

Managing Volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations

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Dedication

*To my family
for being my unwavering
pillar of support
during this journey
and for always
believing in me.*

Abstract

This study examined the use of human resource management (HRM) practices with volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations (CSOs). Using the Volunteer Management Inventory (VMI; Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye & Darcy, 2006), 219 leaders of associations in basketball, curling, ice hockey, skating, skiing, swimming, and volleyball participated in this study and identified current trends in HRM practices and perceived issues in the retention of volunteers. Data collected was analyzed using mean and descriptive statistics, T-tests, ANOVAs, and regression analyses. Results indicate that there is a varying use of HRM practices amongst the organizations, and also a significant correlation between the use of HRM practices and the retention of volunteers, particularly board members. Implications and future research directions are discussed regarding how HRM practices and principles may be applied to CSOs.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Volunteer Management

Volunteers are a part of many different areas of society. Businesses, corporations, civic governments, nonprofit and charity organizations all rely heavily on volunteers to partake in various programs and events, provide services to people in need, or to raise awareness and money for social causes. Sport volunteers make a substantial contribution to the delivery of virtually every level of sport in Canada (Doherty, 2005; Safai, Harvey, Lévesque, & Donnelly, 2007; Sport Canada, 2002). In particular, voluntary or non-profit sport organizations engage volunteers in practically all aspects of their delivery. Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, and Darcy (2006) define the act of volunteering as an “unpaid, freely chosen involvement undertaken through an organization or agency and performed for the benefit of others or the environment as well as oneself” (p. 142). Research pertaining to the subject matter of volunteer management addresses three important questions: a) what it is that volunteers actually do (what types of positions, tasks, and roles are volunteers involved in); b) why are volunteers important and necessary to organizations (how does a volunteer’s time impact various functions of the organization); and c) why is it that people volunteer (what are the motivations and reasons that people become involved as a volunteer)?

The need for volunteers to contribute to sport and recreation is substantial (Chelladurai, 2006), as they have been an integral part of the sport industry though little research has been directed to the sport volunteers specifically (Doherty, 2006). Many community sport organizations are dependent upon volunteers to provide a workforce of

coaches, managers, officials, committee members, and event delivery personnel (Cuskelly et al., 2006; Chelladurai, 2006). Canada boasts approximately 33,650 community sport organizations (Mulholland, 2008) in nearly 100 different sports that require volunteers for their delivery (Bloom, Grant, & Watt, 2005). More specifically, sport volunteers accounted for 17% of total volunteer hours (second most) of all Canadian volunteers, as noted in the 2007 government report *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* (Hall, Lasby, Ayer, & Gibbons, 2009). With this reliance on volunteers, sport organizations require an approach for managing volunteers in the sport setting. Although Chelladurai (2006) suggests that the management of volunteers needs to be consistent with the management practices of paid employees, volunteer management practices have received relatively little attention in research specific to sport organizations.

Human resource management (HRM) literature is extensive and focuses primarily on the effectiveness of HRM practices, as opposed to volunteer literature which pertains mostly to issues of motivation and satisfaction (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Considering all of the research available, a gap in the literature exists pertaining to volunteer management practices as a function of HRM practices, more specifically, in dealing with sport. This is a significant issue given that, in many ways, volunteer in an organization are much the same as employees of a company (Liao-Troth, 2001). Sport volunteers impact the delivery of sport by carrying out the various operations of an organization as board members, coaches, event planners, and frontline workers (Chelladurai, 2006). While HRM practices are not widely implemented in sport organizations, Cuskelly et al. (2006)

argue for the implementation of the HRM practices of planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training, managing performance, and recognizing volunteers in the context of sport. These authors suggest these HRM practices as components of the Volunteer Management Inventory (VMI).

Volunteer Management Inventory

The Volunteer Management Inventory (VMI), developed by Cuskelly et al. (2006), examines the application of HRM practices on community sport volunteers. Within this framework, basic HRM practices (planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training, managing performance, and recognizing people) are applied to volunteers in a sport setting in order to understand predictors of volunteer retention. The study found that the most impactful practices on retention are functions of planning, orientating, and training (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

It is also possible that the VMI has broader applications to the world of sport. Sport organizations and clubs often rely on volunteers, though many do not have a program in place to enhance the experiences they share. By understanding the various aspects that create a strong volunteer program (through research based on the VMI), volunteer effectiveness may be enhanced as a result of including optimal practices.

Justification of the Study

Now, more than ever, non-profit organizations are attempting to redefine volunteer roles and responsibilities to increase professionalism and accountability within organizational structure (Guirguis-Younger, Kelley, & McKee, 2005), leading researchers to suggest that it is necessary to investigate and attend to the effective management of volunteers (Hager & Brudney, 2004; Nichols & King, 1999; Nichols et

al., 2003; Russell & Scott, 1997). Doherty's (1998) review of sport specific literature regarding how human resources affect organizational effectiveness identified a diminutive amount of research in this area. Currently, very little is known about the effectiveness and implementation of HRM practices on volunteers, especially in a sport environment. Cuskelly et al. (2006) suggest that in Australia, many sport organizations are looking to incorporate HRM practices into their organization as a response to government policies and funding stipulations requiring effective management practices.

The creation of the Canadian Sport Policy (CSP; Sport Canada, 2002) has led to many questions regarding the delivery of sport in Canada. The issue and need for volunteers to be active in Canadian sport is noted throughout the policy, however, concerns for how those necessary volunteers will be managed, and direction as to what volunteer management programs are available, or are being developed to support and promote sport volunteers, is lacking. More directly, the issue of 'Enhanced Capacity' directs particular attention to the requirement for volunteers for sport to exist and to expand the capacity of sport in Canada, but does not provide any sort of guideline to do so.

In a review of the literature pertaining to the management of sport volunteers, gaps exist regarding current volunteer management practices, best practices for sport volunteers, and the assessment of volunteer management programs for non-profit sport organizations in Canada. Therefore, this study attempts to address some of those gaps by providing a current assessment of volunteer management practices in Canada, as well by determining any issues related to volunteer training that may contribute to the CSP's goal of 'Enhanced Capacity'.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the current volunteer management practices of community sport organizations in Canada. The purpose will be addressed via the following five research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do Canadian community sport organizations utilize specific human resource management (HRM) practices with volunteers?

RQ2: Do differences exist in the management practices of volunteers in Canadian community sport organizations among the following grouping variables: considering organization size, experience of administration, longevity of organization, geographical region, type of sport, and type of volunteer position?

RQ3. Is there a significant relationship between utilizing HRM practices for volunteers and retention of volunteers?

RQ4. What issues respecting HRM practices (recruitment, training, recognition and retention) are the most problematic for community sport organization leaders in Canada?

RQ5. What is the scope (numbers and type) of volunteer positions used by Canadian community sport organizations, and do volunteer positions differ by the grouping variables identified in RQ2?

Definition of Key Terms

Community Sport.

Doherty and Misener (2008) defined community sport as “characterized by networks of individuals who come together to volunteer their time for community sport organizations ” (p. 114).

Community Sport Organizations (CSOs).

Doherty and Misener (2008) defined community sport organizations as “non-profit, voluntary organizations that provide many of the recreational and competitive sport opportunities we enjoy in our communities” and are “synonymous with local voluntary sport clubs or associations” (p. 114).

Summary

As the nature of sport in Canada is shifting to incorporate a more professional foundation to managing CSOs, there is a need to give a current assessment of what HRM practices are presently being used by CSOs, in an attempt to provide current, relevant, and helpful information to practitioners. Volunteers have been recognized as being essential in the delivery of sport at all levels in Canada (Sport Canada, 2002), which has led to an increased focus on how those volunteers are managed using HRM principles (Chelladurai, 2006). In this chapter, an introduction to the topics of volunteer management, the VMI questionnaire, justification for the study, the purpose of the study, and a definition of key terms used has been provided. This study is exploratory in nature, and is an attempt to provide an assessment and perspective of the HRM practices used by CSOs in Canada. The next chapter will provide an in depth review of literature of HRM practices and the management of volunteers in sport.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

Guided by Cuskelly et al.'s (2006) Volunteer Management Inventory (VMI), the intent of this study was to examine the existing volunteer management practices in Canadian community sport. It is important to identify and understand the current volunteer management practices in Canadian community sport as a means to improve the existing system, and make a positive impact in the delivery of community sport across the country. Each of the following will be discussed in an attempt to develop the necessary background for this study: a) the implications of volunteers in sport; b) a review of Human Resource Management (HRM) literature pertaining to volunteers; and c) a review of the volunteer management practices.

The Implications of Volunteers in Sport

Shift to professional and formal structure of volunteers.

Non-profit sport in Canada has typically been dependent on volunteers for the administration of amateur sport (Kikulis, Slack & Hinings, 1995a, 1995b). More recently, there has been a shift from volunteer-led decision making to a greater professionalization of the decision making process within Canada's National Sport Organizations (Auld & Godbey, 1998; Kikulis et al., 1995a, 1995b; Slack & Hinings, 1992); whereas community sport organizations may have few or no paid employees (Chelladurai, 2006). Historically, there was some resistance to this shift, as it was seen to "reduce the organization's legitimacy in the eyes of its constituents" (Frey, 1978, p. 367). However, early research by Slack (1985) suggested that this progression evolves naturally in voluntary sport

organizations as a process of the organization's development, the creation and implementation of rules, policies and procedures, and finally through organizational growth, leading to a demand for skills and roles that required specified technical knowledge and aptitudes, typically in paid positions. Thibault, Slack, and Hinings (1991) suggested that once professionals had been introduced to a non-profit sport organization, an increase in the levels of role specialization and formalization within the organization will occur, and that the rate of change depends on the technical and administrative alignment of the organization. Research by Auld and Godbey (1998) in the context of Canadian National Sport Organizations (NSOs), found that both professionals and volunteers wanted a relationship that was more equal and balanced with decision-making roles, and that there needs to be an awareness by professionals of the impact of professionalization on the structural and behavioural roles within an organization.

As the nature of sport organizations has shifted to become more professional, volunteers are still required and are a valuable set of human resources (Chelladurai, 2006), and there has been a shift in the social environment of sport and recreation organizations from informal to more formal structures (Sharpe, 2003). However, finding a balance between volunteers and paid professional staff presents various challenges. In a longitudinal study of six Canadian National Sport Organizations (NSOs) (from 1984-1996), Amis, Slack, and Hinings (2004) investigated the role of subunit interests, power arrangements, and organizational capacity of those organizations. Results of this study suggested that the NSOs that successfully (and positively) managed this organizational change possessed the technical and behavioural capacity to do so, had a structure where both volunteers and professional staff could balance power in the organization, and that

all members of the organization embraced the transformation and change process (Amis et al., 2004). Conversely, the organizations that failed to successfully administer this change lacked a foundation of transformational leadership, had power retained by volunteer board members, were characterized as not having a clear vision, and involved power struggles among subunits protecting their own interests rather than working towards the good of the organization (Amis et al., 2004).

As the landscape for volunteer roles and responsibilities has changed to incorporate varying levels of professionalism and accountability within the structure of non-profit sport organizations, researchers have suggested that it is necessary to attend to the effective management of volunteers (Hager & Brudney, 2004; Nichols & King, 1999; Nichols et al., 2003; Russell & Scott, 1997). In an earlier review of sport specific research by Doherty (1998), relatively little research was identified that concerns how human resources affect organizational effectiveness; a more current review of the extant literature suggests that this dearth continues (Taylor, Doherty, & McGraw, 2008). To present day, little is known about the effectiveness and implementation of HRM practices on volunteers, especially in a sport environment. In the Australian context, it has been suggested that much of the desire to add HRM practices to sport organizations is due to changes to government policies and funding stipulations demanding effective management practices (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

Sport volunteers in Canada.

Many government departments that oversee national sport have acknowledged the need for management practices to become implemented with sport volunteers. In Canada, the development of *The Canadian Sport Policy* (CSP; Sport Canada, 2002) has led to

discussions on many aspects of the effectiveness and functioning of the national sport system. The purpose of the CSP is to “improve the sport experience for Canadians by helping to ensure the harmonious and effective functioning, and transparency of their sport system” (Sport Canada, 2002, p. 2).

Volunteers are viewed as an important part of sport in Canada. Outside of workplace-based organizations, sport comprises the second largest component of the voluntary sector in the country (Sport Canada, 2002). Given that these volunteers fill a myriad of types of positions (coaches, officials, event staff, board members, and administrators; Sport Canada, 2002) and are heavily relied on, it is important to invest in the ‘people power’ that makes sport possible (Chelladurai, 2006). Considering coaches, the CSP recognizes that coaches are needed to provide the training and guidance required to develop both participants and athletes. The Policy also recognizes that coaching is often viewed as a hobby, and that a high turnover of coaches exists (Sport Canada, 2002). The CSP identifies that further training of coaches is necessary to improve the quality of the sport experience between coaches, participants, and athletes (Sport Canada, 2002).

The CSP was designed as a 10-year guideline towards improving all aspects of Canadian sport. It proposes a vision for 2012 that suggests the Canadian sport system will be “enriched by the presence of dedicated and qualified volunteers, coaches and staff” and that the sport community will focus efforts into the “recruitment, training, and retention of coaches, officials, and volunteers” (Sport Canada, 2002, p.13). To achieve this vision, the CSP states four goals: 1) Enhanced Participation; 2) Enhanced Excellence; 3) Enhanced Capacity; and 4) Enhanced Interaction (Sport Canada, 2002). While volunteers impact each of these goals, volunteer initiatives fall most directly to

‘Enhanced Capacity’, which addresses the need to build a development system that is ethical, and is centered on an athlete-participant focused sport system (Sport Canada, 2002). While the CSP attempts to address many aspects of the Canadian sport system, specific considerations regarding the realities and challenges of improving and overhauling the existing system need development. This is particularly the case regarding volunteer management. As 2012 nears, there are still effectiveness questions raised regarding policy implementation, specifically some of which relate to volunteer management and training.

The issue of capacity is central for the development and management of an organization. Eisinger (2002) defines capacity as “a set of attributes that help or enable an organization to fulfill its missions” (p. 117). Elements of capacity may include having resources available to the organization, having a skilled and ample labour force, effective leadership within the organization (Esinger, 2002), links to other organizations and communities for help and support, and institutionalizing the strengths of an organization (Honadle, 1981). Of these elements, the facet of human capacity through a voluntary labour force is of significant importance for grassroots and community level organizations.

Human capacity refers to the “ability to deploy human capital (i.e., paid staff and volunteers) within the organization, and the competencies, knowledge, attitudes, motivation, and behaviours of these people” (Hall et al., 2003, p. 5). However, at the grassroots level, Sharpe (2006) further defines human capital as the “talents, knowledge, know-how, and experience brought into the organization by its volunteer members” (p. 389). Volunteers in these community level organizations are typically characterized by

having 'low capacity' skill-sets that relate to the management and leadership of nonprofit organizations and of volunteers (Sharpe, 2006). This may lead volunteers to spend additional time trying to acquire skills and knowledge they lack to manage the administrative side of the organization, which takes away the attention of the quality of experience that the participants are receiving (Sharpe, 2006). Sharpe (2006) acknowledges that these organizations do not have the time to spend on recruiting and training other volunteers to enhance this experience, due to being devoted to the continued existence of the organization. Hall et al. (2003) acknowledge human capacity as the key component for the development of other capacities (financial, structural, network, infrastructure, planning and development) within a voluntary organization. The Canadian Sport Policy states the need for volunteers to drive the pillar of 'Enhanced Capacity' (Sport Canada, 2002), though the area of human capacity requires further support to meet the goals of this policy.

Although Canada may lag behind in volunteer management policy development from a national sport leader such as Sport Canada, the global sport community has identified human capacity through volunteerism as a common issue that has been addressed in various sport governance policies. Sport England, Sport and Recreation New Zealand, and the Australian Sport Commission all have well defined policies in various subject areas of volunteer management.

Sport volunteers in England.

In 2008, Sport England presented and published a policy referred to as the *Sport England Strategy 2008-2011*, a policy to address challenges facing sport in England, particularly within the community sport sector. With the development of this policy,

England has strategically focused on the creation of a “world-leading community sports system” (p. 1) that ensures increased participation, the development of elite athletes, and the creation of quality experiences for each participant to fulfill their potential (Sport England, 2008). The development of volunteers in England is also an issue that the strategy addresses, and is timely with the 2012 London Olympics only a few years away (Sport England, 2008).

Sport in England relies on nearly two million volunteers that are actively giving at least one hour of their time each week (Sport England, 2008). The strategy recognizes the strength of this voluntary workforce, and sets out to attract and retain more volunteers, reduce the burden of existing volunteers, and ensure that professional support enhances these voluntary systems (Sport England, 2008). Expanding beyond a sport context, Sport England has created a partnership with Volunteer England, to ensure that the best practices of volunteers can be properly implemented within the sport sector (Sport England, 2008).

Sport England has developed various programs to assist with volunteer development in a variety of positions outside of their *Running Sports* Program. A program called *Recruit to Coach* is aimed at increasing the number of active volunteer coaches by 4000 people, and is partnered with the non-profit *Youth Sport Trust* organization, to meet the goal of an additional 4000 coaches by 2011 (Sport England, 2008). The *Recruit to Coach* program and the *Youth Sport Trust* organization aim to engage coaches and send them to 70 of the most disadvantaged areas of England through a mix of school and community programs to increase participation and the quality of athlete development in these areas (Sport England, 2008).

Sport volunteers in New Zealand.

Sport in New Zealand also relies heavily on volunteers. There are approximately 500,000 sport volunteers in the country, which translates to eight volunteers for every paid person (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). Sport and Recreation New Zealand's research and the creation of new volunteer management policies are the result of a need for an increased demand for volunteers without a significant increase in the supply of volunteers (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). The Sport and Recreation New Zealand policy *Finding and keeping volunteers: What the research tells us* (2006) takes an in depth look at the quality of the volunteer experience, the recruitment, retention and motivations of volunteers, and assesses overall volunteer management practices for sport in the country.

