

Big-Five Personality Traits Predicts Sport Volunteer Satisfaction

¹N. Jabari, ²S. Boroujerdi, ²S. Ghaeini, ³S. Naghshbandi and ¹G. Karimi

¹Department of Humanities, Islamic Azad University, Salmas Branch, Salmas, Iran

²Department of Physical Education, University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran

³Department of Physical Education, Science and Research Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

Abstract: The Personality traits and satisfaction are emphasized in the retention of the volunteer in non-profit organizations. The purpose of present study was to predict satisfaction by the big five personality traits of student sport Olympiad volunteers in Iran. Population consisted of all volunteers participating in male and female sport student Olympiad in summer 2010 and 131 volunteers were selected as sample by convenience sampling. Results showed that subscales agreeableness and conscientiousness predicted satisfaction significantly. It is suggested that altruistic motivations and philanthropic feeling (related to conscientiousness and agreeableness) are key characteristics of the volunteering.

Key words: Sport volunteer • Personality traits • Agreeableness • Conscientiousness • Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

20th century witnessed the gradual professionalization of the volunteering sector and several research considered volunteerism [1-9]. Symbolically, United Nations nominated 2001 as international year of volunteering [10]. The importance of volunteering is amazing so that after one decade, 2011 was entitled as “European year of voluntary activities promoting active citizenship” in Europe [11].

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2002) defines sport volunteer as a role to support, coordinate and implement organized physical activity and sport [12]. Sport volunteer (formal or informal volunteer) helps others while receiving no payment except the expenses. But, it does not contain journey because considerable additional time is passed then [13].

While volunteerism is important in the sporting contexts [14-16], the role of volunteers is particularly important in sport student Olympiads in Iran. Sport student Olympiads has been planned for the male and female students hosted by volunteered state universities once every two years in summer since 1993 [17]. The use of volunteers is growing. They assist athletes, visitors and spectators in line with organizers' goals.

Volunteers have the personality differences based on capability, strength and expectation [6]. They are players whom should be considered suitable role to play well. Volunteer satisfaction [2, 4, 9] and psychological moods [18] are considered as key factors to retain volunteers in playing role.

Volunteer satisfaction is the emotional-mental mood resulting from one or some goals of togetherness, philanthropic and individual advancement [19]. Elstad (1997) found that individual communication development, sharing in an event and functional competence cause volunteer satisfaction [4]. Johnston, *et al.* (2000) understood that volunteer satisfaction can be provided by event organizers with respect to the individual attempts. Satisfaction is not only to pay attention to the expectation but also it depends on facility and organization of event [20]. Reeser *et al.* (2005) said that manager's function feedback and conception of individual attempts influence volunteer satisfaction [21]. Other dimensions of volunteer satisfaction have been detected too. They are organization [8], matching job setting and psychological function [22], comparing awards and experiences with expectations of volunteer [23] and practical management [24].

Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991) found that the satisfied volunteers continue volunteering [2]. In contrast, Pearce (1993) understood that the unsatisfied volunteers leave the organization easily [6]. It seems logical that organizers try till satisfied volunteers do not leave the organization soon [5]. Attitude towards volunteering, satisfaction, non-satisfaction and volunteer's expectation (psychological contract) influence the retention of volunteer [25].

Big five personality is the current category in organizational behavior. There is relationship between big five personality and occupational function and the traits of big five personality predict occupational function [26]. Costa and McCrae (1985) found through factor analysis that there is difference among individuals based on five major dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional robustness, openness to experience). These traits are comprehensive. Following definitions are presented briefly. Extraversion means positivism, vigor, intimateness and courageousness. Agreeableness is compassion, mercy, sympathy, generosity, philanthropy and trust. Conscientiousness includes the characteristics of order, efficient, self-organized, progress oriented, logic and calm. Emotional robustness expresses anxiety, tension, excision, depression, pity and enmity. Finally, openness to experience maintains curiosity, love of art, artistry, flexibility and wisdom [27].

Big five personality has been focused in the organizational studies in recent years [28]. It is believed that big five personality predicts occupational behaviors in several time, environments and cultures [29] and is related to significant life consequences [30]. For example, conscientiousness leads to fine occupational function. Agreeableness motivates individuals to help others. Extraversion predicts leadership. Emotional robustness is related to depression. Agreeableness and openness to experience are associated with job instability [31].

