

ISSN: 2392-5442 ESSN : 2602-540X		<i>Sport system journal</i>
V/11 N/01 Year/2024		<i>International scientific journal published by: Ziane Achour –Djelfa- Algeria</i>
P 214 - 225		<i>Received:30-01-2024 Accepted:14-02-2024</i>

Sport Event Volunteer Motivation - Case of the 15th Arab sports games 2023 in Algeria -

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Abstract:

The success of the 15th Arab Sports Games 2023 (ASG2023) held by Algeria in 2023 is due to the efforts of participating athletes and the huge behind-the-scenes contribution of 790 volunteers. This study focuses on the variables that affect the deployment of volunteers. The Sport Event Volunteer Motivation Scale (SEVMS) four categories served as the basis for an exploratory factor analysis (EFA); purposeful, solidarity, external tradition, and commitment.

The 112 responses to the online questionnaire revealed that the strongest motivation for Arab Sports Games 2023 volunteers was solidarity (personal growth), followed by purposeful reasons (doing something meaningful), then commitment, with external traditions dominating the least positive factor.

Keywords: Sports events; Sports volunteers; Arab Sports Games 2023; Volunteer motivation; SEVMS.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Volunteers have become a valuable human resource group in all walks of life, especially at sporting events, and the importance of volunteers has been widely recognized in the last decade because the sports industry relies heavily on volunteers. Sports volunteers are often essential for the creation and provision of services. Volunteers are also an essential element in the provision of sports services and an important element in the management of sports events, because they provide sports managers with the ability to provide, support and even expand sports services, quantity, quality and diversity of sports organizations. In many cases, sports events have very few employees, so volunteers are hired to help manage the event and reimburse the costs of the event. Volunteers make up a large percentage of the event staff and remain vital to the continuity of the sports system, without which many community and sports organizations would struggle to survive.

Many organizations rely on volunteers to handle their sporting, cultural and recreational events, with national sports organizations as well as many local authority sports departments utilizing volunteer services during events.

Volunteering is an important part of the overall success of many large-scale events, volunteers are also recruited by the organizing committee to provide services to athletes and spectators, to work in various functional areas of sports to manage marketing, reception, media, medical services, technology, environment, ceremonies, logistics, administrative and security services.

Volunteers are a very diverse group, often representing different cultures, races, ages, Professional background, personal characteristics and previous volunteer experience. These different backgrounds and characteristics influence volunteers' motivations, needs, desires, and behaviors, as volunteers form an important part of the overall success of many campaigns, it is clear that if the organizers understand the motivation of volunteers they can respond more effectively to the needs of management; therefore, understanding what motivates people to volunteer is a key issue that needs to be addressed to improve the success of sports events and successful recruitment of volunteers may be necessary and important to preserve the future, the volunteer base at this event has a positive impact. Volunteering at sports events also provides a short opportunity to immerse deeply in the subculture of the sports industry; it gives volunteers the

possibility to feel part of a team or activity for a short period of time. Volunteers in the sports industry spend their time because they are connected to sports and have distinctive motivations. In addition to the sense of community or team that all event staff feels, the interactions between volunteers create a sense of camaraderie, to improve volunteer management, event planners must have a thorough understanding of the reasons behind volunteers' actions.

With the immense growth of the sporting events volunteering movement, several questions arise. However, the most important question to be fully analyzed is **why do individuals volunteer for sport? And what motivates volunteers to devote themselves to sporting events like the 2023 Arab Games?**

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Volunteering

Research on voluntarism, which is defined as a continuous, non-profit endeavor to enhance the welfare of others, is crucial. Both volunteers and society as a whole gain much from the appointment of volunteers. Volunteering is an altruistic endeavor that may be done in a variety of settings and also gives people a sense of empowerment. Among the reasons volunteers give their time to events are pride or prestige, being part of an event and being involved in the action, socializing with people who share a common interest, meeting and learning about other people as well as expression of values and personal development. (Hallmann & Zehrer, 2017, p. 03)