Sport and Recreation New Zealand has identified four core values that are found in volunteers of the sport industry in New Zealand. The four values are 1) generosity; 2) love of sport; 3) social connection; and 4) appreciation (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). While these core values form the basis for the motivations of volunteers, the findings also suggest that organizations need to be conscious of incorporating these ideals into the organizational culture that aligns processes and practices closely to what the volunteers say is valued and important to them (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). To accomplish this, a 'customer-care' approach is suggested, that will place volunteers in meaningful and rewarding roles and positions that match the needs of the volunteer with the needs of the organization (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006).

Another outcome of the Sport and Recreation New Zealand policy is the need for structures within the organization pertinent to volunteers. Volunteers want formal

systems and processes put into practice, so that they are provided with a sense of knowledge and order in their role (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). Some of the suggestions to incorporate structure for volunteers in an organization include: short written job descriptions, induction programs, professional development and training programs, verbal feedback, health and safety briefings, and access to mentors within the field (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). For higher level or specialized roles in an organization, it may be important to have volunteers complete applications with references, go through a police screening, interview for positions, go through annual reviews, and provide written reporting (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). It is essential that organizations plan how to manage their volunteers, though not all processes may be necessary for all volunteers (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006).

Leadership has been identified as a key trait in organizations for the effective management of sport volunteers. Without strong leadership from the organization, volunteers may be uninspired and uncertain about their role expectations, may lack dedication and commitment, and eventually stop volunteering with a particular organization all together (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006). Sport organizations must create a positive and motivating environment that empowers volunteers to achieve their own aspirations as well as those of the organization (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2006).

Sport volunteers in Australia.

Australia also relies heavily on volunteer involvement for the delivery of sport, with over 1.5 million volunteers engaged in sport and recreation organizations every year (Australian Sports Commission, 2000a). In 2000, the Australia Sports Commission

created and implemented the *Volunteer Management Program*, which is based on HRM principles and is geared towards effective volunteer management practices and training for sport organizations. This program provides six modules for sport organizations that consider good practices, volunteer management policy, the role of the volunteer coordinator, recruitment, retention, and managing event volunteers.

Volunteer management program development.

The existing volunteer management frameworks outlined by the national sporting bodies noted previously, fail to acknowledge support that HRM practices can substantiate managerial power and privilege, underpin a result based approach to support organizational practices, or challenge alternative methods to effectively and efficiently managing personnel (Keenoy, 1999). Considering the management of non-profit organizations, Fenwick (2005) suggests that organization members exercise a high degree of self-selection to align personal values with those of the organization, and members are also more likely to showcase commitment that is relational rather than transactional in nature. Further support for the notion that alternative methods of HRM practices that are based on situational factors, is noted by Grube and Piliavin (2000) who suggest that role identity in volunteers may possibly be a far greater predictor of volunteer (and organization) performance in a situational context, and should be considered in models of volunteer behaviour. Cuskelly et al. (2006) in turn suggest that community sport organizations that are required to implement HRM programs set forth by government agencies are doing so without adequate evidence of the effectiveness of these practices on volunteers or the organization itself. The result of the implementation of these HRM

practices may have anticipated positive outcomes or possible unfavorable consequences on community sport organizations (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

Community sport is prominent in Canada, with approximately 33,650 CSOs across the country (Mulholland, 2008). Operationally, CSOs may be defined as “non-profit, voluntary organizations that provide many of the recreational and competitive sport opportunities we enjoy in our communities” (Doherty & Misener, 2008, p. 114). In an attempt to structure various aspects of sport at the community level, sport organizations have engaged (at differing levels) in HRM practices to structure processes and standards. Canadian organizations such as True Sport, the Canadian Curling Association, Sask Sport, Gymnastics Canada, and Swimming Canada have all made attempts at using HRM practices to guide their sport organizations (at varying degrees) in order to develop programs that encompass the organized, efficient management of volunteers in an effort to sustain and grow their respective sports. True Sport provides a grassroots level acknowledgement, similar to the CSP, that volunteers are necessary for the delivery of sport in Canada, though does not go beyond providing a program to assist the practitioners that make CSOs function (Mulholland, 2008). The Canadian Curling Association developed the “Business of Curling” program, which is a three phase program that guides curling club leaders on training, recruiting and retaining volunteers and employees, as well as to provide strategy support for the sustainability of respective clubs (Canadian Curling Association, 2009). Sask Sport’s production of the “Online Volunteer Training Centre” provides online training for volunteers of CSOs ranging in topics of volunteer management, recruitment and retention, to finance and fundraising practices (Sask Sport, 2009). In Gymnastics Canada’s program “The Business of

Gymnastics – Changing the Culture”, there is a primary focus on the fiscal responsibility and marketing of a sustainable club, though one module from the workshop of this program is dedicated to the management of volunteers (Gymnastics Canada, 2009).

Components of Human Resource Management (HRM)

Human resource management is a relatively young component of the business world, and has continually evolved over the past 40 years. In the mid-1970’s, HRM initiatives were referred to as ‘the quality of work life’, ‘human productivity’ and ‘employee motivation’, and were sought out as companies became concerned with the quality of human performance in the workplace in a time of rising inflation rates and economic downturn in the United States (Mills, 1975). In the few decades since, HRM practices have increased in importance as a response to increased competition, globalization, a continuous change in markets and technology (Cuskelly et al., 2006), social legislation, an increase in unions and collective bargaining, and the demand for personnel to perform more specialized tasks and roles (Taylor et al., 2008). Modern human resource management refers to “practices that employers use to recruit, develop, reward, maintain, retain, assess, and manage individual workers and groups of workers” (Slack, 1997, p. 233). HRM also includes the “development, design, implementation, and management of systems for staffing, training and development, evaluating performance, compensating employees, ensuring they are satisfied in their job, and maintaining harmonious relations with labor groups” (Slack, 1997, p. 233). It is important for organizations to implement HRM practices that enable these functions for paid staff (Beatty, Huselid, & Schneier, 2003), but also for volunteers to some degree (Chelladurai, 2006).

It is suggested that the HR functions in organizations have “changed in parallel with the economic shift from agrarian to manufacturing to services – and now to information” (Beatty et al., 2003, p. 107). However, despite the desire for increased knowledge in HRM practices and theory (both factual and educated analysis), research literature has not been able to keep up with this demand (Storey, 1989). Keenoy (1999) states that HRM has been a “continuing source of controversy, confusion and misapprehension” (p.1), with splintered congruence in concepts, theories, practices, and empirical evidence.

The body of research that is focused on HRM practices is vast and extensive; however, within organizations, the most dominant area of research in the field has been the impact of HRM on performance (Guest, 1997). When determining the effectiveness of these practices, researchers suggest a need to create valid theoretical models to gain further understanding of the role of HRM in organizations, as well as in the foundations of HR practices, in the organizational context (Wright & McMahan, 1992). The need for theory as a contributor to managing varying human resource approaches may lead to a competitive advantage for an organization (Barney, 1995; Schuler & Jackson, 1987), and is impactful on the performance growth of an organization (Huselid, 1995; Huselid, Jackson & Schuler, 1997). Fenwick (2005) calls for researchers to include multinational non-profit organizations in HRM research and theory, as a majority of HRM research is focused on the employees of large for-profit organizations, with little attention being paid to non-profit and volunteer driven organizations (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

Research by Huselid (1995) suggests that an organization built on ‘High Performance Work Practices’ leads to lower employee turnover, greater productivity, and

an increase in firm performance. Huselid et al. (1997) go on to propose a link between increasing HRM effectiveness in an organization to the extent that improvements are made to strategic HRM initiatives as a means for gaining a competitive advantage. Cuskelly et al. (2006) note that there has been a shift from a primarily operational function of personnel management, to include both theoretical and applied approaches in modern HRM practices. This transition illustrates the necessity for an organization's HRM systems to become aligned with their business strategy, through a dedicated philosophy to human resource development (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

There has been an evolution in the concepts that frame HRM literature and models. Tichy, Fombrun, and Devanna (1982) proposed a strategic fit approach to an organization's HRM practices where strategy-based human resource functions follow the strategic management objectives of the organization. This model relies on constant and direct alignment of strategy, structure, and human resource dimensions (Tichy et al., 1982). The HRM dimension is comprised of functions consisting of appropriate selection, performance appraisal, rewards systems, and the development of human capital, while providing various feedback mechanisms within each section (Tichy et al., 1982).

Modern approaches to the value of HRM programs have been discussed for many years. Research by Beer, Spector, Lawrence, Mills, and Walton (1984) is considered to be instrumental in promoting the value of human resources in organizations (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Beer et al. (1984) first introduced a required course in HRM to the Harvard Business School program in 1981 in response to recession, deregulation, and international competition in the United States, as a means to improve the relationship between managers and employees. Beer et al. (1984) suggested that a foundation of HRM

practices is formed through strategic work practices and policy development that aligns the values of the organization with those of the management teams, which is then transferred down to the employee level. Beer et al. (1984) imply that well run HRM programs will positively affect an organization's members by understanding employee values, maintaining employee satisfaction and commitment, supporting employee development to meet organizational goals, as well as to further strengthen other aspects of the organization such as the planning, recruitment, and retention of personnel.

Building on previous literature based on gaining a competitive advantage through HRM practices, Schuler and Jackson (1987) propose an extension of Porter's model of competitive strategy that encompasses innovation, quality enhancement, and cost reduction. The addition of a human resource element of role behaviors is suggested to increase personnel and organizational effectiveness, by providing a foundation which incorporates the skills, knowledge and abilities of each individual into what is needed in the social environment of the workspace (Schuler & Jackson, 1987). This notion of matching competitive strategy with human resource initiatives is geared towards ensuring the effective functioning and sustainability of an organization through a system rooted in attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining of its members (Jackson & Schuler, 1995).

Much of HRM research is asserted to improve the performance of business; though much of the empirical evidence which supports this notion has been mixed (Cuskelly et al., 2006). There is a large body of research that shows support for a positive link between strategic HRM practices and organization performance. Research has shown that HRM strategies that have combined practices that include planning, recruitment,

screening, training, and performance rewards, leads to lower personnel turnover, higher productivity, and an increase in financial performance (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Huselid, 1995; Huselid et al., 1997; Koch & McGrath, 1996; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Pfeffer, 1995). However, there remains a contingent of researchers that are skeptical to adopt these HRM practices as a 'best fit' model to blanket across various industries and organizations, as these practices, theories, and applications may be imperfect (Legge, 2001). Results of a study by Barnard and Rodgers (2000) of both public and private organizations with at least 250 personnel in Singapore, found that HRM practices do not have a positive outcome relating to employment stability or internal staffing, though showed a positive correlation concerning employee development. This study raised questions about how HRM practices are implemented, measured, and evaluated, and illustrated that differences in performance indicator standards are present (Barnard & Rodgers, 2000).

Though there is some debate on the validity of universal best-practice human resource models, there is a strong agreement by academics that there is value in various HR practices, though variations of these are more likely to positively exist on an organization-by-organization basis (Wood, 1999). As the environment of most organizations are dynamic and always changing, it is unrealistic to suggest and believe that a single set of best HRM practices will be ideal for any situation in an organization (Wood, 1999). Lepak and Snell (1999) propose a HR architecture that uses different configurations to allocate work based on two components of human capital – the value and uniqueness of employee skills. The application of different employment approaches acts as a set of best practices for each employee of the firm, and are useful in addressing

the important relationship between the employee and the organization (Lepak & Snell, 1998, 1999; Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Hite, 1995). As sport organizations are also dynamic and always changing, HRM practices of varying capacities may be important when considering the role of a volunteer.

Volunteer Management in Sport – A Human Resource Management Approach

While the HRM literature is not absolute about practices that promise positive organizational performance outcomes (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Guest, 1997; Pfeffer, 1995), there are fundamental elements of HRM such as personnel recruitment, training, development, and motivation that are important to sport organizations (Cuskelly et al., 2006). A study by Cuskelly et al. (2006) titled *Volunteer Management Practices and Volunteer Retention: A Human Resource Management Approach* includes HRM practices expected to influence motivation, skills and knowledge development, commitment, satisfaction and retention, as HR outcomes. This research utilizes a HRM framework which includes seven discrete HRM practices: planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training and support, managing performance, and recognizing performance (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The *Volunteer Management Program* created by the Australian Sport Commission is based on these identified HRM practices and is used as a framework to manage volunteers in various sport organizations in Australia (Cuskelly et al., 2006). However, it was not previously known how these practices are contributing at the community sports level (Cuskelly et al., 2006), or in other international sport contexts such as the non-profit sport setting in Canada.

The research project by Cuskelly et al. (2006) comprised two studies. The first study was conducted in order to identify current volunteer management practices, as well

to develop the Volunteer Management Inventory (VMI) questionnaire (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The researchers used 98 rugby club administrators from across Australia participating in focus groups of between 2-12 people, to identify current volunteer management practices in their clubs (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Interview questions were based on the seven a priori categories listed as part of the HRM framework (previously noted) (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Participants in the focus group were asked questions based in the context of managing volunteers in their own rugby clubs, such as “In your experience, what practices are used in recruiting volunteers?” and “In your experience, what practices are used to induct and orientate volunteers?” (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 147). Prompts such as “written or verbal?”, “formal or informal?”, “systematic or ad-hoc?”, and “which positions?” were used by the interviewer to elicit more detailed feedback regarding some of the interview questions (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 147). Further analysis and appropriate coding of the interviews from the focus groups, led to the development of the 37 item VMI, which is the basis for the second study in this research project (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

The second part of this research study was to apply the VMI to a sport setting. The VMI questionnaire was sent out to a sample of 814 (though only 773 were determined to be eligible – 25 could not be contacted, 16 were joint clubs) clubs within the Australian Rugby Union (ARU), where representatives from 375 clubs completed and returned the survey (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Representatives that completed the survey varied, though most were club presidents or a senior committee members (Cuskelly et al., 2006). In the case of this study, volunteer management was defined as the “application of HRM functions that deal with recruitment, selection, orientation, training, support,

performance management, and recognition of organizational volunteers” (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 149). Due to the absence of a previously established inventory or questionnaire regarding the measurement of volunteer management practices, the VMI was developed for this purpose through the first study of this project (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Construct validity of the VMI was established in the first study, and was also pilot tested with a small sample of 30 rugby club administrators to provide feedback, further clarify meaning of questions, and to establish content validity in relation to how volunteer management practices were defined for use in this study (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The VMI was created to identify HRM practices and collect data from rugby clubs reporting on the extents to which they exercise volunteer management practices. For each question, the stem “In managing its volunteers to what extent does your club...” was used, with respondents answering using a five point Likert-type scale (from 1 = “never” to 5 = “always”) (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

Along with the VMI, an additional component of the study was included to assess the current status of volunteer retention issues. Participants completed questions that considered several categories of volunteer positions asking respondents to “estimate the extent to which volunteer retention was a problem or issue for their club” (Cuskelly et al., 2006). These questions were answered using a four point Likert-type scale (from 1 = “not a problem” to 4 = “serious problem”) for position categories such as board or management committee, coaches, team management, and other formal volunteer positions (Cuskelly et al., 2006). An index of perceived volunteer retention was calculated considering all of the mean scores for each position, where a higher score would indicate that volunteer retention is a greater problem (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

Midway through the 2004 rugby season, survey packages were mailed to all 814 community rugby clubs, where the club representative was typically the president or administration staff member to the management committee or board (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The survey package included an incentive draw for an opportunity to win various prizes and merchandise from the ARU (to entice participation), as well as a reply-paid envelope (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Participation in this study was voluntary and anonymous, and confidentiality was ensured through a coding process that disassociated completed questionnaires from club identities (Cuskelly et al., 2006). A follow-up reminder letter was sent out to each rugby club after a 30 day period (to allow for time to gather all relevant information), and a new survey package was sent after a 60 day period if a completed questionnaire was not returned (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

The 37 items contained in the VMI were scrutinized using item-scale correlations, as well as Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for each of the seven HRM categories (Planning $\alpha = 0.74$; Recruiting $\alpha = 0.61$; Screening $\alpha = 0.55$; Orientating $\alpha = 0.76$; Training $\alpha = 0.81$; Performance Managing $\alpha = 0.85$; Recognizing $\alpha = 0.79$) (Cuskelly, 2006). Each of the reliability estimates for the VMI was considered acceptable except for the HRM category of screening, which was slightly low (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Cuskelly et al. (2006) explain this due the high standard deviation of the construct and the fact that it had only two indicators assigned to it. The researchers had only one item dropped from the analysis due to a very low item-scale correlation, which came from the recruitment category and read "use coercion or pressure to recruit volunteers" (Cuskelly et al., 2006, p. 151). A confirmatory factor analysis was used to examine relationships between the remaining 36 variables and the seven hypothesized HRM constructs, where the error

terms for all 36 variables were constrained to not correlate, and the seven constructs were able to freely correlate (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

Results of this study showed various trends regarding volunteer retention and HRM practices in Australia. Descriptive statistics collected indicated that volunteer retention was not reported to be an issue with 44% of the clubs (Cuskelly et al., 2006). When considering volunteer retention problems for all positions combined, only planning practices was a significant predictor of those issues; meaning that the clubs that used planning practices more extensively in managing volunteers, were less likely to perceive problems with the retention of volunteers (Cuskelly et al., 2006). While comparing HRM constructs for each volunteer position individually (coaches, team managers, committee or board members, and team managers), there was support that planning, orientation, and training and support practices each have an affect on retention issues of those volunteers (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

The researchers acknowledge that the value of this study serves to provide an initial assessment of how the use of HRM practices may act as a predictor of retention issues in community sport organizations (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Results suggest that the use of HRM practices used by CSOs varies broadly between associations, and those that used more extensive practices also reported fewer retention problems (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The link between the use of HRM practices and volunteer retention is important, though it should be noted that this study lays a foundation for future exploration into the organizational behaviour, preferences, influences, strategies, and development of additional resources to assist the volunteer experience, in addition to the creation of a valid assessment tool in the VMI (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

The HRM Constructs Used in the VMI

Planning practices.

