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Volunteer retention: Examining intentions and behaviours in the wrap-up mode of a professional recurring small-scale sport event

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ABSTRACT

Research question: The purpose of this study was to explore volunteers' intentions and behaviours in the wrap-up mode of a professional recurring small-scale sport event.

Research methods: Thirteen volunteers completed an online self-administered questionnaire 10 months after the 2019 Osprey Valley Open, a professional small-scale golf tournament held annually in the Greater Toronto Area (Ontario, Canada) since 2015. The questionnaire included closed-ended and open-ended questions about volunteers' intentions and behaviours. Data were thematically analysed in NVivo12.

Results and findings: All volunteers reported having positive intentions towards the 2020 Osprey Valley Open. Eleven volunteers continued their involvement with the event as they completed their application to participate again. The positive volunteer intentions among seven participants led to their participation as volunteers in other sport (e.g. organizations and/or events) and non-sport settings (i.e. organizations). The remaining participants indicated no involvement in additional volunteer opportunities after the event.

Implications: Findings demonstrate positive volunteer intentions can create different types of formal sport participation behaviours among volunteers in the wrap-up mode of the event lifecycle. Notably, legacies in small and recurring sport events occur via volunteers' ability to repeat their involvement and pursue additional opportunities in and beyond sport.

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Sport event volunteers (hereafter, volunteers) are an essential part of sport events as they contribute their time and energy without financial compensation (Hoye et al., 2020). From small-scale to large-scale events, volunteers make up most of the sport event workforce (Parent & Ruetsch, 2021). Despite their criticality, volunteers are difficult to find, recruit, and train (Hoye et al., 2020). Even when sport managers successfully find, recruit, and train their volunteers,

research shows organizing committees lose approximately one-third of their volunteers leading up to and during the event because of issues like role ambiguity, boredom, and personal emergencies (Parent & Ruetsch, 2021). Thus, given the difficulty in obtaining volunteers, the ability for sport managers to *retain* their volunteers not only during the event but year after year becomes essential for the long-term sustainability of the event. Successful

volunteer retention can also promote strategic outcomes like a competitive advantage as managers' benefit from an experienced and qualified workforce requiring limited to no training or orientation to deliver the event (Lachance & Parent, 2021b). This premise is especially important for *recurring* sport events given the significant financial resources and time devoted to recruiting and training volunteers as well as for *small-scale* sport events given their already limited capacity such as financial and human resources (Kerwin et al., 2015; Parent & Ruetsch, 2021). In particular, most volunteer research has been conducted in mega or large-scale sport events, thereby neglecting those at the lower levels of the sport system (cf. Cuskelly et al., 2021; Dickson et al., 2014).

Though no agreed-upon definition of volunteer retention exists, it is generally understood as the number of individuals who continue their involvement with an event or organization (Hoye et al., 2020). Retention is operationalized by focusing on volunteers' intentions (e.g. perceptions among an individual about the likelihood of their involvement continuing with an event) and subsequent behaviours (e.g. volunteering again for the same event; Bakhsh et al., 2021; Hoye et al., 2020). As noted in the literature review below, existing research on volunteer retention in sport events has predominantly focused on volunteer *intentions* (e.g. Aisbett et al., 2015; Bakhsh et al., 2021; Doherty, 2009; Downward & Ralston, 2006; Hallmann & Harms, 2012); few have examined how volunteers' intentions lead to actual *behaviours* post-event (i.e. in the wrap-up mode; Parent & Ruetsch, 2021), perpetuating an assumption that intentions automatically result in behaviours, in this case, retaining volunteers. Arguably, losing one-third of your volunteers (Parent & Ruetsch, 2021) is likely amplified between events (i.e. volunteer retention from one edition of an event to the next) given the time-lapse and the potential for unforeseen circumstances and barriers which can arise, such

as lack of time, familial demands, personal health, and the COVID-19 pandemic (Gellweiler et al., 2019; Hallmann et al., 2018; Hamm-Kerwin et al., 2009; Lachance, 2021; Misener et al., 2010). Therefore, even if an individual may initially *intend* to volunteer the following year, circumstances could impede them from returning to the event (i.e. being retained as a volunteer), demonstrating the potential problem with this underlying assumption and the need for empirical research on this topic.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore volunteers' intentions and behaviours in the wrap-up mode of a professional recurring small-scale sport event. In this study, retention is understood according to volunteers' intentions and behaviours in the wrap-up mode. From a practical standpoint, this study's findings aid sport event managers in their attempt to retain more volunteers and provide support for claims from policy makers regarding potential social impacts to be developed in a host region or city (e.g. experienced and qualified workforce).

Literature review

The sport volunteer literature is reviewed to provide readers with an overview of examined phenomena and research designs. This literature review includes a focus on relevant literature investigating volunteers' intentions and behaviours given the study's purpose.