Volunteer motivation and satisfaction have been a focus of research aimed at developing an understanding of factors influencing volunteers' performance and retention. Much of this research describes individual motives or general categories of motives for volunteering. For example, (Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998) identified four categories of motives: purposeful, solidarity, external traditions and commitments, the connection with the event as a motive for volunteering was identified in Farrell and others studies, and has been supported by several other studies of large multisport event volunteers. (Allen & Shaw, 2009, p. 80)

Volunteering is essentially an exchange relationship in which individuals contribute their time, skills, and energy to help carry out an activity and receive a variety of benefits and costs in return. Therefore, it can be expected that as long as volunteers have experienced positive outcomes from their past actions, they will be more likely to volunteer at major sporting events in the future; similarly, if they



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have experienced negative outcomes, they will be less likely to do so again volunteer service. (Doherty, 2009, p. 191)

2.2 Motivation

Motivation and motives are both used to define the factors that help a person decide whether they want to do something or participate in something. Motivation can be defined as those internal factors that affect our behavior, how we decide to act in a certain way, and that will affect our future behavior based on how satisfied we are. (Inkiläinen, 2019)

Many studies have linked motivation to other factors and found that motivation is a determinant of engagement or satisfaction. Segmenting volunteering is important because it provides a better understanding of the multiple factors that influence volunteering at sporting events.

Motivation is a key concept in understanding a person's decision to volunteer. Therefore, a better understanding of volunteers' motivations and characteristics will help in making better decisions. Two theoretical categories can be used to categorize the variables that drive someone to volunteer and continue their involvement in an organization: self-centered motives and rewards focused on others, or what they would accomplish for others. (Angosto, Díaz-Suárez, & López-Gullón, 2023, p. 155)

Internalized, intrinsic drive is linked to one's own beliefs, ideals, and passions. Conversely, extrinsic motivation focuses on benefits, recognition, and rewards that originate from outside sources. (Heini & Jonna, 2019)

Similar to volunteers at ordinary festivals and events, research indicates that volunteers typically match the age and gender distribution of athletes participating in those sports; however, volunteer profiles tend to be wider during larger and more distinctive events. This means that increased regularity of events can be linked to the development of a pool of volunteers who develop core competencies in running events, thus ensuring their sustainability. (Downward & Ralston, 2006, p. 336)

2.3 Volunteer Motivation

The area of volunteer motivation is a complex and multifaceted one and despite a substantial volume of material there is still little agreement among researchers about volunteer motives. (Parker, 1997) believes that there are four

essential reasons for volunteering: market, charity, leisure and altruism. Whereas (Clary, Snyder, & Stukas, 1996) six general motivational functions—social, value, career, comprehension, protective, and enhanced—have been proposed. (Auld, 2004, p. 09)

In order for nonprofit organizations to provide services, volunteerism is necessary. Volunteers' helpful behaviors are explained by dimensional models. First, two-dimensional models explain volunteer motivation in terms of either altruistic (sincere concern for others) or egoistic (driven to obtain benefits or to satisfy societal demands) motivations. Second, three-dimensional models define motivations as altruistic, material, and social. (Parris & Peachey, 2012, p. 05)

Serious leisure, casual leisure, and project-based leisure are the three categories into which Stebbins divided volunteer activity. It calls for some preparation, talent, and expertise. Since this study examines the motivation of sport event volunteers, Stebbins' project-related motivations are related to factors such as identification with an interest in the activity, desired skills, required experience, complexity and creativity of volunteering, and shorter time commitment compared to other types of volunteering. (Jarvis & Blank, 2011, pp. 131-132)

The psychological propensity or inner desire to encourage or maintain opportunities, dedication, and involvement in volunteer work is known as volunteers' motivation. In the context of sporting events, a variety of characteristics, including egoistic, protective, solidarity, patriotism, interpersonal interactions, social, personal growth, and extrinsic benefits, have been found to be associated to volunteers' motivations. (Ye, Cheng, Chen, & Li, 2022, p. 02)

Despite the fact that people may join comparable volunteer movements, their objectives may differ greatly. Even though these points of view imply that the subject is complicated, further research into volunteer behavior ought to be done. (Auld, 2004, p. 10)

3. METHODS

The methodology section explains the processes that were chosen for the study, how the data were processed, and how the investigation was carried out.

