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**Enhancing Internal Communication and Youth
Engagement: A Case Study of Finnish Red Cross
Kajaani**

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Abstract**Author(s): Junesh Shrestha and Ajay Chand****Title of the Publication:** Enhancing Internal Communication and Youth Engagement: A Case Study of Finnish Red Cross Kajaani**Degree Title:** Master in Global Business Management

This study examines the issues of internal communication and youth engagement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. The main goal is to improve the channels of communication and increase youth volunteerism by determining barriers and opportunities within the organization's six branches. The study addresses internal and external communication practices, especially communication through digital facilities (WhatsApp and Facebook). A mixed-methods approach was used to get the broad perspective. The research collected primary data in the form of semi-structured interviews with board members and surveys. This research explores the internal and external communication problems faced in Finnish Red Cross Kajaani regarding improving the youth engagement. Statistics showed major barriers in communication channels and the strategies of engagement. The findings point to the need for a centralised digital platform, organised communication principles, and specific social media campaigns to enhance the interaction with the volunteers, especially youth groups. The study offers practical recommendations that can be rapidly employed by the Red Cross to improve communication and promote higher participation of the youth in their activities. First, channel preference has little impact on satisfaction; second, it identifies a strong association between communication tools, leadership involvement, and volunteer retention. The outcomes lead to realistic changes in communication and engagement to improve volunteer experience and organizational effectiveness.

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1 Introduction

In a non-profit organization like the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, it is therefore important to encourage effective internal communication to ensure better engagement of the youths. The Finnish Red Cross Kajaani is a part of the Finnish Red Cross, a prominent non-governmental organization (NGO) with six branches of service, including First Aid, Friendship and Cultural, Multicultural Services, Health Point, Psychosocial Support and Preparedness (redcross.fi, 2025). It seeks to deliver humanitarian assistance, social justice, and community capacity building (redcross.fi, 2025). However, as is common with most non-profit organizations, some communication and volunteer management issues negatively impact its operations and services. Communication is important for non-profit organizations because it fosters good working relations between the management, employees and volunteers (Ihm & Kim, 2021). Lack of communication between the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani's board and its service branches results in ineffective collaboration, strategic misalignments, and slow and cumbersome decision-making processes. This has a negative impact because it becomes hard for the organization to respond to any emergency or need of the community. Another emerging concern is the reduced participation of young people as volunteers (Lee, 2022). Unfavourable shifts in society and other engagements pose a challenge to volunteering organizations that want to engage young people. This poses a threat to the sustainability of the organization because young people are important in the continuity plan and development initiatives. This thesis is critical to establish the communication challenges and participation deficits, as well as to develop solutions for internal communications and young volunteers' recruitment to maintain the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani's functionality in the humanitarian missions.

For the successful implementation of organizational objectives and to engage the youth in any non-profit organization including the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, internal communication is crucial (redcross.fi, 2025). According to Pietikäinen (2024), the communication strategy for engaging the youth should be more interactive and immediate rather than episode-based such as emails or newsletters. However, there are two evident factors that have been noticed to hinder it, and these include poor communication between the board and six departments of First Aid, Friendship, Multicultural, Health Point, Psychological, and Preparedness, as well as reduced opportunities for youth involvement.

The problem of internal communication indicates that the strategic activities are in harmony with the operational ones, but due to the differences in the information exchange, it is a question of

effectiveness and motivation. A review of the literature also reveals that Non-Governmental organisations have a higher turnover of volunteers in the current times (Bódi, 2023). The literature shows that online and social media interventions are helpful in change and communication with youths, but shared difficulties exist in these fields by the NGOs. As a result, there are no theoretical studies on the detailed internal communication models applicable to decentred humanitarian organizations. While there is existing research in youth engagement in non-profits, there is a lack of studies on volunteer-based organizations in Finland, making it a gap in the market for addressing such issues. To fill these gaps, the study will aim at identifying the communication channels and engagement strategies, thereby making the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani active, sustainable and well-connected in all the branches, especially among the youthful volunteers.

1.1 Research Problem

There are internal communication gaps that have been identified to hinder the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani in engaging the youths appropriately. Some of the organizational channels, for example, email communications, newsletters, and magazines may be less effective among young people due to preferring social media and instant messaging apps (Sepulcri, Mainardes, & Pascuci, 2022). This scenario results in low participation of volunteers, poor awareness of volunteering opportunities, and short-term volunteering. In addition, there is the possibility of one-way communication within the organisation and this will be unattractive to the young people as they prefer two-way communication. Available literature also reveals that companies that have not adopted the new communication trend risk losing young members (Fengjiao & Kasimon, 2023). However, some primary constraints may hinder the youth engagement efforts within the organization; cultural and structural issues. It is important to understand these challenges in order to work for the improvement of the communication and engagement of youth and make the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani a long-term organization.

However, there are two major issues that can be considered to be seriously affecting the efficiency and sustainability of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. They are communication divide between the board and branches and the problem of the dwindling youth membership. Lack of proper communication between the six branches, namely First Aid, Friendship, Multicultural, Health Point, Psychological, and Preparedness, will lead to poor service delivery due to confusion

and time wastage. When there is no effective information flow, the coordination of the initiations and the response to the needs of the communities is poor, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the organization (Keyton, 2017).

Moreover, a concern relating to sustainability is the aging volunteer programmes where fewer young people are volunteering in the organization. Youth volunteers also offer idealism, new perspectives, and technical skills that are crucial in the contemporary world regarding communication and public relations (Waikayi et al. 2012). It is imperative for the leadership continuity and business sustainability of Red Cross Kajaani that these people be involved (Finnish Red Cross, 2021). Addressing these issues through better communication within the network and more effective youth outreach will help improve the organization's performance and sustainability for continuously addressing humanitarian crises.

1.2 Research Aim & Purpose

The aim of this research is to develop practical recommendations for enhancing internal communication strategies and increasing youth engagement within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

The purpose of this research is to explore the barriers to internal and external communication in Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, especially between the branches and the board. In this way, by revealing these challenges of communication, the study contributes to the overall goal of providing specific recommendations for improvement of internal communication strategies and better engagement of youth.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the objectives, the study aims to address the following research questions:

Main Question: How can the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani enhance internal communication and youth engagement?

Sub-Questions:

- “What are the primary causes of the communication gap between the branches and the board at Red Cross Kajaani?”
- How can Red Cross Kajaani effectively attract and retain young volunteers, aged 18-30, by identifying communication gaps and understanding their motivations?
- What communication strategies and engagement plans can the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani implement to enhance internal coordination, volunteer satisfaction, and youth participation?”

In this study, the research used a qualitative research design to examine the internal communication issues and youth participation in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. A case study strategy is used to have a deeper insight into the organizational structures, communication challenges and issues of volunteers (Priya, 2021). The case study approach is suitable since it enables the examination of real-life issues affecting non-profit organizations.

This work has used mixed methods in the collection and analysis of the study data (Dawadi, Shrestha, & Giri, 2021). In addition, case study strategy has been followed in this research. In order to address these research questions, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with board members, active volunteers, and youth participants to increase the depth of the information gathered (Kang & Hwang, 2021). This has been done because theories of social constructivism hold that realities are socially constructed. In addition, Webropol will be used to conduct a survey among volunteers and community members to gather quantitative data on the effectiveness of communication and the challenges impacting youth participation. This will guarantee the validity of this study through triangulation and has offered the researcher a wider perspective of the organisation’s problems.

For quantitative data analysis, the study will utilize PSPP, an open-source alternative to SPSS, to generate statistical outputs that will be cross-referenced with the identified themes. Moreover, to provide a more comprehensible representation of trends and patterns, Excel and Canva will be employed further to display the results.

This study will benefit the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani by highlighting the communication barriers and the way through which they can be addressed. The results can be used to design better strategies for retaining volunteers and consequently strengthen bonds between the youth and the

organisation. The strategies could be useful in the management of volunteers in other such organizations in the community.

It is a significant contribution to the field of non-profit management as well as research by identifying and analysing major issues in internal communication and youth involvement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. In terms of academic contribution, the study contributes to the body of knowledge on non-profit communication tactics, volunteer engagement, and organizational endurance. In practical implications of the research, there are various recommendations for the case of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani on how the organization can enhance their communication network and attract young people for volunteering. The findings will enable the organization to close gaps between the board and the six service branches to align and enhance communication and decision making. Besides, the study will provide approaches for encouraging young people's motivation to volunteer and sustaining them in the future.

The anticipated outcomes of this research are the identification of major internal communication barriers of Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. Some expected effects include improvement in volunteer retention, higher youth involvement, and better way of communication. In this way, the organization can contribute to the improvement of the overall volunteer participation, and increase organisational sustainability.

2 Communication Strategies

Communication is very important for even the internal functioning of non-profit organisations as it creates a culture of collaboration, openness and volunteerism. Strong communication leads to a closer connection between leadership and volunteers and a synchrony in that specific organization. The identified communication barriers can be addressed to improve the youth engagement and operational effectiveness of the non-profits as seen at Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

2.1 Understanding Communication: A Foundational Concept in Non-profit Organisations

Communication is widely recognised in organisational research as a basic factor contributing to the effective coordination, teamwork, and participation of stakeholders in an institution (Ihm & Kim, 2021, p.2). It entails the sharing of information, ideas, and feedback via different channels, such as formal and informal, that drive employee behaviour, organisational culture and performance results. In non-profit organisations such as the Red Cross, where volunteers are the key base and there is a need to keep consistent records for different groups, communication is of essential importance. Internal communication promotes alignment between teams and increases motivation, while external communication helps establish community trust and draws in the volunteers (Ihm & Kim, 2021, p.2). Moreover, digital communication tools like WhatsApp, Facebook, as well as email have transformed the way organisations communicate to internal as well as external audiences, particularly the youth. However, even with access to such tools, barriers like unclear messaging, inconsistent use of platforms, and lack of feedback channels tend to undermine their effects. As such, the understanding of communication creates a framework to deal with issues in the Red Cross Kajaani as well as enables the creation of evidence-based strategies that can be used to improve internal operations and youth engagement in the organisation.

2.2 Internal communications in non-profit organizations

This research is based on two theoretical framework areas of internal communication in organizations and youth volunteerism. All these ideas are relevant in addressing the operational and

sustainability issues of social organizations such as the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. This framework elaborates the nature of the relationship between the two and offers an understanding of how communication affects volunteers' involvement.

According to the Social Constructivism Theory proposed by Vygotsky, meaning and knowledge are socially constructed (Shibina, & Vidyapeetham, 2022, p375). It has been useful in explaining how volunteers and youth participants make sense of the organisation's communicational arrangements. Since participation in non-profit organizations is based on social relations and shared experiences, analysing the communication breakdown and the ways different strategies for increasing engagement can be applied were possible due to Social Constructivism.

In addition, another theory, the Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication has been used to assess the communication organizational outcomes (Kusumalatha, 2023, p.48). This model defines communication as a process in which there exists a sender, message, channel, noise, and receiver.

As seen from the context, the two theories, Vygotsky's Social Constructivism and the Shannon-Weaver Model, are relevant in dealing with internal communication and youth engagement at the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani (Shibina, & Vidyapeetham, 2022, p375; Kusumalatha, 2023, p.48). Social Constructivism portrays the process of how the volunteers perceive and engage with the organizational communication based on their experiences and social interaction. The Shannon-Weaver Model is also used to determine the level of communication, interference and feedback. Indeed, both are beneficial in supporting the research objective of enhancing internal communication and youths' active involvement. Moreover, it can be supplemented by Leif Åberg's model, which provides guidance for a comprehensive analysis of the problem and a more prescribed organizational approach to addressing it (ÅBERG, 2022, p.13). Leif Åberg has provided four primary types of internal communication such as strategic, operational, community-building, and trusting with an emphasis on youth volunteerism (ÅBERG, 2022, p.13). The two ways, direction-movement and cohesion-boundary spanning, is a structured framework that facilitates transformation and organisational unity in communication (ÅBERG, 2022, p.13). This form of engagement also supports volunteerism particularly among youths by encouraging their engagement, trust and participation. Using Åberg's model aids in aiding communication disparities, recruitment of young people, and establishing sustainable communication internally and externally.

Communication is very important for even the internal functioning of non-profit organisations as it creates a culture of collaboration, openness and volunteerism. Strong communication leads to a closer connection between leadership and volunteers and a synchrony in that specific organization. The identified communication barriers can be addressed to improve the youth engagement and operational effectiveness of the non-profits as seen at Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

Communication is one of the most critical internal processes of non-profit organizations since it determines their performance and volunteers' involvement. While profit-making organizations may be able to function without efficient communication it is a critical success factor in non-profit organizations to ensure volunteers, staff and executives are on the same page. Communication clears barriers, helps in coordination, makes certain everyone in the organization is on the same page and helps in building healthy and strong relationships in the organization. It also creates a positive workplace environment and enhances decision-making since information can flow freely within the organisation. Communication within non-profit organisations is important as it allows the identification of the organisational strategy in relation to stakeholders. Strategic core messages are short yet flexible statements that define how an organization and its products or services are viewed. 3×3×3, which originate from semiotics, can enhance key messages in various settings (ÅBERG, 2022, p.16). Figure 1 shows the Internal Communication as described by the article and inspired by Hayat et al. 2022; Ihm & Kim, 2021.

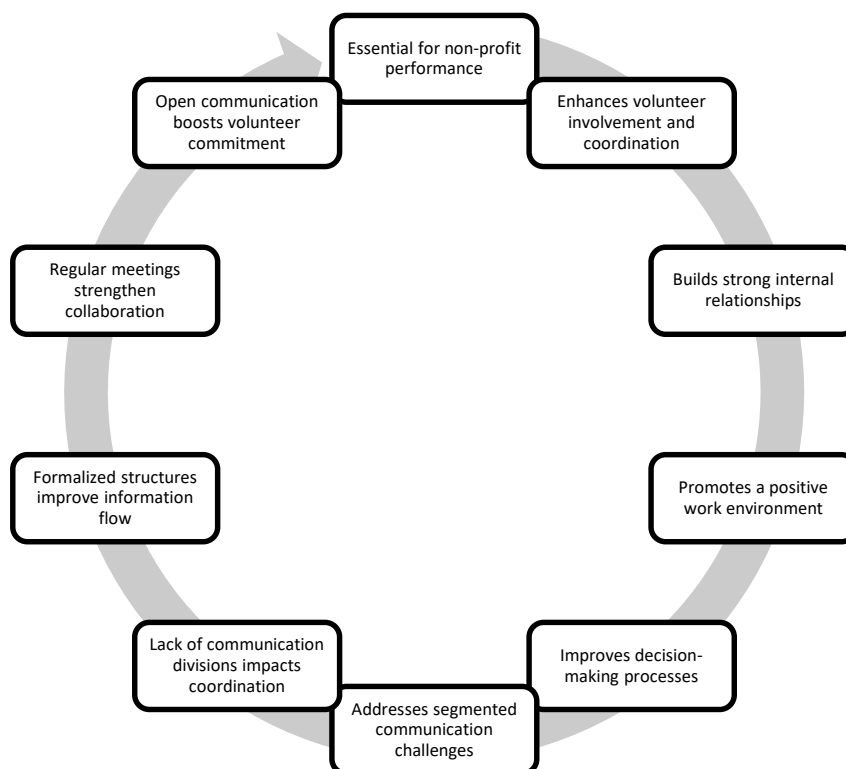


Figure 1: Internal Communication

Internal communication. Communicating within the organization is essential to ensure the success and sustainability of an organization. The Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. It allows easy coordination across departments, better engagement of volunteers, and helps in team organization. According to Hayat et al. (2022) and Ihn and Kim (2021), the figure shows that effective internal communication is critical for the performance of non-profit organisations. All benefits are interconnected. Stronger volunteer commitment could lead to benefitting non-profit performance and closer non-profit impact will lead to stronger volunteer commitment. The figure shows how clear, structured, consistent communication can help address segmented communication problems, which are common to organizations with multiple branches or departments.

Good communication enhances decision-making and encourages relationships within the organisation. This promotes a good climate within the organisation as everyone feels informed. Structured meetings and formalized means of communication ensure that the right information

reaches the right team and misunderstandings can be resolved with speed. As a result, the collaboration is made easy. It is possible for coordination to break down because of gaps in communication. The model in the figure shows that overcoming such segmentation is about more than just sharing information; it is also about building trust, accountability, and inclusion.

All in all, the figure supports the thesis that enhancing internal communication within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani is necessary to improve degrees of volunteer engagement, operational effectiveness, and long-term organization success.

One of the most compelling issues arising in the field of non-profit communication is the fact that the organization has many branches and is headed by a board. This results in a situation where decision-makers are not in harmony and the sharing of information is segmented; this affects the coordination of tasks (Hayat et al. 2022, p.69). Further, non-profits typically do not have specialized communication divisions, which leads to poor coordination and low volunteer retention.

As a result, organisations need to take advantage of formalised communication structures like intranets, newsletters, and real-time messaging services. Other advantages of effective communication are regular meetings, an open decision-making process, and feedback. Additionally, promoting a culture of open communication and including volunteers in the discussion makes them more committed to the organization (Hayat et al. 2022, p.64). Therefore, internal communication within a non-profit organization enhances organizational efficiency, staff and volunteers' commitment and organizational sustainability.

2.2.1 Internal Communication among Organizational Branches

Communication is one of the most crucial organizational elements since it enables the coordination and efficient carrying out of activities within organizational units. It includes the sending and receiving of messages using words, body gestures, facial expressions, written text, and documents, enhancing harmony between teams and promoting organizational objectives (Keyton, 2017, p. 501). In the context of the Finnish Red Cross, Kajaani particularly and especially in organizations with many branches, internal communication is thus a fundamental component in enhancing efficiency, managing volunteers and the overall goal of having branches working in unity towards a common cause. In the SECS1 model Juholin and Åberg described that commitment and

trust should be nurtured through guided discussion, factual third-party communication and community building (ÅBERG, 2022, p.16). If there are no proper communication structures established, this may lead to confusion, duplication of duties among volunteers and thus poor services to the society (Arnon, Reichel, & Abu Rumman, 2022, p.1462). Communication within a branch of an organization is crucial for organization and cooperation. Organizational communication focuses on all the administrative communication aspects that include production management, team and leadership communication. All of these facets involve digital tools and lines of communication that make synchronised work possible (ÅBERG, 2022, p.17). Delegation, supervision and work instructions help to provide a clear chain of command between the management and the subordinates (ÅBERG, 2022, p.17). Figure 2 shows the Internal Communication among Organizational Branches, the figure is inspired by the report published by ÅBERG, 2022; Keyton, 2017; Bordean, 2010.

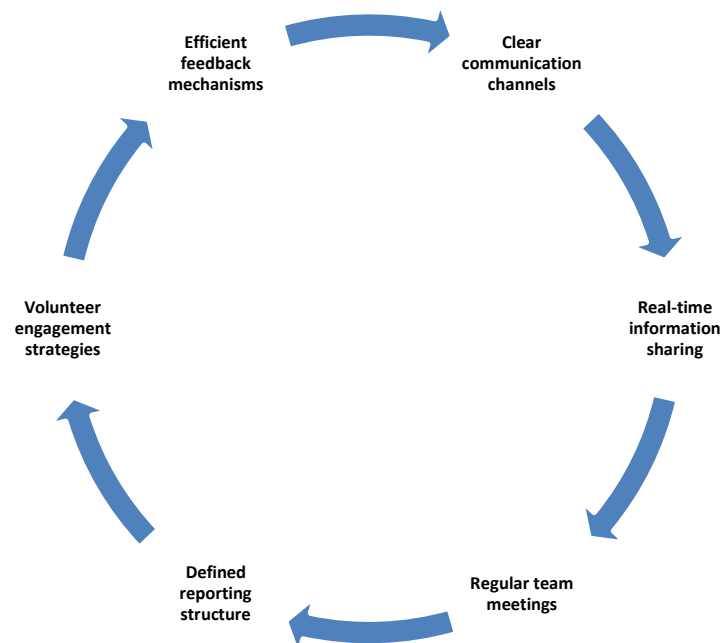


Figure 2: Internal Communication among Organizational Branches

An interconnected series of internal communications is depicted on the circular flow diagram, which connects the various arms of an organisation. Smooth information exchange using speech, writing, and digitally is essential for coordinating volunteer efforts, decision-making, and managing volunteers. The Finnish Red Cross Kajaani calls for the model for using channels of communication (e.g. meetings, social media, and intranet) which promote trust, clarity and efficiency. A good communication cycle can stop duplication, improve performance of volunteers, and ensure all branches work together for humanitarian objectives.

To meet these challenges, it is necessary to establish a clear and effective communication strategy within an organization. In particular, real-time information processing can be provided through WhatsApp, Facebook groups, and an intranet system that may be used to share materials and conduct effective communication (Keyton, 2017, p. 518). The need to have regular meetings either face-to-face or online is a sure way of keeping all the branches of the organization on their toes. Furthermore, successful relationship management supports clarification of reporting and feedback policies, thus enhancing the decision-making process.

