

## Career Motivation Rating of Athlete and Non-Athlete Volunteers of IRCS

**Narges Sedaghati**<sup>1</sup> , **Abolfazl Farahani**<sup>2</sup> , **Hamid Ghasemi**<sup>3</sup> 

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### Original Article

#### Abstract

**INTRODUCTION:** The Red Crescent Society (RCS), as a non-profit organization and a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, engages in relief, humanitarian and public benefit activities, which are influenced by the nature of volunteerism. The purpose of this research is to evaluate and rank the career motivation of two groups of athletes and non-athletes volunteers of the IRCS.

**METHODS:** In this applied survey, data were collected based on Self-Determination Theory framework through a standard questionnaire with stratified random sampling. Due to the Coronavirus situation in the country, questionnaires were sent online to 30,000 young members of the RCS Youth Organization throughout the country which 2815 questionnaires were answered. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods and SPSS-26 software.

**FINDINGS:** According to the findings, the career motivation components of the volunteers in the non-athlete group in order of prioritization are as follows: extrinsic (identified regulation), intrinsic; external (introjected regulation, integrated regulation and externalized regulation) and in the athlete group in order of prioritization is such as: intrinsic motivation; extrinsic (identified regulation); external (introjected regulation, integrated regulation and externalized regulation).

**CONCLUSION:** According to the results, it can be stated that there is a significant difference in the ranking of voluntary career motivation components between athletes and non-athletes volunteer members of the RCS. On this basis, the RCS must have a proper understanding of the difference in the motivational components of people of different age, cultural, gender, etc., in order to improve the level of its social capital.

**Keywords:** Career motivation; Volunteers; Red Crescent Society; Self-determination theory.

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#### Introduction

Organizations are formed to do things in line with specific goals. Organizations are formed to accomplish certain goals. Although organizations struggle with new technologies, they still depend on human resources, and many of them have to use the participation of volunteers to advance their organizational goals and missions. Because non-governmental organizations and institutions providing social services, according to their title, without trained volunteers, they can only be

successful in implementing their minimal programs.

In fact, not only 'volunteers complete essential work and help organizations carry out their missions', but they are a 'potentially invaluable resource'. (1) and are considered a strong source and potential for governments and social and humanitarian organizations.

Volunteers are a very important and powerful human resource for communities and the foundation of their success. (2)

Considering the importance of volunteering culture, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers (IYV), and this action is considered an

1. PhD Student, Department of Sport Management, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

2. Prof. of Sport Management, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

3. Associate Prof. in Sport Management, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

Correspondence to: Narges Sedaghati, E-mail: [na\\_sadeghi@student.pnu.ac.ir](mailto:na_sadeghi@student.pnu.ac.ir)

important step to introduce the activities of volunteers with government resources. The head of the World Association of Volunteer Activities has stated that the year of volunteering is the most important social movement of the new millennium, and also provides a definition of volunteering: volunteering is the participation of people for free, non-profit, and doing something other than their job to help society (3). Voluntary activities have mutual benefits for the volunteer, organization or society, among which social, personal, political and economic benefits can be mentioned (4). Voluntary service is one of the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Thus, RCS is influenced by the nature of volunteerism and volunteers are an integral part of disaster response.

Possessing the knowledge and skills to effectively manage and care for populations affected by an incident and gaining an understanding of continued volunteer engagement contributes to securing and expanding a cadre of highly trained Red Cross volunteers. (5)

Since the IRCS like other National Societies, is one of the most important and extensive relief and humanitarian organizations and considering the importance and outstanding role that human resources play in this organization, dealing with issues that increase the recruitment and performance of its volunteers is of interest to everyone.

Motivation is the main driving force for the participation of volunteers, and many mistakenly consider it as one of the personality traits, while it is one of the psychological characteristics of a human being, which causes human behavior to emerge. In many researches, it has been emphasized that individual motives have a very important role in volunteering and it is known as one of the main pioneers influencing people to get involved and stay in volunteer work. People have many reasons to volunteer and serve others, and it is very beneficial to know the motivation of people for volunteering and free service to the organization. Special and unique motivations are considered as a strong predictive factor in volunteer recruitment and retention. Motivation is the inner state of a person and it creates a behavior in him to achieve a specific goal. People dedicate their time to an organization in which they have the necessary motivation.