1- The event; 2- Participants; 3- Instruments; and 4- Data collection/analysis are all included in this section.

3.1 Event

From July 5–15, 2023, Algeria hosted the 15th Pan Arab Games for the first

time, after a 19-year break since the 10th session in 2004. The Arab Games, sometimes referred to as the Pan-Arab Games, are a regional multisport competition amongst Arab nations. 22 specializations in individual and community sports will be on display at the event; including 3 specializations in disability sports. A total of 21 countries participated in the games, The competitions takes place in 5 Algerian cities, 12 of which in Algiers (Badminton, Basketball 3x3, Boxing, Fencing, Weight-lifting, Judo, Karate, Wrestling, Sail, Volleyball, Chair basketball 3x3, Goal-ball), six in the state of Oran (athletics, Athletics for people with disabilities, Gymnastics, Iron-ball, Handball, Swimming), two in Tipaza (Bikes, Table Tennis), and two in Constantine (Chess, Football), while some football matches will be held in the state of Annaba.

The event's organizers make sure all requirements are satisfied in order to ensure a seamless operation and the success of the competition, which is expected to draw over 2198 athletes at once.

3.2 Participants

Guests in Algeria will find numerous volunteers in various areas throughout these games. The total number of selected volunteers is 790, distributed as follows among the five hosting cities:

- Algiers: 411 volunteers;
- Annaba: 103 volunteers;
- Tipaza: 49 volunteers;
- Constantine: 27 volunteers;
- Oran: 200 volunteers.

Table 01. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

<i>Socio-Demographic Characteristics</i>	Volunteers (N = 112)	
	n	(%)
<i>Gender:</i>		
<i>Male</i>	72	(64.3)
<i>Female</i>	40	(35.7)
<i>Age (Years):</i>		
<i>18-23</i>	42	(37.5)
<i>24-30</i>	51	(45.5)

31-39	12	(10.7)
Over 40	7	(6.3)
Marital Status:		
Single	71	(63.4)
Married	38	(33.9)
Divorced and Widowed	3	(2.7)
Status of Education:		
University Level	90	(80.4)
High School Level	17	(15.2)
Less than High School Level	5	(4.4)
Professional Status:		
Student	51	(45.5)
Employee	47	(42)
Unemployed	11	(9.8)
Retired	3	(2.7)
Experience in sport volunteering:		
Never	24	(21.4)
Once	34	(30.4)
2-3 times	31	(27.7)
More than 4 times	23	(20.5)

Source: Respondents of the study

The volunteers that took part in the 2023 Arab Sports Games in Algiers made up the study's target population. 112 people were chosen at random as a convenience sample from among the volunteers who offered their services to the Arab sports games in 2023. From the 112 volunteers who completed and returned the questionnaires, 72 (64.3%) were men and 40 (35.7%) were women. Their age was between 18 - 23 years (37.5%), age of 24 – 30 was (45.5%), age of 31 – 39 was (10.7%), and the age over 40 was (6.3%).

Of the total respondents, the majority (80.4%) had university level, (15.2%) had high school level, while (4.4%) of the respondents held other educational level. Also the majority of the respondents (63.4%) were single, (33.9%) were married, and (2.7%) were divorced and widowed.

Regarding marital status, nearly half of the volunteers (45.5%) were students, (42%) were workers, (9.8%) were jobless, and (2.7%) were retirees.