Studies have shown that communication does not only improve the organizational performance but the volunteer performance as well (Bordean, 2010, p.770). In turn, volunteers who are knowledgeable and actively invited to participate in the discussion of organizational issues are more likely to remain enthusiastic and loyal to the mission of the organization. Hence, the internal communication within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani should be enhanced to foster better cooperation, timely and efficient interventions to clients' needs and a more expanded impact.

Clear communication at the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani can reduce inadequacies, executive mismanagement and inefficiency in the utilisation of available resources such as personnel and technology to achieve organizational objectives in social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter in volunteering (Fouad, 2025, p.27). Effective group interaction depends on other facilities for the sharing of information, conferencing, and discussion in face-to-face as well as virtual environments (ÅBERG, 2022, p.17). When it comes to determining the best platforms to be adopted, communication professionals offer advisory to such organizations. These structured communication solutions enhance the decision-making processes of the organizations, effective handling of

employees across various branches, and better organizational processes in general. Therefore, improving communication with branches and its subsequent persistence will help sustain the organization, guaranteeing that all the branches operate efficiently in serving their humanitarian roles.

2.2.2 Structure Communication Strategy

It is clear that a structured communication strategy is critical to have in organizations such as the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani to improve the overall coordination, transparency, and engagement. Internal communication is crucial in maintaining harmony between the branches and enhancing functioning efficiency (Subiyanto et al. 2024, p. 36). This brings about confusion and poor coordination and hence puts the organizations in a position that they cannot effectively discharge their duties in benefiting their respective societies.

The aspects of a structured communication plan include the use of technological tools like WhatsApp groups, Facebook groups and intranet, amongst others. These tools facilitate real-time communication and sharing of information and help eliminate communication barriers (Subiyanto et al. 2024, p. 37). Also, structured reporting by such methods as emails and scheduled meetings to ensure that all branches are actively involved in the process.

Another element that must not be overlooked in structured communication is the provision of feedback mechanisms. The use of tools in the form of a survey, suggestion box and others like forums helps in creating a two-way communication in which volunteers and staffing can freely express their concerns, make suggestions and even contribute to the decision-making process (Subiyanto et al. 2024 p. 38). Research shows that effective communication by creating open channels of communication will lead to trust, fewer conflicts between teams and improved cooperation.

This is especially true considering that meeting and training programs can be recurring in Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. Weekly or biweekly meetings allow for the discussion of progress, issues, and activities to be taken, in addition to using apps, documents, and collaborative platforms where everyone can work and share data. Furthermore, capacity building on digital literacy ensures that

all members within the organization, including volunteers, master the type of communication media to be used on digital tools (Subiyanto et al. 2024, p. 41).

In addition, there is a need to develop mechanisms of monitoring the communication strategies in order to evaluate their impact. The indicators such as response time, participation rates, and the level of volunteers' engagement show further areas that require enhancement (Subiyanto et al. 2024, p. 42). Such an approach means that the process of evaluation will maintain flexibility and be long-lasting. The implementation of a proper communication structure helps to fill the current communication gaps at Finnish Red Cross Kajaani and improve cooperation between branches as well as volunteer engagement to achieve the organization's long-term objectives.

2.2.3 Communication Gaps between Branches and the Board

One of the emerging issues is disconnection between the branch offices and the main parent board in a non-profit organization. The hierarchical structure of non-profits hampers communication and it is possible that branch-level challenges are never brought to the attention of decision-makers. Such misalignment may result in goal divergence, ineffective resource utilization and certainly, dissatisfaction from volunteers who may perceive that their voices are not being heard. In the case of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, such communication gaps may pose a problem in the organization because branches may find it difficult to communicate their needs to the head office. For every non-profit organization to have good governance, there should be proper inter-

action between the local chapters and the executive board. Figure 3 Communication Gap influenced by the report published by Tharris, 2021; ÅBERG, 2022.

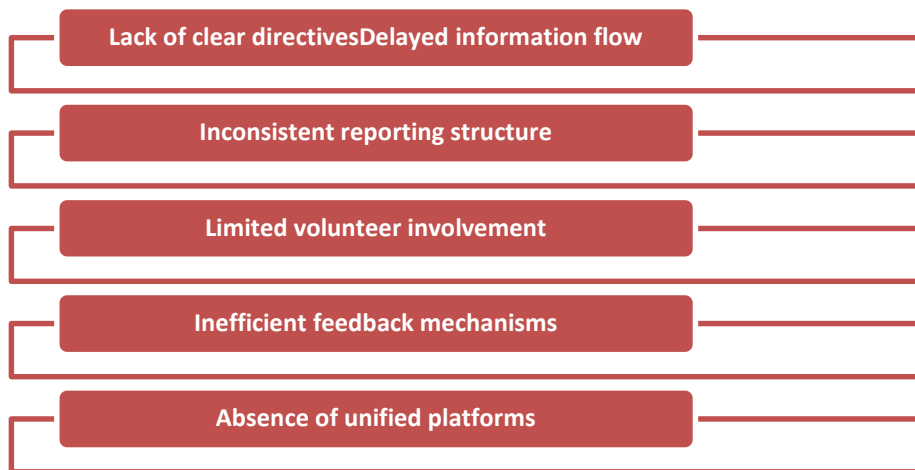


Figure 3: Communication Gap

This can be attributed to the decentralized nature of the non-profit organizations, whereby different branches of the organization work independently. The lack of a consistent communication plan is hazardous when disseminating vital information, as this will cause confusion throughout the decision-making and strategic execution processes (Tharris, 2021, p.26). Further, the occasional use of digital communication tools negatively affects real-time cooperation between the board and branch leaders.

However, issues, which include lack of clear guidance, few feedback channels, and utilization of outdated means of communication, are some of the challenges that affect coordination (Zelman, 2014, p.2). The board establishes goals and makes policies for an organization, yet if these get to the branches, then there are problems with their implementation, which in turn hinders operations. Trustworthy communication can help to bring transparency and enable people to engage

(ÅBERG, 2022, p.20). The Dynamic Justification for Knowledge (DJK) model aids in defining the public fields and determining patterns and communication with the main stakeholders while relevant information reaches decision-makers (ÅBERG, 2022, p.20). In crisis, terms, accreditation is urgent hence the need to ensure fast adaptation; this should involve elements of communication within and without. Stakeholder concerns and public discussions let organizations anticipate change and prevent their decision-making from being influenced by false information.

2.2.4 Communication Barriers in Non-Profit Organisations

Several communication barriers are evident that affect non-profit organizations, including structural, cultural, and technological barriers (Godefroid, Plattfaut, & Niehaves, 2024, p.244). This is due to the fact that the workers are mostly volunteers, with unpredictable schedules and limited access to reliable communication means. This creates fragmentation which results in information disparities, confusion and incoherence in decision-making. In Figure 4 the communication barriers the figure got inspired by the thesis written by Godefroid, Plattfaut, & Niehaves, 2024; Xu et al. 2024; Fouad, 2025.

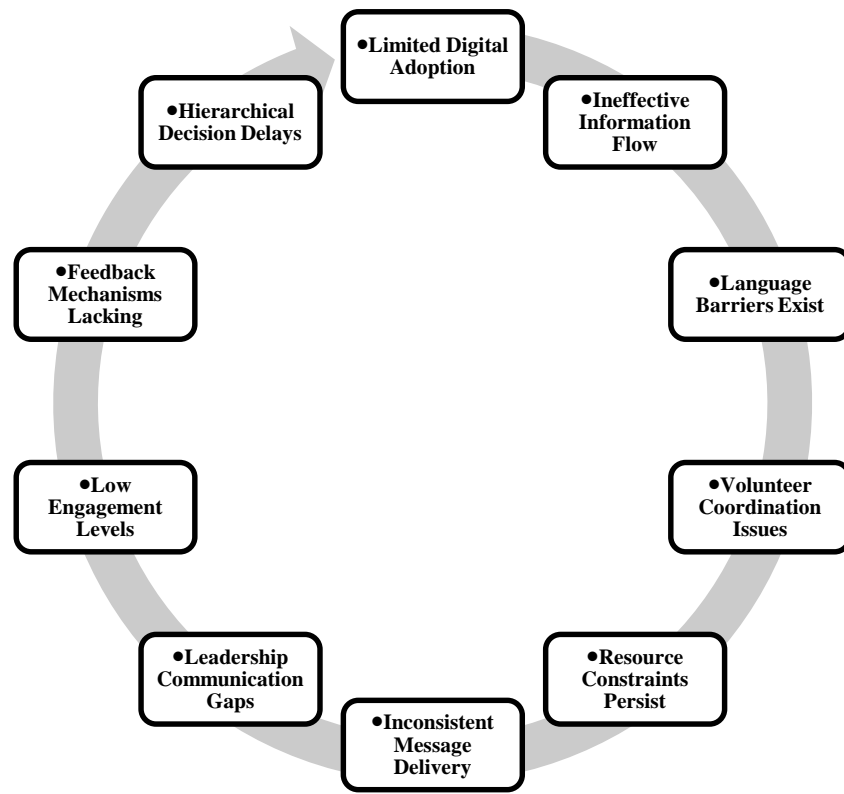


Figure 4: Communication Barriers

Another problem is the lack of uniformity in disseminating information from the board to the branches. For instance, Finnish Red Cross Kajaani has experienced some challenges in relaying crucial information to the volunteers, which results in them missing certain events or changes in a policy. This lack of communication in a timely manner creates frustrations and alliances within the organization. Moreover, new volunteers are naïve to organizational communication patterns, which are formal and email-based rather than social media-based.

Another challenge is that young volunteers are not well engaged due to poor communication measures being employed (Xu et al. 2024, p.16). Some of the young volunteers appreciate direct and timely means of communication, such as social media or messaging. However, the communication channels that Finnish Red Cross Kajaani currently uses are not suitable enough for these preferences, which makes it challenging to retain youths in their organisation. To overcome these

barriers, the organization should introduce effective and easy-to-use technologies in the form of mobile applications and social media groups to keep its members updated.

Challenges associated with such a system include lack of resources, decentralized management structure, high turnover of volunteers and cultural variations, which can be seen in non-profit organizations like the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani and its branches. These barriers may result in misinterpretation, delays, and a lack of enthusiasm among the volunteers and the staff. An important issue may include the absence of a common communication channel. Most of these branches may have their own functions, and as such, information may not always be shared with all the relevant stakeholders in the organization. For instance, Finnish Red Cross Kajaani has six branches, and it is possible for the board to post information that is not well communicated to the local branches, and as a result, they will be confused on the operations; hence, time is wasted in making important decisions.

One of the challenges is the way of communicating with the volunteers, and most of the current communication methods used are through emails and printed notices, which may not be quite appealing to the young volunteers. This has resulted in a generation gap in communication, especially among most of the non-profit organizations that still find it very difficult to embrace the new technology-enabled tools (Fouad, 2025, p.20). In the case of Finnish Red Cross branches, while younger people may prefer WhatsApp and similar applications, senior members may find emails more suitable, which creates mismatches in communication.

Stakeholder engagement is crucial, defining key stakeholders as direct communication partners assists in a consistent approach, whereas mapping out further tiers of stakeholders helps avoid adversities. Here, the core problem is to identify trust groups, hate groups and fake groups as pointed out by Professor Vilma Luoma-aho (ÅBERG, 2022, p.21). The use of dissipative structures that are employed in the realisation of agile communication increases the speed of response while ensuring transparency and credibility in non-profit organisations (ÅBERG, 2022, p.21).

Furthermore, the use of language and culture barriers can also affect communication. Since the Finnish Red Cross is intended to serve refugees and immigrants, branches are required to communicate using different languages and cultural levels. A lack of effective communication or even a misunderstanding of messages can lead to a lack of participation from minorities in the community (Galvin, 2021, p.17).

2.2.5 Strategies to Enhance Internal Communication and Engagement

Some of the major approaches in the management of internal communication and engagement of non-profits include the use of technology in communication, the feedback process, and the encouragement of openness (Godefroid, Plattfaut & Niehaves, 2024, p.244). For instance, the Slack platform and Microsoft Teams in particular help manage communication between the non-profit's team and volunteers so that the volunteers know and are engaged.

It is established that organizations that utilize these tools enhance collaboration among employees and increase productivity. Surveys and other structured feedback about volunteers can be effective in finding out how communication barriers can be reduced and volunteers' satisfaction can be enhanced.

Feedback mechanisms are also required to be implemented on a regular basis. Weekly meetings, questionnaires, and conferences also give volunteers a chance to express themselves and be involved in the decision-making process (Holtrop et al. 2024, p.16). When volunteers are encouraged to participate in the discussion, they feel like they are part of the organization and thus have a stake in the organisation's goals and objectives.

Another successful practice is the practicing of mentorship programs. Assigning a new volunteer to a senior volunteer raises efficiency in the onboarding process, clears up misconceptions and helps in maintaining high levels of volunteers' engagement (Stylianou et al. 2023, p.2). This helps in building teamwork and long-term engagement with the organization of choice since there is bonding among people.

To enhance intrapersonal and interpersonal communication and interaction in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, a system designed for each department is crucial. First Aid groups should engage in a central platform of Microsoft Teams for sharing updates on training schedules and emergencies. Friendship Services can establish feedback sessions to carry out on a regular basis and/or have volunteer recognition programs which will help boost motivation amongst the volunteers (Tsai et al. 2024, p.267).

These services should include the incorporation of appropriate multilingual communication means for the sake of inclusiveness and understanding. In terms of engagement, Health Point can

improve knowledge-sharing activities and the patient referral processes. The Psychological Support teams should set up secure and private messaging platforms as they engage in discussions. Preparedness Services require regular simulation-based communication drills to ensure that when disaster strikes, all the organisations are ready to respond in an efficient manner.

At the organizational level, daily, weekly or monthly inter-departmental meetings, fortnightly newsletter and well-defined protege-ships as well as regular check-up meetings will enhance the level of engagement. Social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook and intranet systems can effectively enhance real-time communication, hence providing prompt updates and effective branch relations. Volunteering programs that seek to involve young people need to embrace current trends such as online recruiting and effectively presenting the organization's work and accomplishment (Varela, 2013, p.172).

2.3 Youth Engagement in Volunteer Organizations

The incorporation of youth in volunteer organizations plays a key role in the continuity as well as the development of new leadership (Eden & Onyebuchi, 2024, p.1405). It can be argued that young people have new ideas, enthusiasm and technology skills that may be valuable for the functioning of a non-profit organization. However, a study shows that the youth need an approach that is culturally sensitive and suits their needs to encourage engagement (Tsai et al. 2024, p.267).

Youths are likely to volunteer if they see volunteering to be important and helpful to their own and career advancement. Social media and digital platforms have become very important in recruitment and retaining young volunteers since they enhance timely engagement and group formation (Prats López et al. 2024, p.1384). However, there are some challenges that non-profit organisations face especially in their efforts to optimally use these platforms due to a lack of knowledge and capital.

Volunteerism has benefits on different aspects of the community because young people's participation in volunteer organisations is vital. In the best manner, communication fosters spirit of 'we' through advocating for commitment and devotion to the common goals (ÅBERG, 2022, p.19). This is in concordance with Strategic Work Community Communication Model where all in a work community engage in what a group communicates, how they work and create value (ÅBERG, 2022, p.19). Young people provide an energetic approach as well as insights as well as new skills derived through the use of IT devices that will improve the operation of an organisation. The Figure 5 youth engagement is inspired by the article by Prats López et al. 2024; Nursey-Bray et al. 2022; Eden & Onyebuchi, 2024.

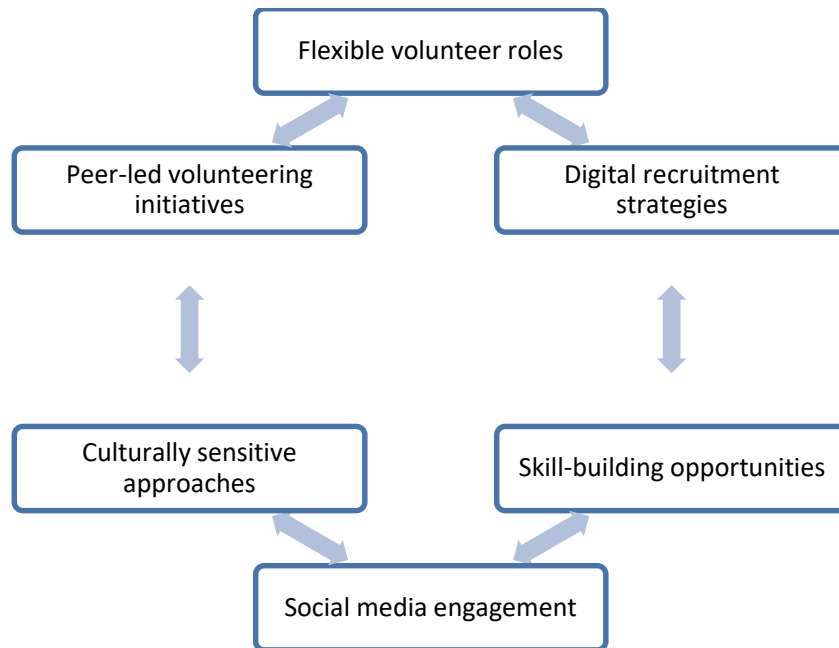


Figure 5: Youth Engagement

Volunteering plays a vital role in engaging youths, and some of their needs include having interactive and flexible volunteering roles. Youth require jobs that are of their interest, where they can learn new skills and make significant impacts within the organizational settings (Nursey-Bray et al. 2022, p.245). This can be attributed to the fact that volunteering may feel institutionalized and impersonal or fail to appeal to a person's self-interest. The other issue that is instrumental in non-profit organizations is the communication style. It is crucial to understand that young volunteers also prefer to communicate through social networks and instant messengers. Failure to conform to such preferences leads to the disengagement of younger people from such organisations (Lee, Park, & Kim, 2023, p.2).

Volunteerism remains an essential strategy in the operation of non-profit organizations since it helps organizations to serve their purposes without much financial strain (Varela, 2020, p. 267). Young people are especially valuable to volunteering, as they can provide fresh ideas, motivation, and continuous support. However, there are some difficulties in engaging and maintaining young volunteers, such as time issues, a lack of awareness of opportunities and assignments, and fixed positions.

The studies suggest that youth is more likely to engage in activities that are meaningful to an individual, self-fulfilling, and developmental. The literature reviewed indicates that meaningful volunteer experiences are beneficial to well-being, foster social inclusion, and promote skill development that make volunteering an interesting option to youth searching for personal and professional development (Peltomäki, 2023, p.12).

To increase the participation of youths in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, the organization should offer flexible volunteering opportunities for the youths. Flexible work arrangements such as short-term or project-based volunteer work via the internet and interactive employee onboarding could increase volunteerism (Widjaja, 2010, p.6). In addition, fulfilling the social role, it is possible to make storytelling and other events organized by peers appear more appealing. Alongside formal communication, free-moving communication is useful in creating and maintaining concentration and organization within the working environment as well as strengthening the organizational identification (ÅBERG, 2022, p.19).

Studies have established that younger generations are more likely to be intrinsically driven by causes that are close to them and have a flexible approach to volunteering (Prats López et al. 2024, p.1383). A major issue is that such jobs are not considered to offer career advancement (Mer et al. 2024, p.2).

Volunteers in their early employment stage are those who are looking for valuable and career-related experience although most non-profit organisations do not advertise this factor (Tsai et al. 2024, p.267). Also, the lack of recognition and feedback are other challenges that contribute to the development of disengagement (Eden & Onyebuchi, 2024, p.1406). The figure 6 on about Barriers to Youth Volunteer Attraction and Retention is inspired by the article written Eden & Onyebuchi, 2024; Mer et al. 2024; Prats López et al. 2024.

