

## MOTIVATIONS OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN SPECIAL EVENTS

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*Volunteers are considered one of the main pillars of the special events. Motivations of volunteers have received a great attention from many organizations as they proved to be of a great value for human resources. Volunteering in special events bring different people together no matter what are their ethnics, origins, religion and economic standards. It also creates a sense of social harmony. The main issue of this research is to identify the motivations, needs and attitudes of young volunteers. Data gathered to examine these points from university students (n=500) that volunteered and those who did not volunteer in special events. The 12<sup>th</sup> version of the statistical tool (Statistical Package for Social Science) SPSS was used to execute data statistical analysis of the field study.*

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**Keywords:** *motivation, special events, volunteers*

### INTRODUCTION

Today, different types of events are considered more vital and glamorous in our culture. Increased in leisure time and discretionary spending have led to a proliferation of public events, celebrations and entertainment. Governments now support and promote these events as part of their strategies for economic development.

Human beings have found ways to mark important events in their lives, some are private others are public. But through the 1980s and 1990s, the term “special events” has been coined to describe specific rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations that are consciously planned and created to mark special occasions or achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives. Special events can



include national days and celebrations, important civic occasions, unique cultural performances, major sporting fixtures, corporate functions, trade promotions and product launches. As Getz (1997, p. 4) suggested through his writings that special events could be,

“A one-time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programs or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body.”

There are different types of special events; they are often characterized according to their size or scale (Hall, 1992). Also, the role of staff and volunteers in these special events are very important. Volunteers are the frontline of the festival, so their performance is a key criterion by which patrons evaluate the festival.

These events attract young people to join the glamour, fantasy, and joy, preparing them and directing their skills and qualifications is a very unique process and a main task in its progress. Also event managers need to make decisions concerning how many staff and volunteers are needed to deliver the event, what mix of skills/ qualifications/ experience is required to accomplish the tasks needed.

The main issue of this research is to identify the motivations of volunteers to attract them to join these events, so it would be simpler and specific for managers to direct their skills according to the tasks needed. Also establish a profile of attitudes of potential student volunteers, analyze the opinions of previous volunteer involvement. And finally determine the major factors influencing volunteer behaviour of students.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The special event industry isn't created recently, but it started since the 1980's. The Commonwealth Games in Brisbane in 1982 ushered in a new era of maturity and prominence for city and a new breed of sporting events. It also initiated a career in planning and designing the ceremonies and celebrations of the opening and closing events such as the Los Angeles, Barcelona and Sydney Olympics ceremonies in 1984. The production and marketing skills that took place in the Sydney Olympics showed the glamour and economic benefits to the city or entire country that enfolded the event (Common wealth Department of tourism, 1995),

Allen, O'Toole, Mc Donnell, and Harris (2005, p. 11) described the term of special event as “constituting specific rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations that are occasionally planned and created to make a special occasion or to achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives.”. It can include national days and

celebrations, important civic occasions, unique cultural performances, major sporting fixtures, corporate functions, trade promotions and product launches.

Therefore, the special event is considered as a one-time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programs or activities of the organizing body. It is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experiences outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience. They also defined the special event as one – time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programs or activities of the sponsoring body. Also they added that “A special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal programs or activities of the customer or guest.”

Therefore, effective planning and management of human resources is the core of any successful event. Choosing the appropriate, well trained and motivated people can easily achieve the objectives targeted out of the event. If any event seeks to grow in size and attendance, it will need a human resources (paid / and volunteers) strategy to support this growth. Otherwise actions will not be in place, and problems will appear leading to poor quality delivery and an associated declining in the image of the market. Janiskee (1996, P. 404) said that volunteer services from the host community can definitely help to create the national loyalty sensation. He also added that community festivals can be considered as hall mark events as they can attract a large number of visitors to the community.

