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The challenges of volunteering during international sport organizations/events

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Abstract:
The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges of volunteers at various stages in their volunteering activities during international sport organizations/events and how these are interlinked with their personal benefits. This study also aimed to analyze the experiences of volunteers during the management process and their thoughts about volunteerism. The method applied in this study was qualitative in nature and the phenomenological approach was used. Data was collected by interviewing. "Purposeful sampling" method and "Criterion sampling" strategy were used. In this study, 3 experienced volunteer leaders with identified criteria were selected and face to face and online interviews with open-ended questions were conducted in 2015 and written opinions of participants were asked via e-mail. "Descriptive analysis" and "content analysis" methods were used to analyze data. In order to ensure reliability and validity four aspects were used: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. In these strategies; expert review, confirmation of participants and purposive sampling methods were used. According to the results, 3 main themes: 1. "*Volunteerism"*, and 2. "*Benefits" gained from the experiences* with 5 sub themes: a. personal development, b. team work, c. active participation and productivity, d. joint sense of purpose and e. sustainability were determined; 3. "*Challenges" affecting the process of volunteering* determined with 6 sub themes: a. field of expertise, b. volunteer education, c. structure of organization, d. management process of the organization, e. budget and f. lack of volunteers.

Keywords: Volunteerism; volunteer; international sport events

Introduction

Volunteering is popular with all generations, from young to old. Many people try to find opportunities for being a volunteer and to find the right match for their talents, interests and time. In literature volunteering is generally considered as an altruistic activity and is intended to promote goodness and to contribute to improving human quality of life. In return, this activity can produce

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a feeling of self-worth and respect. There is no financial gain involved for the individual. Volunteering is also renowned for skill development, socialization, and fun. Volunteering may have positive benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served (25*)*. United Nations Volunteers (UNV) describes volunteerism as a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges and that it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation. UNV recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity. *(*26*)*
Beyond these legal definitions of volunteers, it should be acknowledged that there are, in fact, many variations of the meaning of the term "volunteer." For example, Webster's Dictionary simply defines volunteer as "one who offers to enter into any service of his/her own free will" (19). According to Human and Van Graan (2013) a volunteer can be described as someone who makes a decision to engage in an activity sacrificing his/her time and financial compensation. The volunteer participates in the activity in order to benefit to the community as well as to him/herself (12).

Volunteering Australia defines formal volunteering as an activity taking place through non-profit organizations or projects. Volunteering is to be of benefit to the community and to the volunteer; of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion; for no financial payment; and in designated volunteer positions only. According to Volunteering Australia the principles of volunteering are:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteer work is unpaid.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances.
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community.
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs.
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the non-profit sector only.
- Volunteering is not a substitution of paid work.
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers.
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others.
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality (29).

Australia is known as one of the best volunteering nations. Nearly one-third (4.4 million) of Australians aged 18 years or over did voluntary work in 2000, according to results released in 2001 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).Volunteers contributed 704.1 million hours of unpaid work, and almost a third of the volunteers worked for more than one organization (23).

In Europe, compared to other European countries the Netherlands has a relatively high level of participation to volunteer work. Both in 2000 as well as in 2005 approx. 25% of the population did volunteer work on a regular basis. It is expected that this will be the same in 2015.
According to the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) of the Netherlands voluntary work criteria are as follows:

- The work is non-profit.
- The work is in general interest or in a specific social interest.

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- Volunteer work does not "cost" the labour market jobs and it does not replace a paid job.
- Volunteer work though being voluntary is not non-committal (28).

The current literature focuses on the benefits of social, human and political capital to individuals as motivations for volunteering and how to generate these capitals through voluntary participation (22). Chelladurai stated that a volunteer might join an organization for several reasons: learning and growing, helping others, cultivating friendships, using present skills and learning new skills, gaining work experience, repaying a debt to society, and using leisure time more effectively (4*)*.

In this research it is important to define the concept of volunteering prior to discussing and mapping volunteer research in the context of big international sporting events. This is a complex task in view of the considerable scope for defining volunteering in terms of motives (altruism, self interestedness), activities (leisure-oriented, work oriented) and setting (voluntary organizations, government bodies) (2*)*. The most significant working contribution to major mega events in sports, as in other areas, is provided by the very large numbers of volunteers who undertake tasks across the range of opportunities provided by such events. Numbers of volunteers between 40,000 and 60,000 have been noted for some recent major events (2). Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data revealed that in 2010, 6.1 million people (36% of the Australian population aged 18 years or over) participated in voluntary work. Sport and physical recreation organisations were the most common types that people volunteered for (44% of male volunteers and 32% of female volunteers) (24).