Planning is the first step in the development of a HRM program. It incorporates creating job descriptions, succession planning, addressing turnover in key positions, identifying and targeting potential volunteers for the organization (Cuskelly et al., 2006), establishing goals, and scheduling the activities of each individual (Chelladurai, 2006). Planning is also an important consideration for the efficient use of time and money, and is the foundation for building other HRM practices (Taylor et al., 2008). Depending on the sophistication of the organizational structure, the planning process may be a brief and static process if staff levels are constant and also if there is little variance in the types of jobs and roles that are performed (Hoye, Smith, Westerbeek, Stewart, & Nicholson, 2006). In dynamic organizations that are continually evolving and changing, the planning process is an ongoing course of action (Hoye et al, 2006).

The Australian Sports Commission has emphasized the need for policy planning stating that “organizational policies reflect and clarify the values and beliefs considered important by the organization” (2000b, p. 3). Suggested policies are to include procedures, rules, standards, expectations and guidelines to be communicated to the organization volunteers (and other stakeholders) to ensure accountability, organizational control, responsibility, and expectations of the organization and its members (Australian Sports Commission, 2000b). Policy developments should follow a logical progression, beginning with a policy formation stage (aligning with mission and goal objectives), followed by the implementation of the policy, and ending with an evaluation, review and adjustments to the policy based on problems or issues created (Australian Sports

Commission, 2000b). Volunteer policy development areas are dependent upon the circumstances of a particular organization, but may include (but are not limited to) issues such as eligibility, rights, responsibilities, expenses, record keeping, working conditions, harassment/abuse, training, absences, and disciplinary situations (Australian Sports Commission, 2000b).

Recruitment practices.

The recruitment of volunteers may be a challenging task, though having a recruitment plan, knowledge of task roles and orientations, understanding volunteer motivations, and a purposeful recruitment campaign, will assist in attracting quality people to an organization (Australian Sports Commission, 2000a). Recruitment practices involve tailoring roles and tasks to meet needs of volunteers, active recruitment of personnel across diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, advertising and word of mouth campaigns to attract volunteers, and by attempting to fill key roles and positions in a timely matter (recommended to be done prior to annual meetings) (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

People volunteer for many different reasons. Those reasons may include altruism, the desire to help others, cultural and/or religious values, political membership, specialty social-issue causes, or an affiliation to an organization (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Queniart, 2008; Webb & Abzug, 2008). How active volunteers become or remain depends on various stages in one's life, which consider factors such as age, gender, type of employment, wealth, political alignment, and the phase of one's career (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Queniart, 2008; Webb & Abzug, 2008).

When recruiting volunteers, it is important to understand influences on volunteer behavior. Wymer and Starnes (2001) propose a model of volunteer behaviour that

examines personal influences, interpersonal influences, attitudes, and situational factors as a model to gain understanding of how to strengthen recruitment practices of the nonprofit sector. Personal influences address the volunteer's personality, self-esteem, empathy, values, personal experiences, and life stage, and suggest that organizations can align roles and goals to meet the personal desires of a prospective volunteer (Wymer & Starnes, 2001). According to the research of Wymer and Starnes (2001), interpersonal influences are more extrinsic in nature, and consider facilitation (social connection that one has to other volunteers), social norms, and parental volunteering, as primary influences. Both personal and interpersonal influences will shape the attitudes of the volunteer towards a particular organization, and place a strong emphasis on supporting a match between the values of the individual and the group. Situational factors such as amount of spare time available, proximity to volunteer opportunities, and the safety of the individual, may hinder or enable volunteer participation depending on each circumstance. This framework is important for managers because it allows them to become aware of volunteer motivation and behavior, and link them to appeal to specific recruitment practices of volunteers that fit the organization's needs.

Recruitment strategies of potential volunteers are essential for organizations to ensure that they are able to fill the positions required to maintain their desired level of service to stakeholders. Peterson (2004) outlines six recruitment strategies that organizations may incorporate into their recruitment strategies: 1) Publicizing (putting information regarding needs and opportunities out into the target community); 2) Team Projects (volunteer projects that require individuals to work together as a group on a volunteer project); 3) Matching Incentive (financial contribution to an organization based

on the number of volunteer hours contributed); 4) Recognition (acknowledging volunteer contributions publicly); 5) Performance Evaluations (professional development in volunteer activities that increase job related skills); and 6) Release Time (where a company may give hours off of work to participate in a volunteer activity). Of these six recruitment strategies, not all may be applicable to nonprofit organizations that rely on volunteers, as often there are no (or very few) paid employees, and these strategies were originally geared towards corporate volunteer programs rather than nonprofit organizations (Peterson, 2004). The most accessible strategies to a nonprofit organization would be Publicizing and Recognition, though there may be potential for other strategies to be modified.

Of the many recruitment strategies, some are more effective than others in regards to nonprofit organizations. Using focus groups made up of volunteers, co-coordinators, and directors of nonprofit organizations, Bussell and Forbes (2006) found that public promotions of volunteer opportunities were only sometimes successful, and that the most frequently cited reasons for volunteering were through word of mouth, through connections to others in a community, by being asked to volunteer, or because a friend was volunteering. Bussell and Forbes (2006) also found that for many volunteers, the causal reason to get involved was an internal message rather than an external one.

Bennett and Kottasz (2000) investigated the publication of advertisements geared towards volunteer recruitment for nonprofit charity organizations in the UK. Their study presented two styles of advertisements – one that was altruistically oriented and one that was egotistically oriented – to groups made up of current long-time charity shop volunteers, people who had volunteered in the past two years, and people who had not

volunteered at all in the past two years (Bennett & Kottasz, 2000). The results of this study suggest that individuals with stronger altruistic preferences did not respond more positively to the altruistically oriented advertisements, and also that those individuals with weaker altruistic inclinations found the egotistical advertisements more appealing (Bennett & Kottasz, 2000). For the sample that participated in this study, the authors concluded that advertisements that emphasized personal benefits (material or emotional), portrayed a highly effective marketing campaign for volunteer recruitment (Bennett & Kottasz, 2000). Bennett and Kottasz (2000) also suggested that the public image of a nonprofit organization is a very important factor in volunteer recruitment, and that organizations should invest in building a strong image, identity, and reputation for the activities that the organization stands for and participates in.

When looking at recruiting different groups, age is an important consideration for organizations. Research by Sundeen and Raskoff (2000) suggests that a majority of teenagers that volunteer have a high socialization into volunteer opportunities through influences from family, school, and church, and have a high personal aptitude towards volunteer experiences and a significantly high social status amongst their peers. They also point out that the main gateways to their volunteering activity were through being asked by someone (a friend, teacher, or family member), by having a family member or friend already involved with the organization that they volunteered for, or through participation in an organization or group (a religious group or workplace) (Sundeen & Raskoff, 2000). When considering the nonvolunteer demographic, Sundeen and Raskoff (2000) determine that the top reasons for teenagers to not volunteer is due to a full personal schedule (33.1%), no interest in the organization/activity (24.7%), and that no one asked (23.4%).

Focus groups by Bussell and Forbes (2006) revealed a similar sentiment, suggesting that young people do not “view volunteering as an attractive activity” (p. 159). Other reasons for a lack of teenager volunteer participation include not having a specific organization ask them to volunteer (17.0%), not knowing how to become involved (13.2%), and not having the necessary skills that are required to volunteer (4.6%) (Sundeen & Raskoff, 2000). These are important issues for organizations to consider as a means of gaining entry into a youthful market of potential volunteers. In order to make volunteering opportunities appeal to teenagers, Sundeen and Raskoff (2000) suggest that organizations tailor their initiatives to provide opportunities with varying time commitments, for different types of activities and events, define roles that appeal to demographic interests, and develop programs that make teenagers aware of volunteer opportunities and recruitment.

When considering the recruitment strategies of older people, it is important to understand their motivations for volunteering as a means of attracting them to a particular role or position. Omoto, Snyder, and Martino (2000) found that the volunteer activities of older volunteers (aged between 55 and 76 years old) are service oriented, compared to younger volunteers (aged between 19 and 39 years old) who exercised relationship motivations for volunteer activity. Older volunteers also had greater feelings of societal obligations compared to younger people, which also contributed to their service oriented motivations to volunteer (Omoto et al., 2000). Omoto et al. (2000) also found that older volunteers were more likely to be retired, less likely to be employed full-time, and also worked considerably fewer hours each week in paid employment than younger volunteers, thus making them an accessible resource to organizations. Understanding

these motivations is an important consideration for recruitment strategies in order for organizations to attract volunteers that fit a specific role or position, by matching the message in the medium to a target audience that will be interested in that opportunity (Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Miene, & Haugen, 1994; Omoto et al., 2000; Wymer & Starnes, 2001).

In a sport context, many organizations face a difficult challenge recruiting and retaining quality volunteers. Motivation and satisfaction are two challenges that have been studied extensively in sport volunteerism (c.f., Clary et al., 1998; Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006; Farrell, Johnston, & Twynam, 1998; Finkelstein, Penner, & Brannick, 2005; Hamm, MacLean, & Misener, 2008; MacLean & Hamm, 2007; Strigas & Jackson, 2003; Wymer, Self, & Findley, 2008).

Motivation is an important aspect to consider in understanding why people volunteer in various organizations. Clary et al. (1998), Finkelstein et al. (2005) and Strigas & Jackson (2003) address this issue to gain perspective and understanding of the motives of sport volunteers. Clary et al. (1998) suggest that volunteers desire an activity that fits their own personal wants, needs, and motives to engage in a volunteer position. Finkelstein et al. (2005) link role identity theory (where a volunteer role is internalized by an individual and reflected in their projection of their identity) to the motivations of a volunteer. They suggest that volunteers are motivated by a prosocial function that is a part of their own internalized role identity (Finkelstein et al., 2005).

Much of sport relies on volunteers for various roles during special events. Farrell et al. (1998) point out that volunteer motivation for a special event is different than for other sport volunteers, citing the highest ranking reason for volunteering at the event was

“I wanted to help make the event a success” (p. 298). Costa et al. (2006) confirms a similar sentiment stating that volunteers were committed to the event itself, rather than the task. Both Farrell et al. (1998) and Costa et al. (2006) conclude that the level of motivation, satisfaction, and commitment that special event sport volunteers have before, during and after an event, is a function of meeting their expectations, their opportunities to contribute to the success of the event, and how the organization manages the volunteers (often mirroring paid staff or employees). Strigas and Jackson (2003) built upon previous research by Farrell et al. (1998), to specify that motives for volunteering in sport have a high emphasis on the egoistic factor, and a low emphasis on the material factor.

Hosting special events such as sport championships, tournaments and other short-term events, provides unique challenges for the recruitment of volunteers. Coyne and Coyne (2001) used the 1997 PGA Honda Classic golf tournament as the backdrop for their analysis of recruitment issues. When recruiting first-time volunteers for this golf tournament, the most enticing motivation for adding new volunteers to the event was routed in their ‘love of golf’, and that both new and veteran volunteers were strongly motivated in the opportunity to volunteer at the event because of the free round of golf that was given to each volunteer (Coyne & Coyne, 2001). Free golf privileges aside, the two groups differ significantly in other motivations, with the first-time volunteers being more concerned with the financial effects and impacts of their volunteer time, while the veteran volunteers were concerned with relationship building such as meeting interesting people, creating friendships, having good supervision, and building community spirit (Coyne & Coyne, 2001).

Hamm et al.'s (2008) work on special event sport volunteers seeks to fill in gaps in the literature in relation to commitment and motivation of short-term (episodic) special event volunteers. Volunteers at the 2006 Canadian Women's Open golf tournament were surveyed to determine varying factors of motivation and commitment (Hamm et al., 2008). Their results show that the highest levels of volunteer commitment consider "helping golf be successful" and "community pride", with the lowest levels of commitment concern "caring for the fate of sports in general" and "caring for the fate of the community" (Hamm et al., 2008, p. 32). When considering motivation, the research of Hamm et al. (2008) supports previous conclusions by Farrell et al. (1998) that the primary motivation of episodic volunteers is "making the event a success and interacting with others" (p. 33).

The research of Hamm et al. (2008) provides valuable insight for how practitioners interact with and address the needs of special sport event volunteers. They suggest that practitioners should relate how the efforts of the volunteer will directly benefit other people, as well as use motivations to tailor the fulfillment of goals and objectives of the event to volunteer roles (Hamm et al. 2008).

The recruitment and retention of volunteers is a prevalent challenge for many sport and recreation organizations. Within the Volunteer Management Program, the Australian Sports Commission developed two modules to address the difficulty of recruiting and retaining volunteers. To develop better recruitment practices, it is important to understand why people volunteer – much like the previous research presented, the Australian Sports Commission (2000a) suggests that people primarily volunteer for various reasons such as altruism, social contact, or personal satisfaction.

The Australian Sports Commission (2000a) concluded that few people come to sport and recreation organizations looking for volunteer opportunities or are recruited via advertising or publicity; a majority of sport volunteers are recruited through personal connections of friends, family, or individuals already involved in the organization. The Australian Sports Commission (2000a) has also outlined 'best practices' for engaging potential volunteers that focus on the benefits to the volunteer rather than the needs of the organization, proper planning and development of volunteer roles, as well as the screening, selecting and orientation processing of volunteers.

Screening practices.

Screening processes vary depending on the goals of the HR initiatives of an organization; though routinely include practices comprised of verifying experiences, accreditation, and background checks to ensure the safety of participants (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The purpose of the screening process (also known as the selection process), is selecting the best candidate for a role or position (Slack, 1997).

There are many ways of screening individuals prior to having them join an organization. Some of the most common practices are through written application forms (which include basic personal and contact info; often a resume is included), the completion of a standardized test (used to identify desirable traits and attributes; may be expensive in some cases), through interviews (may be structured or unstructured; common practice), and through reference checks (usually provided with application) (Slack, 1997). When screening individuals, it is important for an organization to be fair and unbiased in the selection process to avoid exposure to discrimination claims on the

basis of race, ethnicity, disability, religion, sex, age, marital status, or sexual preference (Hoye et al., 2006).

Orientation practices.

Orientation practices refer to holding initial introduction sessions within an organization for both new and existing volunteers (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The orientation session allows for volunteers to meet key people and existing volunteers in an organization, provide an overview of the organization, as well to establish a code of conduct and other policies to an individual (Cuskelly et al., 2006). This is an important introductory impression of the organization to the new team member, that may make them feel welcomed and empowered when given a good quality orientation (Hoye et al., 2006). The nature and length of the orientation period will vary depending on the organization, as well as how sophisticated the individual's role is (Slack, 1997).

For special events in sport, the orientation process for volunteers is important. Hamm et al. (2008) proposed that volunteers will benefit from specific descriptions of their roles and how their role fits within the organizational goals of the event, rather than merely providing a list of their duties, and also that the role descriptors will provide interaction opportunities with others. It is also suggested that the organizing committee promote, monitor, and evaluate those goals throughout the event, thus providing volunteers with a purpose and motivation (Hamm et al., 2008).

Training practices.

Practices which involve the training and support of a volunteer may include providing resources, assisting with access to training and development programs, the reimbursement of training costs and expenses, role support, and workload management

(Cuskelly et al., 2006). Slack (1997) states that the purpose of training is to “improve an employee’s skill level, knowledge base, or experience, or to change their attitude about aspects of their work situation” (p. 240). The need for training may be influenced by new technology, a change in organizational strategy, or a change in organizational structure, and may occur at the organizational level, the job level, or the individual level (Slack, 1997). A need for training at the organizational level may be necessitated due to a change in strategy, the current market, or type of technology (Slack, 1997). At the job level, training may be in response to the change of task and skill orientation of an existing role (Slack, 1997). A call for training at the individual level may be necessary to give an individual the essential skills to perform a job adequately or to move into another role (Slack, 1997).

Volunteer training has become an important component to human resource practices within sport organizations. A well-implemented and managed volunteer training and development program allows sport organizations to be more efficient and effective in the execution of organizational strategies, as well as volunteer recruitment, retention, satisfaction, and overall volunteer performance (Costa et al., 2006; Cuskelly et al., 2006; Daprano, Costa, & Titlebaum, 2007; Deslandes & Rogers, 2008; Stockdale & Williams, 2007; Taylor et al., 2008).

Taylor et al. (2008) distinguish between training and development, stating that training refers to the “development and enhancement of technical, job-related skills and abilities, either on-the-job or off-the-job” (p. 111), and that the term development refers to “changing attitudes and behaviors as well as skill building, and aims to improve the interpersonal capabilities of the person” (p. 111).

The need for training and development has led to many important initiatives in sport. In 2005, the Rugby Football Union (RFU), based out of England, developed a Leadership Academy to assist and train volunteers that run hundreds of community rugby clubs in England (Stockdale & Williams, 2007). The development of this training academy was to better enable volunteer leaders to manage their club resources (people and finances) more effectively, as well as to prepare future plans for development of their club (Stockdale & Williams, 2007). Prior to the launch of the academy, a 'Training Needs Analysis' was executed with various club volunteer delegates to identify and prioritize the most important areas for volunteer development and training in community level rugby (Stockdale & Williams, 2007). The overall results highlighted five areas for training and development, which are: 1) Leadership; 2) Communication; 3) Planning; 4) Financial management; and 5) Managing change (Stockdale & Williams, 2007).

Performance management practices.

Performance management practices build upon the training programs of an organization, and MacLean (2001) defines performance as "the activities or behaviours of workers completing tasks associated with a job" (p. 6). This practice seeks to monitor the performance of an individual, provide feedback on work that is being completed, and the facilitation of problem resolution (Cuskelly et al., 2006). In a sport organization, MacLean (2001) suggests three primary reasons as to why it is important to manage the performance of staff: 1) Organizational success is largely based on the quality and performance of the personnel; 2) To manage people effectively, it is impossible to do so without accurate information regarding the work performance of personnel; and 3) Sport organizations are considered to be consumer-oriented in nature, and a well structured

performance appraisal system helps to ensure a quality product for consumers. This allows for an organization to provide an ongoing evaluation of existing programs, to determine if other training and development opportunities need to be offered, and to provide a link between job descriptions of each individual to the expectations of the position (Chelladurai, 2006). It also provides a forum for the individual to identify their own strengths and weaknesses as a means to future personal and career development (Hoye et al., 2006).

