The Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA Study)

Volunteer Study

THE IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Research Team would like to thank:

The Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA)

Volunteer Study

by

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ABBREVIATIONS

Volunteers	People working with young people between the ages of 4-18 years, who were not paid, except for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.
Children	Young people aged between 4-12 years of age
Youth	Young people aged between 13-18 years of age
Junior Sport	Sport programmes specifically targeting young people between the ages of 4-18 years of age.
Formal Learning	Learning that takes place in educational and training institutions, leading to recognised qualifications.
Informal Learning	Learning that takes place in everyday life.
Non-formal Learning	Learning that takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalised certificates.
Life Long Learning (LLL)	All learning activity undertaken throughout life whether formal, informal or non-formal.
Life Broad Learning	The richness and diversity of the learning within a temporal frame
Pedagogy	The interaction between the learning context, learning (learner) and teaching (teacher) or coaching (coach).
BUNTUS	Buntús Play and Buntús Multi Sport are two programmes developed to support teachers and other adults in introducing young people to sport and helping to develop their interests.
CI	Coaching Ireland
DTCS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (formerly Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport)
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
ISC	Irish Sports Council
LISPA	Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity
LSP	Local Sports Partnerships
LTPD	Long Term Player Development
LTAD	Long Term Athlete Development
NGB	National Governing Body of Sport

The Volunteer Study is part of the Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA), a unique multi-centre study undertaken by University College Cork, University of Limerick and Dublin City University on behalf of the Irish Sports Council. It brought together expertise from sport and coaching studies, physical education and physical activity for health. The purpose of the study was to provide insight into issues surrounding volunteering in sports and activity clubs in a child and youth context. Volunteers play a pivotal role in community sport and physical activity programmes, and their engagement with children and youth influences the potential for lifelong physical activity participation and consequently the current and future health profiles of this population. This study contributes to the understanding and promotion of best practice in these contexts; it also explores strategies for engaging and supporting volunteers and sport organisations in their roles. This study builds upon previous research conducted in the Irish context that draws attention to the role, experience and contribution that volunteers make to Irish sport (Delaney & Fahey, 2005; Maleney, 2007). Some caution must be noted in making a direct comparison with previous research due to differences in methodology and sample selection.

Volunteer administrators and volunteers responsible for providing sporting opportunities to 4-18 year olds in a variety sports and physical activity programmes across the Republic of Ireland were electronically surveyed and a sub-sample were interviewed in order to gain a richer understanding of their motivations, needs and capacities.

Summary of main findings

A total of 1186 volunteers and 210 volunteer administrators participated in the study. The volunteers represented 31 main sports covering 31 Local Sport Partnership regions. Volunteer administrators represented 27 sports covering 31 Local Sports Partnership regions. The key findings were:

Volunteer profile

1. Unpaid volunteers made up 97% of the total workforce involved in junior sport.
2. The typical volunteer was a parent, aged between 35-54 years, working in a medium sized club.
3. Volunteers typically committed one day per week to volunteering and remained in the volunteer role for between 3-10 years.
4. Gender representation was balanced across volunteering although gender representation differed between team and individual sports.

Recruitment and retention of volunteers

1. Pathways into volunteering are localised to personal connections, previous participation sport, and/or previous volunteer experience.
2. Recruitment strategies are local and typically word-of-mouth. Clubs require support in developing recruitment strategies.
3. Motivations for becoming a volunteer were related to a person's previous experience as a sport participant, enjoyment of working with young people, and/or family.
4. Ongoing commitment to volunteering was motivated by personal, health, social, and skill outcomes. Clubs must invest in volunteer development if they are to retain them.
5. Providing pathways for youth to engage in volunteer work in children's and youth sport is yet to be developed. To attract youth to volunteering, the image of the volunteer must connect and show relevance to their context. Youth need to be valued as members of the club and given opportunities to express their opinions and help make decisions on issues that affect them. Sports clubs require support to establish sustainable youth pathway programmes into volunteering.
6. Previous participation in sport is a predictor of future volunteering. Children and youth participating in sports clubs should be encouraged and provided with opportunities to engage in volunteer activities. These young people are the next generation of volunteers.

Volunteer education

1. The modern day volunteer is expected to be a skilled volunteer; it is more than just about giving time. Volunteers need and want to be competent and confident in their role.
2. Volunteers are prepared to engage in further education if it leads to more efficient and effective use of their time.
3. Access to educational opportunity is problematic and influences volunteer retention, which in turn impacts on the participant experience. Criteria for conducting courses and platforms for delivering educational material require further investigation.
4. Volunteer coaches working with children and youth seek generic pedagogical and management knowledge to enhance their learning experience.

Club administration

1. At club level, knowledge, skill set and experience are located within a person and not within the organisation. There is little in the way of succession planning, shadowing or transition arrangements that enable the next person to learn the role.
2. Management of human resources is a major barrier to volunteer retention and the sustainability of the sport club or organisation.
3. Volunteers have multiple roles, some of which stretch their skill set and act as a barrier to volunteer retention.

Programme design

1. Volunteers emphasise the need to embed a "child centred" approach when working with children and youth.
2. Programme structures and coaching in junior sport should be underpinned by fun, fundamentals (motor and sport specific), and social connection.
3. There is limited policy and practical guidelines to support volunteers in the implementation of a *child first sport second* programmatic approach. Professional development for clubs and volunteers is required where the outcome is to embed and embody a *child first sport second* approach in their practice.

Recommendations

The one recommendation of this study is to invest in sport club development and the retention of their volunteer workforce. This is pivotal to the sustainability of youth sport. It requires the transformation of club culture and structure, and the implementation of professional processes at local and national level.

To progress this recommendation requires greater collaboration and joined up thinking amongst stakeholders and leadership from the Department of Culture Tourism and Sport and the Irish Sports Council. This could be achieved through

- The establishment of a key stakeholder group whose purpose is to investigate how to strategically develop and deliver educational resources and programmes for sport club development in the Republic of Ireland. The composition of the key stakeholder group would include representatives from the ISC, Coaching Ireland, LSPs, NGBs and invited expertise. It would be appropriate to establish such a group to coincide with 2011 being the European Union Year of the Volunteer.

The following research findings have implications for the design and delivery of sports club education and should guide stakeholder thinking:

- Irish sports clubs require specific educational support and this knowledge should form *part* of the *core* content of the education programme:
  - *Governance:* The rules and practices that ensures an organization is serving its stakeholders (operating codes, bylaws, constitution)
  - *Management:* committees, volunteers, communication, health and safety, club finances, and programme development.
  - *Strategic and Operational Planning:* planning, change management, and monitoring and evaluation

- Access to education material is problematic and multifaceted approaches should be considered.
  - For example, a combination of hardcopy and online resources, face-to-face and online professional development caters for variation in learning styles, creates multiple access opportunities, and is considerate of the time-poor volunteer. There is potential for resources and programmes to be hosted and conducted by a number of organisations (i.e. Coaching Ireland, LSPs, NGBs, 3rd Level Institutions) to further enhance opportunity for access.

● Regular evaluation and monitoring of the programme

  • Evaluation and monitoring programmes enable organisations at a national and local level to measure success, build expertise and knowledge, and develop institutional memory. Traditionally in the Irish sport club context, knowledge has been located within people and not within the sport organisation. Internal and external evaluation creates opportunity for the local sport organisation to incorporate learning experiences into practice and policy. A future outcome of evaluation could be a national club accreditation award.

● Sports policy needs to clearly explain what is involved in a 'child centred' approaches to sport and physical activity, and clearly communicates the benefits of this type of approach.