It is clear that volunteers have been very important for the success of the many sport events from local to international level. Undoubtedly one of the most important events in the international sports calendar are the Olympic Games. From the Lake Placid Games in 1980 until Seoul Olympics in 1988, the period during which the present-day model of *Olympic volunteer* began to emerge. In the Lake Placid Games, volunteers were incorporated into the Organising Committee's programme and by the time of the Los Angeles Games (1984) their role had become fundamental. The Games at Sarajevo (1984), Calgary (1988) and Seoul (1988) were all embracing the volunteer element, though from different organisational perspectives. The Albertville/Barcelona (1992), Lillehammer (1994), Atlanta (1996) and Nagano (1998) Games were definitive confirmations of the growing importance of the volunteer phenomenon as a reflection of individual commitment to the success of the Games, without any hope or desire for monetary reward (17). The concept of the "Olympic volunteer" was first defined explicitly in an Olympic glossary produced as part of the Official Report of the Barcelona Olympic Games 1992: "the volunteer is a person who makes an individual, altruistic commitment to collaborate, to the best of his/her abilities, in the organization of the Olympic Games, carrying out the tasks assigned to him/her without receiving payment or rewards of any other nature" (17). The present-day model of volunteer is included in human resources planning in the Organising Committees. In the most recent Summer Olympic Games in London 2012 the Organizing Committee received more than 240,000 applications. The role of Olympic volunteers has never been more important. 70,000 volunteers of a total workforce of around 200,000 people including more than 6,000 staff and 100,000 contractors were involved in the London 2012 Olympic Games and the volunteers were called 'Games Makers', as they helped to make the Games happen contributing eight million hours of voluntary work behind the scenes (27).

Table 1. shows the numbers of volunteers during the Summer Olympics in the period 1984-2012.

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Table 1. Volunteers in the Summer Olympic Games 1984–2012*

Summer Games	**Number of volunteers**
Los Angeles 1984	28,742
Seoul 1988	27,221
Barcelona 1992	34,548
Atlanta 1996	60,422
Sydney 2000	46,967
Athens 2004	45,000
Beijing 2008	70.000
London 2012	70,000

***Reference: Zhuang et al (2012) and Moragas et al. (1999)**

These incredible numbers also present unique challenges for the management of volunteers at events, and especially for mega events such as the Olympic Games, World Cups, etc. Nichols (2009) stated that volunteers can make a distinctive contribution to events but that they also present distinctive challenges to event managers. For event managers, volunteers bring enthusiasm, a good relationship and empathy with the public, and they provide a cheap labor force. But a major concern is ensuring their reliability. For volunteers, important expectations include: flexibility of engagement, the quality of personal relationships, recognition for their contribution, and a clear communication of what they are expected to do. (18).
Given the scope of volunteer resources in the sport industry it is important that the sport organization manages them and their contributions effectively. To do so we must have a clear understanding of sport volunteers and their experiences (9). This is also essential for the sustainability of volunteering. If the satisfaction and the enthusiasm of a volunteer continue it is most likely that experienced and therefore educated volunteering could also sustain.

Purpose

This study aimed to explore the challenges of volunteers at various stages in their volunteering activities and how these are interlinked with their personal benefits. The success of a sport event mainly depends on good management of volunteers. This study therefore also aimed to analyze the experiences of volunteers during the management process and their thoughts about volunteerism.

Method

The method applied in this study was qualitative in nature and the phenomenological approach was used. The data was collected by interviewing. "Purposeful sampling" method and "Criterion sampling" strategy were used.

Data Collection

Selection criteria were: more than 10 years of leadership and managerial experience of the participants in volunteering, being responsible as a volunteer in at least 3 international sports organizations and having competence, skills and the education to manage the process (Table1, 2). In this study, 3 experienced volunteer leaders (1 Spanish, 2 Turkish) with identified criteria were

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selected and face to face and online interviews with open-ended questions were conducted in 2015 and written opinions of participants were asked via e-mail. In addition, data accuracy was confirmed via phone and face to face interviews with participants.

Data Analysis

The data was coded according to the themes and descriptive analysis and content analysis were used as qualitative analysis methods in order to analyze and to interpret data. The obtained data was summarized and coded independently by two researchers and patterns were established.

