



What Motivates Volunteers? Attractiveness of Volunteering – Take Account of These 10 Points

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Abstract

Vantaa Triathlon sport event is a triathlon event in the South Finland city of Vantaa. The event is held yearly and has a history of 11 years. The study aims to explain what motivates volunteers in the event. The research problem was to answer what are the factors that motivate Vantaa Triathlon sports events volunteers. This quantitative research used a web-based questionnaire. One hundred fifty volunteers from the event received the questionnaire after the event in June 2022. The web questionnaire included a modified VMS-ISE motivation scale. Fifty-two volunteers that responded to the questionnaire were strongly motivated to support Vantaa Triathlon event. Also, many volunteers wanted to support their sports club by volunteering at the event. An influential motivational factor among the volunteers was their "love of triathlon" as a sport and "love for sports" in general. Most of the volunteers at this event did have a sports background. Vantaa Triathlon event had a strong recommendation rate, and most of the volunteers had previously volunteered in the event. According to the study data, they will also come again to volunteer. Ten recommendations introduce improvements for future events. Those ten steps can also benefit other sports events, clubs, and organizations.

Keywords/tags (subjects)

Sports event, triathlon, volunteer, volunteer motivations

Miscellaneous (Confidential information)

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1 Introduction

Millions of people are volunteering globally in different sports organizations (Wicker, 2017). Volunteer workers do not get a salary (Vos et al., 2012). For some organizations, a volunteer workforce is necessary to keep the business alive, and some organizations and places could find it hard to get volunteers (Wilson & Pimm, 1996).

This study aims to answer what motivates volunteers in Vantaa Triathlon sports event. Partnership in this thesis has been with the sports event Vantaa Triathlon and the sports club Triathlon Vantaa. Vantaa Triathlon is a yearly triathlon sports event in Kuusijärvi in Vantaa City, South Finland. Competition supplies different distances, from short sprint distances to a longer half distance which includes 1,9 km of swimming, 90 km of cycling, and a half marathon of 21 km run, different distances are meant for different target groups, from kids to adult beginners, and for triathlon athletes (Vantaa Triathlon, 2022). Sports club Triathlon Vantaa is a nonprofit organization, the club's primary area of focus is children's and adult triathlon sports, providing guided workouts, coaching, training camps, and competitive activity. The club's strategic goals for 2019 - 2025 are to develop services for kids, youth, and adults and to improve areas of marketing, communication, and overall action (Triathlon Vantaa, 2022).

Research provides answers to what motivates volunteers in Vantaa Triathlon event. With this knowledge, it is possible to learn how to increase volunteers' satisfaction. This study uses quantitative research method. For Triathlon Vantaa sports club and Vantaa Triathlon sports event, research supplies valuable information about what motivates the volunteers. Furthermore, consider findings when improving future volunteering experiences. Research data can help the club's and Vantaa Triathlon sports event's volunteers recruit in the future.

The quantitative approach requires many respondents so that survey results become reliable with the research's numerical data (Veal & Darcy, 2014). Vantaa Triathlon sports event has multiple races within two days (Vantaa Triathlon, 2022). This event requires lots of people to build and implement the event. This thesis aims to explain the motivation reasons behind volunteers with an inductive approach among event participants. Vantaa Triathlon sports event can benefit from these results to get to know the volunteer's motivation factors and to learn valuable information from its volunteers. In future years recruiting and re-recruiting can be even more successful in this way.

The thesis consists of chapters; the second chapter, after the introduction, includes the theoretical background of volunteering from earlier research, books and data. Methodology and research questions with a quantitative research view are in the third chapter. The findings from the study are in the fourth chapter. In the last chapter, recommendations for future development can also benefit other sports events, clubs, and organizations.

2 Volunteer Management

People are donating lot of their time for sports volunteering duties (Dawson & Downward, 2013). Volunteers are an important part of sports and events (Hallmann & Harms, 2012). Sports events require a lot of volunteers to be able to work (Stevens, 2008). Many non-profit sports organization's volunteers are globally working in small local sports clubs with longer positions and/or a shorter period typically in a sports event (Wicker, 2017). Thus, in a sports club's volunteer work is more continues than a shorter time in a sports event (Dawson & Downward, 2013). However, volunteers use also helps to cut costs from sports events (Monga, 2006). There are a wide range of different events, sports events can be classified as a local or global event, single or multi-site events, elite race or popular among people, sports or promotional, multidisciplinary or unidisciplinary (Theodoraki, 2011, p. 178).

2.1 Volunteer and Volunteer Motivation

Auld and Cuskelly (2000) have defined motivation as "refers to the willingness of someone to exert effort toward achieving a goal" (p. 37). Chelladurai used in his book motivation definition from Hoy and Miskel that motivation is a complex force or needs that drive to action towards personal goals achievement (2006, p. 100). Cnaan et al. (1996) article deals with terminology and definitions of volunteer, some characteristics of volunteer is that individual is working in free will without payment or just a small compensation. However, Wicker has used based to work of Cnaan et al. (1996) definition that "A volunteer is an individual who works out of free will or relatively uncoerced and receives no remuneration at all or only a relatively small reimbursement or pay" (Wicker, 2017, p.326).

Two well-known theories of motivation are Maslow's need hierarchy, which idea is that people are needed to fill their basic physiological needs first and then can achieve higher levels from need of safety, social esteem and finally self-actualization needs of human (Maslow, 1943/2000; Chelladurai, 2006, p. 100, 108). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory from the year 1968 is based on the idea that motivation and factors that leads to job satisfaction are related to work itself like personal growth or dissatisfaction that are related to context that work is done, like working conditions, relationship with supervisor, and occupational safety (Chelladurai, 2006, p. 100, 109-110; Miner, 2005). This thesis work is using individual perspective to find out what are the motivation factors among Vantaa Triathlon sports event's volunteers.

2.2 Motivation of Volunteers

Motivations to volunteer can be called the MTV (Chaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). Volunteer motivation papers are using widely two-dimension model with altruistic and egoistic or three-dimension model with altruistic, social, and material motivation factors (Monga, 2006). Many volunteers' motivations can be related both to egoistic and altruistic reasons (Clary & Snyder, 1999). In altruistic reasons people choose to volunteer, because they value, and they want to help others (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2009, p. 174). External rewards come from outside like certificate or praise unlike intrinsic rewards than come within people's mind like development or feeling competency (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p. 37).

Motivation can be said to be a person willingness to put in effort toward a set goal (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.37). The results indicated that there are many reasons why people volunteer (Chaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). Hoye and Cuskelly (2009) described volunteer motivation as a want to help, or social or people's personal reward. Volunteer motivation definition by Giannoulakis et al. (2015) "as reasons that have an influence on an individual's decision to participate in sports events" (p. 185). It has been suggested that motivation of volunteers may be varied from volunteer to another (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 140).

Chelladurai (2006, p. 14-16) goes through his book incentives based on Smith and Knobe and Prentsky's work in the 80's;

- utilitarian incentives would be benefits that volunteer is getting from volunteering like new skills and knowledge or parents want to help his/her children if they are competing in some race,
- affective incentives would bring things like friends, status, authority, or fellowship, and
- normative incentives could describe satisfaction when volunteering can help other people, to do something good for others.

Based on Auld and Cuskelly (2000) definition "a reward is an outcome of positive value to the individual" (p.10). For some volunteers' motivation is to gain personal growth and new skills, some volunteers want to serve their community and there are ego centric reasons like want to go a unique event (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2009, p. 174-175). Van der Wagen and White (2018, p. 453) have listed in their book what kinds of benefits volunteers can have from events like new skills, to help others, new contacts, personal satisfaction, involvement, activity, use of skills and chance to do something valuable.

Volunteers' motivation among USA volunteers, such as job career interest, new experience, recognition, and connections, differs between nations because Australian volunteers' things like fun, leisure time, and being part of a cause stand out (Coldblatt & Matheson, 2009). In regional sporting events, motivation builds from bringing a love of volunteer sports to helping others and their community (Geoff et al., 2016). Motivation "is the driving force leading to a behavior" (Giannoulakis et al., 2015, p. 185).

On the other hand, Dawson and Downward's (2013) study shows a connection between activity in sports and volunteering. Moreover, Ma and Draper's (2017) study suggest that running event volunteers with runner background motivations are higher than volunteers with no running experience. Burgham and Downward's (2005) the study concerned swim volunteers, and it shows a positive impact of volunteering for former swimmers, volunteer's kids are swimming, and an older age. In Busser and Carruthers's (2010) study amongst youth coaches, almost 90% of the coaches had their children playing in the team, wanting to make a positive impact on youth life was a strong motivation. Motivational factors of coaches are related to sports enthusiasm (Geoff et al., 2016). In Inkiläinen's (2019, p. 36) study amongst hockey event volunteers stands out as a passion for sports.

The results from the study suggest that volunteering could provide personal satisfaction (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019). It can be fulfilling when an organization is making a purpose, and volunteers can be part of it (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Benefits of volunteering can be different, feeling needed, finding new relationships and networks, and communality can be found (Wilson & Pimm, 1996.) The study made by Renfree and West (2021) amongst weekly park run in the UK shows high motivation among volunteers and the difference between motivation factors between genders. As suggested by Chaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991) study was made amongst volunteers of human resource management; the findings were that people want to do something worthwhile and egoistic motivation that volunteering made them feel better about themselves on a scale of 1 to 5. On the other hand, volunteers do not have just one reason to volunteer, they are usually multiple motivation factors to volunteer (Monga, 2006). That is, motivation of volunteers is complex (Coldblatt & Matheson, 2009). People's motivations to volunteer may change over time (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2009). This implies that being a sports volunteer and participation in sports has a strong link (Geoff et al., 2016).

2.3 Different scales to measure volunteers' motivation

In functional approach to volunteerism, the theory core idea is that volunteering people do the same tasks but have different motivation, and that motivation factors can be measured (Snyder et al., 2000). This approach proposes that people can do the same activities even though it would serve different personal preferences and have been used in studies like Güntert et al. (2015). A functional approach idea is that the same behavior serves different functions in different individuals, and it has helped to understand what motivates volunteers (Houle et al., 2005). Katzin, Smith, and partners' theory and classifications from 1956 – 1960 have been the base of a functional approach (Snyder et al., 2000).

