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The Motivating Factors of Volunteer Engagement: A Study of Youth Sports Organizations

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
2025

Abstract

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MPA, Walden University, 2009

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Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The decline in volunteer engagement within nonprofit organizations poses a significant challenge, particularly in youth sports where volunteer support is essential to program success. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the organizational factors that influenced volunteer motivation and satisfaction in a youth sports nonprofit. The practice focused research question for the study was: what factors within the organization either motivate or demotivate current individuals to volunteer in youth sports? Guided by Herzberg's two-factor theory and self-determination theory, the study utilized the Modified Volunteer Functions Inventory for Sports survey to collect responses from 21 coaches and board members. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. Results showed that intrinsic motivators, including achievement, interpersonal relationships, and a sense of purpose, were most influential, while extrinsic motivators such as career advancement and networking were less important. The findings revealed that organizational support positively predicted satisfaction, while superficial recognition negatively influenced it, highlighting the need for authentic acknowledgement of contributions. Based on these findings, a volunteer engagement strategy was developed, offering actionable recommendation to strengthen recruitment, retention, and overall engagement. Implications for public administration included evidence-based approaches to improve volunteer management and organizational sustainability. Positive social change may be achieved through more stable volunteer programs, enhanced youth development opportunities, and stronger community connections.

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Dedication

This study is lovingly dedicated to my grandmothers, neither of whom had the opportunity to attend college, but who instilled in me a love for reading, a passion for learning, and the importance of loving unconditionally. Their wisdom and strength live on in me, and I honor their legacy with this achievement.

As the first woman born into my family to graduate from college, and now the first woman born in my family to earn a doctorate, this accomplishment is a testament to the sacrifices, encouragement, and love of those who came before me. As a descendance of enslaved people, I stand on the shoulders of ancestors who could only dream of this opportunity. Today, I live their dream, and I carry their legacy forward in every word of this work and every difference I strive to make in the world.

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I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my husband, Darius Motiwalla, who always believed in me even when I did not fully believe in myself. His unwavering support and encouragement sustained me through every challenge of this journey. To my children, Markus, Tre, and Angelina, thank you for reminding me with each degree I earned why I continued to pursue my education. Your love and inspiration kept me focused on what truly matters.

I am grateful to the professors who have shaped my educational path. I extend special thanks to Dr. Jon Saari, who guided me during my undergraduate studies at Antioch University McGregor and who encouraged me to think more deeply and critically about the world around me. I also wish to thank my doctoral committee, Dr. Jerry Regier, my chair, and Dr. Amin Asfari, for their guidance, patience, and invaluable feedback throughout this study. Their support challenged me to grow as a scholar and ensured this work reflects the highest standards of academic rigor.

This achievement would not have been possible without the influence, encouragement, and belief of each of you.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) (2024), a nonprofit is a registered 501(c)(3) agency that is organized and operated for religious, charitable, and scientific testing for public safety, literary, or educational needs. ABC Sports League (the name is masked for privacy) is a small nonprofit that provides football and cheerleading to youth ages 5 to 15 years of age. They are primarily funded through participant fees and donations from private funders. This public administrative study includes a strategic plan for volunteer engagement to support ABC Sports League in retaining its current volunteers and engaging additional volunteers to support the program. In this section, there is an overview of the organization's background, outline the specific challenges it is currently facing, and included a broad description of the methodology that was employed to investigate the problem.

Organizational Background and Problem Statement

The client organization is a small nonprofit that provides youth sports in Florida. It is run completely by volunteers and has had a decrease in qualified volunteers over the past 3 years by approximately 10%.

Background of Client Organization

The client for this study is referred to as ABC Sports League. ABC Sports League is a small nonprofit organization ($131,000 annual budget) that was founded in 1994 to provide youth football and cheerleading to children ages 5 to 15 years old living in three communities in Florida. Their mission is to promote sportsmanship, team spirit, and

competition for the youth in the community. This is a volunteer-run organization with no paid staff. A Board of Trustees runs the ABC Sports League program and reports to the Ocean Beach Conference Board, of which I am a member. The Cheerleading division is run by the Cheer Coordinator, who is also a member of the Board of Trustees. The cheerleading squads or teams are run by a Lead Coach who is supported by Assistant Coaches, all of whom are volunteers. ABC Sports League is a League association under the Ocean Beach Conference, and there are currently 19 volunteer Coaches to run the four ABC Sports Leage teams and 2 administrative volunteers, serving over 100 youth.

Background of the Problem

Nonprofit organizations rely on volunteers to support their programs and services. Nationally, 36 million children participate in youth sports (Aspen Institute, 2023). From 2020 to 2021, 60.7 million volunteered at nonprofit organizations nationwide (Schneider & Marshall, 2023). Youth sports face a unique challenge in engaging volunteers due to the scheduling of practices, games, and competitions. Local youth sports organizations often hold practices after school and games and competitions on weekends, which is demanding for volunteers (Kim, et al., 2010). As the availability of volunteers decreases, youth sports organizations are forced to reduce the scope and frequency of activities, compromising the quality of services and partially eroding the community engagement that underpins these initiatives. This shortage can lead to program disruptions, reduced participant engagement, and an increased workload for remaining volunteers, which further exacerbates the problems by contributing to burnout and turnover. For ABC Sports League Cheer, the volunteer reduction has impacted the number of cheerleading

teams the program can offer families. The long-term implications of this trend threaten the viability of the organization. To mitigate these effects, nonprofit youth sports organizations must implement strategies for volunteer recruitment and retention, thus demonstrating a need for an informed volunteer engagement plan.

The Administrative Problem

The primary public administration issues this client seeks to address is the declining volunteer engagement within their youth sports program. Parents of participating children constitute the majority of volunteers essential for the program's implementation. However, over the past 3 years, there has been a significant 10% decline in volunteer engagement. This local trend mirrors a broader statewide decrease, where the number of residents volunteering has dropped by 7% between 2017 and 2022 (Dervishi & Balderrama, 2023). Volunteers are indispensable to the operation of ABC Sports League, fulfilling roles that range from coaching and field management to administrative duties. Without a sufficient number of qualified volunteers, the program's viability is at risk. Volunteers play an essential role in the operational and strategic functions of the organization, contributing time, expertise, and resources that are critical to sustain the program. Recruiting, training, and retaining qualified volunteers remains a persistent challenge, necessitating a strategic approach to ensure the program's sustainability (Kim et al., 2010).

Deliverable Addressing the Client Problem

The goal for this PSA was to develop a comprehensive, strategic volunteer engagement strategy designed to support the client in retaining existing volunteers while

effectively engaging new ones. The plan incorporates strategic insights and actionable recommendations intended to strengthen volunteer involvement and support the long-term sustainability of the client's program.

Problem Statement Summarized

The problem that I identified for this study was a reduction in the volunteer workforce of ABC Sports League Cheer, which is integral to the organization's operations. Volunteers are essential for coaching, managing gate operations, fieldwork, and performing crucial administrative tasks such as finance, concession management, and volunteer coordination. As a fully volunteer-driven organization, the program has experienced a 10% decline in its volunteer base over the last 3 years, which presents a serious challenge to its sustainability and operational efficiency.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to gain a comprehensive grasp of the causes that impact volunteers' choices to join and either continue or discontinue their involvement with the organization. From those results, I developed a strategic plan that examined and addressed the challenges of volunteer recruitment, retention, and engagement, providing ABC Sports League Cheer with actionable strategies to reverse the decline in volunteer participation and enhance long-term organizational sustainability. This study contributed to both academic discourse and practical implementation in the field of volunteer management.

How Results of Study Provide Client New Knowledge

Findings from the study presented the client with comprehensive insights into the key drivers of volunteer engagement and retention. Analysis of the study results directly addressed the administrative problem within the client organization by providing evidence-based strategies for improving volunteer engagement, addressing inefficiencies in current volunteer management practices, and creating sustainable volunteer retention models. The results of this study also addressed gaps in current practices, offering a roadmap to sustainably enhance the effectiveness of volunteer programs, thereby contributing to both the organization's mission and operational efficiency.

Practice-Focused Research Question

The research question was: What factors within the organization either motivate or demotivate current individuals to volunteer in youth sports?

How Results of Study Address the Administrative Problem

The introduction of specific deliverables from the study results allowed the organization to streamline volunteer efforts, reduce turnover, and enhance programmatic outcomes. The deliverable included a strategic plan outlining targeted interventions based on empirical data, new frameworks for volunteer management, and actionable recommendations for aligning volunteer efforts with organizational objectives. These solutions can also serve as a replicable model for other organizations facing similar challenges, contributing to broader sector-wide improvements in volunteer management.

Summary of Data Sources and Analysis

The data were systematically categorized using Survey Monkey and SPSS based on how volunteers prioritize key factors influencing their involvement, with a focus on identifying the aspects they deem most significant in shaping their decision to remain committed to the organization. The MVFIS survey was designed to ensure that each question aligns with the six motivational dimensions (Value, Understanding, Social, Career, Protective, and Enhancement). The survey consisted of close-ended, Likert scale questions (e.g., 1 = not at all important to 7 = very important) to measure the degree to which each motivation applies to the respondents. Each question was tagged with its corresponding motivational category to streamline data export and analysis.

Sources of Data

The quantitative research design relied on data collected through the administration of the Modified Volunteer Functions Inventory for Sports (MVFIS) survey. This survey was distributed to two key groups: current volunteers and organizational leaders, including Coordinators and Board members. The MVFIS provided structured, quantifiable data regarding the motivations for initial and continued volunteerism. The MVFIS is an adapted version of the original Volunteer Functions Inventory, tailored to assess the motivational factors driving individuals to engage in volunteerism, specifically within the context of sports organizations. This instrument is particularly relevant for organizations such as the client's where it is a volunteer-run organization, offering a structured means to understand the diverse motivations that influence their involvement.

The analysis using the MVFIS instrument identified and evaluated several motivational dimensions that underpin volunteer engagement in sports-related activities:

1. Values: This dimension captures the altruistic and humanitarian. Motives that drive volunteers, particularly the desire to contribute to the well-being of others and promote positive social outcomes within the sports community. Volunteers motivated by this function often seek to support a cause they find meaningful, such as fostering community development or encouraging healthy lifestyles through sports.
2. Understanding: This function reflects the desire to acquire new knowledge, skills, or insights through volunteering in sports. Volunteers may be motivated by the opportunity for personal growth, seeking to enhance their understanding of the sports domain or to apply their existing skills in new and challenging contexts.
3. Social: The social function is concerned with the role of volunteering in fostering interpersonal relationships. For sports volunteers, this may involve strengthening existing social ties or developing new connections through collaboration, teamwork, and engagement in a shared cause. The communal nature of sports organizations often provides rich opportunities for social interaction and relationship building.
4. Career: Volunteers driven by career-related motivations view their participation as a means to enhance professional prospects. In the sports context, this might include gaining relevant experience, expanding one's

professional network, or developing skills that could be beneficial to future career opportunities in the sports industry or related fields.

5. Protective: This function addresses the psychological benefits of volunteering, particularly in terms of mitigating negative emotions or personal issues. For some, engaging in sports volunteering provides an opportunity to divert attention from personal stressors or to reduce feelings of guilt by contributing to a worthwhile cause.
6. Enhancement: The enhancement factor relates to the personal fulfillment and self-esteem that individuals derive from their volunteer efforts. Volunteers motivated by this dimension often seek emotional rewards, such as a sense of accomplishment or increased self-worth, through their contributions to sports organizations.

The MVFIS was specifically designed to measure these motivational dimensions in the context of voluntary participation, making it a valuable tool for organizations where all members are volunteers. By assessing these motivational drivers, findings derived from the MVFIS can assist sports organizations to better comprehend the factors that influence volunteer engagement, thereby facilitating more effective recruitment, retention, and management strategies that align with the diverse needs and expectations of their volunteer base.

Approach to Analysis of the Data

The survey questions were structured using a Likert scale, a commonly utilized rating system in social and educational research that measures respondents' attitudes,

perceptions, and observations (Jamieson, 2023). To analyze the data, I applied multiple linear regression to assess the connection between the independent variables, which include motivation factors (such as workload, opportunities for growth and advancement, responsibility, and recognition) and hygiene factors (such as interpersonal relationships, rewards/benefits, supervision, policies, and volunteer conditions), and the dependent variable, volunteer satisfaction. The analysis explored whether higher levels of volunteer satisfaction, as influenced by these factors, correlate with greater volunteer engagement. This helped to test the hypothesis that improving volunteer satisfaction directly contributes to enhancing volunteer participation and retention within the organization.

In the proposal phase, a target range of 18 to 24 respondents, equating 60% to 80% of the estimated volunteer population, was identified based on best practices for survey research in small populations. A higher response rate is necessary in smaller populations to reduce the margin of error and enhance the reliability of the data (Wu, et al., 2022). This target was intended to maximize representativeness and minimize nonresponsive bias. However, a post-hoc power analysis confirmed that a minimum of 12 respondents was sufficient to detect meaningful effects and support the intended statistical analysis. This revised threshold was met, ensuring the data collected were adequate for both descriptive and inferential analysis. While a higher response rate can improve external validity, in studies with small populations, meeting the minimum number required for statistical power is the more critical concern. The responses obtained provided a solid foundation for examining key constructs related to volunteer motivation and satisfaction, and the sample size was appropriate for the planned analytical approach.

How Purpose Connects to the Deliverable

The purpose of this administrative study was to develop a data-driven, strategic Volunteer Engagement Strategy, aimed at addressing the decline in volunteer participation within the client organization. This plan included strategic recommendations to improve recruitment, retention, and overall volunteer management, ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the organization's operations.

Definitions

Key concepts related to this study are defined below.

Volunteerism – Volunteerism refers to the act of willingly offering one's time, skills, and efforts to perform work or provide services without receiving monetary compensation. It is driven by a desire to contribute to the greater good, support a cause, or fulfill a personal sense of duty or altruism, and it often plays a crucial role in the functioning of nonprofit organizations and community-based initiatives (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023).

Retention – Retention refers to the sustained engagement or continued use of individuals, resources, or practices within an organization or system. In the context of organizational management, retention is crucial for maintaining stability, ensuring the continuity of expertise, and fostering long-term commitment among members or employees (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023).

Hygiene factors – Hygiene factors encompass elements such as salaries and benefits, work environment, and company policies and procedures. These factors are essential in addressing employees' basic needs and play a critical role in preventing

dissatisfaction within the workplace. While they do not inherently motivate employees to higher levels of performance, their absence can lead to significant dissatisfaction and disengagement (Iyer, 2022).

Motivational factors – Motivational factors include opportunities for advancement and promotion, the autonomy to make decisions, the ability to take on greater responsibilities, and the quality of interpersonal relationships within the workplace. These factors serve as key drivers of individual satisfaction and are instrumental in motivating employees to remain committed to their roles and the organization. By fulfilling these motivational needs, organizations can enhance employee engagement and retention (Iyer, 2022).

Job satisfaction – Job satisfaction refers to the extent to which individuals find fulfillment and happiness in their work. It is influenced by various factors, including the nature of the tasks they perform, the level of autonomy they experience, and how effectively their skills and abilities are utilized within the workplace. According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, job satisfaction is primarily driven by intrinsic factors, such as recognition, achievement, and the effort, which contribute to an individual's overall sense of purpose and engagement in their role (Herzberg, 2003).

Job dissatisfaction – Job dissatisfaction occurs when individuals experience unhappiness or discontentment in their work, often arising from extrinsic factors related to how they are treated within the workplace. According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, dissatisfaction is typically influenced by hygiene factors such as poor working conditions, inadequate company policies, lack of proper supervision, and insufficient

compensation. These factors do not necessarily motivate employees but can lead to significant dissatisfaction when absent or poorly managed (Herzberg, 2003).

Intrinsic – Intrinsic motivation refers to the drive to participate in an activity for its innate satisfaction and enjoyment rather than for some separate consequence or external reward. When individuals are intrinsically motivated, they pursue tasks because they find them inherently interesting, fulfilling, or aligned with their personal values, leading to a sustained and self-determined engagement in the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Extrinsic – Extrinsic motivation refers to the drive to participate in an activity due to external factors or rewards, such as incentives, recognition, or the avoidance of punishment. Unlike intrinsic motivation, where the activity itself is the source of satisfaction, extrinsic motivation is fueled by the anticipation of external outcomes, making the behavior contingent on achieving those external rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Significance

The significance of this study extends beyond the immediate organizational context, offering valuable insights and practical applications that contribute to advancements in professional practice, enhance public engagement, strengthen the nonprofit sector, and foster meaningful social change.

Significance to Practice

This study was significant due to the ongoing decline in volunteer participation at ABC Sports League Cheer, which directly affects the number of cheerleading squads

offered and the overall capacity of the program. By identifying strategies to enhance volunteer recruitment and retention, the analysis and resulting plan has generated actionable recommendations applicable to both the client and other organizations facing similar challenges. When applied, the findings support revisions to current practices that may inadvertently deter potential volunteers, offering a broader framework that can be adapted by other nonprofits seeking to bolster volunteer engagement. In an environment where individuals have numerous volunteer opportunities to choose from, understanding the factors that motivate them to join and remain with an organization is crucial. Furthermore, this study aligned with the concept of positive social change, where sustained improvements in organizational culture and relationships lead to long-term benefits for the community as a whole (Dunfey, 2023). The outcomes of this research have the potential to create lasting transformative impacts on ABC Sports League Cheer's volunteer engagement efforts, contributing to the program's sustainability and overall effectiveness.

Significance to The Public or Nonprofit Sector

Other agencies may find this process helpful in identifying their own strengths and weaknesses in volunteer engagement, which is a key aspect of public administration. Effective volunteer management is crucial in ensuring that public and nonprofit organizations can deliver services efficiently, especially in times of fiscal constraint. Public administration professionals can utilize this research to inform policy development and strategic planning for volunteer programs, ensuring these efforts align with organizational goals and community needs. Additionally, other researchers could extend

this work by exploring innovative strategies for recruiting new volunteers, particularly in the context of public service. Understanding what volunteers seek in an organization could guide public administrators in designing comprehensive volunteer recruitment plans that not only attract volunteers but also foster long-term engagement.

Furthermore, when organizations analyze the factors that contribute to volunteer retention and attrition, they can develop targeted volunteer engagement strategies that enhance overall organizational capacity. This reflective practice is a critical component of effective public administration, as it ensures that volunteer resources are utilized optimally. In Florida, 41% of organizations report that finding volunteers is a major obstacle (Perwaiz, 2023). This challenge underscores the need for public administrators to prioritize volunteer recruitment and retention strategies, especially considering restricted funding and increased operational expenses. Volunteers are not just supplementary; they are essential to the sustainability of many public service programs, including youth sports organizations (Kim et al.,2010). By addressing these challenges through a public administration lens, organizations can better navigate the complexities of volunteer management in today's environment.

Significance to Social Change

Volunteer retention results from volunteers choosing to remain at the organization they have chosen to dedicate their free time, contributing to the stability and continuity of community services. Understanding how to motivate volunteers not only leads to a higher retention rate but also fosters a more engaged and committed volunteer base, which is crucial for driving long-term social change. When fewer volunteers leave organizations,

these entities can maintain a consistent level of service and build stronger relationships within the communities they serve. Herzberg's two-factor theory posits that focusing more on motivating factors and less on hygiene factors leads to higher quality services and better outcomes (Paul, et al., 1969). When applied, this principle has implications that extend beyond the organizational context and contribute to broader societal success. By addressing the intrinsic motivators that keep volunteers engaged, organizations can cultivate a culture of sustained civic participation, which is essential for addressing systemic issues and promoting social equity. The analysis examined how motivators affect behaviors and attitudes, thereby influencing volunteer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Ultimately, understanding these dynamics can empower organizations to create volunteer programs that not only retain volunteers but also contribute to meaningful social change.

Summary

Volunteer recruitment and retention are crucial elements that directly impact the quality of services provided by the organization. The client organization, ABC Sports League Cheerleading, is currently facing challenges in retaining volunteers, which has led to a reduced number of individuals available to effectively implement the program. This situation not only affects the organization's operations but also has broader implications for the community it serves.

The Professional Administrative Study (PAS) applied Herzberg's Two-Factor theory and the Self-Determination Theory to investigate what motivates current volunteers to remain committed to the organization. By understanding these motivational

factors, a strategic plan for volunteer engagement has been developed to help the client implement strategies to retain current volunteers and potentially attract new ones. The approach was designed to address immediate organizational needs and to contribute to long-term social change by fostering a culture of sustained volunteerism and community involvement.

Moreover, changing the organization's behaviors and practices in response to the findings may positively influence volunteers who are considering leaving, encouraging them to continue their engagement. Section 2 provides a thorough literature review to support this topic and outline the process of developing the strategic plan volunteer engagement. By doing so, the organization can enhance its ability to deliver quality services and make a meaningful impact on the lives of the participants and the broader community.

Section 2: Conceptual Framework and Relevant Literature

Introduction

The ABC Sports League Cheer program is facing a reduction in its volunteer workforce, which is integral to the organization's operations. Volunteers are essential for coaching, managing gate operations, fieldwork, and performing crucial administrative tasks such as finance, concession management, and volunteer coordination. As a fully volunteer-driven organization, the program has experienced a 10% decline in its volunteer base over the last 3 years, which presents a serious challenge to its sustainability and operational efficiency. I employed a quantitative research approach to develop the volunteer engagement strategy which examined the challenges of volunteer recruitment, retention, and engagement, and produced actionable strategies to support ABC Sports League Cheer in reversing the decline in volunteer participation and strengthening long-term organizational sustainability. The scholarly literature pertinent to the research is delineated, the conceptual framework guiding the study is elucidated, and principal concepts under investigation are explicated.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature review includes sources ranging from 1966 to 2024, drawing on a diverse array of peer-reviewed journals, newspaper articles, expert industry blogs, online dictionaries, encyclopedias, and government websites. To gather relevant information on volunteerism, I utilized Google Scholar, the Walden Library, and Google as primary search tools. I accessed databases including ERIC, Taylor & Francis, ScienceDirect, Harvard Business Review, Sage Journals, APA PsychNet, Sciendo, and Dovepress.

The search terms used for this study included *volunteering, volunteering in nonprofits, volunteering and youth sports, Frederick Herzberg, Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, motivation, retention, recruitment, objectivity, motivation for volunteers, volunteer recruitment/engagement, engagement, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), strategic planning, history of nonprofits, strategic planning and nonprofits, volunteerism, volunteer management, volunteer management best practices, Herzberg's theory and volunteers, volunteers in the United States, Likert Scale, Florida nonprofits, volunteering in Florida, hygiene factors, motivation factors, Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI), VFI and sports, reduction in volunteers, recruitment of volunteers,* and *monetary value of volunteers.*

The research began with a focus on volunteerism and volunteer management, then broadened the scope to include volunteer data from the U.S. Census and information specific to the state of Florida. I explored topics related to nonprofit organizations, volunteer recruitment and retention, and best practices in volunteer management. To clarify key terms, I consulted online dictionaries and encyclopedias. Upon discovering the VFI article, the incorporated it into the search strategy, which led to additional research on modifying the VFI specifically for youth sports organizations.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study integrated Herzberg's two-factor theory and self-determination theory to analyze volunteer engagement and retention. By combining these theories, this study provided a comprehensive understanding of how

both intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence volunteer engagement, offering insights into designing more effective and satisfying volunteer programs.

The Framework Explained

For this study, the conceptual framework was constructed through the integration of Herzberg's two-factor (motivation-hygiene) theory and SDT to examine the factors influencing volunteer engagement, particularly the motivations and deterrents affecting volunteerism at the client organization. Herzberg's two-factor theory, originating from research conducted in the workplace context, suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by two distinct sets of factors: intrinsic motivators (such as achievement, responsibility, and recognition) and extrinsic hygiene factors (such as working conditions and interpersonal relationships). While intrinsic factors drive satisfaction, the absence of hygiene factors leads to dissatisfaction, though their presence does not necessarily enhance satisfaction (Herzberg, 2003; Maidani, 1991).

SDT, as a macro theory of human motivation, complements Herzberg's framework by emphasizing the fulfillment of three core psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci et al., 2017). According to SDT, intrinsic motivation, aligned with Herzberg's motivators, is driven by internal rewards like personal growth and fulfillment, whereas extrinsic motivation is shaped by external incentives. The integration of Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT establishes a comprehensive lens for analyzing volunteer engagement, with Herzberg's framework addressing work-related motivators and SDT highlighting psychological needs fulfillment.

Key Concepts in the Study

Volunteerism is defined as the act of offering services without monetary compensation (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). Individuals choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons, ranging from personal fulfillment to a strong belief in the mission of the organization. The client for this PAS is focused on enhancing volunteer engagement and retaining current volunteers, even as their children age out of the program. Understanding the motivations that drive volunteer engagement is crucial for developing strategies that not only retain existing volunteers but also attract new ones to address current gaps. Volunteer motivation is closely linked to how volunteers perceive the mission and goals of the nonprofit, their personal interests, and the quality of the work they are involved in. Volunteers are more likely to commit to organizations whose missions resonate with them and that provide them with a sense of personal satisfaction.