Bameni Moghadam (2011) explored the relationship of personality's models and leisure satisfaction. Extraversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness had significantly positively related to leisure satisfaction. Neuroticism had significantly negatively related to leisure satisfaction [32]. Auld (2004) examined the behavioral characteristics of student volunteers. The most reasons to start and end volunteering are due to personality traits which organization cannot control. Manager can control quietness partially by training style, management, occupational nature, supervising quality and final

resultant acquired skills [33]. Costa, *et al.* (2006) found that training affects event volunteer satisfaction. Training is a chance to develop community, commitment and satisfaction [34]. United States Department of Labor (2007) declared that satisfaction motivates volunteers to retain in organization moreover satisfaction attracts new volunteers [35]. Chacon, *et al.* (2007) understood that opinions of old volunteers about satisfaction influence new volunteers. Motivation and satisfaction predict volunteer's service duration prior than role identity but in longer service duration, commitment is main factor [36]. Rose and Vitartas (2007) investigated the factors affecting volunteering behavior. Procedural justice and social interaction affect volunteer satisfaction [37]. Salas (2008) surveyed volunteer functions, satisfaction, commitment and intention to leave government. Motivation influences commitment, satisfaction and intention to leave organization [38]. McLennan, Birch, Cowlshaw and Hayes (2008) studied leadership and satisfaction with the volunteer role. Weak leadership is the main reason of non-satisfaction [39]. Millette and Gagne (2008) examined the impact of job characteristics on volunteer engagement. The motivation is intermediate factor of characteristics and satisfaction [40].

Moharramzadeh, *et al.* (2009) compared the satisfaction between the male volunteers and females and the female volunteers were more satisfied [41]. However, Kulik (2007) found that the male volunteers were more satisfied [42]. Boezeman and Ellemers (2009) examined intrinsic need satisfaction and the job attitudes of the volunteers versus employees working in a charitable volunteer organization. The satisfaction of relatedness needs was fundamental to the job satisfaction among the volunteers [43]. Pauline (2010) found the importance of the role that satisfaction plays in behavioral intentions of volunteers to remain [44]. Love, *et al.* (2011) explored the relationship between volunteer motivation and both satisfaction and behavioral intent, as well as the effect of satisfaction on behavioral intent at a PGA tour event [45].

Considering the role of personality traits in volunteer satisfaction, we studied whether female volunteers' satisfaction was different from males. Was there relationship between personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional robustness, openness to experience) and volunteer satisfaction? Furthermore, did personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional robustness, openness to experience) predict volunteer satisfaction?

Methodology: The research was correlative. Data collection was done through field study. Population consisted of all the volunteers participating in Iranian male and female sport student Olympiads in summer 2010. The male and female sport student Olympiads were held separately in two provinces of Mazandaran (male competitions) and Semnan (female competitions). It was a floating population. It means that volunteers could join or quit volunteering during the Olympiad and the number of them was not fixed. There were 131 volunteers (female=72, male=59) as sample selected by convenience sampling. Big-Five Inventory (BFI) [46] and Volunteer Satisfaction Questionnaire derived from VFI [1] were used in order to collect data. The BFI contains five subscales: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional robustness and openness to experience. The inventory is a five-point scale ranging from “*totally agree*” to “*totally disagree*”. The BFI is made of 44 items and certain items in the inventory are reverse scored. The Volunteer Satisfaction Questionnaire is measured as one subscale of VFI subscales. The questionnaire includes 5 items. Participants responded five-point scale ranging from 1= *strongly disagree* to 5= *strongly agree*. Validity of instrument was confirmed by 14 experts of the sport management. Cronbach α was calculated to find reliability of questionnaires; α of Big-Five Questionnaire was 0.78 and α of Volunteer Satisfaction Questionnaire was 0.85. Independent t-test, zero-order correlation, partial correlation and stepwise regression were used to analyze data. Partial correlation not only presents the bivariate correlation but also controls the effects of one or more independent variables. While observing different correlations, it confirms to apply stepwise regression. All calculations were done by SPSS 18.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the comparison of volunteer satisfaction based on gender.

As shown in Table 1, there was significant difference between the males and females in volunteer satisfaction ($t(df=129)=3.60$, $p \leq 0.05$). The mean value of females ($M = 4.58$) was more than males ($M = 4.07$).

Table 2 presents the relationship between the personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional robustness, openness to experience) and volunteer satisfaction.

