

Mediating Effects of Satisfaction on the Relationship between Motivation and Behavioral Intentions for Volunteers at a PGA TOUR Event

Adam Love, Mississippi State University

Rob Hardin, University of Tennessee

Gi-Yong Koo, University of Tennessee

Alan L. Morse, Mississippi State University

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Previous research has shown the need and importance of volunteers for the successful operation and management of sporting events (Berlonghi, 1994; Daly, 1991; Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998; Green & Chalip, 1998; Strigas & Jackson, 2003a; Williams, Dossa, & Tompkins, 1995). Farrell, Johnston, and Twynam (1998) noted that any organization or agency conducting a sporting event must coordinate numerous activities dealing with the event's logistics as well as managing the competition. Strigas and Jackson (2003) wrote that event planners must promote the event, deal with logistics, and respond to media requests along with a plethora of other details. Event organizers turn to volunteers to assist in the operation of the event and to help offset the costs of conducting an event. Volunteers enable event coordinators to expand both the "quantity and diversity of services without exhausting the agency's budget" (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991, p. 270). Thus, the growing use of volunteers at sporting events and the importance of volunteers to the successful operation of sporting events make volunteer recruitment, management, and retention essential duties of sport managers and event planners.

Given this need, several recent studies have examined the motivations of volunteers at sporting events. For example, Farrell, Johnston, and Twynam (1998) investigated volunteer motivation and satisfaction at a curling championship and found that motivations of volunteers at the event could be grouped into the categories of purposive, solidary, external traditions, and commitments. Strigas and Jackson (2003), meanwhile, measured volunteer motivation at marathon running events and found that the motivation of volunteers at the event fell into the factors of material, purposive, leisure, egoistic, and external. They also recommended that more volunteer motivation studies should be conducted in a variety of sports settings (e.g., a different size, level or type of sport event) in order to gain a fuller understanding of the subject. In a study conducted at the Canadian Women's Golf Championship, MacLean and Hamm (2007) investigated motivation, commitment, and intentions to remain a volunteer. They found that intentions to remain in golf, sport, or as general volunteers result from a diverse set of reasons. Specifically, their analysis identified eight reasons for individuals intending to remain golf volunteers, which (in descending order of importance) were: 1) being linked to a professional golf event, 2) promoting women's golf, 3) social influences, 4) retirement, 5) community promotion, 6) improving club level golf, 7) availability, and 8) a love of the game of golf.

While the study by MacLean and Hamm took the important step of seeking correlations between volunteer motivation and behavioral intentions, no study has specifically investigated the relationship between the motivation, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions of volunteers at a sporting event. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to explore the role motivational factors play in volunteer satisfaction and then in turn what role satisfaction plays in behavioral intentions. Such insights will be beneficial for sport managers who must recruit, manage, and retain volunteers for the successful operation of events.

The sample in the current study consisted of 153 volunteers at a PGA TOUR event held in Mississippi. The questionnaire was distributed to individuals in the tournament's volunteer tent. Volunteers completed the questionnaire either prior to reporting to their shift on the course, after completing their shift on the course, or during lunchtime on Friday and Saturday of the event. The instrument used to measure volunteer motivation in this study was a 30-item questionnaire adapted from the instrument employed by Strigas and Jackson (2003) at a marathon running event. In addition to items assessing motivation, the questionnaire also included items designed to measure satisfaction and behavioral intent to continue volunteering in the future. The responses to each item on the questionnaire were examined using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 as "not important at all" to 7 as "extremely important."

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) resulted in a 7-factor model of motivational factors explaining 65.65% of the variance. They were 1) altruistic, 2) egoistic, 3) escapism, 4) career, 5) golf interest, 6) material, and 7) social. Results of the multiple regression analysis revealed that the model R² of .27, reflecting the overall strength of association between seven volunteer motives and volunteer satisfaction, was statistically significant at the .05 level: $F(7, 145) = 6.20, p < .001$. Examination of the β coefficient indicated that the effects of altruistic ($t = 4.01, p < .000$), escapism ($t = 3.12, p = .002$), career ($t = -3.10, p = .002$), and golf interest ($t = 2.20, p = .029$) on volunteer satisfaction were significant at the .05 level, controlling for the other variables. These findings suggested that four volunteer motives were important in explaining volunteer satisfaction. In addition, the results

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of the regression analysis revealed that the model R² of .23, reflecting the overall strength of association between volunteer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, was statistically significant at the .05 level: $F(1, 151) = 45.63, p < .001$. Examination of the β coefficient indicated that the effects of volunteer satisfaction ($t = 6.76, p < .000$) on behavioral intentions was significant at the .05 level.

The results revealed that volunteer satisfaction was a significant predictor of behavioral intentions and might play a pivotal role in mediating the relationship between volunteer motives and behavioral intentions. The results of this study suggest that individuals' levels of satisfaction with volunteer positions play a mediating role between their motivation and intentions to continue volunteering in the future. The three motivational factors most correlated with high levels of volunteer satisfaction were altruistic, escapism, and golf interest, while the factor of career was negatively related to satisfaction. High levels of satisfaction, meanwhile, were associated with stronger behavioral intent to continue volunteering in the future as well as intent to suggest the opportunity to other potential volunteers. Thus, in order to improve volunteer retention, it is advisable for sport managers to attract individuals motivated by altruistic aims, escapism, and a specific interest in golf, while avoiding individuals primarily motivated by career enhancement when recruiting volunteers for golf events.

The results of the current study add to the body of literature on sport volunteerism by suggesting the presence of satisfaction as a mediator between the motivation and behavioral intentions of volunteers. Sport management scholars, however, should continue to explore volunteerism in a variety of sport settings. As the present study was conducted at a PGA TOUR event, further research can help extend understanding of volunteerism beyond the context of golf tournaments and provide additional insight to help sport event managers better recruit, manage, and retain volunteers.