
Interdependence between the Social and Material Convoy: Links between Volunteering, Widowhood, and Housing Transitions

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Relocation in older adulthood may occur due to triggering events, such as widowhood. Guided by Kahn and Antonucci's convoy model, this study explores the influence of volunteering on decision to relocate following the death of a spouse. Using three waves of data from the Health and Retirement Study (2006, 2008, and 2010), 5,146 community-dwelling married older individuals who were 65 years or older in 2008 were included. Findings from two multinomial logistic regression models showed that widows and widowers who were not volunteering in 2008 were more likely to move out of area in 2010 than their married counterparts, whereas the relationship between widowhood and relocation was not detected among those involved in volunteering. This article emphasizes the interdependency of social relationships and residences, a fundamental of one's material convoy, for older adults. Volunteering experiences may not only affect instrumental and emotional support after the loss of a key anchor in one's social convoy, but may also facilitate a widowed older adult to age in place rather than relocate.

KEY WORDS: *aging in place; environmental gerontology; productive aging; relocation; social convoys*

There were approximately 14,349,000 widowed people living in the United States in 2013 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). The death of one's spouse is likely to initiate a significant role change that is not without consequence for many.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Widowhood has been shown to increase rates of psychological distress, including mood and anxiety disorders; these problems can be particularly acute within the first year following the loss (Onrust & Cuijpers, 2006). The *widowhood effect*, which is the increased risk of mortality immediately following the death of a spouse, has also been well documented (Moon, Kondo, Glymour, & Subramanian, 2011), with the potential for elevated risk up to 10 years following the spouse's death (Boyle, Feng, & Raab, 2011).

In addition to potential impact on health, the death of a spouse may influence perceptions and navigation of the widowed person's social world, including housing. Losing one's spouse has been shown to predict relocation among older adults (Longino, Bradley, Stoller, & Haas, 2008), especially for those recently widowed (that is, widowed within the past 12 months).

The death of one's spouse alters the social context in which decisions about residential location (that is, the environmental context) are made and enacted (Longino et al., 2008). Wiseman's (1980) behavioral model of relocation by older adults suggests that triggering mechanisms such as death of a spouse may prompt a critical housing assessment. Others have suggested that death of a spouse may induce feelings of loneliness, increase the difficulty of maintaining a residence, or significantly reduce social support, thus prompting relocation (Beal, 2006). The recently widowed are at increased risk for either institutionalization or taking up residence with others (Strohschein, 2011). Regardless of destination, the process of relocation can be stressful for this cohort, with the possibility of negative physical and emotional impacts (Bekhet, Zauszniewski, & Nakhla, 2009).

Research on the relationship between the death of a spouse and volunteer activity usually focuses on the effects of widowhood on volunteering and has shown mixed results. Li (2007) found that those who lost a spouse were more likely to volunteer than their married counterparts a few years after the loss and that volunteering was protective against negative

psychological outcomes, including depression. This suggests that widows and widowers might rely on volunteering as a mechanism to offset the negative impact of the death of their spouse. Nesbit (2012) examined rates of volunteering in conjunction with four life events, one of which was widowhood. She found that the overall probability of volunteering decreases when people are widowed; however, when looking at age, older widowed people were more likely to volunteer than their younger counterparts. In a study on the benefits of volunteering, Ohmer (2007) found that volunteering contributed to one's personal and collective efficacy. Ohmer and Beck (2006) found that the type of volunteer work, the degree of volunteer involvement (such as whether a volunteer position included decision-making capacity), and assessment of the organization's functioning might differ in terms of the collective efficacy. Thus volunteering may extend beyond mitigation of losses from widowhood, resulting in beneficial development of individual and collective efficacy. Others did not find the same relationship between widowhood and volunteering in older adults (see, for example, Donnelly & Hinterlong, 2010). The study by Donnelly and Hinterlong did uncover increases in *informal social participation*, which was defined as interactions with family, friends, and neighbors. This increase in informal social participation has been framed as a means of coping with spousal loss (Utz, Carr, Nesse, & Wortman, 2002).

According to a recent nationally representative survey conducted by the AdvantAge Initiative (2004), 93% of those surveyed wished to remain in their residence; however, of those, only 66% indicated they were confident they could afford to age in place. The ability to remain in one's long-term residence can afford a sense of independence and serve to maintain enduring attachments to both people and place (Wiles, Leibing, Guberman, Reeve, & Allen, 2012). Interventions have been designed to help facilitate this choice (Bookman, 2008; Scharlach, Graham, & Lehning, 2012). Volunteering has recently been shown to serve as a stabilizing force in relocation and might be helpful if incorporated into aging-in-place initiatives (Shen & Perry, 2014). Researchers have called for more research to assess the significance of age at spouse's death.