Hackman and Oldham (1976) presented a general and important theory about job motivation,

according to this theory, the skills required to do a job should be varied and the job should be important and have an identity (6).

Clary et al. (1992) associate motivation with understanding of the processes that initiate, direct, and sustain action of volunteering, and it precisely engaged by the questions "why do people volunteer?" and "why do they continue volunteering?". (7)

In a research, Andam et al. (2009) state that knowing the motivations of volunteers is very important for the organization's success in attracting volunteers and planning marketing activities (8).

Bostan and Bakhshi (2018) found that one of the ways to attract and retain volunteers of the RCS of Razavi Khorasan province is to hold sports activities and competitions (9).

Setareh (2020) states in a research that due to the popular position of the RCS and having a wide range of contacts and sports facilities in the neighborhoods, it has a high position in the development of public sports. (10) Boling (2005) concluded in his research that volunteering helps to reduce tensions caused by longevity. People in certain age groups have a unique motivation for volunteering. Teenagers mostly volunteer because of their identity, and middle-aged and elderly people also volunteer because of correctness and perfection (11).

Legg and Karner (2021) investigated the experiences of different volunteers of any race and ethnicity, as well as identifying their empowerment factors for a national institution governing sports, and showed that volunteers experience acceptance or non-acceptance in four layered systems: personal, interpersonal, organizational and social. In these layers, subcategories such as unique experience and perspective, personal responsibility, individual attraction, political and social capital, mentors and trainers, required commitment, inclusion in the organizational culture have not been considered (12).

In general, managers and planners of voluntary organizations in the country are trying to develop their human wealth and social capital. The decrease in the rate of voluntary participation of people in today's societies due to the busyness of people and the blending of the lifestyle of communities with the modern industry, the emergence of economic, social, political problems, etc., it is noticeable which has caused a kind of competition between such organizations to attract

people with a volunteer spirit. Understanding the difference in motivational factors of volunteers is very important for organizations with different spectrums of volunteers. Attempts to justify and explain human behavior have drawn researchers' attention to the causes that probably make people eager or reluctant to do things. Therefore, considering the importance of the role and position of volunteers in the RCS, while reviewing these studies, it is tried in this research to examine the components of the job motivation of athletes and non-athletes in the RCS by providing suitable and practical solutions to attract and retain volunteers. By using the recognition of their motives in order to benefit and optimally use the services of volunteers, help to solve some problems, especially during the occurrence of accidents and disasters in order to have a healthier and more cheerful society.

## Methods

In this applied research, the survey method was used and the data were collected based on the framework of self-determination theory. The research sampling method was stratified and random considering the geographical distribution of the RCS Youth Organization throughout the country and due to the announcement of this organization that 30,000 young people between the ages of 18 and 35 are members of the

comprehensive volunteer membership system. However, due to the health conditions and the Coronavirus disease situation in the country, the questionnaire was sent as an online link to all 30,000 young volunteers of Youth Organization, of which 2,815 people from 31 provinces of the country participated in this research as a statistical sample. Finally, data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods and SPSS-26 software.

The current research was conducted in order to further develop the volunteer motivation evaluation scale based on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This theory was chosen because the researchers should distinguish between different motivators, which one motivated the RCS volunteers (people who spend their voluntary activities only in the RCS and those who are also athlete volunteers).

Based on the selected theory, the researchers decided to use a standard questionnaire prepared by Li, Wu and Kei (2016) (13) which is a five-factor or component model with 15 items based on SDT and examines intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability or internal consistency of the questionnaire ( $\alpha=0.880$ ). Therefore, the questionnaire has acceptable reliability considering the standard number of 0.7. (Table 1)

**Table 1.** Questionnaire grouping and reliability of each component

| Voluntary career motivation variable |                      | No. of questions       | Cronbach's alpha |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Components                           | Intrinsic motivation | -                      | 1, 2 & 3         |
|                                      | Extrinsic motivation | Identified regulation  | 0/849            |
|                                      |                      | Introjected regulation | 4,5 & 6          |
|                                      |                      | External regulation    | 7, 8, & 9        |
|                                      |                      | Integrated regulation  | 11,12 & 10       |
|                                      |                      | 15, 14, & 13           | 0/778            |
|                                      |                      |                        | 0/743            |
|                                      |                      |                        | 0/738            |

