

# IYV

## Research Program

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# Volunteer Motivation: What Drives Sports Volunteers?

## What is motivation?

Motivation is what drives people to act. It helps to determine where people direct their energy and how hard they work.

Research undertaken for the International Year of Volunteers identified eight distinct motives for volunteering for sports organizations. The strength of these motives varied according to age and sex, and the role of the volunteer (leadership volunteers, e.g., board or committee, versus hands-on volunteers, e.g., those who do office work or fundraising). For this survey, 621 sports volunteers were asked to respond to a 34-item questionnaire, in which they rated motives for volunteering on a scale from one to seven. Higher values represented more important motives.

## Motive 1: Helping the community

The desire to help their community is the strongest motive for volunteering in sports organizations. In general, this motive was stronger among older people (those 45 and older) than among younger people (those between the ages of 15 and 44). It was also stronger among leadership volunteers.

## Motive 2: Helping others

Sports volunteers are motivated by the desire to help others. This motivation was stronger among women than among men.

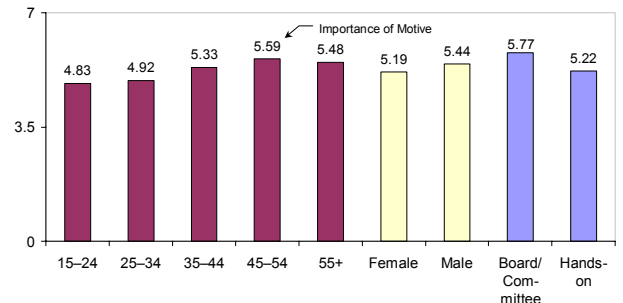
## Motive 3: Social interaction

The social interaction afforded by volunteering for sports organizations, e.g., meeting new people and making new friends, is an especially strong motivator for younger volunteers (those between the ages of 15 and 34). This motive was stronger among women than among men.

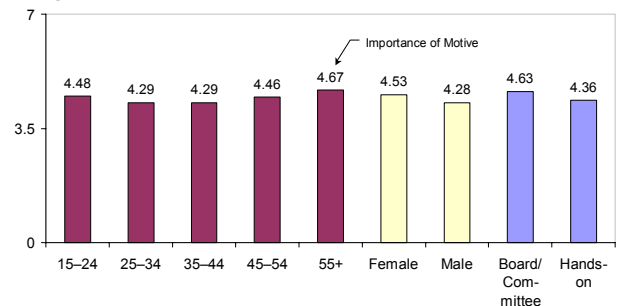
## Motive 4: Recognition

Some people volunteer for sports organizations to gain recognition and status in the community. Generally, this motive was strongest among younger volunteers, especially those aged 15-24.

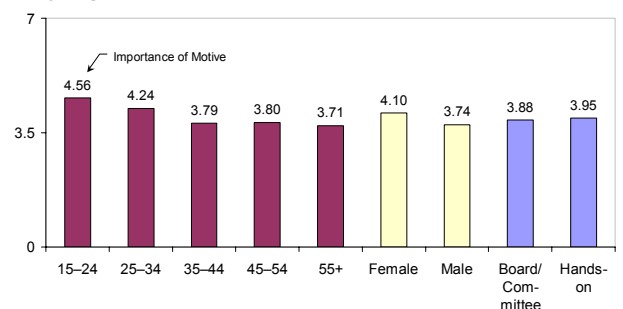
Importance of the Motive "Helping the Community," by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



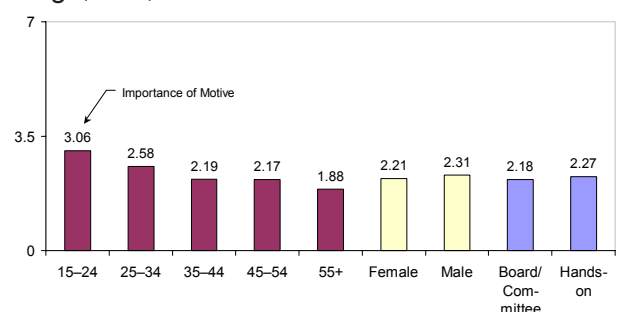
Importance of the Motive "Helping Others," by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



Importance of the Motive "Social Interaction," by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