Validity and Relability

Various researchers point out that there must be some other concepts to be used in qualitative researches instead of validity and reliability (6, 21). In this respect there are four aspects to ensure reliability and validity in qualitative researches: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (21). These four strategies were used for this study. For credibility, an expert who is experienced both in qualitative research and volunteerism checked the entire research according to the expert review strategy. For transferability, data was collected according to the purposive sampling method and the reason was clearly explained. For dependability two expert researchers worked independently and compared the analysis and at the same time it was ensured that the findings were internally consistent and significant. Finally the data obtained from the research and encodings was stored by researchers to be confirmed at a later stage.

Limitations

One of the major limitations of this research was that data could be collected from only three experienced volunteers by means of interview. Thus this research is limited to data obtained from these interviews and reflects the participants' points of view only. Having 1 Spanish and 2 Turkish participants who volunteered in international sport organizations can be considered as another limitation (Table 2).

Table 2. Profile of the participants

PARTICAPANTS			
Gender:	Age:	Nationality:	Experience
FEMALE	48	SPANISH	22 Year
FEMALE	45	TURKISH	15 Year
FEMALE	44	TURKISH	14 Year

Table 3: Statements of the participants related to "volunteer activities" in which they took active part .

Participants	Data obtained from the interviews
	"Volunteer Activities" in which participants took active part
VOLUNTEER Z	1992 Barcelona Olympic & Paralympic Games (bid support during the previous years/in 1992 hired as BOCOG staff) 2004 Athens Olympic Games (Olympic Youth Camp Assistant – Group Leader/Team Leader) 2006 Doha Asian Games (Youth Camp Assistant – Group Leader)

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	2010 Singapore Youth Olympic Games (Language Services Assistant) 2012 Innsbruck Winter Youth Olympic Games (NOC Assistant) 2014 Sochi Winter Paralympic Games (NOC Assistant)
VOLUNTEERM	2001-2009 Turkish National Olympic Committee, Culture and Art Commission, Project assistant 2003-2005 Sport Culture and Olympic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools Research Project, assistant coordinator, co-author, educator, Istanbul, Turkey 2004 Athens 2004 Olympic Torch Relay, Volunteers Coordinator, 2004, Istanbul, Turkey 2004 Athens 2004 Paralympics, Volunteer, Bocce Division, 2004, Athens, Greece 2005-2006 2nd Aphrodisias-Laodikya International Sports, Youth, Culture and Art Festival, Project Leader and International Participants Coordinator, NOCT, Culture and Art Commission, Denizli, Turkey 2006-2008 The Olympic Foundation Netherlands, Olympic Stadium Amsterdam, IOC International Olympic Museums Network Project; OMN, Project Assistant)
VOLUNTEERY	1996-1999 NOCT Olympic Academy Commission – Olympic Education Studies 2003-2005 Sport Culture and Olympic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools Research Project, assistant coordinator, co-author, educator, Istanbul, Turkey 2004 Athens 2004 Olympic Torch Relay, Volunteers Coordinator, 2004, Istanbul, Turkey 2004-2008 Turkish National Olympic Committee, Culture and Art Commission – Commission Member 2004-2014 Turkish National Olympic Committee, Culture and Art Commission/Sport Culture and Olympic Education Commission – Afrodisias-Laodikeia International Sports, Youth, Culture and Art Festival Coordinator 2008 NOCT-2008 Beijing Olympic Torch Relay Istanbul Organization

Results

Research findings were grouped under three general themes. In the first theme, "volunteerism", participants explained their opinion on volunteerism and what it means to them. Some of the sub-themes: a. specific project, working hand in hand, to work for a peaceful dream, to build a better world, to learn about everyone and everything. b. to do something you like just because you want it, imagining that you make a difference, be part of the process, to look from a different perspective, obtaining different knowledge and experience, sharing the same feelings with the people in the world. c. sharing, strength, effort and hard work, acting for a purpose, sharing for the purpose, better, more beautiful, more realistic and qualitative collaboration, feeling of happiness are shown in (Table 4), (Fig. 1).

Table 4: Personal statements of the participants about "volunteerism":

Participants	WHAT is VOLUNTEERISM **How would you describe (in your opinion) volunteerism? What does it mean to you?**
VOLUNTEER	Volunteerism means to work for *specific project*, without expecting anything in return… Means to give your best to achieve a common project, *working hand in hand* with some other people that might think like you.