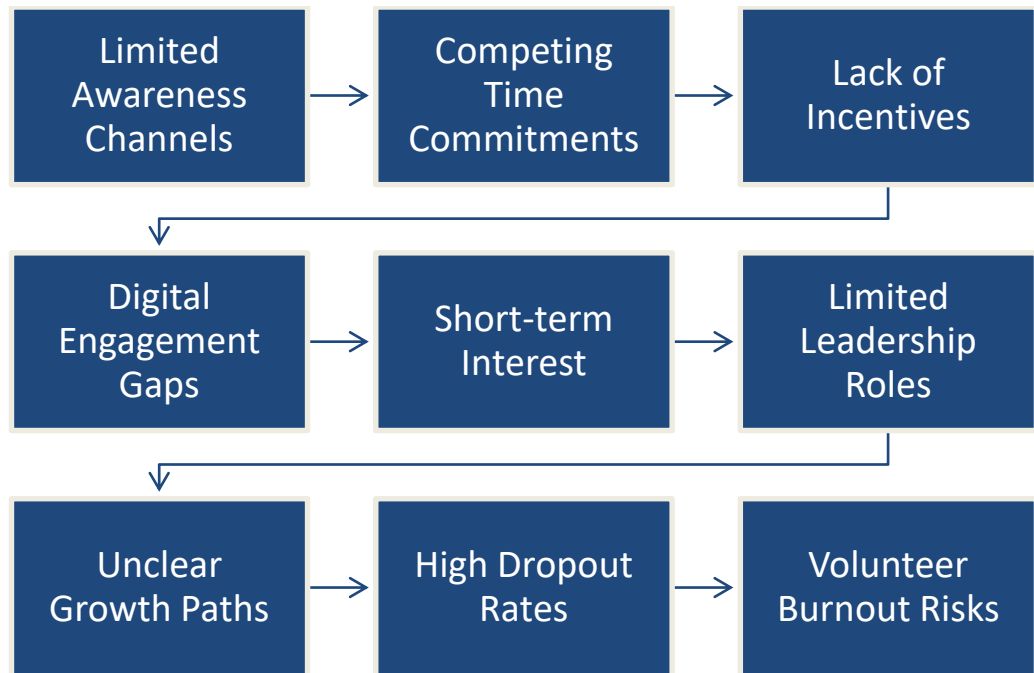


Figure 6: Barriers to Youth Volunteer Attraction and Retention

Another area of concern is the fact that there are no clear incentives available. For instance, youth are willing to volunteer if they are to get skills that may be of help to them, or if they are to meet people they may need for business, or if they are to get certificates. Another barrier is ineffective communication (Nursey-Bray et al. 2022, p.74). Other forms of communication like emails and newsletters may not appeal to younger generations that are used to using messaging applications and social media.

Some challenges faced when enlisting and engaging young people include busy schedules for productivity, short term commitment to volunteering work, and blurred expectations. In order to address these, the use of strategic core messages is appropriate in an organization's communication (ÅBERG, 2022, p.16). Thus, the 3x3x3 model can be effectively applied by organisations to distil brief and powerful messages about what those organisations do and why volunteering is good for society (ÅBERG, 2022, p.16). By identifying with them, it means that when the management is developing its various strategic messages, they will resonate with what the stakeholders

already have in mind (ÅBERG, 2022, p.16). Therefore, the regular evaluation of the communication will serve the purpose of keeping volunteers young, hence retain the motivation towards the purpose of volunteering.

3 Research design

This study uses a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews, while quantitative data is gathered using surveys. This combination helps provide a deeper understanding of the communication and youth engagement issues within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

3.1 Research Strategy

In the present research, a case study method will be employed where the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani will be selected with particular emphasis on communication and engagement with youths. Mixed method will be followed in this research. Both, qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) will be employed to provide a deeper understanding and well-grounded recommendations for the improvement of the organization. The case study technique will be adopted to assess the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani's internal communication and the strategies that foster youth participation. This method is particularly suitable for examining deeper, complex and real-life issues in organizations because it offers a comprehensive way of investigating communication networks, involvement processes, and their outcomes in relation to volunteer retention (Priya, 2021). Examining the Finnish Red Cross in Kajaani is beneficial in enhancing the understanding of non-profit management, particularly in the local context, as literature reveals that there is limited research done on small organizations, but the emphasis is placed on the large organizations.

The thesis examines how purposefully structured communication affects volunteer motivation and organizational effectiveness and provides recommendations for the improvement of the situation. Thus, this case study of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani adds to the literature on non-profits apart from being a valuable assessment tool for this organization; it offers insights that can inform other community-based organizations. The implications are aimed at improving the sustainability and participation rates in volunteer non-profit organizations.

3.2 Research approach

The research will adopt the deductive research approach since it started with the theories on organizational communication on youth engagement, then applied the case of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. This approach also has the advantage of conducting a structured analysis while testing the frameworks in a certain non-profit setting and allows for generalizable conclusions (Kumar & Ujire, 2024). Deductive reasoning is appropriate as it allows the study to test the theoretical frameworks, assess where the practice may be lacking, and offer empiric suggestions to improve the communication and volunteer engagement plans.

3.3 Data collection & analysis methods

Primary Data Collection

Primary data will be collected by conducting semi-structured interviews as well as surveys to get a clear understanding of the communication gap within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. This refers to semi-structured interviews, offering flexibility with structure. Additionally, the study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to ensure depth, breadth, and validity in data collection.

The semi-structured interview is appropriate for the setting up of a small non-profit organization where the interaction between humans determines volunteer experience and where the data collected is contextual information. However, they can take a lot of time to complete, and the responses that are received may be diverse and, therefore, may need some special attention.

Semi-structured interviews are a qualitative research method used by many researchers that combines flexibility and structure. It helps to extract deeper insights while minimizing the level of bias of the interviewer (Saunders et al. 2019). In a small non-profit context, the way the volunteers are recruited, and the human interaction is what shapes their experience. And contextual understanding is important to volunteer experience. In this section, semi-structured inter-

views were conducted with selected board members and volunteers to capture detailed perceptions of obstacles to internal communication and youth engagement (chapters 4.2–4.3 describe how this was done).

Surveys are a well-known quantitative method of collecting extensive standardized data from a larger population. Surveys are known for their depth and generalizability (Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021). They help identify wider ranges of responses, attitudes, and problems among different respondents. Surveys were distributed to volunteers and community members to gauge the effectiveness of messaging, engagement issues, etc. The surveys are being used to complement the qualitative findings presented above (see Chapter 4.2, 4.3).

The study incorporated a mixed-methods approach through semi-structured interviews and survey data that maximized depth and breadth. The use of methodological triangulation helped improve validity and reliability and helped build a comprehensive understanding of communication barriers and youth engagement of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

According to Karatsareas (2022), interviews can be a valuable method for collecting in-depth qualitative data through personal narratives and opinions. In this thesis, two semi-structured interviews with board members will be conducted to gain rich insights. However, such interviews may involve complexities, as interpretations can introduce subjectivity and potential bias.

Surveys will be developed to get a broad range of data from extensive population of volunteers and community members, thus providing quantitative methods of determining Communication efficiency, and youth participation issues. Whereas surveys offer greater representativeness, qualitative ones lack depth in terms of the responses collected.

The quantitative data will be established by self-administered questionnaires to be conducted on a wider population of volunteers and other members of the community at social areas including Kahvilla hub of the organization. “Surveys will be used to assess communication levels and identify barriers that limit youth participation, complementing the qualitative findings. This aligns with Ghanad’s (2023) argument that understanding the factors influencing youth involvement requires systematic and evidence-based analysis.

The survey adds more data to the case study, but the purpose of this case study is not to achieve statistical generalizability but to be able to gain rich, in-depth insights into Finnish Red Cross Kajaani context. The interviews will be conducted purposively with participants who experience direct internal communication and youth engagement so that the information is relevant and contextual. To enhance the credibility of the findings, this study uses triangulation of qualitative interviews with quantitative survey data so that different sources and methods can validate each other (Dawadi, Shrestha, & Giri, 2021). The cooperation and integration of the two methodologies has upgraded reliability and credibility resulting in a better and more adequate understanding of the communication barriers and engagement challenges. Based on this, it can propose practical recommendations on how to improve internal communication and develop activities to promote recruitment and retention of young volunteers in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

Reliability in research is the stability and consistency of findings obtained over time and in different circumstances. In other words, if we repeat a study, we get similar results (Heale & Twycross, 2015). It is the degree to which the results can be generalized to other situations and other people. Validity relates to the measurement accuracy, or whether the research really measures what it is supposed to measure (Golafshani, 2003). In qualitative research, a similar idea is trustworthiness. Trustworthiness incorporates credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to qualify the rigour of qualitative findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure reliability during the study, method for data collection will be structured interviews and standardised survey. Carefully designed survey and interview questions strengthen the validity of the research. The questions reflect on assessing the internal communication challenges and youth engagement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. According to Dawadi, Shrestha, and Giri (2021), the trustworthiness of a study can be improved through transparency in data collection strategies, where feasible participant validation, and methodological triangulation which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches.

4 Empirical Study

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the research conducted to investigate internal communication and youth participation problems within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. The aim is to unveil significant problems affecting communication between the board and its branches of service, as well as recruitment and retention of young volunteers' obstacles. The following sections provide the context of the organization as it is now, the research design and data collection methods, and provide analysis of findings from interviews and questionnaires. These empirical findings are used to discuss and make recommendations in the subsequent chapters.

4.1 Red Cross Current Situation Description

Like many other non-profit organizations, the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani experiences challenges in both internal communication and youth engagement (Juha Tervo, 2025). There is a need for the efficient flow of communication between the branches and the board due to apparent communication breakdowns that hinder effective decision-making and volunteer management (Ihm & Kim, 2021). Youth involvement is another huge challenge, especially in accessing and maintaining young volunteers aged 18-30 years because the social trends of the current society have changed, and young people are also preoccupied with other activities.

The Finnish Red Cross Kajaani has internal challenges with communication and volunteers that affect its operations. Lack of communication between the board and its six service branches, which include First Aid, Friendship, Multicultural, Health Point, Psychological, and Preparedness, means that there is poor coordination, thus limiting the organization's capacity to promptly respond to human suffering.

Furthermore, this means that the organization shall be relying on retirees, hence lacking young people's engagement in volunteering activities. Unless addressed, these factors may hamper the achievement of the organisation. This research seeks to identify these challenges and provide the framework for the youth engagement activities to improve intra-organizational communication, recruit more volunteers, and sustain the organization. Addressing these concerns will help the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani to improve the structure of its volunteer management and thus provide

efficient services for the future. The figure 7 on Current structure of volunteer management and communication hazards is inspired by the article written by Ihm & Kim, 2021; Nordstrom, Tulibaski & Peterson, 2022.

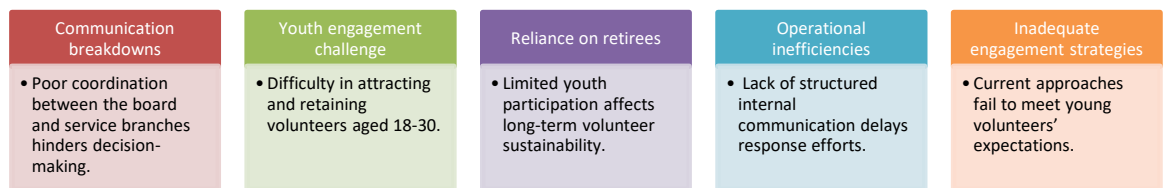


Figure 7: Current structure of volunteer management and communication hazards

Although there are technological solutions and approaches to engaging the audience, they are rather sporadic. According to Nordstrom, Tulibaski & Peterson (2022), young volunteers require meaningful roles, clear communication, and acknowledgement. However, the current engagement approaches may be inadequate to meet these expectations, which makes it difficult for the organization to align volunteer activities with what they want. It is crucial to determine the communication impediments and motivational predictors of youth engagement to design proper approaches. These are the issues this research work intends to investigate to come up with findings that can enhance internal communication and engagement.

4.2 Implementation of Research Design

To examine the challenges of communication and youth participation in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, two research methods were employed: interviews and a survey. A mixed-method design,

combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, was selected to provide both in-depth accounts of individual experiences and broader insights from a larger group of respondents. A total of five individuals closely involved with the organization were interviewed. These consisted of two board members engaged in decision-making, one branch leader responsible for overseeing a department, and two youth volunteers participating in the organization's events. The purpose of the interviews was to explore how information flows across the organisation, how decisions are made and communicated, and the difficulties young volunteers face in maintaining engagement. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via MS Teams, depending on participant availability. Each session lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Permission to record the interviews was received from participants, and when recording was not feasible, detailed notes were taken. The collected material was later reviewed for recurring themes such as communication gaps, language barriers, and feelings of exclusion. Through repeated examination, a deeper understanding of the lived experiences and challenges faced by members of the organisation was developed. To complement the interviews, a survey was designed using the online platform Webropol. The aim was to obtain information from a larger number of volunteers and capture diverse perspectives. To reach a broad pool of respondents, the survey link was distributed through the Red Cross' WhatsApp groups, volunteer email lists, and networks of local schools and youth organisations. The questionnaire included both multiple-choice and scale-based questions, which addressed the frequency of organizational communication, preferred channels (such as WhatsApp, email, or Facebook), motivations for participation, and factors that discouraged engagement. A purposive sampling strategy was adopted to ensure that participants had direct experience with internal communication or youth engagement in the organization. This approach allowed the data collected to remain closely aligned with the research objectives. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a recognized method for identifying and interpreting patterns within textual material (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis followed six phases: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. An inductive, data-driven orientation was applied, meaning that themes were derived directly from participants' accounts rather than imposed from existing theory. This approach enabled challenges related to communication and youth engagement within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani to emerge from the lived experiences of those involved. The survey responses were analyzed using PSCP, a free statistical software similar to SPSS. This tool was used to identify trends, such as preferred communication tools, reasons for volunteering, and levels of satisfaction with existing practices. The results were then presented visually through

graphs and charts produced in Microsoft Excel and Canva to enhance clarity and accessibility. By combining structured survey data with unstructured interview narratives, methodological triangulation was achieved (Dawadi, Shrestha, & Giri, 2021). The comparison and validation of findings across different methods increased the credibility and comprehensiveness of the study. On this basis, evidence-based recommendations were formulated to improve internal communication and strengthen youth engagement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

4.2.1 Interviews

To gain insight into the communication challenges and issues related to youth participation at the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, we carried out interviews for this study. It's important to hear directly from people who are involved with the organization, and many people we interviewed were such people: board members, a department coordinator and young volunteers.

We emailed interview notifications and meeting links to the interviewees before each interview. In the emails, you could see the purpose of the interview. Plus, there was a time and date. Also, there was a link to join the interview. We used Microsoft Teams to conduct the interviews online. This platform was useful as it allows us to record the conversations (with the participant's permission) and later download the transcript. This was useful to analyse the conversations. We also said we could meet in person if anyone couldn't attend online.

Each interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The questions looked at how people communicate internally, how the board and service branches interact, how volunteers (especially young ones) feel about the current methods and what could change.

Once we had all the interviews finished, we looked back at what they had recorded and noted down to see what was important and kept coming up. These repeated ideas are called themes. This study revealed four key themes from the interviews.

1. Strengthening communication between the board and the branches – Participants said there is a need for better feedback loops and the use of proper digital tools to keep everyone informed and involved.

2. Attracting more young volunteers – Interviewees mentioned the importance of sharing meaningful success stories, using social media, and speaking to the motivations of young people.

3. Keeping young volunteers involved – Many believed that offering leadership opportunities, training, and mentorship would help young volunteers stay longer and feel more connected.

4. Clear and inclusive communication – Interviewees emphasized the importance of using clear language, translating key information, and creating a central platform where updates and events can be shared easily.

These themes assisted in conducting an overall analysis of the research and were especially helpful in formulating the recommendations when improving the communication and youth engagement of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani.

Interviewee	Position	Length	Channel
Interviewee A	All Branches active Volunteer	(30)Minutes	Physical
Interviewee B	Board Member of Red Cross Kajaani (Head of Multicultural)	(60)Minutes	Teams
Interviewee C	Formal Red Cross Kajaani Volunteer	(40)Minutes	Teams
Interviewee D	Active Volunteer	(34)Minutes	Teams
Interviewee E	Head of Psychological Branch		Written Answer through Mail

Table A: Interviews Conducted at the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani

4.2.2 Survey

To gather more detailed information about the volunteers of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, an online survey was developed for this research. This organisation commissioned the survey to examine how are volunteers communicated to. It also examines what are the challenges faced by youth in participating as well as remaining with the organisation.

The aim was to get at least 60-80 responses obtained from the volunteer group of nearly 160 members. However, it was known from the outset that this number would be difficult to achieve, as the volunteers consist largely of non-English and non-Finnish-speaking people, most of whom are refugees. Due to this language barrier, some members could not complete the survey on their own. As a result, only 30 responses were ultimately received. The responses collected were less than the target; however, the data collected was useful to learn about communication and youth engagement in the organisation.

We designed and managed our survey using Webropol, an online survey and reporting tool widely used in Finnish universities and organizations (Kajaani University of Applied Sciences provides institutional access for research purposes). Thanks to this tool, we put together an easy-to-use form, so respondents could simply click or type in their responses. We used different types of questions like multiple-choice, Likert-scale (rating), and open-ended to get both numerical data and personal opinions (Webropol, 2025).

The survey was designed and administered using Webropol, an online platform for creating questionnaires. The tool enabled the development of a clear and accessible survey format for participants. A combination of question types was employed, including multiple-choice items, Likert-scale (rating) questions, and open-ended questions. This design allowed the collection of both quantitative data, through structured response options, and qualitative insights, through participants' written answers to open-ended items.

We shared the survey link through several WhatsApp groups regularly used by the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani for updates and event announcements. These included SPR Kajaanin osasto, Red Cross Kahvila, SPR RCK Admin group, and Vapepa Emergency Supp Serv.

We sent the Webropol survey link to each of these groups. Because there are many messages on WhatsApp groups, we were sure that the survey link will be ignored or lost. Our survey launched for a limited time between 03/04/2025–15/04/2025. To raise the survey response, we sent this link again every single day as suggested by Dillman et al. (2014). This served as a reminder for everyone, keeping the survey available for someone who hasn't seen it or responded. In the survey period, we got responses on different days: On 03/04/2025 – 1 response; on 07/04/2025 – 6

responses; on 09/04/2025 – 2 responses; on 10/04/2025 – 11 responses; on 12/04/2025 – 5 responses; on 13/04/2025 – 2 responses; on 15/04/2025 – 3 responses; adding up to 30 total responses.

Despite this effort, we noticed that the response rate was low in the first few days. To resolve this situation, we began sending the survey in person, especially to our volunteers, whom we met during the event or during visit. This direct sharing assisted us in reaching out to the maximum number of people who missed the link in the WhatsApp.

Since the population we aimed for data collection was small, consisting of 60–70 active volunteers and board members of Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, 30 responses were collected by the end of the survey period. These individuals represent all branches and age groups, providing insight into how volunteers experience communication within the organization and what motivates them to continue or stop volunteering. Later, these findings were compared with interview data to develop a complete picture of the communication situation and youth engagement.

5 Findings

The chapter summarizes the key results and findings from the data collection on internal communication and youth engagement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. All these information are drawn from the online survey and the interview conducted with key people in the organization. Combined, these two methods provided a clear and fuller view of the current situation.

In total, 30 people completed the survey. From their answers, we were able to see patterns that emerged like what equipment worked and what areas needed work.

In addition to the survey, interviews were conducted with five individuals, including board members, branch leaders, and active youth volunteers. From these interviews, it was learned that communication is important to people, but at times challenging.

5.1 Themes Emerging from Interviews on Organizational Communication Challenges

The first theme, *“Strengthening branch-to-board communication,”* highlights the need to establish clear feedback loops and adopt more reliable digital tools. Interviewees indicated that both WhatsApp and email were perceived as ineffective, as messages were often overlooked or failed

to reach the intended audience. It is important to have an official communication platform that includes all volunteers and is clear and concise the second theme, Attract Young Volunteers highlights the need to share impactful success stories but also do outreach based on their values and motivations. Several interviewees indicated that a mismatch exists between the expectations of younger people and the jobs available in the Red Cross. Youth can be inspired to join and stay through personal stories of integration and impact. Youth retention and mentorships and opportunities to lead and learn new skills through action are essential. Many participants emphasized that retaining youth is easier when they feel valued, trained, and given responsibilities. The fourth theme, “Strengthen engagement through clear and inclusive communication,” calls for using centralized communication platforms with multilingual resources and regular updates. It was also suggested by the participants to give them a certificate and organise an event to uplift them.

The overall goal of the figure is to illustrate how all four strategies are interconnected, which will serve to create a more attractive, effective, and youth-friendly Red Cross chapter in Kajaani.



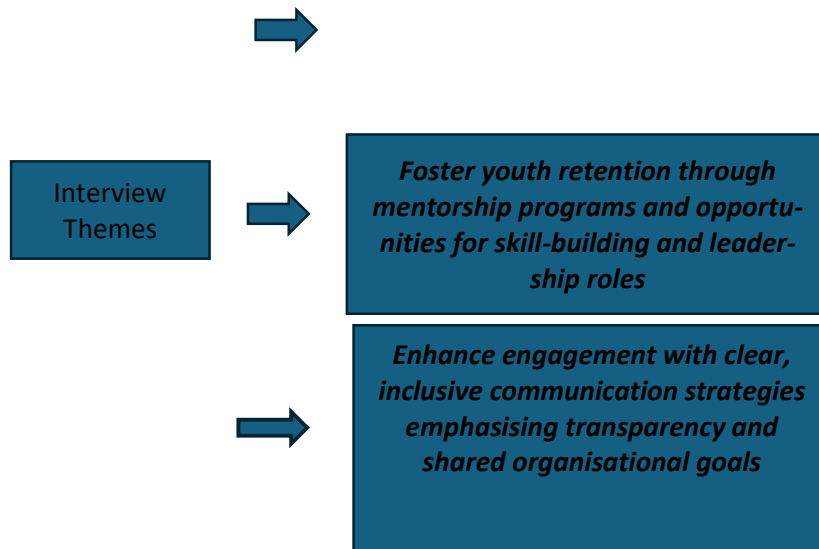


Figure 8: Interview Themes

Theme 1: Strengthen branch-to-board communication by implementing consistent feedback loops and digital collaboration tools

Finnish Red Cross Kajaani can improve internal communication and youth engagement by adopting and developing structured feedback cycles, embedded digital platforms, and inclusive practices of communication. Listening to the volunteers, for instance, Interviewee A, Interviewee B, Interviewee C, Interviewee D, and Interviewee E, it is evident that communication frustrations and youth disconnection are not due to a lack of passion or dedication, but due to ineffective structures and language barriers that hinder involvement and unification across branches. An important area of improvement that can be focused on is board-to-board communication. Interviewee A has opined that First Aid, Psychosocial Support, and Friendship Operation are different groups, yet there is an inadequate number of board representatives from each group since most volunteers are unavailable. This leads to fragmented communication. Interviewee A noted that it would be best if each group were assigned a seat on the boards so that each team could be involved in the decision-making process. There is another solution in the form of digital collaboration tools as well. Interviewee C and Interviewee D stated the issue with unofficial WhatsApp groups and unreliable email threads.