There are many ways to evaluate and manage performance. Written feedback is the simplest and most common form of performance appraisal (Slack, 1997). The effectiveness of written feedback however is determined on the quality of the evaluator's communication skills and ability to clearly articulate detailed feedback about the level of an individual's performance (Slack, 1997). Other methods include the documentation of critical incidents (positive or negative) of each employee to be able to discern desirable behaviours from unappealing ones, the use of rating scales to provide a quick and current assessment of a given attribute, the use of 'behaviourally anchored rating scales' where each rating comes with a critical incident-type level rating, or the use of paired comparisons of one individual versus other individuals within the organization (Slack, 1997).

Recognition practices.

The use of recognition is an important ingredient for the successful management of volunteer programs. Recognition can be defined as a "public expression of appreciation given by a group to individuals who undertake desired behaviors" (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998, p. 264). Having a recognition component to a volunteer management

program is essential for recruitment, motivation, and retention purposes, as volunteers are typically unpaid, and recognition acknowledgements make their efforts feel valued and appreciated (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). These programs may include formal recognition programs, as well as individual and public acknowledgements of the efforts of a volunteer (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

There is little literature that considers the interaction of human resource benchmarking practices (the best practices of other organizations that can be adapted into another organization in a new and creative way) between organizational-level and employee-level outcomes (Browne, 2000). In a survey of factory workers to address this gap in the literature, Browne (2000) found that five HRM practices (measuring employee communication, recognition, training, internal career opportunities, and continuous improvement) were positively and significantly related to measures of organizational effectiveness and job satisfaction, and that four of the five practices were indicators of stress with recognition providing the strongest link.

Brun and Dugas (2008) map out a framework that considers various approaches to administering an employee recognition program. These approaches are presented in four categories: 1) the ethical perspective (considers human dignity and social justice, not just a function or organizational performance); 2) the humanistic and existential view (much like the ethical approach, seeks to see people as unique individuals with their own distinctive character); 3) the work psychodynamics school (subjective experience of people in the workplace and is a reward that is expected by the subject and is symbolic in nature); and 4) the behavioral outlook (behavior is controlled consequences within an effort-reward model, and acts as a means or reinforcing positive and desirable on-the-job

actions) (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Brun and Dugas (2008) propose a workplace continuum of employee recognition from person to product that evolves through stages of existential recognition: recognition of work practice, job dedication, and results, as a means of satisfying employee needs.

Human resource management literature shows a consensus in the positive nature of employee recognition. In a survey of public sector members of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources in Canada and the United States, researchers found agreement in the impact of recognition on employees, which illustrated significant applications on morale, belonging, commitment, satisfaction, and retention (Saunderson, 2004). However, the same survey illustrates that organizations fail to support employee recognition as only 52% of organizations surveyed have a formal recognition strategy (Saunderson, 2004). The same organizations also reported that they provide programs of formal recognition (47%), informal recognition (62%), and everyday recognition (52%) at low levels (Saunderson, 2004).

In the module *Volunteer Management: A Guide to Good Practice*, the theme emphasized related to making volunteers feel valued through good volunteer management practices (Australia Sports Commission, 2000c). The argument is made that through appropriate reward and recognition initiatives, and by making the volunteer feel respected and that they have made a worthwhile contribution to the organization, that they will be more likely to contribute to that cause again (Australian Sports Commission, 2000c). To be able to support the quality of a sport organization's volunteer program, leadership has become the foundation to manage volunteer motivation, recruitment,

retention, stress management, orientation, training and performance evaluation, as most aspects can be traced back to leadership (Australian Sports Commission, 2000c).

Retention issues of volunteers in sport.

In the corporate world, there are many factors that influence organizations in terms of the turnover and retention of employees. Research shows that voluntary (an employee chooses to leave an organization), involuntary (an employee is fired or required to leave) and a reduction in labor (an employee is subject to a lay-off) turnover rates negatively affect the performance of a business unit in terms of productivity, satisfaction, motivation, and profit margins (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Eberly, 2008). It is also suggested that workforce stability is a requirement for organizational efficiency (Holtom et al., 2008).

On the basis of theoretical and empirical literature, Penner (2002) suggested two kinds of organizational variables that have an impact of sustained volunteerism: 1) an individual's feelings about how they are treated by the organization; and 2) the reputation and personnel practices of the organization. Not unlike some corporate turnover rates, volunteer retention issues are primarily a cause of voluntary termination of service by an individual; however, sustainability of volunteerism is linked to demographic characteristics, personal beliefs/values, prosocial personality traits, relationship with the organization, organizational attributes and practices, and other volunteer-related motives (Penner, 2002). Clary et al. (1998) also note that volunteers that serve in roles that fit their motivations, in turn gain more satisfaction and enjoyment from their purpose within the organization and are likely to continue their role longer.

In sport, the turnover and retention of volunteers is a prevalent challenge in organizations that may be avoided with good HRM practices (Hoye et al., 2006). As the complexity of sport systems has increased, so too has the need for volunteers, and issues have risen through hiring paid staff thus leading to conflict between paid and non-paid personnel, as well through the disempowerment of volunteers (Cuskelly, 2004). Volunteers are more likely to extend stronger commitment sentiments to a sport organization that functions in a “positive manner, use open decision making processes, resolve rather than suppress conflicts, and welcome the examination of group processes” (Cuskelly, McIntyre, & Boag, 1998, p. 199). Research by Cuskelly et al. (2006) suggests that the most difficult volunteer positions to fill in a sport organization were coaches, team manager, and committee/board members. Using the VMI, Cuskelly et al. (2006) found that various HRM practices affected the retention of various positions that volunteers fill. Coaching positions were said to be the most difficult to fill, though the clubs that used more extensive planning and orientation practices reported fewer problems with the retention of volunteer coaches (Cuskelly et al., 2006). For volunteer management committee or board member positions, the clubs that exercised the highest levels of training and support practices, showed to have fewer problems retaining these volunteers (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Lastly, considering all other volunteer positions outside of coaches, team managers, and committee or board members, Cuskelly et al. (2006) found that the more extensively clubs used planning practices, the fewer the problems with volunteer retention for those positions.

MacLean and Hamm’s (2007) research of volunteer motivations and commitment at the 2005 Canadian Women’s Golf Championship revealed that there is an important

link between a large sporting event and the community in which it takes place. A majority of the participants in the study intended to continue to volunteer for golf events at a rate of 97.5%, while 76.4% would volunteer for other sporting events, and 83.3% would continue some form of general volunteer practices (MacLean & Hamm, 2007). When examining commitment factors, many of the participants were dedicated to growing the sport of golf, and also identified community promotion and advancement as primary motivations for their involvement as volunteers (MacLean & Hamm, 2007). Other motivations of the participants to engage in further special event volunteerism in sport and in general, consider both work and leisure reasons (MacLean & Hamm, 2007).

The need for the retention of sport volunteers builds on the practices of the recruitment process. The Australian Sports Commission's goal for the retention of volunteers is "to develop a sense of organizational commitment among volunteers" (2000d, p. 3). The Australian Sports Commission suggests that there needs to be a balance between turnover and retention, as extreme levels of either may be detrimental to the capacity of the organization to deliver sport at its highest level to achieve organizational goals (2000d). Retention of volunteers acts as a human resource function that involves training, performance appraisal, recognition, and rewarding for each role provided (Australian Sports Commission, 2000d). In Australia, more than 40% of volunteers stay for less than three years in a sport and recreation based organization (Australian Sports Commission, 2000d). A majority of volunteers that leave do not cite any particular reason for doing so (64.2%), though of those volunteers that do leave, most responded that it was due to a lack of support in their role (11.6%) (Australian Sports Commission, 2000d). To further understand why volunteers may leave an organization,

the Australian Sports Commission recommends exit interviews and a means of gaining information on how to improve and retain more volunteers within the program (2000d).

As volunteers leave an organization, it is important to maintain contact with the purpose of possibly reactivating them in the future. Bussell and Forbes (2006) suggest a strategy of direct marketing (newsletters, cards, social events) to former volunteers as a means of reactivating the volunteer in the future. The researchers provide an example of one organization that converted ex-volunteers into members to keep in touch with them as a means of having them resume another role in the future (Bussell & Forbes, 2006).

Another practice that may be useful for retaining and reactivating volunteers suggests that sport organizations perform a debriefing of the volunteer (much like an exit interview) to ask for feedback on the event and the volunteer roles, in an effort to improve future events and increase in the retention of existing volunteers (Australian Sports Commission, 2000e).

Summary

When reflecting upon the volunteer management policies recommended by Sport Canada, Sport England, New Zealand Sport and Recreation, and the Australian Sports Commission, each country's policies vary in the level of involvement. The *Canadian Sport Policy* mentions the need for volunteer commitment, though it does not provide a program or guidelines to develop volunteer resources. With the 2012 London Olympics fast approaching, Sport England has provided volunteer initiatives within the *Sport England Strategy 2008-2011*, and has developed a partnership with Volunteer England to develop their volunteer program in the years leading up to the Olympics. New Zealand Sport and Recreation developed *Finding and keeping volunteers: What the research tells*

us, an initiative in 2006 to assess volunteer management programs and make various plans for future development. The ASC is by far the most involved of the four countries as illustrated by their *Volunteer Management Program*. This program assesses the current need for sport volunteers and makes strides to provide sport organizations with a solid foundation to build effective and efficient sport programs that are based on volunteer management and human resource research and practices. In comparison, Sport Canada seems to be the farthest behind in the development of a volunteer management program for sport, which may in turn affect the ability for sport to be delivered in the future.

When reviewing the literature, the area of human resource management has been exhausted in corporate settings, with many ‘best practices’ suggested, though there is still much debate regarding transference of these practices from one organization to another, and the support for the effectiveness of HRM programs as a blanket solution in itself is varied. Consensus shows that HRM programs are valued (though just cannot be relied on entirely to solve every problem), and much of this provides a foundation for HRM practices to be applied to volunteers in nonprofit organizations.

Sport has long relied on volunteers for the delivery of events and activities at all levels, ranging from community sport through to the national sport organizations. With that said, there has been very little research and practical applications of HRM practices to volunteers (until recently). This is an important step in strengthening the sport program in Canada going forward towards achieving the goals outlined by Sport Canada in the Canadian Sport Policy.

To investigate how volunteers are managed and used in the delivery of sport in Canada, the following five research questions will be explored:

RQ1: To what extent do Canadian community sport organizations utilize specific human resource management (HRM) practices with volunteers?

RQ2: Do differences exist in the management practices of volunteers in Canadian community sport organizations among the following grouping variables: considering organization size, experience of administration, longevity of organization, geographical region, type of sport, and type of volunteer position?

RQ3. Is there a significant relationship between utilizing HRM practices for volunteers and retention of volunteers?

RQ4. What issues respecting HRM practices (recruitment, training, recognition and retention) are the most problematic for community sport organization leaders in Canada?

RQ5. What is the scope (numbers and type) of volunteer positions used by Canadian community sport organizations, and do volunteer positions differ by the grouping variables identified in RQ2?

Chapter Three

Methods

Procedures

Design of the study.

This research study focuses on HRM practices that are applied to volunteers in community sport organizations in Canada. A quantitative analysis of data collected from questionnaires completed by presidents or executive board members in a leadership position of various community sport organizations will be analyzed using various statistical analyses employing the SPSS (V. 17.0) statistical analysis software.

The survey method for research is categorized as a nonexperimental design, which suggests that a researcher exercises control over almost the entire experimental environment (Keppel & Zedeck, 1989). Creswell (2009) states that survey designs provide “quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (p. 145). In Canada, there are approximately 33,650 CSOs across the country (Mulholland, 2008), making it difficult to pursue a study that gives representation to all organizations; therefore, a proposed sampling method is used.

Sampling method.

There are many sampling methods that may be employed in quantitative studies, thus it is important to select the most appropriate method to ensure statistical accuracy and validity, in addition to considering necessary economic and feasibility issues (Pedhazur & Pedhazur Schmelkin, 1991). A sample may be described as a “subset of elements from the population selected according to a sample design, which specifies the

rules and operations by which the sample is to be chosen from the population” (Pedhazur & Pedhazur Schmelkin, 1991, p. 319).

For this study, a stratified random sampling method was used. Stratified random sampling requires that the population under study is divided into a minimum of two *strata* (a group within a population that shares a common characteristic) (Brase & Brase, 2003), which in this case involves separating community sport organizations in Canada by province. In addition, a random sample (of a given size) is drawn from each *stratum* to be analyzed with adjusted or weighted values for resulting calculations (Brase & Brase, 2003). A stratified random sample was preferred to other sampling methods, as it is ideally suited to fairly representing various groups (provinces), and selecting an equal population to study from each group (community sport organizations) (Jackson, 2003).

Canada showcases approximately 33,650 CSOs (Mulholland, 2008) in nearly 100 different sports, though participation is concentrated in relatively few sports (Bloom et al., 2005). Considering the top 15 sports that are ranked for volunteer participation in Canada, seven take place primarily in the winter (basketball, curling, ice hockey, skating, skiing, swimming, and volleyball) and have between 125,000 and 1,172,000 volunteers in each respective sport annually (Bloom et al., 2005). For this study, 15 community sport organizations from each of the seven sports previously mentioned, in every province and territory (13), were invited to participate in this study. Due to some provinces and/or territories having less than 15 CSOs, each organization in that province was eligible to participate, giving a total sample size of 982 potential participants.

To identify the frame in which community sport organizations are selected based on a stratified random sample, it was necessary to gather a complete list of all of the

CSOs in each of the seven sports for every province. To accomplish this, a letter was emailed to each National Sport Organization, as well as to each Provincial Sport Organization, to request a complete listing of these organizations (see Appendix A). In the case that an email from the NSO or PSO was not received back to provide the requested information within two weeks, a follow-up phone call was made to the PSO. From there, 15 CSOs in each sport from each province were randomly selected using an online randomizer (www.randomizer.org) to participate in this study, except in the case where a sport had less than 15 CSOs where each CSO was able to participate. Once the list of CSOs had been established, contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, and websites for each club was retrieved using a web-based search online.

Research ethics board (REB).

Research involving human participants must be carried out in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS) (Brock University, 2009). The TCPS is a function of three federal research granting agencies – Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council – which provide the foundation for the Brock University Research Ethics Board (REB) (Brock University, 2009). The role of the TCPS is to protect student and university researchers through the development and support of policies that convey the highest levels of ethical standards and considerations (Brock University, 2009). The REB provides an ethical framework that ensures that research is carried out using the highest regard for ethical and scholarly practices (based on the TCPS), as well as to guard against

academic fraud, dishonesty, and the falsification of data collected (Brock University, 2009).

As this study involves human participants completing the questionnaire, Brock University requires all researchers (student, staff, or faculty) to have potential research projects approved by the university's REB (Brock University, 2009). The REB will seek to determine that this research meets all requirements and conditions of a responsible and ethical study, by ensuring that this project shows respect for human dignity, free and informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, justice and inclusiveness, and balances any harms and benefits in a manner that make certain the safety of the participants (Brock University, 2009).

For this study, all participants received a detailed invitation to participate that outlined the purpose and goals of the research (see Appendix B). Along with this, each participant completed a consent form that will ensure the confidentiality of each individual, making every effort to respect the privacy of the participant by using only relevant statistical information provided and not disclosing names or other personal information (see Appendix C).

Data collection questionnaire.

An invitation for participation was initially sent out via email to each representative of the randomly selected community sport organizations across Canada. The attachment to the email included information about the study and the researchers, as well as a consent form, and a link to Survey Monkey to access the online questionnaire. The questionnaire is comprised of 36 questions that revolve around HRM practices (planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training, managing performance, and

recognizing) used by community sport organizations for managing volunteers (see Appendix D for complete survey in English, see Appendix E for complete survey in French). Once the survey is completed, the results are electronically remitted to the researcher.

The questionnaire (revised VMI as per Cuskelly et al., 2006) used for this study was input into an online survey website called Survey Monkey (under the website www.surveymonkey.com), and was tested for errors. The website has the ability to maintain a participant database and organize results based on the data inputs provided by the participants. Tse (1998) suggests six reasons for using email surveys instead of traditional mail surveys: 1) they are inexpensive; 2) reduce manual labour hours putting together survey packages; 3) results are remitted electronically reducing time; 4) email surveys may not be confused for junk mail; 5) recipients feel connected to technology; and 6) electronic surveys are environmentally friendly. There is agreement from other researchers that web-based surveys are enticing due to the large time and cost savings, and quick response rate, though validity of the results is suggested to require further research (Schillewaert, Langerak, & Duhamel, 1998). Tse (1998) found that there were no differences between surveys sent out by regular mail versus email as both generated the same data; however, surveys that were mailed exercised a higher response rate, and those emailed had a quicker response rate. Research by Woong Yun and Trumbo (2000) suggests that using a multi-mode method of survey distribution and collection was found to be highly effective means of data collection without inflicting a bias on the population sampled. This study employed a multi-mode method by using both email and the web to recruit participants and to administer the survey.

Participants

The survey was sent to the attention of CSOs presidents or to the club administrator that is in a leadership position for the club in the case that not all organizations will have a formal board structure. The participants represented each province and territory in Canada across seven different sports. Responses varied by province and by sport.

Instrumentation

The researcher gathered information from each community sport organization about their use of volunteer management practices, features of what the volunteer roles and positions might be, as well as whether their organization perceives there to be a problem with the retention of volunteers in various roles. To establish background information on the type of organizations that were invited to participate in this study, the respondents were asked a series of open-ended questions to gain descriptive information on the size of the organization, the experience of the administration team/board, the longevity of the organization, geographical region, type of sport, and volunteer positions difficult to fill (see Appendix F).