**Table 2.** Frequency of respondents to the questionnaire according to demographic characteristics

| Demographic characteristics |                | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender                      | Man            | 1796      | 63/8       |
|                             | Woman          | 1019      | 36/2       |
| Marital status              | Single         | 1050      | 37/3       |
|                             | Married        | 1765      | 62/7       |
| Age group                   | Under 20 years | 216       | 7/7        |
|                             | 20 to 25 years | 414       | 14/7       |
|                             | 25 to 30 years | 447       | 15/9       |
|                             | 30 to 35 years | 1738      | 61/7       |

**Table 3.** The frequency of respondents to the questionnaire according to their history of sports activity

| History of sports activity | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Coach                      | 238       | 8/5        |
| Referee                    | 40        | 1/8        |
| Player                     | 613       | 21/7       |
| Lack of sports activity    | 1924      | 68/3       |

## Findings

According to findings, the studied sample were 63.8% and 36.2% men and women respectively. It can be concluded that the gender distribution of the research samples is such that the majority of the statistical population is men. Also, married people made up more than half of the respondents to the questionnaires. The age range of the respondents varies from 18 to 35 years, with an average age of 33 years and a standard deviation of 0.986, which has the highest proportion of volunteers in the age group of 30-35 years (61.7%). (Table 2)

Table 3 also shows the history of sports activities of RCS volunteers. Data indicates that the largest number of volunteers (68.3%) have declared no sports activity. In addition, volunteers with a frequency of 21.7% have been active as sports team players in various fields and the rest of the people announced their sports activities through coaching and judging sports fields.

The best way to check the normality of data distribution in high-volume data and questionnaires and Likert spectrum is to check the skewness and kurtosis of the data. The values of skewness and kurtosis of the variable components of voluntary work motivation are all in the range of +2 to -2. In other words, it is symmetric in terms of the skewness of the variable and its distribution, and it has a normal skewness in terms of the skewness of the distribution. Therefore, due to the normality of data distribution, parametric statistics

were used to determine the relationship between research variables.

In Table 4, the result of the Chi-square test comparing two groups of athlete and non-athlete volunteers of the RCS shows that the obtained value is the result of comparing the frequency of the two mentioned groups and is statistically significant (Sig=0.001). Therefore, this means that these two groups are significantly different from each other in terms of voluntary career motivation components.

In this research, Friedman's test was used to rank and prioritize the components of voluntary career motivation in two groups. According to Table 5, this test showed that the chi-square value obtained in the group of non-athlete volunteers is equal to 3779.5 and in the group of athlete volunteers it is equal to 1761.6, which is at an error level of less than 0.05. The significance of Friedman's test means that the importance and ranking of the components of voluntary career motivation among the volunteer members of the RCS are different from each other.

Based on the comparison of the average ranks, the job motivation components of the volunteers in the non-athlete group are as follows: extrinsic (identified regulation), intrinsic; external (introjected regulation, integrated regulation and externalized regulation) and in the athlete group in order of prioritization is such as: intrinsic motivation; extrinsic (identified regulation); external (introjected regulation, integrated regulation and externalized regulation).

**Table 4.** Chi-square test results for comparing two groups of volunteers according to the components of voluntary career motivation (Sig=0/001)

| Voluntary career motivation variable |                      | Athlete volunteers group | Non-athlete volunteers group | Chi-square |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Components                           | Intrinsic motivation | -                        | -                            | 59/26      |
|                                      | Extrinsic motivation | Identified regulation    | 1924                         | 44/26      |
|                                      |                      | Introjected regulation   |                              | 42/49      |
|                                      |                      | External regulation      |                              | 41/46      |
|                                      |                      | Integrated regulation    |                              | 43/91      |

