how to address these challenges when looking at the Villages. This solution, of course, could not be used as a copy-paste solution for the Swedish context. We have a different welfare system and a different tradition in how to take care of our older adults. Nevertheless, with the depletion of workforce in the rural areas, the need for cheaper solutions, and the need for older adults to be able to contribute to society despite retiring, a combined volunteer-professional solution may be well worth a further investigation. We have already seen successful solutions, which are built around volunteer efforts and/or member involvement, in our welfare system. For example the 'Fountain-house' movement (Sveriges Fontänhus Riksförbund 2016), Tubberöds Hus (Tjörns kommun 2015), and a growing number of older-adult cooperatives in Sweden (Äldre i centrum 2004). The knowledge gathered in this study might be used to further develop such initiatives, or help create new ones. We need to start from the needs of those we organize our action net around, this suggestion calls for intriguing continued research. Which needs do we see among the aging population in the context in which we operate?

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Attachments

1) Letter to the Village

Excluded from the original document is information about locations and names in order to keep the confidentiality of the participants.

.... Sweden, 2016-02-25

**Regarding visting student from Sweden!
-to anyone who might be interested in my research and reason for
visiting you.**

Hello!

My name is Andreas Petersson and I'm a 40 year-old student from Sweden. I am currently studying to become a social worker at the Department of social work in the university of Gothenburg, on the west coast of Sweden. This semester is my 6th out of 7 before I will have my bachelors degree and as part of my education I am instructed to conduct a thesis-study in the field of social work. Already in my first semester in the university I became interested in the Village-movement. I read an article about the movement called: *"It Takes a Village: Community Practice, Social Work, and Aging-in-Place"* by Kathryn E. McDonough & Joan K. Davitt. This article made me curious to find out more, mainly due to the possibilities I saw in the organization, and when I thought about what subject to do my thesis on I realized I wanted to do a study on your organization.

The reasons for my interest are twofold.

First: In the wake of the refugee crisis in Europe we have an ongoing discussion in Sweden regarding volunteer-work and how to organize it. The involvement of volunteer organizations in the welfare system has been a topic of the scientific community for a while but the recent events have made it clear that there's a need for new thinking and possibly new ways of organizing our system.

Second: There is also a discussion about elderly care and how we as a society will manage the demographic challenges we, as a country, face. In much of the same way as I understand the US do. Our current ways of providing elderly care are in many ways inefficient.

The overall objective with my study is:

To do an qualitative explorative study on the Village-movement's organization and outreach- strategies, particularly in regards to organizing volunteers and volunteer work.

The study will be executed through formal and informal interviews, observations, literature reviews and an exploration of the "Village to Village Network". Due to the short time-span of the study (10 weeks in total) my main focus will be strategies and know-how. I.e practical strategies, but since the purpose of the study is explorative all inputs will be valuable.

My hopes for the study is that it can contribute to the scientific field by adding valuable insights into strategies and praxis-knowledge used by "the Village".

Regarding the limitations of the study, and my short stay in the US (see below), I might also need to follow up via e-mail, or Skype-calls, and therefore ask in advance if the participants of the study would consider to participate in this form of follow up procedure?

I like to extend my gratitude in advance to the people who has agreed to participate in my study and to share their knowledge. Without you this study would not be possible! I am very grateful and hope to be able to contribute to our common field of interest!

.....

Even if the purpose of this study might not be considered particularly sensitive, in regards to any harm that might come out of it, there's an international consensus in the scientific community that all science should consider an ethical approach to avoid all harmful eventualities. Following this protocol the following ethical consideration will be adhered to in this study.

Ethical consideration: In accordance with demands made by the Swedish research council I am instructed to inform all eventual participants that I will, to the longest extent possible on my behalf, ensure full confidentiality and anonymity for the respondents of this study.

Anyone who want to participate in this study do so voluntarily. Still, any participant who wish to withdraw before or during interviews and/ or observations may do so without expressed reason. All participants has the right to read the outcome of their interview and/ or observation. They will also be able to withdraw completely from the study if they choose to, at any time up until the empirical material has been processed and anonymized.

Finally all participants has the right to receive a copy of the final product (for practical reasons in this case, an electronic copy).

For me to be able to collect and to enable structuring of the empirical material (i.e interviews, talks and observations) I will be recording the sessions, only audio. These sessions will be transcribed and anonymized and after completion of the study the audio files and transcriptions will be destroyed. If any participant does not want me to record, I will take notes instead, no explanation needed.

In order to avoid misunderstandings I also need to inform all participants to note that

Therefore, if I express anything that you may find confusing or in any other way don't understand please ask me so that I can explain.

I am also born and raised in Sweden so my cultural understanding of the US comes mainly from media and literature. But I also visited the US and, in 2012 for a period of two months.

On top of that I have living in and.....

Included in the end of this document is my e-mail, phone-number and adress if anyone want to contact me prior to, or after the study, with questions and/ or in other matters.

.....

I will be coming to the US March 4 and I will leave March 21.

Thanks to the kind assistance of, and hospitality of hosts, my stay during the study will be as follows:

Homestay Itinerary: 6-11 March, 2016

.....

.....

In this section I will add a couple of questions that I intend to include in my semi-structured interview form so that any participant, if they would like, might ponder these in advance.

Q 1-3 are general questions.

