



**Investigating volunteer management and motives within Special Olympics**

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### Background

#### Special Olympics

- ❖ Special Olympics is a global movement of people who want to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities
- ❖ The mission is to provide year round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.



### Special Olympics

- ❖ Eunice Kennedy Shriver began the movement in the 1950s and 60s as a summer camp in her backyard
- ❖ Now Special Olympics provides opportunities for 4.7 million athletes in 169 countries.
- ❖ Over 1.1 million volunteers world wide
- ❖ 2015 Organisational expenditures of \$125.2 million world wide

Eunice Kennedy Shriver during the warm up at the First Special Olympics International Summer Games in 1968




### Growth of Volunteers

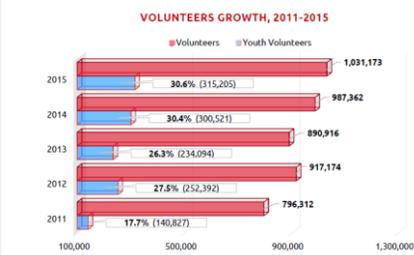
Why is there a need?

- ❖ Athlete numbers have grown from 3.9m – 4.7m
- ❖ Competitions have increased from 146 – 297 per day on average
- ❖ Europe Eurasia showed an increase of 30% in competition numbers between 2014-2015




### Volunteering numbers

**VOLUNTEERS GROWTH, 2011-2015**



Year	Total Volunteers	Youth Volunteers	Youth %
2015	1,031,173	315,205	30.6%
2014	987,362	300,521	30.4%
2013	890,916	234,094	26.3%
2012	917,174	252,392	27.5%
2011	796,312	140,827	17.7%

Special Olympics Reach Report (2015)



### Background

#### Motivation

Depending on it's context, motivation has derived many definitions

- ❖ Sporting Context:
  - ❖ Motivation is the direction and intensity of one's effort (Sage, 1977)
- ❖ Volunteering context:
  - ❖ Whilst many theories have been applied and researchers have proposed many motives, volunteer motivation appears to lack a definition amongst researchers



## Motivation Theories

### Theory of planned behaviour

❖ Before a behaviour is performed, it is planned (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

❖ Three determinants of intentions to perform a task

1. Behavioural Attitude
2. Subjective Norms
3. Perceived behaviour control

### Volunteering explanation

❖ Partly explains an intention to continue to volunteer due to possible links between psychological contracts (Kim et al. 2009)

❖ Warburton & Terry (2000) found this theory had the ability to indicate intention to volunteer but lacked the capability to focus on the motivations of the volunteers

❖ Lack of reliability in the measures typically used e.g. The scales used for perceived behaviour control (Povey et al. 2002; Terry & Leary, 1995)



## Motivation Theories

### Self Determination Theory

❖ 3 core psychological needs:

1. Competence
  - Effective in both task and environment
2. Relatedness
  - Desire to feel connected and interact
3. Autonomy
  - Desire to be in control of their own behaviours and choices

(Deci & Ryan, 1985)

❖ Deeper Psychological needs at the forefront of volunteer motivation

❖ Different levels of self determination exist along a continuum of motivational styles or regulations (Deci & Ryan, 2002)



## Motivation Theories

### Self Determination Theory



❖ Deeper Psychological needs at the forefront of volunteer motivation

❖ Different levels of self determination exist along a continuum of motivational styles or regulations (Deci & Ryan, 2002)



## Aims

- ❖ To conduct a cross-cultural analysis of the motives of volunteers
- ❖ To Determine the motives of volunteers within Special Olympics
- ❖ To gain an understanding of the volunteers views on the processes and structures of volunteer management within Special Olympics
- ❖ To determine if the policies surrounding volunteer management vary between cultures and National Programs in order to allow for a better understanding as to whether an overarching strategy would be suitable in relation to the management of volunteers within third sector organisations
- ❖ To inform policy advisement for Special Olympics as a whole in terms of the management processes involved in volunteer recruitment, training and retention
- ❖ To outline lessons to be learned for other volunteer organisations



## Methodology

### Special Olympics National Programs

	SO Hellas	SO Ireland	SO GB
Founded	1987	1978	1978
Sports Offered	28	16	23
Athletes	12,755	9,462	7,432
Volunteers	5,500	12,000	4,800

- ❖ Variety of experience in terms of hosting international sporting competition
- ❖ Similar 'age' of SO National Program
- ❖ Variations in relation to the structure of the organisation of each National Program



## Methodology



❖ Case Study within 3 Special Olympics National Programs  
 ❖ **Aim:** To determine if cultural differences impact upon the levels of volunteerism

- ❖ Volunteers from each country will complete online questionnaires
  - 4 sections
    - Demographics
    - Volunteer experience
    - Motivation
    - Procedures & management