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Z	For me it means, *to work for a dream*, in the case of the Games, *for a peaceful dream to build a better world* and during the process, to learn about everyone and everything …
VOLUNTEERM	I think volunteerism is to do something you like just because you want it. It gives you a different energy. At least during the task thinking and dreaming that *you make a difference.* *Being part of such a process* makes me look at life from different perspectives. When the motivation is not to earn money you are able to *reach different experiences and knowledge.* Especially during the international organizations it gives you comfort and peace to see that *you have the same feelings with people who have different languages*, you laugh and cry for the same reasons, you are not actually different from them as you thought you were. At least you can reach out to people with more tolerance, not because it is required but because you feel it from the bottom of your heart…
VOLUNTEERY	For me the most basic definition of volunteerism is *sharing.* It is the *strength, effort, hard work and to share* the things without any other expectations. For me volunteering is a sense of "action for the purpose" which is greater than just working. When I do this, my intention *increases towards the better, the more beautiful, better quality and more realistic and more collaborative features* because it gives me great happiness to work hard and perform the task perfectly without any other purposes. Thus, the work gives great pleasure as well as the pride of *sharing this environment with those who serve the same purpose*…

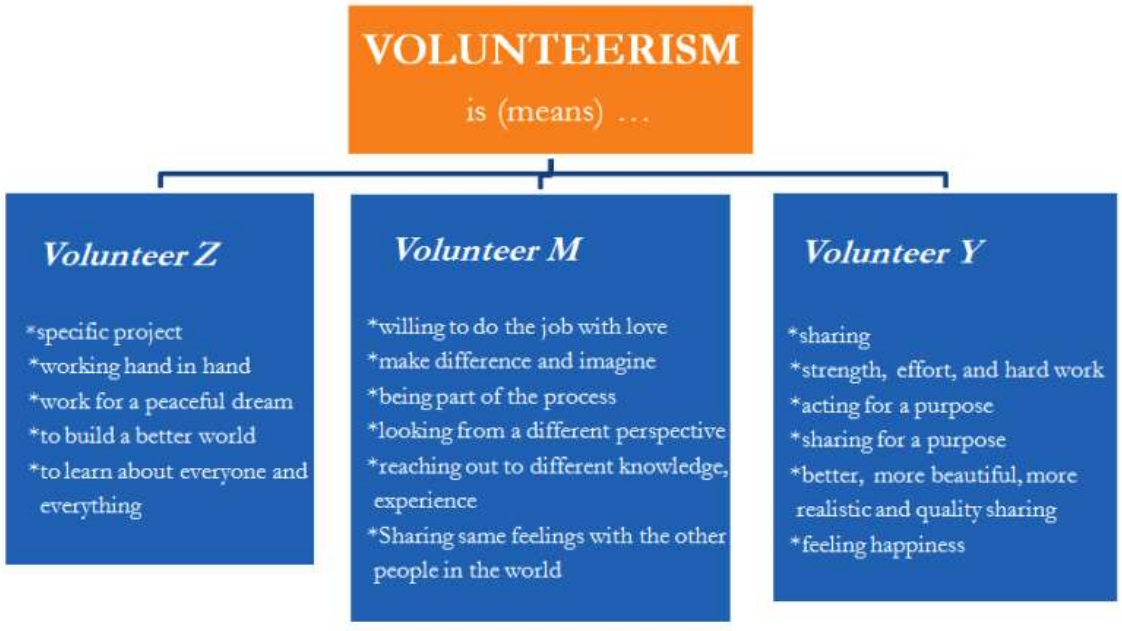


Figure 1. Personal Definitions of the Participants about Volunteerism.

The second general theme was "benefits" which were gained from volunteering experiences and 5 sub themes were determined related to this subject. These were: a. personal development, b.

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Teamwork, c. active participation and productivity, d. joint sense of purpose, e. social network. (Fig. 2).

