

## FEATURES OF SPORT VOLUNTEERS' MOTIVATION IN THE LARGE RUSSIAN REGION

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### Abstract

Sport volunteering is one of the most popular areas of volunteering in the world. Every year thousands of people want to join sports events not only professional but also amateur sports. International and national charity races are held. In some countries, competitions among amateur athletes are widespread. The organization of these events requires the participation of volunteers. Recently, sports volunteering has become a specialized activity of volunteers. In this direction, their behavior patterns are formed. In the community of people who have experience of volunteering, status positions are distributed, their own ideology is formed, a system of incentives that motivates people is developed. Over the past five years, Russia has hosted major sporting events. In 2018, it was the FIFA world Cup, where more than 17 thousand volunteers from around the world were involved. In 2019, Russia hosted the winter Universiade in Krasnoyarsk, where 5 thousand sports volunteers worked. Such a massive annual sporting event as the "Cross of Nations" and "Ski Track of Russia" is also popular in the country.

Despite the political situation and ban of the World anti-doping agency (WADA) on the participation of Russian athletes in international competitions, in 2023 the world summer Universiade is expected to be held in Russia in the capital of the Ural region (Ekaterinburg). The infrastructure for training volunteers in sport events of different levels in all regions of the country is also developing. The expansion of sport events and the popularization of mass sports in Russia is constantly expanding the community of sport volunteers.

The report gives a critical assessment of the survey data based on the members of volunteer community in the Sverdlovsk region, included in the database of the largest regional NGO "Volunteers of the Urals" (sample target, N=706). Sverdlovsk region is one of the key regions in Russia, where international sport events are traditionally held. The largest University in Russia (Ural Federal University) is in the capital of the Ural region, on the basis of which in 2013 was established volunteer center "Volunteers of the Urals". In 2019, in the Association of volunteer centers, this non-profit organization passed a competitive selection and received the status of an infrastructure organization in the Ural Federal district. In the next few years, the organization will be recruiting and training volunteers for all major regional and local events. The survey data allowed to check the dependence of sport volunteers' motivation and their age.

According to the empirical research, it is proved that the nature of activity and behavior of sports volunteers determines not only the special nature of motivation, but also specific goals, as well as socio-demographic characteristics of volunteers. In the internal space of interaction between the community as a whole and volunteers in a particular organization, it is important to correctly set tasks for volunteers with different motivation profiles. These studies allow more effectively organize the process of recruiting volunteers for different volunteer positions (vacancies) depending on the profile of their motivation. In accordance with the peculiarities of sport volunteers' motivation, it is possible to conduct their training more effectively and work to retain already experienced, trained volunteers.

**Keywords:** Volunteerism, sport volunteering, young people, civic engagement.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Sport volunteering is one of the most popular areas of volunteering in the world. Every year thousands of people want to join sports events not only professional but also amateur sports. International and national charity races are held. In some countries, competitions among amateur athletes are widespread. The organization of these events requires the participation of volunteers.

2018 was declared the year of volunteer in Russia. Russian government has developed an action plan for the development of volunteer movement in the country and launched several federal programs. In 2018, 7.4 billion rubles were spent from the state budget to support volunteer activities in Russia (excluding the costs of hosting the world Cup). To date, 15% of Russians are involved in volunteer activities. According to the Association of volunteer centers, the number of volunteers in Russia has tripled since 2014. This is largely due to the regular holding of major international and national sport events in Russia.

Recently, sport volunteering has become a specialized activity of volunteers. In this direction, their behavior patterns are formed. In the community of people who have experience of volunteering, status positions are distributed, their own ideology is formed, a system of incentives that motivates people is developed.

Over the past five years, Russia has hosted major sporting events. In 2018, it was the FIFA world Cup, where more than 17 thousand volunteers from around the world were involved. In 2019, Russia hosted the winter Universiade in Krasnoyarsk, where 5 thousand sports volunteers worked. Such a massive annual sport event as the "Cross of Nations" and "Ski Track of Russia" is also popular in the country.

Despite the political situation and ban of the World anti-doping agency (WADA) on the participation of Russian athletes in international competitions, in 2023 the world summer Universiade is expected to be held in Russia in Yekaterinburg (capital of the Ural region). Sverdlovsk region is one of the key regions of Russia, where international sport events are traditionally held. According to the Analytical center under the government of the Russian Federation, in 2018 the number of volunteers in the Ural region amounted to 137 thousand people.