Introduction

Volunteerism is the lifeblood of Irish Sport, but to date there is little research that has focused on the motivations, needs, and capacities of the Irish volunteer working in a youth sport and physical activity context. Working with children and youth has its own set of challenges but there is much personal gain for the volunteer who invests time and effort in these programmes, and for the sports organisation that invests in volunteers. Ensuring that both the young participants and the volunteers benefit from the experience is vital, as it is the volunteers that make sport and physical activity viable, affordable, and a healthy option for young people.

Profile of Irish volunteers

The profile of the Irish volunteer is shaped by educational attainment, economic circumstances, life phase, and prior participation in physical activity (Lunn, Layte, & Watson, 2007). The typical volunteer has third level education, is aged between 40-49 years, has children participating in sport, and participated themselves in physical activity. Many of these volunteers commenced coaching a decade earlier (Delaney & Fahey, 2005). These demographics highlight the under representation of young people and people over the age of 60 years (GHK, 2010). The 2006 Census of Population identified males (69%) as the dominant gender in the sport volunteer workforce (GHK, 2010). This profile accentuates the narrow band of people who are attracted to volunteering, and the need to look at strategies that promote volunteering as a positive community practice that all community members can contribute to when provided with adequate training and support. To do this requires a further investment in understanding why people volunteer for youth sport and physical activity programmes, and what makes the experience a positive and worthwhile investment of their time. There are outcomes for the volunteer and the participant and both must be considered when designing policy at the local and national level.

The economic value of volunteering

Volunteers make a substantial contribution to the economy. The proportion of people volunteering in sport in Ireland is approximately 14.4% of the adult population (Delaney & Fahey, 2005). Based on the minimum wage, a one-hour commitment per week and a conservative assumption that people volunteer 40 weeks per year (Delaney et al., 2005) estimated that the total annual value of volunteering in Ireland is €267 million while a more recent study by Indecon International Economic Consultants estimated the value of volunteering at between €321 million and €582 million per annum (Indecon, 2010). Understanding volunteer motivations, barriers and needs is at the heart of junior sport and physical activity programmes, as without volunteers there are no programmes.

Volunteer motivations

There are multiple reasons why people choose to volunteer (Taylor et al., 2003). Research from Ireland and countries that have a strong volunteer culture (i.e., UK, Australia, New Zealand) suggest that motivations for participation are altruistic and social (Delaney & Fahey, 2005; Nichols & Shepherd, 2006). They include general interest in the sport, a desire to give something back to the club or sport, family engagement and connection, personal benefits, to do something good, and social networking (Chelladurai, 1999; et al., 1998). In Ireland, the main motivation for male sport volunteers is a desire to give something back to the sport, and for females, it is related to their children's involvement in sport and physical activity programmes (Delaney & Fahey, 2005). What makes volunteering an attractive proposition in an Irish context is seeing participants improve and learn and this reflects international research that reiterates values (altruism) as a major functional motive for volunteering (Busser & Carruthers, 2010) as well as the personal gains of fun, and enjoyment through networking and interaction with other people (Busser & Carruthers, 2010; Maleney, 2007).

Previous engagement in sport influences a person's decision to volunteer (Delaney & Fahey, 2005). This in itself has implications for how sports clubs view their young participants. If they are seen as future volunteers there is opportunity to nurture them and develop a broader skill set (coaching, administration) as part of their sport, or physical activity experience. Understanding why people do not volunteer is as important as understanding why they do. Is their decision to abstain from volunteering an informed decision or is it based on assumptions about a required skill set and experience? Is it due to limited pathways that one can only access and navigate if immersed in sport or connected to a relevant social, family, and community network?

The most common pathway into volunteering in Ireland is through word of mouth and being asked to help (Volunteer Development Agency, 2001). Maleney in his study of Irish volunteers found that three quarters of club level volunteers committed time to volunteering as a result of external influence (being asked to help) or persuasion (nominated for a position) (Maleney, 2007). Considering volunteers are also motivated by social, family and community connections it would make sense that these networks are a fertile recruitment ground. It does highlight that volunteer pathways are restricted and provide limited access to people outside the network. In other EU countries (i.e., Denmark, France) volunteer organisations have national volunteer centres that provide a central hub for volunteer policy, information, education, and volunteer databases (GHK, 2010). In Ireland volunteer organisations are devolved according to sectors. For example, in the sport sector LSPs are responsible for volunteer databases at the local level, and for the organisation of coach and sport education programmes (Fitzpatrick Associates, 2005)

Some people commit to a volunteer role because they perceive that there is no alternative and they fear the club will close because there is no one else to take on the role (Sports England, 2003). Working with children and youth has its own set of unique challenges and responsibilities that can deter volunteers. For example, some of these challenges are the responsibility for "duty of care" associated with working with parents, child protection, transport and management issues, health and safety, and an agreed understanding of the outcomes of children's and youth sport. These challenges, in some cases perceived barriers, have the potential to reduce the volunteer workforce and the related opportunities for children and youth to participate in sport and physical activity.

Some sports in Ireland are culturally and ideologically bound and this influences volunteer motives for engagement. This can work both for and against the organisation as a recruitment strategy (Maleney, 2007; National Committee on Volunteering, 2002; Sports England, 2003).

Challenges and barriers to volunteering

Time is the most common descriptor people use when describing availability and contribution to community sport and physical activity programmes. Available 'time' is the greatest barrier to volunteer participation, followed by 'never having thought about it' and 'never been asked' (Delaney & Fahey, 2005; Maleney, 2007; National Committee on Volunteering, 2002). Time is used as a measurement but also as a value-laden concept. Lack of time was related to available clock time and influenced by lifestyle, family and work commitments. Some people felt that they had already given enough and it was now time for other people to volunteer. In this sense, volunteering is about giving time and about that time being valued. Gaskin (Gaskin, 2008) puts forward that a changing culture of consumerism and the economic climate creates added barriers to volunteering. There is debate over whether the current economic climate has increased or decreased volunteer numbers. In an international report on volunteering in the European Union it was suggested that in Ireland volunteer numbers had risen in the sport sector in response to the current economic climate (GHK, 2010). In contrast the Irish Sports Monitor report (Lunn & Layte, 2008) found no evidence to suggest an increase in volunteer participation. It is important to note that unless studies used to compare volunteer numbers use the same context, methodology and definitions it is impossible to claim accurate results.

Research investigating volunteers in the United Kingdom found that the volunteer workforce often performs several roles, they are overworked and there is rarely a succession plan (Gaskin, 2008). In Ireland volunteers have also expressed that there is too much expected of them, there are insufficient numbers of volunteers, and they were taken for granted (Maleney, 2007; National Committee on Volunteering, 2002). Volunteers are responsible for the management, operation, and coaching in the majority of sports clubs yet they have limited exposure to education and training in these roles. Professionalisation of sport and the ability of volunteers to meet the job demands through extra training and education as unpaid staff, challenges the goodwill of the volunteer. This places increased tension on organisations trying to make volunteering an attractive option (GHK, 2010). The outlook of the organisation and poor management and structure lead to dissatisfaction, and many organisations are reluctant to instigate change even though they have access to more professional processes (Maleney, 2007).

Recruitment and retention of volunteers is problematic. This is a workforce predominantly measured on its outputs but, which also requires input (National Committee on Volunteering, 2002). Lack of recognition for educational attainment through informal [1] and non-formal [2] learning provides little incentive for volunteers. The European report on volunteering (GHK, 2010) recommends that volunteering needs to be actively recognised and supported within lifelong learning strategies and systems developed which officially recognise informal and non-formal learning. To understand the process and issues of volunteer recruitment, retention, motivation and education requires listening to the multiple voices of volunteers, those working at the coal face as well as club administrators with responsibility for the management of clubs and volunteers.

