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Plotting the Motivation of Student Volunteers in Sports-Based Outreach Work in the North East of England

1. Introduction

Volunteers in sport and recreation represent the largest contribution to volunteerism in the UK (Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2016). In England, for example, 12.7 per cent (5,600,600) of adults over the age of 16 years volunteered in sport between October 2014 and September 2015 (Sport England, 2016). Nichols et al. (2014) state that these volunteers help to sustain approximately 85,000 national governing body affiliated voluntary sports clubs (VSCs) (Nichols et al., 2014). Despite what has proved a relatively stable sport volunteer rate in England since 2010 (Sport England, 2016), 70 per cent of VSCs stress that they desperately need new volunteers (Join In, 2015).

Although general levels of formal monthly volunteering in 2014-15 were the same as those recorded in 2001 (27%) (Cabinet Office, 2015), the number of students volunteering in the UK in this period has risen. In 2013, over 725,000 students were reported to be participating in a range of voluntary initiatives organised through their higher education institution (Ellison & Kerr, 2014), compared with the 42,000 recorded by Student Volunteering England in 2004. Those 725,000 students accounted for 31 per cent of all students in higher education in 2013, with their voluntary contributions averaging out at 44 hours across the average 32 week taught term (Ellison & Kerr, 2014). Ellison and Kerr (2014) also reported that 51 per cent of all student volunteers were involved with organising or helping to run an activity or event, and 18 per cent specifically involved in coaching or refereeing sports.

This trend coincides with an increase in university-organised and university-led volunteer programmes and placements in recent years, particularly in Western countries (Smith et al., 2010). Many such opportunities are offered as part of integrated community

service or service learning type activities, with more and more universities embedding mandatory service learning into higher education programmes (Smith et al., 2010; Dean, 2014; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014). Research demonstrates that a major driver of student volunteering is to gain work-related experience in order to facilitate access to work and careers post-university (Handy et al., 2010; Hustinx et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2010). A concern held by both Dean (2014) and Holdsworth and Brewis (2014) is that if students feel coerced or obliged to volunteer due to a perceived instrumental necessity or external inducement, rather than for intrinsic purposes, then their commitment to the cause may become weakened, or, feelings of resentment towards the activity may be fomented, potentially resulting in their disengagement. As it is, research has indicated that volunteering habits amongst young adults are altering, switching from regular and long-term term to more episodic and short-term, in order to fulfil more instrumental needs (Handy, Brodeur & Cnaan, 2006).

With this in mind, there is an extant body of literature that explores continuation in volunteering across a range of contexts, and Cuskelly, Harrington and Stebbins (2002) demonstrate that volunteers may re-evaluate their reasons for volunteering from time to time, and as a consequence, reasons for volunteering can and do change. Those participating in regular volunteering in grassroots sports clubs, for example, have been found to begin and continue to volunteer for utilitarian incentives and the wider opportunities availed through volunteering for either themselves or their family (Cuskelly & O'Brien, 2013). Cuskelly et al., (2002) and Cuskelly and O'Brien (2013) also highlight that the more volunteers are able to identify with their role, the more likely they are to continue. Elsewhere, Schlesinger, Egli and Nagel (2013) found that a sense of collective solidarity amongst sports club volunteers is a powerful determinant of their continuation. Similarly, in one of a limited number of pieces of research into student volunteering on a sport-based service learning programme in the

U.S., Bruening et al. (2015) report that the social connectedness that developed between students and community members can promote future intentions to volunteer.

There is, however a paucity of research examining the motivational evolution of student volunteers involved in sport-related programmes, and therefore a lack of understanding of the social-psychological factors and processes that might influence their retention to such activities. The current research focuses on student volunteering in the Sport Universities North East England (SUNEE) project – a sports-based community outreach project largely run and sustained by the contributions of the region's universities' students. To understand the changing motivation of students whilst volunteering on the SUNEE project, Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory (SDT) – a social psychological framework for discerning and facilitating motivational development – is applied within this research to explore the psycho-social contexts and processes contributing to adaptations in motivation.

To this end, the purpose of the current study is two-fold: first, to demonstrate the utility of SDT for plotting and interpreting the evolution of students' motives to volunteer on a university-led sports-based community outreach project. Second, to provide an understanding of the conditions and contexts elicited on the project that bring about adaptations in their motivation statuses. From this, recommendations are gleaned to support the management of student volunteers on projects akin to that of SUNEE. The aims and contribution of this research are to illustrate the evolving nature of student motivation to volunteer and the factors that elicit such adaptations in order to inform and facilitate the design and management of current or future student volunteer programmes that employ the medium of sport. This paper therefore applies SDT to address the following research questions:

1. What are students' initial motives to volunteer on sports-based community programmes?

2. What are the differences between students' original motives to volunteer and those

driving their subsequent stages of retention?

3. What are the conditions and features owing to students' continued volunteering in sports-based community programmes?

2. The SUNEE Project

The Sport Universities North East England (SUNEE) federation represents a sport-centred inter-university collaboration in the UK between Durham, Northumbria, Newcastle, Sunderland and Teesside universities. The rationale for the project was twofold: to raise the employability of graduates, and to promote social inclusion and nurture social capital amongst a range of hard-to-reach populations in order to strengthen the universities' contribution to community engagement and outreach work. Although the period for the current research ran from April 2008 to April 2011, SUNEE was established in 2006 and the project is a partnership between the non-academic sport departments of the five North East Universities. The SUNEE project is supported by partner agencies and stakeholders that span the three industry sectors and include the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), County Sports Partnerships, Sport England, National Governing Bodies and several specialized voluntary social service organizations. The universities serve as hub sites which host and run a range of sport, education and employable-skills based programmes; partner schools and leisure facilities also provide localised satellite venues for additional sports-based outreach services that are facilitated by SUNEE coaches and student volunteers. Although a small number of professional coaching staff and sport development officers are employed by SUNEE, the project relies on its rich pool of student volunteers to survive. This joined-up approach to sports development provides the region's student volunteers with vast opportunities to gain both experience and qualifications as sports coaches, mentors and leaders by working with a range of socially deprived groups such as ex-offenders, homeless

clients, looked after children (in the care of the local authority), rehabilitating drug users and vulnerable women.

3. Student Volunteering in Higher Education

Volunteering has been widely incorporated by universities in recent times (Simha, Topuzova & Albert, 2011). Recurring themes within the literature suggest that students, particularly those in Western societies, often view volunteering as an investment in their human capital, helping them to acquire and build skills which may be desirable in and transferable to potential workplaces (Handy et al., 2010). Furthermore, and what has become a persuasive theory in the study of volunteer motivation is that students undertake such voluntary activities as a positive signal to employers (Handy et al., 2010; Hustinx et al., 2010). Handy et al. (2010) highlight that there is a widespread understanding that employers use a student's volunteering experience as a proxy that helps them screen applicants for desirable personality characteristics which are unobservable and difficult to gauge from an application form alone.