Understanding the relationship between volunteering and relocation, especially after a major life event like the death of spouse, helps us parse out how much social connections matter. Research has

shown that volunteering can result in beneficial increases in physical (Burr, Tavares, & Mutchler, 2011) and mental (Shen, Pickard, & Johnson, 2013) well-being. The present study also contributes to environmental gerontology by providing a greater understanding of both the triggers to relocation (for example, widowhood) and the stabilizers that mediate relocation (for example, volunteering). As relocation may lead to numerous adjustments, elucidating the possible social roles that volunteering plays increases our understanding of explicit or implicit reasons why people age in place or relocate.

Social and Material Convoys

Drawing on theoretical models of variability in social connections and material possessions over the life course, this article investigates the intersection of the social and physical worlds of older adults and analyzes the relationship between changes in each of these domains. The constellation of one's interpersonal relationships at a specific point in time has been conceptualized as one's "convoy" of social support (Kahn & Antonucci, 1980). Varying over the life course, it is made up of relationships of differing levels of intimacy, with primary attachment figures such as parents and spouses constituting the core of one's convoy (Antonucci, Akiyama, & Takahashi, 2004). Marriage, the formalized integration of a spouse into a convoy of social support, has been associated with a number of positive benefits, such as better physical and mental health (Waite & Lehrer, 2003). Although spousal support is generally positive, relationship quality within the marital dyad must also be considered as relationships of poor quality may moderate the benefits of marriage (Birditt & Antonucci, 2007).

Kahn and Antonucci (1980) explained that a person's social convoy "consists of the set of persons on whom he or she relies for support and those who rely on him or her for support" (p. 269). The need for social supports may increase when major life roles are altered. Incorporating attachment and role theories, Kahn and Antonucci (1980) suggested the importance of one's roles, particularly their constructive nature, because roles "provide the settings in which relationships with others develop, often in ways that supersede the formal requirements of the roles themselves" (p. 262). Although not included in the original model of the convoy, volunteering can be viewed as another means of securing social support through the incorporation of relationships into one's convoy

outside of kin and friendship networks. Among older adults, volunteering is associated with fewer functional limitations, decreased depression symptomatology, improved health outcomes, and even lower mortality (Anderson et al., 2014; Shen et al., 2013). Johnson (2014) found that volunteering can offer social integration following disruptions across the life course such as death of a spouse.

This concept of the social convoy has been extended to material possessions to evaluate their role in the lives of older adults over time (Ekerdt, Sergeant, Dingel, & Bowen, 2004). Material objects in older adulthood have both functional and emotional purposes (Rowles & Watkins, 2003); indeed, the composition of one's material convoy can aid the fulfillment of social roles. Homes in particular are a prominent feature of one's material convoy that allow for continued presence and participation in the life of a community.

In both the social and material convoy, the quality of the relationship is rarely entirely positive or negative. Marital relationships, especially the long marriages of older adults, can provide emotional and instrumental support, but also can be sources of tension and necessitate taking on a caregiving role, especially when a spouse is sick with a debilitating physical or cognitive disease. For many, the loss of a partner is a devastating life event. However, widowhood, although a loss, may also be a time of relief from a caregiving role or a complex emotional relationship. In terms of the material convoy in older adulthood, individuals' relationship with their homes may be an important part of their behavioral patterns. For example, the daily routines of housekeeping and cooking all occur in a home. A home may represent a place of identity, familiarity, and kin ties; it can also be a source of concern for maintenance, cost, and safety. Aging in place and relocation as considered in this research are not a reflection of the type and quality of the older adult's physical and emotional "home" before the death of a spouse.

Relocation

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), 3.31% of older adults relocated between 2013 and 2014. Litwak and Longino (1987) documented three types of moves: amenity, kin, and institutional. The amenity move is often a voluntary relocation because the older adult decides to migrate to a location where better weather and enjoyment are anticipated. A second move may be toward kin, because family support may be useful to enhance one's living situation. Moves to

institutions (for example, assisted-living or skilled-nursing facilities) may occur when family support is not sufficient to meet all the older adult's needs. It is important to note that Sergeant, Ekerdt, and Chapin (2008) addressed challenges faced by research projects, including specifying the type of move, incorporating multiple age cohorts, distinguishing permanent and temporary moves, and controlling for life events like widowhood (see Perry et al., 2015, for an overview of relocation research). One recent study by Waldron, Gitelson, Kelley, and Regalado (2005) of both local and nonlocal moves found that those who relocated nonlocally had what the authors called a "social support deficit" over a period of at least four years. By contrast, local movers experienced an increase in supported relationships.