Summary

Previous international and national research investigating volunteers has highlighted the need to invest in the development of the volunteer workforce. Building on this body of knowledge this study investigates the motivations, needs and capacities of volunteers working with *children* and *youth* participants in an Irish context. The voices of volunteers and administrators are considered when examining this complex and dynamic youth sport and physical activity environment. Their contribution and engagement in junior sport lays the foundation for lifelong and life broad participation in sport, and the health of a nation.

Purpose of the study

The overall objectives of the volunteer study were to:
1. Explore pathways into volunteering in a children's and youth sport context.
2. Investigate motivations and barriers to volunteer participation in a children's and youth sport context.
3. Examine volunteers' perceptions of good practice in programme design.

[1] Learning that takes place in everyday life

[2] Learning that takes place alongside the mainstream education systems but does not lead to the award of a certificate

This study was conducted to investigate the motivations, needs, and capacities, of volunteers working with children and youth in an Irish sport context. Two online questionnaires were administered, one targeting volunteers and the second targeting volunteer sport administrators. The online questionnaires were designed for the Irish sport context. The Institute for Volunteering Research's Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit was used to assist in question design (Table.1). Survey monkey (http://www.surveymonkey.com/) was the delivery platform for the online surveys.

Table 1. Questionnaire Themes:

The volunteer questionnaire	The administrator questionnaire
• Volunteer profile • Level of engagement • Volunteer motivation • Personal development • Barriers to volunteering • Financial and economic impacts • Management and organisation • Knowledge and skill development	• Volunteer workforce profile • Participant profile • Seasonal profile • Resources • Recruitment and retention of volunteers • Volunteer trends • Support network

Six focus group interviews targeting the volunteers explored issues arising from the questionnaire and further examined programme design in children's and youth sport activities. Three urban (Cork, Dublin, Limerick) and three rural (West Cork, Louth, Clare) regions were selected for conducting focus group interviews.

Ethics

The Research Ethics Committee at Dublin City University, University of Limerick and University College Cork approved the study protocol. Participants, by submitting the questionnaire, agreed to participate in the study. People interested in participating in the focus groups were asked to provide contact details on the questionnaire.

Study delivery

Study protocols were piloted and refined. The pilot study used a pool of 110 participants who tested the questionnaire link and timing, and provided feedback on questions and the questionnaire structure.

Sample and response rate

The number of people responding to the volunteer online survey was 1186, and 210 people responded to the administrator questionnaire. The volunteer sample represents 31 sports from 31 Local Sport Partnership regions. The administrator sample represents 27 sports from 31 Local Sport Partnership regions. Some caution is noted in generalising the findings of this study to all volunteers in Ireland as a convenience sample was used.

Data analysis

Quantitative data analysis
Quantitative data analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0). Descriptive statistics were calculated via means, standard deviations, minimums, maximums and percentages where appropriate.

Qualitative data analysis
Focus-group data was recorded on pre-labelled tapes that were then transcribed manually. The constant comparative method was then used to analyse the data. For theme identification, the researcher looked for patterns, themes, concerns or responses that were posed repeatedly by the focus-group participants. Before the analysis was complete, the entire text was re-read for additional clues to assist in the most complete and detailed interpretation of the data.

The respondents

The respondents were a convenience sample and do not necessarily represent the national situations in terms of sport distribution, county representation, or club size.

Volunteer administrator profile

- Two hundred and ten administrators representing 27 sports from 31 LSP areas completed the questionnaire.
- The majority of these clubs and organisations had between 1-50 children and/or 1-50 youth participating in their programmes.
- Volunteers represented 97% of the workforce in children's and youth sport and physical activity.
- Team sports attracted a higher percentage of volunteers (63%) as compared to individual sports (37%).
- Females outnumbered male volunteers in individual sports, but the reverse occurred in team sports.

Volunteer workforce profile

- A total of 1186 people representing 31 main sports and a selection of minority sports (baton twirling, archery, table tennis, canoe polo, bowling, water polo, kayaking, squash, Olympic handball, rock climbing, angling, netball, orienteering, fencing, darts, modern pentathlon, waterskiing and surfing) completed the volunteer survey.
- The majority of these volunteers were parents (48%), followed by long-term members of the club or organisation and senior players. A smaller percentage of volunteers were ex-players returning to the club, and placement students from educational institutions.

- Most parent volunteers worked with more than one sport but this had little relationship with the number of dependent children within the family unit.
- The age profile indicated people were most likely to volunteer between the ages of 35 and 54 years of age, in support of previous research (Delaney & Fahey, 2005; GHK, 2010; McLouglin, 2005).
- Young people (12%) and people over the age of 55 (8%) were less inclined to volunteer.
- The majority of volunteers worked with at least two groups of children and\or youth. Volunteers working in individual sports were more likely to work with a broader age range as compared to volunteers working with team sports.
- Volunteers on average worked with 1.37 sports each (range 0-6 sports; males: 1.38; females: 1.35) and took responsibility for over 3 roles within the club or organisation The volunteer's main roles were coaching (81.4%), administration (53.5%), management (47.7%) and officiating (46.7%). The main gender differences relate to coaching, team management and officiating roles with more males than females performing these roles.
- Over 80% of volunteers commit the equivalent of one day a week or more to volunteering.
- The length of commitment to volunteering ranged between 3-10 years.

In summary, the typical volunteer from this sample is a parent, aged between 35-54 years, working in a medium sized team based club, committing one day per week to volunteering and remaining in the volunteer role from 3-10 years. As a volunteer they perform several roles, work with at least two age groups and two sports. There is a noticeable shortage of youth and people over the age of 55 volunteering in the youth sport sector.

Becoming a volunteer

There are no formal pathways into volunteering in junior sport in Ireland. Typically, people volunteer through their (a) current or previous connection to sport, (b) their relationship to participants, or (c) previous experience volunteering in a related sector. Past members, because of their own positive experience return to the club to coach the next generation of athletes. Parents attend sport with their children and choose to contribute or are expected to contribute to the club through volunteering.

The children would have been definitely why I'm involved, but before that it would have been because I played the sport myself and I loved it, and I realise what good it had done for me when I was a teenager. [Volunteer]

Some of these people felt they were given no option but to volunteer. For example, in some sports volunteering is part of a membership contract; a parent or family member must commit time to the club or organisation. It was also common for people to volunteer under threat of the club closing due to lack of member support.

I suppose we force people to volunteer …we tell people when they join they must do certain things…it is part of the membership conditions. [Administrator]

The club did not have a chairperson or a secretary, … if nobody volunteered the club was going to go under so I volunteered. [Volunteer]

A number of volunteers had worked in related fields and this knowledge and experience prepared them well for working in the junior sport environment. For example, several people had been involved in scouts and have moved into the sport and physical activity field. Although the environment is different they could transfer some of their skills to the new environment and achieve early success (i.e. ability to interact with young people, setting up discipline routines, an established philosophy) with groups of children and youth.

The pathway into volunteering in junior sport requires people to be connected to the club or organisation in some form. This close connection to the organisation or sport does reduce the size of the recruitment net and places pressure on current members to perform multiple roles. One group that has rarely been utilized in the Irish context are youth. Although closely connected to the organisation and often an active club member the volunteer sector has traditionally been an adult domain.