Where students perceive employers and educational institutions to use volunteerism as a proxy for desirable personality characteristics, they will be more likely to engage in volunteering activities to enhance their résumés (Hustinx et al., 2010). In terms of how such motivations manifest themselves in patterns of volunteering, the study by Handy et al. (2010) agrees with Marks and Jones' (2004) findings that those who volunteer out of self-interest, instrumentality and résumé building, volunteer less and display episodic involvement in volunteer activities – activities seen to be less demanding in terms of time, responsibility and emotional commitment.

Scholars have more recently paid attention to the broader macro-structural factors responsible for encouraging young people to volunteer for individualistic and instrumental reasons, as opposed to the more classical discourses of altruism and self-sacrifice, particularly in Western nations such as Canada, England and the United States (Handy et al., 2010;

Holdsworth, 2010; Dean, 2014). In the wider political context, Western states have demonstrated a neoliberal convergence in terms of fiscal policy and governance (Peters, 2012). In conjunction, this neoliberal philosophy espouses the empowerment of citizens to adopt and demonstrate social responsibility, to perform their public duty in the form of active citizenship and volunteering (Kisby, 2010).

Citizenship frameworks have become increasingly embedded within Western education systems to encourage young people to take responsibility for and within their community. In the UK, the New Labour government legislated that citizenship education was to become part of the school curriculum in 2002, to inculcate young people with "(a) social and moral responsibility, (b) community involvement and (c) political literacy" (Eley & Kirk, 2002, p. 152). Inclusion of this citizenship component to taught curriculums provides a mechanism for the direct transmission of political discourse onto young people. DeJaeghere (2014) highlights that neoliberalism is increasingly influencing citizenship education and that it involves a recalibration of the interrelated yet contradictory practices of both liberalism and neoliberalism. As such, young people who are exposed to citizenship education are receiving a hybrid of values which, on the one hand, represent the civic and social rights akin to liberalism and the importance of social solidarity, yet on the other hand, they are also imbued with neoliberal principles that place young people as economic citizens who are individually responsible for their own choices, risks and personal achievements, when participating in an open market environment (DeJaeghere, 2014).

Rising tuition fees within higher education in the UK have served to further reinforce an employability discourse amongst young people and undergraduate students (Holdsworth & Brewis 2014). As such, work-based learning opportunities are often approached in a transactional fashion wherein individuals calculate the exchange value for their services (Hustinx & Meijs, 2011; Dean, 2014; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014). The major concern here,

then, is that if the choice to volunteer is controlled, constrained or even removed – as in the case of some obligatory forms of volunteering – and consequently service-based activity instead becomes coerced, that this leads students to resent volunteering (Dean, 2014). This is, therefore, at odds with one of the tenets, and arguably the cornerstone, of Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth's (1996) four dimensions of volunteerism – free choice.

To this effect, Dean (2014) states that volunteer recruiters, namely those involved in student volunteer organisations/projects, do little to challenge such "structural factors" and the potential implications that an emphasis on employability may create. Dean (2014) therefore presents an important research gap and the need to better understand what motivates young people, like undergraduate students, to volunteer, and to continue to volunteer, in order to increase recruitment, retention and the successful running of volunteer-involving organisations. To this end, Jochum and Brodie (2013) stress that volunteer reliant organisations must become increasingly proactive and reflexive in their approach to the management of their non-paid personnel. In such an employment driven climate, there is a clear need to understand the motivational statuses of student volunteers in order to develop practical and research informed volunteer-centred strategies to support their commitment to voluntary activities.

4. Youth volunteering in sport

Traditional theories surrounding the motivation to volunteer have been based on notions of altruism and selflessness (Phillips, 1982). Contemporary theories, however, posit that volunteers present a plurality of motives, which reconcile egoistic and prosocial dimensions, and whereby individuals understand that they have to make a contribution to society in order receive a benefit from it (Rehberg, 2005). Relatedly, social exchange theory has been applied to the study of motivation in volunteering and suggests that individuals weigh up the costs

versus benefits of any potential involvement in their decision to volunteer (Bang, Ross & Reio, 2012).

Congruently, trends in young people's motivation to volunteer depict an increasingly transactional mind-set in which the benefits yielded from such activities are reciprocal for both the individual and recipient. Research by Eley and Kirk (2002) into sport-related volunteering by young people further reflects such an approach. Eley and Kirk (2002) employed the Volunteer Functions Inventory[1] (VFI) – as developed by Clary et al. (1998) – to gauge and compare the voluntary orientations of 306 young sport leaders. Eley and Kirk (2002) found that, prior to volunteering, young sport leaders rated understanding and career functions as the most important motives to volunteer. Yet, when Eley and Kirk (2002) followed up with participants nine months later (with 31% of the original sample), the young sport leaders reported higher means for the social, enhancement and values functions. These findings indicated a shift from self-orientated motives towards an increase in prosocial behaviour, and that the young sport leaders' experiences of volunteering promoted a desire to volunteer again in future (Eley & Kirk, 2002).

Moreover, recent research by Bruening et al. (2015) demonstrates the influential role that social relations play in the motivation and retention of student volunteers involved in a sport-based service learning programme in the U.S. Bruening et al. (2015) report that the development of social capital between college students and community members facilitated the former's motivation to continue to volunteer beyond the conclusion of their service learning course. Relatedly, Francis (2011) also examined the initial drivers of university student volunteering (general and not sport specific volunteering), positing that voluntary

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[1] The VFI was originally developed to facilitate analysis of general volunteering in human services by sorting motivational factors into six functional dimensions: a) Social – meeting new people and building relationships, b) Values – driven by personal morals and values, c) Career – to acquire skills and build networks, d) Understanding – to acquire and apply knowledge and skills, e) Enhancement – psychological growth and gratification, and, f) Protective – to cope with stress and guilt avoidance (Clary et al., 1998).

action amongst this cohort is strongly dependent on reference group influences, such as parental, sibling and peer involvement in volunteering.

However, Francis (2011) opines that survey instruments which have been designed merely to sort motives into functional categories often under-value the influence of proximal referents (i.e. client groups) upon potential shifts in student motivation to volunteer. Francis (2011) adds that research instruments, such as the VFI, restrict insight into the true initiators of voluntary action and the factors owing to its maintenance, as their static and one-dimensional design limit their ability to discern shifts in motivation over time. Indeed, Allen and Shaw (2009) argue that, throughout the literature, there is a lack of theoretical explanation of the cognitive and social processes underlying volunteer motives, satisfaction and retention. This is of particular relevance in the case of student volunteers who are increasingly participating in voluntary work for instrumental purposes, and whose choices to volunteer may not be so freely made. To this end, Allen and Shaw (2009) advocate self-determination theory (SDT) as an important framework for understanding the motivation and management of volunteers, indicating its applicability for use within a student volunteering context.