The Volunteer Functions Inventory is called the VFI, it consists of six factors that are:

- values can show care towards others
- understanding, chance to learn new skills, meet new people
- career, volunteering can help with career goals and give connections with new people and learn new skills
- enhancement, has similarities to Maslow's motivation theory and needs self-actualization, the last function is about making people feel better or improve themselves
- social relationships can be strengthened, some places are almost a must do volunteering for the social pressure, or also could be wished to fit in better to different social groups, and
- protective volunteering can help with self-reflection and reduce negative feelings

(Clary & Snyder, 1999; Snyder et al., 2000).

For these six factors, Clary et al. have built five items per function, overall 30 items in the VFI, the tool was created to get more valid and reliable tools to measure volunteers' motivation and it has been used widely (Snyder et al., 2000). There have been various kinds of modifications to the scales. Kim et al. (2010) modification from the VFI to better suit youth sports called the MVFIS scale. Social exchange theory is used to understand volunteers volunteering intention in future sports events, if expectations of volunteering are received it is more likely to continue and related to this theory are volunteers motivated on specific issues (Bang et al., 2009).

Volunteer Motivations Scale for International Sporting Events as called the VMS-ISE was developed by Bang and Chelladurai, the original six factors of the scale are: expression of values, like helping others; patriotism, feeling pride in your own country; interpersonal contacts, interaction with other people; career interest, CV and experience; personal growth, feeling needed; and extrinsic rewards, free food, apparel (Bang, & Chelladurai, 2009). Based on Bang et al. (2008) have used VMS-ISE with 29 scale for volunteer motivations in international sports events, but they have added to it the love of sports factor. Also, another research had been using the love of sports factor; Bang et al. (2009) study was made in a triathlon event with added the love of sports factor as an extra from the original six factors as in also study by Ma and Draper (2017) from marathon event. In those studies, the factor of patriotism is not used, but local area support is taking account in research question and in the scale.

Farrell et al. (1998) study was from an elite sporting competition and the events volunteer's motivation and satisfaction factors with the 28-item scale of Special Event Volunteer Motivation. A special event can be called an event that is not normally occurring, many different events can go under this definition (Monga, 2006). The Special Event Volunteer Motivation Scale SEVMS was modified originally from Knoke and Prensky's work from the year 1984 three factors; Purposive, solitary, and material to a four-factor scale by Farrel et al. the year 1998 (Ma & Draper, 2017). The SEVMS includes purposive, helping make the event a success; solidary, to get experience; external traditions, family and/or friends are volunteering; and commitments, it is expected to volunteer (Farrell et al., 1998).

However, The Sports Volunteer Motivation Scale for sports events is originally by Strigas and Jackson with five factors that they have development for sports events like marathon events, material, to build resume to have rewards like tickets; purposive, to give back to community; leisure, to escape from daily life; egoistic, to improve own skills and networks; and external, friends/family are also volunteering (Strigas & Jackson work from Ma & Draper, 2017; Wagen, 2007, p. 64).

Moreover, the Olympic Volunteer Motivation Scale is called the OVMS, which is an 18-motivation scale for the Olympic volunteers, the scale has specific questions related to the Olympic because it is a motivation factor to many and the games difference from a local sports event (Giannoulakis et al., 2007). As seen from this large scale of different study scales of volunteer motivations, sports event volunteers have had a need to specially scales, not just using the scale for invent to other business (Kim et al., 2010). As suggested, values give people a code of how to act and what to decide (Chelladurai, 2006, p. 93).

2.4 Organizational Benefits to get to know Volunteer's Motivation

Volunteers are a huge asset for most sports events to make successful sports events (Bang et al., 2009). Sports organizations use plenty of volunteering help (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.3). The success of satisfaction of volunteers depends on how well volunteers' motivations and environment of volunteering will match (Clary & Snyder, 1999). If it is unsure to an organization is motivating its volunteers and what benefits they are looking for, possible for successful management is limited (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Based on Ma and Draper's (2017) study show that event organizers should focus more on volunteer motivations than the difference in their demographic. While achieving the organization's goals, volunteers would be good to achieve their goals at the same time, volunteer leaders could ask what volunteers want from their volunteering (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000). Volunteering work at an event doesn't often meet the expectation of a volunteer (Kim et al., 2019). When the management team understood the volunteers' main motivation it was easier to fill these individual needs (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019).

The study results suggest that to lead well, it is important to have information from volunteers' motivation factors, this kind of information supplies support to management (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019). It is important to know why people volunteer (Chelladurai, 2006, p. 14). If volunteers' motivation and personal benefit can be connected, an outcome from this combination is a more positive experience of volunteering, in addition, if volunteers are given a choice, they prefer tasks that help their motivations (Houle et al., 2005). If people are feeling too much pressure to volunteer, they maybe do not want to volunteer in the future (Geoff et al., 2016). On the other hand, people's need for a feeling of autonomy is important, if they feel that there is no choice or too much control it reduces interest in the activity (Güntert et al., 2015).

More positive feelings towards volunteering may arise when less external pressure arises, if there is a lot of external pressure, the feeling could be slightly more negative towards earlier experience and future intentions to volunteer according to Clary and Snyder (1999). A good match between volunteers' interests, talent, and tasks in sports events would help both parties greatly (Hallmann & Harms, 2012). In Mykletun and Himanen's study (2016) among two bike events volunteers, volunteers were satisfied, committed, and motivated to do their task. Based on Love et al.'s study (2013), for golf tournament volunteers, 38,5% did have nothing to complain about their volunteer experience; however, among those that did have issues, 47,6% of it considered management.

On the other hand, Wilson and Pimm (1996) do not fully agree with Kotler in their article that appreciation would be the only need for volunteers. When you know what motivation factors are appealing to your field's potential volunteers it is easier to reach them (Chaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). The nature of volunteering is being unpaid for their work, so remember reward and thank you, otherwise that feeling of being undervalued would not rise (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.14). Grow the organization's knowledge of volunteers' motivation and get to know what volunteers' interests, skills, experience, and life situations are (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Motivation commits volunteers to events, gives energy, and makes it possible to reach goals (Arthur, 2013, p.361). Understanding volunteers' motivations in sports events can help to lead and recruit volunteers (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019). The results indicated that volunteers that feel that their experience was satisfactory are shown to volunteer also in the future (Angosto et al., 2021). Highly valuable rewards like thank you notes, and free meals are inexpensive and easy to provide, suggest Phillips and Phillips (2010) in their work.

2.5 Volunteer Management

Based on Auld and Cuskelly (2000, p. 37) have defined leadership “as creating vision, inspiring commitment and directing human resource efforts toward organisational objectives”. Management can be defined by Kreitner’s work as a process with limited resources and efficient use of them, a process in which you are working with others to reach organizational goals in changing environment (Dale & Schmiesing, 2012, p.4). According to Dale and Schmiesing, volunteer management can be defined as a working process that is logical and systematic and is done via volunteers and with them to achieve the organization’s goals in the changing environment (2012, p.6).

Leadership can be defined as a process of behavior that is by nature interpersonal, and its goal is to motivate people toward a set of goals (Chelladurai, 2006, p. 190). Hoye et al. (2018, p. 168) definition of leadership is that it is focused on strengths than the weaknesses of others, is focused on the bigger picture, and is including and goal-focused. Kreitner’s work has included different management aspects that must be taken into consideration also in volunteering work: planning, decision making, structural like a chain of command, responsibilities, and split of work tasks, staff issues like training and recruiting, communicating by rules and information to be able to deliver to job, motivating, leading and controlling or supervision when needed (Dale & Schmiesing, 2012, p.4-5).

The results indicated that induction into volunteer work is important (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Managers should understand what the motivations of volunteers are and what kind of expectations they are having (Monga, 2006). Most of the volunteers (83%) had done volunteering via an organization, community, or club in Finland (Rahkonen, 2021). It is good to know that new volunteers will make the first impact by knowing the organization’s people, relevant activities, and infrastructure and by administration work effectiveness (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Make volunteers feel valued and their contributions wanted, and they are feeling respected, this way they want to contribute again suggest by Auld and Cuskelly (2000, p.4).

Although, to have successful events volunteer management must be under control (Van der Wagen & White, 2018, p. 462). Good leadership is expected also from volunteer leaders (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Line managers have a significant impact on the working environment (Armstrong, 2021). Volunteering increases personal growth and social interaction, volunteering should be interesting and challenging to have these benefits (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Volunteers whose motivation factors are fulfilled have a more positive attitude and commitment to a sports event (Bang et al., 2009). Line managers have a big effect on the working environment (Armstrong, 2021). In volunteering work, this applies also.

Moreover, sports events have many different duties like security, technical, and first aid among others (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019). Sports events differ by length, nature, purpose of the event, and scale, these things should be considered when thinking about volunteers' satisfaction, motivation, and expectations towards the event (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 145). To ensure volunteers' exciting and enjoyable tasks, organizations can improve their experience by providing them with a choice of tasks and scheduling times; this way, volunteers' feelings of independence and competence could be improved with inner motivation growth (Allen & Bartle, 2014). Can goals be settled together with volunteers, are communication and goals of volunteering clear to all, and what are expectations, this kind of questions could help to build an achievable volunteering path (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000).

In an organization's different kinds of human resources processes would be good to think about volunteers' different motivation and satisfaction factors like reward, training, recruitment, and orientation (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 142). Based on the study done by Kim et al. (2019) they suggest that the compatibility of volunteers' motivation and experience is important to keep volunteers. The action recommended by Armstrong (2021) is to select people with good leadership qualities for those tasks. It would be good management (at least for longer volunteering) to write a job description, remember also to ensure that there is fun while working and not overload volunteers with work (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000). Should be considered that it can be meaningful for volunteers to decide whom they work with, in the same sports club volunteers could want to work together, these friends and connections are motivating (Allen & Bartle, 2014).