Some of the statements of the participants on this subject are as follows:

> *"I also had the chance to increase my language and personal skills. Professionally I had the chance to learn about different ways of sports management, depending on the idiosyncrasy of the country and different ways to lead and treat the volunteers" (Volunteer Z).*

> *"chance to grow professionally and personally I had the chance to meet new countries, people, cultures, religions, languages, ways of life" (Volunteer M).*

> *"for me the most important benefit of being a volunteer was being involved within a large organization and collaboration with different people and institutions. Thus to experience different work environments and situations"(Volunteer Y).*

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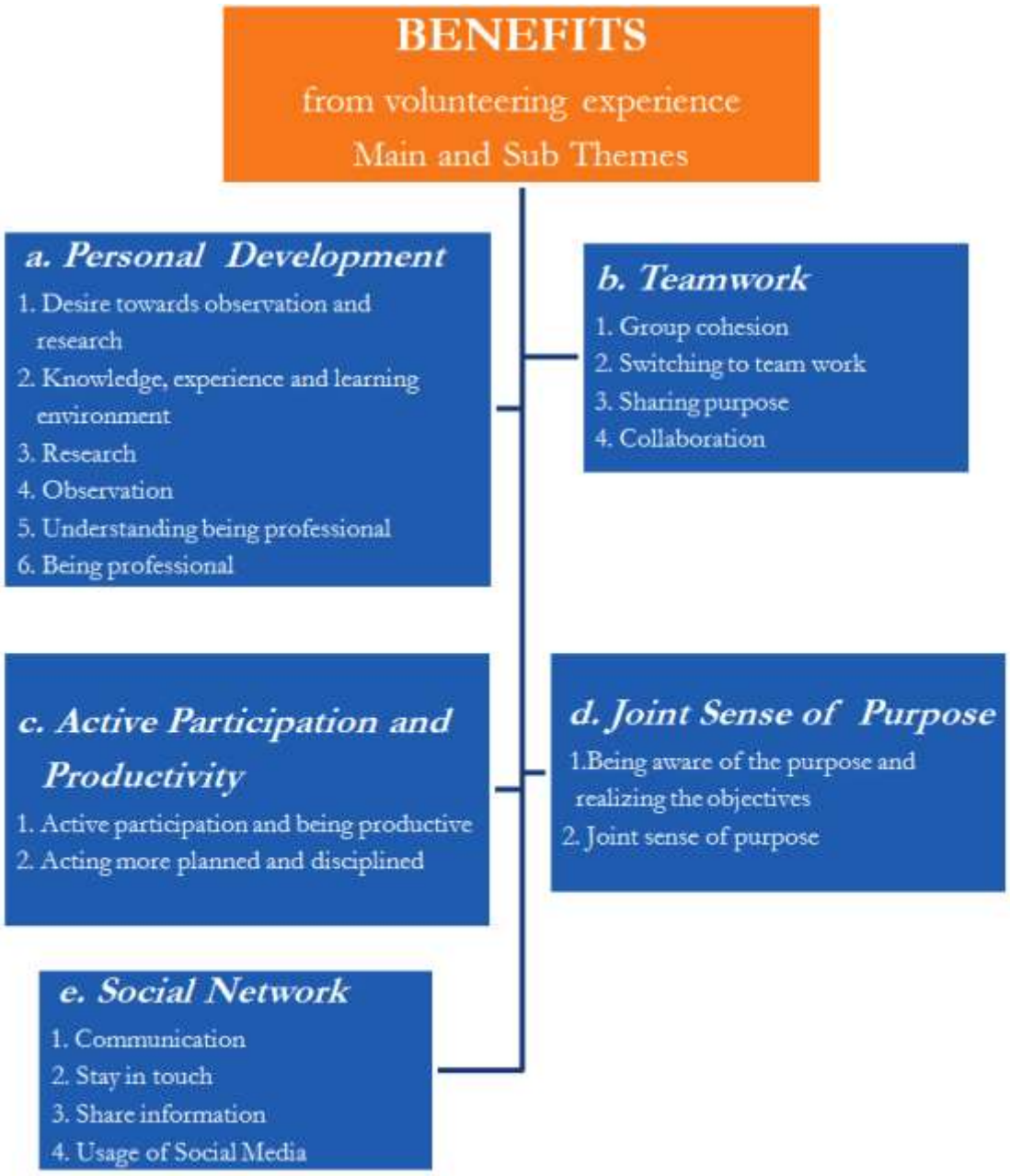


Figure 2. Main and Sub Themes Related to Benefits from the Volunteering Experience

The 3rd general theme was the "challenges that affect the volunteering process" and 6 sub-themes were determined: a. field of expertise, b. volunteer training, c. structure of organization, d. management process of the organization, e. budget, f. sustainability (Fig. 3).

Some of the statements of the participants on this subject are as follows:

"In fact, I was able to see how amateur our approaches to the work were. Therefore, understanding the sense of professional work and the necessity of applying it especially in large organizations within a structure was my greatest experience..." (Volunteer Y).