The largest University in Russia (Ural Federal University) is in the capital of the Ural region, on the basis of which in 2013 was established volunteer center "Volunteers of the Urals". In 2019, in the Association of volunteer centers, this non-profit organization passed a competitive selection and received the status of an infrastructure organization in the Ural Federal district. In the next few years, the organization will be recruiting and training volunteers for all major regional and local events.

The infrastructure for training volunteers in sport events of different levels in all regions of the country is developing. Expansion of sport events' types and popularization of mass sports in Russia allows to increase the community of sports volunteers. In this regard, it is important to understand how this community differs from those people who do not have such experience of volunteering. What motives determine the activity of sports volunteers, are there specific features of sports volunteers that allow to distinguish among them different groups and effectively work with them in the process of training.

Thus, the purpose of this article is to determine the features of sports volunteers' motivation in the Ural region.

## **2 THEORETICAL IDEAS**

Volunteering is widely studied among sociologists in various fields. Within the framework of these research questions, we consider the volunteer community through the prism of the activity approach and theories of motivation in the average level, developed by sociologists studying sport volunteering in different countries.

Motivation of sport volunteers is studied from the position of volunteers' involvement in the environment of sport organizations, specialized clubs or in the socio-cultural environment of mega-events. The interrelation of motivation at participation in major sport events with successful employment practices and career growth of volunteers is revealed and described (Giannoulakis C., Wang C., Gray D., 2014). The motivation of volunteers who took part in sport mega events is studied in the context of achieving any personal, significant from the standpoint of personality psychology results. Such positive results include self-confidence, self-esteem, development of creativity, formation of abilities for self-development, ability to communicate and work in a team (Nichols G, Knight C., Mirfin-Boukouris H., Uri C., Hogg E., Storr R., 2016).

Researchers consider the motivation of sport volunteers within the framework of self-determination theory in terms of the influence of external motivation on internal (Allen J. B., & Shaw S., 2009; Gagné M., & Deci E. L., 2005; Haivas S., Hofmans J., Pepermans R., Huybrechts G., Willems J., Jegers M., & Hofmans J., 2012;

Hayton J., 2016). Sociologists consider the impact of sport volunteers' motivation on commitment to particular nonprofit organization (Bang H., Ross S., & Reio T. G., 2013; Schlesinger T., Egli B., & Nagel S., 2013). Comparative studies of the volunteers' motivation from different countries are conducted (Hustinx L, Convenient F., Knaan R. A., Budney I. L., Pessie B. A., Yamauchi, N. V., 2010; Smith K., Holmes K., Haski-Leventhal D., Knaan R. A., Convenient, F., & Brudney Y. L., 2010).

### 3 DATA AND METHODS

The report is based on a survey of the volunteer community's members in the Sverdlovsk region, included in the database of the largest regional NGO "Volunteers of the Urals" and having experience in sport events (sample target, N=706). To assess the motivation of sport volunteers, we asked the question "What gives you participation in volunteer activities?" with the ability to select multiple options from the list. Respondents were divided into age groups: 18 years and younger (36% of respondents), 19-21 years (45% of respondents), 22 years and older (19% of respondents).

After analyzing the results, we found differences in the motivation of sports volunteers in different age groups. So, to the question "What gives you participation in volunteer activities?" the majority of respondents in the first group (18 years and younger) chose the answer "respect of others". Respondents of the second group (19-21 years) to the same question more chose the answer "obtaining new knowledge and competencies". The majority of respondents in the third group (22 years and older) chose exclusively altruistic motive – "the opportunity to help people".

To assess the motivation of sports volunteers to further participate in events, we asked the question: "What makes you continue to volunteer?". Thus, more than half of the respondents (55.5%) chose the option "Positive emotions, energy and charge that I get in sport projects are important to me", a third of the surveyed volunteers (34%) chose the answer "The presence of a large number of interesting activities for my leisure and development". For a small part of respondents, it is important to "Have free time" (6.5%) and "Friends, established ties and obligations" (4%). For a more detailed analysis, respondents were divided by gender.

According to the empirical study, it can be assumed that the nature of activity and behavior of sport volunteers determines not only the special nature of motivation, but also specific socio-demographic characteristics of volunteers (age and gender).

### 4 THE RESULTS

In order to determine the motives of sport volunteers, respondents were asked one of the questions "Is it important for you to respect of others?". The study revealed statistically significant differences between the responses of respondents of the first age group and other groups. The data are presented in table 1.