Several factors are associated with relocation in older adulthood, and widowhood in particular: financial resources, including income and assets; health status; environment; and social supports. Teaford (1992) found that higher income and neighborhood satisfaction strongly predicted remaining in one's home, whereas functional limitations (for example, limitations in activities of daily living [ADLs] and instrumental activities of daily living [IADLs]) were associated with relocation in widowhood. Owning one's home, which is seen as a strong place tie to a particular community, lowers the probability of relocation (Bradsher, Longino, Jackson, & Zimmerman, 1992). Haas and Serow (1993) identified push and pull factors that may trigger relocation. A pull, or trigger to moving, may be to move toward family, and push factors may include neighborhood problems such as crime, congestion, and pollution. Findings have been mixed regarding the role of gender in predicting long-distance moves for older adults (Longino et al., 2008; Weeks, Keefe, & Macdonald, 2012). The impact of age on relocation in older adulthood is clearer: Those under age 80 are more likely to relocate (Weeks et al., 2012). Longino and colleagues (2008) similarly found that as individuals age the likelihood of an out-of-area move declines. In terms of race, African American individuals are significantly less likely to make an out-of-area move than their white counterparts (Longino et al., 2008); however, research on the relationship between race and relocation is relatively limited.

Limitations of the Current Literature

Much of the literature on older adult relocation has been centered on trigger events, such as widowhood, that push individuals to new communities.

One recent study has shown that activity and relationships related to volunteering experiences also influence decisions to relocate (Shen & Perry, 2014), arguing that volunteering acts as a stabilizing factor against relocation. However, the relationship between formal social participation (that is, volunteering), widowhood, and one's home is underexplored in most of the research. The present article takes up the interplay between social and material convoys with an interest in investigating whether the social convoy supports retention of one's home within the material convoy during widowhood. To be more concise, we consider whether engagement in the social role of formal volunteering helps older adults remain in their communities post-widowhood, a known risk factor for relocation.

METHOD

Data and Sample

In 1992, the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) began surveying people over the age of 50 years, as well as their spouses or partners, and continues to follow up with those same people biannually (Servais, 2010). HRS uses a multistage area probability sample design, which oversamples African American, Hispanic, and Floridian respondents, and periodically adds new cohorts to ensure representativeness of the United States. In the present study, we used three waves of data from the HRS—collected in 2006, 2008, and 2010—to explore whether volunteering changes the relationship between widowhood and relocation. We included community-dwelling older people who were married in 2006 and were 65 years or older in 2008. We focused on older people to consider possible widowhood occurrence by 2008. There were 14,462 respondents interviewed in all waves (2006, 2008, and 2010). Among them, 5,204 individuals were married in 2006 and were 65 years or older in 2008. With data from all study variables available, a total sample of 5,146 older adults was used.

Measures

Dependent Variable: Relocation. Our sample contained all older community-dwelling adults in 2008. Relocation status in 2010 was constructed by the HRS: If respondents had not moved since 2008, they were listed as “no move since 2008” (coded 0). If respondents changed residence but not area, they were listed as “moved within area” (coded 1). Those who had moved out of the area in the 2010 survey were listed as “moved out of area” (coded 2).

Independent Variables: Widowhood Status and Volunteering. We dummy coded the widowhood status of the older individuals. Those who were married to the same person between 2006 and 2010 (coded 0) were compared with those who were married in 2006, became widowed in 2008, and remained widowed in 2010 (coded 1). Loss of a spouse within the past 12 months has been shown to be a significant predictor of nonlocal moves among older adults (Longino et al., 2008). To better capture this with the data available, we focused on people who became widowed within two years (from 2006 to 2008) and remained widowed in 2010.

Volunteering refers to any unpaid work an older person does for religious, educational, health-related, or other charitable organizations. We compared older people who self-reported spending any time in the past 12 months doing volunteer work in 2008 (coded 1) with those who did not do so (coded 0).