Interviewee D stated that *“But sometimes you know that the messages get lost, and in the volume of the communication that we get, so many messages, so many like other stuff is coming.”*

Interviewee C highlighted the effects of exclusion and omitting volunteers in some communication processes. She urged the adoption of the official Red Cross software or a central database where every event or update, training session, among others, is recorded.

Moreover, Interviewee B stated that *“Yeah, we use emails, but there is the same problem.”*

Interviewee D further supported this by proposing incorporating less reliance on WhatsApp and creating an application or a web-based main portal to enhance the connection with the youth volunteer, especially those with interpreter issues. To improve clarity and enhance branch-to-board communication, it is recommended to include feedback loops and use available technologies such as WhatsApp and OMA Red Cross. Interviewee E said that the communication has been better, but more frequent updates and better communication within the group during the evenings are still necessary.

As the interviewee E described it, *“As a challenge, I experience multicultural group integration to others into groups and vice versa”*.

She stressed that the board members should regularly attend the group sessions and get acquainted with the leaders of the action groups to provide them with attention and make sure that the volunteers are listened to all over the organisational structure. In order to encourage young people to get involved, more focus must be placed on changing the perception. Interviewee D emphasised that many youths only associate the Red Cross with emergency assistance and volunteer services, not seeing it as a place to learn, meet new people and travel. He suggested that it is possible to share impact stories via social media, hosting the youth leadership and integration event, as well as certification. Interviewee C further said that social media engagement across different sites is important, but this requires a change of attitude in the organisation to go digital. Therefore, the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani can improve internal communication and the involvement of youth through the creation of a single digital environment for communication, the use of translated materials, involving young people in future planning, and using social networks to highlight their work.

Theme 2: Attract young volunteers by highlighting meaningful impact stories and tailoring outreach to their motivations

Recruiting young people as volunteers to the Finnish Red Cross, more so in the Kajaani region, calls for appropriate and engaging communications. It is vital to focus on the stories that will be the most relevant to the values, motivations, and experiences of the audience. In the interview with Interviewee D, a young volunteer, immigrant from Pakistan, mentioned that youth are not aware of the presence of other positions in the organisation apart from volunteering in emergencies. He stressed the need to promote individual success stories, the successful integration, and learning that can come from volunteering. The experience of his own life as a stranger arriving in Finland and making a home with the aid of the Red Cross is a testament to the strength of storytelling.

Interviewee D stated that *“Either you know that I was inspired to be the volunteer because I wanted to contribute to the cause that directly impacts people like you can say that when I came here, I have. I was the only Pakistani over here. There were not a lot of.”*

This is in accord with literature that has advocated for the significance of emotional appeal in youth volunteer mobilisation (Mao & Nishide, 2025). However, it is important to ensure that the outreach is relevant to the reasons why these youth want to be a part of it, including social interaction, familiarisation with other cultures and career enhancement. As Interviewee D pointed out, activities such as parenting workshops and refugee training not only allowed him to be productive and contribute to society but also positively impacted his development and possess of integration. Interviewee A’s interview also confirms this, where he stated that the Red Cross organises various socially related activities, such as friendship and multicultural activities, that could be highlighted in youth-oriented campaigns. Interviewee C also found out that accessibility and inclusion when using language in communication also played a very big role in the engagement of youths, especially immigrant youths or the youths who are volunteering from other countries. She insisted on the need to use English as the major medium of communication when it comes to such situations, and that there must be a central point for the dissemination of correct information.

Interviewee C stated that *“And the Red Cross is international, and the international language following the European Union is English.”*

Moreover, as the interviewee B described it *“Finnish language is the problem”*.

Here, the communication exclusion that led to her departure from the board exemplifies how composition and leadership perceptions of young and diverse volunteers can be off-putting. She also emphasised the need to give volunteers equal respect as paid staff, as well as providing feedback that helps them feel valued and needed, which is important for youth volunteer recruitment and participation. It can be crucial to focus on the impact of the project on other people’s lives so that target volunteers would see themselves as valuable members of society. Some ways of reaching them are by using the relevant platforms, more interactive recruitment techniques and implementing collaboration with schools to make volunteering appealing. Interviewee E mentioned that young people should be more involved and listen to the Red Cross organisation. She also pointed out that the effective engagement of the youth was achieved during the *Friend Skills for Young People project (2020–2022)*, which worked with educational establishments and built a motivated team of volunteers, which proved the successful targeted recruitment of the youth. Moreover, as Interviewee C has pointed out, the emphasis should not be on the age of volunteers but on openness to any young people. Her observations also include the necessity to redefine the concept of retention: volunteers are motivated by inspiration rather than compulsory orders. As Interviewee D suggested, it is important to appreciate the young volunteers, give those certificates, awards and recognition; find ways of making them leadership positions, and so on. Accordingly, there is a need to humanise the Red Cross target through real-life experiences, make communication culturally sensitive and in the language that the young people understand and use, while ensuring the targeting appeals to their morale and values.

Theme 3: Foster youth retention through mentorship programs and opportunities for skill-building and leadership roles

To address youth turnover in volunteer-based organisations such as the Finnish Red Cross, attention should be placed on work appreciation, career development, and training. From the interview with Interviewee A, Interviewee B, and the reflections Interviewee C and Interviewee D provided, a key theme emerges of the young people staying engaged when they feel appreciated, encouraged, and empowered. Young volunteers require the support of their seniors, and this is why mentorship is very important in considering the issue of retaining them. Interviewee D also raised the issue of helping newly arrived immigrants, as he also drew his inspiration from his own experience of migration. His participation in matters such as parenting guidance, painting and emergency response training shows that sharing the experience contributes to inclusion and continuity. Literature supports this as Celestin (2024) posited that mentorship increases organization commitment and decreases turnover through boosting psychosocial climate and career advancement. The Red Cross can also improve integration and personal growth by matching newcomers with senior volunteers to improve the effectiveness of the local services, particularly for immigrant youth. Interviewee E said that young people should be listened to and said that many are not currently given enough of a voice or authority within the system.

Interviewee E, "Educational cooperation, to make young people attractive groups and activities, bring up helping significance and meaningfulness, making also for yourself".

This would be possible if the organisation adopted the principles of mentorship and leadership pathways, so that the youth feel welcome to be part of the organisation as well as capable of contributing to the improvement of the organisation. There are also personal learning and development, skills development and management opportunities among other requirements. Interviewee A demonstrated how volunteers can be involved with specific sections such as First Aid, Psychosocial Support and Health Point. These roles not only develop competencies but also create meanings. Interviewee C, who provided various leadership roles at Red Cross, explained that leadership roles gave her a meaningful way of being able to assist and contribute, even with obstacles such as language barriers.

Interviewee C stated that *“The requirements to be a leader because we have me and the actual board have a very different concept about what a leader is.”*

She is therefore calling for change on the traditional specifications of the leadership role to include language flexibility and cultural sensitivity as a way of helping the diverse youthful population to lead. Likewise, the literature shows that granting progressive responsibility contributes to the development of ownership and belongingness (Alejandra, Melgarejo Molina, & Simon Elorz, 2025). Interviewee D also encouraged leadership development activities and connections that are accessible for youths; Interviewee D mentioned that activities such as these could enhance youth participation and further counter the belief that the Red Cross only responds to disasters. Interviewee C added to this by saying that it is important to respect the volunteers and reward them appropriately in order to create a good relationship. However, communication remains a barrier. Both Interviewee C and Interviewee D complained about the lack of structure in communication within the company; important information may be found within the WhatsApp conversations or shared only in Finnish. Both recommended that for the volunteers and other youth, it would create more centralised platforms in English that would make it easier for them to access development. Therefore, by establishing the structure for the programs for succession, skill development, and leadership, and improving the communication issues, organisations such as the Finnish Red Cross can retain youth volunteers.

Theme 4: Enhance engagement with clear, inclusive communication strategies emphasising transparency and shared organisational goals

The level of engagement with the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani must be increased through objectives and goals that are clearly stated and easily understood through communication that focuses on the common purpose of the organisation. Considering the interviews of volunteers and leaders like Interviewee A, Interviewee B, Interviewee C, Interviewee D, and Interviewee E, several significant issues can be identified, including the necessity of more centralised platforms, multilingualism, and a focus on values. Interviewee D pointed out that although he had access to updates on his WhatsApp and email, critical information was easily overlooked amid the numerous notifications. He proposed the establishment of a single and unified mobile application or web interface to easily connect with the community, which is also in line with Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez's (2020) assertion about the importance of clear and easily navigable communication channels.

Interviewee D stated that *"I believe that the communication should be on a single platform, like there should be a proper website or a place where you can log in anytime, anywhere or in the mobile app."*

Moreover, the language factor still persists to be a significant challenge. Both Interviewee D and Interviewee C emphasised that very often the important information is conveyed only in Finnish, which makes the other participants who are non-Finnish speaking feel left out. Interviewee C, who resigned from a leadership position, stated that she felt withdrawn due to the minimal use of English in board meetings. This is in tandem with literature indicating that the use of diverse language enhances equality and inclusion in diverse cultural settings (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2020).

Similarly, Interviewee A elaborated on the lack of integrated communication between the First Aid, Preparedness, and Psychosocial Support teams, which coordinate through group messengers

such as WhatsApp and personal networking. She admits that these channels have somewhat enhanced communication, but there is still no unified, official approach to organising and coordinating efforts, which often results in disinterest and confusion. Furthermore, Interviewee B (indicated implicitly through board structure) had concerns regarding the irregularity of leadership changes and the role of volunteers within different Red Cross entities. This shows the importance of transparency and mutual understanding to ensure that the organisation stays on course and stays focused, something which organisational communication scholars such as Ihm & Kim (2021) have emphasised. Good communication ensures that all workers are involved, listened to, and have increased cohesion in their work. Interviewee E noted that although there is better communication, there are still issues such as multicultural inclusion and language differences. To overcome this, organisations should leverage on digital platforms, promote a group dialogue through group evenings and make sure that the organisation's messages cut across all the groups of volunteers.

Some of the possible measures to increase engagement, according to interviewees include both Interviewee C and Interviewee D considered providing formal recognition like certificates, awards, and public appreciation to enhance the motivation of volunteers.

For instance, As the interviewee D described it , *“Yeah, recognising the volunteer's effort through awards appreciation events and certificates of achievement can boost the morale and the encouragement for the long-term commitments of the volunteer, providing ongoing training and the membership program would also ensure the volunteer field supports their roles.”*

They should hold weekly or bi-weekly town hall meetings and feedback sessions where volunteers can express their concerns in the decision-making process, which is in consonance with the participative leadership theory. Education Alliances and Communication make volunteers feel that they are part of the organisational policies and goals. Therefore, the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani can increase its engagement through the following ways based on inclusive, centralised and transparent models.

5.2 Findings from Survey

A structured questionnaire was distributed to volunteers who belong to the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani branch to collect data. A total of 30 volunteers answered the questionnaire which included active and less active participants from different age groups serving for varying lengths of time. The survey instrument contained both standardized response options and Likert-type questions to evaluate volunteer communication preferences and satisfaction and feedback practices along with identified challenges and motivational aspects of volunteerism. The study collected the demographic information about participant age, gender and language selection to perform group comparisons. All respondents maintained their anonymity while the researchers obtained full consent for participation. The collected data shows a thorough representation of how communication and engagement functions in the organization and specifically how youth members participate in these processes.

Thematic Insights from Qualitative Feedback (Question 20).

The volunteers' comments add to the numbers and give us more insight to understand the results. Their open-ended recommendations point towards several themes.

Modernizing Communication and Outreach.

Volunteers want to be more communicative with modern-day technology know-how. This includes using advertising that young people will love, improving our outreach through the internet, and working better with schools and local businesses. These methods are for drawing in and involving younger volunteers. To this end, one volunteer suggested concentrating on local engagement, online channels and hands-on opportunities for youth participation.

The results of the survey given to Finnish Red Cross Kajaani volunteers are shown in this section. It includes demographic information like gender and age, length of volunteer service, and preferred means of communication. It also looks at opinions on how internal communication is currently done, how to make it better, and what influences motivation and trust. It also focusses on the degree of youth involvement and their expectations for increased involvement in Red Cross activities, as well as the events, training, and activities that volunteers prefer.

There were 30 respondents of different ages. The outcome found that the biggest part of the participants belonged to the 18-29 age group and it accounted for 9 respondents (30%) of all. After this, the 30-39 age category 8 respondents (27%) as well as the 60-69 age category 7 respondents (23%). The age groups 40-49, 4 respondents (13%), 50-59 was 1 respondent (3%), and 70+ was 1 respondents (3%) were the least-represented, respectively.

According to the results, the respondents who filled out the questionnaire were largely under 40 years and they together constitute more than the half of respondents i.e. 57%. On the other hand, individuals aged above 50 were less in the responses. This is useful for understanding the sample demographics of the survey and highlighting young people's greater engagement with this survey. These age-distribution results are illustrated in Figure 9.

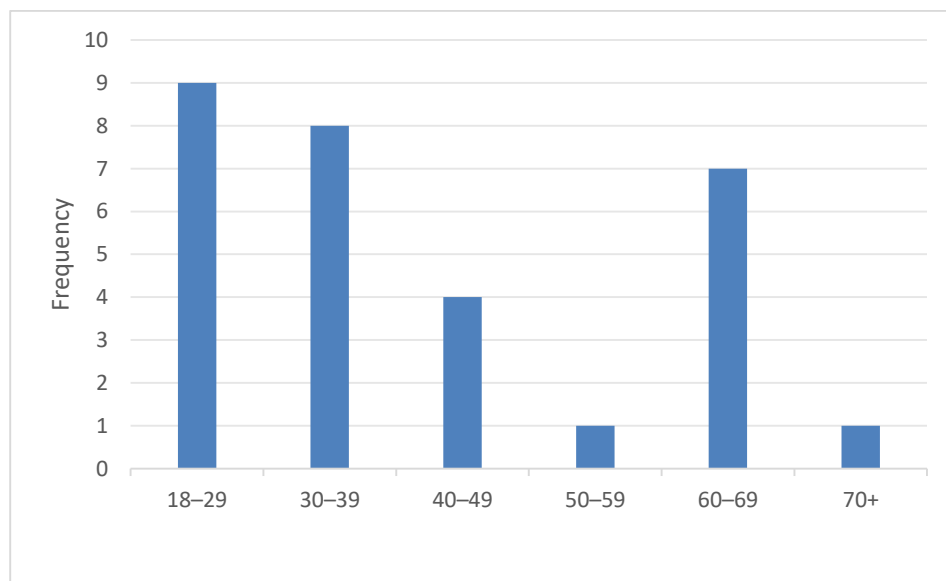


Figure 9: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group (n=30)

The biggest part of the participants belonged to the female group and it accounted for 20 respondents (67%) of all. After this, the male category 10 respondents (33%). No respondents selected "Other" or "Prefer not to say." This is shown in figure 10 and detail information can be seen in Table 1.

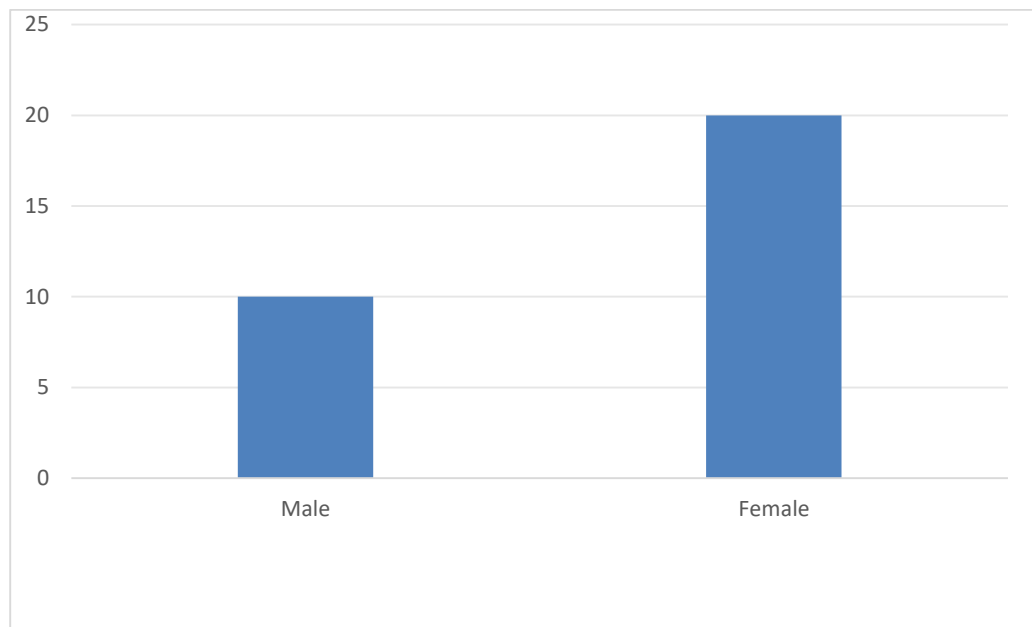


Figure 10: Respondent of Survey (n=30)

Most respondents have been involved with the Red Cross Kajaani for over one year, with the highest number having more than three years of involvement. Fewer respondents have been involved for less than six months. This suggests a generally experienced group of volunteers. This can be seen in Figure 11, and detailed information can be seen in Table 2.

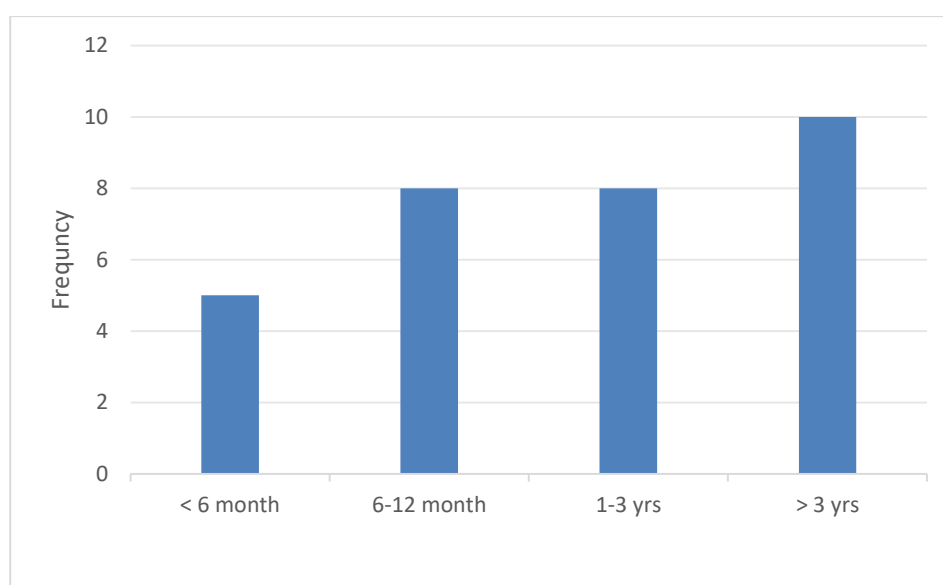


Figure 11: Timeline for Volunteers Being Involved (n=30)

17 respondents (57 %) preferred to receive information in English, while 13 respondents (43 %) preferred Finnish; no one selected Swedish or "Other." This can be seen in Figure 12, and detailed information can be seen in Table 3.