The youth pathway into volunteering has proven problematic; it is perceived by adults that young people have much to gain from volunteering but that young people are just not interested. It is something that older people do:

I think volunteering should be made cooler for young people. Look at the population that's out there. There are people who just finished school and college without anything to do. I said to one of my boys recently, do you know what you should volunteer to do something. Mom, he said, is that not for older people? You know like he doesn't have free time and that volunteering is for old people. [Administrator]

One focus group member, on recalling his own experience as a young volunteer, was vividly aware that he and his young friends were not taken seriously in their roles and there was no investment in their development. There was no evidence to suggest that clubs had actively sought to develop a youth volunteer strategy. There was, however, a genuine interest in investigating how best to attract youth to sports clubs and organisations. There is currently a move in European member states to invest and develop youth volunteer pathways (GHK, 2010)

Motivation for volunteering

People working with children and youth in a sport and physical activity programme volunteer for multiple reasons. The main motivations for volunteering were (a) previous involvement and passion for sport, (b) working with young people and the community, and (c) family (Figure 1).
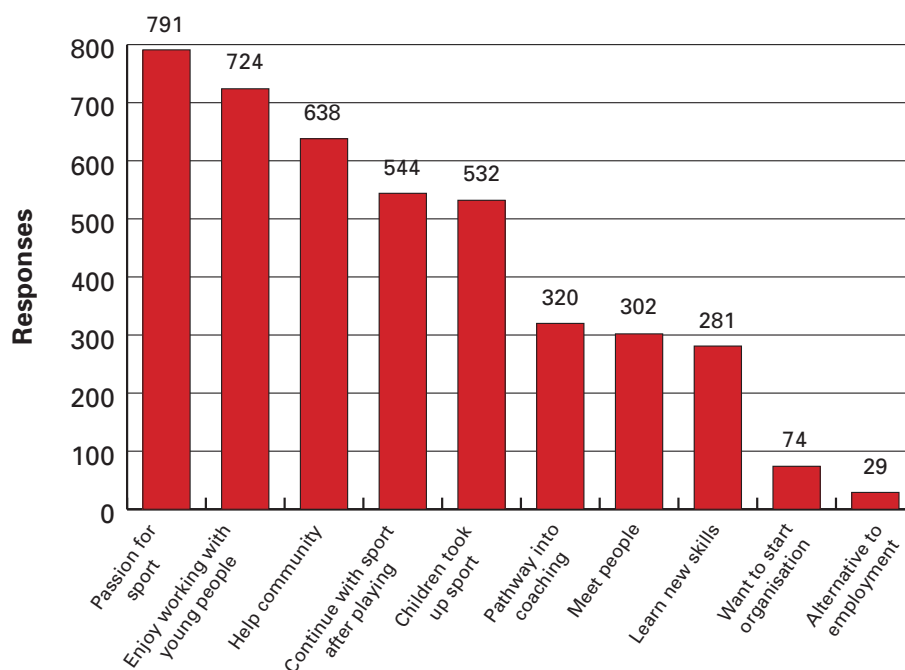

Figure 1: Reasons for volunteering

Previous experience in sport is a significant influence and predictor on future participation as a volunteer. It provides opportunity for people to remain connected and to give back to the sport.

I was very fortunate as a child to benefit from experts, giving of their time voluntarily, many years on I can appreciate the immense positive impact, not just on my life but on a number of lives [Volunteer]

Many of these people enjoy the company of young people and actively engaging with other volunteers.

…I think what I found from it is there's a great social side to it and that, you know, I've met a lot of very good friends since I've got involved in [sport] who are now really good friends. [Volunteer]

Teaching young people, changing their capacities, and observing them achieve motivated volunteers. These people enjoyed the process of facilitating change, contributing to the community, working with young people, and having played a role in young people's achievement.

I have to say, there is a buzz that I enjoy when I'm out there with kids coaching. The smile on their faces or the look of achievement when, it mightn't be the best player, but there's just something about seeing a child or someone do something they couldn't do a week earlier (Volunteer).

Engagement in this cycle of teaching participants and observing their learning and achievement requires hands on experience. Hence, this type of motivation may play a role in retaining volunteers in the system and as a selling point in the recruitment of volunteers.

For many people, family members participating in sport and physical activity led to active involvement as a volunteer. Working as a volunteer provided an opportunity for these people to work closely with family members for extended periods of time. Volunteering also helped people understand their own children and develop better parenting skills.

It gives me more patience with the kids at home. You're so used to dealing with 30 kids that you know you can handle anything your own throw at you. [Volunteer]

Family connection plays a significant role in the recruitment of volunteers but motivation for remaining a volunteer is sustained by other personal and social needs.

Motivation for staying a volunteer

Recruitment is the major focus of administrators at the beginning of a term or season, without volunteers there are no programmes. Retention of volunteers is a long-term commitment which has the potential to expand organisations, develop skill sets and create an environment where recruitment is managed due to the positive learning and support given to volunteers. People are motivated to volunteer for various reasons, it is no longer only about output; people also want input. People's motivations for continuing their role as volunteers often evolved through engagement in the volunteer process. The major retention motivations were (a) personal development, (b) health outcomes, (c) social connection, and (d) skill development. Personal development was a motive and outcome of volunteering. The act of volunteering made people feel good, and for some it led to achievement of personal goals.

The stuff that I've achieved out of volunteering, the huge amount of life skills and learning and meeting other people, the stuff that I've taken, its trials and tribulations with like any coach, you reach the top, but you also have huge, huge failing. And it's trying to learn from that and passing it on. [Volunteer]

Improved health was seen as a significant outcome of volunteering in almost all cases (Table 2) while over 70% of volunteers also experienced increased self-confidence

HOW DID YOUR HEALTH CHANGE DUE TO VOLUNTEERING	TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 1147
Increased Greatly	178 (16%)
Increased	454 (39%)
Stayed the same	471 (41%)
Decreased	39 (3%)
Decreased Greatly	5 (1%)

Table 2: Perceived health changes from volunteering

Volunteering increased people's social connections and in 50% of cases this led to increased trust and further involvement in local activities (Figure 2). The socially motivated volunteer likes working with people and establishing relationships. They enjoy working with children and youth and equally seek engagement with others involved in the club or organisation.

People choosing to volunteer developed skills that transferred into other parts of their life, and the volunteering provided them with another experience or outlet to pursue in their leisure time.

I was new to the country and this was, you know, where my kids were, this was the sport they did and was going to get involved. So I saw it as a way of meeting people and making friends… I got a lot out of it, it was [a] great way of meeting people when I was new to the country. [Volunteer]

This suggests that volunteering is not completely altruistic and that personal development and benefit is an important ingredient in volunteer satisfaction. Volunteers are happy to contribute but there must also be input into their personal development and opportunities for enjoyment through engagement with others.
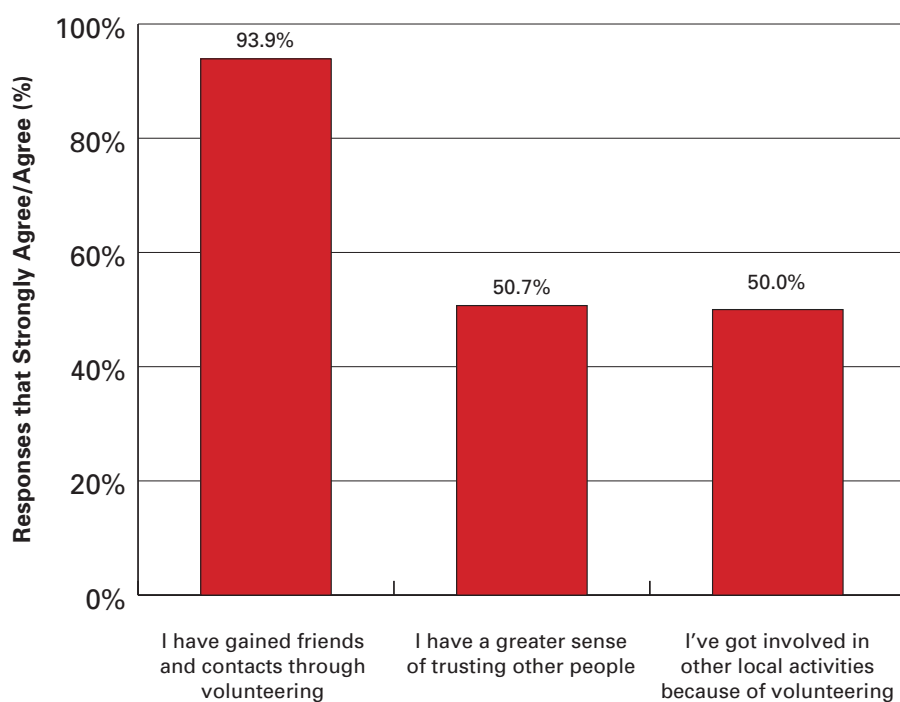
Figure 2: Volunteering outcomes

Engagement in volunteering confers considerable personal, social and health benefits. Volunteering however does cost time and impacts on work and family which has implications for continued involvement if enjoyment, personal development, and the social networking are not part of the experience.