5. Self-Determination Theory

This paper employs the socio-psychological framework of the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to not only index the type of motivations that compel students to volunteer on the SUNEE project, but to also track motivational adaptation and reveal the features occurring within the project which serve to influence participant retention (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

To elaborate, SDT distinguishes between different types of motivation that are determined by different goals and reasons, and which can be plotted along a continuum of

increasing internalisation ranging between extrinsic (nonself-determined) and intrinsic[2] (self-determined) motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Gagné & Deci, 2005). According to SDT, behaviour that is not intrinsically motivated is influenced by varying degrees of extrinsic motivation from the externally coerced/controlled to the more internal, autonomous and self-endorsed (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). As Ryan and Deci (2000a) explicate, this spectrum of motivations "reflect differing degrees to which the value and regulation" of an activity, action or behaviour has been internalised and integrated by the individual (p.71).

According to Ryan and Deci (2000a), intrinsic enjoyment is realised when the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness are satisfied, and this is the key to motivational development. The need for autonomy constitutes a sense of volition and is defined by behaviour which is self-endorsed at the highest level of reflection and not perceived to be controlled (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Competence refers to the need for an individual to possess or feel capable of developing a mastery of the challenges and tasks that they are confronted with in a given environment (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Relatedness is the need for an individual to feel a sense of connectedness to another person, group or community (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). The satisfaction of these needs is key to facilitating the development and internalisation of motivation. Crucially, the more internal and intrinsic an individual's motivation, the more satisfied, healthy and effective they are in whatever task or job they are performing in a given scenario (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Therefore, the goal for volunteer managers should be to facilitate internalisation, integration and intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci 2000a; 2000b).

The SDT continuum (Figure 1) should not be understood as a stage theory in which people must systematically progress through each stage of internalisation, but instead as a scale or index with which to measure one's behavioural regulation at any given time (Gagné

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[2] Intrinsic motivation is defined here as: the doing of an activity "because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable" (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 55).

& Deci, 2005). From left to right, the four types of extrinsic motivation that lie between amotivation[3] and intrinsic motivation are external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation and integrated regulation, with each type more autonomous than the last (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Insert Figure 1 Here

An individual who is externally regulated may feel external pressure or coercion to perform a task, or alternatively they may seek a tangible reward for doing so (Gagné & Deci, 2005). As a modulator of self-esteem, introjected regulation promotes behaviour which is performed for ego enhancement, anxiety reduction or guilt avoidance (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Identified regulation reflects more self-determined and autonomous behaviour. Here, an individual identifies with the value that an action, behaviour or task holds in relation to the achievement of their personal goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

The final and most autonomous form of extrinsic regulation is that of integrated motivation, and is when the aims and purposes of an action or behaviour are congruent with

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[3] Amotivation is "the state of lacking an intention to act" (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p61).

the values, needs and aspirations of that individual (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). However, this form of regulation is still considered extrinsic because an individual eliciting such behaviour does so in order to attain instrumental outcomes in the absence of any inherent satisfaction and enjoyment from the activity (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

5.1 Application of SDT within the context of volunteering

SDT has been used to assess and enhance motivation within professional and formal work organisations, educational settings, health care and well-being services, and in elite performance sport environments to name but a few of its previous contextual applications (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Although SDT has been utilized in other volunteer settings, its rigour and utility has not yet been tested within the context of student volunteering in community sports-based projects.

In one of the few sport volunteering related studies to apply SDT, Allen and Shaw (2009) explored the motivation and experiences of volunteers at a biennial multi-sports event in New Zealand. Allen and Shaw's (2009) found that the participants in their study chose to volunteer for intrinsic purposes, and indicated that their motivation was sustained throughout the event due to the combined satisfaction of their psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Volunteers reported that their motivation was fortified by a number of factors that principally included: a sense of camaraderie with their fellow volunteers, being able to input into tasks, and that they were able apply and develop their skill-sets (Allen & Shaw, 2009).

Looking beyond sport, Millette and Gagné (2008) conducted research to examine the relationship between job characteristics and volunteer motivation in Canadian voluntary organisations, revealing a positive relationship between strong feelings of autonomy, interest and enjoyment, and higher levels of job satisfaction and volunteer retention. Furthermore, Bidee et al. (2013) surveyed 206 Belgian volunteers working for non-profit organisations in

the health sector to find that autonomous motivation drove work effort. Similarly to Millette and Gagné's (2008) findings, Bidee et al. (2013) suggest that autonomy was supported in volunteers who reported that they got involved out of their own interest rather than due to external pressures, and feelings of self-endorsement were maintained because volunteer managers allowed their staff to make personal decisions about how to approach tasks as well as letting them lead initiatives without supervision. In contrast, Bidee et al. (2013) and Millette and Gagné (2008) report that the reverse is also true, as externally controlled action adversely affects self-endorsed motivation. Indeed, there is a considerable evidence-base to demonstrate that autonomy supportive leadership styles support and sustain autonomous motivation for those volunteers who are autonomously orientated, and this can facilitate the internalization of extrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Haivas et al., 2012).

Adding to this, Haivas et al. (2012) conducted research with Romanian volunteers in non-governmental organisations and found that when managers allocated tasks to volunteers which allowed them to utilize their skills, the satisfaction that they received from demonstrating competence afforded them the space to work under less frequent supervision and contribute to their need for autonomy. To this end, Millette and Gagné (2008) suggest that volunteer managers may need to incorporate wider training opportunities to allow participants to learn new skills to increase the variety of tasks that they can perform and take ownership of.

6. Methodology

This research evolves from a broader evaluation process which sought to assess the impact of the SUNEE project on the different stakeholder groups involved in the SUNEE project. The current investigation utilises qualitative data generated from semi-structured interviews with student volunteers who were actively engaged in the SUNEE project to assay their motivation statuses over the course of the project and provide an in-depth understanding of the reasons

contributing to the motivational adaptations that they experienced. Many studies that have explored volunteering in sports-based settings have favoured qualitative methods such as interviews (cf. Kay & Bradbury, 2009; Bruening, et al., 2015) because they offer a medium through which to critically explore the meanings that participants attach to their volunteer experiences. Qualitative methods were therefore adopted to enable the researcher to gain an understanding of how the structures and dynamics of the SUNEE project are experienced by the students, and how the thoughts, feelings and actions that such experiences generate, subsequently connect with volunteer motivation (Allen & Shaw, 2009).