Table 1: Volunteer satisfaction based on gender

	t		
	t	df	sig
Volunteer satisfaction	3.60	129	0.001

Table 2: Relationship between personality traits and volunteer satisfaction (n = 131)

	Correlation		
	Zero-order	Partial	Sig
Extraversion	-	0.004	0.96
Agreeableness	0.36	0.24	0.001
Conscientiousness	0.34	0.23	0.001
Emotional robustness	0.10	-	0.21
Openness to experience	0.17	- 0.02	0.04

Dependent variable: volunteer satisfaction

Table 3: Stepwise regression predicting volunteer satisfaction from personality traits

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Agreeableness	0.38	0.25	2.94	0.004
Conscientiousness	0.27	0.24	2.74	0.007

Dependent variable: volunteer satisfaction

As presented in table 2, in zero-order correlation, subscales agreeableness ($r = 0.36$), conscientiousness ($r = 0.34$) and openness to experience ($r = 0.17$) were related significantly to volunteer satisfaction ($p \leq 0.05$). In partial correlation, three mentioned subscales were related significantly to volunteer satisfaction too ($p \leq 0.05$) but controlling the effects of other subscales, each subscale presented more real and consequently fewer correlation with volunteer satisfaction (agreeableness = 0.24, conscientiousness = 0.23, openness to experience = -0.02). However, subscales extraversion and emotional robustness were not related significantly to volunteer satisfaction ($p \geq 0.05$).

Table 3 demonstrates the prediction of volunteer satisfaction from personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional robustness, openness to experience).

Subscale agreeableness and subscale conscientiousness predicted volunteer satisfaction significantly ($F(1, 128) = 13.82$, $p \leq 0.01$). As demonstrated in table 3, the Beta weights for both subscales were presented significantly (Subscale agreeableness: $\beta = 0.25$, $t = 2.94$, $p \leq 0.01$; subscale conscientiousness: $\beta = 0.24$, $t = 2.74$, $p \leq 0.01$).

DISCUSSION

Results showed that the females were more satisfied. The effect of gender on job satisfaction is varied. Kulik (2007) found that the male volunteers were more satisfied which was in contrast with result of present study [42]. Moharramzadeh *et al.* (2009) found that the female volunteers were more satisfied which was in consistent with result of present study [41]. Helgesen (1990) said that work environment with less competition and more cooperation leads to the female's satisfaction [47]. It seems that non-competitive and intimate atmosphere of the volunteering sector influences female volunteer's satisfaction.

Moreover, the results showed that subscales agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience were related significantly to volunteer satisfaction. However, subscales extraversion and emotional robustness were not related significantly to volunteer satisfaction. The research showed that there is strong relationship between big five personality and work relations [48]. Levin and Stokes (1989) found that emotional robustness is related to job satisfaction [49]. Digman (1990) said that there is association between agreeableness, emotional robustness and openness to experience with job satisfaction [29]. Tokar, *et al.* (1998) understood that low emotional robustness and high extraversion lead to job satisfaction [50]. Judge, *et al.* (2002) indicated extraversion, conscientiousness and emotional robustness as effective factors in job satisfaction [51]. Connolly and Viswesvaran (2000) focused on positive (extraversion) and negative (emotional robustness) attitudes in job satisfaction [52]. Subscale conscientiousness is due to duty and conscience [53], subscale agreeableness includes the traits of sacrifice and blithe, happiness and subscale openness to experience means to search new experiences and get together [54]. Conscience, blitheness [55] and togetherness [56] motivate individuals to work voluntarily.

Furthermore, the results showed that subscales agreeableness and conscientiousness predicted volunteer satisfaction. Timmerman (2004) found that big five personality predicts occupational function [26]. Grant and Langan-Fox (2006) focused on subscales emotional robustness, extraversion and conscientiousness to predict job satisfaction [57]. Agreeableness and conscientiousness are in line with altruistic motivations of volunteers [5].

It is suggested that organizers of volunteer sector invest on the female volunteers. As observed, female volunteers were more satisfied. In universities, there is not any stable systematic association of volunteers. The universities can manage volunteer association focused on female force. The females' more satisfaction persuades them to work voluntarily better than males consequently increasing probable retention of them in volunteering sector. Considering the association between subscales agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience with volunteer satisfaction, volunteer environment should be equipped with suitable coping atmosphere (related to agreeableness), well organizing (related to conscientiousness) and new experiences (related to openness to experience). Altruistic motivations and philanthropic feeling (related to conscientiousness and agreeableness) are key characteristics of volunteering. Voluntary organizations need to pay more attention to the evaluation of the volunteers' performance (57).

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