Rationale for Using This Framework

I selected this framework due to its robust theoretical basis for analyzing the motivational dynamics that influence volunteer engagement and satisfaction, which were central to the practice problem identified by the client organization. Together, Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT establish a framework for understanding the distinction between hygiene factors and intrinsic motivators, as well as the role of psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness, in sustaining participation. Application of these frameworks guided the development of the survey instrument and shaped the interpretation of findings, which led to targeted recommendations to address the organization's challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Literature Review for the Study

Nonprofits and volunteerism have been integral to American society since the nation's founding. While nonprofits existed even before the American Revolution, their development into the formal organizations we recognize today began in the post-revolution era (Hall, 2006). Over time, these organizations have become a well-established means for individuals to give back to their communities. In the realm of youth sports, volunteers, often parents of participating children, have traditionally played a central role in staffing and supporting programs. The history of nonprofits and volunteerism, the challenges associated with recruiting and retaining volunteers, the growing need for additional volunteers, and the importance of strategic planning in addressing these issues are explored in this section.

History of the Context of the Problem

The context of the problem is rooted in the longstanding challenge that organizations, particularly in the nonprofit sector, face in effectively engaging, retaining, and motivating volunteers. Many organizations struggle with high turnover rates and disengaged volunteer bases, often due to inadequate support structures and motivational strategies. This issue has been exacerbated by evolving societal expectations, shifts in volunteer demographics, and changing organizational needs, making it imperative to explore innovative approaches to volunteer management and engagement.

Nonprofit Organizations

As a colony of England, the British government funded churches that supported schools, hospitals, and other organizations that we now recognize as nonprofits.

However, when the American Revolution occurred and the establishment of a clear separation of church and state, these churches lost their access to automatic government funding (Hall, 2006). This shift gave rise to the modern concept of nonprofit organizations. The IRS defines a nonprofit organization as an exempt entity, specifying that such organizations must be "organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, educational, or other specified purpose" (2024).

Throughout American history, nonprofit organizations have played a crucial role in providing essential services such as religious activities, health care, education, and arts and culture opportunities, a role they continue to fulfill today. Community-based small nonprofit organizations fill the gaps in service provision, particularly at the local level (Levine & Fyall, 2019). The nonprofit sector's workforce has grown significantly, from comprising just 1% of the US labor force in 1800 to 9% in 2000 (Hammack, 2002). There are over 1.8 million nonprofit organizations in the United States. (Falk, et al., 2021). In Florida alone, approximately 22,710 nonprofits operate, with 1,832 of them located in Northeast Florida. These organizations generate $14.4 billion in economic impact in Northeast Florida, and across the state, they employ 456,800 staff (The Florida Times Union, 2023). As the scope of nonprofit activities has expanded, youth sports have emerged as an extension of educational programs provided by these organizations. Participation in youth sports has steadily increased over the years, leading to a growing demand for volunteers (Kim et al, 2010).

Volunteerism

Volunteerism has been an integral part of this nation since before its founding, with Benjamin Franklin establishing the first volunteer fire department in 1736 (Dreyfus, 2018). The Cambridge Dictionary defines volunteerism as the practice of working for a good cause without receiving compensation (2023). Volunteering is essential for many nonprofits, as it helps them implement programs and achieve their goals. It serves as the foundation for healthy societies (Dreyfus, 2018). Across the country, thousands of nonprofits rely on volunteers to fulfill their missions (Heim, 2023).

Volunteers are individuals who perform specific tasks or jobs that support an organization's mission. From September 2020 through 2021, approximately 60.7 million people volunteered at nonprofits in the United States (Schneider & Marshall, 2023). Volunteering has had a profound impact on American society, fostering connections between neighbors and communities while benefitting both those who give and those who receive (Dreyfus, 2018).

Research shows that people volunteer for a variety of reasons, including personal satisfaction, enjoyment, giving back to the community, social engagement, and moral commitment (Clary et al., 1999). Volunteers are often recruited by family or friends, such as helping to organize a local fundraising event, or are driven by a passion for a specific cause, like supporting a youth sports organization. Parents with children under 18 are more likely to volunteer formally (30%) compared to those without children in their household (21%). (Schneider & Marshall, 2023).

Lack of Volunteers. The nonprofit sector, which relies heavily on volunteers, has experienced significant growth, approximately 25% in the last decade, yet the number of

volunteers has declined during the same period (Dreyfus, 2018). Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was already a noticeable decrease in qualified volunteers for organizations that depend on them to implement their programs. Following the pandemic, many volunteers did not return to their previous roles (Heim, 2023). As a result, nonprofits across the country are struggling with a shortage of volunteers (Spinney & Clinton, 2024).

In Florida, the percentage of residents who volunteered dropped from 23% in 2017 to just 16% in 2023 (Dervishi & Balderrama, 2023). Additionally, approximately one-third of volunteers do not return to the organization they serve each year, resulting in an estimated $38 billion in lost labor for nonprofits (Kaur, et al., 2022). Factors contributing to this decline include volunteers' perception of their connection and rapport with the others in the organization, as well as their personal motivational factors, which significantly influence their decision to leave (Grant et al., 2020).

Youth Sports Organizations

The Aspen Institute's "State of Play 2023" report indicated that approximately 36 million children aged 6 to 18 in the United States participate in some form of organized sports. The findings emphasized key trends in youth sports participation, including the influence of socioeconomic factors and the ongoing recovery from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Organized youth sports are typically facilitated by nonprofit organizations or youth sports leagues supported by parks and recreation departments. These programs can range from traditional team sports like baseball, football, and softball to individual sports such as tennis, swimming, and running (Kim et al., 2010).

Participation in youth sports offers substantial benefits, including increased physical activity and enhanced mental health, making them a valuable component of youth development (Aspen Institute, 2023).

Youth Sports Organization Volunteers. Volunteering within youth sports organizations presents a distinct context within the broader nonprofit sector, where the cultivation of respectful relationships and trust between youth and adult volunteers is paramount (Gordeau & Baker, 2020). The success and sustainability of youth sports programs are heavily reliant on the contributions of volunteers, who play critical roles in various capacities, including coaching, administrative support, and program coordination (Kim et al., 2010). Research indicates that individuals who volunteer in youth sports are often driven by a strong desire to guide, mentor, and positively influence young athletes (Gordeau & Baker, 2020). In these settings, parents frequently assume the role of volunteers, underpinning the operational framework of the organization, whether as Coaches, support staff, or administrators (Kim et al., 2009). The benefits of volunteering in youth sports organizations extend beyond the immediate impact on the participants; volunteers themselves experience numerous advantages, such as increased physical activity, enhanced social interactions, and the development of meaningful emotional bonds and friendships (Gordeau & Baker, 2020).

Lack of Volunteers for Sports Organizations. The numerous benefits of youth sports for children are inextricably linked to the presence and dedication of adult volunteers, without whom these programs cannot function effectively (Kim et al., 2009). Youth sports organizations encounter unique challenges in volunteer management,

particularly in securing volunteers who are prepared to commit their time and energy consistently to support youth activities. Researchers have demonstrated that volunteer enthusiasm, adequate training, and a genuine passion for the sport are critical components in the successful delivery of youth sports programs (Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020). However, the increasing demand for volunteers' time and commitment has become a significant barrier (Kim et al., 2010). Constraints on available free time directly affect an individual's capacity to engage in volunteer activities, further complicating recruitment efforts (Boulianne, 2023). Consequently, youth sports organizations struggle not only to attract and train volunteers but also to retain them over time (Kim et al., 2010). This volunteer deficit is exacerbated by the tendency of volunteers to withdraw from the organization once their children age out of the program (Kim et al., 2010). As a result, the shortage of volunteers has limited the scope of programs and services that youth sports organizations are able to offer, thereby impacting the overall effectiveness of these initiatives (Heim, 2023).

Studies Related to Current State of Practice

Between 2007 and 2010, the number of newly established nonprofits grew by 9.4%, and this growth accelerated to 17.8% between 2010 and 2017, reflecting the expanding role of nonprofit organizations in addressing societal challenges (Friesenhahn, 2024). Nonprofits play a crucial role in addressing critical issues such as poverty and homelessness by setting strategic goals and leveraging volunteer labor and donations to implement community-based programs (Weaver et al., 2019). Volunteerism, defined as the voluntary provision of services such as tutoring, companionship, and other forms of

support without monetary compensation, is driven by individuals' desire to respond to perceived needs within their communities (Clary et al., 1999). Volunteers not only fulfill immediate needs but also contribute to the development of organizational capacity, thereby enhancing the reach and effectiveness of nonprofit initiatives (Grant et al., 2020).

Doherty & Cuskelly (2020) indicated that the success of volunteer programs is contingent upon several key factors, including the presence of enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers, a shared focus among participants, sufficient volunteer numbers, continuity in volunteer participation, effective succession planning, and the provision of adequate training and development opportunities. Many youth organizations rely heavily on volunteers to advance their mission and vision (Grant et al., 2020). However, volunteerism tends to follow a cyclical pattern, with higher participation at the beginning of individuals' professional careers, a decline during mid-life, and a resurgence post-retirement (Padurariu, 2023). The loss of volunteers poses a significant challenge to nonprofits already struggling to meet the growing demand for their services (Dervishi & Balderrama, 2023). As volunteer rates decline, it has become imperative for organizations to understand the motivations that drive volunteer engagement and to develop strategies for retention (Piatak & Carman, 2023). Volunteer service organizations face the dual challenge of recruiting volunteers while simultaneously promoting fulfilling volunteer experiences and encouraging long-term commitments to service (Clary et al., 1999).

Theories of Motivation

Content motivation theory provides a framework on identifying and understanding the specific needs or factors that drive individual motivation. Within this

framework, key theories developed Maslow, Alderfer, and Herzberg establish categories of human needs and explain how fulfilling these needs can motivate behavior (Kanfer et al., 2017). Maslow's and Herzberg's theories are classic examples of content theories, which emphasize the role of internal needs in shaping motivation (A Dictionary of Organizational Behavior).

Motivation can be understood through various theoretical frameworks. One widely recognized framework is Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which psychologist Abraham Maslow developed. Maslow's model suggests that human motivation is driven by a series of hierarchical needs, starting with basic physiological necessities such as food and shelter and ascending through needs related to safety, social connections, esteem, and, ultimately, self-actualization (Aanstoos, 2023). In the field of personnel management, motivation is often explained through three predominant theories: organizational theory, industrial engineering, and behavioral science. According to organizational theory, well-structured jobs are associated with positive employee attitudes and greater satisfaction. Likewise, industrial engineering theory is concerned with job efficiency, indicating that well-organized work processes contribute to optimal staff attitudes and satisfaction. Finally, behavioral science theorists argued that education in human resources can cultivate the right attitudes, which in turn, contribute to effective job structuring (Herzberg, 2003). Together, these theories provide a framework for understanding the factors that influence volunteer motivation and engagement.

In contrast, process theories are concerned with the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that influence motivation. For instance, goal-setting theory has been applied

to explain how goals influence performance, establishing it as a fundamental process theory in motivation and behavioral studies (Latham & Locke, 2019). Deci and Ryan's SDT is regarded as a more contemporary approach, integrating elements of both content and process theories (Graham & Weiner, 2012). Central to SDT are the psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are essential for understanding human motivation. Autonomy refers to the need for self-direction and individual confirmation of one's activities, competence involves the need to feel effective and proficient in achieving desired outcomes, and relatedness pertains to the need for meaningful connections with others.

Vansteenkiste, Ryan, and Soenens (2020) emphasized that the satisfaction of these basic psychological needs is vital for fostering intrinsic motivation, promoting well-being, and enhancing personal growth. When these needs are met, individuals are more likely to engage in activities with volition, persistence, and enthusiasm. Conversely, when these needs are unmet, it can result in diminished motivation, lower well-being, and a variety of maladaptive outcomes.

Volunteer Motivation

Organized sports programs are sustained largely through the dedication of volunteers who invest their time and energy into engaging youth and fostering a sense of community (Hallenbeck, 2017). To effectively recruit and retain these volunteers, it is imperative for organizations to gain a deep understanding of the motivations that drive individuals to seek out volunteer opportunities, commit to their roles, and maintain their involvement over time (Clary et al., 1999). Nonprofits must recognize and address the

challenges faced by volunteers to enhance engagement and sustain volunteerism (Harp, 2017).

Extensive research has been conducted to uncover the factors that influence volunteers' decisions to stay with or leave an organization. Findings suggest that volunteers who are deeply engaged and satisfied with their roles are more likely to continue their commitment, resulting in longer-term volunteerism (Harp et al., 2017; 9et al., 1998). Conversely, volunteers often leave organizations due to issues such as a lack of control, unclear roles, and insufficient training and preparation (Harp, 2017). Therefore, it is essential for organizations to identify and address these issues proactively to retain current volunteers and attract new ones.

Moreover, organizations must acknowledge that individuals today have numerous volunteer opportunities available to them. Volunteers may spend considerable time deliberating over their involvement, evaluating the extent to which their contributions align with their individual needs and objectives (Clary et al., 1999). Beyond securing the continuity of sports programs, volunteers play a critical role in strengthening the communities they serve (Hallenbeck, 2017). Thus, providing volunteers with a sense of ownership and belonging within the organization is crucial to fostering a sustainable volunteer base (Venzin, 2020).

Best Practices of Volunteer Engagement

Coaches and support or administrative volunteers deliver youth sports programs driven by their passion and commitment to both the organization and the sport itself (Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020). For organizations to retain such dedicated volunteers, it is

crucial to actively engage them through strategic practices. Research scholars have identified several best practices for engaging volunteers, including the importance of effective leadership, personalized interactions, the use of interest surveys, empowering volunteers by involving them in decision-making, and acknowledging the value of their time and contributions (Sandage, 2023). Nonprofit sports organizations must prioritize volunteer retention by ensuring robust financial health and fostering clear, positive communication to attract and maintain experienced, committed volunteers (Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020). Furthermore, to successfully recruit new volunteers, it is essential for organizations to align their values with those of potential volunteers, as value congruence has been shown to be a key motivator in volunteer engagement (Shier et al., 2020).

Benefits of Volunteering

In nonprofit sports organizations, parents constitute the majority of volunteers, playing a crucial role in the implementation of youth programs (Grant et al., 2020). These volunteers are not only essential to the operational success of these programs, but they also significantly influence the experiences of the youth participants. Volunteers foster positive experiences, promote the intrinsic values of sports, and serve as role models for the children involved (Goudeau & Baker, 2020). While many parents initially volunteer to support their own children, they often find themselves making a broader impact, benefiting other participants and the organization as a whole (Grant et al., 2020). The existence and sustainability of these organizations heavily rely on volunteer support, highlighting their indispensable role (Cohen et al., 2020).

Although challenges can arise from involving parent volunteers, the findings suggest that their overall influence tends to be more positive than negative. For instance, 59% of parents had a positive influence on their children's sports experiences, compared to 36% who had a negative impact (Burke et al., 2021). Grant et al. (2020) demonstrated that volunteers derive personal benefits from their involvement, gaining transferable skills and experience that can be applied in other contexts. Scholars have emphasized the importance of robust, proactive planning and management in ensuring successful volunteer engagement (Ferreria, 2023). Research has also shown that factors such as existing friendships, prior volunteer experiences, and current life circumstances significantly influence individuals' decisions to volunteer (Shier et al., 2020).

Strategies to Recruit Volunteers

Ferreria (2023) noted that best practices in volunteer management involve identifying the specific needs of volunteers in alignment with program goals and available resources, and then adapting recruitment strategies to meet those needs effectively. A deeper understanding of the benefits that volunteers bring to nonprofit organizations can significantly enhance efforts to attract skilled and experienced volunteers (Grant et al., 2020). Recruiting new volunteers is vital for sustaining nonprofit operations, and recruitment plans should emphasize how volunteers can establish meaningful connections with youth and build relationships that have lasting impacts (Grant et al., 2020).

Understanding the motivations behind volunteer engagement is also crucial, particularly when segmented by age group. For instance, Baby Boomers often volunteer

for the common good, to stay active, and out of concern for the legacy they leave behind, whereas Generation Z tends to select volunteer opportunities based on alignment with their values, career aspirations, learning opportunities, and self-esteem needs (Padurariu, 2023). By recognizing these motivations, volunteer managers can better match tasks to individual volunteers, thereby ensuring both a positive experience for the volunteers and enhanced productivity for the organization (Ferreria, 2023).

However, it remains unclear whether volunteers fully comprehend the benefits they derive from their volunteer activities (Grant et al., 2020). Nonprofit organizations must improve their communication strategies to clearly articulate these benefits during the recruitment process. Volunteers working with youth-serving organizations often make a lasting impact on the lives of the participants (Grant et al., 2020). It is, therefore, imperative that nonprofit organizations effectively communicate their mission and impact on the community to potential volunteers (Florida Times-Union, 2023). For volunteers, it is important that the organizations they serve are seen as responsible, reliable, transparent, and positively engaged with the community, attributes that should be reflected in the organization's marketing and communication materials (Shier et al., 2020). Ultimately, understanding volunteer motivation is fundamental to the successful management and retention of volunteers, as it enables organizations to engage volunteers in ways that maximize their performance and ensure a positive volunteer experience (Ferreria, 2023).

Literature Supporting The Deliverable Approach

The development of a strategic plan for enhancing volunteer engagement was ground in prior literature in both nonprofit management and organizational behavior. Studies have shown the importance of aligning volunteer engagement strategies with broader organizational goals to improve retention and satisfaction. Research on strategic planning has emphasized the value of a data-driven approach that incorporates volunteer motivation, organizational culture, and effective communication practices. Additionally, literature on volunteer engagement has identified the significance of fostering meaningful connections, providing adequate support and recognition, and creating opportunities for skill development and personal growth. Drawing on these key insights, the deliverable was designed as a comprehensive, evidence-based strategic plan intended to enhance volunteer engagement, strengthen organizational capacity, and support long-term success.

Deliverable to the Client

This conceptual framework was particularly relevant to the client organization's challenges, as understanding the balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators is critical for designing effective volunteer recruitment and retention strategies. By identifying the factors that promote volunteer satisfaction and the deterrents that lead to disengagement, the study aims informed the development of a strategic volunteer engagement strategy that addresses the organization's specific needs. The integration of Herzberg's and SDT's perspectives allowed for a holistic analysis of volunteer motivations, ensuring that the strategies developed are grounded in established theories of motivation and behavior.

Strategic Plan

For this PAS, a strategic plan was developed that focused on enhancing volunteer engagement. As articulated by Wolf and Floyd (2021), "Strategic planning is a process of defining an organization's strategy or direction and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy, including its capital and people." The critical role of resource allocation and informed decision-making as integral elements of the strategic planning process is emphasized in this definition. A primary objective of a strategic plan is to determine how participants can actively contribute to an organization's ability to define and achieve its goals (Venzin, 2020). According to Kim and Mason (2020), strategic planning has become an indispensable tool for building the capacity of nonprofit organizations. They emphasized that through strategic planning, nonprofits can enhance their preparedness for economic challenges by refining financial management practices and establishing operating reserves, which are vital for sustaining organizational capacity.

Incorporating volunteer input into the strategic planning process is a powerful way for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to valuing stakeholders. This practice not only enriches the volunteer experience but also strengthens organizational commitment, which is essential for retaining current members and attracting new ones. When volunteers feel heard and appreciated, their sense of belonging and commitment to the organization deepens, leading to higher retention rates and making the organization more appealing to prospective members.

Scholars have consistently emphasized that effective strategic planning involves developing or revising the organization's mission and vision statements, conducting a comprehensive SWOT analysis, setting goals and objectives informed by the SWOT

findings, and devising detailed action plans to achieve these goals (Bryson, 2018; Wolf & Floyd, 2021). The use of key planning tools such as surveys, interviews, and collaborative meetings during the strategic planning process has proven beneficial across various professional associations and nonprofit organizations (Kim & Mason, 2020).

A well-crafted strategic plan is often described as a roadmap that provides a clear timeline for advancing the organization. This roadmap includes a structured process that encompasses effective communication with stakeholders, targeted training, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of progress (Bryson, 2018). Engaging in strategic planning yields not only a detailed plan but also additional benefits. Bringing all stakeholders together fosters collegiality and creates an environment where the organization's direction can be the central focus, free from the distractions of daily operations (Kim & Mason, 2020).

Strategic Planning and Volunteer Engagement

A strategic plan focused on volunteer engagement can serve as a powerful tool for validating a nonprofit organization's commitment to its volunteers, clearly communicating strategies to achieve specific goals, and guiding decision-making processes (Bryson, 2018). Hu et al. (2014) found that when strategic planning is implemented effectively, it not only enhances existing services but also builds and expands the capacity and programs of nonprofit organizations. Strategic planning is crucial for ensuring that organizations set and achieve their goals. Establishing specific, measurable objectives is a critical component of this process, as it helps align organizational resources and efforts with the overarching mission (Bryson, 2018).

Strategic planning is used to provide direction and a structured framework for decision-making, which has been shown to improve organizational performance by ensuring that all stakeholders.

For small nonprofit organizations, strategic planning is especially valuable in analyzing strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities to enhance overall performance (Bryson, 2018). Scholars have shown that the development of a volunteer engagement strategic plan is most effective when it includes input from both leadership and volunteers, resulting in a more comprehensive and impactful plan (Boyd et al., 1997; Steinhorn, 2017). When executed properly, strategic planning has been shown to support small nonprofit organizations in improving their current services and developing the capacity to sustain and expand their programs, even in uncertain environments (Bryson, 2018). Nonprofit organizations that prioritize volunteer engagement in their strategic planning processes are better positioned to manage resources effectively, monitor program outcomes, achieve greater success, and maintain a satisfied and motivated staff (Steinhorn, 2017).

Summary

The impact of strategic planning on organizational effectiveness is discussed, along with the critical role of volunteers in sustaining nonprofit programs. The literature review was conducted using search terms related to volunteerism, strategic planning, recruitment and retention, Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and motivation. This section presents an overview of the historical development of nonprofits and volunteerism, examines the psychological principles underlying the recruitment,

retention, and engagement of volunteers, and defines the key components of strategic planning. The PAS concluded with the development of a strategic plan designed to enhance volunteer engagement, incorporating tools from to the strategic planning process, such as volunteer surveys and interviews with current volunteers. Section 3 presents the methodology for implementing these surveys, including the processes of data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Section 3: Data Collection Process and Analysis

Introduction

Since 2021, the client has experienced a decline in volunteer participation, leading to increased turnover among both Coaches and administrative volunteers. This quantitative study was designed to identify the factors influencing volunteers' decisions to either remain with or leave the organization, and to develop a strategic plan that enhances the program's effectiveness and impact. As part of this process, the research designed and implemented a survey to collect insights from current volunteers. I distributed the anonymous survey via Survey Monkey, which also compiled and analyzed the data.

The insights gained from this survey informed the creation of a comprehensive volunteer retention and engagement plan designed to help the organization retain its current volunteers and attract new ones. This plan includes strategic guidance on how to better engage volunteers, addressing the key issues identified through the survey. By understanding the motivations and challenges faced by volunteers, the organization can implement targeted strategies to enhance volunteer satisfaction and reduce turnover.

The research methodology for this study is outlined in this section, including the research question, research design, data collection methods, participant selection criteria, recruitment strategies, and analytical techniques used to interpret data.

Practice-focused Question and Research Design

The purpose of this section is to describe the research question that guided the study and explain the rationale for the chosen research design. This study was designed to

address a real-world problem related to volunteer engagement and retention in a nonprofit youth sports organization. In this study, I developed a practice-focused question to explore the organizational factors that influence individuals' motivation to volunteer. To answer this question, I selected a quantitative approach to examine measurable relationships between motivational factors and volunteer satisfaction.

How the Deliverable Addressed the Research Question

The research question for this quantitative public administration study was: What factors within the organization either motivate or demotivate individuals to volunteer in youth sports? I developed a strategic plan grounded in empirical data by examining the motivations underlying individual volunteerism within a youth sports organization. This plan focused on enhancing volunteer retention and recruitment. Implementation by the client is expected to increase both the retention rates and the overall number of volunteers.

Design of the Study

A quantitative, correlational design was used to explore the motivational factors influencing volunteer satisfaction and retention within a youth sports organization. The hypothesis was tested that volunteers who experience a combination of intrinsic motivators (e.g., personal achievement and recognition) and fulfillment of SDT needs (e.g., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) would report higher levels of satisfaction and greater intentions to continue volunteering.

A quantitative research is used to systematically examine relationships between dependent and independent variables through numerical data, thereby supporting

objectivity and reducing the potential for bias. In this study, data were collected through an anonymous online survey, distributed via email using SurveyMonkey, which allowed participants to respond confidentially and without concern for personal identification.

The theoretical framework was developed by integrating SDT and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to guide the development of the research instrument and data analysis. Within SDT, scholars emphasize intrinsic motivation, highlighting the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in sustaining volunteer engagement. Scholars using Herzberg's theory distinguish between motivators such as achievement and responsibility and hygiene factors such as interpersonal relationships and working conditions, which together influence satisfaction and dissatisfaction. I applied these frameworks to guide data analysis, identifying both positive drivers of volunteer engagement and barriers to long-term retention. The research design allowed participants to freely share their experiences, supporting a deeper understanding of the organizational factors that influence volunteerism.