**Table 5.** Friedman's test to rank the dimensions of voluntary career motivation in two groups of athlete and non-athlete volunteers

| Voluntary career motivation variable |                      |                        | Friedman test | Prioritization | Friedman average |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Non-athlete volunteer group          | Intrinsic motivation |                        | Frequency     | 2              | 4/09             |
|                                      | Extrinsic motivation | Identified regulation  | Chi-square    | 1              | 4/11             |
|                                      |                      | Introjected regulation | df            | 3              | 2/61             |
|                                      |                      | External regulation    | Sig           | 5              | 2/06             |
|                                      |                      | Integrated regulation  | Sig           | 4              | 2/13             |
| Athlete volunteer group              | Intrinsic motivation |                        | Frequency     | 1              | 4/11             |
|                                      | Extrinsic motivation | Identified regulation  | Chi-square    | 2              | 4/09             |
|                                      |                      | Introjected regulation | df            | 3              | 2/61             |
|                                      |                      | External regulation    | Sig           | 5              | 2/07             |
|                                      |                      | Integrated regulation  | Sig           | 4              | 2/11             |

## Discussion and Conclusion

There are different and complex motivations for people to volunteer, which varies according to the desired organization, type of event, gender, age, experiences of the volunteer, etc. Understanding the difference in motivational factors between people is important and valuable for organizations with age classification and certain groupings. Volunteering depends on the correlation of people's motivation and volunteering situation. Therefore, volunteer managers should consider the motivation of volunteers when recruiting, assigning tasks, and keeping them. However, in this research, it was tried to study the motivational components that have a wide distinction between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation in two groups of athlete and non-athlete volunteers, and by comparing these two groups, the difference in their motivational priorities and attitude was identified to some extent.

Based on the above hypothesis, the statistical data showed there is a difference in the ranking of voluntary career motivation components between athletes and non-athletes volunteer members of the RCS. The findings of this research are in line with the researches of Navabinejad (2005), Moharramzadeh et al. (2009), Keshavarz Rahbar (2019), Clary et al. (1998), Gagné (2005), Boling (2005), Rozmiark et al. (2021), Heyerdahl et al. (2021) (11,14-20). In these studies, the researchers investigated the different dimensions of volunteering motivations of different groups in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity and having volunteering experience, etc. and showed that there is a difference between their motivational components.

In accordance with the current research findings, athlete and non-athlete volunteers who are members of the RCS differ only in the first two priorities and do not differ in the last three ones; thus, the difference is in the selection of the components of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (identified). Athlete volunteers prioritized the component of intrinsic motivation, which originates from within people. In line with this component, people do volunteer activities freely

without any expectations, with intrinsic interest and satisfaction.

According to the researches, intrinsic or internal motivation indicates the highest level of autonomy and has a positive relationship with basic psychological needs. The motivation in this case is not dependent on external factors and the person participates in the activities freely and with interest and pleasure. Data show that non-athlete volunteers have chosen the external motivation component (identified) as the first priority, the origin of which can be found within the individual, that is, the behavior that fits with the individual's identity.

People consciously perform a voluntary activity in line with a personal cause that they value (for example, for advancement, promotion and growth at work) and perform a voluntary activity in support of it. This component has the highest amount of self-determination among the forms of external motivation.

However, according to the results of the present research, it can be stated that athletes with a history of activity in lively, exciting and enjoyable sports programs who have chosen with personal interest and freely and have tasted the joy of group activities consciously seek to provide voluntary services in order to gain inner pleasure by doing that work and activity.

In the first stage, non-athlete volunteers consciously seek to participate in an activity that is in line with their personal goals, and do it willingly.

Finally, it can be said that athlete and non-athlete volunteers performed differently in choosing the first priority of the motivation component. However, the components of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (identified) show the fact that when people are involved in doing voluntary things with desire, will and choice and understand the value and purpose of their volunteer work, they feel ownership and independence in performing those activities. As a result, they receive clear feedback and support from those matters. Therefore, it is likely that more motivation will be created in them, in the end, they have better reliable performance, learn better and will have more



suitable compatibility in affairs. However, RCS, in order to improve the level of participation, should design psychological, social and economic motivational systems for volunteer members and pay special attention to identify organizational barriers to attract volunteer athletes and spread the culture of volunteering among athletes.

### Compliance with Ethical Guidelines

All ethical principles have been considered in this article, and participants were informed of the purpose of the research and its implementation steps.

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### Author's Contributions

All authors had equal contributions to conduct, methodology, editing, and writing of the article conducting the research, collecting, and analyzing the data; however, Narges Sedaghati was responsible for correspondence and editing the final manuscript submitted to the journal.

### Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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