Staffing is a major area for event managers, also choosing volunteers to join in the event is not an easy job. Understanding volunteer motivation has been widely recognized by both researchers and administrators as a valuable component of volunteer management (cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Harrison, 1995). Identifying the tasks and responsibilities, skills, and number of volunteers needed should be equivalent to the site design and layout, objectives planned and types of work claimed.

Selecting volunteers can be achieved through well planed interview. The inter-viewing process should be undertaken using a structured approach so as all relevant information can be covered and candidates can be directly compared. Mullins (1999) suggests using a checklist while interviews are conducted to volunteers. Answers should be seeking the volunteers background, reasons for seeking involved with the event, the understanding of demands and requirements of their work and whether applicants have a physical or medical condition that might affect their role in the event. Once the volunteers have been selected, a structured induction program should be designed to begin the process of bonding the

individual with the event. Through this program information concerning the event, missions, objectives, tasks, and other staff members and volunteers should be applied. Then training should be conducted on how to use personal skills, available opportunities, event management, marketing, tutorial and assignment work needed, as well as some psychological facts on how to deal with people.

## **Why volunteering**

Without volunteers, many programs that are run at little or no cost to the user would cease to exist. Therefore, there is a critical need to expand our understanding of what motivates individuals to volunteer. Despite all the offered materials, still there is little agreement among researchers about volunteer motivations (Cuskelly & Harrington, 1997). Volunteerism is the willingness of people to help others without any sort of expectations of payment or any other tangible gain. Motivation is both an internally and externally manifested construct. Internal motivations are linked to altruism and personal satisfaction, and external motivations are related more to rewards and tangible benefits (Munro, 2001). As Parker (1997) argued that there were four basic reasons for volunteering: Altruistic, Market, Cause serving and leisure. Also, Clary, Snyder and Stukas (1996) suggested six broad motivational functions social, value, career, understanding enhancement and protective. These opinions were agreed by Davis (1998) who identified motives as social contact, helping others, filling time, gaining recognition, meeting the expectations of others, help achieve goals of organizations, personal enrichment, develop skills, fun and enjoyment, having a sense of accomplishment, self expression and improving self image. Knowing what motivates volunteers enables programmers to direct retention efforts directly towards the enhancement or stimulation of volunteer participation. Volunteers are individuals who choose to contribute their time and effort for no monetary reward. According to the content theories (Peach & Murrell, 1995) there are personal needs that creates a feeling of deprivation, which drives the person towards an action that can satisfy that need. Volunteering inherently involves two unique sets of benefits, benefits to the individual volunteer and benefits to the program and program user. Research has suggested that individuals who choose to volunteer during their discretionary time do so in relation to purely altruistic motivations, egoistic motivations, or a combination of the two. Altruistic motivations typically include the simple need to help others while egoistic motivations represent individuals interested in mutual benefits. Certainly altruistic and

egoistic motivations or a blend thereof, shape an individual's motivational spectrum (Peach & Murrell 1995). Also according to Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, the need for esteem of others, respect, prestige, recognition, and self - actualization can be easily achieved by being a part of a major event serving the community and serving others through volunteering.

A variety of factors may influence the nature of one's motivations to volunteer. For example, researchers suggest that a volunteer's motives for becoming involved are different from their motives for continuing to volunteer. Conceivably, the motives and perceived benefits of volunteers change over time as they become more involved with a particular organization. Therefore, organizations would benefit from focusing on individual motivations as a strategy to recruit volunteers. This means that understanding the individual motivations, throughout the different stages of the volunteer experience, is fundamental to developing volunteer retention strategies for programs that endeavour to preserve their volunteer resources for more than just a single event.

All generations of the population can be part of volunteerism, but the most active members are seniors and young people. Each generation has a different motivation to volunteer. Young people want to gain new skills and be part of the community. While the seniors want to be active, feel useful, and meet with other people to gain new friends (Ekerdt,1986). This research dealt with young volunteers only.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Data was collected from students in Helwan University, specifically students at the faculty of tourism and hotel management. A total number of 500 questionnaires were distributed randomly for these young people of age between 17 to 22 years, 55 were not complete and 25 were not returned back. This made the number of sample resolved 420 questionnaires.