As the SUNEE project was operational in each of the region's five universities, a strategy of cross-university sampling was adopted: recruiting student volunteers from each of the five institutions promoted the dependability of the data. In total, 40 in-depth semi-structured interviews (eight per university) were carried out. The participants ranged from 18 to 23 years of age and were spread across first, second and third levels of undergraduate study; fourteen of the interviewees were female. Five of the 40 volunteers were private school-educated (the remaining 35 were state school-educated), but having asked all participants to name their parents' profession, it is worth pointing out that 32 out of 40 originated from National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification[4] (NS-SEC) Social Classes 1 to 3. The remaining eight were spread across NS-SEC positions 4 to 6. Participants self-identified their ethnicity, with 39 volunteers of White British background and one male identifying himself as Indian.

The participants were all actively volunteering on the SUNEE project at the time of interview, and each interview was conducted by the researcher/author. Student volunteers'

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[4] The NS-SEC is a measure used within the UK to discern an individual's socio-economic classification (Office for National Statistics, 2016). Based on the internationally recognised Goldthorpe Schema, the NS-SEC is derived by combining information on occupation and employment status (ONS, 2016). Employment status is predicated on data that indicates whether an individual is an employer, self-employed, an employee or unemployed (ONS, 2016). NS-SEC 1-2 refers to the upper or manager/professional social classifications, NS-SEC 3-4 represent intermediate classes, NS-SEC 5-7 correspond to working classes, and NS-SEC category 8 denotes those who are unemployed (ONS, 2016).

participation in the project ranged from six weeks to three years. Length of time volunteered by students was not a selection criterion for their inclusion in the research. Each of the participants reported that they were working with one or more of the core client strands supported by the project at the point of interview: disengaged young people, homeless individuals, looked after children, ex-offenders and rehabilitating substance misusers. For confidentiality, all participants used in this study were assigned pseudonyms.

The interviews lasted between 35 and 70 minutes and were all digitally recorded. Recording the interview data meant it was retrievable and accurate. A key advantage of having stored digital files was that it allowed for interviews to be listened to several times and to be transcribed word for word, therefore increasing familiarisation with the data. The interviews and their subsequent transcription were carried out concurrently to allow the researcher to listen to, and note, how participants communicated their responses. Interview data were analysed thematically, both manually and with the aid of the NVivo 8 software package. To undertake the data analysis, and as informed by Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985; Ryan & Deci 2000a; Ryan & Deci 2000b), a priori coding was performed. As an example, if a participant reported intrinsic motivation then such a reference would be assigned a "V", or if they presented identified regulation then that specific quotation would be allotted an "III".

Therefore, one interview per volunteer was carried out during the fieldwork to generate a retrospective account of each student volunteers' experiences and motivational status throughout their participation on the SUNEE project. However, and as recommended by Bryman (2012), to check that the student volunteers participating had been correctly understood, that their comments and contributions were accurately interpreted, and that the data amassed from their interviews fitted into the resulting coding structure, respondent validation was undertaken. Welty Peachey, Borland, Lobpries and Cohen (2015) adopted a

similar approach with their sample, providing an account of their findings to their research participants in order to corroborate their results and ensure the credibility and dependability of them. For the current study, and due to the time constraints surrounding the study, ten participants were randomly selected to verify the accuracy and acceptability of the research findings and their fit within the coding framework; all participants within this sample agreed that their comments and the experiences that they had documented had been accurately reflected in the findings. However, a limitation here in terms of dependability, and similarly to a limitation highlighted within work by Welty Peachey et al. (2011), is that only students that were currently volunteering in SUNEE were accessed and interviewed for this research and their experiences of the project may have contrasted with those volunteers who had previously dropped out or exited the project. A further possible limitation of the study relates to the use of face-to-face interviews in the study as they may have invited social desirability bias. As Mesch et al. (1998) warn, when volunteers are surveyed about their reasons for and experiences of volunteering they are likely to succumb to a social-desirability bias and provide responses which show them in a positive light.

7. Findings

7.1 Motives to volunteer

To attend to the first research question, and to be able to plot and understand how student motivation to volunteer might evolve, it is necessary to discern their initial motives to get involved in the first place. Students engaged with the SUNEE project choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons; motives that span the breadth of the SDT continuum (Figure 1). The most common type of motive to initiate student volunteering was identified regulation (type III). Of the seven interviewees who indicated that their reasons for volunteering predominantly lay to the left of identified regulation and were more extrinsically controlled, choices appeared to differ according to gender. When demonstrating externally-regulated

motivation, female volunteers, like Beth, stated that their friends at university had encouraged them to get involved with the SUNEE project: "I'd started uni just last year and I wanted to settle in and one of my friends said I should go along with her." Ryan and Deci (2000a) would suggest that Beth's behaviour in this scenario was prompted by a need to feel more closely connected and related to others in an effort to help her settle in to her new surroundings at university. However, and as Janith illustrated, male volunteers typically demonstrated a separate externally guided motivation to volunteer, and that was in order to fulfil the requirements of one of their degree modules: "the reason why I did it – I'm not going to lie – is it was part of my course, that's the main reason."

Immediately to the right of external regulation, two female students and no male volunteers elicited motives that were characteristic of introjected regulation, reflecting behaviour which has been taken in by the participant but not yet accepted as their own. Students whose responses were deemed to be anchored at this position on the SDT scale demonstrated regulation by contingent self-esteem. For example, Ruth, a sport student, spoke of her frustration at being unable to participate in competitive sport due to injury and chose to volunteer as a substitute activity in order to enhance her feelings of self-worth: "I'm doing a sport degree but I'm not playing a sport - you get absolutely ripped apart. I wanted to be able to. I just was injured, so I couldn't do it. So I wanted to have an involvement in something."

Most notably, the majority of students (24 out of 40) who were interviewed inferred that their primary motives represented identified regulation. Students occupying this position on the SDT continuum recognise the value that a particular activity or task holds in the attainment of their personal or career goals. The gender distribution of this motivational orientation was proportionate to the gender breakdown of the study's sample, with a third of the students displaying type III regulation being female. Students demonstrating this type of motivation cited the attainment of such benefits as gaining job specific experience aligned to

the students' intended career paths. Rory, for example, illustrated the significance of external contingencies in the attainment of his career ambitions, describing his own motives for volunteering as selfish and self-serving:

> I chose to volunteer for a selfish reason because I wanted to get the best possibility I can to get a job after I leave university. I think it's more of a selfish way for me trying to get my foot in the door, into a job.