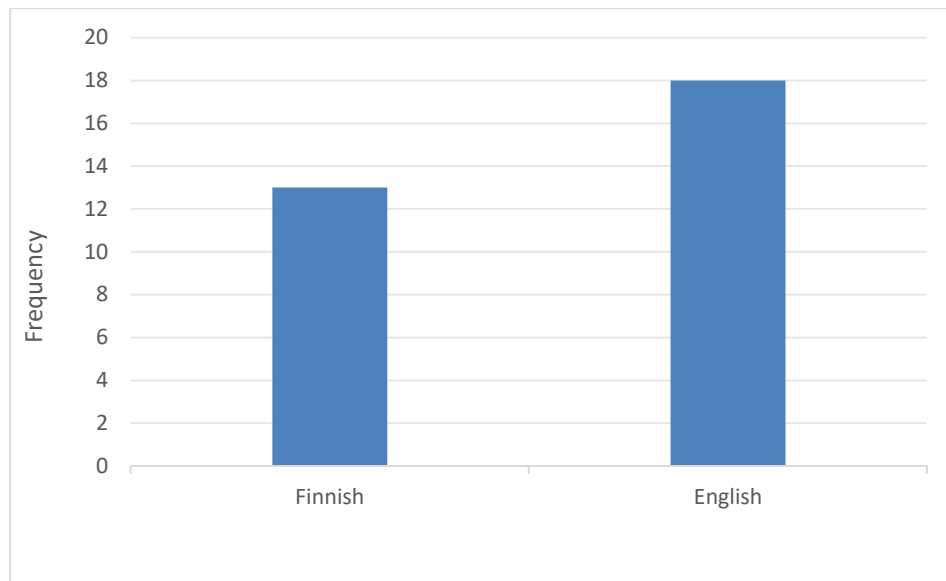


Figure 12: Language Preference for Receiving Information (n=30)

Respondents were asked which communication channel they prefer to receive information from Red Cross Kajaani. As illustrated in Figure X and Table Y, WhatsApp messages were the most popular channel of 25 respondents (83%). 9 respondents (30%) opted for email, 1 respondent (3%) chose phone calls, and another 1 respondents (3%) claimed 'Other' options. Interestingly, none of the respondents chose phone message (SMS) as their communication channel. This can be seen in Figure 14, and detailed information can be seen in Table 7.

Based on the findings, the option of chat medium preferred by the volunteers is WhatsApp and second is e-mail. People rarely use the old-fashioned phone call and SMS messaging capabilities, showing that they much prefer connecting of on much newer and instant messaging mediums.

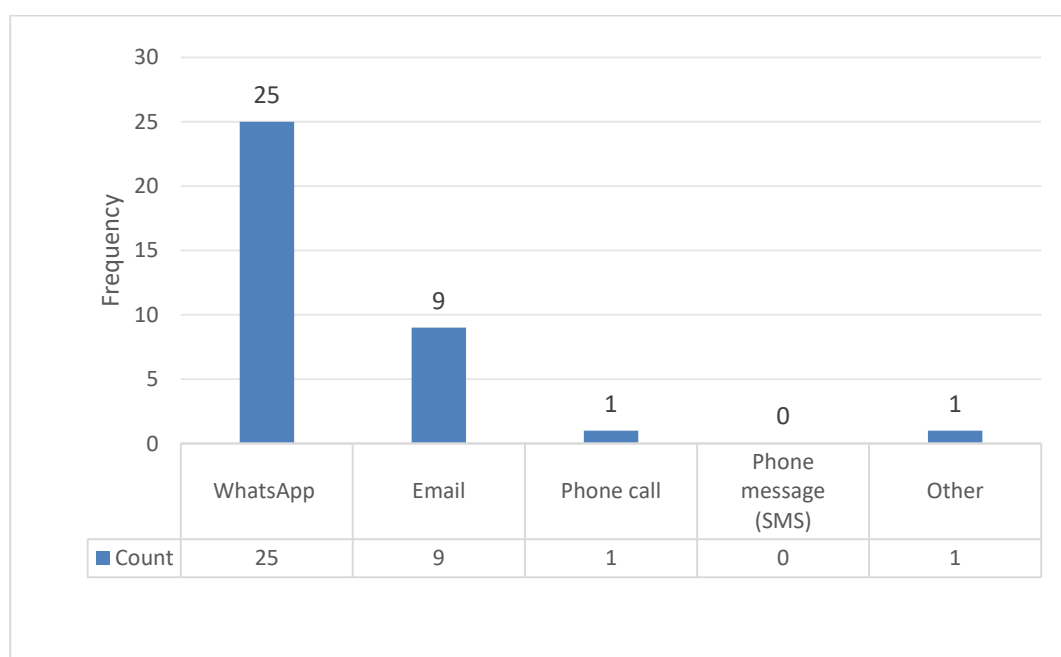


Figure 13: Preferred Communication Channel (n=30)

5.2.1 Improving Internal Communication in Red Cross Kajaani

Nearly half of the 14 respondents (46%) perceive internal communication within the Red Cross Kajaani as somewhat effective, but only 3 respondents (10%) find it very effective, while a combined 8 respondents (27%) consider it somewhat or very ineffective, and 5 respondents (17%) remain neutral. This distribution indicates that, although the majority are at least moderately satisfied, there is considerable room for improvement, particularly given the low proportion who view communication as highly effective and the notable share who are dissatisfied. These findings emphasize the importance of further enhancing internal communication strategies to boost satisfaction among volunteers and members. This can be seen in Figure 14, and detailed information can be seen in Table 5.

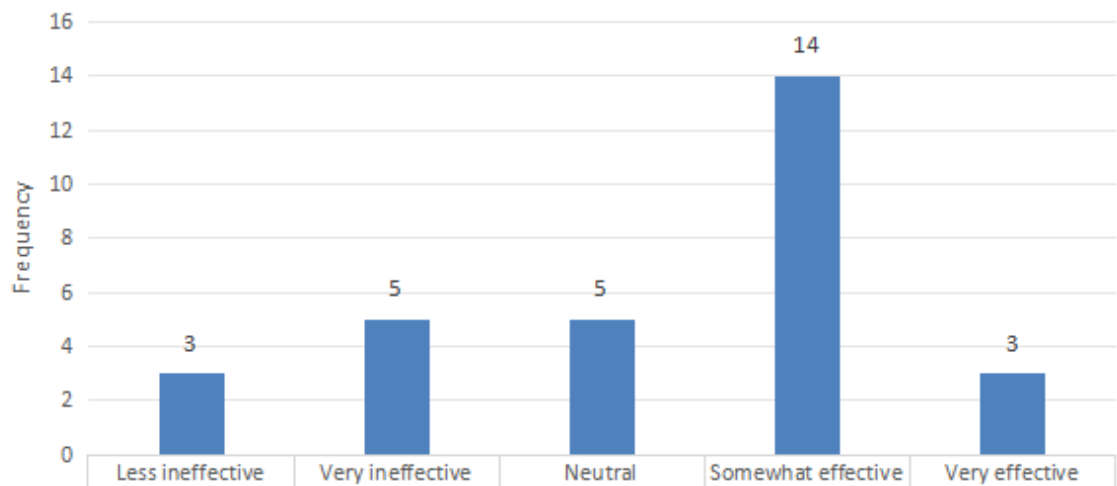


Figure 14: Effectiveness of Communication in Red Cross Kajaani (n=30)

21 respondents (70%) felt comfortable in sharing their opinion/feedback with the leadership team. But 6 respondents (20%) of the surveyed people have no opinion. This might mean they are not certain or lack experience with the processes. Hence, there could be inconsistencies in

the process, or some are unclear for some people. Also, 3 of the respondents (10%) would be uncomfortable providing feedback. So, there are some who may feel hesitant or fearful to speak. So, this issue needs to be addressed for greater trust and openness. This can be seen in Figure 15, and detailed information can be found in Table 6.

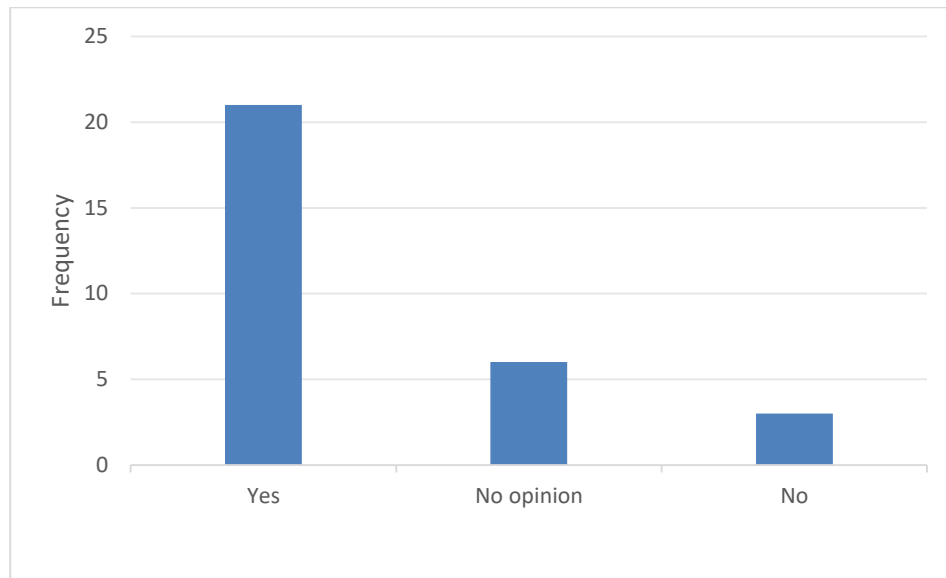


Figure 15: Comfort Level in Sharing Feedback with Leadership – Indications of Trust and Process Clarity (n=30)

The survey results show that many respondents have a difficult time with internal communication within the organization. 13 respondents (43%) indicated limited use of digital communication tools as a challenge, which was the most frequently reported issue. Among the respondents, 9 respondents (30%) identified inconsistency in communication among different branches, while 8 respondents (27%) said unclear instructions were a major obstacle. Delayed responses from the leadership and other unspecified communication problems were chosen far less frequently, by 4 respondents (13%) of respondents. Furthermore, 27 respondents (87%) did not cite any other challenges. Overall, the effectiveness of internal communication in the organization can be improved by enhancing the digital communication channel through standardization. This can be seen in Figure 16 and, detailed information can be seen in Table 4)

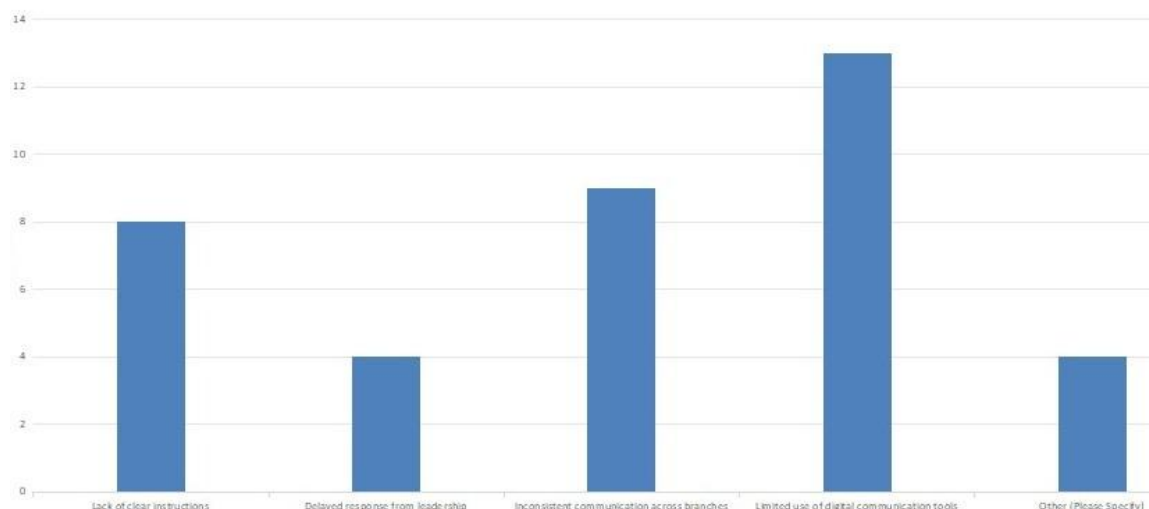


Figure 16: Respondents reporting lack of clear instructions as a challenge in internal communication (n=30)

Based on results from a questionnaire administered to 30 people, it was found that 14 respondents (47%) were aware of all six branches of Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, the branches varying from First Aid, Friendship and Cultural, Multicultural Services, Health Point, Psychosocial Support, and Preparedness. In the meantime, a total of 23% (7 respondents) indicated that they know some of the branches, specifying which ones they know. Finally, 9 respondents or 30% are unaware of any of the branches. This means almost half knew about the organization's branches. But more than half either knew only some or were not familiar at all. Thus, this indicates an area to increase awareness and communication regarding the organization. This can be seen in Figure 17, and detailed information can be seen in Table 8.

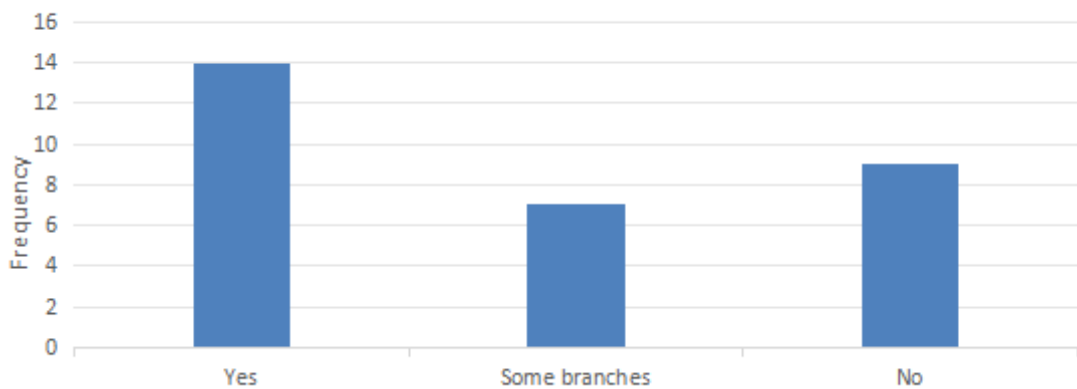


Figure 17: Respondents' Familiarity with Finnish Red Cross Kajaani Branches (n=30)

The table and bar chart summarize how well respondents feel they receive information about upcoming events from different branches within the Red Cross Kajaani, showing that 15 respondents (50%) report receiving information “somewhat well” and 9 respondents (30%) “Very well,” while only a small minority rarely 3 respondents (10%), somewhat poorly 2 respondents (7%), or very poorly 1 respondents (3%) receive updates. This indicates that internal communication is generally effective for most participants, though a few still face challenges in staying informed. For your thesis, it's best to include a concise summary table, a clear bar chart, and a brief interpretation paragraph like this one in the main text, while placing detailed PSPP outputs and frequency tables in the appendix—referencing the appendix for full details and avoiding repetition in both sections for clarity and space. The detailed information can be seen in Table 9.

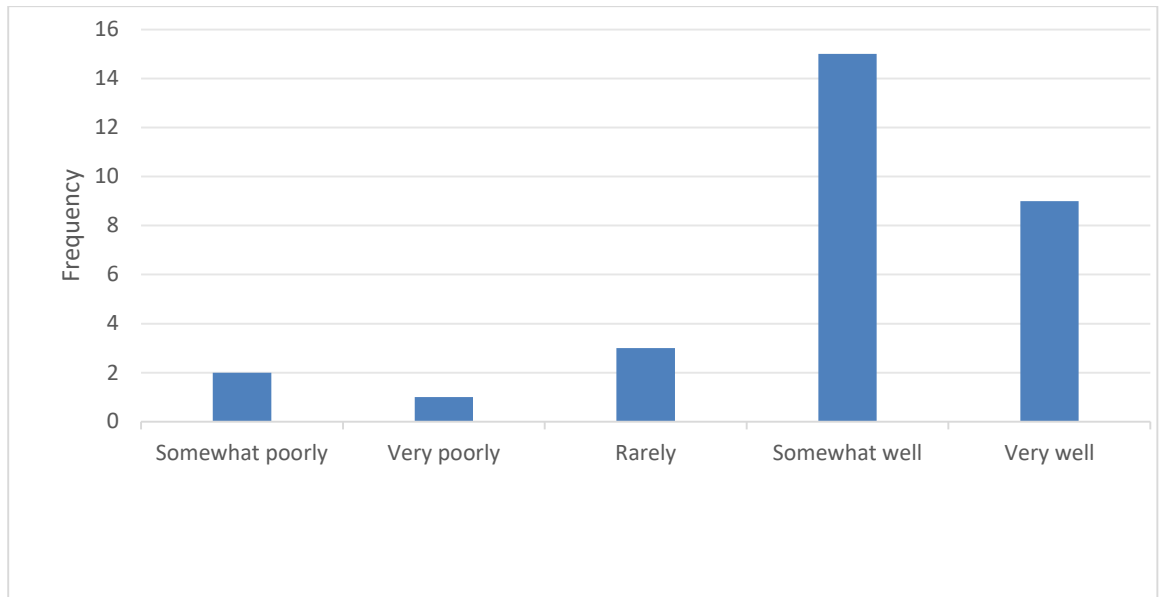


Figure 18: Respondents' Ratings on Receiving Information about Upcoming Events from Different Branches in Red Cross Kajaani (n=30)

The participants had to rate how well the different branches of Red Cross Kajaani communicate with each other on a scale of 1 (Very Poorly) and 5 (Very Well). Out of the 30 respondents, no respondents (0%) rated the communication as "Very Poorly." 7 respondents (23%) rated it as "Poorly." The largest group was 12 respondents (40%) who answered "No Idea." Furthermore, 10 respondents (33%) replied that "Well" the communication in branches is and only 1 respondent (3%) rated it at "Very Well". This can be seen in Figure 19 and detailed information can be seen in Table 10)

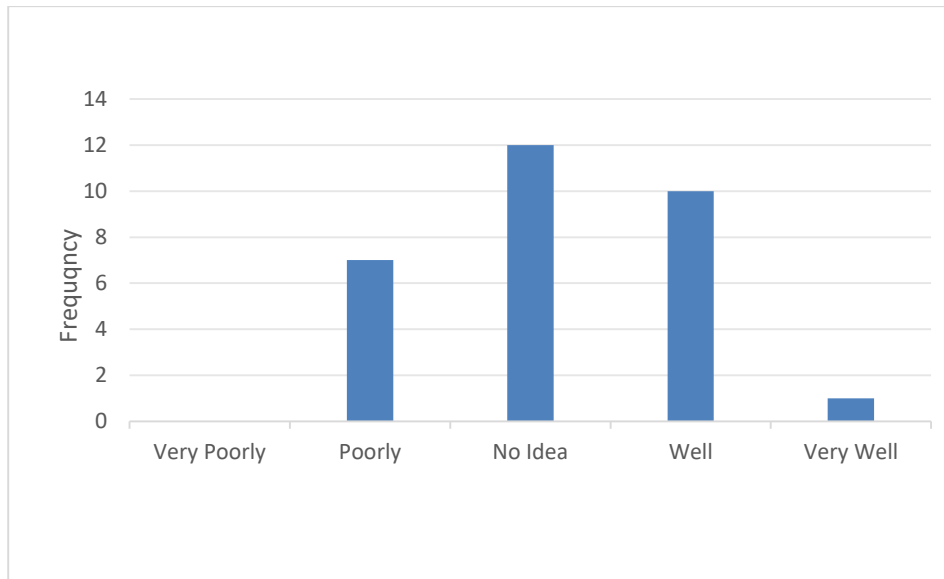


Figure 19: Inter-Branch Communication Ratings by Respondents (n=30)

Among 30 respondents, 12 respondents (40%) feel that the feedback of volunteers is addressed by the board. But the largest chunk of respondents, thus making up 15 respondents (50%) respondents, had no opinion about this, suggesting either uncertainty or issues of misperception or lack of clear awareness. The board does not take note of feedback coming in from volunteers—only 10 pc of respondents (3 respondents) believe this. The fact that the response was mixed suggests that more clarity is needed in knowing how the board received the feedback. (Refer to Table 11)

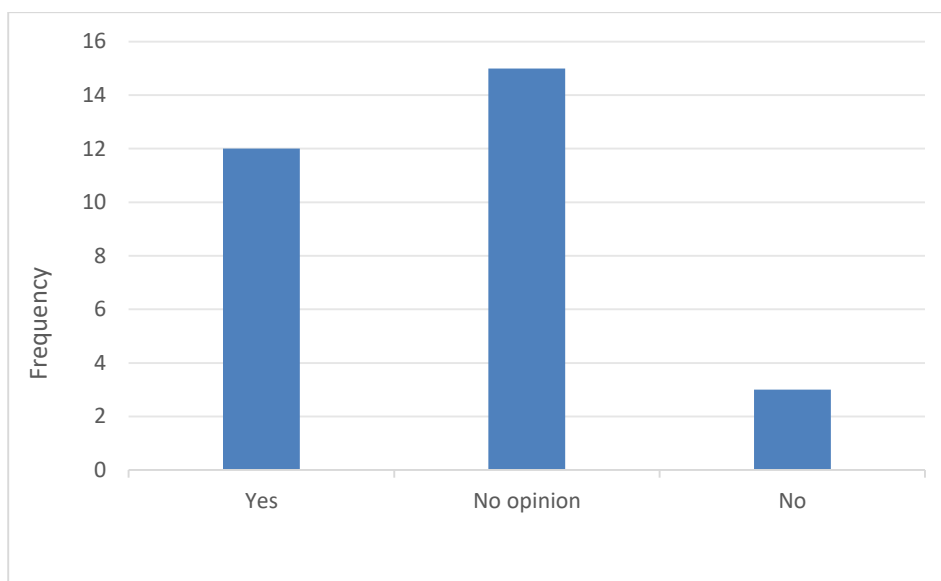


Figure 20: Volunteer Feedback Addressed by Board: Respondent Views (n=30)

The nucleus of the study's aim of strengthen communication between the branches and the board. According to the results, the majority of respondents believed that improving digital communication tools would most likely enhance communication. Moreover, more than a third of those surveyed, 11 respondents (37%), state that meetings should be held more often, communication must be clearer, and greater involvement of volunteers in decision-making should be ensured. These findings suggest areas where the organisation can improve internal communication and engagement. Moreover, this underlines the motivation of the study to enhance the collaboration within the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. This can be seen in Figure 21, and detailed information can be seen in Table 12.