Leaders need to have a positive attitude toward people, not thinking that volunteers are lazy, do not like their tasks, and are forced to volunteer; this kind of attitude reflects behaviour (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.3). However, in situations when it is not possible to let volunteers choose by themselves would be good to tell clearly why the task is important, what is the meaning of those tasks to the event's success, admit that not all the tasks are equally exciting and let the volunteers know that their contribution is valuable (Allen & Bartle, 2014). Sheptak and Menaker's (2016) study shows that volunteering experience can also include a feeling of frustration because of several reasons like lack of communication or support from the organization, inadequate preparation, interest in a task, feeling of undervaluation, or unclear communication. A Code of conduct would be good to exist in the event, this also supplies information to volunteers as to what to expect from events like safety, orientation, insurance, food, drinks, and a harassment free environment (Wagen, 2007, p. 66-67). Management should know different aspects like it is important to know if, in case of an unpleasant experience, it is not so likely to volunteer again in the same event (Auld, 2009, p. 185). Volunteers' efficient use is required support, coordination, and leadership, without these key elements volunteer is not likely to have a positive volunteer experience and probably want to do something else in their free time (Cuskelly & Auld, 2000, p.3). Sports management and sports event organizations should have awareness of this kind of issue consideration of volunteering.

When an organization is having trouble with keeping or finding volunteers, it would be time to take a closer look at the organization's management practices, the problem is not the volunteers point out Auld and Cuskelly (2000, p.4). In leadership key roles training would be recommended to maximize volunteers' satisfaction (Van der Wagen & White, 2018, p. 462). Satisfaction thus volunteer work is significant to commit to sports event organizers among volunteers (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019). Volunteers can be encouraged to return to volunteering, but how willing they are to do so depends also on how they have been treated (Smith & Lockstone, 2009, p. 157). To ensure leadership and fair conditions to volunteers there is even a Certified in Volunteer Administration Initial Certification organization (CCVA, 2022).

2.6 Volunteer Recruiting

Research shows that in the year 2021 long- and short-term volunteering has been as popular in Finland (Rahkonen, 2021). Many times, new volunteers first become familiar with sports and after that with volunteering (Cuskelly & Auld, 2000). Volunteers' profiles and needs are good to fit on events profile (Van der Wagen & White, 2018, p. 449). Robinson et al. (2011, p. 262) write that future volunteer work would probably look different with specific projects where volunteer skills are used and rewarded. A Finnish study shows that 33% feel that it would be easier to volunteer if there would be an opportunity to do short and one-off voluntary work (Rahkonen, 2021). Pereira and Cavalcante's (2018) research data shows also that it could be easier to get volunteers to work in a short event than in longer volunteering work in a sports club.

It should be easy to do volunteering, even childcare could be provided (Wilson & Pimm, 1996.) Based on Østerlund (2013) study recommendation to ease volunteer recruiting of sports organizations, it would be essential to have members involved in situation-making, delegate decision-making and task among multiple volunteers, recognize volunteers and grant them benefits, do a volunteer recruiting strategy and use of electric communication channels. Because the motivation factors of volunteers are complex issues, it is important to think about this during recruitment process of volunteers (Coldblatt & Matheson, 2009). Considering when recruiting new volunteers, they should be informed what kind of task they are looking for so that it is possible to decide before committing to volunteering (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.16).

Factors that may reduce interest in volunteering are bad health, a lot of TV time other than sports programs, young age, being parents to small kids, and being single (Dawson and Downward, 2013). Wicker (2017, p. 327) looked at different studies on volunteering, research results show that volunteering reduces factors in sports events and non-profit sports organizations if there is less free time, people with kids, and immigrant backgrounds. For recruiting, it is important to understand volunteers' motivation, this way it's easier also to target the message to the right potential people (Alfes et al., 2017). When recruiting volunteers should think about what kind of segment the organization is looking for and what that segment could benefit from (Wilson & Pimm, 1996.)

On the other hand, some locations and organizations are easier to have volunteers for than others, concert halls and famous sports events could more easily attract volunteers because people want to see big stars and famous teams (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Moreover, new volunteers are essential to make them feel welcome and valued with a clear role and how everything is working, a well-planned orientation program is a valuable tool (Cuskelly & Auld, 2000). Good leadership with a positive attitude to people helps to have satisfied volunteers with inspiration and commitment with clear roles (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.3). What benefits does enrolment in volunteering bring, and what good does the organization do, this should involve recruitment messages in e-mails, presentations, networks, posters, and brochures (Wilson & Pimm, 1996).

For new volunteer recruits, it is essential to talk about the benefits of volunteering not only for organizational needs (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.16). Volunteers do a wide range of different tasks in sports events (Monga, 2006). Although, many organizations and places could find it hard to get volunteers, and on the other hand, accepting just anybody to volunteer could be a bad choice for an organization because bad recruitment is a waste of time and could bring negative effects to the atmosphere among other things (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Good networks are an asset, new volunteers are more likely to volunteer when someone they know, or a family member is already volunteering suggest Cuskelly and Auld (2000). However, it is possibly easier to recruit volunteers for particular tasks or projects than for organizations just in general. (Alfes et al., 2017). Make sure to understand what people want from their volunteering and when rewarding volunteers make sure to be equal to them (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000).

Even thou, in longer volunteering, is even more important to get to know volunteers' motivation, also sports events could receive help from this knowledge (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). This could also help volunteers re-recruiting. The most popular volunteering subject in Finland is exercise and sports (Rahkonen, 2021). Fulfilment of needs, satisfaction, and positive reinforcement are good signs of working volunteer leading (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.12). Many times, volunteers return to tasks that they have done previously in a recurring event, this brings advantage because of experience of the task (Smith & Lockstone, 2009). A good and satisfactory experience of volunteering is a key thing when re-volunteering (Monga, 2006). Rozmiarek et al. (2021) study did not find a difference between background information but differs with earlier volunteering experience, most motivated were volunteers with earlier experience. Communication and clear aims are important in volunteers' leadership (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000).

3 Research Methods and Implementation

This thesis has a quantitative approach, which means that research involves numeric data (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The author chose a quantitative research approach to this study because of the number of volunteer respondents in the event. Vantaa Triathlon event has yearly proximity of over 150 volunteers working in the event (Sjöholm, personal communication, May 19, 2022). With a web questionnaire, it was possible to reach all the volunteers by e-mail.

Research is based on finding answers to questions (Veal & Darcy, 2014, p. 76). The data collection for this thesis study was from Vantaa Triathlon sports event. Quantitative methods include enumerative data (Brannen, 2016). The online questionnaire was sent to 150 Vantaa Triathlon volunteers after the event by e-mail. The survey remained open for 14 days. The research data can help with Vantaa Triathlon sports event's volunteers recruiting and improve volunteer satisfaction in the future and all along help improve the event. Most volunteer motivation research has been done in North America, the United Kingdom, and Norway, and most studies were quantitative (Kim, 2018). Studies on motivation in sporting events have been concentrated only in some countries, making it necessary to expand these studies to have more information about diverse cultures (Angosto et al., 2021).

3.1 Research Questions and the Survey Form

This thesis approach is explanatory research; it tries to find an explanation behind motivation (Veal & Darcy, 2014, p.7). Research problems and questions are not the same things; questions raise a problem worth solving as a conceptual problem; in this case, we do not know what motivates these events volunteers (Booth et al., 2016, p.51). In answering this paper's research question, Vantaa Triathlon event gets a deeper understanding of its volunteer's thinking which will help future volunteer recruits. The research problem was to know what factors motivate Vantaa Triathlon sports events' volunteers. The main research question: What motivates Vantaa Triathlon volunteers?

An extensive literature review was the base of the web questionnaire (appendix 1). Focusing on the research problem and its central question is essential, according to Booth et al. (2016). The questionnaire was tested from different genders, sports backgrounds, and ages before sending it to the event's volunteers to ensure it was understandable and well structured. The online survey included questions about demographics, including age, gender, and employment status of the volunteer. The choice of the questions was made by the theoretical base and with the needs of the Vantaa Triathlon sports event. In this survey, there were 21 questions. Part of the question and modified VMS-ISE scale from volunteer's motivation factors were with a 5-point Likert scale. That scale works well among adult respondents according to Tähtinen et al. (2020, p. 28). Quantitative research provides numerical data, this study approach requires many respondents (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

In Likert scale has numbers from 1 to 5, one meaning strongly disagree, two disagree, three neutral, four agree, and five strongly agree (Tähtinen et al., 2020, p. 29). Webropol software was a tool for this study. In Webropol, the respondent sees all her/his answers and can adopt those even after answering before sending the form. This can improve the consistency of responses (Valli, 2015, p. 53). Different studies have modified scales for volunteer motivation (Kim, 2018). The VFI scale is relevant in all volunteering contexts (Bang & Chelladurai, 2009). This study used the VMS-ISE scale. It has liability from earlier studies, and the scale has been used in triathlon events and among other sports event volunteers.

The patriot factor from the original VMS-ISE scale was not used in this study because Vantaa Triathlon is not an international event on a big scale. Bavaresco et al. (2018) have officially translated the Portuguese version from the VMS-ISE scale. There is no official version of the scale in Finnish, so an unofficial translation and culturally modified scale were made only for this study. Factors were modified in this research to fit into the cultural context; the surveys were in Finnish. Myklettun and Himanen (2016) also made translations and adjustments to local culture. Bang et al. (2009) study was from a triathlon event with added the Love of Sports factor as an extra from the original six factors. The study by Ma and Draper (2017) on marathon event used it, too; these studies, and many more, have modified the VMS-ISE scale in their study. The approach in this thesis is explanatory research, with research questions to determine motivation issues (Veal & Darcy, 2014, p.7). The questions parted into background information, sports, club and volunteering background, experience from Vantaa Triathlon event, motivation factors, two open questions about how to develop the event in the future, and the questionnaire ending with a recommendation rate. Quantitative research is often data driven and theoretical, looking at something specific interest with an apparent research problem (Brannen, 2016), as this paper also does.