Based on the information gleaned from this research, recruitment and retention are two distinct processes underpinned by different motivational objectives for the volunteer. Clubs need to understand these processes and invest in both to attract and retain this unpaid workforce. Investment in professional development to support retention reduces large-scale recruitment drives that do not necessarily result in quality experiences for participants. The youth pathway challenges national and local organisations to design programmes that give youth a voice, and develop and reward them for volunteer work.

Barriers

Volunteers and administrators identified common barriers that influenced commitment, and quality of the participant and volunteer experience. The barriers were (a) investment of personal resources, (b) skill development, and (c) club administration.

Personal resources, in particular 'time', were a major barrier to volunteering. Time was described as a measurable but limited resource and as a value-laden concept. Important to the volunteers was how they perceived whether their time was wasted, exploited or valued by their sports club. Volunteers described themselves as time poor and, although committed to volunteering, they stated that they would like to see more efficient and effective use made of their time. Better role clarification, a more efficient communication structure and a better matching of people to specific volunteer roles could achieve this. Volunteers also referred to valued time, the need for feedback and recognition for the roles they perform from all members of the club. They do not mind giving their time but do not want it to be exploited.

Many of these "time" referenced barriers to volunteering relate to the administration and organisation of the club or organisation. People who were engaged in a positive volunteering experience described effective and efficient use of their time, investment in their development, and appreciation for their commitment.

You get volunteers if you give them something that they know they can do, let them succeed at it and then acknowledge the fact that they did it, and that's how you get and keep volunteers. If you give them appropriate tasks to do and don't expect more time than they have to give or skills they don't have, and that's how you hold onto volunteers and especially acknowledge them afterwards and say thank you. [Administrator]

Volunteers would like more people to volunteer and contribute time and resources. Although people are very positive about the volunteer experience and gain much satisfaction and personal development, they do feel that they are carrying the load. A recurring theme was lack of respect from other parents in the club or organisation. Volunteers made the point that they often feel like a babysitting service and are taken for granted by other parents.

I had the situation where I've had not only the child that was supposed to train, but they also left the other child because they went shopping and then didn't come back for an hour after training was finished, so we sat and waited. [Volunteer]

There is concern that volunteering has moved beyond giving time and effort, and that volunteers are becoming a more specialist workforce. Skill level was cited as an issue affecting volunteer work by 43% of volunteers, despite 75% of volunteers, having a qualification in the role they carried out. Those pursuing a specialist coaching pathway indicated that what was required was a combination of formal and informal education, coach education programmes, knowledge sharing between coaches, mentoring, and opportunities to gain experience.

In relation to skill development, volunteers felt that clubs and organisations need to invest time in their volunteer workforce, particularly in helping them to develop their skills and knowledge base. They commented that access to education was limited, particularly in rural areas where courses are dependent on numbers, and require travel. Some courses happen on an annual basis (in some cases 18 months), and this impacts on volunteer motivation if they are pursuing a specialist pathway. Although there are a number of resources available they are not necessarily the resources required, or the form of delivery preferred. In contrast, administrators believe resources are readily available for volunteers and that they perform the dissemination task well.

Last time we had the [sport] programme at the club and we were able to get the number of participants, you have to have big enough numbers. And if you don't have, the volunteers have to travel farther afield to do it. You have to bring the course in, put it in front of people or they will not necessarily go out of their way to do the training, but if you bring it to them they will. [Administrator]

If the only way to engage volunteers in training is to host the programme on site it might mean changing the way courses are structured and delivered and the criteria for hosting a programme.

Administration

Administrators and volunteers were concerned with how clubs and organisations recruited volunteers, developed expertise and managed people. The major areas of concern were:
- Recruiting people to the committee
- Defining and educating people about their roles
- Volunteer recruitment strategy
- Volunteer management and support

Volunteers and administrators who were satisfied with their club's structure identified many of the above points as part of their ongoing practice.

The recruitment of people to committees is problematic; people avoid annual general meetings for fear of being elected to a position. In many cases this is a secondary role volunteers take on as well as coaching, managing, or general helping. Volunteers feel overburdened and resentful particularly when they do not have the required skill set or available time. Like athletes, volunteers also want to demonstrate competence and confidence in their roles and this is particularly the cases with novice volunteers (Busser & Carruthers, 2010). The administrators were aware of the risk of overloading key volunteers and the lack of succession planning in their clubs (Figure 3). The majority of administrators agreed that they required new ways of recruiting and training volunteers.
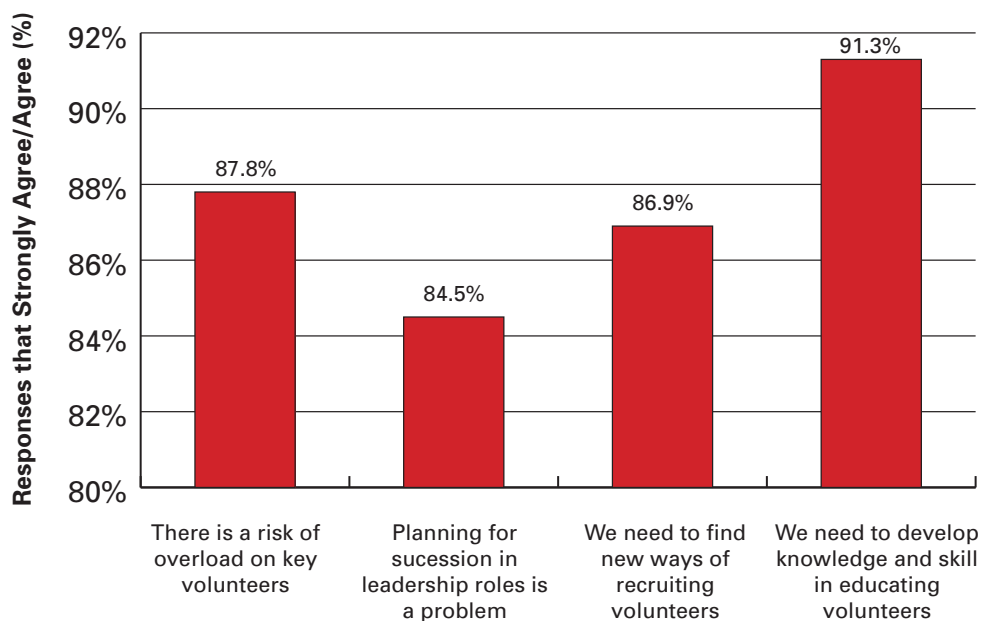

Figure 3: Administrator concerns

…you are going to have secretaries, a treasurer, you know this sort of thing, and initially this is not what they signed up for. This puts volunteers off, I don't really want to do this and I don't know how to do this. That's the other issue then that somebody is going to be a treasurer or secretary, how are you going to give him or her the skills so that they can do the job properly. [Administrator]

New committee members often sought information about their roles from professionals in similar positions (i.e. secretaries), searched the Internet, went to particular websites (i.e. GAA, Swim Ireland), and/or learned on the job. One of the problems at club level is that the knowledge, skill set and experience is located within a person and not the organisation, and there is no succession plan, shadowing or transition phase that enables the next person to learn the role.