The survey questionnaire used for this study is the VMI developed by Cuskelly et al., (2006), and was designed to assess current HRM practices used by community rugby clubs in Australia. The questionnaire addresses HRM functions in planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training, performance managing, and recognizing the efforts of the volunteers (Cuskelly et al., 2006). For this study, the same questionnaire is used to gain understanding of the current situation of volunteer management practices in Canadian community sport organizations (see Appendix D, see Appendix E for French translated

VMI). The VMI consists of 36 questions that pertain to the seven different HRM constructs, with each question beginning with the stem phrase ‘In managing its volunteers to what extent does your club...’ (Cuskelly et al., 2006). Responses to these questions were answered using a five point Likert scale, with the interpretation as follows: 1 = “never”; 2 = “rarely”; 3 = “sometimes”; 4 = “often”; and 5 = “always” (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

To measure how community sport organizations perceived problems of volunteer retention, a four point Likert scale was used (see Appendix G). Participants were asked to assess this perception for their club by answering questions on the extent of this issue for various volunteer positions as follows: 1 = “not a problem”; 2 = “minor issue”; 3 = “major issue”; or 4 = “a serious problem”. Volunteer positions include board or committee members, coaches, team managers, and other positions. Through calculating the mean scores for each of these positions, it can be determined that a higher score reflects a greater perceived problem of volunteer retention.

In an effort to measure how CSOs perceived problematic HRM practices, a four point Likert scale was used (see Appendix H). Participants answered questions that identified their perception of problematic HRM practices within their organization for various HRM constructs on the following scale: 1 = “not a problem”; 2 = “minor issue”; 3 = “major issue”; or 4 = “a serious problem”. Mean scores were calculated for each HRM practice, with a higher value reveals a greater perception of problematic HRM practices.

Incentive.

In an effort to maximize participation in this study, the researcher provided an

incentive to complete the questionnaire in the form of the chance to win a laptop (approximate retail value \$400) for the participant's organization. At the end of the survey, the researcher provided an optional open-ended question for participants to provide their contact information to enter a draw on behalf of their organization to win the incentive gift. All participants that provided their contact information for this incentive were entered into a draw with one random winner. Research suggests that monetary incentives or gifts provide an acceptable platform for receiving positive results in increasing survey participation (Kellerman & Herold, 2001).

Treatment of the data.

Once data was received, it was screened prior to analyzing to ensure that consent was given, to investigate the existence of any patterns of missing data, and to extract and remove any non-respondents. In the case of any missing data points, a mean substitution method was used. Mean substitution refers to replacing missing data values with the mean value of the other data points for each question (Vogt, 2005). Settings used by the researcher in the Survey Monkey program allowed control for missing surveys by keeping a digital record of all surveys opened by the participant regardless of the level of completion, and also for controlling for multiple answers by only allowing the participant to provide one answer per question. Upon completion of the survey, a letter of appreciation was sent out to each participant (see Appendix I).

Data Analysis

All quantitative data received was entered into SPSS v. 17.0. Once entered, the data was analyzed using various methods including descriptive statistics, t-tests,

ANOVAs, correlation, and regression models. Each research question poses various statistical needs that were addressed in the following manner:

RQ1.

RQ1 asks “To what extent do Canadian community sport organizations utilize specific human resource management (HRM) practices with volunteers?”. To understand the extent of volunteer management practices used for volunteers, mean and descriptive statistics will be used to identify any trends in the data.

RQ2.

RQ2 solicits the question “Do differences exist in the management practices of volunteers in Canadian community sport organizations among the following grouping variables: considering organization size, experience of administration, longevity of organization, geographical region, type of sport, and type of volunteer position?”. To analyze this question, both T-tests and ANOVAs will be used to identify statistically significant relationships between any of the groupings.

RQ3.

RQ3 poses the question “Is there a significant relationship between utilizing HRM practices for volunteers and retention of volunteers?”. To determine this, the researcher used correlation and regression analyses for each variable.

RQ4.

RQ4 reads “What issues respecting HRM practices (recruitment, training, recognition and retention) are the most problematic for community sport organization leaders in Canada?”. The analysis for this research question considered mean and

descriptive statistics from the survey, based on the group of questions that fall within particular HRM practice sections.

RQ5.

RQ5 states “What is the scope (numbers and type) of volunteer positions used by Canadian community sport organizations, and do volunteer positions differ by the grouping variables identified in RQ2?”. Analysis for this research question was carried out using T-tests and ANOVAs, looking at any differences between the various groups.

Validity and Reliability

The VMI questionnaire was developed by Cuskelly et al., (2006) and was deemed to be valid and reliable in the setting used for rugby clubs in Australia, with internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach alpha) ranging from $\alpha = 0.55$ to $\alpha = 0.84$ (Planning $\alpha = 0.74$; Recruiting $\alpha = 0.61$; Screening $\alpha = 0.55$; Orientating $\alpha = 0.76$; Training $\alpha = 0.81$; Performance Managing $\alpha = 0.85$; Recognizing $\alpha = 0.79$). Cuskelly et al. (2006) acknowledge that the value for the screening construct is slightly below an acceptable value due to only having two questions pertaining to the category and having a moderately high standard deviation. For this study, the researcher applied this questionnaire to multiple community sport organizations, and also in a different country, which required that the survey be validated once again. To do this, a pilot survey of this questionnaire was completed.

Pilot study.

To ensure that all questions fit a Canadian context, a pilot group of 10 CSO presidents completed the questionnaire online using Survey Monkey and 12 members (six graduate students and six faculty professors) from the Sport Management Department at

Brock University completed the survey in paper form, to give feedback on interpretation and understanding of the language used in the questions. As English is a common language between Australia and Canada, this informal approach to ensure that the questionnaire fits the Canadian context was sufficient to retain the meaning and intention of the questions. Once this review of the questionnaire was completed, the survey was translated into French and a pilot group of three CSO presidents (with French as their primary language) completed the survey to ensure that the interpretation and understanding remained intact following the translation. The CSO presidents that participated in the pilot study did not have their results included in the final data set.

Following the pilot study, feedback from the participants was compiled and analyzed to ensure that the questionnaire was framed in a Canadian sport context. Table 1 illustrates the wording changes made from the original VMI developed by Cuskelly et al., (2006), to what each participant received when they completed the survey based on the feedback from the pilot study group. In all cases, the wording changes were minimal and served to clarify the intent of and interpretation of each question, as phrasing between Canada and Australia do contain subtle differences in reference terms. The average time that it took each participant to complete the survey in the pilot study was eight minutes.

Social desirability response bias.

Social desirability response bias addresses a concern that the way a participant answers a particular survey may be problematic. Vogt (2005) explains that this bias happens when a participant answers particular questions as they feel they “should” answer rather than how they actually feel or what they believe to be true. Social desirability response bias has been studied extensively in research methodology, and

there is a large body of research that supports the use of varying controls and scales as a means of enhancing the validity of research (Arnold, Feldman, & Purbhoo, 1985; Bernardi, 2006; van de Mortel, 2008). However, researchers acknowledge that it is often a difficult and complex phenomenon to manage in research (Vogt, 2005; De Jong, Pieters, & Fox, 2010).

For this study, social desirability response bias was acknowledged as a potential influence on how participants answered the questionnaire. To control for this, two strategies were adopted in lieu of using a formal scale and/or control system due to the nature of the questionnaire not pertaining to sensitive, personal, or controversial topics. The first aspect was to ensure complete confidentiality of each participant's responses by immediately separating their identifying information from their questionnaire answers through a feature of the Survey Monkey tool. This was communicated to each participant in advance of them completing the survey as part of the consent process, and also throughout the survey. The second aspect was to arrange the questions in an order that provided open-ended demographic questions first, followed by questions that are perceived to be straight forward and central to basic organizational practices, and placing questions that the researcher determined to be most susceptible to a social response bias towards the end of the survey. In the pilot study of this research project, the participants were asked follow up questions to gauge whether or not they felt any sort of bias in the way that the questions were presented, ordered, or worded, to limit, or at the very least minimize, any social desirability response bias that may exist.

Summary

The methodology and design for this research study has been selected to ensure

that the data collected will be meaningful, coherent, and reliable. The VMI and additional questionnaires provide a comprehensive and critical lens in which to analyze the current state of HRM practices used with volunteers in Canadian CSOs, and will also provide a platform to answer the four research questions of this study. All steps are taken to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and maintain the highest ethical standards required of Brock University's Research Ethics Board.

Chapter Four

Results

Return Rate

In 2009 there were 4368 community sport organizations in Canada that were registered in the sports of basketball, curling, ice hockey, skating, skiing, swimming, and volleyball. Table 2 illustrates the breakdown of registered CSOs both by sport and by province that were used to create the sample for this study. An initial sample size of 1365 CSOs was determined by using a stratified random sample with 15 CSOs from each sport in each province/territory randomly selected to participate (31.3% of the total population). In the instances where a province/territory had less than 15 CSOs in a respective sport, the researcher decided that all clubs were eligible and sent an invitation to participate, giving a sample size of 982 participants. Of the 982 invitations that were sent out via electronic invitation, 83 were returned for sending errors (invalid address), leaving a participant sample size of $n = 899$.

Once the initial survey invitation was sent out, a follow-up reminder email was sent at the week two, week four, and week five intervals, with a total collection period of six weeks. Participation in the survey varied over the six week period, though most participants in the sample size completed with survey within two days of the initial email and subsequent reminder messages. Research supports the use of follow-up reminder correspondence as a means of increasing participation rates, though cautions that email reminders may be perceived as junk mail or spam messages (Sills & Song, 2002; Shih & Fan, 2008).

Of the remaining sample size, 253 surveys were accessed via the web link to the online survey, though only 219 were completed for a response rate of 24.4%. The remainder of the survey population did not respond to the invitation. There are varying levels of support for the effectiveness of web based surveys, as some researchers believe them to be as effective as mail surveys with comparable response rates (Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004; Baruch & Holtom, 2008) whereas others believe them to be less effective than mail surveys by reporting lower response rates (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000; Sax, Gilmartin, & Bryant, 2003). However, some researchers imply that response rates are more affected by the population sampled, rather than any other factor, making it difficult to pin point accurate and acceptable response rates outside of a population context (Sax et al., 2003). Using a similar methodology (online survey with three follow-up reminders), Sills and Song (2002) reported a response rate of 22%, quite similar to this study.

Preliminary Analyses

Upon completion of the data collection period, all data was screened for non-respondents, missing data points, and to ensure consent was given. Six surveys declined to give consent and 28 were designated as non-respondents due to not answering any of the survey questions once consent had been given. In the case of any missing data points, a mean substitution method was used. There were 17 missing data points in total from the VMI (see Appendix D and Appendix E), the Retention questionnaire (see Appendix G), and from the HRM practice questionnaire (see Appendix H). No single case had more than three total missing data points or more than one missing from a single HRM construct. A further investigation of the missing data points did not reveal any methodical

pattern of non-responsiveness, and therefore is assumed to be a random occurrence. A substitution method was not used for the descriptive data questions (see Appendix F), which resulted in varying sample sizes for subsequent analyses.

To evaluate the VMI used by the researcher, means, standard deviations and Cronbach's alpha were calculated for each of the seven different HRM constructs. These values are displayed in Table 3. The means for each construct ranged from 3.19 for both recruitment and performance to 3.82 for orientation, and standard deviations ranged from 0.58 to 1.10. The values of Cronbach's alpha varied from $\alpha = 0.598$ to $\alpha = 0.784$. Nunnally and Berstein (1994) recommend a Cronbach's alpha value of a minimum of 0.6 for use in research, of which all of the VMI constructs meet, except for Screening. Cuskelly et al. (2006) had a similar result with the screening construct coming in below an acceptable value, and explain this, along with a relatively high standard deviation, due to only having two indicator questions pertaining to this HRM practice. In the Australian context, this construct was included as a response to legislation changes requiring volunteers to be screened prior to working with children in community organizations (Cuskelly et al., 2006).

A correlation matrix considering the seven HRM practices of the VMI is displayed in Table 4. An investigation of the Pearson's r values between the constructs range from $r = 0.26$ to $r = 0.66$ (all significant at $p < .05$). This suggests a positive and moderate relationship between the HRM constructs, and also that the constructs do interact but remain distinguishable from one another.

Descriptive Data Categorization

In addition to answering questions based on HRM practices that may be used in

their respective CSOs, participants were asked open-ended descriptive statistic type questions that pertained to their organization. These questions provided information on the type of sport, geographical region, the longevity of the organization, the size of the organization, the existence of a formal board of directors, and the experience of the administration team/board (see Appendix F). For the questions pertaining to the longevity of the organization, the size of the organization, and the experience of the administration team/board, a tertile split was performed in an effort to develop composite groups for comparison. As there was no literature found to support how groups such as these should be categorized, the researcher made the decision to split the groups in an attempt to create relatively equal numbers in each group. This is acknowledged as a limitation of this study for the following two reasons: 1) when a continuum is categorized such as this, the numbers have been dichotomized and make the assumption that every value within each group is equal; and 2) the researcher created the groups for analysis without support for this procedure due to a lack of academic support in the literature, which speaks to the exploratory nature of this study.

The initial question of “*what sport does your community sport organization represent?*” presents a fairly equal representation of responses from each sport, ranging from 19 responses in the sport of skiing to 38 responses from ice hockey. The distribution of responses by sport is represented in Figure 1. With regards the second question, “*what province/territory does your community sport organization exist within?*”, the response rates showed more variance. Nunavut represented the lowest participation with zero responses, and Alberta had the highest response rate with 36 participants. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of responses by province/territory.

When considering the longevity of the organizations that participated in the questionnaire, there was a wide sweeping range in the number of years in existence. The youngest organizations have only existed for one year (two cases) with the longest standing organization having roots dating back 155 years ($M = 32.98$, $SD = 24.60$, $n = 215$). To further classify these organizations, they were grouped into one of three categories for data analysis: 1) Young (1-19 years in existence) – 61 cases; 2) Middle-aged (20-39 years in existence) – 82 cases; and 3) Mature (40+ years in existence) – 72 cases.

The size of the organization varied extensively with regards to the number of athletes that participate within the CSO. The smallest organization that participated in this study had 10 athletes, where the largest was approximately 6500 athletes ($M = 350.49$, $SD = 630.12$, $n = 218$). These organizations were placed into categories based on the size of the number of athletes in which they deliver sport to as follows: 1) Small (0-100 athletes) – 69 cases; 2) Medium (101-349 athletes) – 92 cases; and 3) Large (350+ athletes) – 57 cases.

The formality of a board of directors varied amongst the CSOs that participated in this study. Within the survey responses, 89% of the organizations reported having a formal volunteer board of directors within their organizational structure, ranging from three members to 25 ($M = 8.74$, $SD = 5.32$, $n = 214$). The experience of those boards was mixed with the total combined experience of the board ranging from three years experience to 200 years (Mean = 39.81, $SD = 34.30$, $n = 214$). The experience of these boards were further categorized into four groups: 1) No Formal Board – 24 cases; 2) Minimal Experience (3 – 25 years experience) – 64 cases; 3) Average Experience (26 –

50 years experience – 72 cases; and 4) Extensive Experience (51+ years experience) – 54 cases.

The last section of the descriptive organizational information pertains to the number and types of volunteer positions that CSOs may use within their respective framework. Of the CSOs that answered the question “*does your organization use the following volunteer positions, and if so, approximately how many volunteers does your organization involve for each?*”, information was provided on whether or not a specified volunteer position was used (for the positions of coaches, team representatives/managers, conveners, and special event coordinators), as well as the numbers of volunteers each CSO would use to fill that role. Of the CSOs in this study, 85.0% reported using coaches in a volunteer role, though the number of coaches in each CSO varied substantially ($M = 13.75$, $SD = 11.08$). Considering the use of volunteer Special Event Coordinators, 65.9% of CSOs used them in their structure, while the number of positions in each CSO was significantly lower than coaches ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 6.47$). For the volunteer position of Team Representatives/Managers, 61.9% of CSOs employed this role, with a wide-ranging number of positions in each CSO ($M = 11.28$, $SD = 10.42$). Only 25.5% of CSOs reported using volunteer Conveners in their structure, with a relatively low number in each CSO ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 6.21$).

Support for Research Questions

RQ1.

RQ1 asks “To what extent do Canadian community sport organizations utilize specific human resource management (HRM) practices with volunteers?”. For RQ1, simple descriptive statistics provides a platform to assess whether CSOs in Canada utilize

specific HRM practices. Table 3 provides the Means and Standard Deviations of each HRM construct. It is important to note that all seven constructs have mean scores over 3.00, which in the questionnaire represented an answer of ‘sometimes’ when asked particular questions about use of various HRM practices. Responses varied through the 36 survey questions, with questions in each construct representing answers across all five points in the likert scale used (from ‘never’ to ‘always’). The implication here is that CSOs in Canada do engage in HRM practices, albeit some more so than others.

RQ2.

RQ2 asks “Do differences exist among grouping variables (considering geographical region, type of sport, longevity of organization, organization size, experience of administration, and type of volunteer position)?”. To answer this question, ANOVA tests were used to compare the grouping variables to the level of HRM practices that were reported. When looking at the relationship between the geographical region (province/territory) of CSOs with HRM practices, the ANOVA revealed that only Performance Management was significant between the provinces ($F(11, 207)=1.847, p < .05$), and differences between the provinces specifically were not identified. For the grouping variable of the various sports, both screening ($F(6, 212)=6.385, p < .05$) and training ($F(6, 212)=3.728, p < .05$) were shown as significant with regards to how these HRM practices are used. A Scheffe test reveals that curling reported significantly lower levels of screening practices in comparison to ice hockey, skating, swimming, and volleyball. Volleyball reported significant differences in extensive uses of training and support programs compared to curling, ice hockey, and skating. Considering the longevity of CSOs, the practices of planning ($F(3, 215)=3.174, p < .05$) and recognition

($F(3, 215)=2.794, p < .05$) show significant differences between the groups in how they are used. Middle-aged organizations had a positive application of planning practices in comparison to the young organizations, whereas the ANOVA for recognition revealed significant differences though no specific relationships were identified. The ANOVA comparing board experience to the HRM constructs revealed significant differences in how planning ($F(4, 214)=5.392, p < .05$), recruitment ($F(4, 214)=5.541, p < .05$), and recognition ($F(4, 214)=3.621, p < .05$) practices are utilized. The absence of a board of directors had a significant negative effect on the level of planning, recruitment, and recognition practices that were used by CSOs. An ANOVA considering the size of a CSO compared to the use of the seven HRM constructs revealed no significant difference.