Roles of the Researcher and Client Organization

As a Board member of the Ocean Beach Conference and an active participant, I hold a leadership position within the Conference and previously served on the client organization's Board and as a cheerleading coach. This long-standing involvement, which began in 2010, has fostered established relationships with many of the volunteers, including those affiliated with the football program, although that group is not the focus of this study. The Conference Cheer Coordinator served as the liaison between me and the client organization throughout the project. While I may recognize recurring themes in

participant response, steps were taken to minimize potential bias and maintain analytical objectivity throughout the study.

Methodology

The objective of this research was to explore the factors that motivate volunteers, using the Modified Volunteer Function Inventory for Sports (MVFIS), an adaptation of the original Volunteer Functional Inventory (VFI) as the primary framework. I used SurveyMonkey to collect anonymous feedback from current volunteers within the client organization. Based on my leadership experience and established access, surveys were distributed via email with the assistance from the Conference Cheer Coordinator. The use of SurveyMonkey and SPSS ensured respondent anonymity and supported objective data analysis through standardized tools including charts and statistical tests.

I integrated SDT, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and the MVFIS to identify primary motivators driving volunteer engagement and retention. I aimed to uncover factors that might lead to volunteer disengagement if motivational needs are unmet. The structured survey design enabled a statistically grounded exploration of volunteer behaviors and perceptions, which ultimately informing the development of a targeted engagement strategy for the organization.

Sources of Data

Data was collected from two groups within the organization using an anonymous survey. The first group consisted of Cheer Coaches (current volunteers), and the second group was comprised of organizational leaders, such as Coordinators and Board members, all of whom have volunteered with the organization for over 15 years. The

MVFIS was used to gather structured, quantitative data on the motivations driving initial and sustained volunteerism. Responses were measured using a Likert scale, and the data was organized and analyzed in relation to the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

SurveyMonkey served as the primary tool for collecting responses using the MVFIS. The survey was distributed once via email, targeting a minimum of 12 responses. Volunteers were given a two-week window to complete the survey. While no additional distribution was necessary, two reminder emails were sent during the response window to encourage participation. The final response rate met the minimum threshold, and no paper surveys were needed. All data were collected electronically within SurveyMonkey to ensure consistency in data compilation and analysis.

Participants (The Sample). The participants for this study were drawn from the current volunteer base of the client's program to ensure a diverse and representative sample. Two distinct groups were targeted: Group 1 consisted of current volunteers, including cheer Coaches and Assistant Coaches. Group 2 was comprised of seasoned leadership members, specifically Conference Cheer Coordinators and Board members, all of whom possessed prior experiences as Coaches. This dual-group approach allowed for the collection of a wide range of perspectives regarding volunteer motivations and experiences.

Recruitment efforts included direct outreach via email, telephone calls, and announcements made during volunteer meetings. Volunteers who meet the inclusion

criteria were provided with comprehensive information outlining the study's objectives, procedures, and any associated benefits or risks of participation. They were invited to complete an electronic survey administered through a secure platform. To ensure confidentiality, participants completed the survey anonymously.

Ethical considerations were rigorously adhered to throughout the recruitment and data collection processes. All participants were clearly informed that their involvement is completely voluntary and that they could leave the study at any time without facing any adverse penalties. Informed consent was obtained from each participant prior to their engagement in the study to ensure understanding of the study's aims, participant rights, and the measures established to protect their privacy and confidentiality.

Procedures. The survey process involved a single survey instrument designed to capture data from various participant groups within the organization, ensuring consistency and comparability of responses across different roles. The survey was introduced at an organizational meeting, where the purpose, importance, and procedures for completing the survey outlined to foster participant engagement. Each participant also received an email containing study details, my contact information, informed consent information, and an explanation of how their responses would be used. Following this introduction, the survey was disseminated electronically via email to all current volunteers and organizational leaders. Participants were given a two-week period to complete the survey, during which automated reminders were sent to encourage participation and minimize non-responses.

The survey was distributed, and responses were tracked through SurveyMonkey to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and the accuracy of the data. I oversaw the administration process, including managing the response rates, managing the follow-up communications, and ensuring data integrity throughout. Ethical considerations, such as voluntary participation and confidentiality, were addressed by obtaining informed consent prior to survey completion in accordance with guidelines for research involving human subjects. All participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential, and no identifying information would be linked to the data collected.

Survey Instrument. Upon completion, the data collected through Survey Monkey was exported to SPSS for advanced statistical analysis. This process enabled a detailed examination of key trends, correlations, and factors related to volunteer motivation and retention. Using SPSS allowed for a more sophisticated analysis of the data, ensuring that the results are robust and can directly address the research questions. The integration of Survey Monkey for data collection and SPSS for data analysis ensured both the efficiency and integrity of the process. By automating data collection and analysis, this method minimized the potential for bias or errors that could occur during manual data handling, ultimately leading to more accurate and reliable study findings.

The survey instrument utilized in this study was the MVFIS, which is specifically designed to assess the motivations behind volunteer participation in sports-related organizations. Originally, the VFI identified six motivational factors that reflect the psychological and social functions driving volunteerism: values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement (Clary et al., 1999). The MVFIS retains these

categories (Kim et al., 2009), streamlining the original inventory by reducing the number of items from 30 to 18 and eliminating those that lacked relevance or clarity (Kim et al., 2009). This instrument aligned with the theoretical foundations of Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT. Herzberg's theory distinguishes between motivators (achievement and responsibility) and hygiene factors (working conditions and interpersonal relationships), both of which influence volunteer satisfaction and engagement. Similarly, SDT focused on intrinsic motivations like autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are critical for sustained volunteer commitment. The MVFIS survey captured these intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the factors that drive both initial volunteer engagement and long-term retention. By quantifying these motivations, the MVFIS provided valuable data that, when analyzed in SPSS, that offered insights into how these theories manifest in the context of volunteerism within the client organization.

Strategy for Data Analysis

Quantitative research is characterized by the methodical collection and evaluation of numerical data to examine connections between variables, particularly cause-and-effect dynamics. This study was designed to explore the motivations behind volunteer participation within the client organization, grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT. The investigation compared the two key groups: current coaching staff and former Coaches who now serve in leadership positions. The analysis identified and compared the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that influence their continued involvement with the organization.

Data was gathered through the MVFIS survey and subsequently exported to SPSS for statistical analysis. During coding, emphasis was placed on the core motivators from Herzberg's theory, such as achievement, responsibility, and recognition (motivators), as well as hygiene factors like interpersonal relationships, policies, and working conditions. Additionally, SDT's psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were used to code responses. These starting themes were applied to guide the analysis in identifying which factors contribute most significantly to sustained volunteer engagement.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted in SPSS to examine the coded data, which identified trends and correlations between intrinsic motivators (aligned with SDT's autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and extrinsic hygiene factors (in line with Herzberg's theory). The results revealed which motivational elements most strongly influence volunteer satisfaction and long-term commitment, providing evidence-based insights into how these factors foster continued engagement. This comparative approach illuminated the complex interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in shaping volunteer behavior and supported a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that drive volunteer retention in the client organization.

Sample Size and Size Effect

A power analysis was conducted using G*Power to assess whether a sample size of 33 participants would be sufficient for detecting significant relationships in the proposed linear regression analysis, which involves 8 independent variables. The power analysis was specified with a medium effect size (f2=0.15f^2 = 0.15f2=0.15), a

significance level of 0.05, a power level of 0.80, and 8 predictors. Calculations indicated that a sample size of 12 would be technically sufficient for achieving the desired power level under these parameters. To strengthen the reliability of the results and mitigate potential limitations due to the relatively small sample size, bootstrapping was employed. This approach generated more stable estimates of standard errors and confidence intervals, thereby supporting the robustness of the findings even with a limited sample size.

The choice of a medium effect size is justified as it reflects a realistic expectation for the relationships among the variables and aligns with common research practices in behavioral and social sciences. This approach is supported by Cohen's (1988) widely accepted conventions for defining small, medium, and large effect sizes. To enhance the robustness of the analysis, especially given the constraints of the sample size, bootstrapping techniques were utilized (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993).

Operational Definition of Variables

The independent variables in this study, derived from Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, were operationalized through the MVFIS. The factors below are the independent variables for this study.

1. Achievement (motivator/intrinsic factor) – the sense of accomplishment volunteers gain from their participation.
2. Recognition (motivator/intrinsic factor) – the extent to which volunteers feel their contributions are acknowledged.

3. Autonomy (SDT/motivator) – the degree of control and independence volunteers have in their roles.
4. Responsibility (motivator/intrinsic factor) – the level of responsibility volunteers feel for their tasks.
5. Interpersonal Relationships (hygiene factors) – the quality of social interactions and relationships within the organization.
6. Competence (SDT/intrinsic factor) – the sense of mastery or proficiency volunteers feel in their roles.
7. Relatedness (SDT/intrinsic factor) – the sense of belonging and connection volunteers feel with the group.
8. Organizational Policies and Supervision (hygiene factor) – the clarity, fairness, and effectiveness of the organization's policies and leadership.

The dependent variable was the engagement and satisfaction of the volunteers. This was defined as the level of commitment and satisfaction volunteers feel toward their roles and organization.

How Each Variable Was Be Measured

The Likert scale, typically ranging from 1 (not at all important) to 7 (very important), was used to measure volunteer perceptions of the independent variables. Incorporating the Likert scale into the operationalization of each variable added clarity to how responses were measured, scored, and analyzed using SPSS. Consistent quantification of each variable was achieved through this approach, which supported robust statistical analysis.

How Variable/Scale Score Was Calculated

Each item on the MVFIS was presented as a statement, randomly arranged on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 represents “not at all important” and 7 signifies “very important” (Kim et al., 2009). Responses were scored by averaging the ratings of each item to determine the overall importance of specific motivators.

Software Analysis System

The data was imported into SPSS for comprehensive statistical analysis, including tests, visualizations, and data manipulation. Scores were analyzed to identify key trends and relationships between variables. Demographic factors, such as respondents’ age groups, were also considered to explore potential differences in motivational drivers. The most frequently selected responses, based on their aggregated scores, were highlighted as the predominant factors influencing volunteers’ engagement with the organization.

Data Cleaning And Screening Procedures

Before conducting any statistical analysis, the collected data were subjected to a rigorous cleaning and screening process to ensure accuracy and reliability. The first step involved examining the data for any missing values or incomplete responses. In cases where respondents provide incomplete data, those responses were excluded from the analysis, depending on the proportion of missing information and its relevance to this study. Additionally, responses were examined for outliers and inconsistences, such as extreme values or contradictory answers, that could potentially skew the results.

Next, the data was screened for any duplicate entries to ensure that each respondent is counted only once. SurveyMonkey provided initial insights into response

rates and potential inconsistencies, while SPSS was used for more detailed cleaning, such as identifying and addressing issues with outliers or erroneous entries through statistical tests (e.g., z-scores or box plots).

Once cleaned, the dataset was inspected for normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity to ensure it met the assumptions required for statistical analyses to be performed. Any violations of these assumptions were addressed through transformations or adjustments where necessary. This thorough data cleaning and screening process ensured that the dataset was accurate, complete, and ready for valid statistical analysis, leading to more reliable and meaningful results.

Group 1: Coaches Data

Group 1 consisted of current volunteer Coaches and Assistant Coaches actively involved with the client organization during the data collection period. These individuals held direct service roles with youth participants and were responsible for planning and leading cheer practices, managing team communications, and supporting events. Their perspectives were vital in understanding the day-to-day motivations and challenges faced by volunteers who engage closely with program participants. The group represented a diverse range of volunteer experiences and included both new and recurring Coaches, offering insight into factors influencing initial engagement as well as long-term retention.

Analysis System (Software)

SPSS was utilized to analyze the survey responses collected from volunteer Coaches. Descriptive statistics were conducted, including measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and standard deviation, to identify patterns and distributions

within the dataset. Linear regression analysis was employed to explore the relationships between motivational constructs, such as intrinsic motivators, autonomy, responsibility, and recognition, and volunteer satisfaction and engagement. Bootstrapping was applied to generate robust estimates of standard errors and confidence intervals, which was particularly useful given the minimum sample size of 12. Assumptions testing and multicollinearity checks were performed to confirm the validity of the regression model. An ANOVA table and partial eta squared were reported to assess the model's practical significance.

Organizing and Coding Data

During the design process in SurveyMonkey, each survey item was conceptually aligned with theoretical constructs from Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and SDT, such as achievement, autonomy, competence, recognition, and relatedness. After data collection, responses were exported to SPSS, where variable names were labeled to reflect the corresponding motivational domains. Composite variables were then created by averaging Likert-scale responses to items representing the same theoretical construct. A structured approach was applied to support data analysis in meaningfully examining the relationships between motivational factors and volunteer engagement outcomes. The data set was reviewed for accuracy, and necessary recoding was performed to merge similar categories or clarify constructs. All variables were consistently labeled and formatted to support robust statistical analysis.

Treatment of Discrepant Cases

All coach responses were retained in the dataset. Outliers were reviewed and considered in the interpretation phase to maintain the integrity and representativeness of the data.

Group 2: Board Members

Group 2 was composed of seasoned leadership volunteers (Board members) affiliated with the client organization. All individuals in this group had over 15 years of experience and had previously served in coaching roles before transitioning to administrative or leadership capacities. As decision-makers and strategic planners within the organization, their perspectives provided valuable context on organizational culture, volunteer support systems, and retention strategies. This group was instrumental in shaping program policy and oversight, making their insights critical for understanding structural motivators and potential barriers to sustained volunteer engagement.

Analysis System (Software)

SPSS was similarly used for the Board member group, though the response rate was limited to five individuals. Descriptive statistics were calculated, including means and standard deviations, to understand motivational patterns. Due to the small sample size, inferential statistics were interpreted cautiously and reported primarily for illustrative purposes. The reduced number of responses limited statistical power but provided useful qualitative insight into leadership perspectives.

Organizing and Coding Data

Board member responses were coded and processed identically to those from the coach group to ensure consistency across datasets. Composite variables were generated,

and the same labeling scheme was applied to facilitate comparison. All data were check for anomalies and matched to theoretical constructs for interpretation.

Treatment of Discrepant Cases

No Board member responses were excluded. Although a small sample size may increase the influence of individual variation, retaining all responses allowed for a more complex understanding of the perspectives within this leadership group.

Summary of the Deliverable

The volunteer engagement strategy was developed as a comprehensive, evidence-based plan to enhance volunteer recruitment, satisfaction, and retention within youth sports organizations. Grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, the strategy emphasized intrinsic motivators such as achievement, interpersonal connection, and a sense of purpose. The analysis indicated that volunteers are primarily driven by meaningful engagement rather than external rewards, and that fostering emotional connection to the mission is key to sustaining long-term commitment.

In response to these findings, five core priorities were established: emphasizing intrinsic motivation in recruitment, strengthening recognition and appreciation programs, building a sense of community, implement regular feedback loops, and customizing retention efforts for long-serving volunteers. Each priority was supported by targeted action steps designed to create a more fulfilling and connected volunteer experience.

The strategy also included clearly defined benchmarks for evaluating progress, such as improvements in retention rates, volunteer satisfaction scores, and participation in recognition and engagement activities. By aligning organizational practices with what

matters most to volunteers, the plan was designed to provide leadership with a practical and impactful roadmap for sustaining service and strengthening the overall volunteer program.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Internal Validity

Internal validity refers to the level to which a study correctly ascertains a cause-and-effect relationship between variables, guaranteeing that the results are not manipulated by extraneous factors or biases. In this study, several measures were taken to enhance internal validity. All variables, such as volunteer engagement, satisfaction, and the motivational factors drawn from Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, were clearly defined and consistently measured using validated scales like the MVFIS. This ensured that the study measures what it intends to, thereby minimizing measurement bias (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007). Demographic variables were analyzed separately to account for their potential impact on volunteer engagement and satisfaction. Controlling for these variables ensured that demographic influences do not confound any observed relationships between motivational factors and volunteer engagement.

The survey items were presented in random order to minimize response bias, such as the tendency of respondents to answer similarly to consecutive items. This randomization helped prevent patterns in responses that are not related to the content of the questions (Shadish, et al., 2002). The survey was administered through Survey Monkey ensuring uniform data collection processes for all participants. This consistency reduced the risk of procedural bias or inconsistencies in how participants interact with the

survey (Fowler, 2014). In SPSS, multiple regression analysis was employed to control for the influence of extraneous variables, allowing the study to isolate the effects of the independent variables (motivational factors) on the dependent variable (volunteer engagement and satisfaction). This helped strengthen the causal inferences made in the study. The use of statistical controls improved internal validity by isolating the relationships between the independent and dependent variables (Field, 2018). By implementing these strategies, internal validity was strengthened, ensuring that the relationships between motivational factors and volunteer engagement were accurate and not due to uncontrolled factors.

External Validity

External validity refers to the extent to which the outcomes of a study can be simplified beyond the sample used in the research to other populations, situations, times, and contexts. Achieving strong external validity ensured that the findings are applicable to broader contexts. The study was designed to provide a replicable model for other youth sports organizations seeking to better understand and improve volunteer engagement.

A diverse and representative sample is essential for enhancing external validity. When a sample reflects the broader demographic makeup of the general volunteer population, the likelihood of generalizing the findings to similar organizations or contexts increases. The idea that representative sampling enhances external validity by ensuring that results are not confined to specific subgroups has been supported in literature (Calder et al., 1982).

Nationally, youth sports are a significant endeavor, with approximately 36 million children participating in youth sports (Aspen Institute, 2023). Given the prevalence of youth sports and the reliance of parent volunteers, this survey could be applied by thousands of similar organizations nationwide. By adopting this survey, these organizations can identify key motivators for their volunteers, contributing to the improved retention and more effective management of volunteer resources.

Furthermore, conducting the study over an extended period or repeating the survey at different points in time can enhance external validity by demonstrating the stability of the findings across various temporal contexts. Longitudinal designs provide a more robust foundation for generalizing results across time periods (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). The application of this approach supports local sports programs and also contributes to broader community engagement and development initiatives. Through the integration of these strategies, external validity was strengthened, allowing the findings to be generalized to other volunteer populations, organizations, and settings beyond the sample being studied.

Reliability

Reliability in research indicates the dependability and repeatability of the results. Ensuring that the findings are reliable is crucial for producing credible and valid outcomes. By using SPSS, I manually created an audit trail of files to document decisions and maintain version control, supporting transparency and methodological rigor. Data were collected from two different groups within the organization, allowing for the inclusion of diverse perspectives on the same set of questions. The data from each group

were analyzed separately, and the findings were then compared to identify whether similar themes or patterns emerged across groups. Consistency across groups strengthened the findings and the study's validity. Differing perspectives indicated nuances in how various roles or experiences influence perceptions of volunteer engagement. These divergences were valuable for understanding the complexity of volunteer motivations and identifying tailored strategies for different segments of the organization. By comparing the perspectives of each group, I was able to develop a deeper understanding of the overall dynamics influencing volunteer engagement.

The MVFIS developed by May Kim, James J. Zhang, and Dan Connaughton (2009), is specifically tailored to assess volunteer engagement within youth sports organizations. This tool has undergone a rigorous two-part validation process. Initially, the original Volunteer Functional Inventory, was adapted to meet the unique needs and contexts of youth sports volunteers. The modified version was subsequently validated through a second study, involving a new group of volunteers, ensuring that the findings were consistent and reliable across different respondent groups (Kim et al., 2009). Given its established reliability and relevance to the target population, the MVFIS served as the primary instrument for this study, offering robust data on the motivations and engagement levels of volunteers.

Objectivity

Objectivity, as defined by Merriam-Webster (2024), refers to the absence of bias or favoritism. Reflexivity involves the ongoing understanding of how a person's own values, experiences, and biases may influence the research method. The use of the

MVFIS helped maintain reflexivity by ensuring that participant responses were guided by standardized questions rather than influenced by my framing or interpretation of the data. The Likert scale enabled quantification of responses and provided a clear and measurable way to capture subjective experiences. This helped to reduce interpretative bias by allowing the respondents to directly communicate their level of agreement or importance to them. SurveyMonkey provided an anonymous platform which helped mitigate any potential influence or concerns about privacy. It also automatically compiled the data reducing the potential for manual error. SPSS allowed for robust and reproducible statistical testing, ensuring that the findings are data-driven rather than influenced by subjective interpretations. The application of these strategies ensured that the research findings were grounded in objective data and not unduly influenced by personal biases or interpretations.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical procedures in a research study are crucial for safeguarding the welfare of the participants. These procedures were designed to ensure that all aspects of the study are conducted in a manner that respects the dignity, rights, and well-being of those involved. This included obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and privacy, mitigating any potential harm, and maintaining transparency and accountability in the collection, analysis, and reporting of data. Ethical guidelines safeguard participants, enhanced the credibility and reliability of the research findings, which fostered trust in the scientific process.

Client Organization Approval

The agreement between ABC Sports League Cheerleading and me is documented and included in the Appendix of this report. This ensured transparency and provided a detailed reference of the terms and conditions agreed upon by both parties.

Treatment of Human Participants

This study adhered to Walden University's ethical guidelines for conducting research involving human participants. The study posed minimal risk and involved no physical or psychological harm. Participants were provided with comprehensive information about the nature and purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their rights to withdraw at any time. Data collection was conducted anonymously to protect participant privacy, and all responses were stored securely in password-protected digital formats. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, data confidentiality, and transparency, were addressed throughout the research process.

Institutional Permissions. Prior to data collection, I completed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application process at Walden University. Formal approval to conduct the study was granted under IRB Approval Number 02-03-25-0122582, with expiration date: February 2, 2026. As part of this process, I completed the required Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program certification in human subjects. Supporting documents submitted and approved by the IRB included the informed consent form, email recruitment invitation, and anonymous survey instrument (MVFIS). These materials ensured that participant privacy, voluntary consent, and

minimal risk protocols were upheld. All relevant IRB documents are included in the Appendix.

Recruitment

The primary ethical concern in the recruitment process involved ensuring that volunteers did not feel coerced or obligated to participate due to existing relationships within the organization. To mitigate this, recruitment materials emphasized the voluntary nature of participation to avoid language that could be perceived as persuasive or authoritative. All recruitment was conducted through email using an IRB-approved script that clearly outlined participants' rights, including the right to decline or withdraw at any time without consequence. Additionally, no incentives were offered, and participation remained anonymous to further reduce pressure and protect participant autonomy.

Consent and Privacy. Participants were provided with a detailed informed consent statement, which was distributed via email alongside the survey invitation. Consent was obtained through implied action, where participants indicated agreement by choosing to complete the anonymous survey The consent form clearly explained the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and the measures in place to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Given my affiliation with the organization, the consent materials explicitly emphasized that participation would remain anonymous and that responses would not be linked to identities or roles. No names, email addresses, or identifying information were collected. These steps were taken to reduce any perceived pressure to participate and to address potential concerns related to power dynamics. The study posed minimal risk to

participants, and the informed consent process was designed to ensure participants fully understood their rights and the protections in place before choosing to participate.

Data Collection. During the data collection process, several ethical considerations were addressed, including participant privacy, potential power imbalances, and minimal risk associated with the study. Although the study posed minimal risk, participants may have experienced some discomfort while reflecting on their experiences as volunteers. To mitigate this, participants were informed of their right to skip any questions that caused discomfort and to withdraw from the survey at any time without consequence. The study underwent formal ethical review and received approval from Walden University's IRB, ensuring that all research procedures complied with established ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, and the principles of confidentiality, autonomy, and nonmaleficence were upheld throughout data collection and analysis. These measures were implemented to safeguard participants' rights, privacy, and well-being, and to ensure that ethical obligations were met throughout the research process.

Treatment of Data

In the final study, all data were treated with strict confidentiality and measures were taken to ensure that respondents' identities remain anonymous. The youth sports organization is simply referred to simply as "the client organization." The identities of the participants were not collected, and no personally identifiable information was associated with their responses. All potentially identifying information such as roles or experiences were anonymized during data collection and reporting. All data has been securely

deposited in password-protected devices and encrypted cloud storage accessible only to me. Raw data collected through SurveyMonkey was downloaded and stored in a secure folder, with no access granted to third parties. No physical copies of data were created; all data were stored electronically in secure, password-protected files accessible only to me. The dissemination of findings was conducted in a manner that preserved confidentiality and ensured that no identifiable information was disclosed. To support this, aggregated data were used in reporting, and no individual responses were presented in a way that could lead to participant identification. All data will be retained for five years following study completion, after which it will be permanently deleted from all storage systems.

Other Ethical Issues

This study was conducted at an organization with which I have been affiliated since 2010. To mitigate potential biases associated with this long-standing relationship, a quantitative design was employed using an anonymous survey distributed through SurveyMonkey. This method enabled participants to provide honest feedback without fear of identification or repercussion. No incentives were offered, and participants were informed that their responses would remain confidential and would not affect their standing within the organization. These precautions supported the ethical integrity and objectivity of the research.

Summary

A quantitative design was employed using an anonymous survey, distributed via email to current volunteers of the client organization, to explore the factors that motivate

and discourage participation in youth sports volunteerism. The research addressed the question, “What factors within the organization either motivate or demotivate individuals to volunteer in youth sports?” The survey was structured on a Likert scale to measure the motivations driving volunteer engagement within youth sports organizations. Both the current volunteer coaching staff and the seasoned Coordinators and Board members completed the survey to capture their unique perspectives. The MVFIS, adapted for the youth sports context, was applied to enable a more focused analysis of volunteer motivations. Participants responded to items on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from *not at all important* to *very important* to quantify the significance of various motivators and demotivators.