A number of strategies were used to attract people to clubs and organisations. The main recruitment strategy was "word of mouth". Parents and previous members were targeted and local networks were used to identify possible volunteers. Other recruitment strategies were (a) the media, (flyers, newsletters, advertisements, radio), (b) visiting local schools, (c) hosting community and open days, and (d) compulsory volunteer commitment (membership contract). The more daunting problem for organisations is not recruitment, but retention. This is where an investment in people becomes vital.

I think one of the problems is that there are lots of people to help, but the problem with it is there's nobody there willing to help the people, you know, to actually give them information, you know. [Volunteer]

According to the administrators, the volunteers are well supported in their roles. Over 60% of the clubs and organisations provide internal and external training and mentoring, and are well managed and supported. Volunteers are provided with written guidance in some clubs and organisations. The most common guidance is on child protection (70%). Some volunteers when interviewed felt the area of child protection has been "over baked" and instilled fear in people working with children and youth. Some clubs and organisations provide a general club handbook, written information on health and safety, first aid, and legal matters (Figure 4).
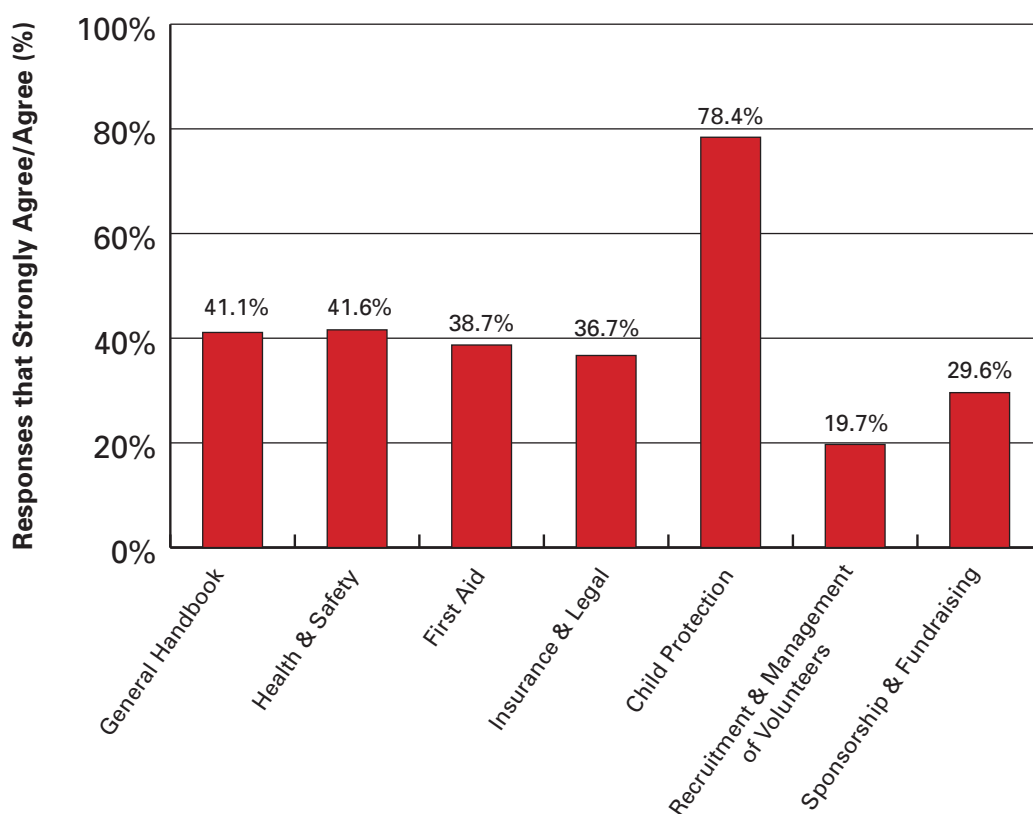

Figure 4: Club provided resources

There is a perception gap between how administrators believe they are supporting volunteers and what volunteers perceive they need to perform their role. The volunteers questioned the level of support they received from clubs. Volunteers want someone they can go to for advice, opportunities to engage with others, to learn new skills, to gain experience, get feedback and recognition. Volunteers want bodies with knowledge, not just bodies of knowledge (written material). Volunteers who were satisfied with their experience cited volunteer coordinators or development officers as playing a major role in their professional development as well as management. The volunteers see themselves as learners and seek investment in their development.

It's easy to get somebody to come along and give a hand out, but when they are standing there and feeling out of their depth and two weeks on the trot and nobody's helping them, good luck and good bye, you know. It is a case that you have to give people some help as well when you get them in and make it kind of almost attractive for them as well, make them feel they are part of something. [Volunteer]

To-date in Ireland there are no formal sport administration programmes designed for local clubs to develop skills, knowledge, and expertise in organisation of club business and committee roles. In the United Kingdom investment in club development has progressed to a level where local clubs are confident in their processes and voluntarily seek accreditation for its attached benefits (Clubmark, n.d.). Some NGBs in Ireland are providing information on committee structures. One NGB has placed emphasis on development of club administrators and is investing resources in this area.

I know [NGB], because I'm heavily involved with them, [NGB] have now started a number of courses for people in clubs and it's one thing that they've recognized, and they have 12000 members, and they've recognised that in clubs, the most important volunteers are the ones that run the association. [Administrator]

People are not deterred by the financial cost of volunteering. They feel they are adequately reimbursed. A small minority get access to free training, tickets to matches or kits. Over 30% believe that there are benefits to be gained in school, work and career prospects. This transfer of knowledge and skills across other areas of the volunteer's life are worth the financial and time commitment involved in volunteering. To meet these requirements administrators need to ensure that they develop recruitment and retention policies to ensure volunteers as participants are also being served by the organisation.
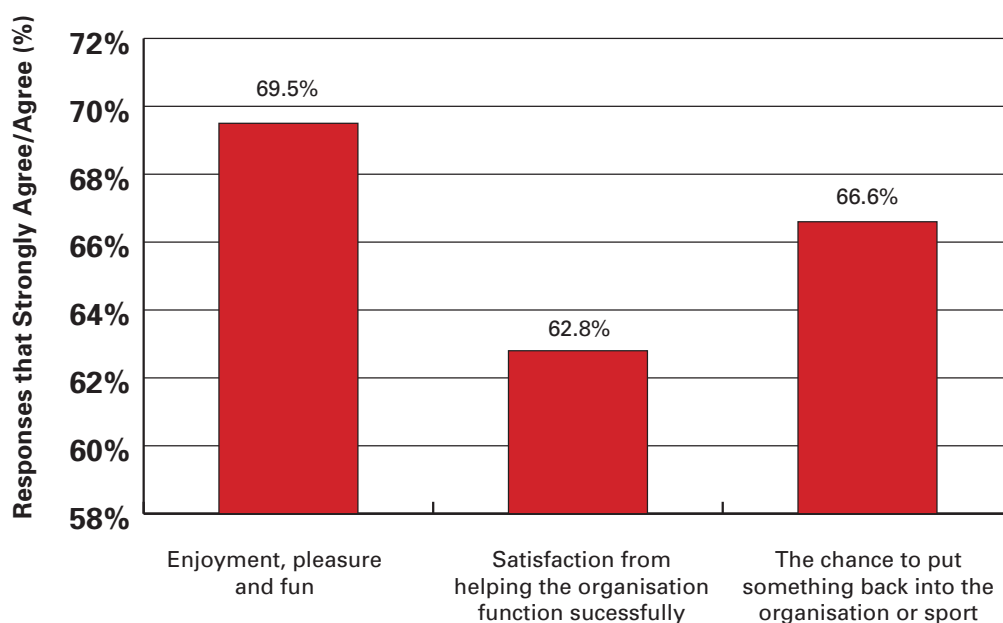
Figure 5: Volunteer Satisfaction

The barriers to volunteering are at a personal, educational and management level. The modern day volunteer is expected to be a skilled volunteer, it is more than just giving time; they also need to be competent and confident in their role. This requires club investment in their development and the creation of a learning environment that meets their educational, social and health needs. This requires transformation of club culture and structure, and the implementation of professional processes designed to retain the skilled volunteer workforce. These changes require local and national input in order to promote active and long-term engagement by participants and volunteers in junior sport at the local club level.