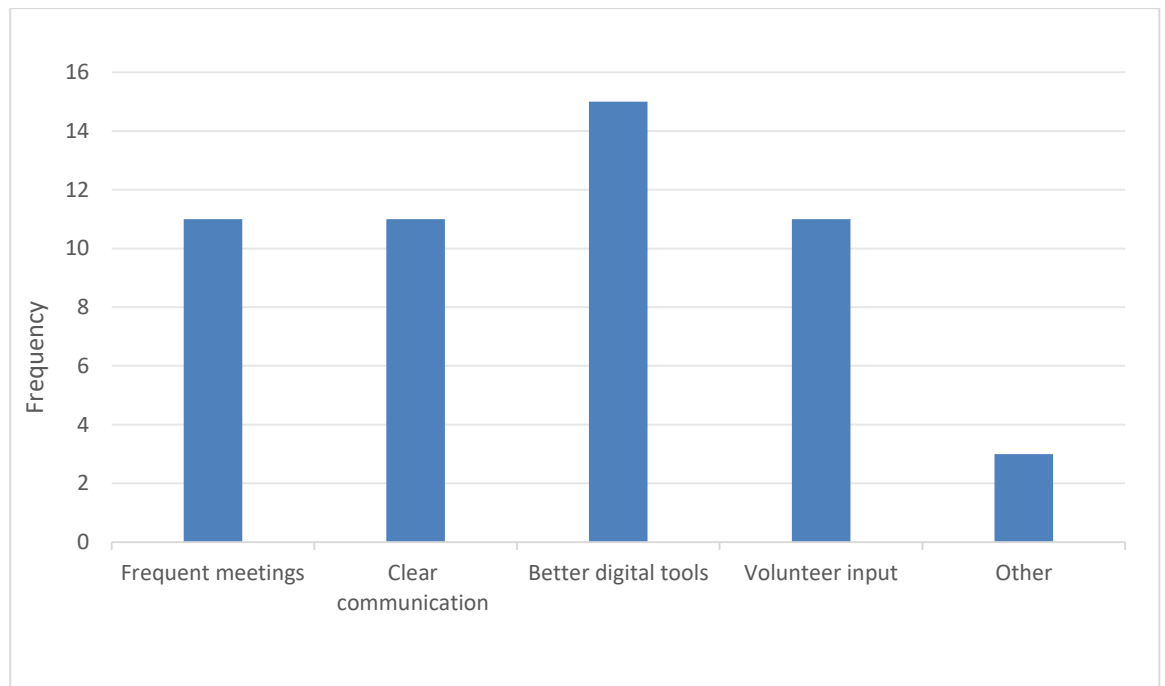


Figure 21: Respondents' Views on Key Improvements to Strengthen Communication between Branches and the Board (n=30)

The survey results reveal that cultural and language differences, as reported by 20 respondents (67%), is the biggest communication barrier in Red Cross Kajaani. Volunteers are rarely available (10 respondents, 33%), and leadership does not prioritize communication (8 respondents, 27%). Communication channels were the least reported barrier at (5 respondents (17%). The overall picture shows that there are structural problems but, more importantly, diversity and volunteer engagement are the biggest problems. It is important to overcome these barriers for improved internal communications and enhanced cross-branched and board collaborations. This can be seen in Figure 22 and detailed information can be seen in Table 13.

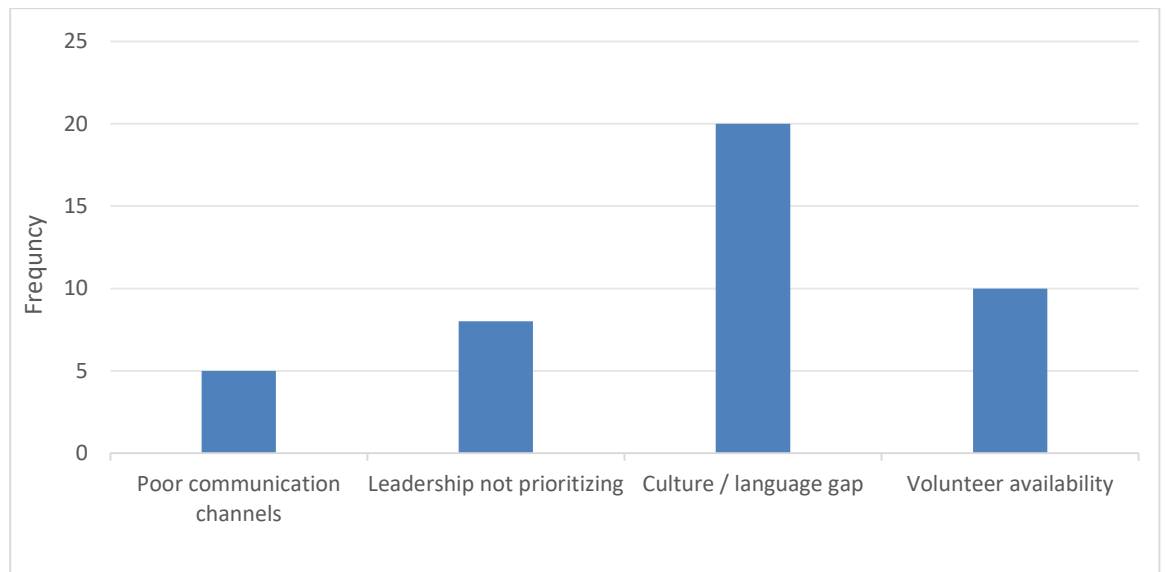


Figure 22: Barrier to Internal Communication (n=30)

Out of the participants, 20 respondents (66.7%) opted for “Neutral”, six respondents (20.0%) expressed “satisfied”, while 4 respondents (13.3%) stated “dissatisfied” with the training on communication tools and protocols. The median and mode are both 2, while the mean or average score, based on a 3-point rating scale (1 = Dissatisfied, 2 = Neutral, and 3 = Satisfied), is 2.07. On the whole, the sentiment may be characterized as ‘mostly neutral, with a slight positive indication’ as the mean is only a little above the neutral midpoint. These results point to training that is broadly acceptable yet still offers scope for improvement to move more volunteers from neutrality to clear satisfaction. This can be seen in Figure 23, and detailed information can be seen in Table 14.

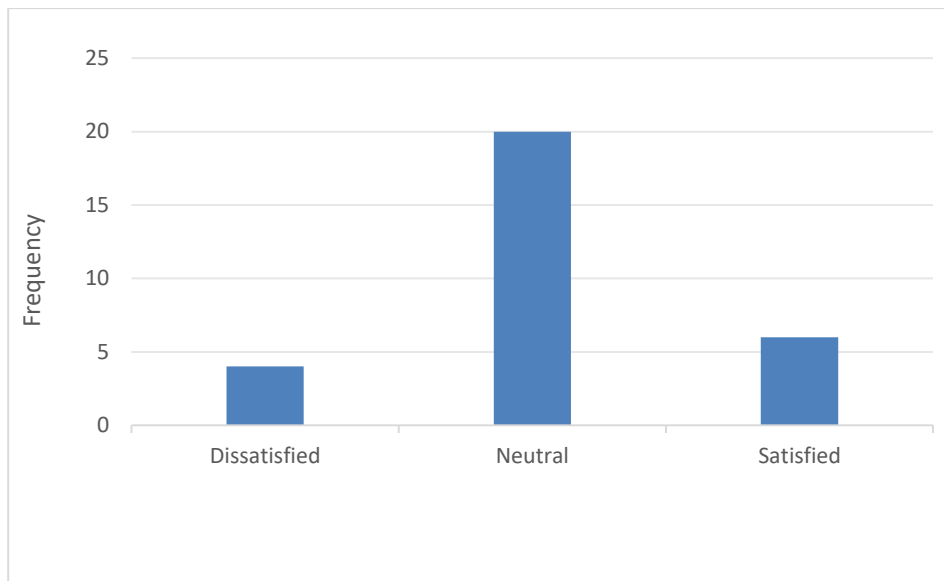


Figure 23: Respondents' Satisfaction with Communication Tools and Protocols Training (n=30)

Most young people volunteer with the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani because of social aspects. 21 (70%) respondents did the survey in which this came out. The cause itself is the personal interest of the cause (or issue) closest to the organization, 17 respondents (57%). Nearly 50% 17 respondents (47%) of those surveyed were motivated by opportunities for the development of skills. Meanwhile, fulfilling requirements of community service as well as jobs for betterment of career motivates fewer people, 10 respondents (33%), and 7 respondents (23%), respectively. Only 3 respondents (10%) mentioned other reasons. It indicates that the personal touch and social engagement of the organization will attract and retain the youth as volunteers. This can be seen in Figure 24, and detailed information can be seen in Table 15.

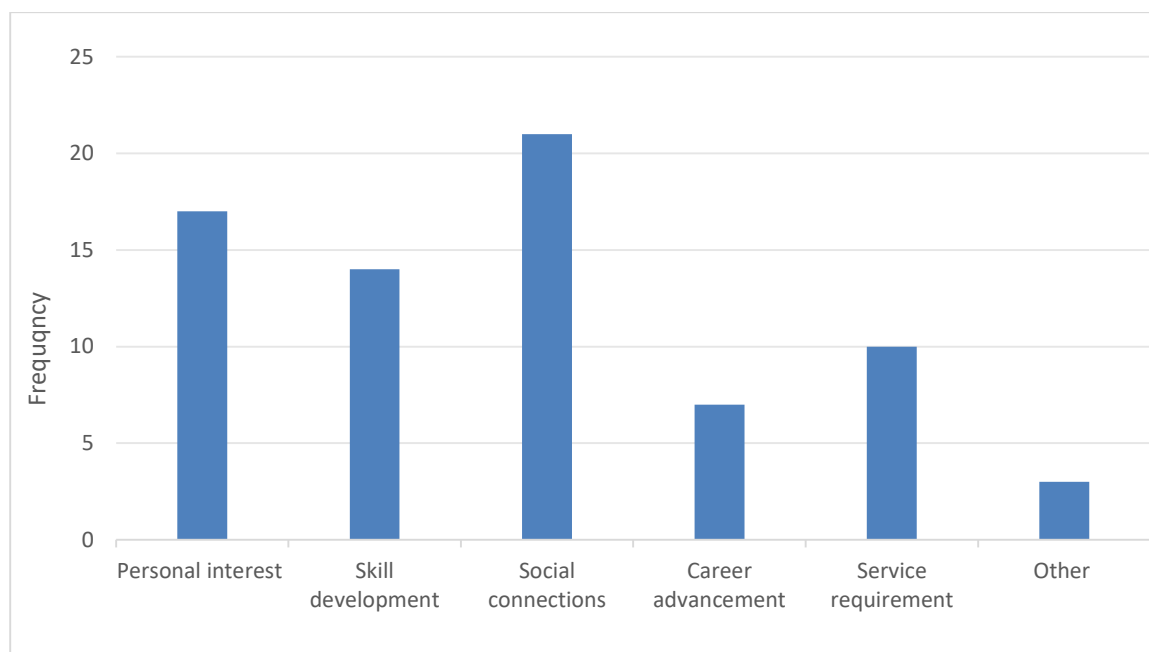


Figure 24: Key Motivations for Youth Volunteering – Emphasis on Social Connection, Personal Interest, and Skill Development (n=30)

The major reasons that young volunteers leave the organization are underappreciation (7 respondents, 23%), unclear messages (9 respondents, 30%), lack of growth opportunity (43%), and a lack of time (20 respondents, 67%). Furthermore, 6 respondents (20%) of the respondents indicated that other reasons included difficulty integrating into the core, as it is a close group. Lack of authority/ownership, moving to a different town, and the activities are old. One respondent was unsure about the reasons for leaving. The research findings indicate that improving recognition, communication, personal development opportunities, and inclusiveness are important factors in retaining young volunteers. This can be seen in Figure 25, and detailed information can be seen in Table 16.

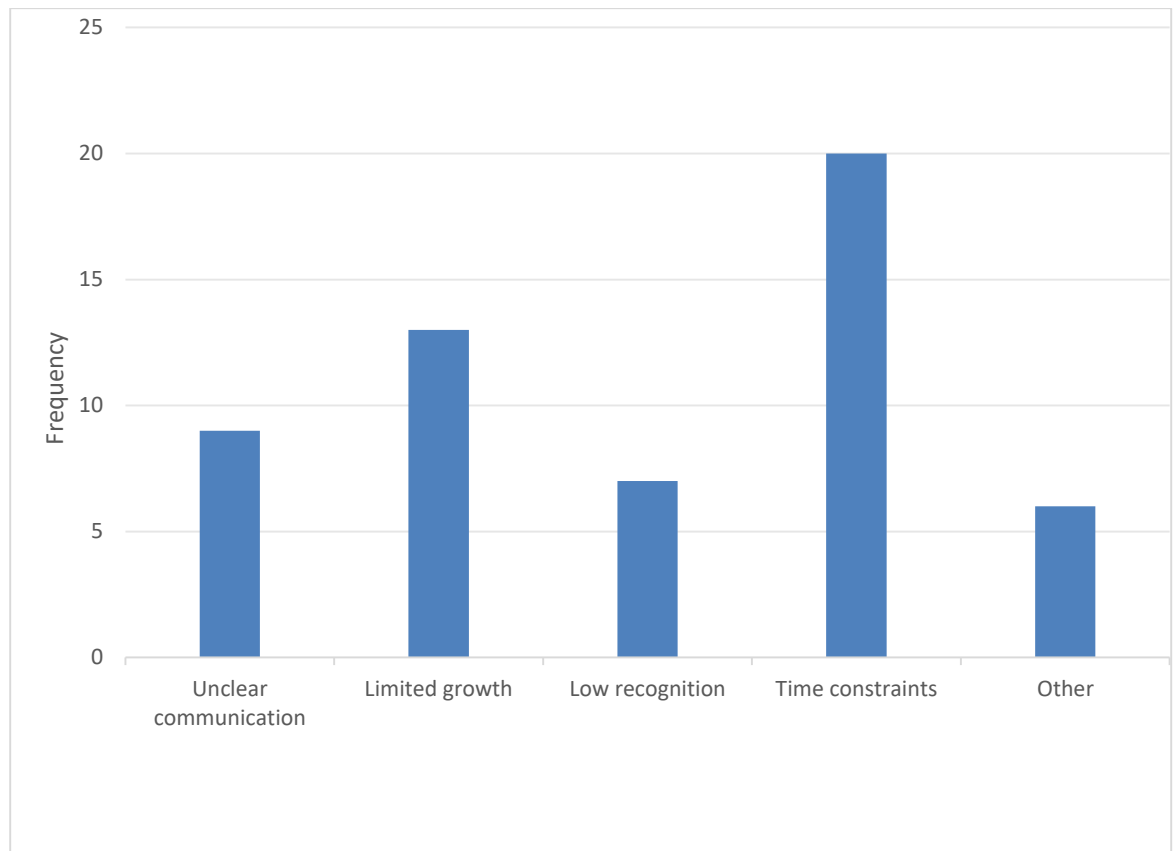


Figure 25: Key factors influencing young volunteers to leave the organization (n=30)

The survey shows that youth leadership roles are the most popular retention strategy, mentioned by 19 respondents, while nearly as many (17) stress the need for stronger communication and mentorship. Offering flexible volunteering options follows with 12 votes, and better recognition—such as public thanks or awards—earns 8 mentions. Just one respondent proposed a different idea outside these main categories, underscoring how leadership opportunities, supportive guidance, adaptable schedules, and clear appreciation are the key ways to keep young volunteers engaged.

Consequently, future programming efforts should prioritize creating leadership roles for youth, developing better communication and mentorship initiatives, while allowing flexibility in participation and recognizing contributions. This can be seen in Figure 26, and detailed information can be seen in Table 17.

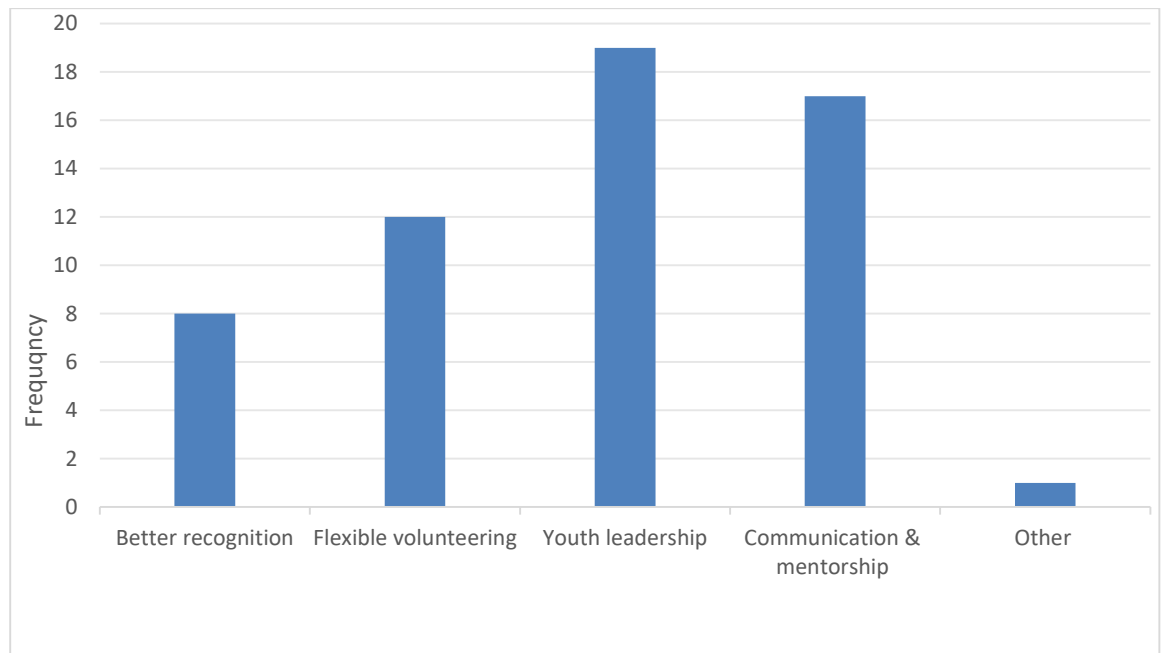


Figure 26: Strategies to Improve Youth Volunteer Retention (n=30)

The respondents reported being more comfortable giving feedback to the leadership team if they were familiar with the six branches of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. In particular, 57% of those who feel comfortable when providing feedback are familiar with all six branches – thus, greater organisational knowledge may encourage open communication. On the other hand, respondents who felt uncomfortable sharing feedback were less familiar with the branches. Notably, 29% of this group were unfamiliar with the branches. The increase in knowledge and a better understanding of the different branches can facilitate better communication and engagement in the organization. (Refer to Table 20)

5.2.2 Comfort Sharing Feedback by Familiarity with Branches

This further breaks down the “Some” familiarity group into specific branches, highlighting where communication gaps might exist. For example, those familiar only with “Friendship and Cultural”

or “Red Cross Kahvilla” branches show varying levels of comfort in feedback sharing. This detailed insight helps identify specific branches where communication efforts could be strengthened.

5.2.3 Communication and Recommendation Likert Scale Results

Communication between Branches (Q11):

The median response was 4 (“Well”), indicating that overall, volunteers perceive branch communication positively. However, the mode was “No Idea” (40%), meaning the most frequent answer reflects uncertainty about communication between branches (see Appendix 29). This suggests that while some volunteers experience good communication, a significant portion may not be directly involved or informed, highlighting an area for improvement.

Event Information (Q10):

Most volunteers feel informed (4/5), but they often said “Sometimes,” meaning information isn’t always timely or consistent. This also needs improvement.

Recommendation to Others (Q19):

Volunteers strongly recommend the Red Cross (4/5). This shows they’re generally happy, but better communication could improve their experience even more.

These findings support your goal of improving internal communication to increase volunteer engagement and satisfaction. (Refer to Table 21)

5.3 Conclusion

This study seeks to develop internal communication and increase youth volunteers of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani through volunteer’s perceptions and experiences. The respondents of the survey were mainly young volunteers aged between 18 and 39 years that constituted 57%. We were

able to learn a lot about how communication happens in the organisation, and what motivates the youth to participate.