3.2 Data Collection Process

June 2022 was the time for the survey after Vantaa Triathlon event was over. The results collection time was two weeks. This thesis used new data from research. The primary data collection was from Vantaa Triathlon volunteers with a semi-structured questionnaire with two open questions from the development of the event and closed questions. The questionnaire-based survey was sent to 150 volunteers after the event on 13th July, and a reminder from the survey was sent 20th July by email. The email was an excellent connection to volunteers because they also get emails from the event's organizations. Vantaa Triathlon organization sent the email to volunteers via the event's organization's address list. The author of this thesis did not have direct name lists, GDPR rules applied, and the questionnaire was anonymous. The questionnaire was open 14 days from 13th June to 26th June 2022. The timeline was selected straight after the event so that the event would be a fresh memory. Volunteering motivational aspects from Bang and Chelladurai's (2009) work was used in a questionnaire (Pereira & Cavalcante, 2019). The VMS-ISE is a widely used tool to collect data on motivation factors among sports volunteers (Angosto et al., 2021). In many cases, sample sizes from volunteers' motivation research have been relatively small, maybe because volunteers' amount is much smaller than participants' and they are not easy to reach (Hallmann & Harms, 2012).

3.3 Analyzing the Data

Data were analyzed after the questionnaire link had closed after 14 days on Monday, 27th of June 2022. From July to August 2022, most of the research data was ready from the analysis. Background questions were nine, like age and gender, and seven questions regarding the event. The modified VMS-ISE scale was one part of the questionnaire. Also, were the volunteers recommending the event, and are they going to volunteer again next year at the event? At the end of the questionnaire were two open questions. These open questions could answer in Finnish. For the data analysis using thematic sorting of the topic. In the end, the author made a connective word cloud from the most popular topics from these questions.

Webropol software data analyzing tool was the tool for numerical data analysis. Webropol's tools provided data reports. Average, percent, mean and standard deviation (SD) were the most used figures. The database was relatively narrow, so a basic figure had much information to answer this study's research question and find out the factors that motivated the event's volunteers. This thesis used the modified VMS-ISE scale with 18 different items. The Finnish version of the original VMS-ISE scale does not exist yet, so the author built an own version of it for this study. Cultural and language issues had to fit Finnish culture, and some specific items and different words can be found in the modification (table 3), and the Finnish questionnaire is in appendix 1.

3.4 Reliability, Validity, and Research Ethics

Reliability means how reliable research is and how much randomness effect it; this can be seen with a reliability rate that varies between 0-1, and with background information, answers in a study can be assumed almost to be perfect, close to 1 (Valli, 2015, p. 139). Multiple respondents ensure reliability in the quantitative approach, and reliability tells results would be the same if done again (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The lower the degree of error, the better the research's reliability (Kumar, 2014, p. 216). Also, a broad and relevant literature view brings more reliability to the study paper (Booth et al., 2016).

Validity in the study instruments is needed to have clear logic between questions and study (Kumar, 2014, p. 214). Validity tells how well information collected truly reflects on research subject; research findings should be replicated to be valid (Veal & Darcy, 2014). Plagiarism is using someone else's work and pretending that it is their own also is important not to use your text the same as before (Helgesson & Eriksson, 2014, p. 94).

Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) ethical principles during the thesis work (JAMK Staff, 2018). The collected data storage is in JAMK's secure Microsoft Office 365 cloud services with a personal password and Webropol software provided for students of JAMK for a thesis process and study time in JAMK. After the thesis approval process, the author published the thesis on Thesus webpage according to JAMK thesis report guide. Bar charts were mainly used instead of pie charts for a clearer reader view (Booth et al., 2016, p. 225). The anonymous study response as a pdf report was also delivered to Vantaa Triathlon sports event organizer and the club manager of Triathlon Vantaa sports club to develop the event in the future. The anonymous research material in pdf form is in Finnish and can be more familiar to the events organization. Study limitation can be a small sample size (Hallmann & Harms, 2012). In the Likert scale there is no allowed writing explanations to responses (Love et al., 2013). This thesis also had two open questions in the questionnaire where it was possible to leave an open text. Research with discretionary sampling, has no broader statistical qualification for the wider population (Ruddock, 2001).

4 Findings

52 of 150 volunteers answered the questionnaire, which makes a response rate of 35%. Background information shows that 55% were females and 45% were male. The largest age groups were 40-49 (34%) and 50-59 (33%), the age range being from under 18 to over 70. 78% were in work life, 12% were students, and 10% were retirees. Most of the volunteers were from Helsinki, 42% of which is the city next to Vantaa. Vantaa city, home of the event, is also the hometown of 36% of the volunteers. Volunteers did have a strong sports background, but only 4% did not have a sports hobby. 52% of the volunteers were triathletes that were part of a triathlon club, 51% volunteered in the event because their sports club asked, and 22% this was the partial cause. Vantaa Triathlon event in 2022 was the 11th time (TriforFun, 2022). 44% of the volunteers had been to the Vantaa Triathlon sports event two to five times before, 37% were volunteers six to eleven times before, and 19% volunteered at the first-time event (figure 1).



Figure 1. Volunteering experience from Vantaa Triathlon event among volunteers (n 52)

40% of the volunteers did not volunteer other than Vantaa Triathlon event. 20% of the volunteers did volunteer work in triathlon club. 32% volunteered in sports other than triathlon, and 26% volunteered in other activities other than sports (figure 2).

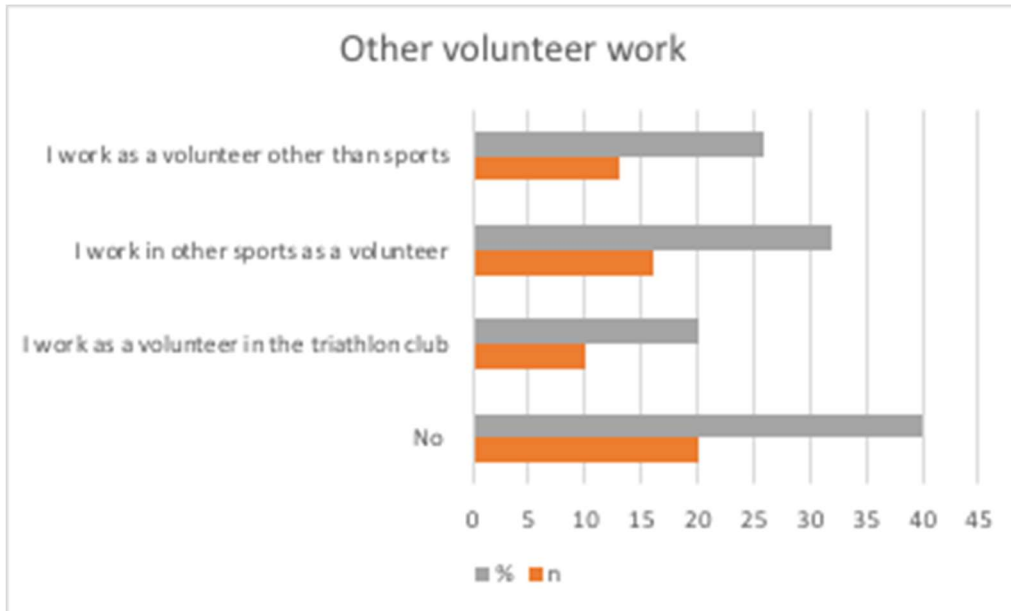


Figure 2. The number of other volunteer activities among volunteers of the event (n 50)

In figure three, only nine volunteers from these respondents participated in the meeting held during the event week. The meeting has an introduction purpose, but it is voluntary.



Figure 3. Participation in volunteer meeting during the event week (n 52)

Volunteers did have many different tasks in the event, like race office, race route control, change-over place, water rescue, and beverage service to athletes. 50% of the volunteers did not have an impact on choosing a volunteering task, some impact made 31%, and 19% of volunteers did get to choose their task (figure 4).

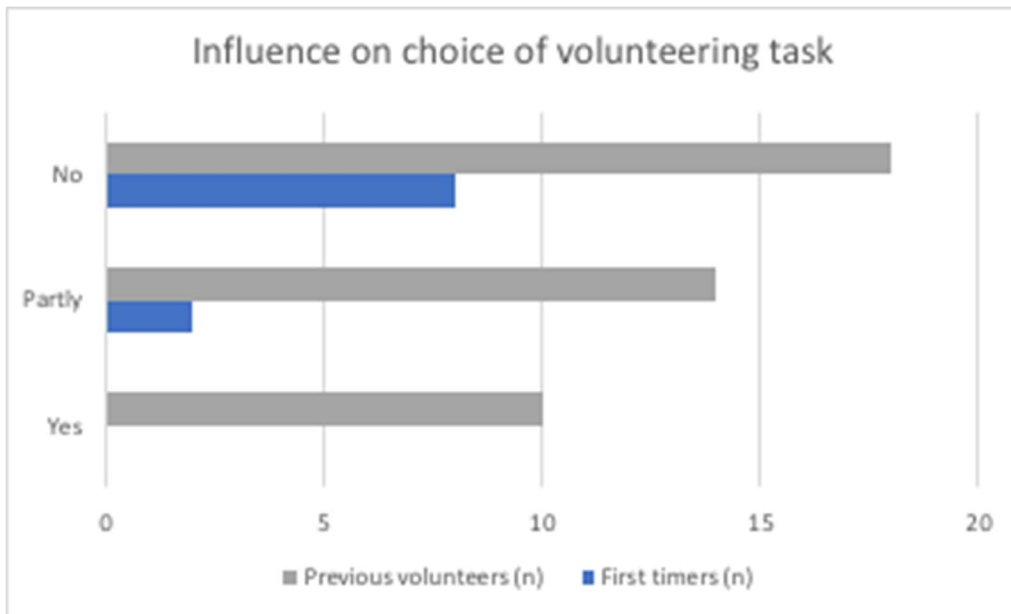


Figure 4. The volunteers' influence on the choice of volunteer work (n 52)

Table 1. Highest-rated motivation items

	Average
I want to help the success of the Vantaa Triathlon event	4,61
Helping others is important to me	4,35
I want to support my own sports club by participating in volunteering	4,2
I want to support triathlon as a sport	4,19
I want to support sports in general	4,19

The volunteers of Vantaa Triathlon sports event answered the modified VMS-ISE on a 1-5 Likert scale. From the scale expression of values, the most important item was “helping others is important to me,” with an average of 4,35 (table 1). This was also a second essential item among all the scales. Community involvement included to most motivated item from this event among volunteers, “I want to help the success of Vantaa Triathlon event,” was average with 4,61; this argument had the lowest standard deviation of this study, 0,53. It describes that the fraction of the answers was the smallest in this section and the volunteers agreed most. On average, 4,2 “I want to support my own sports club by participating in volunteering.” Those two were the only ones in this study, with five as the mean; this describes the importance of motivation.