This passage crystallises the motivational type of identified regulation and accords with most of the students' motives for volunteering on the SUNEE project, with many commenting that they entered the project with a view to building their coaching portfolio and enhance their Curriculum Vitae (CV) in order to boost their employability beyond the project in what they understand to be competitive teacher training and jobs markets. Likewise, Sheila commented that she wanted to use the opportunities presented by the SUNEE project to help facilitate a career as a physical education teacher:

> I wanted to be a PE teacher but I knew how hard it is to get on a PGCE[5] at another university to do it. And, it was all because, from that you get like coaching awards paid for, like the CV looks enhanced, your own skills are better because you've worked with such a variety of clients and different coaching staff, and as a result I've got on the PGCE at that university, so it's paid off.

Taking a further rightward step, three students referred to integrated regulation – the most internally regulated form of extrinsically orientated behaviour – when explaining why they chose to volunteer. This regulation is defined as the most autonomous extrinsic motivation and is engendered in individuals whose behaviour directly reflects their own

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[5]Postgraduate Certificate in Education – a prerequisite qualification to become a PE teacher in the UK.

belief systems, principles and values. Dominick epitomised this notion of integrated regulation:

> My mum and dad were foster parents, so I've seen kids who have been taken off the street. I've always been open-minded and just appreciated what you've got and trying to give a bit back. I know a lot of students volunteer just so that they can get the free coaching badges but I haven't done a single coaching badge yet. I just go because it's giving a bit back to the community. I've been brought up to help others.

At the far right of the SDT continuum, students who were intrinsically motivated from the outset reported that SUNEE appealed to them because of the inherent satisfaction and genuine enjoyment that they derive from playing, coaching and volunteering in sports and sports-based activities. For example, Stuart spoke of the pleasure that he received during previous voluntary commitments and how those experiences influenced his involvement in the SUNEE project:

> I first started volunteering when I was at college when I was sports coaching. I finished my voluntary hours and stayed on as a volunteer worker there. "I just said that I'm really enjoying what I'm doing, can I just stay on as a volunteer because I absolutely love it?" They said no problem. Then I started university last September. I went to the Fresher's Fair, and there was a stall for SUNEE and I put my name down for volunteering.

In addition, Craig (below) commented that after getting injured he took up coaching to fill the void of playing [football], something he really enjoyed, and found coaching to be more pleasurable as he felt greater competence in it. This is what drew him to the SUNEE project:

> I quit playing football a long time ago and I started concentrating on coaching. I got

injured at 16; I started coaching then. I find that I actually prefer coaching than playing; I'm probably better at it actually. And for me it's as much a hobby… I enjoy it.

Stuart and Craig both indicate that they chose to take part in the opportunities provided by SUNEE for their own sake and the genuine satisfaction that they receive from participating in them. Craig's description of his voluntary coaching role as a 'hobby' captures this notion aptly.

7.2 Plotting student motivation to volunteer

The following three sub-sections are concerned with answering the second research question and serve to discern and demonstrate the evolving motivations of students over the course of their involvement with the SUNEE project. During the interviews, the vast majority (34/40) of respondents indicated that their motives to volunteer on the project had evolved over time, providing responses that demonstrated shifts along the SDT continuum (as illustrated fully in Table 1). Here, SDT is used to plot and illustrate the trajectory of student motivation to volunteer on the SUNEE project over time. The graphic in Table 1 (below) illustrates the changes in volunteer motivation over time against the transition-based coding scheme that was constructed and aligned to the anchors positioned along the SDT continuum.

By observing Table 1, the trends and patterns in students' motivation to volunteer over time are demonstrated. Table 1 lists each student in order of length of time that they have volunteered on the SUNEE project, from shortest to longest, up until the point of interview. The graphic illustrates where each students' original motive to volunteer lies in accordance with Deci and Ryan's (1985) five types of behavioural regulation and plots any motivational adaptation inferred by participants along the SDT continuum. To navigate the reader around Table 1, the direction of motivation as denoted by the Roman Numerals along the central

Insert Table 1 Here

header corresponds with the illustration of the SDT continuum that is displayed in

Figure 1. Motivation type I at the left-hand side of the graphic represents external regulation – the least self-determined form of motivation. This is followed by introjected regulation (II), identified regulation (III), integrated regulation (IV), and lastly, at the far right of the scale and the most self-determined and autonomous of motivational regulations lies intrinsic motivation (V). To demonstrate students' initial motives and all subsequent motivational adaptations reported, each behavioural regulation is numbered to depict origin and transition. Primary motives are numbered 1; a first motivational transition is numbered 2, and for those students who reported undergoing a second motivational transition then the specified regulation is occupied with a number 2.

7.3 Motives to continue

As illustrated in Table 1, students reported that their motivation to volunteer changed over time. Such developments in students' motivation have been interpreted and plotted using the SDT framework. Joey, for example, demonstrated a progression to the right of the SDT scale, from identified regulation (III) and the pursuit of personal goals, to that of intrinsic motivation (V) due to the genuine enjoyment he received from participating in the project:

> Well, firstly it was just so the university would pay for my level one football badge, because I want to get involved in club coaching; I wanted to be qualified for it. And I can honestly say within the few weeks of starting I've just absolutely loved doing it, and I would say even though that sounds really selfish, why I got started, it's just been absolutely fantastic. It's the highlight within our week, to be honest.

Like Joey, Simon joined the SUNEE project out of identified regulation, but indicated that his motivational development and reasons for continuing to volunteer on the project became entirely self-determined and intrinsically orientated. Simon admitted that he

embarked on the project in order to satisfy his own ends and attain free coaching badges. However, Simon added that he continued to volunteer due to the almost immediate enjoyment and satisfaction he received during his involvement with the project, an experience which subsequently encouraged him to volunteer outside of the project and in his free-time for his local cricket club:

> I wanted football coaching badges and they said, 'we'll pay for them if you do this', so that was my way into it and I've been on that project ever since… And you know, the moment that I got into it I really enjoyed it. Now I do other things. I do a lot more voluntary coaching at the local cricket club. I suppose, although my route into it was selfish in a sense, in that I didn't go into it to volunteer. It was something that was offered to me. But I think the moment that I started to do it, I really enjoyed doing it.

Following the same direction of motivational development to that of Joey and Simon, Jonny demonstrated a progression to the right of the SDT scale, from identified regulation (III) and the pursuit of personal goals, to that of integrated regulation (IV):

> It's on my CV, right, I've got my graduate job sorted already. I don't really need this project from a self-point of view, now. But I'd say the last eight weeks I've genuinely got tense and nervous and worked up… and genuinely have been really, really focussed on the achievements of other people.