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"Also some of the volunteers were having problems because they were not good enough in communicating in English and they experienced very difficult times during the organization…" (Volunteer M).

"Until recently there was no volunteer training. When they gave training the time was too short so the training was not sufficient. Nevertheless we worked very hard to make a good job…" (Volunteer Y).



Figure 3. Main and Sub Themes Related to Challenges That Affect the Volunteering Process

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Discussion

According to the results one of the main themes was "volunteerism". Participants explained their version of volunteerism and stated that sharing, working hand in hand, sharing for the purpose and sharing the same feelings with the people in the world are very important factors in volunteerism. Human and Van Graan (2013) obtained similar findings in their study on South African volunteers' experiences of volunteering at the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Volunteers indicated that they experienced interaction with fellow volunteers as unity in diversity and although they were from diverse backgrounds they all had a common goal (12). Kodama, et al. (2013) also determined in their study on Vancouver 2010 volunteer experience that "shared purpose, experiences, and support reflect and reinforce volunteers' identity and connection with others" (15). Participants also stated that being part of the process, acting for a purpose and working for a dream mean a lot in volunteering.

The second general theme was "benefits" which were gained from volunteering experience. The particular experiences over the years benefited the participant volunteers in several ways and one of them was personal development. They indicated that they could improve some personal skills such as: foreign language skills, communication skills, research and observation and also working professionally through their experiences in volunteering. Many people may use their volunteer experiences to gain or improve their personal skills and experiences. Baum and Lockstone (2007) identified five elements as comprising the conceptual framework of volunteering. These elements include rewards, the issue of free will, nature of benefit received from volunteer activity, organizational setting and level of commitment of volunteers (2). Similarly in Akman's (2008) study which examined the effect of volunteer motives, volunteer role identity, sense of community and social responsibility and satisfaction, the volunteers reported more satisfaction with volunteering when volunteering enabled them to enlarge their social network and enhance their self-esteem, and when it contributed to their personal development (1). In a study conducted with Turkish volunteers altruistic motivations were reported as the most important reasons of volunteering, followed by affiliation and personal development (3). Doherty (2005) also identifies "Social" and "personal development" motives as constituting secondary motives for sport volunteering. She stated that some variation can be expected among volunteers with regard to the relative importance of motives at this level. For example, personal development through new skills and experiences is typically a stronger motive for sport volunteers than social reasons. Further, learning new skills is a particularly prominent motive for younger volunteers, as is volunteering to improve job opportunities (8). Team work and active participation and productivity were also sub themes of

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benefits. Group cohesion, sharing purpose and collaboration were very important factors for the participants. Joint sense of purpose was another sub theme. If a volunteer shares the same ideas or purpose with the other volunteers or the organization, it would most likely increase his/her motivation and willingness to continue volunteering. Akman (2008) similarly indicates that developing a stronger sense of community in the volunteering context was expected to make the volunteer more likely to maintain volunteering behavior for an extended period since stronger sense of community in the organization would indicate that volunteers and employees of non-governmental organizations worked together to achieve common goals and there was a supportive atmosphere in the organization (1). According to Costa et al. (2006) opportunities to share opinions and experiences during training helps to build volunteers' sense of community at the event and sense of community positively impacts volunteers' commitment to the event (5).

One of the important outcomes as sub theme was social network. Participants stated that if they communicate and stay in contact with other volunteers who shared the same experiences they feel attached. Participants also indicated that using social media and creating group accounts help them to continue sharing. Wysong and Maellaro (2013), based on the findings in their study, pointed to poor communication and the underutilization of volunteer talents as factors that negatively impact overall satisfaction of volunteering at major sports events (20). However consistent with reviewed literature, although many of the volunteer management practices such as creating social network, social interactions have been suggested and used, there has been limited research that measures the effectiveness of these volunteer management practices (13).