Sport event volunteer research

The volunteer literature has become a large area of research in sport management (Kim & Cuskelly, 2017; Wicker, 2017). Research on volunteers has been concerned with examining various constructs like their economic value (Wicker, 2019), recruitment and selection (Cuskelly et al., 2021), motivations (Farrell et al., 1998), satisfaction (Pauline, 2011), role ambiguity (Rogalsky et al., 2016), commitment (MacLean & Hamm, 2007), sense of community

(Kerwin et al., 2015), experiences (Lachance & Parent, 2020, 2021a), and volunteer legacy (Doherty, 2009; Sand et al., 2017).

Despite the previous research, two knowledge gaps are present in the volunteer literature. First, most volunteer research has examined constructs in the event lifecycle's planning or implementation mode. This notion is demonstrated by the collection of data either before (Costa et al., 2006; Cuskelly et al., 2021; Downward & Ralston, 2005; Hallmann et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2018; Lachance & Parent, 2020), during (Lachance & Parent, 2021a; Pauline, 2011), or as soon as the event is completed (Aisbett et al., 2015; Alexander et al., 2015; Bakhsh et al., 2021; Dickson et al., 2017; Gellweiler et al., 2019; Lachance et al., 2021).

The dominance of planning and implementation mode research is problematic as there is a limited direct, empirical understanding of phenomena among volunteers such as intentions or behaviours in the wrap-up mode. For instance, previous knowledge on future volunteer intentions has yet to understand the intention-behaviour relationship after the event such as positive intentions create formal sport participation behaviours like being retained because of the data gathering approach. At best, research has gathered data only a week or two after the event (Hallmann & Harms, 2012; Kim et al., 2009). This approach is problematic, considering volunteers might feel more "inspired" (Bakhsh et al., 2021) or be in a "honeymoon phase" filled with euphoria and excitement (Holmes et al., 2018; Kodama et al., 2013; Lachance & Parent, 2021a) following the event, which could skew their initial perceptions and our understanding of this phenomenon (Nichols & Ralston, 2012). Thus, this issue demonstrates the need to examine intentions at a longer time point following the event in the wrap-up mode.

The gap in knowledge is also problematic as outcomes of the volunteer experience in the wrap-up mode of the event lifecycle could have important impacts, such as increasing

sport participation in the host city or region in the form of volunteering (Bakhsh et al., 2021). However, this knowledge gap in the literature remains despite calls to further investigate outcomes from participating in a sport event as a volunteer (Bakhsh et al., 2021), such as the participation intentions vs. actual behaviours (e.g. whether or not individuals repeated or continued their involvement) following the event. Such knowledge would be important to provide empirical evidence about volunteer experience outcomes, such as creating a volunteer legacy (Doherty, 2009; Fairley et al., 2016; Nichols & Ralston, 2012), as individuals felt inspired from their involvement and, thus, returned to volunteer in future editions of the event. Further, though overlooked in current research, the wrap-up mode still occupies an important role in the success of sport events given outcomes like legacies and impacts occur during this mode (Parent & Ruetsch, 2021).

The second knowledge gap relates to most research in the volunteer literature being conducted on one-off, large or mega sport events (e.g. Bang & Chelladurai, 2009; Cuskelly et al., 2021; Dickson et al., 2014; Downward et al., 2005; Downward & Ralston, 2005; Fairley et al., 2007; Farrell et al., 1998). Though research is important to understand phenomena related to volunteers in larger-scaled sport events, fewer studies have been concerned with recurring events held annually or bi-annually in the same city or host region (Parent & Ruetsch, 2021) and those small-scale in nature (Kerwin et al., 2015; Lachance et al., 2021). This second knowledge gap is problematic as recurring, smaller-scaled sport events have been argued to be more beneficial in the achievement of positive event-related outcomes in comparison to large and mega sport events (Chalip, 2006; Taks et al., 2015, 2017). Such outcomes could, for example, include volunteers having a positive intention and actual behaviours (e.g. retained for future editions of the sport event).

Sport event volunteer retention: intentions and behaviours

Research on future volunteer intentions is scant (Hallmann et al., 2018). For example, there is a smaller body of research in the sport event volunteer literature examining volunteer retention via intentions following the event's completion (Aisbett et al., 2015; Bakhsh et al., 2021; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; Kim et al., 2009). Notably, Downward and Ralston (2006) found previous attendance at sport events positively impacted future volunteer intentions, while Doherty (2009) found higher levels of perceived task overload and personal inconvenience negatively impacted volunteers' future intentions. Koutrou and Barber (2021) suggested role ambiguity impacts intentions among volunteers after an event, thereby advocating for managers to properly train and educate their workforce to improve experiences in assigned roles. Further, when comparing planning and on-site volunteers, Doherty found future volunteer intentions in the former to be predicted by task overload, while the latter was influenced by skill enrichment, social enrichment, and positive life experiences. In turn, first-time volunteers are more inspired from their experience than returning volunteers, resulting in higher levels of future volunteer intentions (Bakhsh et al., 2021).