RQ3.

RQ3 states “Is there a significant relationship between utilizing HRM practices for volunteers and retention of volunteers?”. To determine this, the researcher used correlation and regression analyses to find out if a relationship may exist between HRM practices and the retention of volunteers overall and also for each variable. A linear regression analysis was employed for volunteer retention issues through four volunteer categories: 1) board or management committee members; 2) coaches; 3) team representatives or managers; and 4) other formal volunteer positions. A regression table is illustrated in Table 5 for each volunteer position.

The results of the analysis showed that there was a relationship between the use of HRM practices and the perceived retention of volunteers in CSOs across Canada. The regression analysis was significant ($F(7, 211)=3.465, p < .05$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.073$), however there was not a single HRM construct that was a noteworthy predictor of

retention issues. This provoked a further examination of the perceived retention of various volunteer positions.

For board or management committee members, the regression analysis was significant ($F(7, 211)=4.544, p < .05$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.102$), suggesting that the retention of board members or management committee members is linked to the use of HRM practices. However, a specific HRM practice did not contribute as a single predictor of this, rather the model as a whole contributes to approximately 10% of retention issues for this position.

For volunteer coaches, team representatives or managers, and for other formal volunteer positions, the regression analysis did not reveal any significant trends to link retention issues with the use of HRM practices by CSOs.

RQ4.

RQ4 reads “What issues respecting HRM practices (recruitment, training, recognition, and retention) are the most problematic for community sport organizations in Canada?”. The analysis for this research question considered mean and descriptive statistics from the survey, based on the group of questions that fall within particular HRM practice sections.

When comparing the means of these practices, only recruitment (Mean = 2.264, SD = 0.718) and retention (Mean = 2.033, SD = 0.706) had mean values over 2.00 as being perceived problematic for the respective CSOs. Table 6 illustrates all of the mean values and standard deviations for the HRM practices. This suggests that the incidents where CSOs perceive issues with regards to each particular HRM practice to be a major issue or serious problem, are isolated to particular organizations.

RQ5.

RQ5 states “What is the scope (numbers and type) of volunteer positions used by Canadian community sport organizations, and do volunteer positions differ by the grouping variables identified in RQ2?”. Analysis for this research question was carried out using descriptive statistics, looking at any differences between the various groups.

The last section of the descriptive organizational information pertains to the number and types of volunteer positions that CSOs may use within their respective framework. Of the CSOs that answered the question “*does your organization use the following volunteer positions, and if so, approximately how many volunteers does your organization involve for each?*”, information was provided on the extent of how volunteers are used as coaches, team representatives/managers, conveners, and special event coordinators. Coaches were reported to be the most utilized volunteer position with 85.0% of CSOs filling this role with volunteers ($M = 13.75$, $SD = 11.08$). In the CSOs that participated in this survey, 65.9% used volunteer Special Event Coordinators in their structure ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 6.47$), as well as 61.9% used Team Representatives/Managers ($M = 11.28$, $SD = 10.42$). Only 25.5% of CSOs reported using volunteer Conveners in their structure ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 6.21$).

Breaking down the number of volunteers to the individual sports, findings show some interesting trends in the data. Ice hockey associations utilized the highest number of volunteers between the seven sports in the positions of board members ($M = 12.29$, $SD = 6.58$), coaches ($M = 26.82$, $SD = 6.07$), and trainers/managers ($M = 19.08$, $SD = 9.22$), while basketball lead the number of volunteers used in the conveners category ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 6.08$). Considering the fewest use of volunteers by position, swimming reported the

lowest number of both coaches ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 3.54$) and convenors ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.72$), while volleyball had the lowest number of board members ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 3.38$) and skating with the fewest trainers/managers ($M = 0.63$, $SD = 1.21$). Table 7 illustrates the average number of volunteers used by position in each sport.

Bearing in mind the number of volunteers used in each province, there are variations in the use of each volunteer position across the country. Alberta and New Brunswick reported the highest averages for volunteer board members ($M = 8.75$, $SD = 5.44$ and $M = 8.75$, $SD = 4.39$ respectively), while Nova Scotia had the lowest number ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 4.96$). New Brunswick also had the highest number of volunteers for both coaches ($M = 14.75$, $SD = 12.13$) and trainers/managers ($M = 9.26$, $SD = 10.62$). For both coaches and trainers/managers, Manitoba stated the lowest number of volunteers in both categories ($M = 8.50$, $SD = 11.36$; $M = 2.93$, $SD = 5.30$). Lastly for the position of volunteer convenors, Newfoundland reported the most frequent use of this role ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 10.09$), while Quebec did not have a single organization that used a convener position. The means and standard deviations for the single response from the Northwest Territories were not included in the results of the discussion about due to only receiving a single case response. Table 8 showcases the means and standard deviations for each volunteer position used in all of the provinces across Canada.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Conclusions

Study Overview

The goal of this study was gain an understanding and current assessment of how community sport organizations in Canada use, or perceive to use, HRM practices in the delivery of sport at the community level. Cuskelly et al. (2006) created the Volunteer Management Inventory for use within an Australian context, and the researcher was able to apply a revised questionnaire to community sport in Canada. Since the original research project by Cuskelly et al. (2006), little has changed in the way non-profit and community level organizations apply human resource management practices to their volunteers, which is supported by the literature review. HRM research is primarily concerned with paid employees, whereas volunteer management literature pertains mostly to volunteer satisfaction and motivation (Cuskelly et al., 2006). While this is an important aspect of managing volunteers, a more formal approach should be understood and employed as the formalization of CSOs evolves.

Discussion

RQ1.

The amount of research that has been done previously with regards to the human resource management of volunteers in Canadian sport is very limited, making this study exploratory in nature. As a reference point to determine what is being done with the management of volunteers in Canadian CSOs, descriptive statistic and means score results were used to quantify the levels of HRM practices currently being used in organizations. In the 219 responses that were received, the mean scores for the use of

each of the seven HRM constructs ranged from 3.187 to 3.817 on a five-point likert scale (ranging from 'never' to 'always'). Responses varied across the 36 question VMI, though it does show promise that there is a level of formalization with how volunteers are managed in these CSOs. In the original study by Cuskelly et al. (2006), mean scores for the seven constructs also varied from 2.83 (recruitment practices) to 3.94 (recognition practices).

The constructs of recruitment ($M = 3.189$) and performance management ($M = 1.87$) were the least utilized HRM practices of all the responses, which were also found to be in two of the three lowest practices in the study by Cuskelly et al. (2006). Cuskelly et al. (2006) had found recruitment practices to be the least utilized practice ($M = 2.83$), followed by planning practices ($M = 3.03$) and performance management practices ($M = 3.05$). On the five-point likert scale, a response of '3' represented that the practice was 'sometimes' used, where a response of '4' represented that the practice was 'often' used.

When looking at the most utilized HRM constructs, orientating was reported as the most frequent practice ($M = 3.817$), while screening was not far behind ($M = 3.800$). This differed from the results of the study by Cuskelly et al. (2006) which showcased recognition practices as the most utilized ($M = 3.94$) followed by training and support ($M = 3.63$).

The construct of screening is a HRM practice that requires some further development as it only involves two questions, had the highest standard deviation ($SD = 1.106$), and the lowest Cronbach's alpha score (0.598). A potential reason for the screening construct representing one of the higher mean scores could be due to changes in the legal and criminal systems, where organizations are more inclined to screen all

people working with volunteers as a protective condition of their involvement within the association. Programs such as *myBackCheck.com* (founded by the Sport4Ontario and Coaching Association of Ontario organizations in 1998) have become increasingly popular as a means for sport organizations to screen volunteers prior to allowing them to join their organizations. From the volunteer perspective of a coach, the need for screening practices is a legitimate concern for outlining practices, procedures and boundaries for working with younger athletes (Wiersma & Sherman, 2005).

Screening practices have recently received increased media attention due to high profile sexual molestation accusations and charges with junior hockey coaches, making this a priority for parents and organizations. This may explain the frequency of screening practices used as this issue has become a prominent public concern in Canada. Also, as the nature of sport shifts to become more professionalized, so may the requirements tied to government funding. The need for screening practices may increase to facilitate protective measures for organizations in various sport associations.

RQ2.

Another element of this study that contributed to exploring the nature of how volunteers are managed using HRM practices, was to examine differences between the grouping variables of geographical region, type of sport, longevity of organization, organization size, experience of administration, and type of volunteer position. The original study by Cuskelly et al. (2006) did not touch this realm as it focused on only the prominent sport of rugby in Australia. In reviewing the results of this study, there were gaps identified in the variance of how HRM practices are utilized in CSOs in Canada.

Most interesting was how the sport of curling, arguably one of Canada's oldest played sports, was so informal in the use of screening and training practices compared to ice hockey, skating, swimming and volleyball. This could possibly be due to curling being centralized by older participants, while the other sports are more youth-oriented, or it could be from a lack of leadership to focus on these characteristics and champion their importance. Research by Mair (2009) that looks at the social fabric of curling clubs that the management of curling clubs is very informal and organized through volunteers that view the curling club as a community center used for sport, social events, community meetings, and a social club. Mair (2009) characterizes the curling club volunteer as forming the foundation of the organization through "long-term commitment and a sense of ownership" (p. 462), as such formal HRM practices are rarely used.

Another interesting outcome of the survey was the glaring concern that organizations that do not have a formal board structure, reported very low levels of uses of planning, recruitment, and recognition practices. This suggests that the "kitchen table" approach to the administration of CSOs is still prevalent in Canada and does create an informal approach to operations of the organization, and also presents some limitations of the various organizations. Sharpe (2006) acknowledges that the informality of community sport is limited by the lack of professional competencies that volunteers possess with regards to the administration side of sport. Further to this, Barnes and Cousens (2009) suggest board capacity affects the delivery of sport by relying on long-standing volunteers that are entrenched in the community. This presents a unique dichotomy through having loyal volunteers but limits the capacity to grow and change sport within the community through complacency and traditional procedures, thus not responding to

changing needs and demands of organizations (Barnes & Cousens, 2009). These sentiments acknowledge a capacity issue that should be addressed in a separate study, as a more direct evaluation may provide a stronger understanding of how sport is delivered in Canada.

RQ3.

The question of how volunteer management is linked to perceptions of retention issues was one of the most important questions explored in this study, and also had the most surprising results. The results show that there is a significant relationship between the use of HRM practices and perceived issues with retention, meaning that CSOs that reported using more HRM practices to manage their volunteers also reported fewer issues of retention; however no single construct was identified as a predictor of this. Cuskelly et al., (2006) also had a similar result, though were able to identify the HRM practice of planning as a predictor of retention issues in rugby clubs in Australia.

The findings that no single construct of HRM practices measured in this study was identified as a predictor of retention is a significant result in that it is an insignificant finding. This is interesting to find that none of the HRM practices measured are tied to perceived retention issues, opening up discussion to what other potential reasons could explain this issue. Outside the realm of HRM practices measured, further research should consider other aspects affecting how volunteers are managed and how that might be linked to perceived retention issues. This may include the time commitments and workloads of volunteers, volunteer motivation, volunteer satisfaction, or conflict issues and resolution strategies.

The results show that there is a significant link between the retention of board members and the use of HRM practices, though no single HRM construct could be a lone predictor of this. This suggests that CSOs that use more formal HRM management practices show the fewest perceived issues with retaining volunteer board members. The original study by Cuskelly et al. (2006) suggested a similar finding, but was linked specifically to extensive uses of training and support practices. There has been a large body of research dedicated to how boards function in sport organizations. Ferkins, Shilbury, and McDonald (2009) acknowledge that volunteer boards have the potential to exude influence and control on an organization, but need to become involved further in the strategic development process. This in turn creates a demand on the “time, expertise and intellectual commitment” of the volunteers, as this requires particular skill sets, knowledge and experience to perform this effectively (Ferkins et al., 2009, p. 270). Further research calls for an increased investigation into how sport boards maintain relationships with paid professional staff (Ferkins, Shilbury, & McDonald, 2005), as well as how board structures are designed to consider board roles, composition, and nature of the organization as means for organizational sustainability and effectiveness (Yeh & Taylor, 2008).

Even more surprising was the finding that the perceived retention of volunteer coaches, trainers/managers, and other formal volunteer positions was not linked to the use of HRM practices. Previous research by Cuskelly et al. (2006) saw significant differences linked to each of those volunteer positions. They found that clubs that used HRM practices of planning and orientating reported fewer issues of retention in coaches, while considering the position of other formal board positions planning was a significant

predictor of perceived problems with retention (Cuskelly et al., 2006). For team representatives and managers, Cuskelly et al. (2006) reported that there was a significant link between retention issues, however none of the HRM constructs was individually significant.

RQ4.

This research question was also part of the exploratory process to see how CSOs perceived the use of HRM practices within their organization to be an issue. The two issues that were professed to be the biggest issue for CSOs were the recruitment and retention of volunteers. This finding presents an important foundation for future research, and does leave room for an open interpretation of how these issues are related.

The issue of recruitment suggests that CSOs would benefit from resources such as policies, manuals, or a forum for ideas, that assist them with best practices and strategies to recruit a larger number of volunteers or possibly more skilled volunteers. This may be linked to the retention of volunteers in a couple different ways. If a volunteer leaves an organization after one season, it may be because the role took up too much of their time rather than merely assisting with the operations of the organization. Sharpe (2006) points out that association volunteers fill part-time roles, looking to put in only a couple hours per week. There is also support in the literature that suggests that many volunteers serve multiple organizations, making their time valuable (Barnes & Cousens, 2009). By having more volunteers, organizations are able to lighten the workloads of each individual, making their commitment to the organization manageable on their personal time.

Another aspect of enhancing retention issues through stronger recruitment strategies, is to find more skilled volunteers that fit a particular role. A volunteer may

elect to leave an organization because they become overwhelmed with the role that they signed up for. An example of this might be an individual that accepts a board position as the treasurer, but has no financial background. This could be a daunting task for someone with no experience in that particular field, which could lead to low satisfaction in their role, as well as an increased time commitment due to a steep learning curve. There is a need for sport organizations to develop multiple recruitment strategies that inform potential volunteers on role tasks, time commitments, benefits and conditions of the position (Australian Sport Commission, 2000a).

RQ5.

This research question presents an interesting illustration of the numbers and types of volunteer positions that are commonly used by CSOs in Canada. This data seeks to establish a foundation for further research into specific positions in Canadian sport organizations and acknowledges a variety of volunteer positions currently used by the various sports and provinces.

Coaches were reported to be the most utilized volunteer position in organizations, as 85.0% of the organizations that participated in this survey reported using volunteer coaches. The role of coach is a common volunteer position in community sport organizations, and one that is necessary for the delivery of sport (Wiersma & Sherman, 2005). The role of a volunteer coach often leads to taking on other roles within a team (surrogate parent, active role model, or administrator) (Wiersma & Sherman, 2005), which may explain the extensive use of team managers/trainers to alleviate some of the workload outside of actually coaching a team.

It was not surprising to see that special event coordinators and team managers/trainers were shown to be used extensively as well. Many associations host tournaments or various social events as a means of fundraising or generating revenue, bringing awareness to the organizations, or as a social event to bring together a community (Mair, 2009). The use of conveners by CSOs appeared to be more of a niche position rather than a common mainstream position as only one in four organizations reported having this role in their organizational structure.

These findings suggest that there are a significant number of volunteer roles to be filled within an organization. CSOs will benefit from future research that considers these roles specifically in a sport setting, and much may be learned about how and why these roles are so prominent.

Limitations

As this study is concerned with the HRM practices of volunteers in CSOs of Canada, it is limited in that the VMI instrument used has only been previously administered to clubs of a single sport (rugby), and only in Australia. Cuskelly et al. (2006) acknowledge that further refinement of this questionnaire is required to provide support and validity in its use for other contexts, though in its infancy, further use of the VMI is required to substantiate future findings.

The number of participants in this study was acceptable to establish baseline trends and information in how CSOs manage volunteers across Canada, however, the study is limited by a low representation when considering the overall number of CSOs in the country. Future studies should consider increasing the number of participants invited to participate in the study, and also expanding to other sports. There are over 100 sports

played in Canada (Bloom et al., 2005), so a representation greater than seven would provide a more accurate portrayal of the management of volunteers in CSOs.

Although every effort was made to eliminate any social response bias, there is always an underlying question of the accuracy of the responses received. During the analysis of the data collected in this study, there appeared to not be any trends or patterns in how questions were answered; however, only the President (or person in the leadership position of the organization) answered the questions and accuracy may have been influenced by their sole opinions rather than that of the other board members. Future research could consider multiple respondents from each organization to create a collective response in the case that one person's responses were biased for any reason.

The last limitation of this study relate to how the grouping variables of the questions pertaining to the longevity of the organization, the size of the organization, and the experience of the administration team/board were created. A tertile split was performed in an effort to develop composite groups for comparison. As there was no literature found to support how groups such as these should be categorized, the researcher made the decision to split the groups in an attempt to create relatively equal numbers in each group. In doing so, the following two limitations were created: 1) when a continuum is categorized such as this, the numbers have been dichotomized and make the assumption that every value within each group is equal; and 2) the researcher created the groups for analysis without support for this procedure due to a lack of academic support in the literature, which speaks to the exploratory nature of this study.

Delimitations

This study focused on volunteer management practices at the community sport

level, and was delimited by ignoring volunteer management practices and issues in sport at the professional, post-secondary (university and college), and school levels. The study was further delimited by using clubs with websites, as well as by only selecting sports that are in-season, due to concerns of accessibility and availability of the sample population.