All data collected, including participant information, has been securely stored in SurveyMonkey, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The data was analyzed using SPSS, with access restricted solely to me. The analysis was focused on identifying trends and discrepancies between the two groups, ultimately generating actionable insights to enhance volunteer retention and engagement. Findings from the comparative analysis were used to inform the development of a strategic plan for volunteer engagement aimed at improving involvement within the organization and attracting new volunteers.

Section 4 presents a detailed account of the study’s methodology, findings, and volunteer engagement strategies derived from the data. Tables and graphs generated by Survey Monkey and SPSS re included to visually represent the results. The section also contains a discussion of the study’s strengths and limitations, providing a comprehensive review of the research process and outcomes.

Section 4: Results and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the factors within a youth sports organization that either motivate or demotivate individuals to volunteer. The guiding research questions was: What factors within the organization either motivate or demotivate current individuals to volunteer in youth sports? This study was conducting using the MVFIS and was grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory and the self-determination theory. The practice problem addressed by this study was the organization's ongoing challenge in retaining volunteers, especially among coaching and leadership roles, despite long-standing community involvement. A gap existed in understanding which specific factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic, influence volunteer engagement in this setting.

The resulting deliverable, a strategy for volunteer recruitment and retention, was informed by quantitative data gathered from current cheer Coaches and long-serving Board members using a 7-point Likert-scale survey. This section presents a detailed overview of the study's methodology, including the research design, data sources, participant recruitment, and procedures for data collection and analysis. Contextual factors such as declining volunteer participation and my long-standing involvement within the organization are also considered, as these may have shaped participant perspectives and the interpretation of the study results.

Data Collection

Data were collected from 21 participants, including 16 cheer coach volunteers and five Board members, via an online SurveyMonkey survey administered over a 30-day period. The survey consisted of structured questions (Appendix B) aligned with the MVFIS and measured both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Demographic data, including age, gender, ethnicity, education, and household income were also collected.

Demographic Characteristics

The participant group consisted predominantly of women, with 80% of the Board members and 100% of the volunteer Coaches identifying as female. The majority of participants identified as White and reported having attained at least some college education or higher. Household income levels varied across the sample, reflecting a moderate range of socioeconomic backgrounds.

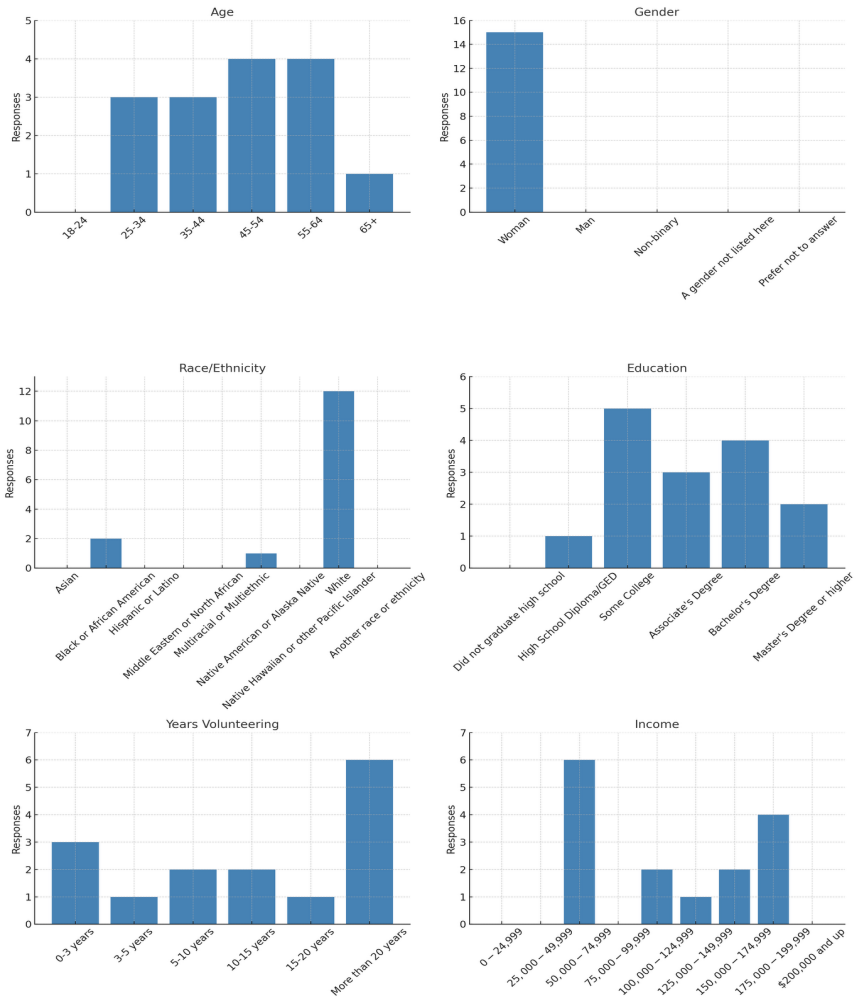
Demographic Analysis

An analysis of the demographic data revealed both notable differences and areas of alignment between the Board and the Coaches. While both groups were predominantly White, the Board had less racial diversity, with only one Multiracial members compared to the Coaches' inclusion of Black and Native American individuals. Women made up the majority in both groups, though the Coaches were exclusively female, whereas the Board included one male member. Educational attainment was generally higher among the Board members, with 60% holding a bachelor's or higher degree, compared to 40% of the Coaches. Notably, Board members reported longer tenures of volunteer service and higher income levels, with 80% earning above $175,000 annually, while most Coaches

fell in the $50,000-$74,999 range. The structural and socioeconomic distinctions between governance and direct-service roles within the organization were revealed through analysis of these contrasts. Figure 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

Figure 1

Coaches Demographics

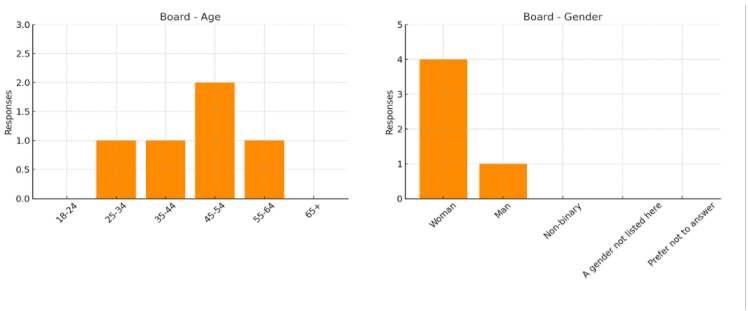


As illustrated in Figure 1, the majority of respondents were women, with a strong representation across the 25-54 age range. Most participants identified as white, followed by smaller proportions of black or African American and other racial/ethnic groups. Educational background varied, though a majority reported completing at least some college or holding a bachelor's or master's degree. Volunteer tenure was polarized, with notable representation from individuals with fewer than 3 years of experience and those with more than 20 years of experience. Income levels ranged widely, though the largest proportion of participants reported annual incomes between $25,000 and $49,999. These demographic patterns were used to provide important context for interpreting the motivation and satisfaction findings, reflecting a diverse volunteer base in terms of age, education, experience, and socioeconomic status.

While the previous figure illustrated the overall demographic composition of the Coaches, Figure 2 presents the Board member participants. This side-by-side view provided a more nuanced understanding of the leadership cohort within the organization and identified differences in background, experience, and potentially motivational priorities between governance and frontline volunteers.

Figure 2

Demographics of Board Members



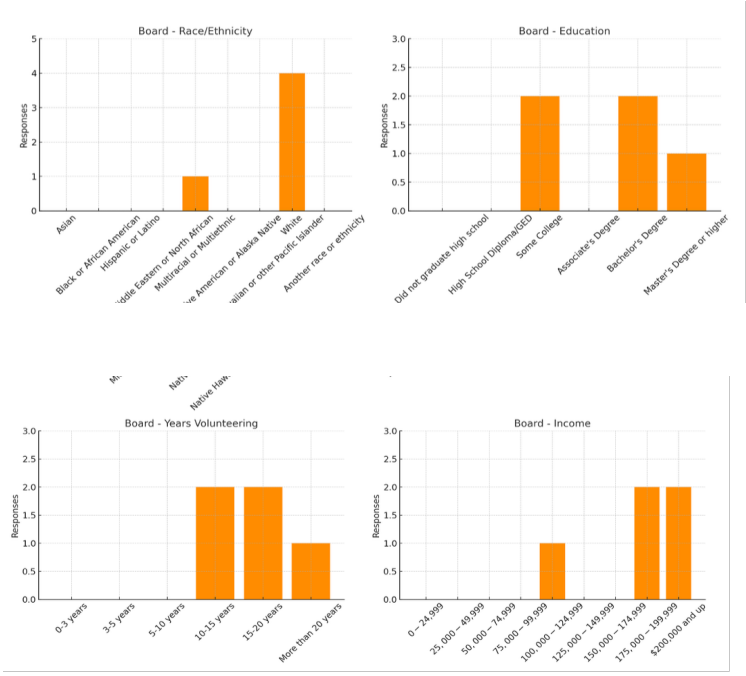


Figure 2 presents the demographic distribution of Board members in the study. The majority of Board participants identified as women, with ages spanning across mid-career and older adult categories, particularly within the 35-44 and 55-64 ranges. Educational attainment was notably high, with all members reporting some college education or higher, and several holding advanced degrees. Most Board members identified as white, and volunteering tenure skewed longer, with the majority reporting over 10 years of service. Income levels also reflected a more affluent profile, with the largest proportions falling in the $75,000 to $149,999 range. Analysis of these findings suggested that Board members tend to represent a more experienced, educated, and financially stable subgroup, which may influence their motivational drivers and organizational perspectives differently than frontline volunteers.

Power Analysis

A power analysis was conducting using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) to determine the minimum required sample size for the study's multiple linear regression analysis. Using a standard alpha level of .05, a desired statistical power of .80, and a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$) as recommended by Cohen (1988), the analysis indicated that a minimum of 12 participants was needed to detect significant effects with up to eight predictor variables. This sample size provided an 80% probability of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis when a true effect exists, thereby reducing the likelihood of a Type II error (Field, 2018). The Coaches group exceeded this requirement with 16 participants, strengthening the reliability of the results and supporting the validity of statistical inferences. Achieving appropriate statistical power is especially important in studies with small populations, such as those involving nonprofit volunteers, to ensure meaningful and generalizable findings (Lakens, 2022).

Data Analysis

Sample Description and Descriptive Statistics

The study sample consisted of twenty-one participants affiliated with a youth sports volunteer organization, divided into two distinct groups: sixteen current volunteer Cheer Coaches and five former Coaches currently serving as Board members. This purposeful sampling approach was designed to capture multiple perspectives on volunteer motivation and engagement within the same organizational context. The Coach group was the primary focus of statistical analysis due to sufficient sample size for inferential

testing, while the Board member group was analyzed descriptively. Participants responded to the MVFIS, which included Likert-scale items aligned with Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were computed for motivational construct. Coaches reported the highest mean scores on Interpersonal Relationships and Achievement, while Board members rated Achievement and Relatedness as most influential. These patterns suggested that intrinsic motivators are highly salient across both roles.

Variables Included in the Analysis

The primary dependent variable in this study was volunteer satisfaction, measured by a single survey item (Q19): "Overall, I am satisfied with my experience as a volunteer in the youth sports organization." This item was selected due to its direct alignment with the study's focus on intrinsic motivation and volunteer engagement. The independent variables included composite constructs derived from grouped survey items representing motivator and hygiene factors based on Herzberg's two-factor theory and components of SDT, including autonomy, competence, recognition, and responsibility. In addition, two single-item variables, Q20 (I feel that my contributions are valued by the organization) and Q23 (Overall, I feel that my volunteer role is meaningful and contributes to the goals of the organization) were retained as independent variables due to their conceptual relevance and theoretical grounding. All variables were coded and labeled in SPSS according to the alignment framework presented in Appendix 148.

A missing values analysis revealed no missing responses for any of the Likert-scale items used in this study (N = 16). Therefore, the full dataset was retained for

descriptive, reliability, and regression analyses without the need for listwise or pairwise deletion.

Coaches Responses. Table 1 provides a sample of raw data from five volunteer Coaches across 22 Likert-scale items. Each item, labeled Q1 to Q22, corresponds to a specific statement measuring aspects of volunteer motivation, satisfaction, or engagement.

Table 1

Sample Raw Data from Coaches Responses

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22
6	6	7	6	7	5	5	5	5	6	4	4	4	3	5	4	3	7	7	7	6	7
6	6	5	5	6	5	5	6	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	7	6	7	6	7
5	4	3	4	4	4	6	4	2	1	1	4	1	2	3	3	4	7	7	7	7	7
6	7	6	7	6	6	7	7	5	6	6	4	4	4	6	7	6	6	6	7	6	7
6	5	6	4	4	4	4	5	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	4	6	7	6	7	7

Note: Q1–Q22 represent individual survey items that measure volunteer motivation, satisfaction, and engagement. Refer to Appendix B for full question wording and theoretical construct alignment.

The responses were analyzed to show a range of agreement or importance. The snapshot was used to illustrate the variability in individual responses and provide an initial look at the data structure prior to the aggregation of items into theoretical constructs. The complete dataset of survey responses is included in Appendix E.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Coaches Raw Data

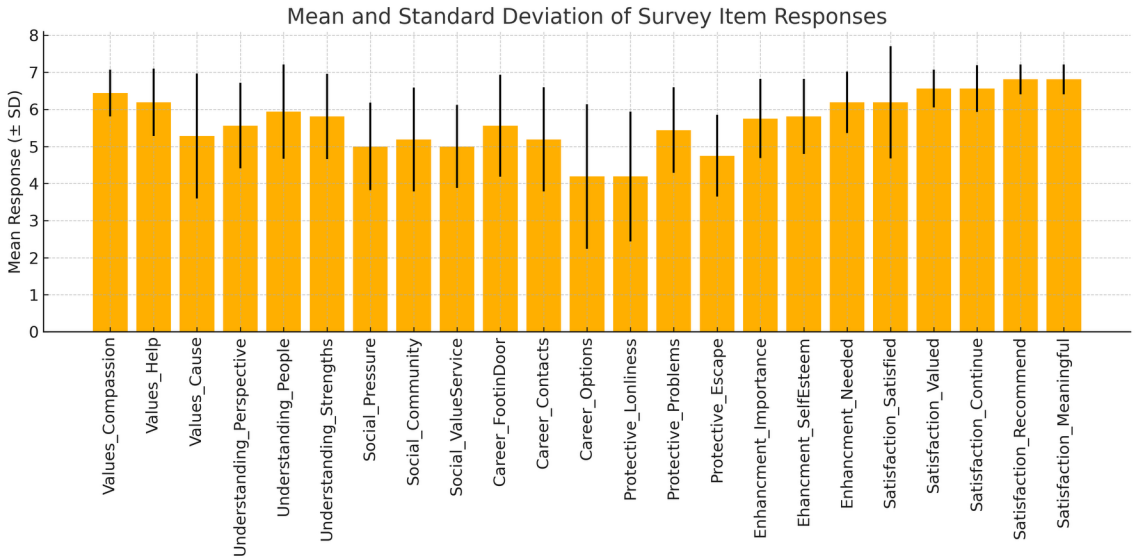
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Values_Compassion	16	5	7	6.44	.629
Values_Help	16	4	7	6.19	.911
Values_Cause	16	1	7	5.88	1.668
Understanding_Perspectiv e	16	1	7	5.25	1.653
Understanding_People	16	3	7	5.94	1.289
Understanding_Strengths	16	1	7	5.13	1.893
Social_Pressure	16	1	7	4.88	1.668
Social_Community	16	4	7	5.69	1.138
Social_ValueService	16	3	7	5.50	1.033
Career_FootinDoor	16	1	6	3.44	1.931
Career_Contacts	16	1	7	4.00	2.477
Career_Options	16	1	7	3.13	1.996
Protective_Lonliness	16	1	7	4.19	1.940
Protective_Problems	16	1	6	3.56	1.896
Protective_Escape	16	1	7	3.81	1.905
Enhancment_Importance	16	1	7	4.75	1.693
Ehancment_SelfEsteem	16	1	7	4.75	2.017
Enhancment_Needed	16	2	7	5.19	1.515
Satisfaction_Satisfied	16	1	7	6.19	1.471
Satisfaction_Valued	16	6	7	6.56	.512
Satisfaction_Continue	16	6	7	6.75	.447
Satisfaction_Recommend	16	5	7	6.56	.629
Satisfaction_Meaningful	16	6	7	6.81	.403
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Table 2 provides descriptive statistics for each of the 23 individual survey items included in the analysis. All items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, with higher values indicating greater agreement or perceived importance. Mean scores ranged from 4.19 (Career_Options) to 6.81 (Statisfaction_Meaningful), indicating generally high levels of motivation and satisfaction among respondents. The lowest mean scores were observed for items related to career advancement, suggesting that career-related motives were less salient for these volunteers. Analysis of the Standard deviations showed moderate variability across most items, with some items (e.g., Understanding_People) displaying greater dispersion than others. These descriptive results offered an initial overview of response trends and supported the subsequent construction of composite variable for inferential analysis.

Figure 3

Mean and Standard Deviation of Coaches Survey Responses by Item



The mean scores and associated standard deviations for each of the 23 survey items assessing volunteer motivation, satisfaction, and engagement are displayed in Figure 3. Most items had relatively high mean values, which indicated generally favorable perceptions among respondents. Items related to meaningful contribution (Q23), satisfaction (Q19), and perceived value (Q20) received the highest average ranges with low variability, reflecting strong agreement across participants. Conversely, items associated with career advancement (Q12) had lower mean scores and higher standard deviations, suggesting these factors were less uniformly endorsed. Analysis of these patters provided insight into which motivational drivers resonate most consistently with volunteers and guided the development of composite variables for further analysis.

Board Responses. Table 3 provides a sample of raw responses from five Board members to the full set of 23 survey items measuring volunteer motivation, satisfaction, and engagement.

Table 3

Sample of Board Survey Responses

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23
5	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	4	5	7	7	7	7	7
6	7	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	3	4	3	5	4	4	5	5	6	7	6	7	7	7
7	7	7	7	7	7	6	7	7	4	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	7	6	6	7	6	7
6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	4	5	6	5	7	6	7
7	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	3	4	3	5	4	4	5	5	6	6	5	7	6	6

Analysis of the data showed a general trend of high ratings across most items, with many responses falling between 5 and 7. Notably, constructs such as organizational support, satisfaction, and career advancement were rated consistently high, suggesting that Board members place strong value on recognition, influence, and meaningful participation. In contrast, items related to community-level engagement or direct interpersonal interaction received slightly more varied responses, possibly reflecting differences in role expectations among governance volunteers. My interpretation of these patterns helped to contextualize the motivational landscape of Board-level participation. The full dataset of Board responses was provided in Appendix D.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Raw Survey Items – Board Responses

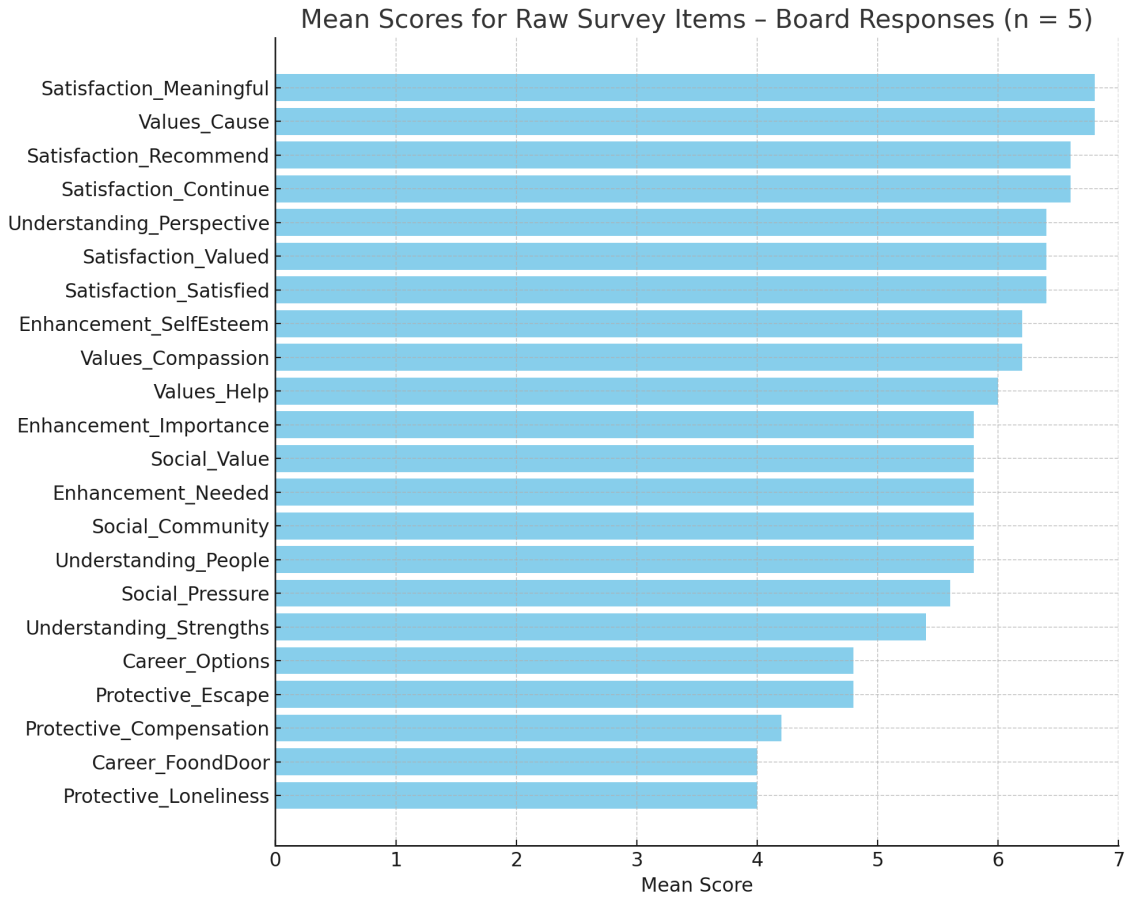
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Values_Compassion	5	5	7	6.20	.837
Values_Help	5	6	7	6.60	.548
Values_Cause	5	6	7	6.40	.548
Understanding_Perspective	5	5	7	5.80	.837
Understanding_People	5	5	7	5.80	.837
Understanding_Strengths	5	5	7	5.60	.894
Social_Pressure	5	5	6	5.60	.548
Social_Community	5	5	7	5.80	.837
Social_Value	5	5	7	5.80	.837
Career_FootinDoor	5	2	4	2.80	.837
Career_Contacts	5	2	5	3.40	1.342
Career_Options	5	2	5	3.00	1.225
Protective_Lonliness	5	4	6	4.80	.837
Protective_Problems	5	3	6	4.00	1.225
Protective_Escape	5	3	6	4.00	1.225
Enhancment_Importance	5	4	6	4.80	.837
Enhancment_SelfEsteem	5	4	6	4.80	.837
Enhancment_Needed	5	5	7	5.80	.837
Satisfaction_Satisfied	5	6	7	6.40	.548
Satisfaction_Valued	5	5	7	5.80	.837
Satisfaction_Continue	5	6	7	6.80	.447
Satisfaction_Recommend	5	6	7	6.40	.548
Satisfaction_Meaningful	5	6	7	6.80	.447
Valid N (listwise)	5				

Table 4 provides the descriptive statistics for each of the 23 individual survey items completed by Board members. Consistently high mean scores were observed across most items, with responses typically ranging between 5 and 7 on the Likert scale. Items related to satisfaction, values_compassion, and understanding_perspective were rated especially highly, indicating a strong identification with mission-driven and meaningful engagement among Board members. In contrast, items such as career_options and protective_lonliness received lower ratings, indicating that extrinsic or protective motivations were less influential for this group. These findings indicated that Board members are primarily driven by intrinsic motivations aligned with the organization's mission and their perceived impact.

Figure 4

Mean Scores for Raw Survey Items – Board Responses



In Figure 4, I illustrate the mean scores for each of the 23 raw survey items completed by Board members. The highest-rated items included satisfaction_meaningful, values_cause, and satisfaction_recommend, all reflecting a strong sense of purpose, mission alignment, and willingness to endorse the organization. In contrast, items such as career_options, protective_lonliness, and career_footindoor received the lowest mean scores, suggesting that role-based advancement and protective factors were less influential for Board members. The interpretation that Board participants are primarily

motivated by intrinsic and mission-driven values rather than extrinsic or compensatory factors was reinforced by this distribution.

Alignment of Variables

This mapping was used to streamline data management, coding, and analysis while preserving the integrity of each original item. Abbreviated descriptions were included to provide a concise reference for interpreting figures and tables that use Q1-Q23 labels throughout the study. Full item wording was retained during data collection, and the variable names reflect theoretical grouping aligned with Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT as detailed in the conceptual framework. Inclusion of this table supports transparency and replicability in the data analysis process.