Table 2. Lowest-rated motivation items from the scale

	Average
I want to receive discounts from the event's partners	2,29
I want to get free food	2,37
I can make new contacts that can help me reach my goals	3,22

Interpersonal contacts with items of "I want to interact with others" as an average of relatively high 4,15 and "I want to meet people and be part of a group" with a 4,14 average. The most motivated item in career orientation was "meaningful volunteering tasks motivate me" 4,04 average. From personal growth, the most motivating item was "volunteering makes me feel useful," with an average of 3,90. Extrinsic rewards were less unmotivated in this study. The items "I want to get free food" and "I want to receive discounts from the event's partners" were the only items on the scale, with only two as the mean number.

Triathlon Vantaa sports event's volunteering task list was very varied. Many volunteers had previous expertise from the event (figure 1). Every volunteer function had many experienced volunteers in all the locations (figure 5).

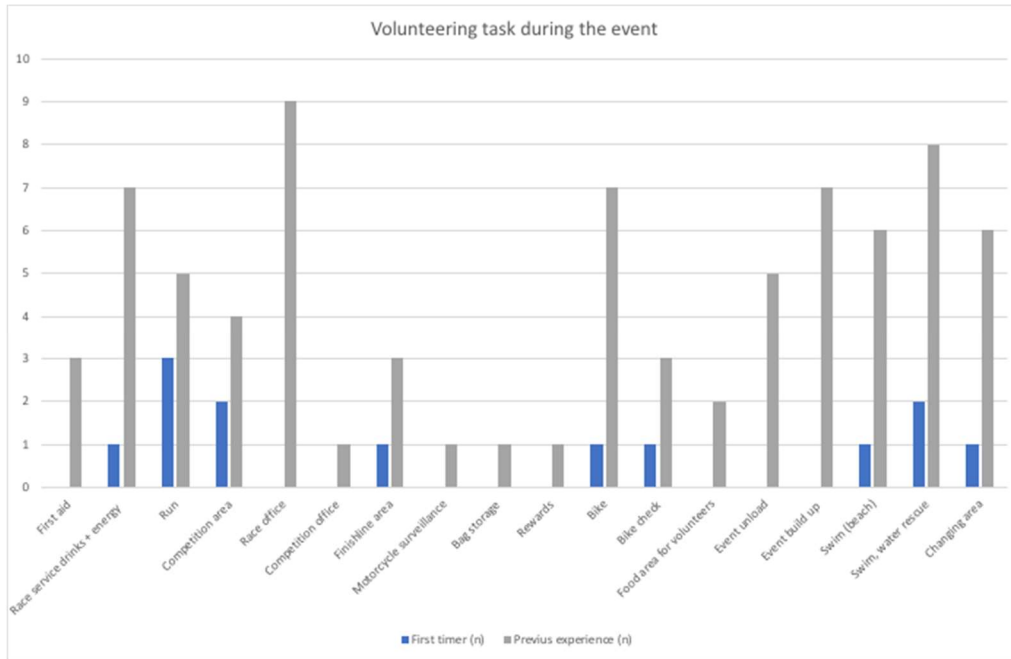


Figure 5. Volunteering tasks distribution between first-timers and volunteers with previous experience from the event (n 52)

There was a bit more median difference between women and men than all the study data together, as shown in figure six. The difference that arises is to support of own club. Seven women are a parent of children whose hobby is triathlon, compared to just one dad. Also, only 4% of non-sports hobby answers come from a male. Egoistic motivations had an average of 3,53 on a 1–5-point Likert scale compared to altruistic motivations average of 3,99.

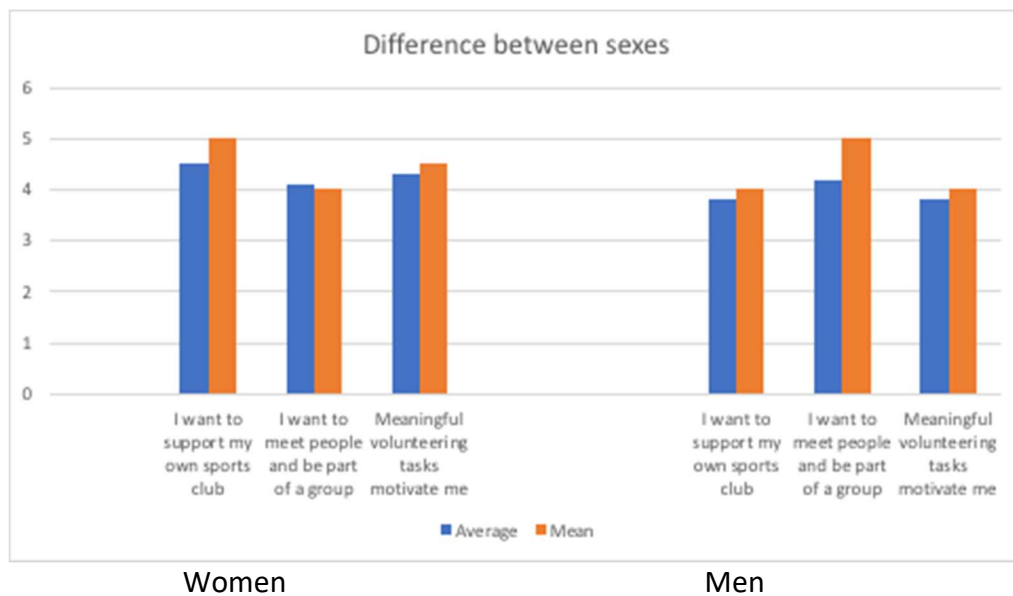


Figure 6. The VMS-ISE scale items differences between women and male volunteers (n 52)

Table 3. Figures from the modified VMS-ISE scale answers given on a 1–5-point Likert scale

Descriptive Statistics	Average	Mean	SD
Expression of Values			
I want to do something worthwhile	4,16	4	0,72
Helping others is important to me	4,35	4	0,66
I feel it's my duty to help	3,54	4	1,07
Community Involvement			
I want to help the success of the Vantaa Triathlon event	4,61	5	0,53
I want to support my own sports club by participating in volunteering	4,20	5	1,07
I want to support events in the area and thus create attraction and income for the area	3,47	4	1,08
Interpersonal Contacts			
I want to interact with others	4,15	4	1,00
I want to meet people and be part of a group	4,14	4	1,07
Career Orientation			
I can make new contacts that can help me reach my goals	3,22	4	1,24
I can learn something new from the event and/or my volunteering tasks	3,63	4	1,06
Meaningful volunteering tasks motivate me	4,04	4	1,06
Personal Growth			
Volunteering makes me feel useful	3,90	4	0,96
I can become aware and find my own strengths	3,39	4	1,17
Extrinsic Rewards			
I want to get free food	2,37	2	1,33
I want to receive discounts from the event's partners	2,29	2	1,08
Love of Sport			
I want to support triathlon as a sport	4,19	4	0,79
I want to support sports in general	4,19	4	0,91
A family member/friend does triathlon and I want to support the athlete	3,37	4	1,40

From figure seven, the volunteers with previous experience from Vantaa Triathlon event gave more positive answers about their motivation than those who worked there for the first time. In figure eight can be seen, the most significant difference.