Q 4-6 are intended for employees and other individuals who engage in the daily work.

Question 1: Why do you think The Village-movement is growing so rapidly?
-Are there any elements in the concept that you find crucial to its growth?

Question 2: What are the differences between The Village-movements way of addressing the elderly and the traditional way?

Question 3: Are there any organizational traits you believe are typical for the Village in the US societal context?

in -How does it correspond to "american" values?
-Describe challenges you believe the Village-movement will face
the future.

Question 4: Could you tell me a bit about how you do to reach out to volunteers/ members in order for them to engage in the community?

Question 5: How would you describe the typical volunteer in your organization?

Question 6: Could you describe which qualities you find valuable in order to be a successful employee in the organization?

.....
To give you an idea of who I am, and the preconceptions I bring into this study, a short bio will follow.

My name, as mentioned above, is Andreas Petersson. I am 40 years old...

I live in(population 4000), a small community in the rural areas outside of the city(population ...) which is situated 30 km,... of Gothenburg. The second largest city in Sweden (population 600 000).

I grew up in a religious environment. My father was a preacher and my mother is a trained nurse.

I have ...part of the reason I'm able to do this study since I will be staying with when I'm not visiting you.

My mother worked in different fields after her education, such as Swedish-teacher for refugees and in the social-services after being a stay at home mom with me and my sisters until I was 7.

Up until I was 8 we lived in a religious commune with many other families and volunteer-work was a natural part of how to contribute so the social life. Even after we moved out of the commune we always had a lot of people coming and going in our lives. As an adult I continued living in communes together with other families and I find it to be a natural part of life. Even today my mother lives close by, in a house on my family's property, neighbor to my own family.

With my wife being a church-musician in the Church of Sweden, we as family are very much involved in the church life. I am on the board of the church and also have a position as head of an international committee responsible for the exchange with our "sister-church" in South Africa.

When I was in my 20s I went to performing-arts school, training as a performing artist. I graduated at age 24 and after that worked full time on stage as a singer, dancer and actor during a period of about 12 years. I also started a

business for my creative work. I was hired as a singer, photographer, director, writer and manager for the creative staff of a cruise-ship.

In the creative field most work is seasonal. That meant I often had to have other jobs on the side between contracts. These jobs were often in the social-work field. I worked in homes for people with disabilities and as a housing-supporter. I also worked in the home-care services for the elders. But I also recruited people for abroad-work as singers, and drove a taxi.

Due to the constantly unfavorable working hours as an artist me and my wife eventually started talking about me finding an other profession in order for us to be able to spend more time with the kids. I´ve always dreamt of going to the University and when the decision was made the field in which I wanted to study eventually came natural for me.

As a student in Sweden I get to take student-loans, even at age 40. But being in the position I am with family, house, car etc. I still have to work part-time to make ends meet.

Today I work part-time as a manager of a gero-psychiatric unit in a retirement home. I´ve also had the opportunity to work with family´s, investigating them for the social-services for two years during school.

The future possibilities in the field of social work in Sweden seem endless today. We have a growing demand for social workers in all parts of the social field. The particular areas of interest for me personally are leadership issues, organization, social entrepreneurship and the challenges that comes with the demographic development.

In my privat life I love traveling, cooking, languages and all things creative.

If you want to get in contact with me please use any of the following:

e-mail:

skype name:

phone:

address:

I look forward, very much, to meeting you and learning from you!

Best wishes, Andreas

2) Letter to faculty

Hello ...!

First of all I'd like to extend my gratitude to you, and your colleagues, that you've agreed to meet with me March 9th and share your knowledge, it's much appreciated!

Second; the reason I'm writing to you is because I am aware that the topic of my thesis isn't directed in particular to your line of work, and that you aren't associated with the Village-movement directly. I see the meeting with you as an opportunity to get a bigger picture and perhaps ask other questions that might broaden the knowledgebase of my study!

In the document I attached Yesterday I included 6 questions of which I believe only the 2 first might be of your interest.

So I thought I'd send you a couple of other questions/ topics in order for you to be able to prepare. If you would like/ have time.

Topic/ questions as follows:

-Since you are faculty at ...School of Social Work I'm very curious to know how you address the demographic challenges with the growing, and possibly changing demands from an aging population?

In your homepage I read:

".....organizations and communities."

You aim to provide leadership in the development of socially just program to strengthen groups, organizations and community. I wonder if you could tell me a bit how you do this, connected to the above mentioned topic?

-What are your thoughts on prevailing theory, and possible paradigms in the field of elderly-care in the US?

-Could you perhaps describe the pension system and funding of the elderly-care in the US?

I will of course have a lot more when I come visiting! But I think these, plus those in the document are enough to get you an idea! I look forward to meeting you on March 9!

Best wishes,
Andreas Petersson

3) Sweden

For the reader interested in the Swedish context I recommend 'The Swedish institute', SI (Sharing Sweden 2016). It is a public agency responsible for information about Sweden. It is governed by an annual government directive and publish extensive information material on the internet for the reader who wants to find out more about Sweden.

Below follow two examples of pages connected to the interest of this study but there are many more pages with a lot of information about Sweden for the curious reader.

This page is about the Swedish health care system (under which umbrella the elder care resides):

<http://sharingsweden.se/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Healthcare-High-Res.pdf>

This website is about the Swedish society:

<https://sweden.se/society/p1/>