Importance of the Motive "Recognition," by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



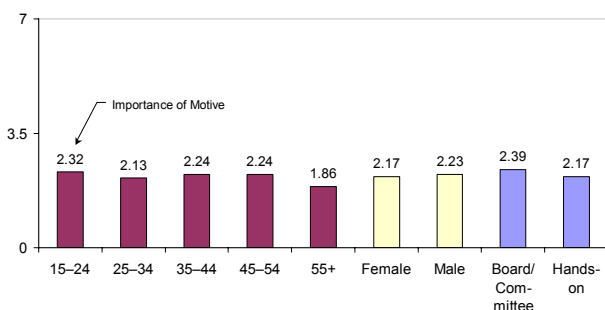
## Motive 5: Cultural norms

The belief that volunteering is “the right thing to do” motivates some sports volunteers. The strength of this motive was roughly similar for all age groups.

## Motive 6: Diversion

Volunteering for sports organizations can be a way for people to get away from their daily activities and troubles. This motivation was stronger among younger volunteers (those aged 15-34) than among older volunteers. It was also stronger among “hands-on” volunteers than among leadership volunteers.

Importance of the Motive “Cultural Norms,” by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



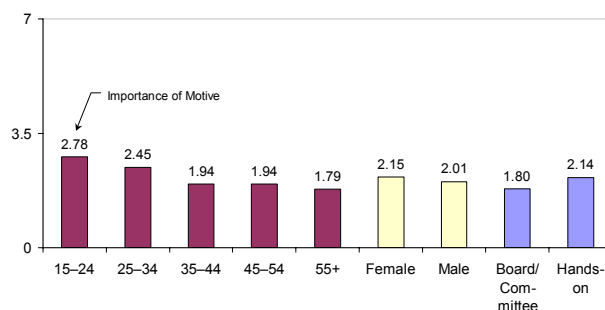
## Motive 7: Career advancement

Volunteering for sports organizations is sometimes seen as a way to get a job or to advance in one’s current career. This motivation was strongest among younger volunteers, especially those between the ages of 15 and 24, and declined with age.

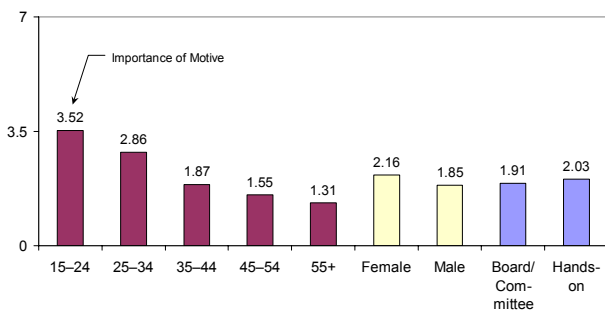
## Motive 8: Obligation

People sometimes volunteer for sports organizations because they feel pressured by friends, family or others in their lives. The strength of this motive was roughly similar across age groups and was somewhat stronger among men than women.

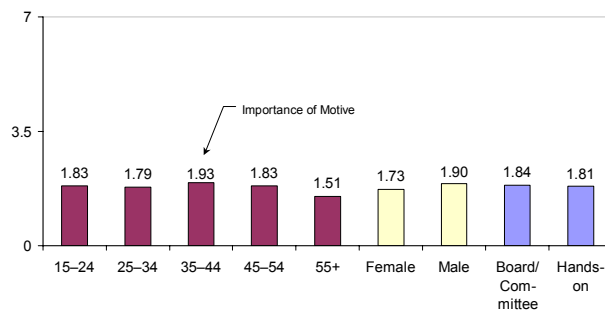
Importance of the Motive “Diversion,” by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



Importance of the Motive “Career Advancement,” by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



Importance of the Motive “Obligation,” by Age, Sex, and Role of Volunteer



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### Research Information

Participants in this survey of 621 volunteers were from various sports organizations across Saskatchewan. Respondents ranged

in age from 12 to 79 (the average age was 42). Half were from urban areas, 51% were women, 20% were board or committee members, and 80% were classified as “hands-on” volunteers.

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For more information on the International Year of Volunteers, visit [www.nonprofitscan.ca](http://www.nonprofitscan.ca).

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