Beyond the lack of research on future volunteer intentions (Hallmann et al., 2018) lies an additional issue about volunteers' behaviours after their involvement with a sport event. This issue is the result of studies examining future volunteer intentions, yet, ignoring the influence of these intentions on actual behaviours post-event (Aisbett et al., 2015; Bakhsh et al., 2021; Doherty, 2009; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; Kim et al., 2009). As such, a taken-for-granted assumption is present where future volunteer intentions are believed to influence individuals to repeat their involvement in the same event or pursue additional opportunities in other settings in the host region or city.

However, there is no empirical evidence for this assumption. Therefore, examining the intentions and behaviours of volunteers in the wrap-up mode of the event lifecycle would advance previous research solely focused on future volunteer intentions to explore whether these intentions influence the behaviours of individuals to be retained by a sport event for future editions. This approach would also answer recent calls for research on outcomes of volunteers in the wrap-up mode (e.g. Bakhsh et al., 2021; Doherty & Patil, 2019; Lachance et al., 2021) to address the dominant approach of examining phenomena in the planning or implementation mode (cf. Cuskelly et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 1998; Hallmann et al., 2020; Lachance & Parent, 2020, 2021a; MacLean & Hamm, 2007).

Materials and methods

The following section presents the study's context. This is followed by a description of the data collection method and analysis process.

Context

The study's context is the 2019 Osprey Valley Open (OVO), a professional golf tournament held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. This event was selected as it is a recurring sport event and small-scale in nature, thus providing a juxtaposition on the intentions and behaviours of volunteers from past research derived in a one-off large-scale sport event (e.g., Commonwealth Games; Downward & Ralston, 2006). To demonstrate its significance for the Greater Toronto Area, this event is the only professional golf tournament to have been held successfully, with recurring editions, since 2016. The OVO's recurring nature is compared to other larger, one-off professional golf tournaments like the RBC Canadian Open or CP Women's Open. Volunteers from the OVO are integral to its

successful delivery, with various formal roles assigned related to transportation, scoring, security, marshalling, and hospitality. A total of 256 volunteers assisted with the event's delivery.

Data collection

A survey research methodology (Babbie, 2016) featuring an online self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire comprised 22 closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions were specific to socio-demographic information like age, gender, and education. In turn, open-ended questions focused on the intentions and behaviours of volunteers after the event and included items such as: "How or why did your volunteer experience at the 2019 OVO impact you to volunteer at the 2020 OVO?"; "Why do you intend to volunteer for the 2020 OVO?"; "If you have not applied to volunteer at the 2020 OVO, do you intend to volunteer?"; "Since the completion of the 2019 OVO, have you volunteered again in the context of organizations and/or events?"; and "Why did you choose to volunteer for these organizations/events since the 2019 OVO?"

Though 256 volunteers were present at the event, 25 participants provided their contact information (i.e. personal email address) to the research team. This contact information was acquired from a separate questionnaire conducted as part of a larger research project where participants had the opportunity to provide their personal email addresses after completing a post-event questionnaire. Nevertheless, the study's dataset and results are unique to this paper.

The first author sent the study's questionnaire link via email to all 25 participants on May 10th, 2020, and a reminder email was sent to participants on May 19th, 2020. Following the reminder email, data collection ended on May 24th, 2020, at which point, 13 volunteers had completed the questionnaire. To

respect the university ethics certificate obtained for this study, participants are not named; instead, pseudonyms are used (e.g. Volunteer 1, Volunteer 2, etc.). The questionnaire was not piloted and no additional methods (e.g. interviews) were considered to understand potential nuances in the results.

Data analysis

All data were inputted into NVivo 12 where a thematic analysis was undertaken according to Braun and Clarke's (2022) six phases: (1) familiarizing yourself with the dataset; (2) coding; (3) generating initial themes; (4) developing and reviewing themes; (5) refining, defining, and naming themes; and (6) writing up. The first author began by reading through all questionnaire responses. After reading through the dataset twice, the first author proceeded to "tag" various passages (e.g. experience, relationships) from the participant responses as initial codes. Next, these initial codes were grouped into categories (e.g. positive reasons for intentions and behaviours) based on their content to further identify potential themes. Following this, the themes identified by the first author were presented and reviewed by the remainder of the research team. This was done to confirm the first author's interpretation of the data and ensure the dataset's "story" was well represented in the analysis. No issues were noted in this phase of the analysis, so the research team proceeded to define and name the identified themes. The result and representation of this analysis are presented in the following section.

Results

The sample's socio-demographic data are first presented. This is followed by the two identified themes: (1) volunteers' intentions and behaviours towards the OVO and (2) volunteers' intentions and behaviours beyond the OVO.

Sample characteristics

This study's sample (see Table 1) was mostly comprised of males ($n = 10$) and adults over the age of 60 ($n = 12$). Most participants had a level of education above high school ($n = 7$), and most had a household income above \$60,000 (CAD; $n = 7$). The assigned volunteer positions for the 2019 OVO for our participants were mostly associated with roles requiring on-course access like caddies ($n = 5$), scoring ($n = 1$), starter ($n = 1$), and water/on course ($n = 1$). One participant had a role related to registration (back-of-house role) and four did not disclose their role.