Jonny admitted that his initial motives to volunteer were solely career orientated. Yet, as Jonny's response built, he demonstrated experiencing increasing motivational internalisation over the course of his involvement. This is illustrated by the personal value and importance that Jonny began to attach to the voluntary role that he performed and concern for the clients' achievements and the support he provided in their development. This sense of commitment is indicative of a motivational transition from identified regulation (III) to integrated regulation

(IV). However, Jonny went on to suggest that his motivational development did not stop at integrated regulation (IV), but continued to develop, residing at the intrinsic anchor (V) at the point of interview:

> Reflecting on it at this moment… it's my favourite thing of university. It is very important to me… I will definitely remember this for a long time. I just really enjoy it… Because I've never really had that feeling, that sort of passion and getting worked up about something which you don't get very often. It will definitely stay with me.

Here, Jonny described the sense of passion and purpose that he receives from volunteering with the hard-to-reach groups, expressing the inherent enjoyment and intrinsic satisfaction that he derives from his involvement on the project.

7.4 Patterns in student motivation

Upon cursory analysis of Table 1, it is apparent that the majority of student motives to volunteer are of centre or centre-left origin, and also that motivational transition is evident following a clear rightward shift in motivation. To break down the information conveyed in Table 1 further, the majority of students (24/40 participants) debuted at anchor III (identified regulation) and not at position I (external regulation) – which recorded the second most common instigator of voluntary action (7/40 participants). It is important to emphasise that the majority of volunteers did not enter the SUNEE project at the farthest extrinsic regulation. In addition, the majority of students' motivational development reached and remains at anchor IV (integrated regulation) or V (intrinsic regulation), demonstrating a definite internalisation of motivational regulation over time. Most students reported a final motivation of V (29/40).

Interestingly, seven students experienced two transitions and had, in total, occupied three consecutive motivational anchors up to the point of interview, a tentative finding is

presented here highlighting that the data suggest that student volunteers are more likely to experience a three stage transition over a longer period of time, which, on the basis of this evidence is a minimum of one year's participation. Furthermore, six volunteers' motivation remained stationary, with two starting and ending at anchor III (identified) and four of which did not move from point V (intrinsic); thus, pointing to a perpetual maintenance of their motivation. Crucially none of the participants demonstrated motivational regression to the left of the continuum.

Looking at these transitions in more depth, six out of the seven students that embarked on the SUNEE project at point I on the SDT scale had reached either IV or V at the point of interview. Sixteen of the twenty-four participants whose motivation originated at point III experienced adaptations that had transitioned to type V by the time of interview, and four students who entered the project for reasons consonant with type III underwent transitions to the IV anchor point. Two of the twenty-four students that occupied position III on the continuum at the outset demonstrated a double transition passing through point IV and reaching the final anchor, V. All three of the volunteers whose initial motives aligned with motivational type IV went on to reach point V. Both of the volunteers that joined the programme demonstrating type II motives went on to undergo a double motivational shift that occupied IV at 'transition one' before evolving to type V. All but one of the participants (6/7) who underwent a double motivational transition occupied integrated motivation (IV) at some stage of their participation on the project, with six out of the seven of these individuals ending within the intrinsic domain (V) at the point of interview. The trend here broadly demonstrates that the majority of students' motivation shifts from externally regulated choices to volunteer toward more internalised and intrinsic drivers of behaviour, over the influence of time.

7.5 Motivational transition and the satisfaction of core psychological needs

In responding to the third research question, the purpose of the current sub-section is to analyse the conditions and features owing to students' evolving motivations and continued volunteering by engaging with the core psychological needs framework (as explained above) on which the SDT is heavily predicated. When exploring adaptations in students' motivation to continue to volunteer on the SUNEE project, a number of consistent features emerged. It was clear from interviewee responses that the student volunteers thrived on "optimal challenges" (Ryan & Deci, 2000a), and Jack offered a sense of this:

> It's just me and Ronny [student volunteer] and there's nobody else really to help. I've definitely gained more confidence because you need it… I think, once you get the confidence, you start to take a bit more of a lead role. I mean, me and the other lad [Ronny], you can see we're getting more confident as it's gone on, we're leading a session, we're coaching and organising what we're doing. It's getting better. They [the clients] call me coach, they know the job you're doing. They know how hard it is. I mean, it is challenging, but it's enjoyable, which is the best thing.

As illustrated by Jack's comments, it is imperative that students perceive a skills-challenge balance wherein the prospect facing them pushes the boundaries of their abilities, yet is not overwhelming or unattainable. The challenges perceived by students were commonly linked to either the need for competence or relatedness with clients, or a combination of the two.

Many interviewees, like Jack, implied that in order to sustain and develop a sense of competence it is important that they receive opportunities for progression, in terms of gaining increasing responsibility, to maintain a skills-challenge balance. Like many of her peers, Gemma reported that such progression was supported and perpetuated by a tapering of supervisors/sport development officers' (SDOs) input into the sessions, allowing the volunteers to take a more active role within the programmes that they were involved with:

Jim and Karen [SDOs] have started giving us more of an active role. Last year we would just join in or just supervise the children, but now we get designated hours and Karen emails us and says right, 'you've got the first hour and you've got this area, what do you want to do?' So, I think it's been easier from the start of this semester as you do feel more confident because you've had experience with them all last year, and then with my coaching qualification as well, I think it's just made me a bit more confident to sort of design new games and rules, and be more authoritative with them.

In a similar developmental process to Jack and Gemma, Becki reports that she gradually gained more responsibility during the project as she continued to volunteer. The combination of increased responsibility coincided with incremental feelings of autonomy, competence and relatedness as illustrated in the passage below:

I kind of did more and more schemes I got a bit more involved, and now I'm leading the sessions. So I try and give Karen [SDO] feedback into what sports activities should be in it; I control and try to organise what sports we're going to do and lead the teams around. I'm kind of in charge of the volunteers, so making sure they're in the right place at the right time, Karen's taken a step back as well, she's letting us run it more now… I feel more confident now leading people I don't know, because when you kind of get to know the same people it becomes quite comfortable. Whereas, coming to this and teaching, especially when the groups change quite frequently, so it's getting to know new people each time, it's quite a challenge, yeah, it's a good challenge. (Becki)

Becki's response illustrates that as her confidence and ability to coach and lead developed, her supervisor took a step back and allowed her to take more control of the sessions. This suggests that the passing on of responsibilities from the supervisor to her provided a means of competence promoting feedback which reinforced her performance, boosting her self-

efficacy. This also allowed Becki to step into a position of authority allowing her to feel in control, thus enhancing her sense of autonomy. Becki also comments that the frequent changes in client groups that she has had to deal with prevent her from becoming "comfortable", as the need to regularly establish relatedness with different participants presents a consistent "good challenge".