Control Variables. Measures of all control variables are in 2008. We used two measures to identify participants' financial resources. Household income was divided into five categories: “\$0–\$20,000,” “\$20,001–\$40,000,” “\$40,001–\$60,000,” “\$60,001–\$100,000,” and “100,001 plus.” Home ownership indicates whether respondents did not own their homes (coded 0) or owned or were buying a home or lived on a farm (coded 1).

Home environment refers to the accessibility of one's home, neighborhood safety, and urban residence. The “accessible home” variable indicates whether a participant's house is disability accessible. We compared those living in a house that is accessible (coded 1) with those who are not (coded 0). The “neighborhood safety” variable is self-reported perception of how safe respondents reported their neighborhood to be; possible responses were “excellent,” “very good,” “good,” “fair,” and “poor.” “Urban residence” refers to whether a respondent resides in an urban area (coded 1) or a nonurban area (coded 0), identified by HRS using 2010 U.S. Census information and the 2003 Beale Rural-Urban Continuum Code (HRS, 2012).

We used six variables to measure respondents' health and functioning. First, number of IADLs refers to the number of tasks respondents reported not being able to perform without assistance or were not carrying out as a result of health reasons. IADLs are more complex tasks that require a certain amount of physical dexterity, sound judgment, and organizational skills. The four IADL

tasks are preparing a hot meal, shopping for groceries, making a telephone call, and taking medications. Second, respondents' number of ADL limitations refers to the number of ADL tasks an older person reports getting help with, not conducting, or having difficulty performing. ADLs are basic and routine self-care tasks. The six ADL tasks are dressing, bathing, eating, toileting, walking, and getting in and out of bed. Third, number of chronic health conditions is the sum of nine possible current health problems an older adult reports: diabetes, heart condition, stroke, lung disease, cancer, arthritis, psychiatric problems, urine control, and legal blindness or very poor eyesight. Fourth, we dichotomously coded severe cognitive problems. A person is identified as having a cognitive problem (coded 1) if he or she fails to correctly answer 50% or more of the questions in the Telephone Interview for Cognitive Status. Fifth, we also dichotomously coded the variable indicating a spouse with care needs. We consider an older adult as having a spouse with care needs (coded 1) if the spouse has any ADLs or IADLs, any chronic health conditions, or severe cognitive problems as defined here. Finally, we considered respondents' ability to drive. Older people who reported being able to drive (coded 1) were compared with those not able to do so (coded 0).

We operationalized social supports as the availability of social supports for an older individual, because direct measures of the social support older individuals receive were not available in the present data. Two indicators were considered: relatives living nearby and friends living nearby: Older adults who reported that they have relatives living in the neighborhood (coded 1) were compared with those who do not (coded 0). We coded as 1 those older people who reported having good friends living in the neighborhood; other older people were coded 0.

We considered four demographic characteristics in the present study: gender (female or male), race (white, black, or other race), education (years completed, zero to 17 years), and age in 2008 (ranging from 65 to 106 years). Age squared was included to capture a possible nonlinear relationship between age and relocation.

Analytical Strategies

We first conducted unweighted univariate and bivariate analyses for the dependent variable and each

predictor variable. Taking into account the HRS's complex multistage sample design to obtain accurate statistics and standard errors, the significance tests for all bivariable analyses were performed by `svyset` commands in Stata 12.0, adjusting for sampling weights, clustering, and stratification of the sample by geographic location and size of place (StataCorp, 2011). To test differences among "did not move," "moved within area," and "moved out of area" (the dependent variable), we used chi-square tests for categorical predictors. We used regression procedures for continuous predictor variables, as no procedure analogous to analysis of variance was available when `svyset` commands were applied. Next, we used multinomial logistic regression to elucidate the relationships between widowhood status in 2008 and relocation in 2010, controlling for all other predictors. To understand whether volunteering in 2008 is associated with the relationship between widowhood status and relocation, we used another two multinomial logistic regression models. Whereas `svyset` commands in Stata are applied to all multinomial logistic regression models, typical goodness-of-fit information (such as the pseudo R^2) cannot be obtained after such commands are applied.

RESULTS

Descriptive Findings

Among 5,146 older adults, 221 (4.3%) moved out of the area in 2010 and 163 (3.2%) moved within the area, whereas 4,762 (92.5%) did not relocate (see Table 1). Approximately 5% of the older adults were married at the time of the 2006 survey, widowed as of 2008, and remained widowed in 2010; the other 95% of older adults were married from 2006 through 2010. There were 38.7% older adults in the sample who volunteered in 2008.