Theme 1: volunteers' intentions and behaviours towards the OVO

Volunteers' intentions toward the event 10 months after its completion were reported as positive. These positive future volunteer intentions created repeated behaviours among volunteers. This repeated behaviour from positive intentions is associated with 11 of 13 volunteers applying to be involved with the next edition of the OVO. This positive impact of intentions on volunteers' behaviour was attributed to four factors: positive volunteer experience, social interactions, contributing to local communities, and love of golf. However, barriers to intentions and behaviours were also found. These impacts are described below and summarized in Table 2.

Overall, this theme's results highlight the presence of different motivation types, namely egoistic, altruistic, and solidary (Downward & Ralston, 2005, 2006; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; MacLean & Hamm, 2007). These motivation types are important to consider as they provide insights on the reasons for positive intentions and behaviours to occur after the event. In turn, barriers impeding positive intentions and behaviours to occur relate to prior research on older adult volunteers (Hamm-Kerwin et al., 2009; Misener et al., 2010;

Mukherjee, 2011) and environmental conditions (Lachance, 2021). These notions are elaborated upon in the discussion section.

Positive volunteer experience

Volunteers reported their positive experiences from the 2019 OVO motivated them to continue their involvement with this particular event. This positive perception about their experiences was attributed to organizing committee characteristics, such as their ability to be well-organized, communicate with volunteers, and successfully deliver the event. These organizing committee characteristics are highlighted in the following quotations: "very organized and an overall positive experience" (Volunteer 1), "the event was professionally run ... Communication was well done and timely" (Volunteer 3), "[the organizing committee members] were friendly and helpful" (Volunteer 4), and "[the organizing committee] did a great job and made me feel very welcome and appreciated" (Volunteer 11).

Social interactions

Specific to social interactions, volunteers attributed their interest in volunteering for the event to meet others during their experience. For instance, Volunteer 10 added they "enjoyed meeting new people," while Volunteer 13 explained:

I met some really interesting people during the rain delays and out on the golf course who I would later come across in unrelated events – such as meeting Brooke Henderson's uncle, who was a caddy volunteer as well. And, I met a professional caddy who was somewhat helpful in me getting to caddy for a professional during the CP Canadian Women's Golf Championship later in the summer.

Another feature of these social interactions was a feeling of camaraderie among the volunteers at the event, as seen in the following quotations: "there was good camaraderie" (Volunteer 6); and "all volunteers are friendly, obliging, and collectively try to make sure the event is

Table 1. Sample characteristics.

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education level	Income	Volunteer position
Volunteer 1	60	Male	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose
Volunteer 2	69	Male	Postgraduate	More than \$100k	Scoring
Volunteer 3	60	Male	College Diploma	\$20–39k	Caddy
Volunteer 4	40	Male	Postgraduate	More than \$100k	Caddy
Volunteer 5	64	Female	Postgraduate	\$60–79k	Water/On course
Volunteer 6	65	Male	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose
Volunteer 7	59	Female	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose
Volunteer 8	62	Male	College Diploma	More than \$100k	Starter
Volunteer 9	66	Male	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose	Prefer not to disclose
Volunteer 10	79	Male	High School	Prefer not to disclose	Caddy Master
Volunteer 11	81	Male	Postgraduate	\$60–79k	Caddy
Volunteer 12	81	Female	High School	\$60–79k	Registration
Volunteer 13	67	Male	Undergraduate	More than \$100k	Caddy

successful” (Volunteer 10). The importance of these social interactions is demonstrated by its impact on the intentions and behaviours of these volunteers to continue their involvement with the OVO.

Contributing to local communities

The volunteers’ repeated behaviour also related to their desire to contribute to the local community. Volunteers stated they chose to apply to be involved in next year’s event because of altruistic-based motives, as demonstrated in the following quotations: “continue to help... enjoy helping people/causes” (Volunteer 2); “I feel the need to contribute to the success of the programmes” (Volunteer 11); and “I enjoy giving back, particularly when it comes to golf – it gives me immense satisfaction” (Volunteer 13).

Love of golf

Volunteers chose to continue their involvement with the OVO because of a personal interest in golf. Specifically, volunteers mentioned they had a particular love for golf where their roles (e.g. caddy, scoring) allowed them to have unprecedented access to the field of competition. This notion is demonstrated in the following quotations: “I love golf and saw a lot of great golf from volunteering” (Volunteer 5); “I enjoy the game of golf and feel privileged to be ‘inside the ropes’ where I can see

firsthand how professional golfers approach the game” (Volunteer 13); and “it comes down to how much you either enjoy or not enjoy the event. Also being a golfer, watching the event players is an interesting experience with great young talent” (Volunteer 9).