Programme design

Focus group volunteers were in agreement with the principles that underpinned positive youth sport programmes. These principles were (a) relationships, (b) fairness, (c) fun, (d) skill development, and (e) a social engagement. All of which align closely with the philosophy and operational structure of LISPA (Lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity) (MacPhail, Lyons, Quinn, Hughes, & Keane, 2010). Other skill and educational programmes also highlight these principles, for example BUNTUS and the Code of Ethics; however these initiatives were not specifically mentioned in the focus groups.

Relationships: Volunteers emphasised the importance of relationships with participants and that these relationships took time to develop. The relationships were based on respect for the participants, treating them as a person first and then as an athlete.

Fairness: Fairness was described as a value that coaches and volunteers needed to embed in their practice as participants understand and accept fairness (no train, no game).

Fun: Fun was an important component of learning. If they do not have fun they do not return.

Skill: If participants do not improve their skill level they do not return. The volunteer needs to have content and teaching knowledge so that they can create a learning environment and provide feedback on skill development.

Social engagement: Related to fun is the importance of providing opportunity for participants to engage with each other in activities conducted by the clubs. In some clubs this may take the form of social nights, for others it is the away trips. The participants and volunteers enjoy the trips and it is also good for bonding and the morale of the club.

You have got to get to know something about the athlete's background, and that would apply to both mainstream and professional leagues…you need to build a relationship between yourself and the kids… you need to improve their ability in sport. If they cannot do it properly they will not come back. They have to have fun doing what they are doing. They're having fun but they are learning at the same time and it's just to be able to figure out how to do that, you know. [Volunteer]

A recurring theme in all focus groups was the need to provide a variety of participation pathways. According to focus group members the emphasis is on competition pathways in clubs and they suggested that a recreational pathway might meet the needs of a greater number of participants and reduce dropout rates from sport and physical activity.

There was acknowledgement that dealing with children and youth requires different methods of engagement, and pedagogy. Volunteers had personal preferences for working with different age groups and genders and there was no evidence to suggest preference for any particular group. The volunteers did however articulate the challenges of working with youth describing puberty, attitude, peer pressure and competing agendas as positive challenges for volunteers to overcome.

The teenagers are more challenging. I think at this stage they are past the stage where their parents bring them. They are entering secondary school, they have their own opinions and they are definitely not afraid to express them and I think because they choose to be there you get a different attitude. You get a lot of attitude. [Volunteer]

Current research literature advocates for a child and not an athlete centred approach when providing children and youth with sport and physical activity opportunities. This approach focuses on participation rather than performance and has been shown to foster enjoyment, skill development and life-long participation in sport and physical activity. Evidence of child centred approaches being used in clubs were found in the focus group discussions, however the questionnaire data showed more complex methods of coaching and less evidence of a 'child centred' approach. A recommendation from this research is that sports policy clearly explains what is involved in a 'child centred' approaches to sport and physical activity, and clearly communicates the benefits of this type of approach. Volunteers were aware that sport and physical activity programmes that focus strictly on competition only service a minority of participants, and it is time to look at cultural and structural changes designed to meet the needs of a wider spectrum of young people. There are limited guidelines that explain and promote these strategies. The promotion and professional development required to enact a child-centred, or child first, sport second approach needs further commitment at a national level.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis the following needs were identified in combination with opportunities for capacity building to transform practice at local and national level. Many of the findings support previous research on volunteers in sport from an international and Irish context. There are four areas highlighted in this report:

1. Club administration
2. Recruitment and retention of volunteers
3. Volunteer education
4. Programme design

Club administration

Many of the barriers noted by volunteers are anchored in their perception of poor administration, personnel management, and communication. These results reflect Maleney's findings that poor administration and management practice at the local club level have a negative impact on volunteers (Maleney, 2007). Volunteers are often placed in positions without experience or the appropriate skill set because no one else takes responsibility for the role, and because there has been no succession planning. There are limited resources available on club administration and only a small minority of NGBs are developing these resources. Swim Ireland as part of their education package has a Team Manager Development Programme available to members (Swim Ireland), The Gaelic Athletic Association is creating a club manual and online resources designed to assist with club administration and club activity (GAA).

Sports administrators require support through education programmes and resources. There is evidence that in some pockets Local Sport Partnerships are investing in club development (Irish Sports Council, 2009); however, in most cases there has been minimal investment in the management, organisation and strategic development of local sport organisations. Education services could be developed and delivered through one channel or multiple channels. The Clubmark programme in the United Kingdom provides accreditation for clubs that meet a set of consistent and accepted operating standards. Club mark accreditation is administered either by the NGB or the County Sports Partnership (Clubmark, n.d.). In Australia, sports administration programmes are available and designed to enhance the administrative and management skills of people in these roles. The delivery platform is online to maximize access and these programmes are nationally accredited and independent of NGBs (http://www.assasa.asn.au/course.php).

The Local Sport Partnership programme (Fitzpatrick Associates, 2005; Irish Sports Council, 2009) is positioned to co-ordinate, promote, enhance and deliver components of sports administration programmes. However, the size of the LSP programme makes it difficult to have the extended reach required to service all clubs and volunteers. Coaching Ireland (Coaching Ireland, 2008) with its focus on training and education is well positioned to expand its current profile and remit to include sports administration accreditation. Although CI's strategy is coaching focused, professionally administered clubs positively shape the sporting experience for all involved, and education in this area dovetails into coaching strategy outcomes. The NGBs have the potential to develop sports specific information to support clubs in developing their administration and managerial skills. Swim Ireland and the Gaelic Athletics Association have both invested and provided resources to support sports administrators. Regardless of who takes responsibility for designing and delivering these programmes, a focus on club development is pivotal for ensuring club sport is sustainable in the Irish sport context.

Recruitment and retention of volunteers

Volunteers are the workforce in children's and youth sport. These people are active participants in the sport process just like the children and youth they work with. They want to display competence and confidence and this requires investment in volunteer recruitment and learning.

There are no formal pathways into volunteering and the most common form of recruitment is word-of-mouth. Pathways into volunteering are limited to those people with either a connection to the participant, the sport, the club, previous volunteering experience, or combination of the above. In contrast, Germany provides an example of how a formalized infrastructure can enhance the volunteer experience by providing information, training, coordination services, and a formal pathway between volunteers and organisations (GHK, 2010). The LSP programme was designed to provide a national structure to co-ordinate and promote the development of sport at local level (Fitzpatrick Associates, 2005). There is evidence to suggest that LSPs are engaging in the delivery and organisation of volunteer education and assisting clubs and groups to develop autonomous structures and codes of practice but to date they appear to have made little impact as a broker between volunteers and organisations (Fitzpatrick Associates, 2005; Irish Sports Council, 2009).