The relationship between each independent variable and whether relocation occurred out of area, within area, or not at all in 2010 is also listed in Table 1. Assessed predictor variables differed significantly among these three groups in nine out of 18 instances. Household income and race differed among older people who moved out of area, moved within area, and did not move. Older adults in the sample were more likely to move out of area if they (a) did not own their home, (b) had more ADLs, (c) had more health conditions, (d) did not have relatives living nearby, (e) did not have friends living nearby, (f) were widowed, or (g) did not volunteer.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for All Variables (N = 5,146)

Variable	Type of Relocation in 2010								<i>p</i>
	Full Sample		Did Not Move (<i>n</i> = 4,762)		Moved within Area (<i>n</i> = 163)		Moved out of Area (<i>n</i> = 221)		
	%	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	%	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	%	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	%	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	
Total			92.5		3.2		4.3		
Household income (\$)									*
0–20,000	12.1		11.7		11.0		21.3		
20,001–40,000	30.3		30.3		33.7		28.5		
40,001–60,000	22.2		22.6		17.8		17.2		
60,001–100,000	19.3		19.6		20.3		11.8		
100,001+	16.2		15.9		17.2		21.3		
Own home	87.6		88.9		72.4		69.2		***
Accessible home	14.1		14.1		11.7		16.7		
Neighborhood safety									
Excellent	41.9		41.9		45.4		41.2		
Very good	32.8		33.0		31.3		30.3		
Good	18.8		18.8		13.5		22.2		
Fair	5.6		5.6		6.1		5.4		
Poor	0.8		0.7		3.7		0.9		
Residing in urban areas	42.2		42.5			42.3		35.7	
Number of IADL limitations (0–4)		0.2 (0.5)		0.2 (0.5)		0.1 (0.5)		0.2 (0.6)	
Number of ADL Limitations (0–6)		0.3 (0.9)		0.3 (0.9) ^a		0.4 (1.1)		0.5 (1.1) ^a	*
Number of health conditions (0–9)		1.6 (1.1)		1.6 (1.1) ^a		1.7(1.3)		1.8(1.3) ^a	*
Spouse with care needs		78.5		78.6		79.1		76.5	
Ability to drive		90.6		90.8		89.6		86.0	
Relatives living nearby		31.0		31.5		35.0		18.1	***
Friends living nearby		71.0		71.8		66.9		57.9	***
Male		45.5		45.4		45.4		46.2	
Race									
White		82.9		82.9		85.9		81.0	
Black		8.6		8.9		6.1		3.6	
Other		8.5		8.2		8.0		15.4	*
Years of education (0–17)		12.6(3.1)		12.6 (3.1)		12.6 (2.8)		12.4 (3.6)	
Age (65–106)		73.1(6.0)		73.0 (5.9)		74.3(6.8)		74.2(6.9)	
Widowhood status									***
Married from 2006 through 2010		94.9		95.3		92.6		88.7	
Married in 2006, widowed in 2008, remained widowed in 2010		5.1		4.7		7.4		11.3	
Volunteer		38.7		39.2		34.4		29.9	**

Notes: IADL = instrumental activities of daily living; ADL = activities of daily living. Means and percentages are based on raw data. All significance tests take design effects into account. Reported *p* values indicated by asterisk test overall significant differences across all three groups. When overall *p* values were significant, additional tests testing the differences between any two of the three groups were performed.

^aThese groups differed from one another at least at *p* < .05.

p* ≤ .05. *p* ≤ .01. ****p* ≤ .001.

Multivariate Findings

To gauge the relationship between volunteering, widowhood, and relocation, we used several multinomial logistic regression models (see Tables 2 and 3). These models are used to show the log odds of making one of two types of moves (in area or out of area) versus making no move at all based on the predictor variables. Table 2 presents the relative risk ratios (*RRRs*) when respondents were assessed for likelihood of either an out-of-area or in-area move. Those owning

a home were less likely to move either in the area (*RRR* = 0.35) or out of area (*RRR* = 0.30) in 2010. Being widowed, having a higher number of health conditions, and racial identification as “other” (that is, not white and not black) was associated with greater probability of an out-of-area but not a within-area relocation. Having relatives or friends living nearby and greater age reduced the probability of an out-of-area move but were not significant for within-area moves.