Barriers to intentions and behaviours

Beyond the positive intentions and repeat behaviours noted above, two volunteers (Volunteers 4 and 8) did not consider seeking continued involvement with the OVO. This lack of repeat behaviour – despite positive perceptions of future volunteer intentions – can be explained by two factors. The first factor was the COVID-19 pandemic, which both participants noted, given the underlying uncertainty about the event’s hosting due to the virus’s spread and restrictions imposed by governments and health authorities. This first factor was seen in the following quotations: “COVID-19, cancellation of tournament” (Volunteer 4); and “COVID-19 risks have interceded and whether or not the event is going to happen” (Volunteer 8). Second, one participant noted their lack of awareness about volunteer applications being available for next year’s edition of the OVO to explain not continuing their involvement: “I was unaware of the application for this year” (Volunteer 8). Nevertheless, it is important to consider that a lack of repeated behaviour among these two participants was

Table 2. Volunteers' intentions and behaviours.

Pseudonym	Future volunteer intentions	Behaviour towards the event	Reasons for continued behaviour towards the event	Behaviour (s) beyond the event	Reason(s) for behaviour (s) beyond the event	Type(s) of volunteer opportunities beyond the event
Volunteer 1	Positive	Yes	Positive experience; Meeting others while volunteering; Professional organizing committee	No	Busy schedule	N/A
Volunteer 2	Positive	Yes	Contributing to local community; Enjoyment from helping others; Successful perception of the event's delivery Organization and execution of organizing committee	No	Travelling; Personal health reasons (e.g. surgeries)	N/A
Volunteer 3	Positive	Yes	Enjoyment of on-course experience; Free-time available; Positive experience; Professionally executed event; Communication by organizing committee	Yes	Previously involved before 2019 OVO	Minor hockey association; Provincial curling organization
Volunteer 4	Positive	No	COVID-19	Yes	Positive experience from the 2019 OVO	Local soup kitchen
Volunteer 5	Positive	Yes	Love of golf; Positive experience; Meeting others while volunteering	Yes	Previously involved before 2019 OVO	Local church
Volunteer 6	Positive	Yes	Event atmosphere; Love of golf; Camaraderie among volunteers	No	Lack of opportunities in local community	N/A
Volunteer 7	Positive	Yes	Positive experience; Professional and organized organizing committee; Enjoyment of on-course access	Yes	Previously involved before 2019 OVO	Professional golf tournament; Two local non-profit organizations
Volunteer 8	Positive	Yes	Positive experience	No	COVID-19; Lack of time	N/A
Volunteer 9	Positive	Yes	Enjoyment of on-course access; Positive experience	No	Lack of time; Work commitments	N/A
Volunteer 10	Positive	Yes	Positive experience; Enjoyment of assigned roles; Well-organized event; Meeting others while volunteering; Enjoyment of on-course access	No	Lack of time; Work commitments	N/A
Volunteer 11	Positive	No	Unaware of applications for next year's event; COVID-19	Yes	Enjoyment of volunteering and being involved; Contributing to local community and the success of programmes	Provincial-level golf tournament; Local non-profit organization
Volunteer 12	Positive	Yes	Positive experience	Yes	Positive experience from the 2019 OVO	Provincial-level golf tournament
Volunteer 13	Positive	Yes	Love of golf; Enjoyment of on-course access; Contributing to local community; Meeting others while volunteering; Communication by organizing committee; Well-organized and delivered event	Yes	Previously involved before 2019 OVO	Two professional golf tournaments

present despite their reported positive perceptions of future volunteer intentions.

Theme 2: volunteers' intentions and behaviours beyond the OVO

Results demonstrated seven volunteers pursued additional volunteer opportunities after their involvement with the 2019 OVO. Their involvement occurred within other organizations and/or events after the event. These results are described below according to sport and non-sport settings.

Overall, this theme's results suggest sport events who create positive intentions among its volunteer workforce can lead to behaviours inside and beyond sport, thereby extending prior research on this topic as it relates to legacies from mega-sport events (Koutrou & Berber, 2021; Koutrou et al., 2016). The results also provide empirical evidence regarding social impacts from hosting smaller-scaled recurring sport events (Chalip, 2006; Taks et al., 2015, 2017). These points are elaborated upon in the discussion section.

Involvement in sport settings after the event

Five volunteers were involved with sport-related organization(s) and/or event(s) 10 months after the OVO. Specific to organizations, the types in which volunteers were involved with varied as some noted a minor hockey association ($n = 1$), a provincial/territorial curling association ($n = 1$), and community-level non-profit organizations ($n = 2$). In turn, four of these five volunteers pursued additional opportunities in the context of sport events (i.e. Volunteers 7, 11, 12, and 13). The types of events noted were specific to the sport of golf, including amateur provincial/territorial ($n = 2$) and professional tournaments ($n = 2$).

Volunteers attributed their involvement in other organization(s) and/or event(s) to an overall enjoyment for being involved as a volunteer rather than gaining personal benefits

like work experience or materials (e.g. uniforms). This notion was demonstrated in the following quotation:

Like the other events that I'm involved in, the 2019 event reinforced my love for volunteering in an area that I am passionate about. If it had been a bad experience, it may have lessened my enthusiasm elsewhere – but that's not the case whatsoever. (Volunteer 13)

Additional volunteers stated their reason for volunteering with other organization(s) and/or event(s) is because they were already doing so before their experience at the 2019 OVO. Volunteers 3, 7, and 13 are examples of this reason. Though, this was not the case for all participants: exceptions to this case include Volunteers 11 and 12 as they only began their involvement with other organization(s)/event(s) after the OVO. Nevertheless, this demonstrates OVO volunteers are involved in sport settings – namely, organizations and events – after their experience with the event.