Relatedness proved to be a central theme amongst volunteers, with many indicating that the development of a sense of social connectedness with both their student peers and the clients contributed to their enjoyment during the project, as well as their commitment to it: "over the past few weeks we've had the same volunteers coming, so, we've all got a lot closer, we're all quite a nice little team; so it's just generally been a better set up really" (Becki). In a similar vein, Ruth, like many students, spoke fondly of the influence of newly formed friendships on her experience as a SUNEE volunteer: "I made a lot of friends doing it. From the other volunteers right through to the clients and community workers… It's really just added a lot to my life." Jess also went on to describe how her friendship with some of the clients extends beyond the project:

> I've made friends now that I would never have made before, we are going to keep in touch with them to see how they're getting on in life. So we're going to be seeing them around so it will be nice. Before I wouldn't dare go and talk to them but now I really look forward to seeing them.

However, the prospect of volunteering on the project was a daunting one according to many of the interviewees and, as Rick highlights, the initial lack of relatedness between the students and clients in particular, presented a significant challenge and an instant barrier to positive motivational development: "Ultimately, with the Street League clients that we have… you need to earn their respect first as a volunteer. You can't just go jumping in there...

because they think you're a university student, you're well off. That's their perception." Such a lack of relatedness can alienate students and potentially lead to volunteer drop out. As Craig explained, there are student volunteers who drop out of the project due to intimidating client behaviour:

> We've had new volunteers come along and spent one session with the clients… and they realise 'oh, I can't be with these guys', and walk away.

Although none of the students interviewed in this research dropped out of the project or chose to discontinue prematurely, some do mention instances when other volunteers decide to drop out. In these instances, the students that drop out do so early into their involvement with the project.

8. Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to explore and understand the motivations of students who volunteer and remain on a sports-based outreach project, called the SUNEE project, in the North East of England. To do this, the article aimed to plot initial student motivations to volunteer; assess any motivational developments that may have occurred over time; and, to provide insight into the features underlying such motivational adaptations in order to inform the future management and retention of student volunteers on projects akin to that of SUNEE.

The majority of the students that were interviewed reported that they had originally chosen to volunteer on the project to obtain tangible external rewards such as coaching experience or qualifications, in order to help them work towards personal/career goals. Such findings accord with key literature around student volunteering which highlights that students often choose to volunteer to enhance their employment prospects and test drive a potential future career. Indeed, Dean (2014) highlights that the opportunity to boost job credentials means that such university-based opportunities to volunteer present a potent 'hook' with

which to encourage students to get involved. To this effect, incentives that were offered by the project, such as coaching accreditations and related training opportunities, or simply the prospect of gaining the experience of working with a diverse group of participants, proved an attractive proposition to prospective student volunteers. Although such incentives appear to play a significant part in drawing students to the project, Gagné and Deci (2005) warn that there is a risk that they may undermine or inhibit the development of intrinsic motivation, or more autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation. To guard against a shift towards an external regulation, extrinsic rewards should be minimized and represent some degree of alignment to the individual's personal goals (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). In addition, if the facilitation of intrinsic motivation is a goal, and if rewards are to be used, then the nature of the activities need to offer competence promoting feedback, and therefore provide challenging stimuli in order to offset the influence of external incentives that may prove deleterious to internalisation and intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Many student volunteers involved with SUNEE, however, indicated that the pursuit of coaching awards and CV boosting experience naturally subsided, and in their place more autonomous motives to continue emerged.

The patterns in student volunteering highlighted within this research stand in contrast to those found in previous research by Marks and Jones (2004), Handy et al. (2010) and Dean (2014) whose work has illustrated that students who volunteer for instrumental and self-serving motives volunteer less, display episodic involvement in volunteer activities, and once they have received the tangible returns for their services it is likely that they cease to volunteer. Dean (2014) raises concerns around the growing trends in employability-driven and transactional volunteering that is promoted amongst young people, such as university students, warning that discourses of employability and transactional exchange exert external control and coercion upon the individual which, in turn, threatens to undermine the altruistic

side of volunteering and diminish intent to volunteer in the future (Dean, 2014; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014). The wider implications of this are, at the least, twofold. First, that voluntary organisations, charities and indeed the clients that outreach projects such as SUNEE projects exist to help, are adversely affected (Dean, 2014). Second, if students possess the demographic characteristics[6] similar to those of the typical volunteer stalwart who plays such a key role in sustaining voluntary sports clubs in Western countries like the U.K., then perhaps the current climate of individualistic and career driven volunteering that is espoused and endorsed in higher education threatens to curtail this traditional supply line.

However, students within the current study reported that on the whole their experiences were positive, and those whose initial motives were of an instrumental nature, largely demonstrated a general internal shift in motivation towards the right of the SDT continuum over time, and with it, augmenting their commitment to the project. Despite the lure of incentives and instrumental designs, these participants typically reported that their motives grew increasingly internal over the course of their involvement. This motivational development coincided with student volunteers' continuing work on the project beyond the attainment of their prior and extrinsically orientated goals. Indeed, seven participants who had volunteered on the project for a year or more, indicated that they had undergone a double adaptation in their motivation. This points towards a tentative finding that the motivational transition of student volunteers is governed by the length of time they have served the project – in short, the greater the length of time that a participant has dedicated, the greater the likelihood that their motivation will become internalised and enduring. Research by Eley (2003) into youth volunteering supports the potential for the participation in helping activities to elicit an altruistic response as she found that that young people's commitment to performing voluntary work within the community was heightened following prior exposure

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[6] Demographic profile of typical volunteer: White ethnicity, male, belongs to one of the four highest socioeconomic classifications, holds or is studying towards a college/university degree, and are in or on course for full-time employment (Doherty & Misener, 2008)

to volunteering. Furthermore, Jochum and Brodie (2013) emphasise that people's involvement in volunteering is not static, stressing the importance of volunteer-involving organisations to garner a more sophisticated understanding of how trends and patterns in an individual's volunteering might change over different life stages, as well as the influence that context and experience have on their commitment to freely give their time. It is clear within the current research that motivation within student volunteering (in a sport setting) is likely to consist of multiple stages rather than representing a stage in itself.