**Table 1. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: "Is it important for you to respect of others?" (%)**

Respondents' answers	I age group (18 years and younger)	II age group (19-21 years)	III age group (22 years and older)
Yes	84	34	18
No	16	66	82
Total	100	100	100

Source: author's calculation

"Respect of others" correlates with the age of sport volunteers (Cramer's  $V=0,549$ ). As can be seen from table 1, most of the first age group (84%) consider it important to respect of others. For other groups, the opposite is true – the number of those who do not care how other people feel about their activities exceeds the number of those for whom it matters.

Further in the questionnaire respondents were asked the question "Is it important for you to gain new knowledge and competencies?". The study revealed statistically significant differences between the responses of respondents in the second age group and other groups. The data are presented in table 2.

**Table 2. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: "Is it important for you to gain new knowledge and competencies?" (%)**

Respondents' answers	I age group (18 years and younger)	II age group (19-21 years)	III age group (22 years and older)
Yes	43	70	35
No	57	30	65
Total	100	100	100

Source: author's calculation

"Gaining new knowledge and competencies" correlates with the age of sport volunteers (Cramer's  $V=0.473$ ). As can be seen from table 2, most of the second age group (70%) consider it important to acquire new knowledge and competencies in the framework of work as a sport volunteer. The importance of this motivation is almost equal for the first age group (43% and 57%). For the third age group, the opposite situation is typical – the number of those who do not care about getting new knowledge and competencies exceeds the number of those for whom it matters.

The next question asked "Is it important for you to be able to help other people?". The study revealed statistically significant differences between the responses of respondents of the third age group and other groups. The data are presented in table 3.

**Table 3. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: "Is it important for you to be able to help other people?" (%)**

Respondents' answers	I age group (18 years and younger)	II age group (19-21 years)	III age group (22 years and older)
Yes	51	59	73,5
No	49	41	26,5
Total	100	100	100

Source: author's calculation

"The ability to help other people" correlates with the age of sports volunteers (Cramer's  $V=0.554$ ). As can be seen from table 3, most of the third age group (73.5%) consider it important to be able to help people through volunteer activities. The importance of this motivation is almost equal for the first and second age groups.

To assess the motivation of sport volunteers for further participation in events, we asked the question: "What makes you continue to engage in volunteer activities?". The data were analyzed from a gender perspective. The results are presented in table 4.

**Table 4. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: "What makes you continue to engage in volunteer activities?" (%)**

Type of motivation	Gender	
	Male	Female
Positive energy, emotions and the charge that I get on projects are important to me	47	60
The presence of a large number of interesting activities for my leisure and development	22	33

Availability of free time	15	3
Friends, established ties and obligations	16	4
Total:	100	100

Source: author's calculation

Thus, it was revealed that the motivation of sport volunteers correlates with gender. Half of the girls (60%) go into volunteering for the sake of emotions and positive charge, a third of the respondents attract a variety of activities for leisure and self-development (33%). Quite insignificant value for girls play "the availability of free time" and "established ties". Men in general have a similar trend: the most important thing for the majority of respondents is to receive positive emotions (47%). However, the choice of other motives was about equally divided among men.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the results of the study, we can say that the socio-demographic characteristics of sports volunteers affect their motivation. So, for young sports volunteers 18 years and younger, the most important thing is the respect of others. In our opinion, this is due to the desire of volunteers to show others their importance and prove the usefulness of their activities in the eyes of peers and older generation.

Representatives of the second age group (19-21 years), as a rule, are students of secondary special and higher educational institutions. For them, the acquisition of new knowledge and competencies plays a key role, as students through volunteering acquire general skills that are necessary, including for the successful construction of a career. Sport volunteering, unlike all other areas, causes special professional and personal characteristics of students, as a result of the requirements that are put forward to applicants for sport volunteers.

For older sports volunteers (22 years and older), the most important thing is an exclusively altruistic motive: the ability to help other people. As a rule, representatives of this group already have a job, certain professional and personal characteristics, so they do not volunteer to meet any needs.

It is important to correctly set tasks for volunteers with different motivation profiles. These studies allow more effectively organize the process of recruiting volunteers for different volunteer positions (vacancies) depending on the profile of their motivation. In accordance with the peculiarities of sport volunteers' motivation, it is possible to conduct their training more effectively and work to retain already experienced, trained volunteers.

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