Involvement in non-sport settings after the event

Two volunteers were involved in non-sport settings 10 months after the OVO. This involvement, however, is specific to the context of organizations rather than events (as presented above). Specifically, Volunteer 4 noted they were involved in the social services industry as they volunteered for a community soup kitchen. In turn, Volunteer 5 was involved in the religious industry given they volunteered for a local church. Though these results suggest OVO volunteers pursued additional opportunities in non-sport settings after the event, both participants noted their involvement predated the event itself. Thus, these two volunteers simply continued their involvement with their organizations after the OVO's completion.

Discussion

The discussion centres on volunteers' intentions and behaviours towards the event and

beyond (i.e. sport and non-sport settings), followed by barriers.

Volunteers' intentions and behaviours towards and beyond the event

Results suggest motivation was important for volunteers' positive intentions and behaviours toward the event (Downward & Ralston, 2005, 2006; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; MacLean & Hamm, 2007), thereby being retained for future editions. This motivation, however, was related to egoistic, altruistic, and solidary-based motives among volunteers, which appeared to drive their intentions and behaviours. This result supports previous claims regarding motivation's ability to influence volunteers' intentions and behaviours after their experience with an event (e.g. Downward & Ralston, 2005, 2006; Farrell et al., 1998; Hallmann & Harms, 2013; MacLean & Hamm, 2007).

From an egoistic standpoint, volunteers' motivation to continue their involvement were partially attributed to the unprecedented access to the field of competition, thereby supporting previous claims to this effect in mega (Holmes et al., 2018; Kodama et al., 2013; Koutrou et al., 2016), large (Koutrou & Berber, 2021), and smaller-scaled sport events (Lachance & Parent, 2020, 2021a). This finding compares to work on volunteer coaches in enduring organizations whereby learning (i.e. egoistic) drives intentions and behaviours (Griffiths & Armour, 2012, 2013). Contrarily, this study's results demonstrated the importance of altruistic-based motivation given its impact on volunteers' will to contribute to their local communities led to their continued involvement with the event (Downward & Ralston, 2005, 2006; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; MacLean & Hamm, 2007). In turn, solidary-based motivation should also be considered when examining volunteers' intentions and behaviours after the event. Beyond the ability for sense of community to impact the volunteer experience (Costa et al., 2006; Kerwin et al.,

2015; Lachance & Parent, 2020, 2021a), this study supports the value of solidary-based motivation – that is, interpersonal relationships and social interactions between individuals (Parent & Ruetsch, 2021) – to influence volunteers to continue their involvement with the event (Fairley et al., 2007, 2016; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; MacLean & Hamm, 2007).

Though prior event research on volunteers' intentions and behaviours has found differences according to the group such as planning versus on site (Doherty, 2009) or gender and types of sports involved with (Downward et al., 2005), this study suggests the need to consider the type of setting in which the volunteering occurs after the event's completion. Specifically, results demonstrated volunteers' positive intentions after the event led them to pursue additional volunteering opportunities in two settings: sport and non-sport. On one hand, individuals choose to volunteer in other sport organizations and/or events within their local communities after their experience. This behaviour suggests individuals seek to continue their involvement in a sport setting (i.e. organizations and/or events) because of their motivation, such as a passion for a particular sport (e.g. golf; MacLean & Hamm, 2007; Pauline, 2011). This passion for a sport, however, could also be disadvantageous for volunteers as their loyalty and interests could make them more inclined to be overworked and lead to role exit (Gellweiler et al., 2019).

On the other hand, some volunteers pursued additional opportunities to be involved beyond sport, yet specific to organizations in the social services and religious industries. This behaviour suggests volunteers can contribute to additional industries beyond sport as they seek to continue their involvement in organizations after their event volunteer experience. This extends prior discussions on behaviours of volunteers in sport-related settings considering their involvement after an event also occurs in non-sport-related settings (Doherty, 2009; Downward et al., 2005; Fairley et al., 2007,

2016). Further, pursuing volunteer opportunities in non-sport organizations suggests these individuals are willing to be involved in an enduring institution compared to events, which are temporary in nature. This result could also be explained by the potential presence of greater opportunities to volunteer in non-sport-related organizations rather than sport events.

An additional noteworthy discussion point resides in the broader volunteer culture of the region and country in which the event is hosted. Specifically, prior research has demonstrated the prominence of volunteering in Norway whereby a strong disposition to contribute to local communities via a sense of community is found (Kristiansen et al., 2015; Sand et al., 2017). As such, a broader culture fostering volunteering in a region and country could create longer term sport participation after an event. This volunteer culture is arguably also found in Canada and Australia given their commonalities as Commonwealth nations with long histories of amateur sport driven by the contributions of volunteers (Hoye et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the point here is to consider the impact of culture on the long-term intentions and behaviours of volunteers following an event.