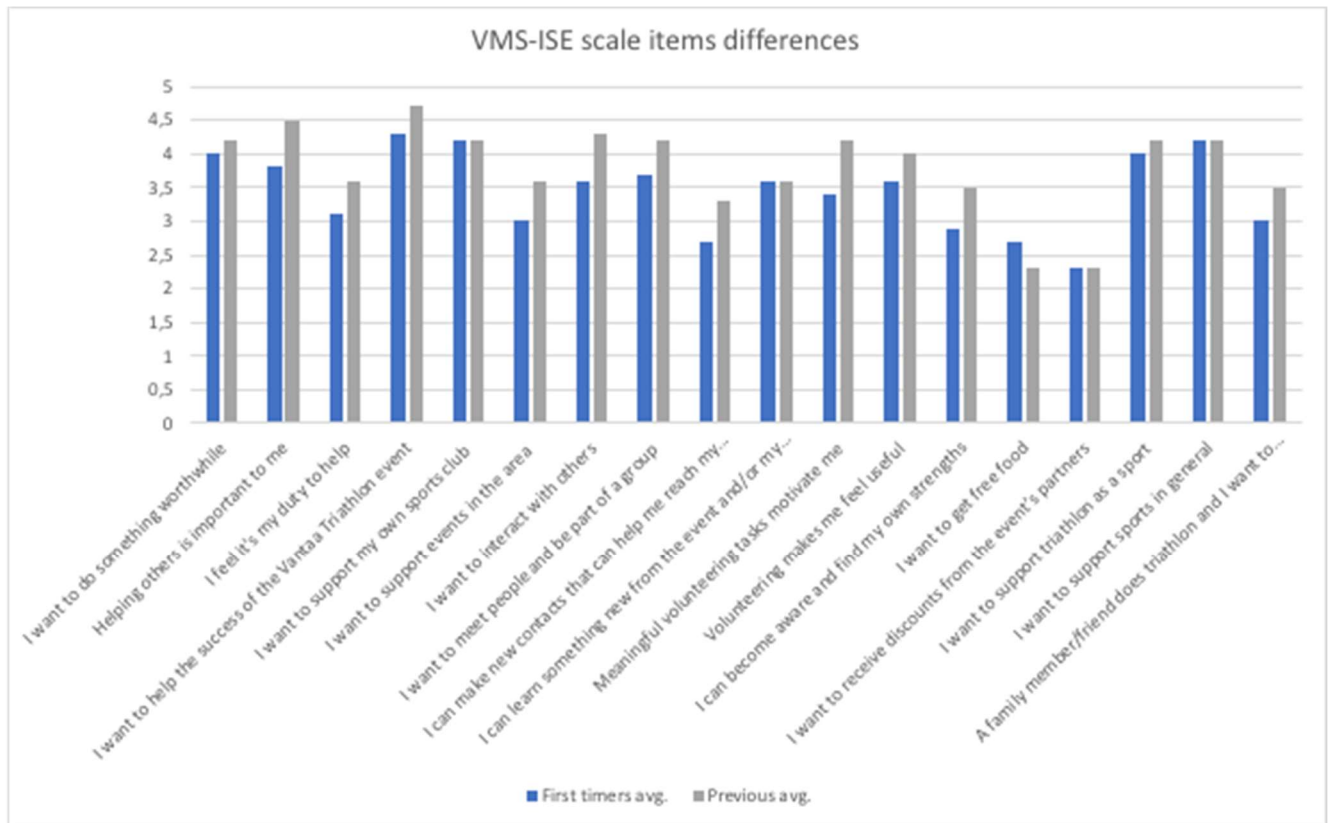


Figure 7. The VMS-ISE scale item dispersion of responses between first-time volunteers and volunteers with previous experience (n 52)

The biggest average difference of 0,8 on Likert scale 1-5 had been in the argument “meaningful volunteering tasks motivate me”. The average number of volunteers that worked for the first time was 3.4 and volunteers with previous experience of the event had an average of 4,2 (figure 8).

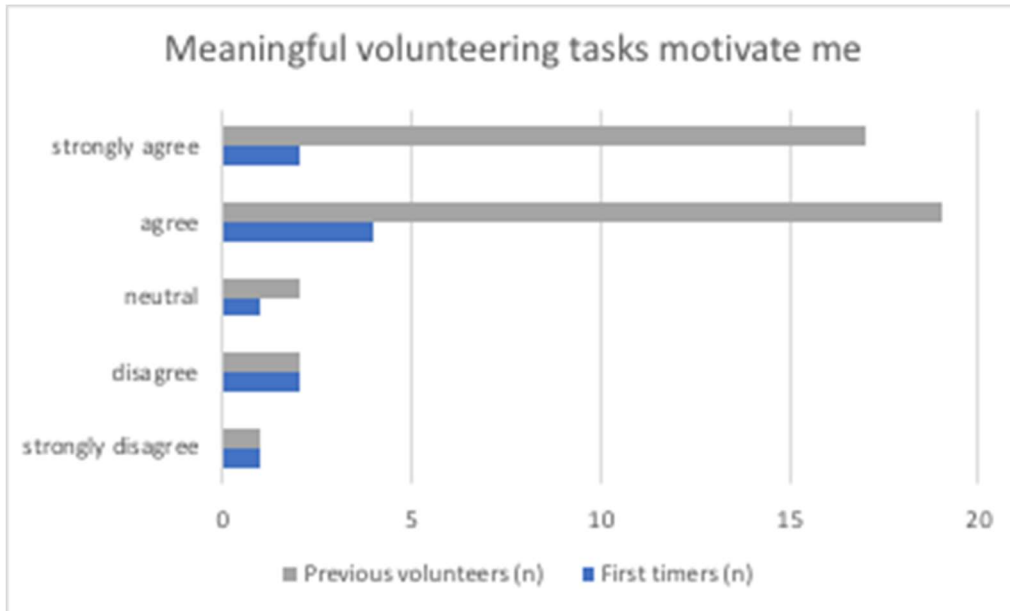


Figure 8. Dispersion of response in scale's item between first-time volunteers and volunteers with previous experience (n 51)

The questionnaire contained two open questions about how to develop volunteer experience (26 respondents) in the future and how to develop the event (21 respondents). Answers were sorted by themes, and the word cloud was formed and included in this paper (figure 9). Most mentions were from scheduling of volunteer tasks, instructions, and training of volunteers, updating the need for race route maps, the start of the half distance already in the morning, and the need for updating the event's Internet page. Vantaa Triathlon event's organization can use anonymous development ideas for future development.



Figure 9. Word Cloud on possible development targets in future years

The recommendation rate of the event was good, with a median of five and an average of 4,4 on a Likert scale of 1-5. 83% think that the volunteer's amount was correct. 92% were happy with the amount of communication with volunteers. Volunteers did give good feedback to arguments, "I was satisfied with my volunteer task," "I got enough training for my job," and "I was satisfied with my volunteer officer in charge of my area," the median being 5 (Liker scale 1-5) and the average of this arguments being 4,4 – 4,7. All the first-time volunteers strongly agreed (5) or agreed (4) with all the arguments in figure 10. A volunteer officer is like a manager in that function of volunteering, satisfaction towards a person in charge is good among volunteers.

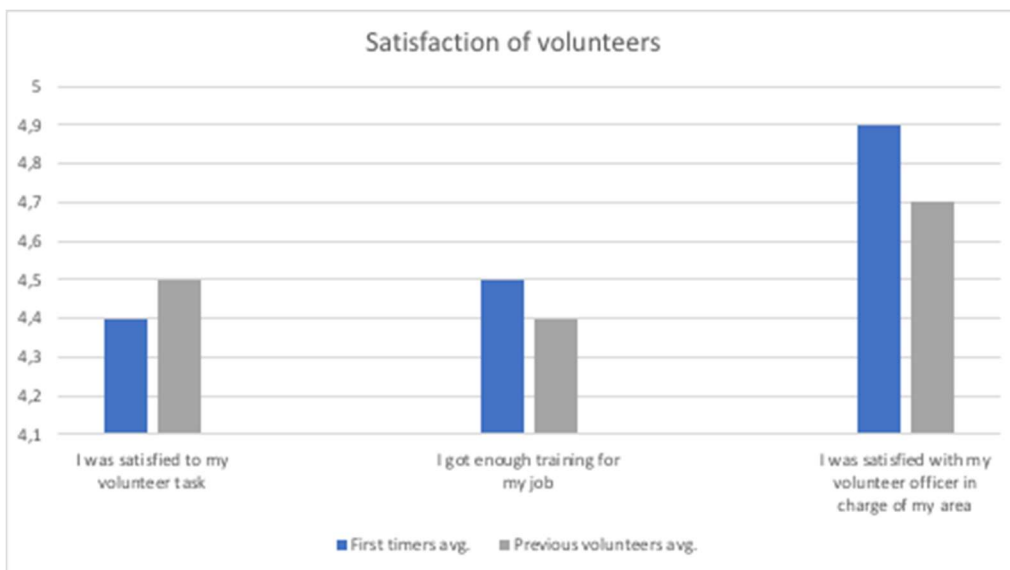


Figure 10. Satisfaction of the volunteers at the event (n 52)

69% of volunteers will volunteer again next year, 25% said maybe, and only 6% would not come to volunteer again next year. In figure 11. is shown to have some differences between first-time volunteers and volunteers with previous experience from the Vantaa Triathlon event. There are more maybe answers among the first-timers. Many of the volunteers at the event had previous experience and had volunteered in the event before.

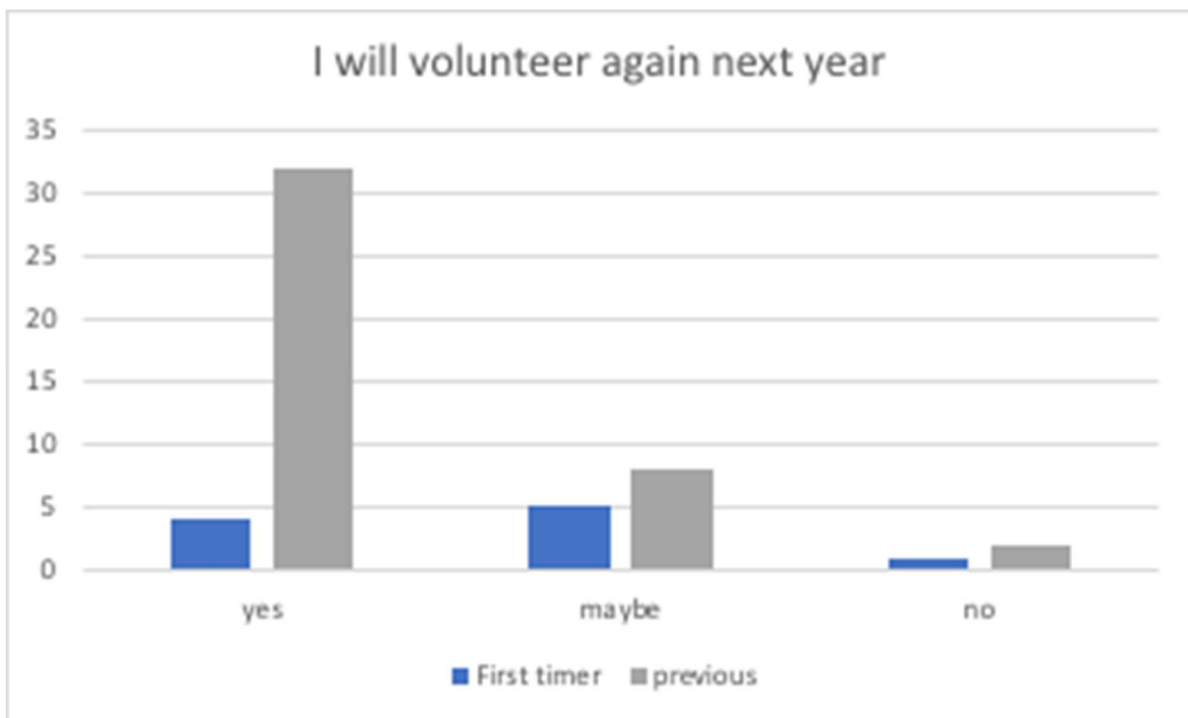


Figure 11. Difference between first-time volunteers and previously experienced volunteers (52)

The deviation between first-time volunteers was smaller in the recommendation question. 30% of the first-time volunteers strongly agreed, and 70% agreed that they would recommend the experience to their friends (figure 12).

