
DOES THE VOLUNTEER CUBE HELP TO UNDERSTAND MOTIVATION

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Abstract

1. AIM of ABSTRACT: To demonstrate how the volunteer cube model can help throwing light over the phenomena volunteer motivation.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND/LITERATURE REVIEW

The volunteering aspect can be studied from three levels: the mini- (individual level), the meso (organizational level) and the macro-level (society or community level). Most research has been on the individual level (e.g. Allan & Shaw, 2009; Downward, Lumsdon, & Ralston, 2005; Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998; Love, Hardin, & Koo; Skirstad & Hanstad, 2013; Strigas & Jackson; Williams, Dossa, & Tompkins, 1995; Wollebæk, Skirstad & Hanstad, 2012), not many on the organizational level (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012; Wicker & Hallmann, 2013) and few at community level (Chalip, 2006; Hustinx & Meijs, 2011; Kristiansen, Skirstad, Waddington & Parent, 2014).

Borrowing from geometry, a cube is a three-dimensional regular square prism in three orientations. The cube had to be adapted a little to fit the three broad frameworks used to explain the complexity of volunteering in sport events. This is illustrated by using a cube like model with the dimensions $3 \times 3 \times 5 = 45$ cells. The first to be included in the model is the three levels of analysis; individual, organization and society. The second framework uses the lifecycle phases (antecedents, experiences and consequences) the volunteer goes through (Omoto & Snyder, 2002). The third framework include the transitions (nominee, newcomer, emotional involvement, established volunteering and retiring on 5 levels) the volunteers go through and the processes (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). They focus on the changes (the process) the volunteers undergo when they enter an organization. No existing theory explains what makes the volunteers move from one stage to the next, and a detailed socialization process needs to be described. Now and then, the volunteer must quit for a while in order to gather new energy and then return to volunteer later. If we put gender as a variable all this cells must

be multiplied with two, and that makes 90 cells. Age, which partly coincides with the lifecycle phases, is another variable. Volunteering is for sure no “one size fits-all”.

Warner, Newland and Green (2011) write that we need to develop the ways we research volunteer experience in the future. The discussions often treat voluntarism as a unidimensional category lacking complexity; therefore, the concepts need further scrutiny, which I have tried to provide.

3. RESEARCH COMPLETED THAT HAS LED TO THIS KNOWLEDGE
Research on volunteers at the Test World championship in Nordic Skiing in 2010, the World Championship in the same sport in 2011, (both pre- and post-events questionnaires, quantitative), and interviews (qualitative) from the world Championship and World Cup in Nordic Skiing in 2012 and in 2014 and also interviews from a Worldcup in Skiflying 2013 has led to this knowledge that volunteers are no unidimensional phenomena. The paper will give some examples from these investigations to fill some of the 45 or 90 cells, and specially point out where new research is wanted.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE REVIEW

Three broad frameworks for explaining the complexity on volunteering in sport have been studied, and that has widened my understanding of volunteering. The different frameworks have been of help in locating issues previously not enough explored, and likely to discover new approaches and insights.

Volunteerism changes through the different stages in the organizational socialization (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008) and over time (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003). Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) introduced a new analytical framework of “styles of volunteering” (SOV) in traditional and reflexive or modern styles. Research also shows that volunteers combine different motives in a mix that suits the individual volunteer (Shaw, 2009; Treuren 2013). Our results give examples of this.

Perhaps is the solution to engage in interdisciplinary research because no one has the answer alone. Interdisciplinary research, however, shows an interaction between the researchers from different specific fields and the boundaries of specific disciplines are crossed, and that is essential to the creativity and new insights. This was argued by Doherty (2013, p.1) that, “it is time to engage in interdisciplinary research in sport management as no one has all the answers”. Amis and Silk had earlier (2005, p. 362) stressed that sport management “need to be open to competing discourses and viewpoints”. The merits from interdisciplinary research are new ways of conceptualizing phenomena, and because of that see problems from new angles. This paper highlights the possibility of a more sophisticated approach to volunteer research.

References

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