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Furthermore, 21.4% of them had never volunteered at an athletic event, and (30.4%) they were the only ones who volunteered once, followed by those who volunteered two to three times (27.7%) and those who volunteered more than four times (20.5%).

All of the volunteers were informed about the purpose of the study, and those who voluntarily participated in the research by completing the questionnaire comprised the final sample.

3.3 Instruments

The tool comprised 33 questions divided into two sections: volunteer motivation and demographics. In order to better understand the demographic profile of the population, a total of six demographic questions were included. These questions included age, gender, status of education, marital status, professional status, and volunteer experience from prior sporting events.

The Special Event Volunteer Motivation Scales (SEVMS) developed by (Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998) served as the model for the survey items pertaining to volunteer engagement in ASG 2023. In that sense, it was the most complete scale.

To estimate the effectiveness of SEVMS, (Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998) proposed that it should be used to scale volunteer provocations at different sports and special recreational events. Therefore, implementing SEVMS for volunteers at the Arab Sports Games 2023 would help to further elucidate the evaluations of volunteer provocation propositions and to solidify the understanding of its four components within the theoretical framework of this construct. (Lim & Ibrahim, 2020, p. 82)

The Sports Event Volunteer Motivations Scale (SEVMS) was developed after research into event management and human services literature. The 27-item SEVMS was among the first tools used to measure event volunteers and could be easily customized for use in a variety of sporting activities. The following four elements make up SEVMS:

- Factor 1 listed solidarity motivation, which was measured using a (6-items scale).
- Factor 2 in questionnaire listed purposeful motivation comprising of a (10-items scale).
- Factor 3 in questionnaire listed external traditions, with (6-items scale).

- The questionnaire identified Factor 4 as Commitment and included (5-items).

On a unidirectional 5-point Likert-type scale, the 27 items that addressed motivation were scored (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

"My goal is to make a contribution to the event's success" (purposeful); "I would like to build relationships with other people" (solidarity); "I have more free time than I used to have" (external traditions); and "My skills were needed" (commitment) are examples of items for each component utilized in this study.

3.4 Data collection/analysis

Version 22 of SPSS was used to code and analyze the event data that was gathered. First, the maximum likelihood approach with varimax rotation was applied to an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) in order to confirm the latent factors of the collection of items. For communities, a cut-off point of 0.3 was used.

Using EFA, it was possible to determine how many idle constructs, in terms of motivation, underlay the set of things and provide a way to account for item variance. EFA will probably look at procedures for figuring out how many factors are appropriate and how the data's factor loadings are arranged. When the main goal is to find idle constructs and there isn't much empirical evidence or prior model specification to support strong hypotheses about the number of common variables that exist, EFA is used.

4. DISCUSSION

Table 02. Participants

Motivation Factors	Mean	Std. Dev
Solidarity:		
I want to interact with others	4.330	.8317
My goal is to obtain some practical work experience	4.438	.9565
My goal is to widen my horizons	4.330	.9808
I would like to build relationships with other people	4.339	.8756
I would like to collaborate with diverse people	4.295	.8662
I could get some educational experiences	4.286	.9341
purposeful:		
Volunteering creates a better society	4.205	.9118

I want to accomplish something meaningful	4.170	.9289
I want to give something back to community	3.866	1.1028
I want help to make the event successfull	4.402	.7993
I want to experience a sense of community	4.143	.9942
I want to help out in any capacity	4.036	1.1144
Without my voluntary contribution, this task would not be completed by anyone	3.446	1.3072
Being a volunteer at the Arab Sports Games improves my self-esteem	4.027	1.0523
I want to change up the activities that I usually do	4.348	.8772
This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity	3.893	1.2900
External traditions:		
I have more free time I used to have	3.688	1.2594
A relative or a friend is involved in Arab Games	3.616	1.4658
I want to continue a family tradition of volunteering	3.054	1.4132
My friends/family were also volunteering	3.214	1.3783
There is nothing else I have to do with my free time	3.491	1.3820
I would like to get a chance to interact with the campers and see the events	4.214	1.1104
Commitment:		
Being a volunteer with this Arab sports games is considered prestigious	3.857	1.2510
Most people in my community volunteer	3.170	1.3549
I am expected to volunteer	4.054	1.1137
My expertise and skills are required	3.982	1.0568
I have previously worked doing similar things	3.848	1.1795