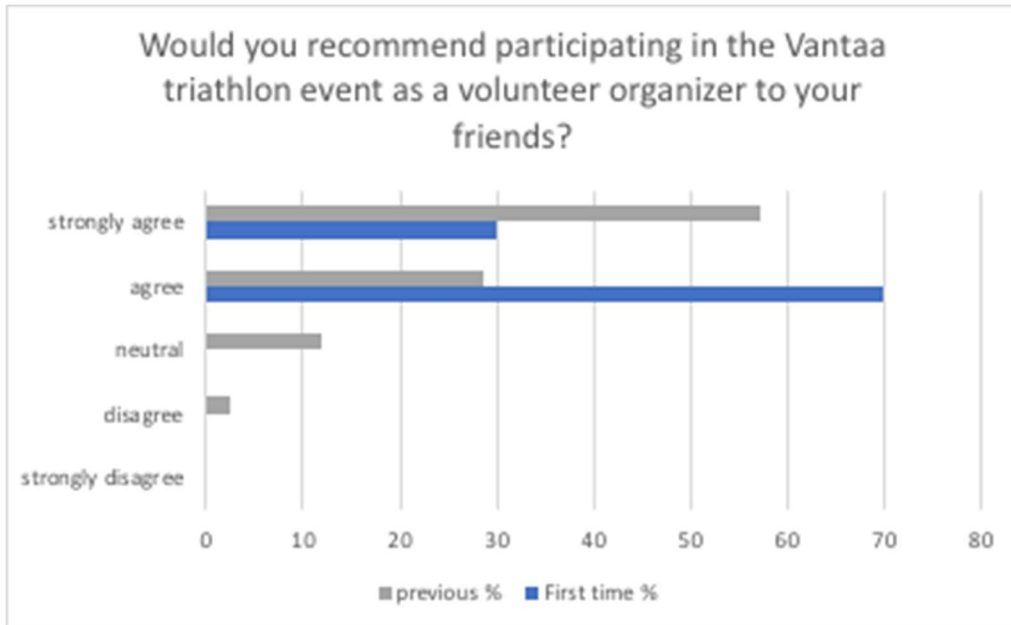


Figure 12. Recommendation of volunteering (n 52)

5 Conclusions

According to Cuskelly and Auld (2000), volunteers are widely in working life. This was also true in this study data; most of the volunteers were in working life. Personal sports participation and sports volunteering have a strong link, and sports club membership increases the chance of being asked to volunteer (Geoff et al., 2016). Burgham and Downward's (2005) study among swimming volunteers, the study shows a positive impact for volunteering with a previous swimming background. In this study, most of the volunteers did have a sports background. Triathletes in a triathlon club member were this study's most common volunteer type (52%). Much of the recruitment to Vantaa Triathlon sports event has a lot of sports club cooperation (P. Sjöholm, personal communication, May 19, 2022). Many of the volunteers (51%) volunteered because their sports club had asked them, and 22% of the volunteers said that was a part of the reason for volunteering. A significant difference in motivation between volunteers that also volunteer in other contexts was not found compared to the 40% that do not do other volunteering work. This study's data showed slightly more positive motivation factors from those who had previously volunteered in the event than the first-timers. In Rozmiarek et al. (2021) study, the most motivated volunteers were with previous experience. In Vantaa Triathlon sports event did have a considerable number of experienced volunteers. Many of them worked on multiple days with separate roles.

The VMS-ISE scale questions in this study; the scale includes 18 items, of which 14 answer with four as mean (1-5 Likert scale). Under community support on the scale, "I want to help the success of Vantaa Triathlon event" was the highest-rated motivating item in the entire study. It was also the most agreed argument among the volunteers. Geoff et al. (2016) also showed that community support was vital to volunteers. In Ma and Draper's (2017) study, community support is vital. The second biggest motivation factor in Kuivalainen's (2017) work was from the scale "I want to help make the event a success." Among Brazilian volunteers, motivation factors from the VMS-ISE scale collected data from many sports events that were most meaningful to volunteers; love of sport and community involvement (Bavaresco et al., 2022).

Angosto et al. (2021) found in 18 studies that only four were the most significant factor in interpersonal contacts and four in career orientation. In this study, the most popular interpersonal contacts items were “I want to interact with others” and “I want to meet people and be part of a group.” Renfree and West (2021) did a study among local park-run volunteers; they found a motivation difference between genders. In this study, women were slightly more motivated in most VMS-ISE scale answers.

Angosto et al. (2021) did a literature review of sports events volunteers motivations studies; they found that the expression of values was the most motivating aspect among the 18 studies they analyzed. Expression of values and “helping others is important to me” was essential to Vantaa Triathlon event’s volunteers (average 4,35). Helping others was shown to be important also in Geoff et al. (2016) study among regional sports event volunteers. In Mykletun and Himanen's (2016) research among volunteers in cycling events in Norway, altruistic motivation factors were most important. In this thesis study, altruistic motivations from modified VMS-ISE scale, account with average and SD, altruistic motivations were more important than egoistic motivation factors and with a lower standard deviation.

Love of sports item was the second most significant factor in Angosto et al. (2021) analysis of 18 studies among volunteers in sports events. In the study by Bavaresco et al. (2022), love of sports was the most motivating factor. In a regional sports event, the most motivating factor to volunteer is their passion and love for their sports (Geoff et al., 2016). Connection to sports was the second highest factor in Mykletun and Himanen paper (2016). Love et al. (2013) found that interest in sports was essential to volunteers. Inkiläinen’s (2019, p. 36) study among hockey event volunteers shows that a thing that stands out as a motivation factor is a passion for sports. Love of sports was found to be important in the study by Bang et al. (2009) and Ma and Draper (2017). Also, this study confirms that love of a volunteer’s sports or sports, in general, is an important motivational factor for sports event volunteers.

Most of the volunteers in this study were satisfied with communication (92%) and the number of volunteers at the event (83%). Arguments regarding satisfaction of volunteering work and the lead volunteer officers did get a good response. As shown in the research data only three first-time and six volunteers with previous experience participated in the volunteer meeting during the event week. Despite that, satisfaction with communication and orientation of volunteers was good among all the study respondents. The recommendation rate for Vantaa Triathlon event was excellent (4,4). The willingness to suggest volunteering to friends tells much about volunteers' satisfaction with the event (Smith & Lockstone, 2009, p. 158). In this study, 81% of the volunteers that responded to the web survey had volunteered at Vantaa Triathlon event before. Most of the volunteers will volunteer in the next events also. Only 6% of the volunteers in this study said they would not come again next year to volunteer; the reason why was not asked in the questionnaire.

A sporting event is an event whose primary reason is a race or sports action (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2009). Vantaa Triathlon sports event has a history of many years (TriForFun, 2022). This study's goal was to determine what motivates the event's volunteers. The study has an individual perspective on motivation among the event's volunteers. Volunteering at events requires different types of tasks (Stevens, 2008). In Vantaa Triathlon event, all the different tasks had experienced volunteers, and many of the volunteers had volunteered in previous years. Of 150 volunteers, replied voluntary 52 volunteers, which gives a 35% response rate. The research showed that the main motivational factors were supporting Vantaa Triathlon sports event, the value of helping others, and supporting the volunteers' sports club. Volunteers did also have a strong meaning of love of triathlon and sports in general. Also, other studies have shown that volunteers can have more than only one reason to volunteer (Monga, 2006). The least motivational factors were external rewards, discounts, and free food.

Most of Vantaa Triathlon event's volunteers did have sports backgrounds. This sports event has been able to build an event with a good recommendation rate among volunteers. The thesis's recommendations build an even stronger event and satisfaction among volunteers in future years. Sports events, clubs, and organizations can also benefit from this paper's recommendations, in addition to Vantaa Triathlon event and Triathlon Vantaa sports club. Volunteers feeling satisfied with their volunteering experience will most likely volunteer in future years (Angosto et al., 2021). Vantaa Triathlon event has managed to build an event with a great recommendation rate and satisfaction from volunteers of those many who will volunteer in the event yearly.

5.1 Discussion

Vantaa Triathlon event organization learns more about their volunteers' motivation and aspects that the organization can develop even further to ensure volunteers' satisfaction and future years recruiting of volunteers. This paper also brings information about volunteers' motivations in general. That information is essential for many types of sports organization work, especially for managers. Getting volunteers can become even more complicated because more and more parties compete for work and leisure time. Moreover, sports organizations must invent how to keep and recruit new volunteers for their activities.

Thesis section two is widely looking at previous research, books, and articles on volunteer motivation. Part three of the thesis introduces the quantitative approach, research questions, and questionnaire building. Part four presents the findings from the survey. Section five contains conclusions and comparisons to theory, previous research, and recommendations for future improvements.

Careful planning and testing of the questionnaire bring solid ground for research. Volunteers did have an opportunity to answer the web questionnaire in Finnish. The questionnaire used familiar language and two open questions for feedback from the volunteer experience located at the end of the questionnaire. The author used Webropol software cross-tabulations to analyze data and find significant meanings from the research data. Excel was used to assist with data visuals for this paper. The Finnish language questionnaire requires using English terms in the figures and tables, so all of those need to be in English. More complex data analysis is a good idea if more data should be available in future studies. The author used JAMK's instructions for reporting in this paper.