They were categorized as:

A number of 255 (60.7%) were never volunteers for any organization, while 165(39.3%) answered that they already volunteered in different special events.

The12th version of the statistical tool (Statistical Package for Social Science) SPSS was used to execute data statistical analysis of the field study as follows:

Cross-tabulation procedure was employed to indicate whether certain variables are associated with each other.

One-Way Chi-Square Test compares the observed frequency of a variable in a single group with what would be the expected by chance.

Two-Way Chi-Square Test was the observed frequencies for two or more groups when compared with expected frequencies derived from the marginal totals of the cross-tabulation table.

Significance of variables was studied at the significance level 5%. Therefore, if the value of Sig. (P-Value) is less than the Significance level, a significant difference can be detected.

## FINDINGS

As for the sample presenting (n=165) who volunteered, 36.4 % were females, while 63.6% were males. This percentage showed that the males who volunteered were more than the females. Unlike seniors, females are more likely to volunteer than men they present 78 % (William, Robert & Carlton 2007). To test the significant difference between distribution of the research sample being a volunteer in special event and gender and expected distribution, Chi-Square test has been used. A significant difference was detected between the gender of the sample and being volunteers in special events at the significant level of 5% as the value of Sig. (P-Value) is less than the significant level (.000).

Also significant existence can be detected between the will of volunteering and gender as shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the research sample according to being a volunteer in special event and gender

Did you volunteer?		Female	Male	Total
No	N	122	133	255
	%	47.8	52.2	100.0
Yes	N	60	105	165
	%	36.4	63.6	100.0
Total	N	182	238	420
	%	43.3	56.7	100.0
Chi-Square		5.376		
Sig.		.021		

According to the events they liked to join, Noonan (1998, p.124) argued that “other than a unified spirit of caring, there is little that is typical about these people who give so freely of their time”. Also Davis (1998) suggested that young people volunteer for social contact and helping others. This was obvious as 29.7% volunteered in charity events compared to 21.2% for sports and 21.8% for cultural; while 18.2% for festivals and recreational events. And the least was for attending conventions (9.1%) as shown in table 2.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the research sample as to the type of event they liked to volunteer in special event

Type of event		Yes	No	Total
Sports	N	35	50	85
	%	21.2	19.6	20.2
Cultural	N	36	71	107
	%	21.8	27.8	25.5
Festivals	N	30	64	94
	%	18.2	25.1	22.4
Charity events	N	49	25	74
	%	29.7	9.8	17.6
conventions	N	15	45	60
	%	9.1	17.6	14.3
Total	N	165	255	420
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chi-Square	31.330			
Sig.	.000			

It is obvious from the above table that the top events that young people volunteered in were the charity ones. While it came at the end of the preferences for young people who never volunteered before.

By testing the significant difference between distribution of the research sample according to event type and desire of volunteering in a special event; a significant difference between the views of both categories of sample study can be detected at the significant level of 5% as the value of Sig. (P-Value) is less than the significant level.

No relation between the gender and type of event volunteered was fetched, as there is insignificance relation between them as the value of Sig. (P-Value) is more than the significant level (0.199).

In regard to their exposure to the event, they were asked how they learnt about it and got involved. 48.5% were involved in volunteering through their friends, while 39.4% knew through the media and 12.1 % were involved through different organizations such as schools, universities, clubs and religious places.

To find a relation between the way of being introduced to the event and gender, it is found that there is insignificant difference between the views of both categories of sample study at the significant level of 5%, as the value of Sig. (P-Value) is more than the significant level (0.675).

To identify which of the organizations had the lead to use volunteers in their events, they were asked specifically which place had the priority to take the lead for offering such experience to young people to have the chance to serve their community and their society. Universities (48.5%) had the lead of being the main organizations followed by clubs (42.4%) then schools (9.1%).