Table 5

Survey Item Alignment: Question Numbers, SPSS Variables, and Item Descriptions

Question #	SPSS Variable Name	Survey Item (Shortened)
Q1	Values_Compassion	I feel compassion toward people in the organization
Q2	Values_Help	It is important to help those involved
Q3	Values_Cause	I can do something for a cause I care about
Q23	Satisfaction_Meaningful	Role is meaningful to organization

Note: See Appendix F for a full alignment of question numbers with SPSS variable names and item text.

Dependent Variable

Prior to conducting inferential analysis, the distribution of the dependent variable, volunteer satisfaction (Q19), was examined using a simple histogram. The histogram presents a frequency of responses across the 7-point Likert scale, where higher values

indicate greater satisfaction. As shown in Figure 5, the distribution is heavily skewed toward the “Very Important” and “Extremely Important” categories, indicating that the majority of the volunteer Coaches reported high levels of satisfaction. Only one respondent selected “Not at all important,” and none selected values in the middle range. This positively skewed distribution was interpreted as reflecting a strong sense of satisfaction among participants and supporting the reliability of the satisfaction construct used in subsequent analysis.

Figure 5

Distribution of Coaches Satisfaction Responses

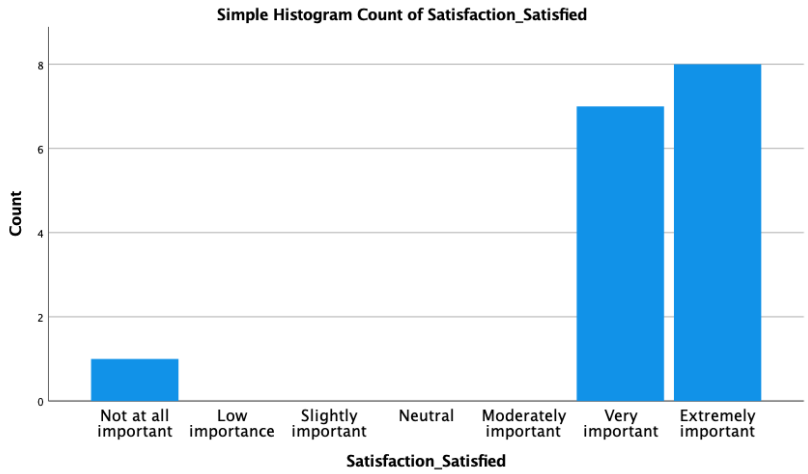


Figure 5 displays the distribution of response to the survey item measuring overall satisfaction (Q19). The data were collected using a 7-point Likert scale, with higher values indicating greater satisfaction. The histogram presents a clear skew toward the upper end of the scale, suggesting that most Coaches reported high levels of satisfaction with their volunteer experience. The right-skewed distribution was interpreted as supporting the descriptive findings that Coaches generally have a favorable view of their

roles and contributions within the organization. The observed pattern also provided a strong foundation for subsequent analysis exploring predictors of volunteer satisfaction.

Construction of Composite Variables

In this study, motivational variables were categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic to support both the theoretical framework and the structure of the data analysis. Intrinsic motivations were defined as internal psychological satisfactions derived from the act of volunteering itself, such as fulfillment, empathy, and alignment with personal values. These were operationalized using survey items related to helping others, compassion, feeling needed, and commitment to the cause. In contrast, extrinsic motivations are understood as external drivers such as organizational rewards, advancement opportunities, or social expectations. These included motivations related to career advancement, networking, and recognition. The categorization was based on Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, with intrinsic motivators align with Herzberg's motivators and SDT components (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), while extrinsic motivators corresponded to hygiene factors and organizational contingencies. This theoretical alignment was used to inform the development of composite variables and to guide decisions about construct inclusion in the regression model.

Board Construct Variables

Descriptive statistics for ten motivational constructs based on Board member responses are shown in Table 6. Each construct was derived as a composite of survey items grouped by theoretical alignment. The table includes the number of valid responses, as well as minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation values for each construct. A

quantitative snapshot of the motivational landscape among Board participants was provided through these statistics.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Motivational Constructs – Board Responses

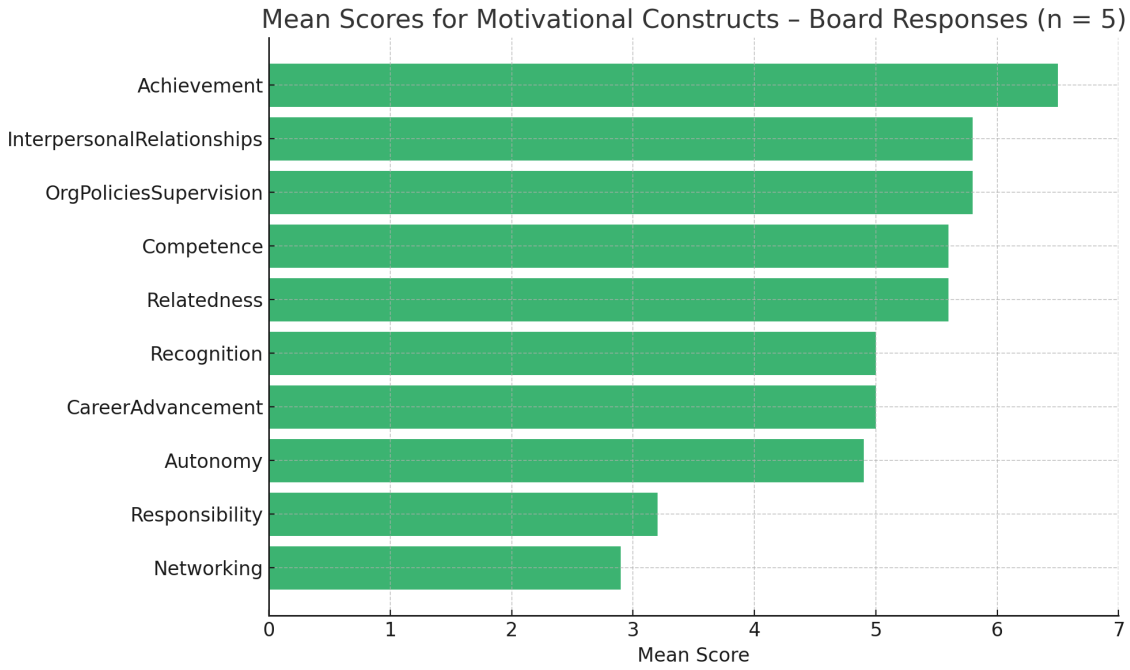
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Autonomy	5	4.00	6.50	4.9000	1.02470
Achievement	5	6.00	7.00	6.5000	.50000
Recognition	5	4.50	6.50	5.3000	.83666
Responsibiity	5	5.00	6.50	5.4000	.65192
InterpersonalRelationships	5	5.00	7.00	5.8000	.83666
Competence	5	4.50	6.50	5.2000	.83666
Relatedness	5	4.80	6.60	5.6400	.74027
OrgPoliciesSupervision	5	5.00	7.00	5.8000	.83666
CareerAdvancement	5	2.00	4.50	2.9000	1.02470
Networking	5	2.00	5.00	3.4000	1.34164
Valid N (listwise)	5				

The bar chart presents a summary of the average ratings for key motivational constructs among Board members. The highest-rated construct, achievement (M = 6.50), was interpreted as showing that Board participants are strongly driven by a sense of personal accomplishment and goal attainment. Interpersonal relationships and organizational policies and supervision (both M = 5.80) were also rated highly, indicating that meaningful connections and a well-structured volunteer environment contribute to Board engagement. Mid-range scores for competence, relatedness, and recognition were interpreted as suggesting moderate influence from these areas. In contrast, responsibility (M = 3.20) and networking (M = 2.90) received the lowest ratings, implying that external obligations and social expansion are less relevant motivational drivers for this group. The overall pattern was interpreted as reflecting a motivational profile rooted in personal fulfillment, relational engagement, and alignment with the organization's mission and operational clarity.

Figure 6

Mean Scores of Composite Motivational Constructs – Board Responses



The small sample size of Board participants (n = 5) precluded inferential analysis, but their responses were interpreted as providing valuable insights into motivational patterns at the governance level. The descriptive findings were used as a point of comparison for understanding how engagement factors may vary across organizational roles. The next section of the analysis focuses on the coach participant group, whose larger sample size permitted further statistical testing.

To prepare the data for inferential analysis, survey items were grouped into composite constructs based on their theoretical alignment with Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT. This alignment was guided by prior research and documented in Appendix F. Individual Likert-scale items (Q1-Q23) were first reviewed for conceptual similarity, and those representing a common motivational domain (e.g., autonomy,

competence, recognition) were averaged to create continuous composite variables. Only constructs of two or more items were included as composites. Variables measured with a single item, such as perceived value (Q20) and meaningful role (Q23), were used individually as predictors due to their direct theoretical relevance.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Motivational Constructs – Coaches Responses

Descriptive Statistics

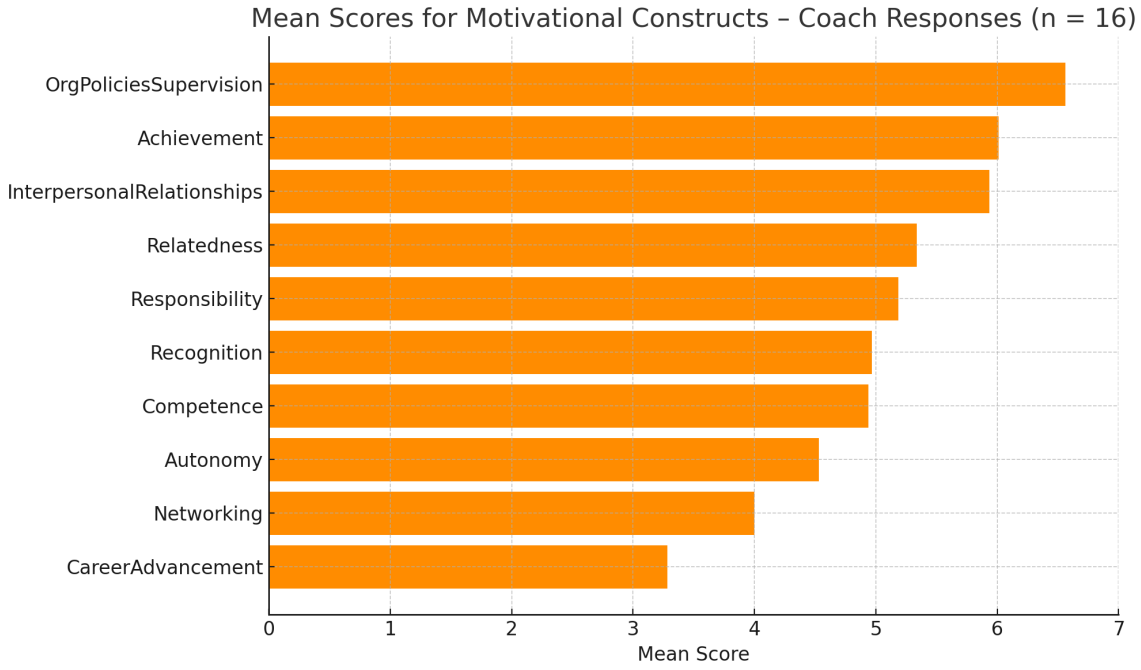
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Autonomy	16	1.00	7.00	4.5313	1.54347
Achievement	16	3.50	7.00	6.0312	1.13238
Recognition	16	2.50	7.00	4.9688	1.46593
Responsibility	16	3.50	6.50	5.1875	1.01448
InterpersonalRelationships	16	3.00	7.00	5.9375	1.28938
Competence	16	1.50	7.00	4.9375	1.82460
Relatedness	16	4.40	7.00	5.3375	.75443
OrgPoliciesSupervision	16	6.00	7.00	6.5625	.51235
CareerAdvancement	16	1.00	6.00	3.2813	1.90586
Networking	16	1.00	7.00	4.0000	2.47656
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Table 7 displays the descriptive statistics for the composite variables derived from the raw Coaches' survey items. Mean scores for the constructs range from 3.28 (career advancement) to 6.56 (organizational policies and supervision), indicating a strong overall motivation across domains, particularly in relation to structure support and alignment with organizational values. Achievement (M = 6.01) and interpersonal relationships (M = 5.94) were also rated highly, suggesting intrinsic and relational motivators. In contrast, lower ratings for career advancement and networking (M = 4.00) indicated less emphasis on extrinsic or career-oriented benefits. Analysis of standard deviations showed varying degrees of response consistency, with networking showing the greatest variability (SD = 2.48), indicating divergent views among participants. All constructs were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, with higher values representing

stronger agreement with each motivational domain. These results provided a baseline for understanding the motivational profile of volunteer Coaches prior to inferential analysis.

Figure 7

Mean Scores for Motivational Constructs



The visual representation illustrates the relative importance of each motivational construct for volunteer Coaches. Analysis indicated that organizational support and achievement were the top motivators, while career advancement and networking ranked the lowest, reinforcing the idea that volunteer Coaches are primarily driven by mission-aligned, internal factors rather than personal gain. This pattern was interpreted as suggesting that volunteer engagement strategies should focus on fostering meaningful roles and strong organizational culture rather than professional development incentives.

Internal Consistency Reliability

To ensure validity and reliability of the composite constructs used in regression analysis, internal consistency was performed using Cronbach's alpha. Constructs with alpha values of .70 or higher were considered acceptable for inclusion, consistent with established guidelines in quantitative research. Constructs with slightly lower alpha values (.60-.69) were considered acceptable for exploratory analysis if supported by strong theoretical justification and conceptual coherence. Constructs with alpha values well below .60 were excluded from the final model due to insufficient internal consistency. Based on these criteria, relatedness and responsibility were excluded from the regression model. In contrast, achievement was retained despite falling below the .70 threshold, due to its clear theoretical alignment with intrinsic motivation (Herzberg's motivators). The decision to retain or exclude constructs was made to balance empirical reliability with conceptual integrity, ensuring that the final model remained theoretically grounded and statistically robust.

Table 8

Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's Alpha by Construct

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Career Advancement	2	.938
Relatedness	5	.433
Competence	2	.730
Responsibility	2	.174
Reliability	2	.799
Achievement	2	.591
Autonomy	2	.665

Table 8 presents the internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for each of the multi-item constructs. Among the constructs, career advancement demonstrated excellent reliability ($\alpha = .938$), while competence ($\alpha = .730$) and reliability ($\alpha = .799$) also met the conventional threshold of $\alpha \geq .70$, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Autonomy ($\alpha = .665$) fell slightly below the threshold but was retained for analysis due to strong theoretical alignment and minimal deviation from the accepted benchmark. Three constructs, relatedness ($\alpha = .433$), responsibility ($\alpha = .174$), and achievement ($\alpha = .591$) did not meet reliability standards. Based on these findings, relatedness and responsibility were excluded from the final regression model due to low internal consistency. All remaining constructs were used in subsequent analyses to assess their predictive value in relation to volunteer satisfaction.

Evaluation of Statistical Assumptions

To ensure the validity, a multiple regression analysis was conducted with the Coaches group, and all relevant statistical assumptions were thoroughly evaluated in accordance with established quantitative research standards. Linearity was assessed by examining scatterplots for each independent variable in relation to the dependent variable, volunteer satisfaction (Q19). Visual inspection of the plots, with linear lines applied indicated reasonably linear relationships across all predictors (autonomy, achievement, competence, recognition, career advancement, networking and organizational support) and showed no evidence of curvilinear or nonlinear patterns. The scatterplots are included in Appendix G to illustrate the linear relationships observed.

Normality of residuals was evaluated using both a histogram and a normal probability plot (P-P plot) of standardized residuals. As shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9, the histogram displayed a roughly bell-shaped distribution centered near zero, while the P-P plot demonstrated that the residuals aligned closely with the diagonal reference line, indicating that the residuals were approximately normally distributed.

Homoscedasticity was assessed by plotting standardized residuals against standardized predicted values, supporting the assumption of constant variance. Multicollinearity was evaluated by reviewing Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) and tolerance values for each independent variable. All VIFs were below 10 and all tolerance values exceeded .10, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern in the final model. Independence of residuals was confirmed using Durban-Watson statistic, which yielded a value of 2.433, well within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, indicating no autocorrelation. Collectively, these results confirmed that the assumptions for multiple linear regression were sufficiently met, providing support for the validity of the model estimates.

Regression Results

A standard multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the extent to which select motivational constructs predicted volunteer satisfaction among Coaches. As shown in Table 9 (Model Summary), the overall model explained a substantial proportion of variance in Coaches satisfaction, with an $R^2 = .849$ and an adjusted $R^2 = .675$, indicating that approximately 67.5% of the variance in satisfaction was accounted for by

the independent variables included in the model. The standard error of the estimate was 0.816, suggesting a reasonable level of prediction accuracy.

Table 9

Model Summary of Multiple Regression Predicting Volunteer Satisfaction

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.921[a]	.849	.675	.838

a. Predictors: (Constant), Networking, OrgPoliciesSupervision, Competence, InterpersonalRelationships, CareerAdvancement, Recognition, Autonomy, Achievement

b. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction_Satisfied

The ANOVA results (Table 10) indicated that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(6, 3) = 3.440$, $p = .025$, confirming that the set of predictors reliably distinguished satisfaction levels among participants.

Table 10

ANOVA Table for Multiple Regression Model

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.524	8	3.440	4.901	.025[b]
	Residual	4.914	7	.702		
	Total	32.437	15			

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction_Satisfied

b. Predictors: (Constant), Networking, OrgPoliciesSupervision, Competence, InterpersonalRelationships, CareerAdvancement, Recognition, Autonomy, Achievement

As shown in Table 11 (Coefficients Table), analysis indicated that two predictors made statistically significant contributions: organizational support ($\beta = .853$, $p = .030$) and recognition ($\beta = -.598$, $p = .038$). The positive coefficient for organizational support was interpreted as evidence that participants who felt valued by the organization were more satisfied. Conversely, the negative relationship with recognition was interpreted as suggesting that superficial or insincere forms of acknowledgement were not motivating.

Other predictors, including autonomy, competence, career advancement, networking, achievement, and interpersonal relationships, were not statistically significant.

Table 11

Standardized and Unstandardized Coefficients with Multicollinearity Diagnostics

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.555	4.140		.376	.718					
	Autonomy	-.321	.292	-.337	-1.102	.307	-.017	-.384	-.162	.231	4.332
	Achievement	-.601	.531	-.463	-1.133	.295	-.284	-.394	-.167	.130	7.716
	Recognition	.389	.305	.388	1.277	.242	.405	.435	.188	.234	4.265
	InterpersonalRelationships	.306	.374	.268	.820	.439	-.204	.296	.121	.202	4.959
	Competence	.268	.351	.332	.763	.470	.278	.277	.112	.114	8.758
	OrgPoliciesSupervision	.722	.551	.252	1.311	.231	-.061	.444	.193	.588	1.700
	CareerAdvancement	.703	.219	.911	3.210	.015	.218	.772	.472	.269	3.721
	Networking	-.601	.171	-1.012	-3.524	.010	-.329	-.800	-.518	.262	3.812

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction_Satisfied

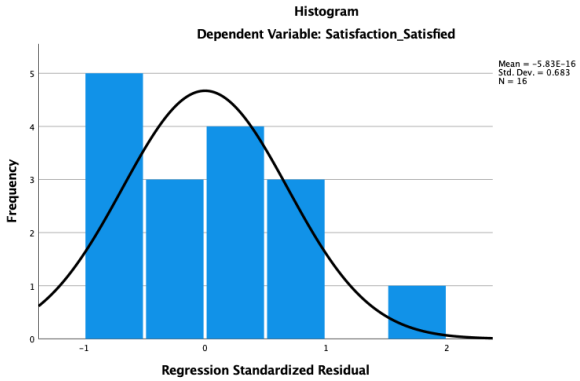
The predictors that met acceptable thresholds for multicollinearity, with VIF values below 10 and Tolerance values above .10, indicated no issues with collinearity.

Normality of Residuals

Assumptions of normality were also examined using a histogram and a P-P plot of the standardized residuals. As illustrated in Figures 10 and 11, the residuals were approximately normally distributed. These findings supported the validity of the regression model and confirmed that model's error terms are randomly and symmetrically distributed, a key condition for reliable coefficient estimation.

Figure 8

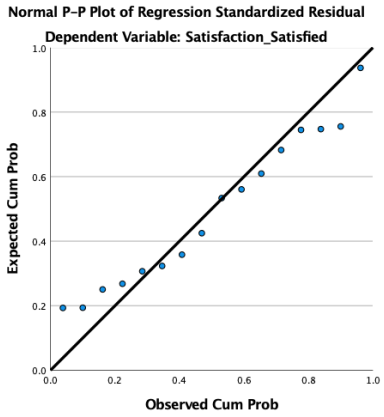
Histogram of Standardized Residuals for Satisfaction Overall



The distribution of residuals appeared normal, centered around zero with a bell-shaped curve. The mean was essentially zero (M = -.104E-15), and the standard deviation (SD = 0.79) fell within acceptable limits, supporting the assumption of normality.

Figure 9

Normal P-P Plot of Standardized Residuals for Satisfaction Overall



The residuals closely followed the diagonal reference line, indicating no serious deviations from normality. This further confirmed that the assumption of normally distributed residuals was met.

Taken together, the regression results were interpretated a statistically valid and theoretically grounded model of volunteer satisfaction among Coaches, with organizational support and recognition emerging as significant predictors. Because the assumptions of linearity, normality, and multicollinearity were sufficiently met, the model was judged to offer reliable evidence of the motivational factors that most strongly influence Coach engagement. The following section presents a detailed interpretation of these findings, explores their practical implications, and situates them within the broader context of volunteer motivation and leadership engagement.

Findings

Drawing from descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, the findings were interpreted as providing insight into how different motivational constructs influence volunteer engagement across organizational roles. The results were organized to highlight group-specific patterns, beginning with a comparative analysis on Board and Coach participants, followed by a detailed examination of the regression model used to identify predictors of volunteer satisfaction among Coaches. These findings were used to develop actionable recommendations for the client organization, including targeted engagement strategies that align with volunteers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Additionally, the results contribute to the broader discussions in public administration and youth sports engagement by offering a replicable model for improving volunteer retention and satisfaction in similar community-based programs.

Comparison of Raw Survey Item Descriptive Statistics: Coaches vs. Board

A comparison of the descriptive statistics for raw survey responses from Coaches (n = 16) and Board members (n = 5) revealed both shared motivational patterns and meaningful distinctions based on organizational role. Across both groups, high mean scores were observed on values-based and satisfaction-oriented items, suggesting strong intrinsic engagement. Coaches reported the highest average scores on Values_Compassion (M = 6.44), Satisfaction_Recommend (M = 6.56), and Satisfaction_Meaningful (M = 6.81), indicating that personal fulfillment and alignment with organizational purpose were key drivers of participation. Similarly, Board members assigned the highest ratings to Values_Cause (M = 6.80), Satisfaction_Recommend (M = 6.60), and Satisfaction_Meaningful (M = 6.80), underscoring the significance of mission alignment and perceived impact in sustaining governance-level engagement.

While both groups demonstrated high levels of satisfaction and values-based motivation, differences emerged in the distribution and emphasis of other motivational domains. Coaches exhibited greater variability in their responses, with standard deviations frequently exceeding 1.0 across items such as Understanding_Perspective (SD = 1.853) and Career_Options (SD = 1.896), suggesting more diverse perspectives within the operational volunteer group. In contrast, Board member responses were more consistent, with standard deviations remaining below 0.85 for most items, indicating stronger consensus around their motivations.

Additionally, items related to career advancement and protective motivations received notably lower ratings from both groups, but especially from Board members.

For example, career_options received a mean of 1.80 among Board respondents, compared to 4.19 among Coaches, and both protective_loneliness and protective_problems were similarly low among the Board group (M = 2.00). These findings suggested that Board members are less influenced by extrinsic or self-protective motivations and more driven by strategic alignment and service-oriented values. Coaches, while also intrinsically motivated, reflected a broader range of personal and professional drivers, reinforcing the need for differentiated engagement strategies tailored to volunteer role and function within the organization.