Implementation of this thesis was successful by co-working with Vantaa Triathlon sports event organizers and Triathlon Vantaa club manager. In this study, 1/3 of Vantaa Triathlon sports events volunteers did answer this study. This 35% response rate with 52 responses is suitable for this research. Reliability in this study was quite good with this data, and these results could be repeated. The relevant literature chapter supports the reliability of this paper. All the data was collected anonymously, and no personal data like name and address was collected at any point of the study. This study followed the ethical principles of JAMK, data stored in JAMK's data services. This research focus remained on the main research question, and the research succeeded in finding an answer to what motivates Vantaa Triathlon volunteers. The validity of the research is good with these assessments. Despite this thesis discretionary sampling, also other sports organizations, events, and clubs can benefit from recommendations made in part 5.2 and give them new ideas on how to improve their volunteer position in an organization. In future studies, it would be interesting to find out Nordic countries' volunteers' motivations and motivations between smaller sports events volunteers and sports club volunteers.

5.2 Recommendations

Here are ten proposals for improving Vantaa Triathlon sports event even more in the future. Based on the literature view of this paper and the research results of this thesis. Proposals can also be used in other sports organizations like sports clubs and events. This way, an organization can benefit from their knowledge of volunteer work and make sure that also, in the future, satisfied volunteers are working in the organization, and recruiting new volunteers is easy. Take account of these 10 points when working with volunteers.

One - Take care of volunteers. Offer them free food, coffee/tea, and something to drink. In Finland offer a least tap water opportunity and provide or remind to bring own water bottle. Many sports events are held in the summer months when it is hot. Vantaa Triathlon sports event provides free food to the event's volunteers. Recommendation: A gift water bottle could be a nice present for volunteers, also a note in the information letter could tell the location of the water tap in the event.

Two - Volunteers work without payment, so it is essential to reward them so they feel valued and there would not rise feelings of undervalued (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.4, 14). Recommendation: The organization's webpage could be written down that valuing volunteers is vital to them.

Three: Send enough clear information. In the Vantaa Triathlon sports event, the volunteers felt they had enough information. Recommendation: At Least one newsletter could be a delivery goal to volunteers between the yearly events.

Four: Make sure that there are enough experienced volunteers in every event location, if possible; this way, events run more smoothly, and it is easier for first-timers to ask for help. In the Vantaa Triathlon event, experienced volunteers worked in all the volunteer tasks and locations. Recommendation: In the information letter to volunteers, introduce who else will be on the spot.

Five: Try to plan and schedule the event and volunteers' tasks well, so there would be no extra stress for the volunteers (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000, p.14). Recommendation: In Vantaa Triathlon sports event, volunteers feel that there was a good number of volunteers, but some more development with the schedule can be done in the future.

Six - Volunteering possibilities showing on the webpage. Recommendation: The organization's webpage should say how to volunteer and contact. What would the organization offer to volunteers? A good idea would also be to have recommendations from the current volunteers.

Seven: Happy volunteers will more likely volunteer again. Recommendation: Collect feedback yearly from the volunteers.

Eight - Induction to volunteer tasks. Recommendation: The induction form could help to remember all the critical issues.

Nine: Ask volunteers to share their volunteering on their social media; social media is also helping in retention when an organization is sharing experiences and connecting volunteers (Ward, 2015). Recommendation: Create a hashtag for volunteers, show their work on the organization's social media accounts, and encourage volunteers to share their social media.

Ten - Make sure that volunteers are not overloaded, and for longer-term volunteers, make a job description (Auld & Cuskelly, 2000). Recommendation: Make a volunteer certificate; volunteers can benefit those in their careers or add those to their CVs or social media. Certificates can also be a way to thank volunteers (Coldblatt & Matheson, 2009).

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire for volunteers

Saate:

Tällä kyselyllä pyritään kehittämään Vantaa Triathlon tapahtumaa ja toimitsijoiden kokemusta siitä. Vastauksia käytetään osana Nuppu Hepo-ojan Master's Degree Programme in Sports Business Management (YAMK) opinnäytetyötä. Opinnäytetyö julkaistaan v. 2022 loppuun mennessä Theseus.fi sivustolla. Lisätietoja kyselylomakkeesta ja opinnäytetyöstä Nupulta AA5861@student.jamk.fi. Kysely on tehty Webropol-verkkoalustalle ja se muodostuu pääasiassa monivalintakysymyksistä. Kyselyyn vastaamiseen kuluu aikaa noin 5-10 minuuttia. Kysely on anonyymi, emmekä kerää henkilötietojanne. Kysely sulkeutuu sunnuntaina 26.6.2022 kello 23.59.

Vastaajan perustiedot

1. Sukupuoli 1 Nainen 0 mies

2. Ikä alle 18 18-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 yli 70

3. Ammattiasema

Töissä Opiskelija Kotiäiti/-isä Eläkkeellä Työtön Muu

4. Asuinkunta

Vantaa, Espoo, Helsinki, Uudenmaan muut kunnat (esim. Kerava, Järvenpää) tai Asun Uudenmaan ulkopuolella

5. Oma urheilutausta

(voit valita tarvittaessa monta vastausvaihtoehtoa)

Harrastan triathlonia urheiluseurassa

Harrastan triathlonia, mutta en urheiluseurassa

Lapseni harrastaa triathlonia

Harrastan muuta urheilua urheiluseurassa

Harrastan muuta urheilua, mutta en urheiluseurassa

Ei liikuntaharrastusta

6. Tulin toimitsijaksi, koska omasta urheiluseurastani pyydettiin

Kyllä osasy ei

7. Kilpailuviikonlopun rooli

(voit valita tarvittaessa monta vastausvaihtoehtoa)

Toimitsija / Osallistun itse kisaan tänä viikonloppuna / Olen osallistujan vanhempi / Olen osallistujan iso-
vanhempi/ Olen osallistujan ystävä / Olen triathlon valmentaja / muu?

8. Olen toiminut toimitsijana myös aiemmin Vantaa Triathlon kilpailussa

Tämä on ensimmäinen kerta/ Kyllä, 2-5 kertaa/ Kyllä, 6-11 kertaa

9. Toimin vapaaehtoisena myös muutoin (Voit valita tarvittaessa kyllä vaihtoehdoista useamman vastaus-
vaihtoehdon) En / Toimin triathlonseurassa vapaaehtoisena / Toimin muun urheilun parissa vapaaehtoi-
sena / Toimin vapaaehtoisena muussa toiminnassa (ei urheilu)

10. Työskentelin Vantaa Triathlonissa seuraavina ajankohtina (voit valita useamman vastausvaihtoehdon)

Valmisteluissa mukana ennen perjantaita

Perjantaina 10.6.2022 kisapaikan rakennus

La 11.6.2022

Su 12.6.2022 Tapahtuman purkaminen

11. Osallistuitko toimitsijoiden tutustumistilaisuuteen tapahtumaviikolla?

Ei

Kyllä

12. Oliko sinulla mahdollisuus itse valita toimitsijatehtävä? Ei kyllä osittain

13. Toimitsijatehtäväni (voit valita tarvittaessa monta vastausvaihtoehtoa)

Ensiapu Huolto (juoma + energia)

Juoksu Kilpailualue valvonta

Kisakanslia Kisatori Kuulutus

Maalialue Moottoripyörävalvonta

Narikka

Palkinnot

Parkkipaikka

Pintasukeltaja

Pyörä

Pyörän tarkastus ennen kisaa

Ruokailu

Tapahtuman purku

Tapahtuman rakentaminen

Uinti, rannassa

Uinti, vesipelastus

Vaihtopaikka

Yövalvonta

14. Oliko alueellasi mielestäsi toimitsijoita sopiva määrä?

Sopivasti Liian vähän Liian paljon En osaa sanoa

15. Sain toimitsijoille suunnattua etukäteisviestintää

Sopivasti Liian vähän Liian paljon En osaa sanoa

16. Vastaisitko seuraaviin väittämiin asteikolla 1–5 (1 eri mieltä - 5 vahvasti samaa mieltä)

- Kuinka tyytyväinen olit annettuun toimitsijatehtävään?
- Sain tarpeeksi perehdytystä tehtävääni?
- Olin tyytyväinen alueeni vastuutoimitsijaan?

17. Vastaisitko oheisiin väittämiin koskien motivaatiosi osallistua vapaaehtoisena Triathlon Vantaa tapahtumaan asteikolla 1–5 (1 eri mieltä - 5 vahvasti samaa mieltä) [OBJ:OBJ]

1. Haluan tehdä jotain arvokasta
2. Minulle on tärkeää auttaa muita
3. Haluan auttaa Vantaa Triathlon tapahtuman onnistumisessa
4. Haluan tukea oman urheiluseurani toimintaa osallistumalla toimitsija työhön
5. Haluan tukea alueen tapahtumia ja näin luoda vetovoimaa sekä tuloja alueelle
6. Koen velvollisuudekseni auttaa
7. Haluan olla vuorovaikutuksessa muiden kanssa
8. Haluan tavata ihmisiä ja olla osa porukkaa
9. Voin luoda uusia kontakteja, jotka voivat auttaa tavoitteisiini pääsemistä
10. Voin oppia tapahtumasta ja/tai toimitsijatehtävästäni uutta
11. Mielekkäät toimitsijatehtävät motivoivat minua
12. Vapaaehtoistyö saa tuntemaan itseni hyödylliseksi
13. Voin tiedostaa ja löytyy omia vahvuuksiani
14. Haluan saada ilmaista ruokaa
15. Haluan saada yhteistyökumppaneilta alennuksia
16. Haluan tukea triathlonia lajina
17. Haluan tukea urheilua yleisesti
18. Perheenjäsen/kaveri harrastaa triathlonia ja haluan tukea oman tutun urheilijan tekemistä

18. Osallistun todennäköisesti tapahtumaan toimitsijana myös ensi vuonna? Kyllä Ehkä En

19. Suositteletko Vantaa triathlon tapahtumaan osallistumista vapaaehtoisena toimitsijana ystäville? 1–5 (1 eri mieltä - 5 vahvasti samaa mieltä)

20. Miten voisimme parantaa toimitsija kokemustasi? Voit halutessasi mainita 1–3. asiaa, joita kehittää.

21. Tai muita kehittämisideoita Vantaa Triathlon tapahtumaan?