Students were also asked about the responsibilities that they preferred to handle, 39.4% liked being involved in different duties involving management and preparation of the event. They like to be in charge, help achieve organization goals and develop their skills for future employment. While 36.4% preferred to stick to certain duties and assignments agreed upon before work. These young volunteers seek fun and enjoyment as well as meeting new people. As for the remaining 24.2%, their desire to volunteer was the main target with no considerations to the type of work. They needed to accomplish self expression and improve self image. (Davis, 1998). This was also approved by Clary et al. (1996) "As individuals may be involved in similar voluntary activities, but their goals can vary widely."

Concerning previous training, Most of the volunteers (60.6%) had some sessions, while the others (39.4%) were informed on daily basis with their duties. As Allen et al. (2005) argued that, it is unrealistic to expect volunteers to perform effectively without appropriate training. The training should include the volunteer's role in the activity and how that role contributes to the activity's overall success.

Furthermore, they were asked questions about their experience as to gain a wider point of view about volunteering; as for the working hours, 54.5% spent from 4 up to 5 hours on daily basis; while 45.5% spent from 5 to 6 hours. These hours were on shift basis (morning or evening shifts) for 60.6%, while 39.4% worked as fulltime (long day) volunteers.

A percentage of 48.5% of volunteers were satisfied with the number of volunteers on the event. While 51.5% complained about the number of volunteers and how this caused extra work for them to do. According to



their answers, the number of volunteers was not enough for the required job. Therefore it is wiser for the manager staff to conduct a situation analysis to identify the number of volunteers needed in the different sections of the event.

A percentage 55.2% of young volunteers faced some difficulties such as:

- The fear from meeting people
- The miscommunication with the staff
- Being bored with the ritual work
- Feel obligated to certain tasks demanded
- Not having enough attention or full trust from paid staff
- Difficulty with transportation
- Lacking enough confidence

On the other hand 44.8% had no problems and enjoyed their experience greatly. By detecting the relation between finding difficulties in their experience and volunteering again

**Table 3.** Distribution of the research sample according to running into difficulties and volunteering again

Would you volunteer again?		Did you run into any difficulties?		Total
		Yes	No	
Yes	N	30	68	98
	%	18.2	41.2	59.4
No	N	61	6	67
	%	37.0	3.6	40.6
Total	N	91	74	165
	%	55.2	44.8	100.0
Chi-Square	58.756			
Sig.	.000			

From the table above it is obvious that running into difficulties would decrease the motive of volunteers to repeat the experience again. But as for the experience itself, 56.4% (as shown in table 4) liked volunteering greatly as they achieved high self-esteem and gained confidence. They also liked dealing with people and gaining new friends through the team work. On the other hand, 43.6% of them did not enjoy their experience of volunteering due to:

- The mishandling of the management team
- The duties they were assigned to achieve were overdue compared to the number of volunteers and time available to achieve it
- Lack of communication and orientation between the paid staff and volunteer members
- Lack of training before the event

This success gained through their experience encouraged 59.4 % of the students to have the will to try volunteering again; on the other hand 40.6% are not willing to volunteer again.

**Table 4.** Distribution of the research sample according to Volunteer enjoyment and willingness to volunteer again

Would you volunteer again?		enjoy volunteering		Total
		Yes	No	
Yes	N	88	10	98
	%	53.3	6.1	59.4
No	N	5	62	67
	%	3.0	37.6	40.6
Total	N	93	72	165
	%	56.4	43.6	100.0
Chi-Square		109.678		
Sig.		.000		

From the above table it is obvious that there is a very strong significance between enjoyment of volunteering and the young people's will to volunteer again. To motivate young volunteers to join these events, the desire to meet people and expand the range of friendship came at the top of motivations (24.8%) followed by the willingness to gain new experience through dealing with people and handling different duties of work (42.4%); then came the desire to achieve higher self-esteem (16.4%); then to gain sense of affiliation towards their society (6.1%) and at the end came the will to escape from routine (10.3%).