Key Quantitative Findings.

Respondents rated that communication between the different branches of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani was positive. The median was four on a scale of one to five, so communication was generally good overall. That said, 40% of respondents choose “No Idea” for inter-branch communication. This shows that a large number of volunteers do not know (or aren’t sure) how well the branches communicate with each other. This uncertainty appears to show a lack of transparency and information flow that could inhibit collaboration and cohesion between branches

The volunteers were asked how efficiently they receive information regarding new events from different branches. Volunteers gave a median score of four indicating general satisfaction. Even so, many of the respondents commented on how they only receive event information “sometimes.” Because of this lack of consistency, some volunteers may feel uninformed or not involved in the organization.

The Finnish Red Cross Kajaani’s volunteers’ likelihood of recommending the organisation to others was similarly measured on the same scale. The median was 4, the mode was “Well,” which is a positive response overall. Most volunteers are happy with their experience and would encourage others to join. This is important for maintaining or expanding the volunteer base.

The comfort level of giving feedback to the top management is related to the knowledge of the six activities of the organization. Volunteers who reported comfort in sharing their opinions and feedback with the board as they knew all the six branches were 57%. On the other hand, less comfortable sharing feedback were those who did not know the branches. This highlights the value of organizational knowledge for open communication and participatory culture at the Red Cross.

Thematic Insights from Qualitative Feedback (Question 20).

The volunteers' comments add to the numbers and give us more insight to understand the results. Their open-ended recommendations point towards several themes.

Modernizing Communication and Outreach.

Volunteers want to be more communicative with modern-day technology know-how. This includes using advertising that young people will love, improving our outreach through the internet, and working better with schools and local businesses. These methods are for drawing in and involving younger volunteers. To this end, one volunteer suggested concentrating on local engagement, online channels and hands-on opportunities for youth participation.

Increasing Visibility and Accessibility.

Another frequent communication was the need for clearer information about how to become a member of the Red Cross and participate in its activities. It was felt by volunteers that making this information accessible will help them recruit new members and increase engagement. Concern about joining the Red Cross activities was raised in one comment, asking for more visible information on how to join.

Increasing Cooperation and Leadership Opportunities Within

Volunteers also suggested improving collaboration between branches and increasing opportunities for young volunteers to take on leadership roles. Collaboration between the different groups was deemed essential to strengthen the organization. Moreover, youth volunteers can become more committed and feel a sense of belonging if they are empowered.

Emphasizing Feedback and Communication Skills.

Finally, volunteers think it is vital to have a culture of welcoming feedback. In addition, volunteers think that we should communicate better. They emphasized the need for leadership to be approachable and responsive to volunteers, as responsiveness to volunteers is the key to trust.

Holistic Interpretation.

When these results are put together, we get a good picture of the situation as it is now regarding internal communication and volunteer engagement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. Communication is generally viewed as constructive. However, a large number of volunteers not being sure about branch to branch communication is an important area of concern. Improving openness and making communication channels clearer will be helpful.

The connection between organizational familiarity and feedback comfort suggests educational efforts and awareness building about the organizational structure may help in creating a more communicative environment. The feedback received backs up the conclusions. It shows the need for modernisation and increasing visibility. Internal cooperation and open culture of feedback are also important.

According to the volunteers, they would recommend this organization to a friend. This solid grounding provides a great opportunity for growth if we overcome our communication barriers.

5.4 Linking with objectives

Thus, this research can be considered successful in achieving its goal of strengthening internal communication measures and increasing youth involvement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. The findings correspond with the need to establish the internal communication tools used in the current workplace, including WhatsApp and Facebook, and assess how good they are in linking the

board to the six branches. This study revealed that though the platforms are in place, there is inadequate and irregular supervision, hence creating a gap in the flow of information and youth engagement. Through a survey of the Branches, such as First Aid and Multicultural Services, the research established that fragmentation and lack of transparency were the key challenges.

In accordance with the identified objective to attract young people, especially graduates, the study highlighted that youths aspire to be recognised, want to have an impact, and require up-to-date communication tools. This is in line with the goal of utilising the organisation's accomplishments and ideals to target this audience. The study also revealed some of the barriers to communication and youth retention, such as language barriers, a lack of integration of digital tools, and inadequate feedback systems. In addition, it outlined measures that include the provision of a centralised digital structure, standardised on boarding, and narratives to build internal unity and engage youthful talent. Therefore, all the objectives of the research were achieved by presenting actual branch solutions that may aid in enhancing long-term engagement and organisational development.

5.5 Recommendations

As the analysis of the conducted interviews and survey responses revealed, there are many areas of improvement in internal communication and youth engagement in the work of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani branch. The recommendations below include a practical solution to address specific challenges and ensure a more inclusive, structured, and youth-led organization. The figure Strategic Initiatives for Enhancing Volunteer Engagement and Organizational Effectiveness is inspired by best practices in volunteer management and was created with the help of AI to visually represent key strategies for improving communication, engagement, and retention.

Enhancing Organizational Effectiveness Through Strategic Initiatives



Enhancing Volunteer Engagement and Communication

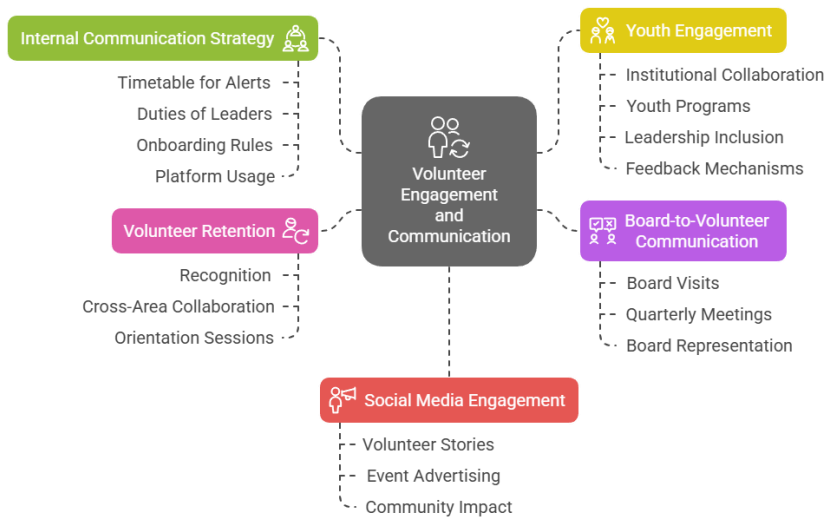


Figure 16: Preferred Communication Channels Among Finnish Red Cross Kajaani Volunteers

1. Establish a Centralized and Inclusive Communication System.

Volunteers are most concerned about how poorly they can communicate internally. At present, there is more communication on WhatsApp that creates clutter, makes it easy to lose important messages and confuses due to informal, and inconsistent messaging. Since many volunteers are left off relevant channels and emails are used infrequently, this exacerbates communication gaps.

To fix this, the Kajaani branch should use one digital communication tool like Microsoft Teams or Slack for everything, it is recommend. Through these platforms, one can communicate in an organized way, set up events, share files, and assign tasks. Each action branch (e.g. First Aid, Multi-cultural, Healthpoint) can have dedicated groups or channels and an announcement group can be retained where only some admins can post. By limiting chatter, they can furnish all volunteers with what they need to keep in touch, while not overloading them.

Also, they should utilize the OMA which is the internal platform of the Red Cross in a more systematic way for sharing calendars, training materials, etc. To ensure that board members and team leaders use the official platforms instead of WhatsApp, they must be trained and held accountable.

2. Implement Bilingual and Accessible Communication Practices.

A big obstacle for communicating is the Finnish-speaking leader and international volunteer language separation. Most messages, guidelines, and announcements are communicated only in Finnish, effectively excluding international or less fluent volunteers.

In order to bridge the gap, their essential communication should be available in Finnish and English for better accessibility. It could be assigned to a translation volunteer or alternatively, the team could use apparatuses such as Google Translate, DeepL or AI apparatuses like ChatGPT within a timeline. Moreover, using simple, clear and inclusive language in all communications will allow all volunteers to follow the communication easily, whichever language they speak.

We can conduct training workshops with our volunteers, mainly with the older section who are not so tech-savvy. These should cover basic digital communication tools (e.g. email, Teams,

WhatsApp features) to ensure everyone is equipped to participate in organizational communication.

3. Develop Structured Communication Strategies and Protocols.

Presently, the Red Cross in Kajaani does not have a communication strategy, and similar communications happen on an ad hoc basis. Create a communication protocol. Outline how information flows to and from the board and the branch leaders, as well as from the general volunteers.

This strategy should include.

- A set timetable for internal alerts (for example weekly or bi-weekly announcements).
- Duties of branch and board leaders in sharing updates.
- Rules for using channels for onboarding new volunteers.
- Each platform's appropriate use (WhatsApp is for urgent matters, Teams for planning and documents).

All members should be onboarded with the onboarding process by creating a digital volunteers handbook. You may include instructions on using the platform, contacts, role descriptions, FAQs, etc in this document. It should also be available in Finnish and English, to promote accessibility.

4. Strengthen Board-to-Volunteer Communication and Representation.

Many volunteers do not feel “in the loop” when they are in meetings, they are not aware of what decisions are being made and why. The boards have not discussed branches of a multicultural and psychological support nature.

To promote two-way communication, it is recommended that.

- Board members go to branch meetings on a regular basis to speak with volunteers.
- There will be a quarterly meeting with representatives from all six action groups: First Aid, Friendship, Multicultural, Healthpoint, Psychological, and Preparedness.
- The board will include at least one member from each branch. This ensures your concerns and ideas will be raised, with updates being communicated back to volunteers effectively.

Structural integration will increase trust, accountability, and a sense of belonging in the organization.

5. Improve Youth Engagement Through Tailored Activities and Leadership Inclusion.

The study highlights the need to increase youth engagement, particularly among students and young professionals. Those activities are not attracting the youth volunteers as per their liking. Even there is no momentum for their opinion in organizations.

To address this, the organization should.

- Work together with institutions (e.g. Kajaani university of applied sciences) to get new volunteers.
- Make programs that kids like. Cultural nights, sports days, outdoor events, skill-development workshops which are fun and useful.
- Make sure that youth representatives are included in planning committees and given advisory roles that have input on event planning and organizational strategies.
- Request frequent feedback through surveys and focus group meetings to assess their experience and incorporate suggestions.

Integrating youth into leadership structures will increase their sense of ownership and commitment to the mission of the Red Cross.

6. Improve Volunteer Retention and Inclusion.

International student volunteers frequently leave, which is a problem. Volunteers have to feel needed, part of a community, and appreciated.

Suggested actions include.

- Giving participation certificates, letters of recommendation, or public recognition through social media or volunteer spotlight appearance.
- Encouraging volunteers to collaborate across different areas of the organization, so they don't get soloed in one space (e.g., only multicultural programs).
- We will be organizing orientation sessions to familiarize the volunteers with the functioning of the organization, and the facilities available to them, and the way they can contribute.
- This challenge requires the design of an onboarding and feedback system that new volunteers feel welcomed, heard and encouraged to stick around.

7. Leverage Social Media for Visibility and Engagement.

To increase the youth's visibility and interest in the organization, strategic outreach must take place via social media. Younger generations use platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook and have been used by.

- Share your volunteer stories and achievements.
- Advertise events and training that are upcoming.
- The impact of volunteering on the community needs highlighting.

The social media content should be bilingual and multicultural, with the content being developed in consultation with the international youth volunteers.

Following the implemented suggestions would help enhance communication flow, strengthen inclusivity and volunteer engagement in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani branch. By combing through

language barriers, digitization of communication processes, engaging youth meaningfully and creating structured, transparent communication protocols we can make volunteer networks more connected, vibrant and sustainable. The said improvements will not only assist in strengthening internal organizational effectiveness but also contribute to the wider humanitarian mission of the Red Cross while building a robust and diverse volunteer community.

6 Discussion

This study has effectively solved the central research question, how the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani can improve internal communication and increase youth engagement. We can create strategies that can really take off by targeting core challenges and discovering the meaning of volunteers. Based on both interviews and surveys, we uncovered a pattern of miscommunication between board and branches, along with uncertainties regarding youth involvement structure.

The communication gap is mainly caused by the first one of the mainly digital tools being inconsistent, after that the languages being spoken and thirdly lack of roles being assigned to beer663 this communication. Reasons given for demotivation included WhatsApp and email overload, limited feedback loops, and lack of representation on decision-making boards. These findings are in line with literature which expresses similar concerns and states that decentralized structures need tailored communication strategies (Åberg, 2022; Keyton, 2017). The study concluded that storytelling, mentoring and skills enhancement constitute meaningful engagement that is critical for attracting youth and keeping them involved. Instead of just helping people or building their career, youth are motivated by being included and being part of the community. Thus, communicating through social media, multilingualism and co-creating events will convey to them their values.

To ensure reliability and validity of the research findings, triangulation was adopted through the combination of qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. This further enhanced the internal validity through cross-verification of data. The communication and engagement challenges occurring in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani were well grasped by this established approach. The reply rate for the survey was quite low, especially among the digitally excluded and older volunteer groups. This may have restricted the generalizability of the findings as these groups do not actively use applications such as WhatsApp or Webropol. The study may have been skewed because younger, more tech-savvy people are represented in greater numbers than their older counterparts. The research was ethical, despite these limitations. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and told they could withdraw from the study at any time and their information will be kept confidential. Before taking part, consent was obtained (verbal or written). Moreover, it meets the academic and professional ethical standards. By paying attention to

ethics and methodology, the overall credibility and trustworthiness of the study is enhanced despite the sampling breadth limitation.

For this research, reliability was achieved through the consistent application of standardized tools. Surveys utilized Webropol while PSPP software was used for quantitative analysis. We cross-checked the data multiple times and maintained an audit trail to ensure certain accuracy in our interpretations. Despite these measures, there are areas for improvement. Future studies should employ broader sampling techniques to include a more diverse volunteer base. Making the survey and interview material available in more languages (such as English and Finnish) would enhance accessibility for non-Finnish speakers. You can achieve better data inclusivity and reliability by mixing digital and non-digital methods, such as personal interviews and paper-based surveys.

The results can be transferred also to similar NGO's in Finland or in Europe, which work with youth problems. Finnish Red Cross Kajaani will gain useful insights that they can immediately implement, including a dedicated communication platform, assignment of board reps per branch, and youth mentoring programs. Looking back on our growth as researchers made us learn more about participatory research methods, ethical dilemmas when working with marginalized groups, and flexibility in our data collection process. We will also learn how to combine qualitative as well as quantitative insights into organizational recommendations. Theoretical reflection connects this work to communication and engagement theory. According to SECS1 (Åberg, 2022), meaningful internal communication requires feedback mechanisms with no retribution. It also validates models that suggest leadership, recognition and empowerment are important for volunteer retention (Ryppö et al., 2021; Eden & Onyebuchi, 2024).

The study collected genuine views from important people in the group which ended up clearly identifying communication gaps and youth disconnection issues in the group. It gave real-life ready solutions customized for the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani's structure. Yet, it would be useful to have a bigger sample for increased representativeness. For example, more volunteers could be recruited from under-represented groups (e.g. older volunteers, those who do not use the internet). Future studies should also test out the real-time communication platforms and their functionality with an analysis.

6.1 Limitations

This study proved to be useful for the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani's internal communication and youth participation. Nevertheless, there were several limitations which impacted the depth, scope and inclusiveness of the study.

Communicating with elderly volunteers was one of the biggest challenges. Many of them don't know English, and as English was the dominant language used to prepare the research tools—like the interview questions and survey format—it became challenging to engage them yet appropriately. Many old age people were not at ease speaking in English. That is not their mother tongue and they do not have great confidence or enough knowledge. Due to this limitation, the elderly members could not participate much in the interviews. Thus, many opinions were not studied in this analysis.

The organization has strict rules for privacy and ethics which is another limitation. The Finnish Red Cross Kajaani fully respects the freedom and consent of its volunteers. It was fully voluntary to participate in interviews or surveys, and there was no pressure to take part. Many older volunteers declined to share their thoughts, especially online. Some people did not know about these tools, while others were hesitant to use them due to privacy concerns or low digital literacy.

It was hard to collect data online because of this.

When it comes to the work of the Red Cross Kahvila group, the participation rate is quite high, but many of these members are refugees. Further, they are people who have survived wars or are from a marginalised section of society. Due to limited access to digital devices and not knowing how to respond to web-based surveys, we are unable to include many of their recommendations.

Because the survey received a small amount of responses, the analysis was unable to perform hypothesis testing using the PSPP software. Because the sample size was small enough that further statistical testing was not possible, the results of the survey were not generalisable. Thereafter, the questionnaire was clarified, simplified and presented in English and Finnish for easy answering by the participants to the survey. The questions used in the questionnaire were directly related to the objectives of the study and focused on assessing the level of youth involvement

and their communication problems in the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani. The uniform structure of the survey and easy-to-understand wording along with the alignment of questions with the aims of the research gave the quantitative findings a degree of reliability and validity as per the availability of the respondents.

To make the qualitative part of the study as well as the process more robust interviews were conducted with five different participants who happen to be from different roles. This includes being a volunteer, board member, member from any of the activity groups, etc. The interviews were conducted according to a semi-structured format. The researchers confirmed whether the responses of the interviewees were consistent or not. The qualitative results were further supported through the comparison of interviews. The survey also confirmed the conclusions by verifying the results.

In the face of obstacles, the research offered useful insights. In future research studies, providing translated materials and conducting face-to-face interviews or utilizing paper-based surveys may encourage elderly and digitally excluded members to participate.

6.2 Future Scope

The study concentrated on the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, which was useful for further information regarding internal communication and youth engagement. Nonetheless, a wide array of future research can further the understanding of these topics and their specifics.

Additionally, future research may benchmark the communication system and youth program of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani with those of Finnish Red Cross units/other similar European NGO's. If we do so, see that it will highlight the best practices and help the organization to adopt what is working already.

Another important area for future research is the impact of enhanced digital communication over time. It is interesting to find out how improvement of communication tools enhances volunteers'

retention, satisfaction and commitment, youth's in a particular. By creating more resilient bonds with volunteers, these findings can help the organization achieve long-term development goals.

To gather more impactful research, future analysis should include larger sample sizes, more comparisons across regions and organizations, and a study of longer-term consequences.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Thesis material management plan

1. General Description of the Material

The extent and quality of material selected for inclusion in a thesis is a major factor impacting the quality of a thesis. In particular, research objectives and methodology influence the extent and quality of selected materials. For this thesis, Red Cross volunteers and board members were interviewed to obtain primary research data. Besides the interviews, a survey was also conducted with the volunteers. Both interviews and surveys together gave a comprehensive overview of the research topic. In addition, the thesis is underpinned by real and practical data.

2. Documentation and Quality of the Material

In order to guarantee the validity of the research, documentation and quality assurance were ensured. We conducted interviews and surveys and recorded all that data. The study recorded demographic details of the participant and to maintain accuracy audio recording and transcription of interview were done all data were kept safely on a personal laptop that was saved on Google Drive to avoid disorganization and loss of data.

We applied validation techniques like cross-checking the data to enhance its quality. Further data security measures were put in place to prevent any breach. Informed consent from all participants was taken, and all written works were duly cited in accordance with ethical standards.

3. Storage and backup

During the thesis research process, careful steps were taken to protect the integrity and security of all research materials, including interviews, surveys, and academic articles. Digital data was stored safely using password protection or saved on drives that only the researcher could access.

4. Ethical and legal issues related to storage

Ethical considerations are utmost in data handling, with adherence to guidelines that protect participant confidentiality and privacy. Informed consent from participants in interviews was obtained and identities were anonymized. Access to the research materials was controlled and limited to authorized personnel (research team and supervisor). Particular attention was given to addressing ethical concerns in material storage, particularly when dealing with sensitive information, where data is securely stored. Intellectual property rights and ethical guidelines were followed when citing or using research materials from external sources, such as academic articles and journals.

5. Opening the material and long-term storage

Ensuring the future use of research material is a key aspect of responsible data management as Researchers aim to preserve collected data and insights for future studies, comparisons, or ongoing research endeavors. To achieve this, meticulous practices such as proper documentation, detail notes, and research materials, whether digital or physical, were organized systematically, to ensure that materials remain accessible and useful over time.

Appendix 2: Survey


We recently opened our survey portal for ten days and shared the opportunity through multiple WhatsApp groups, emails to volunteers, and a few personal messages. In total, we received around 30 responses.

The survey was available in both English and Finnish. While more than half of the participants responded in English, Finnish was actually the most preferred language overall, with English coming in second.

Most of the responses came from people aged 18–39. The majority also selected WhatsApp as the best way to receive information.

Overall, most participants said they are satisfied with the work of the Red Cross. However, many feel that the Red Cross could improve its use of digital media.