Source: SPSS V22 Outputs

The motivation scores for the 27 SEVMS items are displayed in Table 02 based on the factors. With a mean score of 4.438, it was discovered that the volunteer's primary incentive was "My goal is to obtain some practical work experience", "I want to help make the event successful" came in second with a mean score of 4.402. With a mean score of 3.054, "I want to continue a family tradition of volunteering" was deemed the least significant.

4.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis on Solidarity

Table 03. Solidarity analysis

<i>Motivation Factors</i>	Loading
<i>I want to interact with others</i>	.672
<i>My goal is to obtain some practical work experience</i>	.560
<i>My goal is to widen my horizons</i>	.534
<i>I would like to build relationships with other people</i>	.615
<i>I would like to collaborate with diverse people</i>	.454
<i>I could get some educational experiences</i>	.401
<i>Eigenvalues</i>	3.236
<i>Total variance explained</i>	53.937
<i>KMO</i>	.850
<i>Bartlett's test of Sphericity</i>	212.241

N=112; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

The six items that were utilized to gauge the solidarity factors for the Arab Sports Games in 2023 were subjected to the initial analysis. The factors loading for the six items range from 0.401 to 0.672, and Table 03 shows that a single factor solution with six items produced eigenvalues of 3.236, explaining 53.937% of the variance in the data.

The item's KMO measure of sample adequacy value was 0.850, indicating a possible correlation between the items and the creation of a common factor. It was determined that Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (chi-square = 212.241, p<.001). Demonstrating the importance of the correlation matrix, proving that the factor analysis carried out was suitable. Due to lower factor loadings (<.50), two items were deleted: S4 (I would like to collaborate with diverse people) and S5 (I could get some educational experiences).

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis on Purposeful

Table 04. Purposeful analysis

<i>Motivation Factors</i>	Loading
<i>Volunteering creates a better society</i>	.385
<i>I want to accomplish something meaningful</i>	.485



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<i>My goal is to give something to the community</i>	.568
<i>My goal is to make a contribution to the event's success</i>	.196
<i>I want to experience a sense of community</i>	.525
<i>I want to help out in any capacity</i>	.588
<i>Without my voluntary contribution, this task would not be completed by anyone</i>	.452
<i>Being a volunteer at the Arab Sports Games improves my self-esteem</i>	.581
<i>I want to change up the activities that I usually do</i>	.654
<i>This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity</i>	.608
<i>Eigenvalues</i>	5.043
<i>Total variance explained</i>	50.433
<i>KMO</i>	.812
<i>Bartlett's test of Sphericity</i>	292.147

N=112; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Ten items that were used to gauge the purposeful component of the motivation factor for the 2023 Arab Sports Games were the subject of the second analysis. A two-dimensional extract was obtained. Stated differently, the study produced a two-factor solution with an eigenvalue of 5.043 that explained 50.43% of the overall data variance and factors loading for 10 items with values ranging from 0.196 to 0.654.

The KMO measure of sampling adequacy value for the item is presented in Table 04's result summary as 0.812, suggesting that the items are related to one another and form a common factor. It was determined that Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (chi-square = 292.147, p<.001). Demonstrating the correlation matrix's importance. As a result, the factor analysis carried out was suitable. Four items were removed from consideration because of lower factor loadings (<.50). These included P1, "Volunteering creates a better society," P2, "I want to accomplish something meaningful," P4, "My goal is to make a contribution to the event's success," and P7, "Without my voluntary contribution, this task would not be completed by anyone."