As this study is very exploratory in nature, it has been delimited by not differentiating volunteer management practices for each volunteer position. Though this is a valuable piece of information, a current assessment of volunteer management practices of CSOs in Canada is needed to establish a basis for the significance of the value of defined volunteer roles.

A final delimitation of this study was only inviting the individual leader in the position of board president or senior leadership of each CSO to participate. Depending on the type of organizational structure, there could be other individuals that deal with each type of specified volunteer position within the CSO in a greater role than the board president or senior leader.

Future Directions

As this study is exploratory in nature, future research should continue to refine an understanding of how volunteers are managed in Canada, and also to gauge resources that should be developed to help support this notion that volunteers are necessary for the delivery of sport in this country. For policy makers, such as government bodies like Sport Canada that oversee sport in Canada, it would be beneficial to consider this approach as building a resource base to assist in organization development. This should be seen as an investment in the future of sport in Canada, though this initiative should come from

professionals in that position rather than at the grassroots and community level where CSOs are competing for the time of volunteers.

Another focus for further research is to continue on what has been found in this study. As a baseline research project to establish trends of volunteer management in CSOs in Canada, it would be important to determine some of the systems that are currently in place in various sports and provinces to celebrate programs that have yielded positive results, and also to provide support to fill in some of the gaps in programs that have struggled.

Lastly, further refinement of the VMI is necessary to aid in understanding how CSOs manage volunteers. In particular, the construct of screening is limited to only two questions and scored a lower than acceptable Cronbach's alpha score. In Canada, this construct would benefit by expanding to include a number of additional questions in the screening category. These may refer to: a) police background checks for every volunteer; b) having the volunteers complete an application process to become a volunteer; c) have the CSO check the references of the volunteer; d) have the volunteer interview for the position or role they are looking to participate in; and e) provide terms of references for each position that ensures that volunteers are hired for appropriate roles.

The refinement should not just be limited to the screening construct. There may be other factors that contribute to the retention of volunteers in Canadian CSOs, such as societal factors that affect volunteer workloads and time commitment, organizational conflict and resolution, volunteer motivation, and volunteer satisfaction.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research project does provide some implications as to how

volunteers are managed in CSOs in Canada. Volunteers are necessary for the delivery of sport in this country, and across a sample of sports, have shown to be involved at various levels and positions in how organizations are managed. Without these volunteers, the Canadian sport system would be put in jeopardy of becoming obsolete or at best, an elitist activity due to the need for paid professional staff to administer it. Further empirical research in the management of volunteers in sport will contribute to the breadth of understanding of the importance of volunteers in CSOs, as well as to provide a platform to address gaps in the current system and structure. Leadership is required from the national bodies responsible for the overall growth and delivery of the sport system in Canada in the form of resources, programs, and assistance, rather than providing a mere policy (CSP) in the hopes that these will be developed and created by volunteers.

The study found that there are varying degrees to the use of how HRM practices are used by CSOs across Canada, though they are a prominent feature of sport in the country for a variety of volunteer positions. With that said, it is somewhat troubling to see there is still a significant number of organizations that function without a formal board structure and revert back to the 'kitchen table' approach to the delivery of sport. The data shows that the lack of a formal board structure is directly tied to a lack of use of HRM practices to manage volunteers.

A surprising finding of this study was that perception of retention issues being linked to the use of HRM practices was only significant for the volunteer position of a board member. This suggests that board members execute the overall functioning and operations of an organization, which may benefit from a more formal approach to using HRM practices to prepare them for their roles within the organization, thus assisting in

retaining their services longer. Very few programs exist in Canada to help with this issue, and CSOs would benefit from resources such as policies, manuals, and the development of programs, as a means of enhancing their organizational capacity through the management of volunteers. For the position of volunteer coaches, there is a long history of resources available through the Coaching Association of Canada, Provincial coaching organizations, and resources from NSOs, making their ability to function in a formal or informal setting manageable either way. For other volunteer positions that exist in organizations, further research could delve further into why retention is not perceived as an issue for them.

Other data collected in this study support the notion that volunteers are numerous across the country and various sports, and should be given some consideration as to how they are managed. A formal structure might not necessarily be required for every situation, however the more resources that organizations have, the more prepared they are to deal with issues that arise (i.e., best practices and strategies for recruiting volunteers and dealing with volunteer retention). Cuskelly et al., (2006) suggest a similar conclusion by acknowledging that the quality of deliverable programs and services may suffer by not managing volunteers and also acknowledging that the relationship between CSOs and volunteers is delicate.

Summary

When considering the seven HRM constructs, a correlation analysis identifies that the varying HRM practices related to one another but were statistically independent. This combined with the various reliability and validity tests supports this questionnaire and framework as valid for a Canadian context. A review of literature provides empirical

support for the use of HRM practices in organizations, though some gaps exist in how those practices are affected in volunteer based organizations, in sport organizations, and how retention of volunteers is perceived to be a problem. With the volunteer position of board or executive committee members in particular, the use of more formal HRM practices was a significant predictor on perceived retention issues of these volunteers. However, it is acknowledged that HRM practices were not a significant predictor of volunteer retention issues for other formal positions.

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Table 1

Wording Changes Made Between the Original Volunteer Management Inventory (Cuskelly et al., 2006) and the Revised VMI for a Canadian Context

Question Number	Original Wording	Revised Wording
3	Engage in succession planning to replace key volunteers	Engage in succession planning (identifying and developing internal personnel) to replace key volunteers
4	Provide role of job descriptions for individual volunteers	Provide job descriptions for individual volunteers
8	Fill key volunteer positions prior to the AGM	Fill key volunteer positions before the season commences
14	Verify the accreditation of coaches and officials	Verify the credentials of coaches and officials
15	Conduct suitability checks of volunteers (e.g., child protection, responsible service of alcohol)	Conduct suitability checks of volunteers (e.g., police background check)
17	Conduct induction sessions for specific groups of volunteers (e.g., coaches, managers, committee members)	Conduct introduction sessions for specific groups of volunteers (e.g., coaches, managers, committee members)
19	Organize induction meetings for new or continuing volunteers	Organize orientation meetings for new or continuing volunteers
24	Assist volunteers to access training outside the club (e.g., coach accreditation)	Assist volunteers to access training outside the club (e.g., credentials such as NCCP coaching certification)
28	Provide club uniforms or clothing for volunteers	Provide club uniforms or clothing at no cost to the volunteer

Table 2

Number of Community Sport Organizations in Each Province for the Sports of Basketball, Curling, Ice Hockey, Skating, Skiing, Swimming, and Volleyball

Province	Sport							Total by Province
	Basketball	Curling	Ice Hockey	Skating	Skiing	Swimming	Volleyball	
Alberta	52	114	66	161	33	53	47	526
British Columbia	50	98	267	66	20	61	42	604
Manitoba	1	133	13	75	6	16	34	278
Newfoundland & Labrador	15	18	26	33	4	17	0	113
New Brunswick	24	36	30	48	4	20	19	181
Northwest Territories	3	7	13	6	0	2	2	33
Nova Scotia	45	36	33	38	2	18	33	205
Nunavut	0	3	6	0	0	0	0	9
Ontario	240	263	250	326	44	133	44	1300
Prince Edward Island	9	7	20	13	2	3	7	61
Quebec	88	71	15	172	70	145	15	576
Saskatchewan	18	208	28	154	11	26	19	464
Yukon	0	12	2	1	2	0	1	18
Total by Sport	545	1006	769	1093	198	494	263	

Table 3

Results for Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach's Alpha for Internal Consistency of the Seven HRM Constructs (N = 219)

	Factor Mean	Factor SD	Factor α
Planning (6)	3.376	0.674	0.708
Recruiting (7)	3.189	0.579	0.638
Screening (2)	3.800	1.106	0.598
Orientating (4)	3.817	0.781	0.734
Training and Support (9)	3.684	0.595	0.708
Performance Managing (3)	3.187	0.847	0.747
Recognizing (5)	3.663	0.789	0.784

Note: Questions were answered on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always)

Table 4

Correlation Matrix of VMI Constructs (N = 219)

	Planning	Recruiting	Screening	Orientating	Training and Support	Performance Management	Recognition
Planning	1.00						
Recruiting	.588	1.00					
Screening	.464	.459	1.00				
Orientating	.618	.657	.483	1.00			
Training and Support	.616	.508	.342	.623	1.00		
Performance Management	.488	.530	.335	.573	.594	1.00	
Recognition	.529	.538	.261	.468	.540	.491	1.00

Note: All significant at $p < .05$

Table 5

Predictors of Perceived Retention Issues by Volunteer Position (N = 219)

Variable	Volunteer Position				
	All Volunteers	Board or Management Committee Members	Coaches	Team Representatives or Managers	Other Formal Volunteer Positions
	β	β	β	β	β
Planning	-0.192	-0.051	-0.244	-0.170	-0.095
Recruitment	0.188	0.150	0.204	0.058	0.121
Screening	0.026	-0.066	0.033	0.109	0.013
Orientation	-0.076	-0.104	-0.025	-0.026	-0.059
Training	-0.060	-0.153	0.095	0.027	-0.134
Performance	-0.152	-0.166	-0.099	-0.075	-0.093
Recognition	-0.050	-0.025	-0.110	-0.005	0.000
Adjusted R ²	0.073	0.102	0.029	-0.003	0.031
F	3.465	4.544	1.931	0.892	2.009

Note: Significance measured at $p < .05$

Table 6

Results for Means and Standard Deviations of Perceived Issues for HRM Practices

Scale item:	Mean	SD
In managing its volunteers, to what extent does your club perceive the following Human Resource Management practices to be an issue ... (four point likert scale)		
Planning	1.861	0.687
Recruiting	2.264	0.718
Screening	1.567	0.653
Orientating	1.593	0.592
Training and Support	1.664	0.630
Performance Managing	1.744	0.634
Recognizing	1.567	0.602
Retention	2.034	0.706

Note: Questions were answered on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not a problem) to 4 (a serious problem)

Table 7

Number of Volunteers Used in Each Position in the Sports of Basketball, Curling, Ice Hockey, Skating, Skiing, Swimming and Volleyball

Sport		Volunteer Position			
		Board Member	Coach	Trainer/Manager	Convenor
Basketball	Mean	5.62	16.15	9.39	2.33
	N	34	33	31	30
	Standard Deviation	4.22	10.48	11.67	6.08
Curling	Mean	10.00	5.09	2.29	2.13
	N	32	32	28	30
	Standard Deviation	5.11	4.17	6.12	3.35
Ice Hockey	Mean	12.29	26.82	19.08	2.28
	N	38	38	37	32
	Standard Deviation	5.58	6.07	9.22	5.90
Skating	Mean	9.07	3.48	0.63	0.24
	N	29	27	27	25
	Standard Deviation	3.59	4.34	1.21	1.72
Skiing	Mean	8.26	7.68	4.47	0.71
	N	19	19	17	17
	Standard Deviation	3.36	10.64	7.87	1.72
Swimming	Mean	7.39	3.13	0.81	0.27
	N	33	32	31	26
	Standard Deviation	3.41	3.54	0.91	0.72
Volleyball	Mean	3.55	13.53	7.33	0.46
	N	33	32	30	28
	Standard Deviation	3.38	10.72	7.38	1.14
Total	Mean	8.07	11.68	6.96	1.30
	N	218	213	201	188
	Standard Deviation	5.07	11.33	9.85	3.83

Table 8

Number of Volunteers Used in Each Position in Each Province

Province		Volunteer Position			
		Board Member	Coach	Trainer/Manager	Convenor
Alberta	Mean	8.75	11.68	7.74	0.63
	N	36	34	34	30
	Standard Deviation	5.44	11.27	9.56	1.77
British Columbia	Mean	8.23	12.20	7.24	1.08
	N	31	30	29	26
	Standard Deviation	4.99	11.78	11.55	2.17
Manitoba	Mean	6.35	8.50	2.93	0.47
	N	17	16	15	15
	Standard Deviation	5.35	11.36	5.30	0.92
New Brunswick	Mean	8.75	14.75	9.26	1.00
	N	20	20	19	16
	Standard Deviation	4.39	12.13	10.62	2.97
Newfoundland	Mean	8.00	13.00	5.75	5.00
	N	9	9	8	9
	Standard Deviation	4.21	11.01	11.02	10.09
Northwest Territories	Mean	12.00	8.00	0.00	0.00
	N	1	1	1	1
	Standard Deviation				
Nova Scotia	Mean	6.13	11.96	6.83	0.18
	N	24	24	24	22
	Standard Deviation	4.96	12.35	10.20	3.42
Ontario	Mean	8.60	9.31	7.03	2.41
	N	33	32	29	29
	Standard Deviation	5.06	10.46	9.62	3.42

Prince Edward Island	Mean	8.73	11.55	6.20	1.11
	N	11	11	10	9
	Standard Deviation	4.05	5.80	6.07	3.33
Quebec	Mean	7.25	9.50	5.14	0.00
	N	8	8	7	8
	Standard Deviation	4.05	13.55	11.45	0.00
Saskatchewan	Mean	8.67	14.10	8.00	2.17
	N	21	21	19	18
	Standard Deviation	6.56	12.15	10.68	7.25
Yukon	Mean	7.86	12.14	7.00	1.40
	N	7	7	6	5
	Standard Deviation	3.02	13.53	12.10	2.19
Total	Mean	8.07	11.68	6.96	1.30
	N	218	213	201	188
	Standard Deviation	5.07	11.33	9.85	3.83

Figure 1

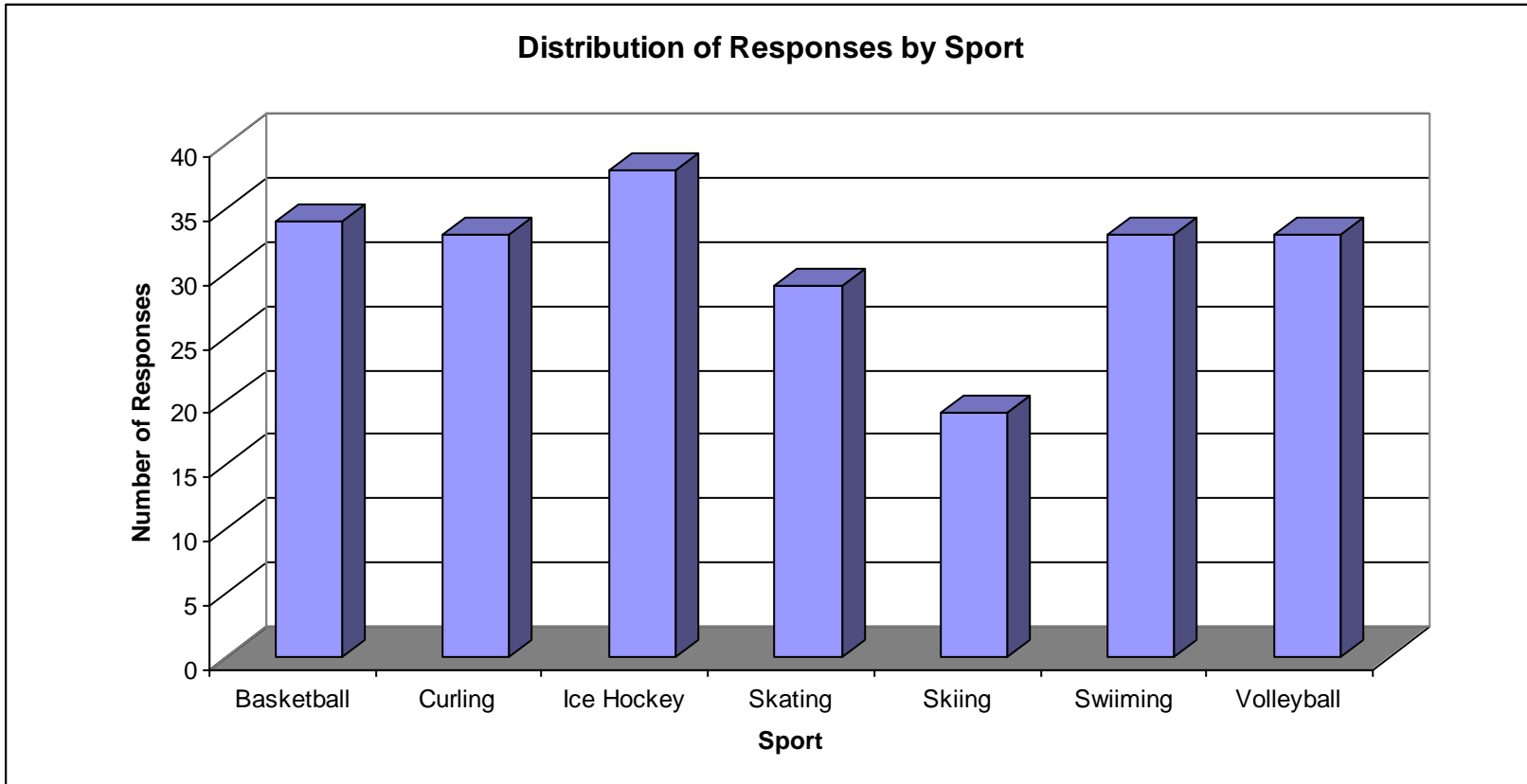


Figure 1. Distribution of participant responses by sport.