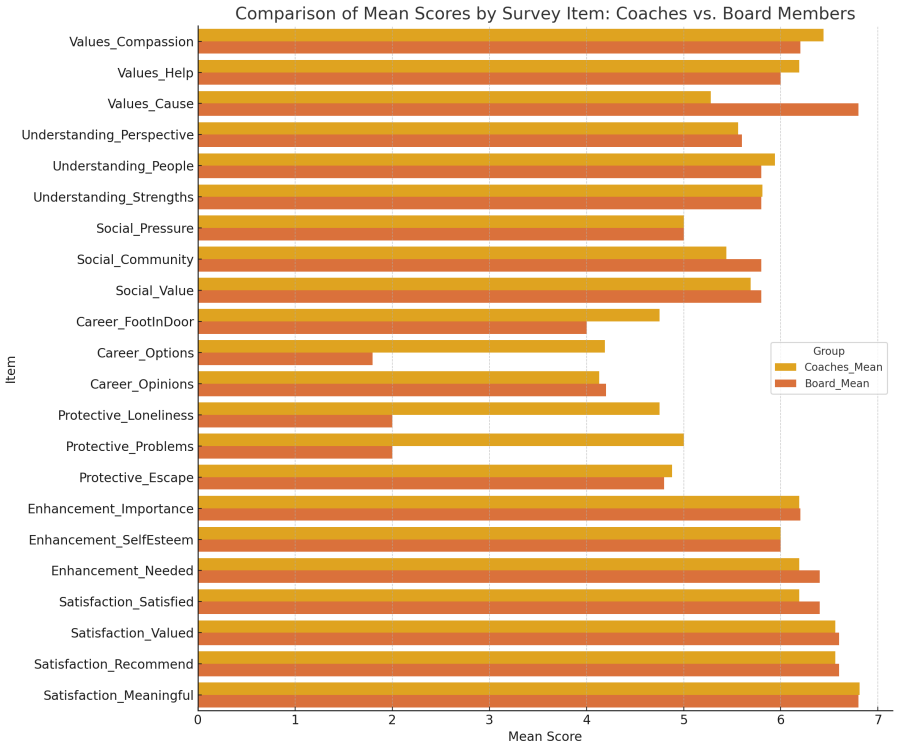
Table 12

Comparison of Mean Scores by Survey Item: Coaches vs. Board Members

Item	Coaches Mean	Board Mean
Values_Compassion	6.44	6.20
Values_Help	6.19	6.00
Values_Cause	5.28	6.80
Understanding_Perspective	5.56	5.60
Understanding_People	5.94	5.80
Understanding_Strengths	5.81	5.80
Social_Pressure	5.00	5.00
Social_Community	5.44	5.80
Social_Value	5.69	5.80
Career_FootInDoor	4.75	4.00
Career_Options	4.19	1.80
Career_Opinions	4.13	4.20
Protective_Loneliness	4.75	2.00
Protective_Problems	5.00	2.00
Protective_Escape	4.88	4.80
Enhancement_Importance	6.19	6.20
Enhancement_SelfEsteem	6.00	6.00
Enhancement_Needed	6.19	6.40
Satisfaction_Satisfied	6.19	6.40
Satisfaction_Valued	6.56	6.60
Satisfaction_Recommend	6.56	6.60
Satisfaction_Meaningful	6.81	6.80

Figure 10

Comparison of Mean Scores by Survey Item



Comparison of Motivational Construct Mean Scores: Coaches vs. Board

Descriptive statistics for motivational constructs were examined to identify both commonalities and distinctions between the Coach (n = 16) and Board member (n = 5) groups. Among Coaches, the highest mean score was observed for Organizational Policies and Supervision (M = 6.56), followed closely by Achievement (M = 6.01) and Interpersonal Relationships (M = 5.94). These findings were interpreted as indicating that structural clarity and a sense of accomplishment were key motivators. In contrast, Board members rated Achievement highest (M = 6.50), followed by Interpersonal Relationships and Organizational Support (both M = 5.80), suggesting alignment with internal values and a strong connection to the organization's mission. Across both groups, Career

Advancement and Networking had the lowest mean scores (Coaches: M = 3.28 and 4.00; Board: M = 2.90 and 3.40, respectively), interpreted as showing that extrinsic motivators related to personal gain were perceived as less relevant. While both groups exhibited motivation driven by internal and relational constructs, Board members placed slightly more emphasis on recognition and interpersonal value, whereas Coaches appeared more influenced by clarity of expectations and tangible feedback mechanisms. These descriptive analyses established the foundation for interpreting inferential findings within each group's unique engagement profile.

Descriptive Statistics for Motivational Constructs – Board Responses (n = 5)

Descriptive analysis of the Board survey response (n = 5) was interpreted as showing that Board members reported generally high levels of motivation across most constructs, with some variation reflecting their unique governance role within the organization. The highest rated construct was achievement (M = 6.50, SD = .5000), interpreted as underscoring the significance of personal fulfillment and goal attainment in Board engagement. Other highly rated constructs included interpersonal relationships and organizational policies and supervision (M = 5.80), interpreted as indicating that meaningful interpersonal dynamics and a structured governance environment contribute to sustained involvement. Moderate ratings for competence (M = 5.20), relatedness (M = 5.60), and recognition (M = 5.30) reflect consistent but slightly less dominant intrinsic motivators. In contrast, responsibility (M = 3.20) and networking (M = 2.90) received the lowest average scores, interpreted as suggesting that external obligations and expansion of professional connections were less salient for Board participants. The overall

motivational profile was considered consistent with the expectations of governance roles and provided a meaningful contrast to the Coach responses discussed in the subsequent section.

Descriptive Statistics for Motivational Constructs – Coaches Responses (n = 16)

Analysis of the composite motivational constructs derived from the Coaches survey responses indicated the relative importance of different motivators for volunteer Coaches. The highest rated construct was organizational policies and supervision (M = 6.56, SD = 0.52), interpreted as showing that Coaches place a high value on structured support and organizational clarity. Achievement (M = 6.01) and interpersonal relationships (M = 5.94) were also rated highly, interpreted as indicating that personal accomplishment and relational connection are central to the volunteer experience. In contrast, career advancement (M = 3.28) and networking (M = 4.00) received the lowest ratings, interpreted as suggesting that external or career-oriented incentives are less salient for this group. The variability in responses, interpreted as reflecting diverse perspectives on its value. These descriptive analyses provided a baseline motivational profile for Coaches prior to inferential testing.

The following section provides an analysis of the key findings from the descriptive and inferential analyses conducted on the survey data collected from volunteer Coaches (n = 16) and Board members (n = 5). To establish context for the regression results and explore the patterns in volunteer engagement, descriptive statistics were analyzed for both raw survey items and motivational constructs. Analysis of initial comparisons indicated strong intrinsic motivation across both groups, with high ratings

on items such as satisfaction_meaningful, satisfaction_recommend, and values_based motivators. However, distinct differences emerged in the distribution and emphasis of specific motivational domains. Coaches exhibited greater variability in their responses, reflecting a wider range of personal and professional influences, while Board members demonstrated more consistency and a stronger alignment with strategic and mission-driven values. The observed differences were interpreted as providing important insights into how each group experiences and expresses motivation, thereby laying the foundation for subsequent regression analysis and implications for volunteer engagement strategies.

Table 13

Comparison of Motivational Construct Mean Scores: Coaches vs. Board Members

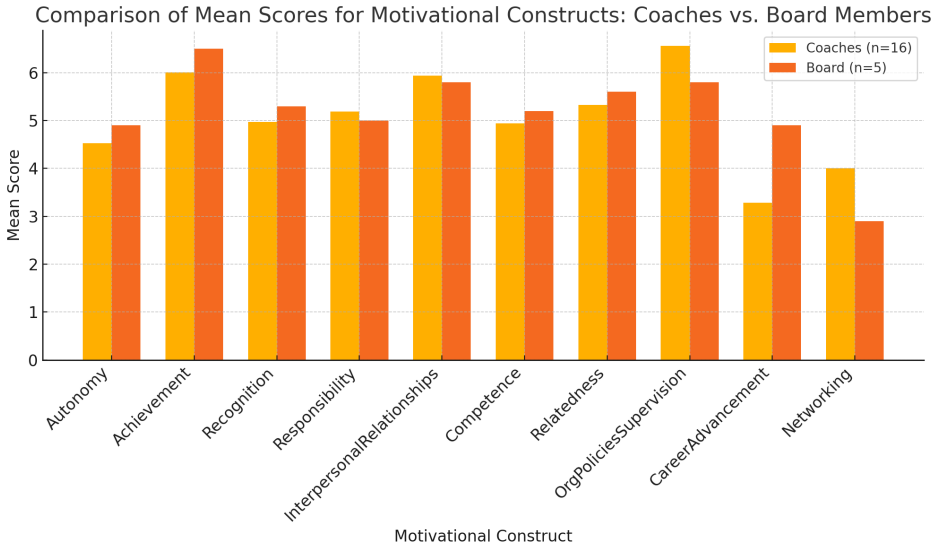
Construct	Coaches (n=16)	Board (n=5)
Autonomy	4.53	4.9
Achievement	6.01	6.5
Recognition	4.97	5.3
Responsibility	5.19	5.0
InterpersonalRelationships	5.94	5.8
Competence	4.94	5.2
Relatedness	5.33	5.6
OrgPoliciesSupervision	6.56	5.8
CareerAdvancement	3.28	4.9
Networking	4.0	2.9

Table 13 presents the mean scores of motivational constructs between coaches and Board members, allowing for comparison between the two groups. While both groups rated intrinsic motivators highly, Board members scored slightly higher on achievement and recognition, suggesting a stronger emphasis on personal fulfillment and acknowledgment. Coaches, on the other hand, placed greater value on organizational policies and supervision. Career advancement and networking were consistently rated

lower by both groups, with Board members reporting particularly low motivation from networking. These comparisons highlight nuanced differences in engagement drivers across organizational roles.

Figure 11

Comparison of Motivational Construct Means Among Coaches and Board Members



The chart presents a side-by-side comparison of mean scores for key motivational constructs between Coaches (n = 16) and Board members (n = 5). Both groups reported high levels of intrinsic motivation, with achievement, interpersonal relationships, and organizational support ranking among the most influential factors. Board members rated achievement and recognition slightly higher than Coaches, suggesting a stronger emphasis on personal accomplishment and formal acknowledgement. In contrast, Coaches reported higher motivation from organizational policies and supervision, possibly reflecting their direct engagement with day-to-day operations. Both groups rated career advancement and networking lower, indicating limited influence from extrinsic or

career-oriented incentives. The results indicated both shared and role-specific drivers of volunteer engagement.

Regression Model Findings

The multiple regression analysis indicated that motivational constructs collectively accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in satisfaction levels ($R^2 = .854$, Adjusted $R^2 = .723$). The results show that approximately 72.3% of the variance in satisfaction could be explained by predictors included in the final model. Of the seven variables retained in the analysis (autonomy, achievement, recognition, competence, interpersonal relationships, organizational policies and supervision, and career advancement), only achievement emerged as a statistically significant predictor ($\beta = .758$, $p = .016$). This finding highlights the critical influence of personal accomplishment as a driver of volunteer satisfaction in this context. While the remaining predictors demonstrated positive but nonsignificant associations, their inclusion contributed to the overall explanatory power of the model. The construct relatedness was excluded from the final model due to multicollinearity, ensuring the stability and interpretability of the regression estimates. I interpreted the results as evidence of the centrality of intrinsic motivation, particularly achievement, in shaping meaningful and sustained volunteer coach engagement.

Synthesis of Descriptive and Inferential Trends

The descriptive analysis demonstrated that both Coaches and Board members reported high levels of intrinsic motivation, with achievement and interpersonal relationships consistently ranking among the highest-rated constructs. Coaches rated

organizational policies and supervision as the strongest motivational factor (M = 6.56), while Board members placed the greatest value on achievement (M = 6.50). In contrast, extrinsic motivators such as networking and career advancement received notably lower ratings, especially among Board members, suggesting that personal growth and connection to mission are more influential than external incentives across roles.

These descriptive trends were reinforced by inferential analysis. Multiple linear regression identified organizational support ($\beta = .853$, $p = .030$) and recognition ($\beta = -.598$, $p = .038$) as statistically significant predictors of volunteer satisfaction among Coaches, with the final model accounting for 84.9% of the variance in satisfaction ($R^2 = .849$, Adjusted $R^2 = .675$). Although achievement did not reach statistical significance in the model, its high mean score and theoretical relevance supported its continued importance in understanding volunteer motivation. Overall, the alignment between descriptive and inferential results underscored the central role of intrinsic and relationship motivators in sustaining volunteer engagement, consistent with Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory and SDT. The following section presents an evaluation how these findings aligned with the original research question and hypothesis, clarifying the predictive role of motivational constructs in volunteer satisfaction.

Alignment of Analysis with Research Question and Hypothesis

With this study, I aimed to explore the factors within the organization that influence volunteers' decisions to join and continue their involvement, guided by the hypothesis that volunteers who experience a combination of intrinsic motivators (e.g.,

achievement and recognition) and fulfillment of SDT needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) would report higher satisfaction and stronger retentions.

The regression analysis conducted on the Coach sample directly addressed this research question by identifying the specific motivational constructs that predicted volunteer satisfaction. Among the predictors, organizational support and recognition emerged as statistically significant. Organizational support was positively associated with satisfaction ($\beta = .853$, $p = .030$), while recognition showed a significant negative impact ($\beta = -.598$, $p = .038$), suggesting that they type or quality of recognition may affect its impact on satisfaction. While other intrinsic constructs such as achievement, competence, and autonomy were retained in the model due to theoretical relevance, they did not reach statistical significance. These results partially supported the hypothesis, indicating that volunteers who feel valued and supported by the organization are more likely to report high satisfaction, even if personal accomplishment and autonomy do not always predict outcomes at a statistically significant level.

The Board data, while not used for inferential testing due to small sample size, supported the descriptive patterns observed in the coach group. Board members rated achievement, interpersonal relationships, and organizational support among their highest motivators. This reinforces the importance of intrinsic motivation and mission alignment for volunteers at different organizational levels. Notably, extrinsic constructs such as career advancement and networking were consistently rated lower across both groups, suggesting that external rewards and opportunities for personal gain are less influential in driving volunteer engagement.

Together, the results aligned with both Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, highlighted the central role of intrinsic motivation, particularly purpose, contribution and support, in promoting volunteer satisfaction and retention. The analysis of the data affirmed that volunteers are most engaged when their psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and value alignment are met, supporting the study's hypothesis and theoretical framework.

Implications for Practice and Policy

The findings from this study have important implications for both the client organization and the broader youth sports and volunteer sectors. By identifying key intrinsic motivators that influence volunteer satisfaction, such as achievement, interpersonal connection, and a sense of purpose, the study provides a foundation for enhancing volunteer engagement through evidence-based strategies.

For the client organization, the results point to several actionable improvements. Recruitment messaging should be refined to highlight the emotional and mission-driven aspects of volunteering, such as making a difference in the lives of children and contributing to community development. Volunteers are more likely to commit when they feel that their service has meaning and aligns with their personal values. In terms of retention, the organization would benefit from implementing structured recognition programs, peer mentoring, and opportunities for social connections. These practices reinforce a sense of belonging and appreciation, both of which were shown to be significant drivers of volunteer satisfaction.

In addition, the use of regular data collection, such as biannual volunteer satisfaction surveys, can support continuous quality improvement. Collecting feedback on intrinsic motivators and perceived value allows leadership to remain responsive to volunteer needs and to adjust strategies accordingly. This practice supports a culture of listening, reflection, and ongoing refinement of engagement efforts.

Beyond the client organization, the findings have broader relevance for community-based volunteer programs and youth serving nonprofits. The motivational constructs identified in this study are consistent with research in other sectors, suggesting that the strategies outlined here may be scalable and adaptable. Organizations with similar missions may adopt these practices to improve volunteer engagement and program sustainability. Furthermore, funders and policymakers may consider requesting or incentivizing volunteer engagement assessments as part of performance-based funding. Doing so may improve program outcomes by ensuring a more stable and committed volunteer base.

Finally, the results point to the potential for leadership development within volunteer programs. By identifying and supporting long-serving volunteers through mentoring or governance roles, organizations can cultivate future leaders from within. This approach promotes continuity, strengthens institutional knowledge, and reinforces the mission-aligned culture that sustains long-term impact.

Deliverables and Recommendations

Recommended Solutions

This study produced findings that informed actionable strategies to enhance volunteer engagement and satisfaction within the youth sports organization. Grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, the results indicated that intrinsic motivation play a central role in volunteer fulfillment. The goal of the recommendations is to cultivate a volunteer culture rooted in purpose, contribution, and organizational support.

The final deliverable was a volunteer engagement strategy. I developed the plan based on descriptive and inferential analysis of volunteer data, emphasizing constructs such as achievement, organizational support, and recognition. These elements were consistently rated as influential motivators by both Coaches and Board members.

Multiple linear regression results confirmed that organizational support ($\beta = .853$, $p = .030$) and recognition ($\beta = –.598$, $p = .038$) were statistically significant predictors of satisfaction. Although achievement did not reach statistical significance, it was retained in the model due to the strong theoretical alignment and high mean ratings across both participant groups. These findings suggested that volunteers are most satisfied when they feel genuinely valued by the organization and perceive their contributions as meaningful.

Development of the Deliverable Based on Study Findings

The volunteer engagement strategy was crafted in direct response to the study's findings. Coaches and Board members rated intrinsic constructs such as achievement, competence, and interpersonal relationships highly, while extrinsic factors such as networking and career advancement were rated notably lower. The analysis informed the

tone and content of the deliverable, ensuring that strategies aligned with the values and priorities expressed by the volunteers. By aligning strategic elements with volunteer motivators, the plan offers a practical and evidence-based roadmap for increasing engagement.

Implementation Considerations

To ensure the successful adoption of the volunteer engagement strategy, the organization should integrate it into its existing strategic and operational planning processes. The deliverables structured to be easily integrated into strategic processes, offering guidance for future volunteer support and program alignment. A designated Volunteer Engagement Lead or committee could provide accountability and responsiveness over time.

The deliverable was designed to be flexible and scalable, allowing for adjustments as the organization grows or volunteer demographics change. In this way, the plan is designed to support a culture of continuous improvement and to help the organization adapt to the needs and motivations of its volunteer base.

Recommendations for Future Research

To further strengthen the effectiveness of this plan and support broader learning, several areas of future inquiry are recommended. First, similar studies should be conducted in other youth sports organizations to determine whether the findings are generalizable across different program models and communities. Comparative studies can help identify universal versus context-specific motivators, supporting better-informed decisions across the sector.

Second, qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups, should incorporated in future assessments to gain deeper insights into volunteer experiences. Personal stories and reflections can reveal underlying emotional drivers, challenges, and success factors not captured in surveys.

Third, longitudinal tracking of volunteer motivations and satisfaction over time would provide critical data for evaluating the plan's impact. Seasonal or annual surveys can help detect emerging trends, identify disengagement risks, and guide continuous refinement of strategies.

Finally, further research into the influence of demographic factors, such as age, race, gender, and prior volunteer experience, on motivation and engagement would allow the organization to design more inclusive and customized approaches. This understanding is essential for ensuring that engagement strategies are equitable and responsive to the diverse needs of the volunteer population.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The Volunteer Engagement Strategy has implications that extend beyond the organization. By enhancing volunteer satisfaction and retention, the organization can create more stable, supportive environments that promote children's physical, emotional, and social development. Strengthened volunteerism also contributes to stronger community ties, increased civic engagement, and expanded access to safe, developmental opportunities for youth. These broader benefits reflect key social determinants of health and well-being, underscoring the role of community-based volunteerism in advancing positive social change.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Internal Validity

Internal validity refers to the degree to which a study established a credible cause-and-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables, free from confounding factors. In this study, several strategies were employed to safeguard internal validity. First, motivational constructs such as engagement and satisfaction were clearly operationalized, and a validated survey instrument, the MVFIS, was used to ensure measurement consistency. Randomization of survey items was implemented to mitigate response pattern bias, while uniform administration through SurveyMonkey minimized procedural variability across participants. In SPSS, multiple regression analyses were utilized to control for the influence of demographic and extraneous variables, thereby isolating the effects of motivational factors on volunteer engagement and satisfaction. These combined strategies enhanced the internal credibility of the study and strengthened the reliability of the observed associations.

External Validity

External validity addresses the generalizability of the study findings to broader populations, contexts, and settings. To enhance external validity, this study drew upon a sample reflective of the broader demographic characteristics common to youth sports volunteers nationally. By using a well-established survey instrument across a diverse group of volunteer Coaches and Board members, the study ensured that findings could be applied beyond the immediate organizational context. The high prevalence of volunteer-dependent youth sports organizations nationally supports the broader applicability of the

findings. Furthermore, the use of standardized replicable survey administration procedures increases the potential for future replication studies, herby supporting the generalizability of results across different temporal and geographic settings. Strategies such as sample representativeness and procedural consistency collectively contributed to the external validity of the research.

Reliability

Reliability pertains to the consistency and repeatability of research findings over time and across different contexts. In this quantitative study, several strategies were employed to ensure reliability. Data were collected from two distinct participant groups (Coaches and Board members) enabling comparison of patterns across roles and reducing the likelihood of isolated or biased interpretations. The use of the MVFIS, a validated and widely recognized instrument for assessing volunteer motivation in youth sports, strengthened the internal consistency of measurements. Additionally, a structured data analysis protocol was followed using SPSS. These procedures reinforced the study's methodological rigor and support the dependability of the findings.

Objectivity

Objectivity refers to the extent to which research findings are free from investigative bias or subjective influence. To ensure objectivity in this quantitative study, a validated instrument (MVFIS) was used to standardize the assessment of motivational constructs. Responses were gathered using a 7-point Likert scale, allowing for quantifiable and consistent measurement. The survey was administered anonymously through SurveyMonkey, minimizing the risk of social desirability bias. Data analysis was

conducted using SPSS to maintain statistical rigor and avoid interpretive distortion. Additionally, I practiced reflexivity by disclosing my role as a current volunteer and taking steps to minimize potential bias throughout the data collection and analysis process. These safeguards collectively supported the integrity and objectivity of the study's conclusions.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Strengths

This study possessed several notable strengths that contribute to the credibility and relevance of its findings. First, it maintained a clear and consistent focus on motivational factors influencing volunteer engagement, a topic of growing importance in nonprofit and community-based organizations. This focus was anchored in two well-established theoretical frameworks, Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, which provided a solid conceptual foundation for interpreting volunteer motivations. The theoretical grounding enhanced the study's rigor and ensured that data collection and analysis were meaningfully tied to existing research literature.

Second, the study utilized a validated and reliable survey instrument designed to assess intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, satisfaction, and engagement levels among volunteers. The use of a pre-tested instrument not only increased the internal validity of the study but also allowed for accurate comparison with similar research efforts. It also enabled the quantification of key motivational dimensions that are often difficult to capture qualitatively.

Third, the inclusion of two distinct organizational groups, volunteer Coaches and Board members, offered a comparative perspective that enriched the analysis. This design allowed for the identification of both common and divergent motivational factors between the two cohorts, thereby expanding the practical implications of the findings. The comparative approach also added a layer of complexity and nuance, making it possible to tailor engagement strategies for different volunteer roles within the same organization. Additionally, the diverse perspectives strengthened the generalizability of the findings to other youth-serving nonprofits with varied volunteer structures.

Finally, the study was carefully implemented with attention to ethical standards, including informed consent and confidentiality, and was grounded in practitioner experience, enhancing its real-world relevance. These methodological and conceptual strengths combined to produce findings that are both academically rigorous and practically actionable.

Limitations and Weaknesses

Despite the strengths of the study, several limitations must be acknowledged. The relatively small sample size of Board members limited the statistical power of inferential analyses and restricted the generalizability of findings. While the sample size for the volunteer Coaches exceeded the minimum threshold established through a power analysis, the Board cohort fell short, thereby constraining opportunities to detect significant differences or patterns across groups. Future studies would benefit from including larger and more demographically diverse samples to enhance statistical robustness and representativeness.

The study relied exclusively on self-reported survey data, which introduces the potential for response biases, including social desirability and recall bias. Although anonymity was preserved to encourage candor, participants may not have been inclined to present themselves or their experiences in a more favorable light. Incorporating additional data sources, such as focus groups or interviews, in future research would enable methodological triangulation and deepen the interpretation of volunteer motivation and engagement to dynamics.

Several organizational and personal factors may have influenced participant experiences and thus interpretation of the study results. My dual role as both investigator and current volunteer within the organization could have introduced unintended bias or influenced how participants perceived the study. Although survey responses were collected anonymously and I had no access to identifying information, the possibility of perceived familiarity remains a consideration. Future research may benefit from using external evaluators or researchers with no affiliation to the organization under study.

Timing also presented a potential limitation. Data collection occurred during a transitional period between sports seasons, which may have affected volunteers' sense of connection to the organization or the salience of their recent experiences. The timing could have impacted response rates and the immediacy or accuracy of participants' reflections on their engagement and satisfaction.

Moreover, the organization's governance context may have shaped how volunteers experience and interpret their roles. The longstanding tenure of Board members, ranging from 15 to 30 years, suggests a stable but potentially enriched

leadership culture. This leadership continuity may have affected how newer volunteer perceive opportunities for influence, innovation, or organizational change, which in turn could shape their motivational orientation and satisfaction. These contextual dynamics may have underscored the importance of understanding the organizational environment when interpreting the results and translating them into practice.

Taken together, these limitations highlighted areas for methodological improvement and underscore the need for further research that is both methodologically rigorous and contextually sensitive. Addressing these limitations would improve both the internal and external validity of future research in this area.

Summary

Section 4 of the study provides a detailed analysis of the quantitative findings and examines their alignment with the guiding research question regarding volunteer motivation in youth sports organizations. The research, grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory and SDT, addressed the persistent challenge of volunteer retention by examining intrinsic and extrinsic motivators across two groups: volunteer Coaches and Board members. Using the validated MVFIS instrument, data were collected from 21 participants and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression.

Key demographic differences emerged between the two groups, with Board members generally reporting higher levels of education, income, and years of volunteer service. Coaches rated organizational policies and supervision as their most influential motivator, while Board members prioritized achievement. Across both groups, intrinsic

motivators such as satisfaction, meaningful contribution, and values alignment were consistently rated higher than extrinsic factors like networking and career development.