❖ 200 respondents in each country



## Preliminary findings Demographics

	Male	Female
SO Ireland	36.6%	63.4%
SO Hellas (Greece)	21.5%	78.4%
SO GB	41.7%	58.3%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>

- ❖ Large variations in relation to gender differences in volunteering depending on context
- ❖ 14.8% British men volunteer in sport compared to 9.23% of British women (APS survey 2012-2013)
- ❖ Other researchers suggest no significant difference in the genders of the volunteers (Berlonghi, 1994; Dalziel, 2011)



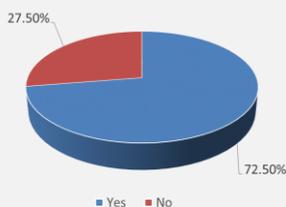
## Preliminary findings Demographics

Age Range	SO Hellas	SO Ireland	SO GB	Overall
18 - 24	14.3%	11.3%	20.8%	<b>15.5%</b>
25 - 34	30.6%	13.4%	8.3%	<b>17.4%</b>
35 - 49	25.5%	25.3%	16.7%	<b>22.5%</b>
50 - 64	23.5%	33.9%	33.3%	<b>30.2%</b>
65+	6.1%	16.1%	20.8%	<b>14.3%</b>

- ❖ Volunteering is highest amongst 16-25 years (Sport England Volunteer insight project)
- ❖ The largest volunteering ages in sport at 16-25 and 35-49 (Community life survey 2015)



## Preliminary findings Actively volunteering



- ❖ Active volunteering was determined by attendance at any Special Olympics event in the previous 12 months
- ❖ Reasons for inactivity were primarily listed as work or family reasons
- ❖ 12% of inactive volunteers stated 'other reasons for no longer being active'
  - ❖ "not been asked"
  - ❖ "help was no longer needed"



## findings Motivation

SDT	CMQ Mean	SO Hellas	SO Ireland	SO GB	Overall
Intrinsic	5.89	6.35	6.20	6.52	<b>6.36</b>
Integrated	4.7	6.05	5.39	4.92	<b>5.45</b>
Identified	4.72	5.75	4.92	4.96	<b>5.21</b>
Introjected	3.81	3.99	4.01	4.34	<b>4.11</b>
External Regulation	2.91	2.62	2.98	3.38	<b>2.99</b>
Amotivation	2.48	2.02	2.05	1.69	<b>1.92</b>

I started to volunteer because I know/ am related to a Special Olympics Athlete

Answer Options	Response Percent
True	27.2%
False	72.8%



## Findings Volunteer recruitment

- ❖ Inconsistent
  - Some felt the quick, simple and effective
  - Some felt it took a long time
- ❖ The process has improved over the years
- ❖ Process is better organised when there is a recruitment drive for large events, otherwise it can be quite ad hoc
  - This changes experiences and led to some stating they had to travel to the capital for training as there was none locally
  - "I began volunteering before I was old enough to be an official volunteer so the process carried on whilst I was volunteering"
- ❖ Slow to assign roles



## Findings Decision making

- ❖ Decisions are often made without volunteer input
- ❖ The further 'up the chain' the less decisions are made by volunteers
- ❖ After events, volunteers are always asked for opinions
  - "Those organising events will always take feedback and act on this if necessary"
- ❖ "SO central need to listen more to people on the ground when organising and timetabling events"
- ❖ "I personally do not interfere with the operational side of things"



## Decision making – should volunteers have more powers?

### Yes

- Volunteers are grassroots should be able to make decisions
- Volunteers are the experts in the field
- Only if it benefits the athletes
- Long term volunteers have valuable opinions
- It would make volunteers feel valued
- Volunteers at committee level would be helpful
- Some decisions by SO are outdated

### No

- Large numbers of volunteers would make decision making impractical
- They should have less power & roles should be filled by paid staff
- It should be the athletes with more powers
- No, it should be about the enjoyment, not making decisions
- No, volunteers don't have the extra time to give for meetings



## Findings

### SO Policies & Procedures

- ❖ There is a lack of awareness of any policies the organisation may have
- ❖ Volunteers are allowed to drift away with no contact to keep them involved
- ❖ Communication is ad hoc – usually only when volunteers are needed for events
- ❖ Inconsistent
- ❖ The coach education forum and co-ordinators meetings provide structure
- ❖ An over reliance on family members to run clubs and events



## Findings

### Qualitative – key points

- ❖ Lack of awareness of any procedures or policies in relation to volunteer management
- ❖ Variations in terms of opinions of the level of decision making powers for volunteers
- ❖ Volunteers have very little say outside of their club with little opportunity to influence policy
- ❖ The same volunteers do everything
- ❖ Continues to be a lack of awareness of the organisation within the general public



Thank you  
Discussion?

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