Figure 2

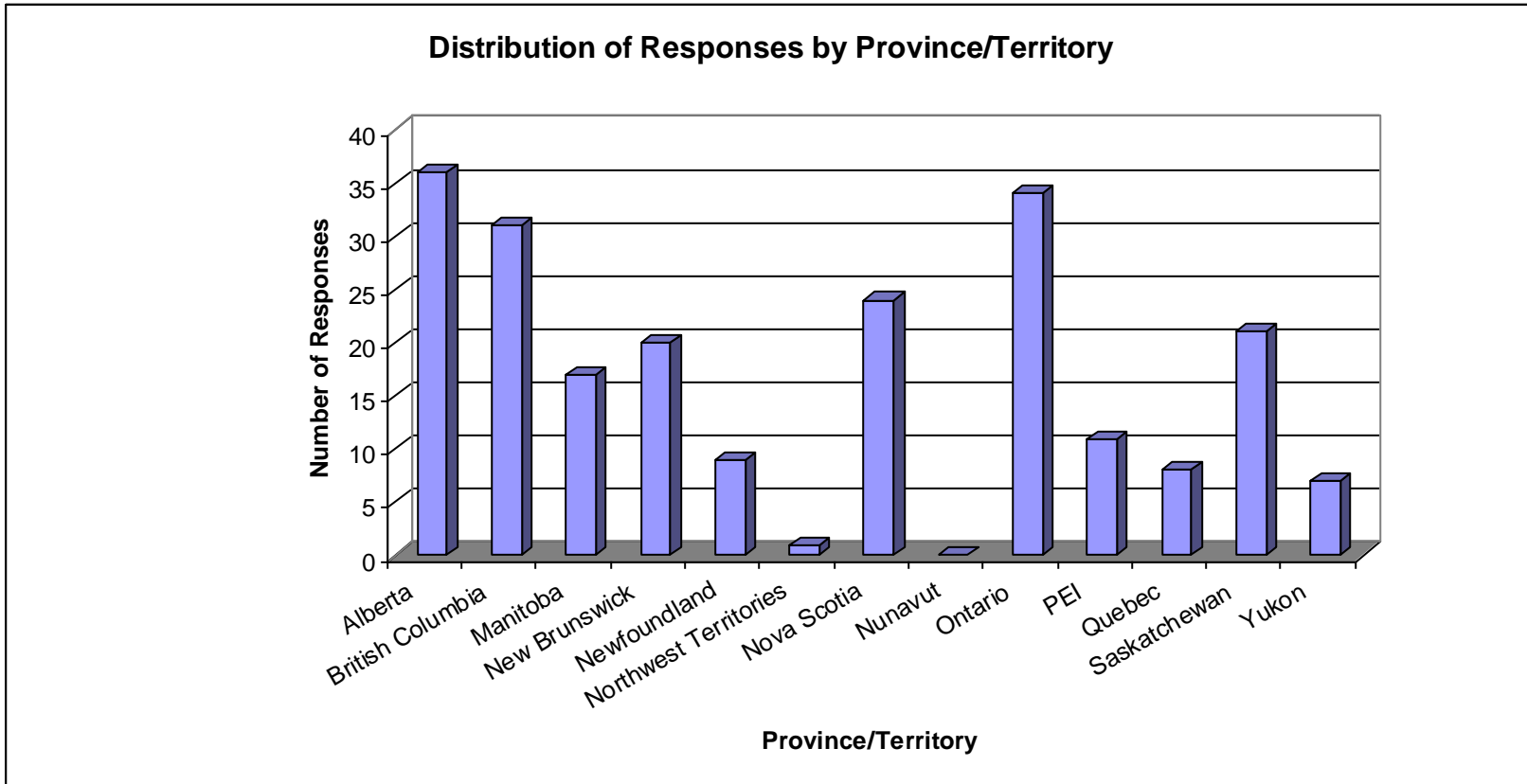


Figure 2. Distribution of responses by province/territory.

Appendix A

Club Listing Request

[To be printed on Brock University letterhead]

December 1, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Joel Mrak, and I am a Graduate Student and Master of Arts candidate, from the Department of Sport Management at Brock University. For my research study titled "*Managing Volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations*", I require a complete list of community sport organizations registered with your Provincial Sport Organization as a means of generating a stratified random sample of [insert sport here] clubs in your province. I am requesting a complete list of these clubs so that I may recruit participants based on the requirements of a stratified random sample.

The purpose of this research project is to investigate how volunteers are managed in Canadian Community Sport Organizations using more formal human resource management practices such as planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training, managing performance and recognizing performance.

This research should benefit Community Sport Organizations that are registered with your Provincial Sport Organization, by providing information on current trends in volunteer management, by linking human resource management practices to volunteer retention issues, and providing support for future development of volunteer management programs as a resource for sport organizations. Volunteers have been recognized as being essential in the delivery of sport in all levels in Canada, and with this exploratory study, the goal is to gain a valuable assessment of current practices used by community sport organizations.

I thank you in advance for your assistance with this matter. Please feel free to contact me at (905) 329-0391 or joel.mrak@brocku.ca if you have questions or concerns about this research study. Thank you again for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Joel Mrak
Graduate Student, Master of Arts candidate
Department of Sport Management
Brock University

Appendix B

Letter of Invitation

[To be printed on Brock University letterhead]

December 1, 2009

Title of Study: *Managing Volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations*

Principal Investigator: Joel Mrak, Graduate Student and Master of Arts candidate,
Department of Sport Management, Brock University

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Joanne Maclean, Department Chair and Associate Professor,
Department of Sport Management, Brock University

I, Joel Mrak, Graduate Student and Master of Arts candidate, from the Department of Sport Management, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project entitled *Managing Volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations*.

The purpose of this research project is to investigate how volunteers are managed in Canadian Community Sport Organizations using more formal human resource management practices such as planning, recruiting, screening, orientating, training, managing performance and recognizing performance.

The expected duration of this questionnaire is 15 minutes. Participation in this study is voluntary and individuals may decline to answer any or all of questions they deem inappropriate. Participants may withdraw from the study at any stage of the process (i.e. prior to the questionnaire, during the questionnaire or following the questionnaire).

This research should benefit Community Sport Organizations such as yours, by providing information on current trends in volunteer management, by linking human resource management practices to volunteer retention issues, and providing support for future development of volunteer management programs as a resource for sport organizations. Volunteers have been recognized as being essential in the delivery of sport in all levels in Canada, and with this exploratory study, the goal is to gain a valuable assessment of current practices used by community sport organizations.

This is a single-site project with all data being collected online, and analyzed at Brock University.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, reb@brocku.ca).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you

Joel Mrak
Graduate Student, Master of Arts candidate
(905) 329-0391
joel.mrak@brocku.ca

Dr. Joanne Maclean
Department Chair, Associate Professor
(905) 688-5550 ext 3159
jmaclean@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board (09-137 MACLEAN)

Appendix C

Informed Consent

Date: December 1, 2009
Project Title: Managing Volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations

Principal Investigator: Joel Mrak
Graduate Student, Master of Arts candidate
Department of Sport Management
Brock University
(905) 329-0391
joel.mrak@brocku.ca

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Joanne Maclean
Department Chair, Associate Professor
Department of Sport Management
Brock University
(905) 688-5550 ext 3159
jmaclean@brocku.ca

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to investigate the current volunteer management practices of community sport organizations in Canada.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be required to access the Survey Monkey website with the link provided in the letter of invitation to complete a short questionnaire pertaining to the human resource management practices used by your organization in managing volunteers. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information you provide is considered confidential; your name will not be included or, in any other way, associated with the data collected in the study. Furthermore, because our interest is in the average responses of the entire group of participants, you will not be identified individually in any way in written reports of this research. Data collected for this study will be stored in a password protection digital file on the Principal Investigator's personal computer. Data will be kept for a five year period following the completion of this study, after which all data collected will be destroyed. Access to this data will be restricted to the primary researcher and the faculty supervisor mentioned above.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback of this study will be available through the Principal Investigator via email requests upon the completion of this study on August 31, 2010.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact the Principal Investigator or the Faculty Supervisor (where applicable) using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (09-137 MACLEAN). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please print and keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

By checking this box, consent is given as a digital signature

Appendix D

Volunteer Management Inventory

In managing its volunteers to what extent does your club ...	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Always 5
Planning Practices					
1) Identify potential volunteers before the season commences	1	2	3	4	5
2) Target individuals for volunteer positions based on their skills	1	2	3	4	5
3) Engage in succession planning to replace key volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
4) Provide role or job descriptions for individual volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
5) Actively encourage turnover of volunteers in key positions	1	2	3	4	5
6) Maintain a database of volunteers' skills, qualifications and experience	1	2	3	4	5
Recruitment Practices					
7) Match the skills, experience and interests of volunteers to specific roles	1	2	3	4	5
8) Fill key volunteer positions prior to the AGM	1	2	3	4	5
9) Develop positions to meet the needs of individual volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
10) Actively recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds (e.g., minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities)	1	2	3	4	5
11) Use advertising for volunteer recruitment (e.g., newsletters, online, local papers)	1	2	3	4	5
12) Use "word of mouth" to recruit volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
13) Actively recruit volunteers that are not directly associated with the club	1	2	3	4	5

(Table continued)

(Continued)

In managing its volunteers to what extent does your club ...	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Always 5
Screening Practices					
14) Verify the accreditation of coaches and officials	1	2	3	4	5
15) Conduct suitability checks of volunteers (e.g., child protection, responsible service of alcohol)	1	2	3	4	5
Orientation Practices					
16) Introduce new volunteers to people with whom they will work during the season	1	2	3	4	5
17) Conduct induction sessions for specific groups of volunteers (e.g., coaches, managers, committee members)	1	2	3	4	5
18) Encourage volunteers to operate within a code of acceptable behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
19) Organize induction meetings for new or continuing volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
Training and Support Practices					
20) Mentor volunteers, particularly when starting in a new role	1	2	3	4	5
21) Provide support to volunteers in their roles (e.g., assist with the resolution of conflicts)	1	2	3	4	5
22) Provide sufficient resources for volunteers to effectively carry out their tasks	1	2	3	4	5
23) Manage the work loads of individual volunteers where they are excessive	1	2	3	4	5
24) Assist volunteers to access training outside the club (e.g., coach accreditation)	1	2	3	4	5
25) Cover or reimburse the costs of volunteer attendance at training or accreditation courses	1	2	3	4	5

(Table continued)

(Continued)

In managing its volunteers to what extent does your club ...	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Always 5
26) Reimburse volunteers for “out of pocket” expenses	1	2	3	4	5
27) Supply volunteers with food and beverages when volunteering	1	2	3	4	5
28) Provide club uniforms or clothing for volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
Performance Management Practices					
29) Monitor the performance of individual volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
30) Provide feedback to individual volunteers about their performance	1	2	3	4	5
31) Address performance problems amongst individual volunteers (e.g., a volunteer who fails to complete essential tasks)	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition Practices					
32) Recognize outstanding work or task performances of individual volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
33) Plan for the recognition of volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
34) Thank volunteers for their efforts (e.g., informal thank yous)	1	2	3	4	5
35) Publicly recognize the efforts of volunteers (e.g., in newsletters)	1	2	3	4	5
36) Provide special awards for long-serving volunteers (e.g., life membership)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E

Volunteer Management Inventory – French Translation

Dans la gestion de ses bénévoles, dans quelle mesure votre club ...	jamais 1	rarement 2	quelquefois 3	souvent 4	toujours 5
Procédures de planification					
1) Identifie les volontaires potentiels avant que la saison débute	1	2	3	4	5
2) Cible des individus pour les postes de bénévoles basées sur leurs compétences	1	2	3	4	5
3) Engage en succession la planification (par l'identification et le développement du personnel interne) pour remplacer des volontaires clés	1	2	3	4	5
4) Fournis les descriptions des fonctions pour différents volontaires	1	2	3	4	5
5) Encourage de façon active le roulement de bénévoles dans les positions clés	1	2	3	4	5
6) Maintient une base de données des compétences, qualifications et expériences des bénévoles	1	2	3	4	5
Procédures de recrutement					
7) Associe les compétences, l'expérience et les intérêts des volontaires aux rôles spécifiques	1	2	3	4	5
8) Remplis les positions volontaires clés avant que la saison débute	1	2	3	4	5
9) Développe des postes pour répondre aux besoins individuels des bénévoles	1	2	3	4	5
10) Recrute de façon active des bénévoles de diverses origines (par exemple, les groupes ethniques minoritaires, les gens avec des incapacités)	1	2	3	4	5

(Table Continued)

(Continued)

Dans la gestion de ses bénévoles, dans quelle mesure votre club ...	jamais 1	rarement 2	quelquefois 3	souvent 4	toujours 5
11) Utilise de la publicité pour le recrutement de bénévoles (par exemple, les bulletins en ligne et les journaux locaux)	1	2	3	4	5
12) Utilise "le bouche à oreille" pour recruter des bénévoles	1	2	3	4	5
13) Recrute de façon active les bénévoles qui ne sont pas directement associé avec le club	1	2	3	4	5
Procédures de tirages					
14) Vérifie les qualifications des entraîneurs et des fonctionnaires	1	2	3	4	5
15) Contrôle de convenance le conduite des volontaires (par exemple, vérification des antécédents de police)	1	2	3	4	5
Procédures d'orientation					
16) Présente les nouveaux volontaires aux gens avec qui ils travailleront pendant la saison	1	2	3	4	5
17) Dirige des séances d'initiation pour les groupes de bénévoles spécifiques (par exemple, les entraîneurs, les directeurs, les membres du comité)	1	2	3	4	5
18) Encourage les volontaires à fonctionner dans un code de comportement acceptable	1	2	3	4	5
19) Organise les réunions d'orientation pour les nouveaux volontaires ainsi que ceux qui maintiennent leurs postes	1	2	3	4	5
Procédures d'entraînement et de soutien					
20) Guide les bénévoles, surtout en commençant un nouveau rôle	1	2	3	4	5

(Table Continued)

(Continued)

Dans la gestion des bénévoles, dans quelle mesure votre club ...	jamais 1	rarement 2	quelquefois 3	souvent 4	toujours 5
21) Fournis un soutien aux bénévoles dans leurs rôles (par exemple, l'aide avec de la résolution de conflits)	1	2	3	4	5
22) Fournis aux bénévoles des ressources suffisantes pour rendre l'exécution des tâches efficace	1	2	3	4	5
23) Gère les charges de travail des bénévoles en cas où elles sont excessives	1	2	3	4	5
24) Offre de l'aide pour accéder à la formation en dehors du club (par exemple, les qualifications telles que la certification de entraînement de NCCP)	1	2	3	4	5
25) Couvre ou rembourse les frais associés à la participation des bénévoles à l'entraînement ou aux cours d'accréditation	1	2	3	4	5
26) Rembourse les bénévoles pour les dépenses "de la poche"	1	2	3	4	5
27) Fournis les bénévoles avec de la nourriture et de boisson quand ils se portent volontaire	1	2	3	4	5
28) Fournis les uniformes ou l'habillement de club sans coût au volontaire	1	2	3	4	5
Procédures de performance et gérance					
29) Surveille la performance des bénévoles individuels	1	2	3	4	5
30) Fournis aux bénévoles l'information en retour de leur performance	1	2	3	4	5
31) Adresse les problèmes de performance avec les bénévoles individuels (par exemple, un bénévole qui ne complète pas des tâches essentielles)	1	2	3	4	5

(Table Continued)

(Continued)

Dans la gestion des bénévoles, dans quelle mesure votre club ...	jamais 1	rarement 2	quelquefois 3	souvent 4	toujours 5
Procédures de reconnaissance					
32) Reconnaît la performance de tâches de travail remarquable des bénévoles individuels	1	2	3	4	5
33) Planifie pour la reconnaissance de bénévoles	1	2	3	4	5
34) Remercie les bénévoles pour leurs efforts (par exemple, remerciements informels)	1	2	3	4	5
35) Reconnaît les efforts des bénévoles de façon publique (par exemple, dans les bulletins)	1	2	3	4	5
36) Fournis des récompenses spéciales pour les bénévoles à long terme (par exemple, l'adhésion de la vie)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F

Open Ended Grouping Variables Questionnaire

- 1) What sport does your community sport organization represent?
- 2) What province/territory does your community sport organization exist within?
- 3) How long has your organization existed for?
- 4) How many athletes participate in your organization (approximately)?
- 5) How many board or management committee members are in your organization?
- 6) What is total combined experience (in number of sport seasons) of the administration team that makes up your board or management committee members (approximately)?
For example: If your board has seven members who have averaged three seasons each as a member of the board, the total combined experience would 21 seasons.

Appendix G

Volunteer Retention Questionnaire

In managing its volunteers, to what extent does your club perceive retention to be an issue for the position of ...	Not a Problem 1	Minor Issue 2	Major Issue 3	A Serious Problem 4
1) Board or management committee members	1	2	3	4
2) Coaches	1	2	3	4
3) Team managers or representatives	1	2	3	4
4) Other formal volunteer positions	1	2	3	4

Appendix H

Perceptions of Problematic HRM Practices Questionnaire

In managing its volunteers, to what extent does your club perceive the following Human Resource Management practices to be an issue ...	Not a Problem 1	Minor Issue 2	Major Issue 3	A Serious Problem 4
1) Planning for volunteers	1	2	3	4
2) Recruiting volunteers	1	2	3	4
3) Screening volunteers	1	2	3	4
4) Orientating volunteers	1	2	3	4
5) Training volunteers	1	2	3	4
6) Managing the performance of volunteers	1	2	3	4
7) Recognizing the performance of volunteers	1	2	3	4
8) Retaining volunteers	1	2	3	4

Appendix I

Letter of Appreciation

[To be printed on Brock University letterhead]

December 1, 2009

Dear Participant:

Thank you for your participation in the research project *Managing Volunteers in Canadian Community Sport Organizations*. As you are aware, I am conducting this research study in fulfillment of my Master of Arts thesis in the Department of Sport Management at Brock University. The purpose of this study is to investigate the current volunteer management practices of community sport organizations in Canada. Your participation in this study plays an integral role in gaining a valuable assessment and perspective of the human resource management practices used with volunteers by Community Sport Organizations. My hope is for the findings of this research project to be used as a resource for practitioners such as you, as well as policy makers, funding agencies, and academics.

Feedback about the use of data collected will be available upon the completion of this study (August 2010). Please feel free to contact me at (905) 329-0391 or joel.mrak@brocku.ca if you would like a copy of any published reports or if you have questions or concerns about this research study. Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Joel Mrak
Graduate Student, Master of Arts candidate
Department of Sport Management
Brock University