While it was detected by Monga (2006) that the strongest motive to volunteer is due to affiliate reasons.

**Table 5.** Distribution of the research sample according to Motivations of volunteering and gender

Motivations		Male	Female	Total
Desire to meet people	N	26	15	41
	%	24.8	25.0	24.8
gaining new experience	N	44	26	70
	%	41.9	43.3	42.4
Self esteem	N	18	9	27
	%	17.1	15.0	16.4
sense of affiliation	N	5	5	10
	%	4.8	8.3	6.1
escape from routine	N	12	5	17
	%	11.4	8.3	10.3
Total	N	105	60	165
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chi-Square	1.285			
Sig.	.864			

From the above table (5) the distribution of the research sample according to motivations of volunteers and gender, insignificant difference was detected between the views of both categories of sample study at the significant level of 5%, as the value of Sig. (P-Value) is more than the significant level (0.86).

Also a significant difference between motivations of volunteers and the type of event was detected in table 6, which reveals that there are interior feelings and desires that direct volunteers towards choosing to volunteer in a certain special event.

At the same time there is insignificant difference between the organization and motivations of volunteers (table 7)

This research reveals that young people are willing to volunteer in special events no matter to what organization they belong to as much as the feelings of self esteem and gaining experience would be.

**Table 6.** Distribution of the research sample according to motivations of volunteers and type of event

motivation		Sport	Cultural	Festivals	Charity events	Conventions	Total
Desire to meet people	N	11	8	5	12	5	41
	%	31.4	22.2	16.7	24.5	33.3	24.8
Gaining new experience	N	15	21	11	19	4	70
	%	42.9	58.3	36.7	38.8	26.7	42.4
Self esteem	N	5	1	10	10	1	27
	%	14.3	2.8	33.3	20.4	6.7	16.4
Sense of affiliation	N	3	3	1	2	1	10
	%	8.6	8.3	3.3	4.1	6.7	6.1
Escape from routine	N	1	3	3	6	4	17
	%	2.9	8.3	10.0	12.2	26.7	10.3
Total	N	35	36	30	49	15	165
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chi-Square	23.619						
Sig.	.098						

### Management of volunteers:

Since volunteers are the core of any successful event, this involves the establishment of a guiding strategy to support the overall mission and objectives. Volunteer management has many key elements such as planning a volunteer program, cost containment, improve quality outcomes and improve organizational effectiveness. This can be achieved through a well planned program supported by sufficient information and analysis about these young volunteers.

As for volunteers always respect them and enhance their powers and capabilities. Managers should provide them with the suitable training, appreciation, care and appoint high expectations. Through their planning analysis, managers have to identify each job in terms of specific tasks, responsibilities and qualifications. Then try to group volunteers together

in terms of character assumed, their requests, previous experiences, skills, physical abilities and responsibilities. Training and professional development should be followed specifically as appointed (according to qualifications), then supervision and evaluation for outcomes and modifications.

**Table 7.** Distribution of the research sample according to Motivations of volunteers and the organizations volunteers belong

		School	Club	University	Total
Desire to meet people	N	4	17	20	41
	%	33.3	24.3	24.1	24.8
Gaining new experience	N	3	35	32	70
	%	25.0	50.0	38.6	42.4
Self esteem	N	2	9	16	27
	%	16.7	12.9	19.3	16.4
Sense of affiliation	N	2	2	6	10
	%	16.7	2.9	7.2	6.1
escape from routine	N	1	7	9	17
	%	8.3	10.0	10.8	10.3
Total	N	12	70	83	165
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chi-Square	7.106				
Sig.	.525				