This study suggests the distinct features of smaller-scaled and recurring sport events compared those larger and one-off in nature (e.g. Olympics, Paralympics) like having less financial capital and human resources are important to consider for volunteer retention. Specifically, small and recurring sport events held within local communities are arguable more accessible and create opportunities for continual volunteerism. For instance, volunteers can be involved in their local communities in organizations and/or events whereby geographical accessibility is promoted in addition to limiting potential socio-economic barriers (e.g. time, education, marital status, income). This compares to larger and one-off sport events like the Olympics whereby volunteer selection is rigorous and typically involves temporary geographical displacement and financial

capital to fund personal transportation, lodging, and food. However, smaller-scale and recurring sport events arguably offer a distinct opportunity to create long-term volunteer retention considering they offer an incentive to be perennially involved, for example with the OVO, in addition to contributing to other organizations and/or events in their local communities.

This study demonstrated volunteers' behaviours after the event were associated with seeking additional opportunities to be involved in organizations and/or events that were both sport and non-sport related. The results suggest that, following their experience with an event, volunteers' intentions developed themselves into behaviours, thus, providing support for this relationship as previously claimed in the volunteer literature (Bakhsh et al., 2021; Doherty, 2009; Hallmann et al., 2018; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; MacLean & Hamm, 2007; Neufeind et al., 2013; Sand et al., 2017). Further, the results demonstrated the need for positive volunteer intentions – due to a positive experience, feeling of contributing to the local community, interpersonal relationships and social interactions, and access to the field of competition – to create behaviours within sport and beyond after the event (Bakhsh et al., 2021; Downward et al., 2005; Farrell et al., 1998; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; Hallmann et al., 2018; MacLean & Hamm, 2007; Sand et al., 2017).

Results highlighted the ability for a recurring small-scale sport event to have positive impacts in the host city and/or region (Chalip, 2006; Taks et al., 2015, 2017). However, these positive impacts are associated with having individuals willing to pursue additional volunteer opportunities after the event, such as returning the following year or being involved with other organizations and/or events. This suggests the importance of considering volunteers when examining sport participation impacts of events, as well as a need to move beyond a sole focus on economic impacts to justify

bidding and hosting sport events (Chalip; Taks et al.). Specifically, this study demonstrated volunteers' ability and willingness to be involved as sport participants after the event, which, in this case, was organizations and events benefiting from the involvement of new or returning volunteers following their experience with a recurring small-scale sport event.

The above notions point to broader tensions in sport events regarding the balance between meeting financial impacts and fulfilling legacy commitments. For instance, to the authors' knowledge, no specific legacy planning was undertaken for the OVO volunteers to create positive impacts in the local community as observed in the positive intentions and behaviours found. Compared to prior research indicating the need to integrate volunteer legacies into the planning phase of the event lifecycle (Doherty, 2009) or the need for event leveraging to be undertaken via a strategic approach as advocated by Chalip (2006) and colleagues (Taks et al., 2015, 2017), this study's results suggest the OVO's volunteers legacy occurred organically. This premise could be explained by the event's volunteer workforce, which was characterized by a passionate and motivated group (e.g. altruistic, egoistic, solidary) in addition to, perhaps, the accessibility to be involved in local organizations or events after the OVO compared to larger organizations or events at the national and international levels.

Barriers to volunteers' intentions and behaviours

Despite positive future volunteer intentions, barriers impeded some volunteers from pursuing additional opportunities after the event. Previous literature on volunteers has identified barriers to volunteering, particularly for older individuals (as was the case for this study's sample), such as a lack of time (e.g. work commitments), physical health (e.g. injuries), or transportation (Hamm-Kerwin et al., 2009;

Misener et al., 2010; Mukherjee, 2011). This study supports the presence of these barriers, not when an individual is interested in being involved with an organization (cf. Hamm-Kerwin et al., 2009; Misener et al., 2010; Mukherjee, 2011) but, instead, after their experience with an event as they seek to further contribute to their local communities with sport and non-sport-related organizations and/or events. However, the inability to be involved in their local communities after the event was also attributed to COVID-19 restrictions (e.g. travel, social gatherings). Given individuals' inability to partake in in-person volunteering, they were unable to demonstrate behaviours after the event despite positive intentions of doing so. This highlights the presence of an environmental barrier, as the COVID-19 pandemic impeded some volunteers from participating in sport and, perhaps, beyond (Lachance, 2021). Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on volunteers' behaviours after the event (e.g. lack of opportunities to partake in volunteering), which supports previous non-empirical claims about its potential influence on volunteers (Lachance, 2021).

Implications

Implications from the study's results are presented related to research and to practice.