Volunteer pathways targeting youth involvement are conceptually a good idea, but there is no formal structure to help clubs develop, mentor and protect youth in these roles. There is international interest in developing youth volunteer programmes and pathways in all volunteer sectors (GHK, 2010; The Scottish Executive, 2004). The sport context provides a natural segue from athlete to volunteer or a parallel pathway where active participants can also work as volunteers in a club or organisation. To be empowered, these young people must depend on support from their club and parents. They need to be valued as members of the club and given opportunities to express their opinions and help make decisions on issues that affect them. Recognition for knowledge gained from the experience and/or an award system (for example, The President's Award - Gaisce) could provide added incentive for engagement in volunteering. To engage youth the first task is to change the image of volunteering and make it attractive and relevant to their context. Youth are interested in experiences that provide opportunity for them to be proactive and empowered.

The term volunteering no longer describes the role performed by the unpaid workforce in junior sport. The term is in need of rejuvenation and must reflect the skills, knowledge and value of the role if it is to attract and retain people in junior sport. For example, the term sport leader may more adequately capture the essence of the role.

People want more from the experience than personal satisfaction from contributing to the sport club. There is a general consensus that they perform a skilled role and training is required. They are prepared to deliver output but they also want and need input, this is the currency exchange. Time is an important commodity, it is a limited resource, it is a value laden concept, it must be respected, rewarded, and invested in so that people can develop skills, and perform effectively in their context.

The benefits of volunteering are recognised in the literature (Delaney & Fahey, 2005; Nichols & Shepherd, 2006) and supported by this research. The main benefits are personal development, health benefits, social engagement and networking, and opportunity to contribute to the community and play a role in the development of young people (Irish Sports Council, 2008). At the national level the ISC has been given the mandate to plan, lead and coordinate the sustainable development of competitive and recreational sport in Ireland. In the ISC vision statement the opening point is that everyone is encouraged and valued in sport (Irish Sports Council, 2008). It is time to make explicit what "everyone" represents, as all members of sports clubs and organisations expect an investment in their development. **The continual reaffirming from evidence based research that volunteering confers benefits for both parties (the volunteer and the recipient of the volunteering) creates opportunities for LSPs and local sport organisations to promote volunteering, while also reinforcing the need for local level organisations to invest in the retention of volunteers.**

The results also confirm previous research that highlights the influence of participation in sport on future volunteering (Maleney, 2007). Clubs would be wise to remind those working with children and youth that they are not only preparing sport participants, they are also nurturing the next generation of volunteers and administrators. Where there is opportunity to involve participants in these roles it should be encouraged, and where possible, these roles should be created to provide these experiences.

Volunteer education

In this research over 80% of volunteers performed a coaching role. Formal coach education programmes have been a rich site for instigating cultural and educational change in sport. According to volunteers and administrators, access to coach education was problematic. Opportunity to attend coaching courses is dictated to by numbers enrolling in the programme. This limits access, particularly in rural areas where there can be delays of up to 18 months, or in sports that are in the early stages of evolution and lack infrastructure and human resources for conducting courses across the country. There is a need and opportunity to investigate i) the criteria for conducting a course, and ii) alternative delivery platforms that can reach a wider audience. Recognition that volunteering requires specialist skills places responsibility on people to invest in continuous professional development. This can only be achieved through access to educational opportunity. It was also noted that volunteer commitment is greatly enhanced when courses take place on site, and time commitment is reduced.

The learning package preferred by volunteers is a combination of formal and informal education, and non-formal learning. Traditionally informal education has been highly valued by the volunteer but given minimal credit by those responsible for formal delivery of volunteer education (Walsh, 2004). The study on volunteering in the European Union (GHK 2010) highlights the lack of national systems for promoting recognition of coaching and the need to recognise skills and competencies for non-formal and informal learning. Volunteer coaches have specifically asked for access to coaching courses, opportunities to network and share practice, and formal mentoring. Coaches working with children and youth also asked for professional development to help them engage with these groups, in particular communication and management. **They want to know how to coach not just what to coach. These generic pedagogical skills could be delivered through a central portal, as these skills are not sport specific.** In Australia novice coaches can get access to introductory level material on coaching and officiating, it is delivered online on the Australian Sports Commission website and there is no cost to participants who receive a certificate on completion http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches/education/onlinecoach).

Validation of non-formal and informal learning has the potential to work as an incentive and reward for participation in voluntary activities, and as a recruitment strategy. It is imperative that NGBs and CI consider alternative platforms for the delivery of course material. Restricted access to course material and tutors has had a detrimental impact on the volunteer population in a number of rural areas.

Programme design

The general consensus amongst volunteers is that programme design for children and youth is inadequate and needs to change to meet the needs of a more diverse range of young people. Programme design relates to what values are privileged and the cultural outcome of these values. If the club values winning it privileges performance pathways, and invests in children, youth, and volunteers that reproduce these values in behaviour. Clubs have a major impact on children and youth's activity patterns over an extended period of time, as evidenced by the fact that 80% of current club members join before the age of 7 years (CSPPA, children's study). Clubs have a responsibility to create a safe environment that encourages children and youth to participate in activity and develop competence, confidence, and connection with other children and adults. Volunteers advocated for providing multiple pathways and opportunities for children and youth to continue in their sport regardless of ability and provide opportunity for them to form connections with other members of the club. There is little evidence of guidelines or resources to support clubs in establishing values and programmes that reflect a child first, sport second approach.

Recommendations

The one recommendation of this study is to invest in sport club development and their retention of their volunteer workforce. This is pivotal to the sustainability of youth sport. It requires the transformation of club culture and structure, and the implementation of professional processes at local and national level.

To progress this recommendation forward requires greater collaborative and joined up thinking amongst stakeholders and leadership from Department of Culture Tourism and Sport and the Irish Sports Council by:

- The establishment of a key stakeholder group whose purpose is to investigate how to strategically develop and deliver educational resources and programmes for sport club development in the Republic of Ireland. The composition of the key stakeholder group would include representatives from the ISC, Coaching Ireland, LSPs, NGBs and invited expertise. It would be appropriate to establish such a group to coincide with 2011 being the European Union Year of the Volunteer.

The following research findings have implications for the design and delivery of sports club education and should guide stakeholder thinking:

- Irish sports clubs require specific educational support and this knowledge should form part of the core content of the education programme:
    - Governance: The rules and practices that ensures an organization is serving its stakeholders (operating codes, bylaws, constitution)
    - Management: committees, volunteers, communication, health and safety, club finances, and programme development.
    - Strategic and Operational Planning: planning, change management, and monitoring and evaluation

- Access to education material is problematic and multifaceted approaches should be considered.
    - For example, a combination of hardcopy and online resources, face-to-face and online professional development caters for variation in learning styles, creates multiple access opportunities, and is considerate of the time-poor volunteer. There is potential for resources and programmes to be hosted and conducted by a number of organisations (i.e. Coaching Ireland, LSPs, NGBs, 3rd Level Institutions) to further enhance opportunity for access.

- Regular evaluation and monitoring of the programme
    - Evaluation and monitoring programmes enables organisations at a national and local level to measure success, build expertise and knowledge, and develop institutional memory. Traditionally in the Irish sport club context, knowledge has been located within people and not within the sport organisation. Internal and external evaluation creates opportunity for the local sport organisation to incorporate learning experiences into practice and policy. A future outcome of evaluation could be a national club accreditation award.

- Sports policy needs to clearly explain what is involved in a 'child centred' approaches to sport and physical activity, and clearly communicates the benefits of this type of approach.

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