According to the results the third main theme was the "challenges that affect the volunteering process" and 6 sub-themes were determined. Field of expertise was one of the sub themes. Participants stated that selecting the right person for the task and being professional are crucial in volunteering. One of the biggest challenges of being a sport volunteer is being attracted more to the sport or event itself than having a task/responsibility. Especially young volunteers choose to be volunteer for mainly prestigious sport events such as Formula 1, Olympic Games, World Cup, etc. Recruiting the right persons from this enthusiastic but not specifically talented crowd is often a dilemma for the organizers and the managers. Cuskelly and Boag (2001) indicated that many sport organisations have problems recruiting sufficient numbers of volunteers to fill all the roles necessary for the organization to function effectively (7). In this respect volunteer training appears as another challenge related to this dilemma. Education, or foreign language skills and expertise of a volunteer play a crucial role during volunteering. For example, in Human and Van Graan's study

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(2013) participating volunteers during the 2010 FIFA World Cup mentioned language barrier as one of the biggest dilemmas. They explained their interaction with foreign people during the event as follows: *"...with some of them we had a challenge interacting because we didn't speak the same language. We were trained accordingly as to how to approach those tourists and how to deal with them … it was great meeting new people,"* (12). According to Du's (2008) study sufficient training should be provided not only on the working procedures, role allocations during the events, but also on the characteristics of the service targets. It is essential not only for the success of the events, but also for the improvement of volunteer satisfaction, and more importantly, retention of them (10). Costa et al. (2006) indicated that opportunities to share opinions and experiences during training might be an early stage of interaction of the volunteers and indication of support from the others and also from supervisors (5). Baum (2007) however stated that it is important to know what new skills volunteers acquire and how they acquire them and to what extent use is being made of volunteers' existing skills profile. He also stated that it is not clear what the impact of such learning is on the long-term development and careers of volunteers and whether returning volunteers, on a bounce-back experience, seek to learn more of the same or focus on new learning opportunities from their repeated experience(2). Furthermore Lu-Luan (2001) stated in the study examining factors affecting volunteerism for international sports events in Taiwan, that when recruiting volunteers for international sport competitions organizers should give careful consideration to organize training programs by giving the volunteers opportunities to improve their social and management skills. Lu-Luan also expressed that volunteers wish to gain experience, broaden their horizons and promote personal growth (16). Kodama, et al. (2013) conducted a study using an auto-ethnographic approach, to explore her (first author) Olympic volunteer experience with the Vancouver 2010 Games. This generated a greater understanding of sport event volunteerism from her own experience. She stated *"I found volunteer training to be not only critical to my role performance but also a foundation for developing camaraderie and positive group dynamics within the volunteer team. It is important for event managers to recognize and ensure the effective implementation of training that facilitates both role preparation and social connection"*. (15)

Participants of the study also mentioned structure of the organization and management process of the organization as challenges for a volunteer. Type of organization and the degree of difficulty of the organization are very important factors which are directly related to the performance of the volunteer. Especially big (mega) international organizations have many different aspects to manage for both volunteer and management. Cuskelly and Boag (2001) indicated the planning and management of an organized volunteer program as the retention of volunteers (7). Moreno et al., (1999) explained in their study that the numbers of participants, both athletes and media people in

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the mega sport events have spiralled and in this new setting the role of volunteer too has acquired new dimensions, having been incorporated into the structure and overall plan in an organized way(17). Preparing and applying a plan and afterwards evaluating and reporting the outcomes and especially volunteers work require consistency in the plan as a whole and being professional in every step. Consistently, Du (2008) indicated in the study determining job satisfaction among volunteers of the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games that since the success of sports events largely depends on volunteer input, it is of great importance for event organizers and volunteer coordinators to understand not only the motives of voluntary workers, but also the areas that they are more satisfied and areas they are less satisfied with, so to enhance the ability of event organizers to recruit and sustain qualified volunteers (10). Han (2007) on the other hand explains the benefits of volunteer training from a marketing point of view: "proper training of volunteers is critical because well trained volunteers are able to enhance organizational effectiveness" (11). Furthermore Lu-Luan (2001) suggested a model for volunteerism in sport events in the study examining factors affecting volunteerism for international sports events in Taiwan. According to the model: recruitment, training, supervision and evaluation phases must be planned. In the evaluation phase: documentation to keep accurate records of the volunteer, recognition to recognize or reward to offer some kind of appreciation, assessment to review and assess recruitment, training and job performance factors and finally change to modify recruitment, training and job programs based upon the assessment, must be planned (16). It is very important for the organization to help volunteers understand each working unit in the organization, to explain how the work they do impacts the mission or "big picture" of the organization and to be clear and honest about the performance of individual volunteers.