Enhancing Internal Communication and Youth Engagement. A case study of Finnish Red Cross Kajaani

 Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (*)

Hello everyone,

We are conducting research at Kajaani University of Applied Sciences for our master's thesis. Our survey is designed to address the challenges of communication at the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani and increase young people's engagement with its activities. The survey will only take 5-10 minutes to complete. The information you provide will only be used for this research, and your answers will be confidential. Your insights are crucial in helping us identify areas for improvement and develop strategies that promote communication and youth participation in the organization. Thank you for your participation!

1. What is your age group? *

- Under 18
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70+

2. What is your gender? *

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

3. How long have you been involved with the Red Cross Kajaani? *

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to less than 1 year
- 1 year to less than 3 years
- 3 years or more

4. What language do you prefer for receiving information? *

- Finnish
- English
- Swedish
- Other

5. What communication channel do you prefer for receiving information? *

- WhatsApp message
- Email
- Phone call
- Phone message (SMS)
- Other

Next

6. How effective do you find the internal communication within the Red Cross Kajaani? *

- Somewhat ineffective
- Very ineffective
- Neutral
- Somewhat effective
- Very effective

7. Do you feel comfortable sharing your opinions and feedback with the leadership team? *

- Yes
- No opinion
- No

8. What challenges do you face with internal communication? *

- Lack of clear instructions
- Delayed response from leadership
- Inconsistent communication across branches
- Limited use of digital communication tools
- Other (Please Specify)

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9. Are you familiar with all six branches of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani?
(First Aid, Friendship and Cultural, Multicultural Services, Health Point,
Psychosocial Support, and Preparedness) *

- Yes, I am familiar with all six branches.
- I am familiar with some branches. (Please Specify)
- No, I am not familiar with them.

10. How well do you receive information about upcoming events from different branches? *

- Somewhat poorly
- Very poorly
- Rarely
- Somewhat well
- Very well

11. On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do the different branches of the Red Cross Kajaani communicate with each other?

- Very Poorly
- Poorly
- No Idea
- Well
- Very Well

12. Do you feel that feedback from volunteers are addressed by the board? *

- Yes
- no opinion
- No

Previous

Next

13. What Improvements would help strengthen communication between branches and the board ? *

- More frequent meetings
- Clearer communication channels
- Improved digital communication tools
- More involvement of volunteers in decision-making
- Other Please Specify

14. What do you think is the biggest barrier to effective communication within the Red Cross? *

- Lack of proper communication channels
- Leadership does not prioritize communication
- Cultural/language differences
- Volunteers' irregular availability

15. How satisfied are you with the training provided on communication tools and protocols? *

- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied

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16. What motivates young people to volunteer in your organization? (Select all that apply) *

- Personal interest in the cause
- Opportunities for skill development
- Social connections
- Career advancement
- Community service requirement

Other Please Specify

17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply) *

- Lack of clear communication
- Limited opportunities for personal growth
- Insufficient recognition of contributions
- Time constraints

Other Please Specify

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention? *

- Better recognition programs
- More flexible volunteering options
- Increased leadership opportunities for young volunteers
- Enhanced communication and mentorship programs

Other Please Specify

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Enhancing Internal Communication and Youth Engagement. A case study of Finnish Red Cross Kajaani

 Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (*)

19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to recommend volunteering with the Red Cross to others?

-
-
-
-
-

20. What recommendations would you like to give to the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani to improve their future activities?

Comment

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Appendix 3: Interview Question

1. General Involvement and Experience

- Can you tell us about your role in the Red Cross and how long you have been involved?
- What motivated you to join the Red Cross?
- What activities or projects have you participated in?

2. (For First Aid Department)

- What are the main responsibilities of the First Aid Department in Finnish Red Cross Kajaani?
- How does the department ensure volunteers are well-trained and prepared for first aid emergencies?
- What challenges does the First Aid Department face in recruiting and retaining volunteers?
- How can internal communication within the First Aid Department be improved to enhance efficiency and response times?

3. (For Multicultural Branch)

- How does the Multicultural Department support and engage people from diverse cultural backgrounds in Red Cross activities?
- What challenges does the department face in promoting inclusivity and participation among multicultural communities?
- Are there specific programs or initiatives that have been particularly successful in fostering multicultural engagement?
- How can the Red Cross improve its outreach and communication to better support multicultural volunteers and beneficiaries?

4. (For Volunteer)

1. What inspired you to volunteer for the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani, and what has been your most rewarding experience so far?

2. How well do you feel informed about upcoming activities and opportunities, and what improvements would you suggest for internal communication?
3. What challenges have you faced as a volunteer, and what support do you think would enhance your experience?
4. What suggestions do you have to encourage more young people to get involved in Red Cross activities in Kajaani?

5. For Psychosocial support branch

- What does the psychosocial support branch do to help people in difficult situations?
- How do you support people who are feeling stressed or sad after a crisis?
- Can you share a story about how psychosocial support made a difference for someone?
- What can the Red Cross do to make psychosocial support even better?

6. Communication Effectiveness

- How do you typically receive information about Red Cross activities and meetings?
- Do you feel that communication between the board and volunteers is clear and effective? Why or why not?
- What communication methods (emails, WhatsApp, meetings, etc.) do you find most effective?
- Have you ever faced difficulties in receiving important updates or instructions? If so, can you share an example?

7. Challenges in Youth Participation

- In your opinion, what are the main challenges preventing more youth from participating in Red Cross activities?
- What could be done to make volunteering more appealing and accessible to young people?
- Do you think the current structure allows youth to voice their opinions and be actively involved?

- Have you seen any successful strategies in engaging young volunteers?

8. Suggestions for Improvement

- What improvements would you suggest enhancing communication between volunteers and the board?
- How can the Red Cross better support and retain its volunteers?
- Are there any new initiatives or activities you think should be introduced?

Appendix 4: Theme Challenges and Solution

Summary of Themes and Challenges

Theme	Main Focus	Key Challenges
1. Communication & Coordination	Improve structured communication between board and branches	- Fragmented info sharing - Language barriers - Lack of consistent tools
2. Youth Engagement	Reach and involve more youth, especially international students	- Weak social media use - No targeted outreach - Limited multicultural inclusion
3. Volunteer Retention	Recognize and develop volunteers	- Low visibility of efforts - No structured onboarding - Limited growth paths
4. Inclusive & Transparent Culture	Foster belonging and collaboration	- Lack of joint events - Disconnected branches - Limited youth involvement in planning

Simplified Theme & Solution Table

Theme	Suggested Solutions
1. Communication	- Create a central communication platform (e.g., app or web portal)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assign board reps from each group or action team - Use multilingual communication (especially English) - Set clear communication protocols (what, when, and to whom)
2. Attract Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share success and impact stories on social media (TikTok, Instagram, etc.) - Collaborate with schools and universities (e.g., Kajaani University) - Promote career, social, and learning benefits of volunteering - Use inclusive and engaging language in outreach materials
3. Retain Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start mentorship and buddy programs for new volunteers - Offer leadership roles with flexible language and skill requirements - Give certificates, awards, and public recognition- Provide regular training and skill-building opportunities
4. Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host regular meetings, feedback sessions, and town halls - Communicate clear goals, updates, and shared impact - Involve youth in planning and decision-making - Organize multicultural events and cross-branch activities

Reduction Table

Raw Data (Interview Excerpts)	Initial Codes	Sub-Categories	Final Themes
"Sometimes I don't get emails, so I miss meetings."	Missed emails	Information gaps	Communication flow problems
"WhatsApp messages are too many, important info gets lost."	WhatsApp overload	Ineffective digital tools	Communication tool limitations
"I don't understand Finnish well, so I feel left out."	Language barrier	Exclusion due to language	Language challenges in engagement
"Young people are not invited when decisions are made."	Youth excluded	Lack of participation in decisions	Exclusion from decision-making
"Board members don't always hear what branches are facing."	Board disconnected	Weak branch-to-board link	Need to strengthen branch-to-board communication

"I volunteer because I want to meet new people."	Social motivation	Reasons for volunteering	Volunteer engagement drivers
"It feels like nobody cares when I stop attending."	Lack of recognition	Demotivation	Barriers to retention

Appendix 5: Data Management Plan

Data Management Plan	
Section	Details
1. Project Information	<p>Project Name: Enhancing Internal Communication and Youth Engagement</p> <p>Author(s): Ajay Chand and Junesh Shrestha</p> <p>Degree Programme: Master in Global Business Management</p> <p>Year: 2025</p>
2. Data Description	<p>Data Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative (interviews) • Quantitative (surveys) <p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text (DOCX, TXT) • Excel (XLSX) • Statistical • Graphics (charts)
3. Data Collection Methods	<p>Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews (physical, Teams, email)</p>

	Quantitative: Webropol online surveys distributed via WhatsApp, email
4. Legal and Ethical Considerations	Consent: Informed consent obtained Anonymity: Identities anonymized Sensitivity: Low – Professional/organizational data only
5. Data Storage and Backup	Tools: Microsoft Teams, Excel, PSPP, Webropol Storage: KAMK OneDrive, inter-finna Backup: Institutional OneDrive + physical external drives
6. Data Sharing and Access	Access: Restricted to researchers and supervisors Public Access: Not decided Raw Data: Not publicly available
7. Data Preservation and Archiving	
8. Data Reuse	Reuse Conditions: Aggregated results are reusable with citation Raw Data Reuse: Restricted due to privacy and consent limitations of commissioner

Appendix 7 : Review of Literature

Author(s)	Key Focus	Findings	Relevance
Hayat et al (2022)	Impact of organizational structure on teamwork and project success in non-profit organizations	Effective communication within teams improves collaboration and project outcomes	Highlights the need for structured communication between branches and board

Godefroid et al (2024)	Barriers to technology adoption in non-profits	Resistance to digital tools limits efficiency and engagement	Suggests training to enhance digital tool adoption
Eden & Onyebuchi (2024)	Youth leadership development in non-profit organizations	Leadership programs increase engagement and retention among young volunteers	Supports mentorship initiatives for youth volunteer retention
Tsai et al (2024)	Volunteer motivation through leadership	Effective leadership influences volunteer commitment	Suggests leadership training for volunteer coordinators
Prats López et al (2024)	Crowdsourcing platforms in volunteer recruitment	Online platforms increase volunteer engagement	Recommends digital outreach strategies
Mer et al (2024)	Work engagement in non-profit organizations	Recognition and incentives enhance volunteer retention	Supports appreciation initiatives for volunteers
Lee et al (2023)	Volunteer resource management during crises	Efficient communication supports volunteer coordination	Highlights resource allocation strategies
Nursey-Bray et al (2022)	Youth volunteering for community resilience	Engaged youth enhance organizational resilience	Supports youth-targeted communication strategies
Tharris (2021)	Virtual leadership in non-profits	Online leadership fosters accountability	Supports digital communication adoption
Xu et al (2024)	Volunteer management in non-profits	Clear expectations and training improve retention	Highlights structured volunteer management practices

Holtrop et al (2024)	Volunteer turnover and retention	Engagement strategies reduce turnover	Supports retention-focused communication
Stylianou et al (2023)	SWOT analysis of environmental volunteering	Non-formal education enhances volunteer engagement	Supports educational programs for volunteer engagement
Keyton (2017)	Organizational communication	Effective communication enhances collaboration and productivity	Highlights the need for structured internal communication
Arnon et al. (2022)	Volunteer engagement	Identifies factors influencing volunteer commitment	Supports strategies to improve youth engagement
Varela (2013)	Volunteer followership	Effective leadership fosters volunteer retention	Emphasizes leadership's role in engagement
Bordean (2010)	Internal communication	Strong communication improves organizational performance	Reinforces the need for communication strategies
Subiyanto et al. (2024)	Digital leadership & communication	Digital tools improve teamwork and communication	Justifies digital solutions for non-profit management
Peltomäki (2023)	Digital tools in volunteer work	Digital platforms enhance volunteer experiences	Supports digitalization for youth engagement
Widjaja (2010)	Volunteer motivation	Identifies intrinsic and extrinsic motivators	Helps tailor engagement strategies
Fouad (2025)	Barriers to volunteerism	Organizational and societal barriers impact engagement	Addresses challenges relevant to Finnish Red Cross Kajaani

Zelman (2014)	Leader support in non-profits	Strong leadership improves communication effectiveness	Reinforces leadership's role in internal communication
Galvin (2021)	Community involvement in non-profits	Identifies barriers and facilitators of engagement	Supports strategies to enhance non-profit participation
Åberg, L. (2022)	Development of a model for meaningful community communication	Introduced "Åberg's Pizza" model with communication functions	Helps organizations structure communication to align with strategy, enhance reputation, and foster engagement

Appendix 8

Table 1: Gender Distribution. (n=30)

2. What is your gender?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	10	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Female	20	66.7%	66.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 2: Length of Volunteer Involvement with Red Cross Kajaani

3. How long have you been involved with the Red Cross Kajaani?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid < 6 mo	5	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
6-12 mo	8	26.7%	26.7%	43.3%
1-3 yrs	8	26.7%	26.7%	70.0%
> 3 yrs	9	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 3: Language Preference

4. What language do you prefer for receiving information?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Finnish	13	43.3%	43.3%	43.3%
English	17	56.7%	56.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 4: Respondents reporting a lack of clear instructions as a challenge in internal communication

Statistics

	lack_instructions	delayed_response	inconsistent_comm	limited_digital	other_specify
N Valid	30	30	30	30	30
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	.27	.13	.30	.43	.13
Std Dev	.45	.35	.47	.50	.35
Minimum	0= Not Selected	Not Selected	Not Selected	Not Selected	Not Selected
Maximum	Selected	Selected	Selected	Selected	Selected

lack_instructions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0= Not Selected	22	73.3%	73.3%	73.3%
Selected	8	26.7%	26.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 5: Effectiveness of Communication in Red Cross Kajaani

6. How effective do you find the internal communication within the Red Cross Kajaani?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid L.E	3	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
V.E	5	16.7%	16.7%	26.7%
N	5	16.7%	16.7%	43.3%
N.E	14	46.7%	46.7%	90.0%
V.E	3	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 6: Comfort Level in Sharing Feedback with Leadership.

7. Do you feel comfortable sharing your opinions and feedback with the leadership team?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	21	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%
No opinion	6	20.0%	20.0%	90.0%
No	3	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 7: Preferred Communication Channels Among Volunteers

Email_num

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	21	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%
1.00	9	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Phonecall_num

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	29	96.7%	96.7%	96.7%
1.00	1	3.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Message_num

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	30	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

other_num

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	29	96.7%	96.7%	96.7%
1.00	1	3.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

delayed_response

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not Selected	26	86.7%	86.7%	86.7%
Selected	4	13.3%	13.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

limited_digital

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not Selected	17	56.7%	56.7%	56.7%
Selected	13	43.3%	43.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

other_specify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not Selected	26	86.7%	86.7%	86.7%
Selected	4	13.3%	13.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 8: Familiarity with the Six Branches of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani

		9. Are you familiar with all six branches of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani? (First Aid, Friendship and Cultural, Multicultural Services, Health Point, Psychosocial Support, and Preparedness)??			
N	Valid				30
	Missing				0
	Mean				1.83
	Std Dev				.87
	Minimum	Yes			
	Maximum	No			

		9. Are you familiar with all six branches of the Finnish Red Cross Kajaani? (First Aid, Friendship and Cultural, Multicultural Services, Health Point, Psychosocial Support, and Preparedness)?			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	14	46.7%	46.7%	46.7%
	Some	7	23.3%	23.3%	70.0%
	No	9	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total		30	100.0%		

Table 9: Respondents' Ratings on Receiving Information About Upcoming Event

10. How well do you receive information about upcoming events from different branches?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SP	2	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%
	Very poorly	1	3.3%	3.3%	10.0%
	Rarely	3	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%
	SW	15	50.0%	50.0%	70.0%
	Very well	9	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total		30	100.0%		

Table 10: Inter-Branch Communication Ratings by Respondents

11. On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do the different branches of the Red CrossKajaani communicate with each other?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poorly	7	23.3%	23.3%	23.3%
	No Idea	12	40.0%	40.0%	63.3%
	Well	10	33.3%	33.3%	96.7%
	Very Well	1	3.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total		30	100.0%		

Table 11: Volunteer Feedback Addressed by Board: Respondent Views

12. Do you feel that feedback from volunteers are addressed by the board?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
	no opinion	15	50.0%	50.0%	90.0%
	No	3	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total		30	100.0%		

Table 12: Enhancing Collaboration through Improved Internal Communication Tools

13. What Improvements would help strengthen communication between branches and the board?:More frequent meetings

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	19	63.3%	63.3%	63.3%
1.00	11	36.7%	36.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

13. What Improvements would help strengthen communication between branches and the board?:Clearer communication channels

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	19	63.3%	63.3%	63.3%
1.00	11	36.7%	36.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

13. What Improvements would help strengthen communication between branches and the board?:Other Please Specify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	27	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
1.00	3	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 13: Barrier to Internal Communication

14. What do you think is the biggest barrier to effective communication within the Red Cross?:Lack of proper communication channels

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	25	83.3%	83.3%	83.3%
1.00	5	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

14. What do you think is the biggest barrier to effective communication within the Red Cross?:Leadership does not prioritize communication

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	22	73.3%	73.3%	73.3%
1.00	8	26.7%	26.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

14. What do you think is the biggest barrier to effective communication within the Red Cross?:??????Volunteers' irregular availability?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	20	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%
1.00	10	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 14: Respondents' Satisfaction with Communication Tools and Protocols Training

15. How satisfied are you with the training provided on communication tools and protocols?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Dissatisfied	4	13.3%	13.3%	13.3%
Neutral	20	66.7%	66.7%	80.0%
Satisfied	6	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 15: Respondents' Satisfaction with Communication Tools and Protocols Training

16. What motivates young people to volunteer in your organization? (Select all that apply):Personal interest in the cause

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	13	43.3%	43.3%	43.3%
1.00	17	56.7%	56.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 16: Key factors influencing young volunteers to leave the organization

17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):Insufficient recognition of contributions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	23	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%
1.00	7	23.3%	23.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Lack of clear communication

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	21	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%
1.00	9	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

FREQUENCIES
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/BCHART=.

Statistics

	17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Lack of clear communication	17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Limited opportunities for personal growth	17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Insufficient recognition of contributions	17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Time constraints	17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Other Please Specify
N Valid	30	30	30	30	30
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	.30	.43	.23	.67	.20
Std Dev	.47	.50	.43	.48	.41
Minimum	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maximum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

17. What are the main reasons young volunteers leave the organization? (Select all that apply):?Other Please Specify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	24	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
1.00	6	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 17: Strategies to Improve Youth Volunteer Retention

Statistics

	18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Better recognition programs	18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:More flexible volunteering options	18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Increased leadership opportunities for young volunteers	18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Enhanced communication and mentorship programs	18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Other Please Specify
N Valid	30	30	30	30	30
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	.27	.40	.63	.57	.03
Std Dev	.45	.50	.49	.50	.18
Minimum	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maximum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Better recognition programs

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	22	73.3%	73.3%	73.3%
1.00	8	26.7%	26.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:More flexible volunteering options

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	18	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
1.00	12	40.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Increased leadership opportunities for young volunteers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	11	36.7%	36.7%	36.7%
1.00	19	63.3%	63.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Enhanced communication and mentorship programs

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	13	43.3%	43.3%	43.3%
1.00	17	56.7%	56.7%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Other Please Specify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	29	96.7%	96.7%	96.7%
1.00	1	3.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

18. What strategies do you think would improve youth volunteer retention?:Other Please Specify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	29	96.7%	96.7%	96.7%
1.00	1	3.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 18: Recommendation for Volunteering

19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to recommend volunteering with the Red Cross to others?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Very Poorly	1	3.3%	3.4%	3.4%
No Idea	3	10.0%	10.3%	13.8%
well	14	46.7%	48.3%	62.1%
Very Well	11	36.7%	37.9%	100.0%
Missing -1.00	1	3.3%		
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 19: Age Group of respondents.

1. What is your age group?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-29	9	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%
30-39	8	26.7%	26.7%	56.7%
40-49??	4	13.3%	13.3%	70.0%
50-59	1	3.3%	3.3%	73.3%
60-69	7	23.3%	23.3%	96.7%
70+	1	3.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	30	100.0%		

Table 20: Relationship between Feedback Comfort and Branch Familiarity

	Familiar with all branches	Familiar with some branches	Not familiar	Row total
Comfortable sharing opinions	12 (57 %)	3 (14 %)	6 (29 %)	21 (100 %)
No opinion	1 (17 %)	3 (50 %)	2 (33 %)	6 (100 %)
Not comfortable	1 (33 %)	0 (0 %)	2 (67 %)	3 (100 %)
Column totals (n)	14	6	10	30

Table 21: Communication and Recommendation Likert Scale Results

Statistics			
	11. On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do the different branches of the Red CrossKajaani communicate with each other?	10. How well do you receive information about upcoming events from different branches?	19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to recommend volunteering with the Red Cross to others?
N	Valid 30	30	29
Missing	0	0	1
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode	No Idea	SW	well