Although volunteering status in 2008 was not statistically significant in predicting older people's relocation in 2010, existing literature suggests possible stabilizing effects volunteering might have on widowhood and relocation (Shen & Perry, 2014). Two separate multinomial logistic regression models regressing all predictor variables on relocation were used, one for nonvolunteers and the other for volunteers (see Table 3). In the nonvolunteer model, owning one's home was again associated with a lower probability of relocating both out of area and within area ($RRR = 0.33$ and 0.31 , respectively). Having a spouse with care needs ($RRR = 1.80$) was significantly associated with higher probability of an out-of-area relocation only among older adults in 2010. Having relatives living nearby reduced the probability of moving out of area ($RRR = 0.46$) but increased within-area relocation ($RRR = 1.82$). Having friends living nearby ($RRR = 0.53$), identification as black ($RRR = 0.28$), and increased age ($RRR = 0.45$) lowered the probabilities of an out-of-area move.

In the volunteer model, owning one's home or having relatives or friends who lived nearby lowered the probability of an out-of-area relocation ($RRR = 0.24$, 0.38 , and 0.73 , respectively), whereas

high levels of education increased it ($RRR = 1.13$). None of the predictor variables were significantly associated with moves within area among older adult volunteers.

Marital status was of particular interest for this study. For older adults who did not volunteer in 2008, being widowed increased the probability that they would have moved out of the area in 2010 ($RRR = 3.36$, $p \leq 0.01$), but widowhood status (either married or widowed) was not significantly associated with a move among those who volunteered.

DISCUSSION

The death of a spouse causes a significant change in one's convoy of social support. Whereas much of the literature has explored the impact of this loss in terms of physical health and emotional well-being, this study investigated the impact of volunteering on one key aspect of one's material convoy, relocation. We found that widowed people who were not volunteering in 2008 were more likely to relocate out of the area in 2010 than their married counterparts, whereas widowed people who were volunteering in 2008 relocated at rates similar to those who were married.

Table 2: Multinomial-Logistic Regression Models (N = 5,146)						
Variable	Moved out of Area vs. Did Not Move			Moved within Area vs. Did Not Move		
	B	RRR	p	B	RRR	p
Household income	0.49	1.05		0.15	1.16	
Own home	−1.20	0.30	***	−1.05	0.35	***
Home accessibility	0.01	1.00		−0.43	0.65	
Neighborhood safety	0.07	1.07		0.04	1.05	
Residing in urban areas	−0.35	0.70		−0.05	0.95	
Number of IADLs	−0.12	0.89		−0.29	0.75	
Number of ADLs	0.08	1.08		0.08	1.08	
Number of conditions	0.17	1.19	**	0.09	1.09	
Spouse with care needs	0.28	1.32		0.21	1.23	
Ability to drive	0.11	1.12		0.03	1.03	
Relatives living nearby	−0.83	0.44	***	0.30	1.34	
Friends living nearby	−0.56	0.57	**	−0.17	0.84	
Male	0.08	1.08		−0.04	0.96	
Black	−0.94	0.39		0.12	1.13	
Others	0.61	1.85	*	−0.28	0.76	
Education	0.03	1.03		−0.01	0.99	
Age	−0.67	0.51	**	−0.31	0.74	
Age ²	0.00	1.00	**	0.00	1.00	
Widowhood status	0.90	2.46	**	0.49	1.63	
Volunteering status	−0.25	0.78		−0.21	0.81	
Constant	21.64	2.50e+09	*	7.49	1,795.40	
Model statistics	$F(40, 13) = 4.02; p \leq 0.01$					

Notes: *RRR* = relative risk ratio; IADL = instrumental activities of daily living; ADL = activities of daily living.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