To provide insight into the experiences underlying student volunteers' motivational development whilst on the SUNEE project, interviewees reveal a number of key facets which influenced their motivational development and retention to the SUNEE project, and which incorporate the satisfaction of the three core psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. To explicate, as supervisors/SDOs gradually reduced their involvement within the sessions this shift in control enabled student volunteers to emerge as leaders within their programmes. As portrayed in research by Haivas et al. (2012) and Bidee et al. (2014), apportioning greater responsibility to volunteers elicits competence promoting feedback as it indicates to them that they are effectively able to interact with and control the social dynamics of the project. Allowing students to take the lead also proved to be autonomy supporting – giving volunteers a say in the decision making processes provides them with a sense of ownership of the sessions, and as a result, empowers them (Bidee et al., 2014). Literature suggests that contexts which provide strong supports for autonomy facilitate the integration of behavioural regulation, and in turn, promote intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Gagné & Deci, 2005). As supervisors and SDOs take a step back, the freedom bestowed on student volunteers to initiate their own practice implicates them in their own decision making processes. Such feelings of choice and control, which coincide with a sustained period of accomplishment, drive a student's sense of self-endorsement, triggering

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an alignment to their intrinsic goals. This positive internal process causes the integration of student volunteers' project related goals, roles and accomplishment with their sense of self (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). This motivational development consequently enables the student volunteers to establish congruence between their personal goal hierarchy and the accomplishments and challenges imposed through participation in the project (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

Furthermore, phasing out and removing the presence of supervisors/SDOs and giving selected students a more prominent role also sends out positive messages to the entire volunteer cohort as it illustrates that opportunities for progression do exist and should be aspired to. For this process to occur, however, clear lines of communication and effective volunteer monitoring and management by supervisors/SDOs are necessary. Conversely, students that reported a lack of progression or responsibility hinted at a potential skills-challenge imbalance which was causing their motivation to stagnate or dwindle (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

What is more, as students begin to establish and build proximal relational supports with both their volunteer peers and the client groups, they report that their feelings of competence and connectedness were enhanced, which in turn, promote intrinsic motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Research by Allen and Shaw (2009) and Bruening et al. (2015) highlight that the development and maintenance of a sense of camaraderie and social connectedness with proximal relations both facilities the intrinsic enjoyment received from such volunteer work, but also fosters greater commitment to the cause.

In terms of the demographic make-up of this study's sample, there were no apparent or discernible differences drawn between socioeconomic status and the spread of initial motives to volunteer or the adaptation of students' motivation. Nor was there a high enough representation of non-white participants for any conclusions to be drawn on the grounds of

race or ethnicity. In regards to gender however, a small trend was revealed when examining students' original motives for getting involved in the SUNEE project, and these differences lay at the external anchor of the SDT continuum. Females that presented external regulation tended to demonstrate that social motives lay behind their engagement, whereas male volunteers' behaviour at this anchor point was more controlled by formal requirements of their course. Such gender differences in external regulation chime with available literature indicating that women are more inclined to demonstrate this extrinsic form of motivation to create new social acquaintances, and also because they are more likely to be asked to volunteer (Musick & Wilson, 2008); whereas, men are driven more by instrumental purposes and to complete externally set tasks (Prentice & Carlsmith, 2000; Einholf, 2011).

9. Conclusion

This paper has employed Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to offer a wider understanding of volunteer motivation. This research has found that the majority of interviewees demonstrated that their primary motives to volunteer on this project were based upon extrinsic instrumentalities by which they perceived would boost their employability. The critical issue here, is the unearthing and harnessing of the features and mechanisms experienced by student volunteers which elicit a shift away from the externally regulated behaviour that initially moves students to volunteer in the anticipation of reward contingencies, and which ultimately serve to promote autonomous regulation and intrinsic motivation. Such positive motivational outcomes present a raft of potential benefits to both stakeholders and the broader community. First, the greater the commitment volunteers have to the project often equates to the degree of progression and responsibility that they experience: opportunities which students perceive to be commensurate with their employability. Second, those individuals who are intrinsically motivated are typically associated with higher levels of retention, a factor which is vital to the sustainability of

volunteer-led projects such as SUNEE. Third, the development of intrinsic motivation in projects like SUNEE and concomitant participant commitment to the cause, increases the likelihood that those individuals will choose to volunteer on unrelated programmes and initiatives in the future, benefitting the community and society as a whole.

This research therefore highlights that undergraduate students' motivation to volunteer on a sports-based outreach project is not static. To date, very few studies have examined student motivation to volunteer on a university-led sports-based community outreach project that runs week-in, week-out, and none have sought to apply Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT to analyse and understand the dynamic nature of student motivation within this context. To this end, this research builds on both work by Allen and Shaw (2009) who use SDT to explore sport event volunteers' motivation, as well as that of Bruening et al. (2015) who illustrate that an informed and intentional structure, design and management of service learning initiatives can lay important precursors for volunteer continuation. The findings of this research study support the core tenets of SDT and present it as a viable framework with which to unpack and explore the psychosocial processes underlying student motivation to volunteer on projects akin to that of SUNEE. As highlighted by Allen and Shaw (2009), a strength of SDT is that it enables the researcher to appraise the interplay between an interviewee's environment and the thoughts, feelings and actions that are elicited in response. This facilitates the researcher's understanding of the relationship between student and the motivational climate whilst volunteering in order to discern the specific features active within the social context that either support or undermine self-determined and intrinsic motivation. This research extends Allen and Shaw's (2009) application of SDT as it investigates regular volunteering, it explores externally controlled extrinsic motivation in greater depth, and describes and interprets volunteers' shifting motivations.

A number of practical implications for volunteer coordinators and managers emerge

from this paper. First, incentives such as free coaching accreditations offer a powerful hook, particularly for students entering the project at the identified regulation anchor. Second, SDT can be implemented as part of a baseline screening process to ascertain the motives, skills and experience of potential volunteers. Also recommended by Allen and Shaw (2009), this will assist the matching of students to tasks and the management of their individual responsibilities. Third, such a screening process should be coupled with the provision of a volunteer portfolio for the student to log their progress and present in reviews with their supervisor in order to negotiate changes in their role. Fourth, supervisors should practice autonomy supportive leadership by facilitating the incremental progression of opportunities for volunteers and also phase out their own input, when appropriate (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Haivas, et al., 2012). Finally, a volunteer coordinator who can monitor, plan and support the progression of student volunteers is a position that would facilitate these recommendations.

This study recognises a number of limitations. One limitation of this research is that it did not identify and approach lapsed volunteers from the SUNEE project. Therefore, it would be useful for future research into similar sport-based interventions to access and follow-up with lapsed student volunteers to understand their desistance. Such research would help to corroborate principles of volunteer management rendered from the current study and the mechanisms espoused for the nurturing of the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness, and ultimately intrinsic motivation. A further limitation of this investigation is that the findings around the motivational development of student volunteers were not recorded on a longitudinal basis, as single interviews followed by respondent validation were carried out to provide a retrospective account of students' motivational adaptations. A principal recommendation of this study would therefore be to test this motivational framework (SDT) against qualitative data captured across a longitudinal study of student volunteers. Additionally, on the basis of the indicative data, there appears to be few

differences between gender and motivational status, other than motives initiating

volunteering at the external regulation anchor. This is a worthwhile topic for future research,

particularly given that females were under-represented in the current sample. Future research

may therefore require a quota or stratified sample to ensure that females are included equally.

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