Regression analysis identified organizational support and recognition as statistically significant predictors of volunteer satisfaction, explaining 67.5% of the variance. Achievement, though not statistically significant, maintained theoretical relevance and high mean scores, further affirming the central role of intrinsic motivation. The study adhered to standards for quantitative analysis by testing assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity. Reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha, with most constructs meeting acceptable thresholds. Despite a limited Board member sample, the study's internal and external validity were strengthened through methodological rigor, sample representation, and standardized data collection procedures.

Implications for practice include the development of a volunteer engagement strategy tailored to the motivational profiles identified. The recommendations emphasized structured recognition, mission-aligned recruitment messaging, and long-term leadership development pathways. The study's findings also provided actionable insights for other community-based organizations, highlighting the role of intrinsic motivators in supporting volunteer retention. Future research is encouraged to expand the sample size, incorporate qualitative methods, and track longitudinal data to depend on understanding and strengthen generalizability.

Section 5 outlines the dissemination plan for presenting the study's findings and deliverables to the leadership of the client organization. Additionally, this section

describes the broader applicability of the volunteer engagement strategy to similar nonprofit organizations, explores recommendations for future research, and discusses the potential for positive social change resulting from enhanced volunteer engagement strategies.

Section 5: Dissemination Plan and Conclusion

Dissemination Plan

The results of this study were shared with Board of Directors via email, and a formal presentation was offered as an option, if requested. Accompanying the presentation was an executive summary and the formal volunteer engagement strategy. These deliverables were designed to provide Board members with a clear, evidence-based foundation to inform strategic decision-making related to volunteer engagement and retention. By translating empirical findings into actionable insights, the dissemination process supported data-driven improvements that align with the organization's mission and long-term sustainability goals.

Applicability to a Broader Audience

The outcomes of this project, particularly the development of the Volunteer Engagement Strategy, were highly applicable to a broad range of nonprofit and community-based organizations beyond the immediate youth sports context. Many volunteer-driven organizations face similar challenges related to recruitment, engagement, and retention, particularly in sectors where intrinsic motivation is a key driver of participation. The strategies identified in this study, emphasizing emotional connection, recognition, and mission alignment, can be adapted to fit the needs of organizations supporting youth development, community health initiatives, educational programs, and civic engagement efforts. As such, the volunteer engagement plan offers flexible, evidence-based framework that can inform strategic planning and operational

improvements across diverse nonprofit environments, promoting sustained volunteer involvement, and enhancing organizational capacity.

Impact for Social Change

Fostering intrinsic motivation among volunteers has the potential to yield significant and sustained positive social change. By strengthening volunteer engagement and retention, youth sports organizations can create more stable, supportive environments that enhance developmental outcomes for children and adolescents. These improvements directly align with key social determinants of health, particularly in the areas of education access, community cohesion, and social capital development. Increased volunteer stability contributes to equitable access to safe, enriching recreational opportunities, promotes the development of positive adult-child relationships, and strengthens the social fabric of communities. In doing so, efforts to enhance intrinsic motivation among volunteers not only support organizational goals but also advance broader public health and community well-being initiatives.

Summary

In summary, the findings provided empirical evidence that intrinsic motivators are critical to sustaining volunteer engagement within youth sports organizations. Translating these findings into an actionable volunteer engagement strategy offers a strategic pathway for strengthening nonprofit operations, enhancing community resilience, and promoting positive social change. The findings of this research highlighted a critical conclusion: fostering intrinsic motivation among volunteers is not merely beneficial, it is essential to building enduring, impactful community-based programs.

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Appendix A: Service Order Agreement

Project Proposal / Organization Approval

Students are required to secure approval to participate from the organization where they wish to conduct research. The organization leader must state their desire to participate in the study in a signed letter. The letter should state a preference if the organization wishes to be identified or not in the student's published study. An organization report with the organization's name will be provided by the student to the organization. In concert with a student's Professional Administrative Study chairperson, the student must provide details on what they hope to accomplish and have a signed agreement from a senior organizational leader.

This Project Proposal has been drafted by Autumn Tomas for ABC Sports League Cheerleading dated 2/27/2024.

Scope of Work

Autumn will create a research-based parent engagement plan.

Work Phase	Estimated Time Required
Interactions: Create and implement a parent engagement survey.	3 months
Outcomes/Deliverables: Analysis of parent engagement survey and a Parent Engagement Plan.	3 months

Additional Services Provided if Requested:	
Total	6 months

Services Summary	**Estimated Length of Engagement** **6 months**

Terms of confidentiality and compliance:

In all reports (including drafts shared with peers and faculty members), the student is required to maintain confidentiality by removing names and key pieces of information that might disclose an Institution's / individual's identity or inappropriately divulge proprietary details. If the Institution itself wishes to publicize the findings of this project, that is the Institution's judgment call.

The student will publish the case study in ProQuest as a doctoral capstone (with site and participant identifiers withheld). The case study will be based upon interviews with non-vulnerable adults on the topic of the Institution's business operations, review of public records, and review of internal records/documents related to the Institution's operations that the Institution deems appropriate for sharing with the student.

The doctoral student will not use these data for any purpose other than the project outlined in this agreement.

Interview recordings and full transcripts will be shared with any interviewee (upon request), and the doctoral student will provide opportunities for clarifying previous

statements. Transcripts with identifiers redacted may be shared with the doctoral student's university faculty, peer advisors, and site leadership (upon request).

The doctoral student is responsible for understanding and complying with all the Institution's policies and regulatory requirements.

Ethical Conduct in this Consulting Relationship

The Code of Conduct in the Walden University 2016-2017 Student Handbook and the ethical requirements for IRB compliance.

Also, students are required to uphold professional principles in fulfilling their roles as consultants and coaches to client organizations. Beyond the confidentiality requirements outlined above, three principles are key to ensuring ethical conduct in consulting relationships.

Principle 1: Protect the integrity of Walden University

Not representing conflicting or competing interests or positioning themselves such that their interest may be in conflict or may be perceived to be in conflict with the purposes and values of Walden University

Not intentionally communicating false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of Walden University and of the consulting capstone experience

Principle 2: Exhibit professional conduct at all times

Respecting the climate, culture, values, and regulatory requirements of client organizations and client workforce members

Principle 3: Protect the promise of confidentiality

Not using or adapting client organization's data and information after the capstone experience, unless the information has been publicly shared by the client

Not conducting telephone conferences with the client organization in public places where information may be overheard

This Project Proposal has been submitted by Autumn Tomas and Walden University:

Autumn L. Tomas 2/24/2024

SIGNATURE & Date

This Project Proposal has been approved by Kristy Hancock, Cheer Coordinator:

Kristy Hancock 2/24/2024

SIGNATURE & Date

Appendix B: MVFIS Survey Questions

Appendix B includes the survey instruments administered via SurveyMonkey. Both participants, the Board of Directors and the Coaches, responded to these questions, which were designed to assess perceptions of engagement, satisfaction, and program effectiveness.

MVFIS Survey

Please select the option that best represents your thoughts and feelings.

1. I feel compassion toward people in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
2. I feel it is important to help those involved in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
3. I can do something for a cause in the youth sports organization, which is important to me.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important

4. Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
5. I can learn how to deal with a variety of people in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
6. I can explore my own strengths in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
7. People I am close to want me to volunteer in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
8. People I know share an interest in community service.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance

- Slightly important
- Neutral
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

9. Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
10. Volunteering in the youth sports organization can help me to get my foot in the door at a place.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
11. I can make new contacts through the youth sports organization that might help my business or career.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
12. Volunteering in the youth sports organization allows me to explore different career options.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important

- Neutral
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

13. By volunteering in the youth sports organization, I feel less lonely.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
14. Volunteering in the youth sports organization helps me work through my own personal problems.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
15. Volunteering in the youth sports organization is a good escape from my own troubles.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
16. Volunteering in the youth sports organization makes me feel important.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important

- Very important
- Extremely important

17. Volunteering in the youth sports organization increases my self-esteem.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
18. Volunteering in the youth sports organization makes me feel needed.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
19. Overall, I am satisfied with my experience as a volunteer in the youth sports organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
20. I feel that my contributions as a volunteer are valued by the organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
21. I am likely to continue volunteering with this organization in the future.

- Not at all important
- Low importance
- Slightly important
- Neutral
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

22. I would recommend volunteering for this organization to others.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important
23. Overall, I feel that my volunteer role is meaningful and contributes to the goals of the organization.
    - Not at all important
    - Low importance
    - Slightly important
    - Neutral
    - Moderately important
    - Very important
    - Extremely important

Demographics:

1. Age
    a. 18-24
    b. 25-34
    c. 34-44
    d. 45-54
    e. 55-64
    f. 65+
2. Gender
    a. Woman
    b. Man
    c. Non-binary

    d. A gender not listed here
    e. Prefer not to answer
3. Ethnicity/Race
    a. Asian
    b. Black or African American
    c. Hispanic or Latino
    d. Middle Eastern or North African
    e. Multiracial or Multiethnic
    f. Native American or Alaska Native
    g. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    h. White
    i. Another race or ethnicity, please describe below
        i. Insert text box
4. Education Level
    a. Did not graduate high school
    b. High school diploma/GED
    c. Some college
    d. Associate's degree
    e. Bachelor's degree
    f. Master's degree or higher
5. Length of Volunteering
    a. 0-3 years
    b. 3-5 years
    c. 5-10 years
    d. 10-15 years
    e. 15-20 years
    f. More than 20 years
6. Income Level
    a. $0-$24,999
    b. $25,000-$49,999
    c. $50,000-$74,999
    d. $75,000-$99,999
    e. $100,000-$124,999
    f. $125,000-$149,999
    g. $150,000-$174,999
    h. $174,99-$199,999
    i. $200,000 and up
7. Work Status

1. Prior Volunteer Experience
2. Other Volunteer Work

Likert 7-Point Scale Level of Importance 1 – Not at all important 2 – Low importance 3 – Slightly important 4 – Neutral 5 – Moderately important 6 – Very important 7 – Extremely important

I am using multiple choice in SurveyMonkey because the Matrix/Rank option does not allow for more than 5 columns.

Appendix C: Deliverable

Volunteer Engagement Strategy: A Recruitment and Retention Plan

Prepared for: Client Organization

Date: July 2025

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This Executive Summary outlines the core findings and recommendations from a comprehensive study on volunteer engagement within youth sports organizations. The study revealed that volunteers are primarily motivated by intrinsic factors such as personal fulfillment, a sense of purpose, and social connection. In contrast, extrinsic motivators like career advancement were less influential.

The resulting Volunteer Engagement Strategy provides a targeted plan to enhance recruitment and retention by aligning volunteer experiences with these motivational drivers. The strategy includes five core priorities:

1. Emphasize intrinsic motivators in recruitment and messaging.
2. Strengthen recognition and appreciation efforts.
3. Foster a sense of community and belonging.
4. Create regular feedback mechanisms through biannual surveys.
5. Personalize retention strategies for long-term volunteers.

Key evaluation benchmarks include improved season-over-season retention, average satisfaction ratings of 6.0 or higher on a 7-point scale and increase participation in engagement activities. This plan is designed to support data-driven decision-making and help the organization sustain a strong, mission-aligned volunteer base.

Methodology

The data for this volunteer engagement study was collected using a targeted, quantitative approach designed to explore the motivational factors influencing volunteer satisfaction, commitment, and retention within a youth sports organization. Grounded in applied research principles and supported by validated theoretical frameworks, the methodology ensured both depth and relevance in capturing the experiences of current volunteer Coaches and Board members.

- Primary Data Collection through Volunteer Surveys – A structured survey was administered to current Coaches and Board members using the Modified Volunteer Functions Inventory for Sports (MVFIS), a validated instrument in assessing intrinsic and extrinsic motivational drivers.
- Theoretical Frameworks to Guide Design and Analysis – Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and SDT guided the design and analysis. These frameworks helped define key constructs such as achievement, competence, relatedness, and recognition.
- Descriptive Statistical Analysis – Responses were analyzed to determine trends in motivation and satisfaction. The study highlighted areas of strong engagement and potential improvement.
- Stakeholder Specific Insights – Separate analysis of Board member and Coach responses allowed for nuance recommendations tailored to each group.

This methodology provided a foundation for developing strategic priorities directly informed by the voices and values of the organization's active volunteers.

About this Plan

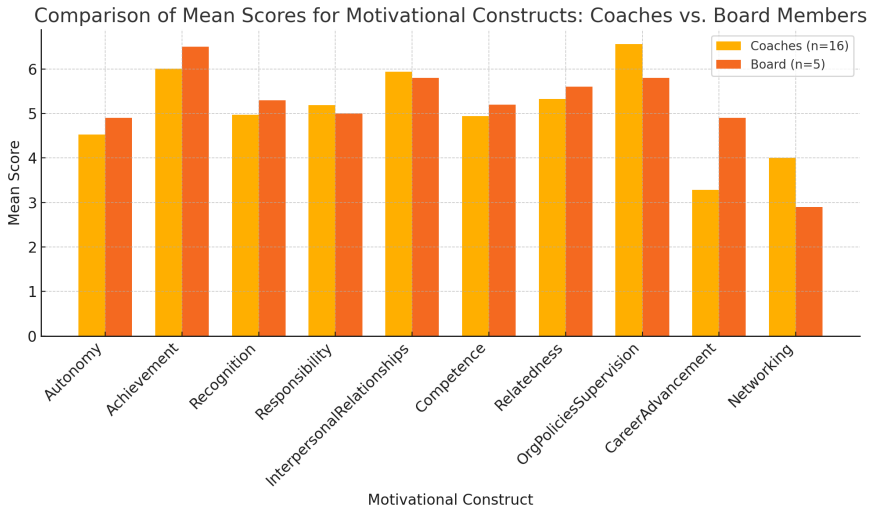
This strategy was developed in response to findings from a recent volunteer engagement study. It presents evidence-based recommendations to enhance recruitment, deepen engagement, and support long-term volunteer retention. The plan equips leaders with actionable steps that reflect the values and motivations of their volunteer base.

Introduction

This strategic plan outlines targeted recommendations to enhance volunteer engagement, based on survey data collected from current Coaches and Board members. Grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and SDT, the analysis identified intrinsic motivators such as achievement, interpersonal connection, and a sense of competence, as the strongest predictors of satisfaction and ongoing involvement.

Figure 1C

Comparison of Motivational Construct Means Among Coaches and Board Members

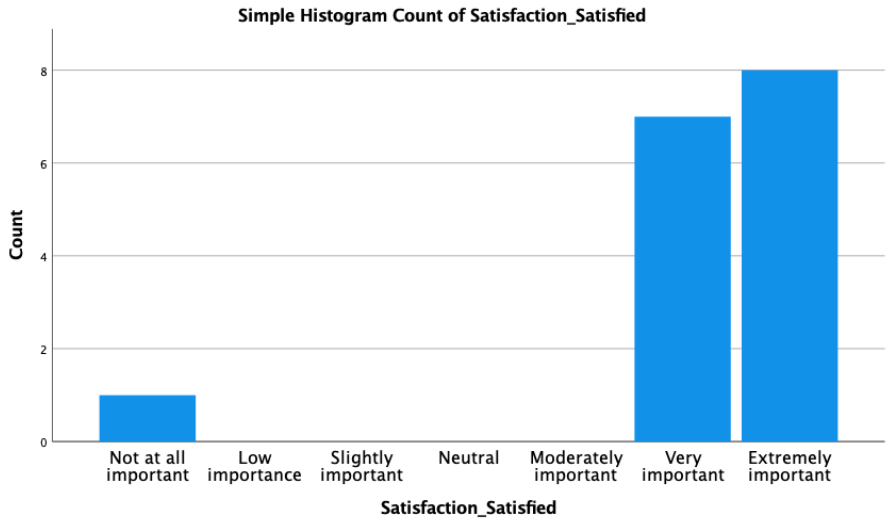


Key Findings

- Volunteers report high levels of intrinsic motivation, including a strong sense of purpose, connection, and achievement.
- Satisfaction and intent to continue volunteering were both rated very highly.
- Extrinsic motivators like networking and career advancement were rated lower in importance.
- Long-term retention is closely tied to emotional engagement and perceived value.

Figure 2C

Distribution of Coaches Satisfaction Responses (Q19)



Strategic Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to align volunteer management practices with the core drivers of engagement, as identified in this study. By focusing on intrinsic motivation, recognition, community-building, and feedback, this plan aims to foster a lasting and meaningful volunteer experience.

Strategic Goals

1. Increase volunteer satisfaction and organizational commitment
2. Deepen emotional connection between volunteers and the mission
3. Improve volunteer retention across seasons

Strategic Priorities and Action Steps

Priority 1: Emphasize Intrinsic Motivators in Recruitment

Findings Basis: Volunteers are motivated primarily by achievement, interpersonal relationships, and competence.

Action Steps:

- Update recruitment materials to highlight emotional rewards (e.g., 'Make a Difference in a Child's Life').
- Share volunteer impact stories on social media and at events.
- Integrate mission-focused messaging in all onboarding and orientation materials.

Priority 2: Strengthen Recognition and Appreciation Programs

Findings Basis: Feeling valued was a top indicator of volunteer satisfaction.

Action Steps:

- Launch a 'Volunteer of the Month' program with personalized awards.
- Host an annual Volunteer Appreciation Night with family-inclusive activities.
- Send quarterly personalized thank-you letters highlighting individual contributions.

Priority 3: Foster a Strong Sense of Community and Belonging

Findings Basis: Volunteers value social connection over career advancement.

Action Steps:

- Create small 'volunteer cohorts' for team bonding (e.g., potlucks, small group socials).
- Assign a peer mentor to every new volunteer to build early relationships.

- Offer optional workshops (e.g., coaching skills, child development) to deepen commitment without formal pressure.

Priority 4: Implement Biannual Volunteer Satisfaction Surveys

Findings Basis: Continuous feedback loops are essential for retention.

Action Steps:

- Distribute a short volunteer satisfaction survey every 6 months.
- Include questions aligned to intrinsic motivators and emotional fulfillment.
- Review results with leadership and take visible action on top concerns.

Priority 5: Customize Retention Efforts for Long-Term Volunteers

Findings Basis: Board members have long tenure but show diverse motivational profiles.

Action Steps:

- Offer expanded leadership roles, committee opportunities, or mentoring roles to veteran volunteers.
- Recognize service milestones (5, 10, 15 years) with public awards and small tokens of appreciation.
- Conduct exit interviews for departing volunteers to learn and improve future retention.

Figure 3C

5 Strategic Priorities for Volunteer Engagement

Evaluation and Accountability

To measure the success of this plan, the following benchmarks will be tracked over time:

- Retention Benchmark: Increase season-over-season volunteer retention rates
- Satisfaction Benchmark: Target a minimum satisfaction score of 6.0/7.0 on biannual surveys.
- Engagement Benchmark: Boost participation in recognition and social engagement activities.

Figure 4C

Evaluation and Accountability Scorecard Sample

Evaluation Area	Metric Description	Target Goal
Volunteer Retention	Track season-over-season retention rates	Increase retention annually
Volunteer Satisfaction	Measure average satisfaction using a 7-point Likert scale	Average score of 6.0 or higher
Engagement Participation	Monitor participation in recognition events and social activities	Annual increase in participation rates

Conclusion

This strategy offers a focused, evidence-based approach to strengthening volunteer engagement. By aligning recruitment, recognition, and retention practices with the intrinsic values and needs of volunteers, the organization can build a sustainable and impactful volunteer program that supports its mission and long-term goals.

Appendix D: Raw Survey Dataset – Board

This is the complete raw survey dataset from Board members who participated in this study as Group 2 (Board). The responses reflect each participant's ratings across all survey items, including key constructs related to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, responsibility, autonomy, and organizational engagement. All identifying details have been removed to ensure confidentiality. These data informed the descriptive statistics, group comparisons, and interpretations related to the motivational profiles of Board members.

Board Responses

Group	2	2	2	2	2
Q1	5	6	7	6	7
Q2	6	7	7	6	7
Q3	6	6	7	6	7
Q4	5	6	7	5	6
Q5	5	6	7	5	6
Q6	5	5	7	5	6
Q7	5	6	6	5	6
Q8	5	6	7	5	6
Q9	5	6	7	5	6
Q10	2	3	4	2	3

Q11	2	4	5	2	4
Q12	2	3	5	2	3
Q13	4	5	6	4	5
Q13	4	5	6	4	5
Q14	3	4	6	3	4
Q15	3	4	6	3	4
Q16	4	5	6	4	5
Q17	4	5	6	4	5
Q18	5	6	7	5	6
Q19	7	7	6	6	6
Q20	7	6	6	5	5
Q21	7	7	7	7	6
Q22	7	7	6	6	6
Q23	7	7	7	7	6

Appendix E: Raw Survey Dataset – Coaches

This is the complete raw survey data collected from volunteer Coaches who participated in the study. Each row represents an individual respondent's Likert-scale response to all items on the survey instrument, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, as well as satisfaction and engagement measures. All personally identifying information has been removed to maintain respondent confidentiality. The data are presented as exported from the original SurveyMonkey dataset and prepared for analysis in SPSS. These responses served as the basis for all descriptive and inferential statistical analysis related to the volunteer cohort in this study.

Coaches Responses

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
6	6	7	6	7	5	5	5
6	6	5	5	6	5	5	6
5	4	3	4	4	4	6	4
6	7	6	7	6	6	7	7
6	5	6	4	4	4	4	5
7	6	7	5	7	6	5	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	5	7
7	7	7	4	7	7	7	4
7	7	6	5	6	6	5	6
7	6	6	6	6	5	6	4
6	6	6	5	5	6	5	5
6	7	7	7	6	7	4	6
7	5	6	4	7	1	2	7
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
6	6	1	1	3	1	1	5
7	7	7	7	7	5	4	7

Variables Q9 to Q16:

Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
5	5	6	4	4	4	3	5
6	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
3	2	1	1	4	1	2	3
6	5	6	6	4	4	4	6

6	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
6	6	7	5	5	6	6	7
6	6	4	4	6	5	7	5
4	4	6	4	6	4	4	7
6	2	2	2	5	2	2	5
5	5	6	4	6	5	6	6
6	2	2	1	2	2	3	5
5	5	7	7	5	6	5	6
5	4	2	4	1	1	4	3
7	1	1	1	7	5	6	5
5	1	1	1	5	1	1	5
7	1	7	1	1	5	1	2

Variables Q17 to Q23:

Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23
4	3	7	7	7	6	7
5	6	7	6	7	6	7
3	4	7	7	7	7	7
7	6	6	6	7	6	7
2	4	6	7	6	7	7
6	6	7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	7	7	6
6	7	7	7	7	7	7
7	5	7	7	7	7	7
5	6	6	6	7	6	7
5	4	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	6	7	7	7	7
2	2	6	6	6	7	7
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
3	6	7	6	6	5	6
1	4	1	7	7	7	7

Appendix F: Mapping of Survey Questions

This appendix provides a mapping of the MVFIS survey questions to the eight theoretical constructs derived from Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Each survey item is categorized according to the motivational or hygiene factor it was intended to measure. Questions related to satisfaction and engagement are listed as dependent variables. Extrinsic career-related items are noted separately for optional analysis. Each item score on a 1-7 Likert scale. The constructs computed as averages.