Table 3: Multinomial-Logistic Regression Models, by Volunteering Status

Variable	Nonvolunteers in 2008 (<i>n</i> = 3,155)					
	Moved out of Area vs. Did Not Move			Moved within Area vs. Did Not Move		
	<i>B</i>	<i>RRR</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>RRR</i>	<i>p</i>
Household income	0.06	1.06		0.14	1.15	
Own home	−1.10	0.33	***	−1.17	0.31	**
Home accessibility	−0.22	0.80		−0.51	0.60	
Neighborhood safety	0.08	1.08		0.07	1.08	
Residing in urban areas	−0.31	0.73		−0.10	0.91	
Number of IADLs	−0.12	0.89		−0.30	0.74	
Number of ADLs	0.06	1.06		0.14	1.15	
Number of conditions	0.17	1.18		0.09	1.09	
Spouse with care needs	0.59	1.80	*	0.25	1.28	
Ability to drive	−0.07	0.94		0.27	1.30	
Relatives living nearby	−0.77	0.46	***	0.60	1.82	**
Friends living nearby	−0.64	0.53	*	−0.14	0.87	
Male	0.22	1.25		−0.15	0.86	
Black	−1.28	0.28	*	−0.33	0.72	
Others	0.46	1.59		−0.11	0.89	
Education	0.00	1.00		0.01	1.01	
Age	−0.80	0.45	**	0.01	1.01	
Age ²	0.01	1.01	**	0.00	1.00	
Widowhood status	1.21	3.36	**	0.86	2.37	
Constant	26.92	4.93e+11	**	−4.99	0.007	
Model statistics	<i>F</i> (30, 23) = 2.70; <i>p</i> ≤ 0.008					
	Volunteers in 2008 (<i>n</i> = 1,991)					
	Moved out of Area vs. Did Not Move			Moved within Area vs. Did Not Move		
	<i>B</i>	<i>RRR</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>RRR</i>	<i>p</i>
Household income	−0.02	0.98		0.18	1.20	
Own home	−1.44	0.24	**	−0.59	0.55	
Home accessibility	0.54	1.71		−0.29	0.75	
Neighborhood safety	0.04	1.04		−0.03	0.97	
Residing in urban areas	−0.45	0.64		−0.05	0.95	
Number of IADLs	−0.11	0.90		−0.59	0.55	
Number of ADLs	0.15	1.16		−0.47	0.63	
Number of conditions	0.21	1.23		0.12	1.12	
Spouse with care needs	−0.19	0.82		0.14	1.13	
Ability to drive	2.34	10.6		−1.11	0.33	
Relatives living nearby	−0.96	0.38	*	−0.41	0.66	
Friends living nearby	−0.31	0.73	*	−0.22	0.81	
Male	−0.23	0.79		0.14	1.15	
Black	−0.24	0.79		0.61	1.85	
Others	1.06	2.88		−1.74	0.18	
Education	0.12	1.13	*	−0.06	0.95	
Age	−0.36	0.70		−0.88	0.41	
Age ²	0.00	1.00		0.01	1.00	
Widowhood status	0.32	1.38		−0.90	0.41	
Constant	6.42	611.44		30.37	1.55e+13	
Model statistics	<i>F</i> (38, 15) = 5.69; <i>p</i> ≤ 0.001					

Notes: *RRR* = relative risk ratio; IADL = instrumental activities of daily living; ADL = activities of daily living.

p* ≤ .05 *p* ≤ .01 ****p* ≤ .001.

It is important to note that the findings of this study, which took place between 2006 and 2010, may have been affected by the transnational financial

context during the period. The financial crisis and the resulting global recession affected multiple sectors, including the real estate market. Thus, contextual

changes may have contributed to the relocation decisions of people of all ages. According to recent ethnographic work on relocation of older adults conducted during the onset and aftermath of the financial crisis, there were at least four ways the crisis affected relocation: (1) reconfiguring of the relationship between sellers and buyers, (2) rethinking home ownership, (3) reconsidering moving, and (4) redirecting resources (Perry, 2014a). For some older adults, these themes were intertwined to address the needs of themselves and their family networks, thus reconsidering moving meant remaining in their current homes rather than moving and financially supporting loved ones who had lost jobs by supporting college tuition of grandchildren.

Interrelationship between the Social and Material Convoys

What does volunteering offer older adults in terms of material and social convoys? In addition to serving as an activity that can be emotionally rewarding, volunteering can increase social connections. Volunteering allows an older adult to be known to various agencies or faith-based organizations and in regular contact with members of the community, which may result in support for them after the death of a spouse; for example, fellow volunteers may visit to offer support, which may be especially important in geographic areas where weather contributes to the isolation of older adults (Perry, 2014b). The support received could be instrumental, such as assistance with home maintenance, or emotional.

Our research illustrates the interrelationship of personal relationships that result from formal volunteering experiences and material resources. Widowed people who volunteer may be less vulnerable than those without strong connections to their communities. Ohmer and Beck's (2006) findings of increased self and collective efficacy among older adults who volunteer illustrate the benefits gained from a volunteer experience. Greater understanding of the type and quality of volunteer positions may be crucial to understanding how volunteering contributes to an older adult's well-being after the death of a spouse. The present findings suggest that the type of relationships in one's social convoy may serve to preserve possessions within one's convoy of material resources. Home and place-making rituals have been found to contribute to older adults' well-being (Ekerdt & Baker, 2014; Rowles & Watkins, 2003). By remaining at home amid one's possessions, feelings of

familiarity and identity can be preserved. The physical spaces in which a spouse lived and contributed may be important to maintain in the short term post-widowhood. As we have shown in this article, volunteering may be another way to retain familiarity and identity, as well as network ties and one's social convoy. Intersection of the social and material convoy may not only affect instrumental and emotional support, but also help a widowed older adult age in place rather than relocate. Decisions about whether to remain in one's community or relocate out of area may be made in light of whether one's social convoy can be sustained and even replenished post-widowhood. Volunteering offers an opportunity to expand one's social convoy, possibly particularly important after this life transition.