4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis on External Tradition

Table 05. External Tradition analysis

<i>Motivation Factors</i>	<i>Loading</i>
<i>I have more free time I used to have</i>	.727
<i>A relative or a friend is involved in Arab Games</i>	.563

<i>I want to continue a family tradition of volunteering</i>	.689
<i>My friends/family were also volunteering</i>	.808
<i>There is nothing else I have to do with my free time</i>	.780
<i>I would like to get a chance to interact with the campers and see the events</i>	.385
<i>Eigenvalues</i>	3.953
<i>Total variance explained</i>	65.885
<i>KMO</i>	.649
<i>Bartlett's test of Sphericity</i>	206.555

N=112; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

The six items used to measure the external tradition motivation components also underwent factor analysis, in a manner similar to that of the section before it. With an eigenvalue of 3.953, the two factor solution that emerged from the study explained 65.885% of the variation in the data (Table 05). The factors loading for the seven items varied from 0.385 to 0.808.

The KMO measure of sample adequacy value for the item was 0.649, as shown in Table 05, suggesting that the items are connected to one another and form a common factor. It was determined that Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (chi-square = 206.555, p<.001). Demonstrating the importance of the correlation matrix and the suitability of the factor analysis that was conducted. Because of the lower factor loadings (<.50), one item (E6: "I I would like to get a chance to interact with the campers and see the events") was eliminated.

4.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis on Commitment

Table 06. Commitment analysis

Motivation Factors	Loading
<i>Being a volunteer with this Arab Sports Games is considered prestigious</i>	.730
<i>Most people in my community volunteer</i>	.545
<i>I am expected to volunteer</i>	.677
<i>My expertise and skills are required</i>	.606
<i>I have previously worked doing similar things</i>	.731
<i>Eigenvalues</i>	3.288
<i>Total variance explained</i>	65.796
<i>KMO</i>	.622
<i>Bartlett's test of Sphericity</i>	94.870

N=112; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001



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The five factors that were used to gauge the level of commitment for the 2023 Arab Sports Games were subjected to the most recent study. The results are summarized in Table 6. The factors loading for the five items varied from 0.545 to 0.731, and the two factors solution consisting of five items gave eigenvalues of 3.288, explaining of 65.796% of variance in the data.

The item's KMO measure of sampling adequacy value was .622, demonstrating the interdependence of the items and their creation of a common factor. The results of Bartlett's test for sphericity showed substantial results (chi-square = 94.870, $p < .001$). Demonstrating the importance of the correlation matrix and the suitability of the factor analysis that was conducted.

5. CONCLUSION

This study found that the four SEVMS components offer significant new insights into the motivational elements of volunteers in 2023 Arab sporting events. Simultaneously, specific elements like "My objective is to gain some hands-on work experience" and "My objective is to contribute to the event's triumph" were recognized as reasons for volunteering by Arab sports games 2023. For volunteers, the objective component serves as their main source of motivation. In order to ascertain whether Algerians' reasons for volunteering in athletic events have evolved recently, more research is required.

The above results support the SEVMS as a tool to influence the motivation of volunteers at sporting events and can be further developed to gain insight into the differences between long-term and temporary volunteers. Furthermore, communication strategies can be developed to promote volunteer work in Algeria, as it can be assumed that volunteers in Algeria are mainly composed of students and young people. A deeper understanding of the incentives for attracting and managing potential volunteers in this segment would greatly assist volunteer management at major sporting events.

There is no denying that volunteers provide tremendous social and financial support. However, defining and measuring volunteering across cultures and regions remains challenging. Expanding volunteer assessment research using tools such as SEVMS can address this gap and provide insights into what motivates and engages volunteers. It is hoped that empirical data from ongoing research will help develop effective and sustainable volunteer recruitment and retention

programs and shed light on changing trends.

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