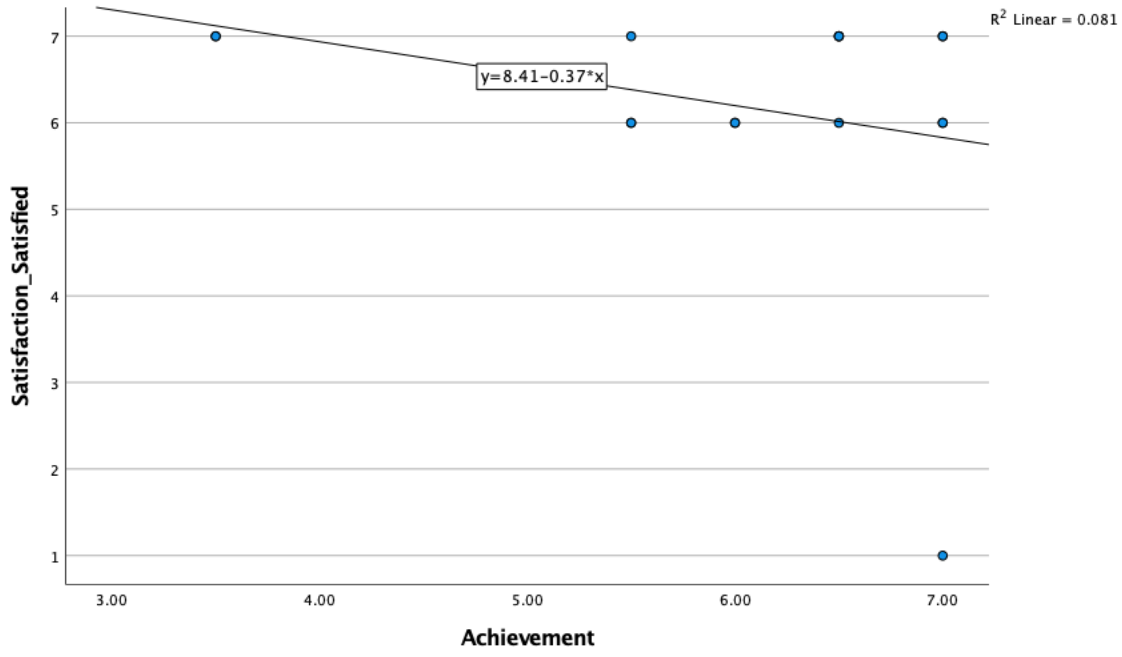
Survey Question	Variable Name	Theoretical Variable
Q1. I feel compassion toward people in the youth sports organization.	Values_Compassion	Relatedness (SDT/Intrinsic)
Q2. I feel it is important to help those involved in the youth sports organization.	Values_Help	Achievement (Motivator/Intrinsic)
Q3. I can do something for a cause in the youth sports organization, which is important to me.	Values_Cause	Achievement (Motivator/Intrinsic)
Q4. Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things in the youth sports organization.	Understanding_Perspective	Autonomy (SDT/Motivator)
Q5. I can learn how to deal with a variety of people in the youth sports organization.	Understanding_People	Interpersonal Relationships (Hygiene)
Q6. I can explore my own strengths in the	Understanding_Strengths	Competence (SDT/Intrinsic)

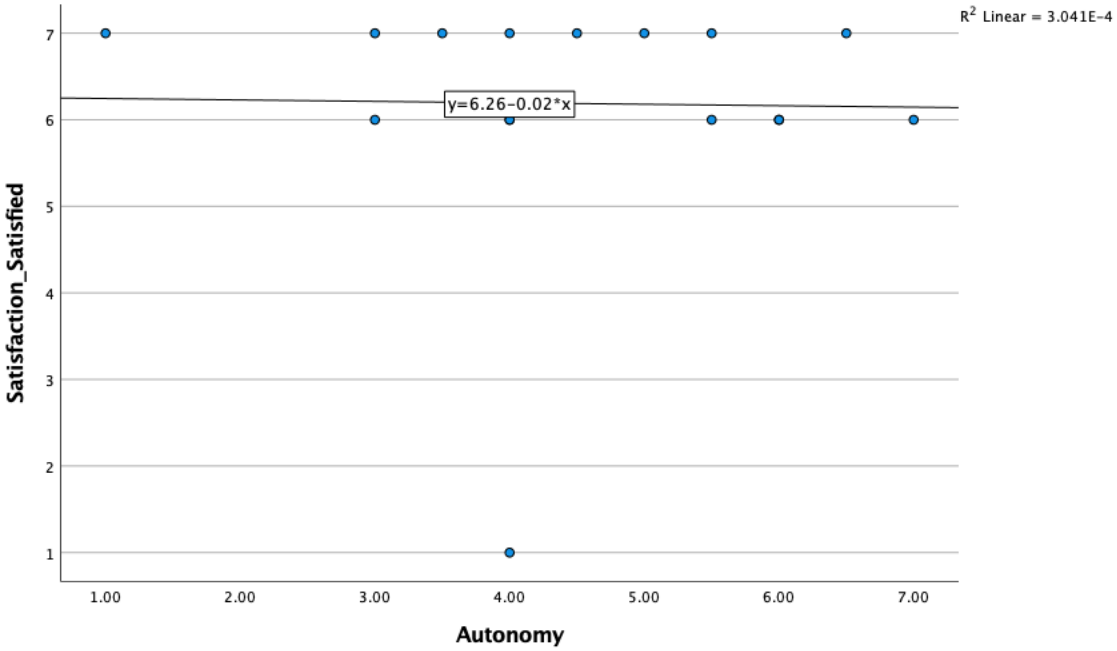
youth sports organization.		
Q7. People I am close to want me to volunteer in the youth sports organization.	Social_Pressure	Relatedness (SDT/Intrinsic)
Q8. People I know share an interest in community service.	Social_Community	Relatedness (SDT/Intrinsic)
Q9. Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.	Social_Value	Relatedness (SDT/Intrinsic)
Q10. Volunteering can help me get my foot in the door at a place.	Career_FootinDoor	Career Advancement (Extrinsic - Optional)
Q11. I can make new contacts that might help my business or career.	Career_Contacts	Career Advancement (Extrinsic - Optional)
Q12. Volunteering allows me to explore different career options.	Career_Options	Career Advancement (Extrinsic - Optional)
Q13. By volunteering, I feel less lonely.	Protective_Lonliness	Relatedness (SDT/Intrinsic)
Q14. Volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems.	Protective_Problems	Responsibility (Motivator/Intrinsic)
Q15. Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles.	Protective_Escape	Autonomy (SDT/Motivator)
Q16. Volunteering makes me feel important.	Enhancment_Importance	Recognition (Motivator/Intrinsic)
Q17. Volunteering increases my self-esteem.	Ehancment_SelfEsteem	Competence (SDT/Intrinsic)
Q18. Volunteering makes me feel needed.	Enhancment_Needed	Recognition (Motivator/Intrinsic)
Q19. Overall, I am satisfied with my experience as a volunteer.	Satisfaction_Overall	Dependent Variable: Engagement/Satisfaction

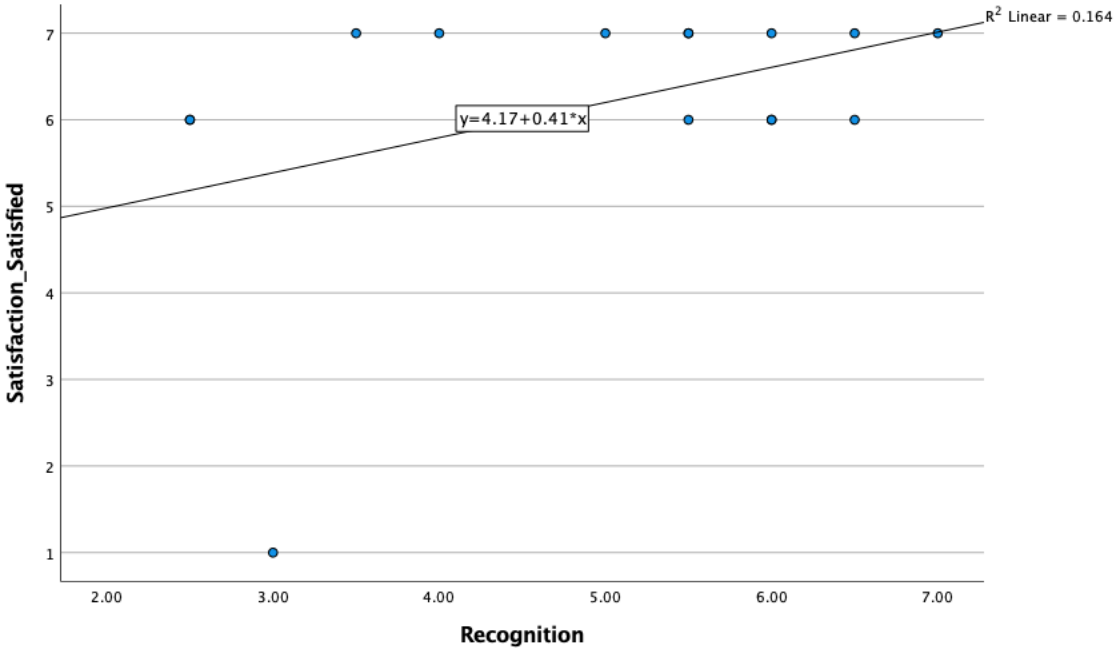
Q20. I feel that my contributions are valued by the organization.	Satisfaction_Valued	Organizational Policies and Supervision (Hygiene Factor)
Q21. I am likely to continue volunteering with this organization in the future.	Satisfaction_Continue	Dependent Variable: Engagement/Satisfaction
Q22. I would recommend volunteering for this organization to others.	Satisfaction_Recommend	Dependent Variable: Engagement/Satisfaction
Q23. Overall, I feel that my volunteer role is meaningful and contributes to the goals of the organization.	Satisfaction_Meaningful	Responsibility (Motivator/Intrinsic)

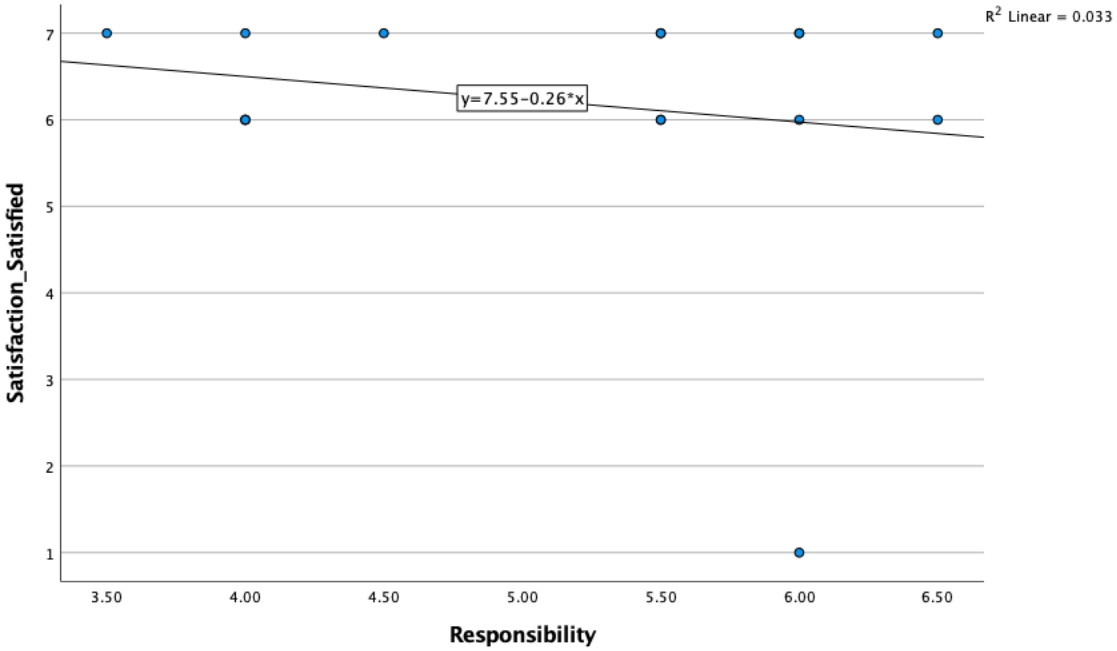
Appendix G: Linear Scatterplots

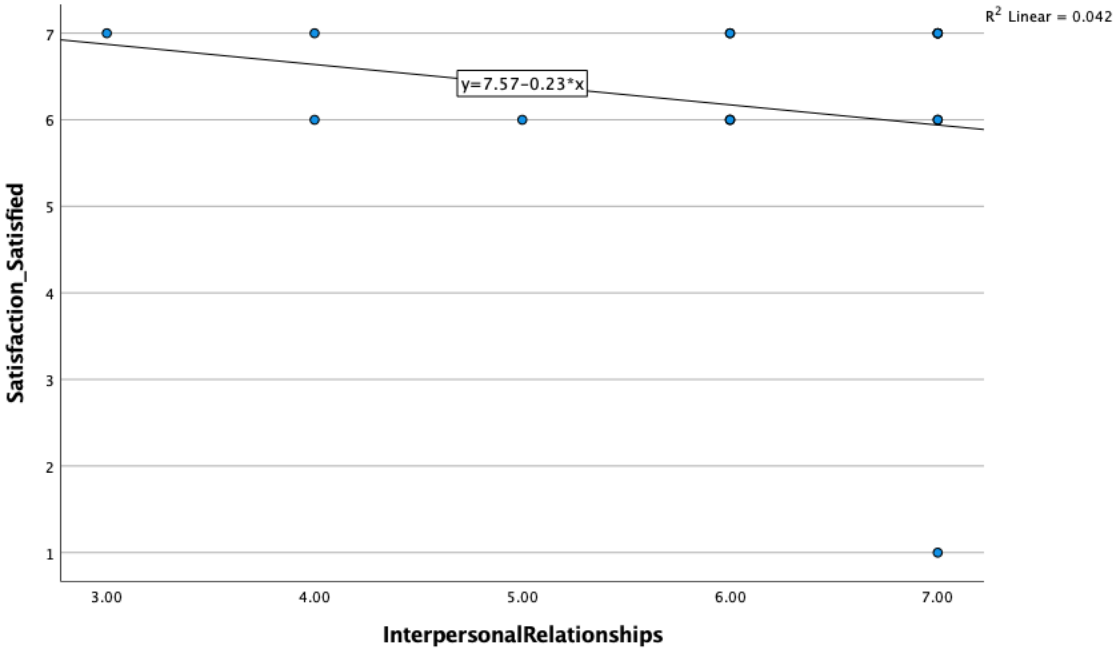
The following appendix includes a series of scatterplots that visually depict the linear relationships between each motivational construct and overall volunteer satisfaction among coach participants. These plots were generated as part of the preliminary assumption testing for the multiple linear regression analysis. Each scatterplot displays individual data points and a fitted linear trend line, allowing for a visual assessment of linearity, direction, and strength of association. These visualizations complement the statistical diagnostics reported in the analysis section and help confirm that the assumption of linearity was reasonably met for each predictor.

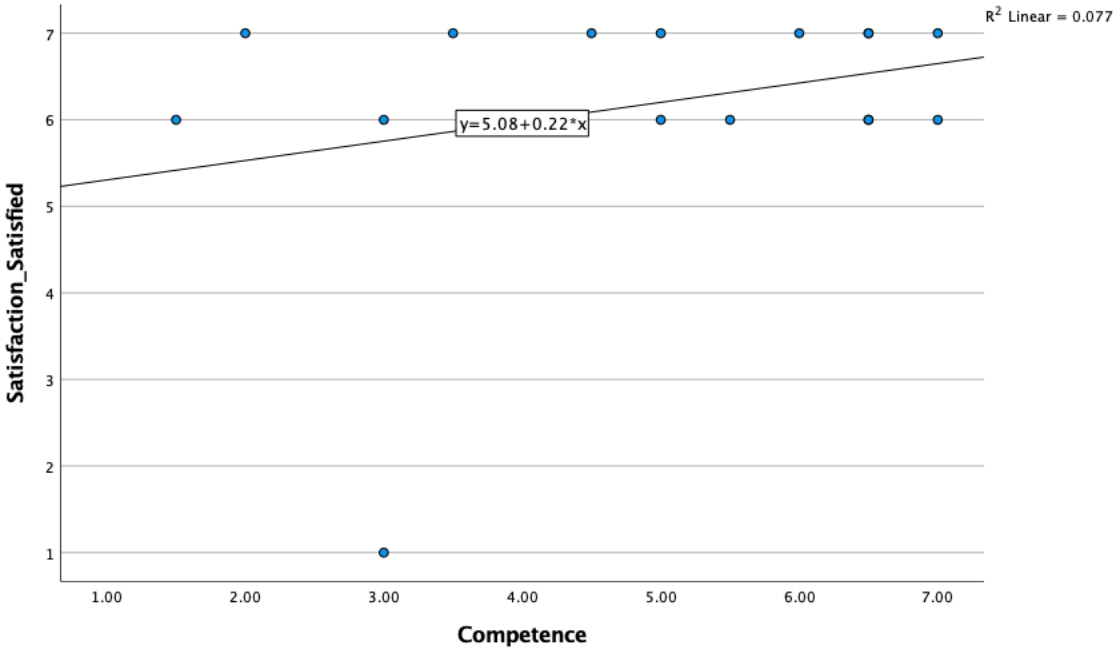


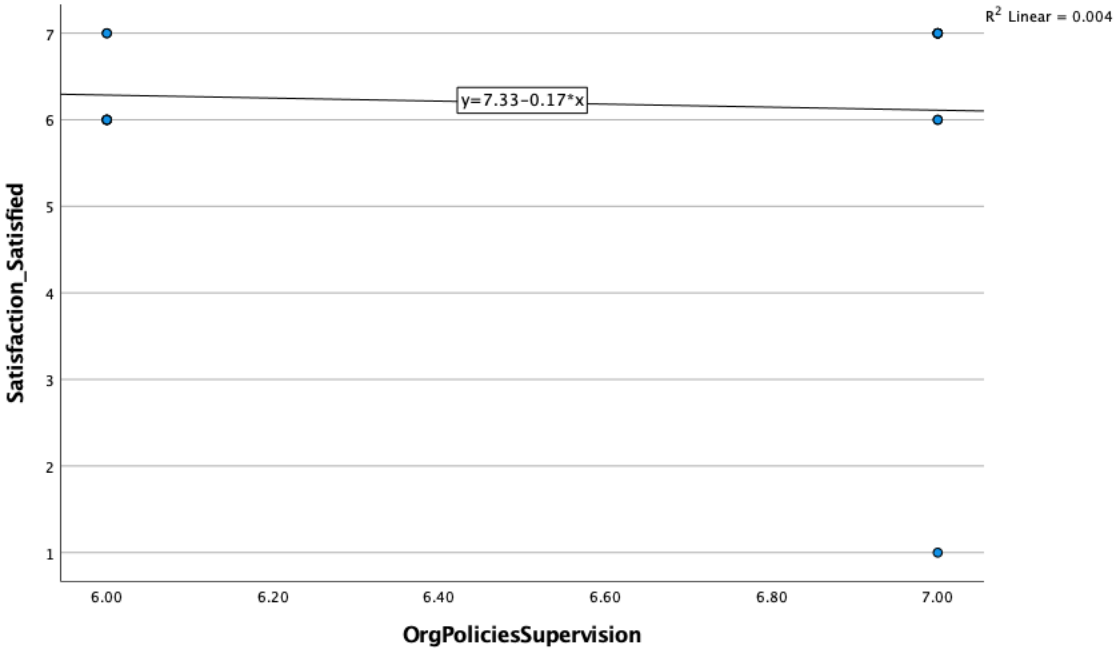

R² Linear = 3.041E-4
y=6.26-0.02*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
Autonomy
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
7.00
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

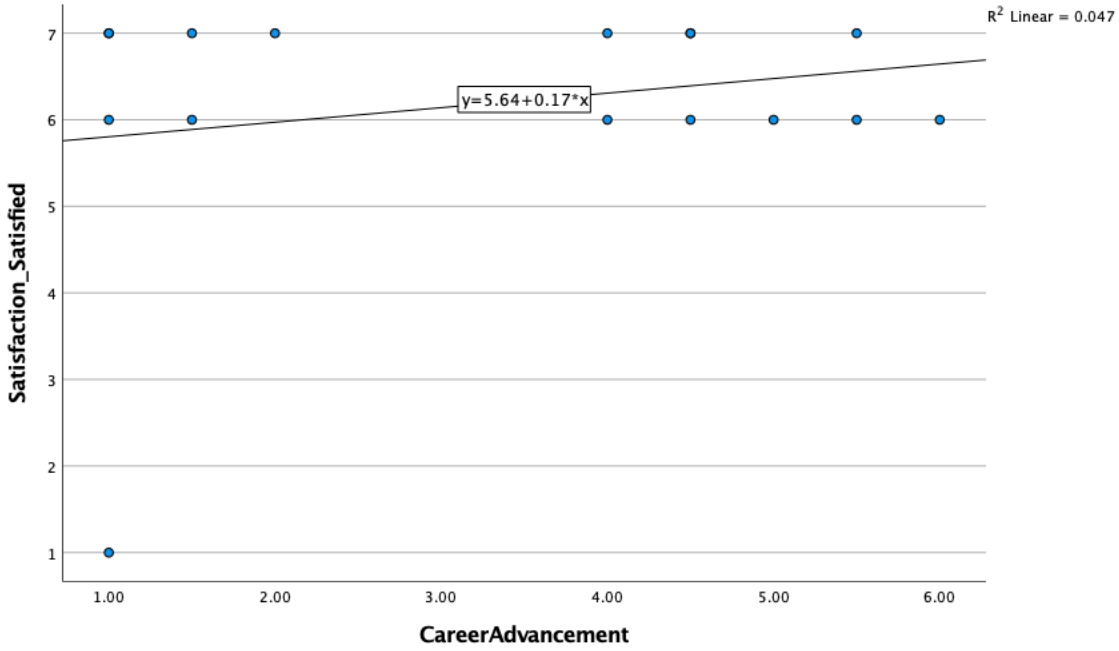

R² Linear = 0.164
y=4.17+0.41*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
Recognition
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
7.00
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

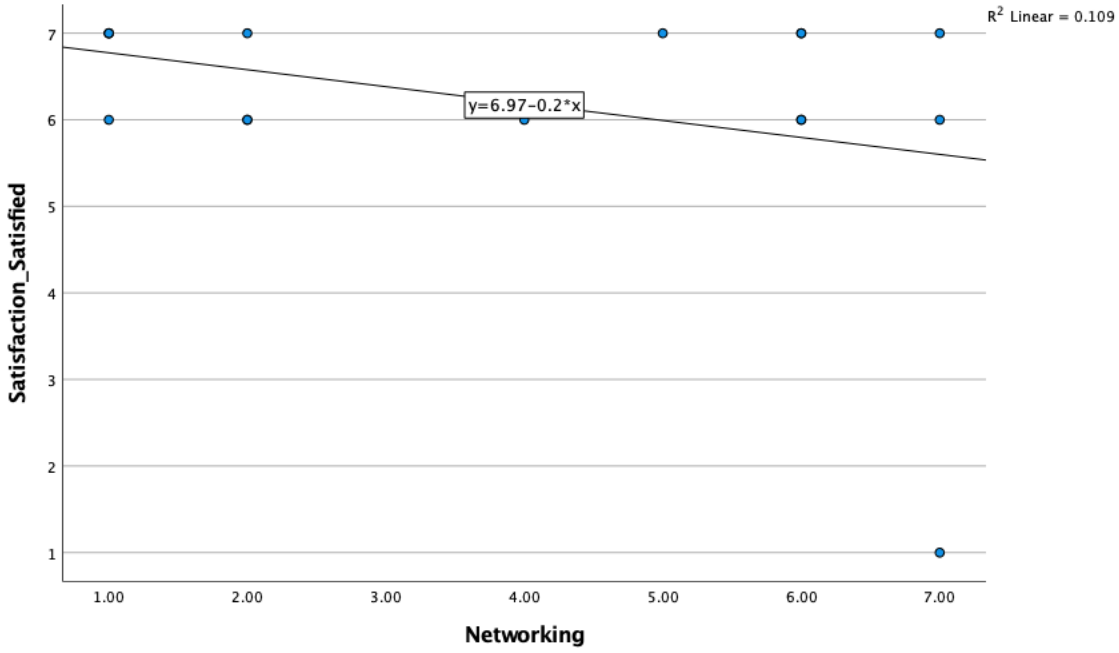

R² Linear = 0.033
y=7.55-0.26*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
3.50
4.00
4.50
5.00
5.50
6.00
6.50
Responsibility


R² Linear = 0.042
y=7.57-0.23*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
7.00
InterpersonalRelationships


R² Linear = 0.077
y=5.08+0.22*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
Competence
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
7.00


R² Linear = 0.004
y=7.33-0.17*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
OrgPoliciesSupervision
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
6.00
6.20
6.40
6.60
6.80
7.00


R² Linear = 0.047
y=5.64+0.17*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
CareerAdvancement
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
1
2
3
4
5
6
7


R² Linear = 0.109
y=6.97-0.2*x
Satisfaction_Satisfied
Networking
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
7.00
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

Appendix H: 7-Point Likert Scale

The following list presents the 7-point Likert scale used in the volunteer motivation and satisfaction survey. Participants were asked to rate each item based on the importance to their volunteer experience. This standardized scale provided consistent measurement across all survey constructs, enabling meaningful comparison and analysis of responses.

1 = Not at all important

2 = Low importance

3 = Slightly important

4 = Neutral

5 = Moderately important

6 = Very important

7 = Extremely important

Appendix I: Email Invitation

To initiate participant recruitment, I distributed an email invitation to eligible volunteers affiliated with the client organization. The message included a summary of the study's purpose, assurance of anonymity, and instructions for survey participation. To ensure informed consent, the IRB-approved consent form was attached to this email.

Email Invitation

Subject line:
Invitation to Take an Anonymous Survey

Email message:

You are invited to complete an anonymous survey by a Walden University student working toward a doctoral degree. (See the consent information form attached to this email.) There is a new research study focused on understanding the motivations of volunteers in youth sports organizations. The insights from this study could help organizations like [redacted] better recruit and retain dedicated volunteers.

For this study, you are invited to share your experiences as a volunteer, including what motivates you to continue your involvement. Your input will remain anonymous and will contribute to improving volunteer programs and support within youth sports organizations. The link to the survey is listed below.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference!

About the study:

- One 15-20 minutes anonymous survey through Survey Monkey.
- To protect your privacy, the published study will not share any names or details that identify you.

Volunteers must meet these requirements:

- 18 years old or older
- Current volunteer

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PWVolunteerSurvey

Appendix J: CITI Training Certificate

I completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program's IRB Members – Basic Course on January 7, 2025, under the requirements set by Walden University. This training covered foundational principles in the protection of human research participants, including topics such as ethical research conduct, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, and federal regulations governing human research subjects. Completion of this course demonstrated my understanding of ethical research standards and preparedness to conduct research involving human participants in compliance with institutional and federal guidelines.

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 07-Jan-2025
Expiration Date N/A
Record ID 67140380

This is to certify that:

Autumn Tomas

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

IRB Members
(Curriculum Group)
IRB Members
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Walden University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

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