Implications and Future Directions

Better understanding of the links between the social and material convoys of older adults has practice implications on both clinical and macro levels of social work. As older adults and kin prepare for the loss of a spouse, medical social workers or hospice social workers should examine the survivor's home and community and assess the prospects for him or her to age in place. One's post-widowhood social connections may make a difference in home maintenance, home navigability, and daily functioning. As practitioners assess the social and material and resource needs of older adults, specifically their ability to remain in their home, attention to the social links of kin, friends, and, as we have shown, volunteer sites, is an important context.

Those who have experienced the loss of a key individual in their social convoy may participate in individual or group bereavement therapy. This research has shown that housing concerns and possible transitions may be an important topic for therapeutic discourse. Knight and Buys (2003) suggested that older adults often initiate a move, though adult children are involved. A better understanding of the emotional motivation underlying relocation, such as not wanting to be a burden, has emerged in recent studies (see, for example, Jennings, Perry, & Valeriani, 2014).

Our findings suggest that volunteering may help older adults stay in the community they are familiar with and may promote civic engagement in multiple phases of older adulthood, including post-widowhood. Staff of social services agencies could use this research to recruit volunteers in different

phases of older adulthood. Older adults may also benefit from increased self and community efficacy if their work promotes beneficial change (Ohmer, 2007). Some recent work has shown the impact of community-level interventions to help older adults both age in place and sustain active participation in their community through volunteering. The village model is an example of an initiative already in place that supports individuals at all phases of older adulthood (Scharlach et al., 2012).

Limitations

Although our findings suggest that volunteering is an important influence on one's social and material convoys and likelihood to relocate, a number of limitations should be noted. Data from the HRS only provides information on whether or not widowed older adults volunteered and relocated. We do not know the types of organizations or agencies for which these older adults volunteered. Volunteer work differs depending on where one volunteers: in educational settings, volunteers may read books with children; in civic organizations, volunteers may work on elections; in a religious institution, a volunteer might become a deacon. Consequently, we do not know what aspects of volunteering benefit older adults; possibilities include less isolation, feeling altruistic, or increased self-efficacy. Given more insight into the type and quality of volunteer positions, we could explore alternative explanations of our findings. By understanding the intersection between psychological impact of volunteering, such as feelings of self and collective efficacy, and the social impact of volunteering, we could find out what is individually or socially beneficial about volunteer experiences for older adults. Further exploration of the distinct qualities of the volunteer role that bolster support for aging in place would be of great benefit.

The degree of choice to move also remains unknown, limiting our ability to say for certain whether those who did not move were choosing to remain in their community or lacked the resources to relocate. Although income was not significant in this model, home ownership remains a strong predictor of not relocating, indicating that different types of financial resources and their liquidity may influence relocation in different ways. Other factors that may influence relocation are the location of kin, suggestions by kin about safety of a current living situation, and friends or peers relocating. Changes in neighborhood context, such as safety and maintenance of

other residences (Haas & Serow, 1993), may also be a factor; this may be especially important in urban areas where large groups of older adults may be displaced because of financial resources due to gentrification (Perry et al., 2015). As noted previously, most older adults report a preference to age in place, but those factors that facilitate desired moves are of equal importance. Historical trends in access to marriage also affect the generalizability of our findings. By examining the death of a spouse among those over 65 years of age, we are likely to have significantly oversampled heterosexual individuals (only two people in this study self-identified as being in a same-sex partnership). As marriage rights were recently extended to same-sex couples, future scholarship related to widowhood will need to be inclusive of their experiences. The absence of volunteering relationships in the social convoy of widowed people was significantly associated with relocation, supporting a strong connection between the composition of one's social convoy and the decision to alter one's convoy of material resources by moving out of the area. Thus, individuals can be anchored to their community by more than family, friends, and employment, lending further evidence to volunteering as a stabilizing force. **SWR**

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