One of the other challenges that participants experienced many times during their volunteer work was budget. Especially for the international sport events if the costs of accommodation, transportation and food and beverage are not covered by the organization, it would be one of the biggest challenges an international volunteer has to face. Moreover, Kinsbergen et al. (2013) in their study explaining volunteering time in Dutch Private Development Initiatives stated that organizational characteristics influence voluntary time investment in Private Development Initiatives. Volunteers in organizations with larger budgets spend more hours on volunteer work (14).

Sustainability was the last challenge that participants mentioned for the volunteering experiences. Lack of qualified volunteers, being not institutionalized lack of support from the government and

not being able to understand the professional work are ultimately effecting the sustainability of volunteering. Cuskelly and Boag (2001) stated that the turnover behavior of volunteers is critical to the survival of many sport organizations, but beyond measuring rates of turnover, little is known about volunteer turnover behavior and why it occurs in sport organizations (7). The management of sports volunteers is absolutely critical to the continued success of those who volunteer in sport. According to Doherty's (2005) official report on community sport volunteers in Canada, most satisfying in volunteering is the opportunity to use one's skills and experience, and obtaining new skills and experiences, through volunteer work that is enjoyable and worthwhile. Most dissatisfying to sport volunteers is working for a poorly-run organization, followed by boredom or lack of challenge/interest in the volunteer role, too much time required, unable to cope with what asked to do, and efforts not being appreciated. Furthermore she defines volunteerism as an exchange between the organization and the volunteer. The needs of both must be met for the relationship to be satisfying and effective, and maintained (8).

Volunteers who do not expect any material compensation for their time, energy and commitment surely want to enjoy themselves and feel needed and appreciated. therefore they are more likely to not only be more productive in fulfilling their role, but it is also more probable they will continue to volunteer in the future.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the light of all the findings it could be concluded that the benefits of the volunteers from their experiences and the challenges they have to face are very important and must be recognized by the organizations. In this respect organizations must consider to offer opportunities for volunteers to contribute to their personal and social development. This is very important for the volunteer's overall satisfaction but also vital for the sustainability of volunteer work. "It is the experience, the satisfaction and the sense of community the volunteers benefit from in the first place in volunteering" (1). It is clear that good volunteer management and a clear understanding of the way volunteers work particularly in sport are essential to protect and nurture this valuable group of individuals.

There is a need to continue to examine the nature of volunteer commitment. Considering the most international sport events rely on great numbers of volunteers, having an effective and sustainable volunteer management program regarding personal, social and cultural aspects of the community or nation is inevitable.

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Supplement: Turkish Abstract

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı uluslararası spor organizasyonlarında gönüllü olan katılımcıların gönüllülük sürecinde yaşadıkları zorlukları ortaya çıkarmaktır. Araştırmada ayrıca katılımcıların deneyimlerinin ve gönüllülük hakkındaki düşüncelerinin bir değerlendirmesi yapılmıştır. Araştırmada, nitel araştırma deseni olarak "fenomenoloji" yaklaşımı ve veri toplamada "görüşme" yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Örneklem seçiminde "amaçlı örnekleme" yöntemlerinden "ölçüt örnekleme" yöntemi seçilmiştir. Araştırmada, belirlenen ölçütte 3 deneyimli gönüllü lider ile açık uçlu soruları içeren görüşmeler 2015 yılında, yüz-yüze ve mail aracılığı ile yapılmış ve yazılı olarak katılımcılardan görüşleri istenmiştir. Elde edilen verilerin çözümü için, nitel analiz yöntemlerinden "betimsel analiz" ve "içerik analiz" yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Geçerlik ve güvenirliği sağlamak üzere inandırıcılık, aktarılabilirlik, tutarlık ve teyit edilebilirliktir stratejilerinden yararlanılmıştır. Bu stratejilerde; uzman incelemesi, katılımcı teyidi ve amaçlı örnekleme yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda 1. "*Gönüllülük"*; 2. *Gönüllülük deneyiminde "kazanımlar*" ile ilgili 5 alt tema belirlenmiştir. Bunlar: a. kişisel gelişim b. takım çalışması c. etkin katılım ve verimlilik d. amaç birlikteliği ve e. sosyal ağ/iletişim'dir. 3. Genel tema ise: *gönüllülük sürecini etkileyen "zorluklar"* başlığı altında 6 alt temadır. Bunlar: a. uzmanlık alanı b. gönüllü eğitimi c. organizasyon yapısı d. organizasyonun yönetim süreci e. bütçe f. süreklilik, alt temalarıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gönüllülük; gönüllü; uluslararası spor organizasyonları