Research implications

First, results demonstrated positive volunteer intentions create different types of formal sport participation behaviours among volunteers during the wrap-up mode of the event lifecycle. Such positive volunteer intentions and formal sport participation behaviours after the OVO were attributed, in part, to the volunteer experience during the event and distinct features of smaller-scaled and recurring sport events. As an implication for sport volunteer researchers, this finding suggests the volunteer experience during the event should be

considered as an antecedent to predict both intentions and formal sport participation behaviours among volunteers after the event. In turn, researchers should consider how distinct features of small and recurring sport events can promote volunteer retention, such as offering an incentive to be involved and contribute to the local community annually or accessibility (e.g. geographical, socio-economic).

Second, though motivation was identified as an important construct to explain volunteers' intentions and behaviours, this result has implications for sport volunteer research. Specifically, sport volunteer researchers should adopt a multidimensional perspective to this construct whereby egoistic, altruistic, and solidarity motivation are applied. This approach is needed to better understand volunteers' intentions and behaviours in the wrap-up mode of the event lifecycle according to different types of motivation.

Practical implications

First, event managers should create a positive experience for their volunteers by focusing on their motivation, thereby promoting retention. For instance, managers can understand their volunteers' motivation by gathering information on an application form via an open-ended question (e.g. please state why are you interested in volunteering for this event?). The motivation listed, such as interpersonal relationships, contributing to the community, or field access, could inform the practices used by event managers and roles assigned to individual volunteers. From these strategies, volunteers having higher intent and actual behaviours – as demonstrated by results of this study – will likely continue their involvement with the event. Such continued involvement results in an experienced and qualified volunteer workforce for event managers. This also means fewer resources will need to be dedicated to recruitment and training of new

individuals in subsequent years because of the continued involvement of the returning workforce.

Second, event managers should attempt to create roles for volunteers that are virtual in nature (e.g. document translation, policy development). For instance, individuals facing time or transportation issues could still participate as a volunteer for the event, though at a distance (e.g. own residence) and via technological means (e.g. personal computer). This strategy is important as it could mitigate some barriers identified in this study to create formal behaviours among volunteers who could not participate in sport or beyond after the event.

Third, the findings suggest event managers should consider the volunteer types within their workforce. Specifically, an older and more experienced volunteer workforce – as found in this study – were more likely motivated by altruistic and solidarity motivations, suggesting event managers should provide opportunities for social interactions and establish interpersonal relationships. This compares to, for example, a younger and less experienced volunteer workforce with egoistic motivations; in this case, event managers should prioritize opportunities for young volunteers to gain work experience and network for future employment. Such strategies are important to consider for event managers to create positive intentions and behaviours among their volunteers.

Finally, it is important to understand the responsibility to instigate a volunteer legacy rests with the organizing committee and event managers. Thus, event managers should consider adopting a strategic approach to their leveraging efforts. However, these leveraging efforts, which are initiated in the planning mode, should be focused on volunteers and their retention considering the ability to achieve positive social outcomes after hosting a small-scale recurring sport event via this group of human resources.

Conclusion

This study explored volunteers' intentions and behaviours in the wrap-up mode of a professional recurring small-scale sport event. Results demonstrated the positive impact of future volunteer intentions on the behaviours of individuals toward the event (i.e. pursuing additional volunteer experiences with the OVO) and beyond it (e.g. sport and non-sport settings). However, some participants reported a lack of involvement after the event, demonstrating the continued impact of retention barriers (e.g. health, lack of time, transportation). Limitations and future directions are offered below.

This study had a small sample size, recognizing only 13 of the 256 volunteers from the event completed the questionnaire, which was administered online and, thus, could have been completed by more technophilic individuals. However, acknowledging the qualitative approach undertaken in this study whereby open-ended questions were used to make conclusions regarding the results, claims are supported and corroborated from those of other participants. Though challenges partially explain our small sample size with recruiting participants in the wrap-up mode of the event lifecycle compared to during the event (e.g. individuals appear less willing or available to participate), the approach was justified in that intentions and behaviours were successfully examined 10 months after the event. Still, future research should gather larger sample sizes and compare different types of events (e.g. one-off versus recurring, large-scale versus small-scale) to further understand intentions and behaviours among volunteers.

This study did not statistically examine the relationship between future volunteer intentions and behaviours. Though future volunteer intentions led to various volunteer behaviours after the event, such as being involved with other events or organizations within their communities or in the host city and region, future

research should statistically examine this relationship through a questionnaire. This would provide statistical evidence on the potential (or not) for future volunteer intentions to predict behaviours (e.g. types of sport participation pursued) among volunteers after an event.

Finally, the cross-sectional examination of intentions and behaviours in this study is worth noting as data were not collected beyond 10 months post-event. Considering this limitation, future research should incorporate a longitudinal approach (e.g. collecting data at three-time points in the wrap-up mode) to better understand how behaviours of volunteers change over time in the wrap-up mode. Collecting data at multiple time points in the wrap-up mode would also improve researchers' understanding of how intentions and behaviours can change over time after an event is hosted, something this study did not achieve but recognizes the importance of such an approach to be undertaken in the future.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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