Training should be provided according to the tasks needed and should be effectively matched to volunteers age and skills. This training should identify the kind of job, why did it come to existence, how will it be accomplished and evaluated. Also volunteers should be treated as co-workers. They should be given respect and full trust. This includes:

- Job description
- Equal employment opportunities
- Occupational health and safety and anti-discrimination legislation
- Know the purpose and ground rules of the organization
- A suitable place to work
- The choice between the full time and part time shifts

- Be heard and make suggestions
- To know the date of commencement and the date of ending the program as well as the work rules and legislations

Also organizations have the right to:

- Receive as commitment and accurate service from volunteer
- Select the best volunteer for the job by interviewing
- Expect volunteers to undertake training provided for them and observe safety rules
- Express opinions about poor volunteers in a diplomatic way
- Expect loyalty to the organization
- Expect clear and open communication from the volunteers
- Release volunteers if not acquainted with their job

### **Objectives and expected outcomes from volunteering**

- Volunteering helps create a stable and cohesive society by bringing people together to act for the good of the community
- Strengthening youth's belief that they can make a difference or change what they disapprove by undertaking social responsibilities
- To bring young people together around common social goals and thus keeping them away from conflicts based on differences
- To enable socialization of different youth categories by bringing them together from different universities and cultures; thus integrating the concepts of friendship and serving the community
- To direct youth towards intellectual and communal and/or economic productivity as well as creating the sense of cooperation and harmony between them
- Bring people together to act for the good of the community as it creates bonds of trust and social capital
- Help create a politically literate public, which is important for the preservation of democratic principles
- It plays an important role in preparing people to act and respond spontaneously to emergencies and natural disasters

### **Benefits of volunteering for young students**

Young people are attracted to volunteer work as to explore new talents, learn new facts about life, volunteering helps expand their

knowledge by assisting others and to learn about themselves and their community. They gain self satisfaction and personal growth from the time they give to help others and serve their community.

When they volunteer, they get the opportunity to look at themselves, to look at others and to see their community through different new angles that allows them to critically assess some of their ideas about themselves and their community.

## **CONCLUSION**

These special events have proven to provide benefits to both the society and the young volunteers. Gaining new experience and desire to meet people came on the top of motivations that motivate young people to volunteer in special events that's why they prefer to be in direct contact with people during the event and not only participating in the managerial jobs. Young people are attracted to volunteer work as to explore new talents, learn new facts about life, volunteering helps expand their knowledge by assisting others and to learn about themselves and their community. But it appeared from the research that sex did not affect the will of volunteering nor the type of event. The will of volunteering appeared equally for different sex.

They gained self satisfaction and personal growth from the time they give to help others and serve their community. They developed their skills and built a better scale for future activities in life such as finding employment or even dealing with some of life's problems. As for the group of people who volunteered they were involved mostly in charity events, then festivals, followed by the cultural events then sports and conventions. Compared to the other group of students who were willing to volunteer, they were mainly cultural, and then festivals followed by sports and convention events and at last charity events. This divulged their desire to help others and their community as well. Followed by their desire of enjoyment and will of experience.

Also as for the organizations it was revealed from the research that Universities were active in serving the community compared to clubs and schools while there was no significant relation between the organization, sex and motivation to volunteer.

A relation between the motivation of volunteers and the choice of event was revealed as there is another relation between the type of event and satisfying the inner desires of volunteers. This means that students

volunteered to achieve an inner satisfaction through their choice of the type of events.

There is a significant relation between their experience and will to volunteer future wise. As for the ones who faced difficulties, they did not reveal a great will for future volunteering. While the ones who had a good and enjoyable experience they were willing to volunteer and have different experiences. Therefore managers should analyze and study volunteers as to appoint suitable jobs to their abilities and desires. They should provide training and supervision for these young volunteers. Volunteer Organizations should keep profiles of volunteers as to form a base of committed people of volunteering. Provide trust and support for these young volunteers, as to develop their abilities for future employment. Volunteering is a benefit for volunteers, organizations and societies.

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