

# Volunteer Motivations in Sport: Gender Differences among College Students in Singapore

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## Abstract

With the growth of Singapore's sport industry, more manpower is needed to meet the demands of increasing sporting events. Given the economic and non-economic benefits that young volunteers bring, sport organizations should aim to attract more of such personnel. In order to do so, they should have an understanding of sport volunteering motivations and how these motivations differ between genders. This would allow them to customise their recruitment campaigns to target each gender more effectively. The aim of the study was to examine gender differences in sport volunteering motivations. The study used the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) scale to test for importance placed on six motivators (i.e., values, understanding, social, career-related, enhancement, and protective) with regards to sport volunteering. Online questionnaire was sent to undergraduates in a sport-related field of study. There were 126 responses, comprising of 68 males and 58 females. One-way MANOVA testing showed that females placed significantly more importance on values motivator;  $F(1, 124) = 4.91, p = .028$ , understanding motivator;  $F(1, 124) = 5.06, p = .026$ , and protective motivator;  $F(1, 124) = 4.43, p = .037$ . Results implied that volunteer recruitment messages should emphasise on benefits related to values and understanding, especially if the aim is to attract female volunteers, given that these two motivators were also ranked as most important among the six motivators. Ways to improve males' perception towards volunteering should also be looked at by volunteering organisations and government agencies.

*Key words: Sport volunteering, motivations, gender differences, volunteer recruitment*

## 1. Introduction

### 1. Background of the Study

The sport industry in Singapore has been

rapidly growing over the past years, hosting more mega international sporting events such as the Formula One Race, as it continues to develop its sporting image (Parry, 2009). Furthermore, the government is trying to pro-

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mote sport participations among the community and support healthy lifestyles by offering various types of recreational or sport events. The rise in such events has resulted in a need for more human resources to fill up roles such as ushering, logistics, and technical tasks, where sport volunteers come into play.

Sport volunteers can be defined as "individual volunteers helping others in sport, in a formal organisation such as clubs or governing bodies, and receiving either no remuneration or only expenses" (Gratton, Nichols, Shibli, & Taylor, 1997, p. i). Volunteers are strongly sought after by sport organisations as they bring about numerous benefits. Firstly, recruiting volunteers allows companies to save money on hiring paid staff (Chelladurai, 2006). Past research conducted overseas have shown the significant economic impact of sport volunteers. Volunteers in America who were involved in sport and recreation events contributed an economic value of approximately \$10 Billion (Chelladurai, 2006). Secondly, with volunteers being more flexible in terms of scheduling and roles, they can provide services in various positions and levels of responsibility (American Youth Soccer Organization, 2004). Thirdly, clients and public in general are likely to perceive volunteers as more sincere and credible (Tedrick & Henderson, 1989). Accordingly, volunteers can serve public relations and fund-raising functions more effectively. Additionally, being free from financial benefits and reprisals, volunteers are more likely to provide sport organisations with

objective feedback and to suggest fresh ideas (Chelladurai, 2006). Finally, volunteers with sport-related knowledge bring about an additional benefit. They may be better equipped with the necessary understanding, cutting down on time and resources spent on training as compared to their counterparts without such background. With these benefits, recruitment and retention of volunteers are of high importance to sport organizations (Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, & Darcy, 2006; Kim, Chelladurai, & Trail, 2007).

One of the important populations in sport volunteerism is undergraduates from sport-related field of study (Sport England, 2004). With employability being rated as an important benefit of volunteering among youths (Hill & Russell, 2009), this group is likely to see sport volunteering as an opportunity to strengthen their future career success. This results in a win-win situation whereby a company recruits relevant volunteers while the volunteers themselves are able to apply learnt skills and improve their job prospects. Furthermore, undergraduates are normally perceived as vibrant and energetic, matching with the image of a sport event or a sport organisation. Young people are found to be interested in contributing their ideas and making a difference (National Youth Agency, 2007). Impact of youth volunteers to the sport industry is highlighted by Sport England's (2004) list of numerous sport clubs (e.g., soccer, hockey, etc.) which are being operated by largely youth volunteers.

## 2. Research Problem

While an exact figure of Singapore volunteerism rate in sport was not evidenced, one recent international event gave an insight of the current situation. The inaugural Youth Olympics Games (YOG) hosted by Singapore in 2010 faced a shortage of volunteers according to the local Sport Minister Vivian Balakrishnan (2010), as cited from Channel NewsAsia (2010). Students and teachers from some institutions even complained about being 'forced into volunteering' for the Games (TR Emeritus, 2010). Furthermore, empirical evidence showed that Singapore is lacking behind other developed countries such as America and Australia in terms of percentage of volunteers in general. A survey conducted by National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre in 2010 showed that 23.3% of Singaporeans volunteered in general. This figure was lower than those of America and Australia with a volunteering percentage of 26.3% (U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2011) and 36% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011), respectively, in 2010.

Given the aforementioned benefits of sport volunteerism but Singaporeans' relatively low volunteering rate, it is surprising that there has been little research conducted on volunteerism in the local context. Furthermore, with the rising number of sport events in Singapore, more sport volunteers are needed. This is especially so with the imminent completion of Sports Hub which will attract more international sport events.

Shortage of volunteers may result in a lack of creativity and flexibility, while forcing sport organisations to increase costs for hiring paid staff. Hence, there is a need to increase volunteerism locally in general and specifically in the sport context to support the growth of Singapore's sport industry. In order to improve the effectiveness of sport volunteer recruitment, event organisers and relevant sport organizations should aim to satisfy motivations behind volunteering.

Motivation can be described as the need to fulfil a psychological function that initiates, guides, and maintains behaviour (Katz, 1960) such as the act of volunteering. It is important to note that motivations behind engaging in a particular task may differ among people. Meece, Glienke, and Burg (2006) pointed out the role of gender in shaping motivation in their review of several theories. They indicated that motivation-related beliefs were shaped by gender role conceptions due to social factors such as family influence since early childhood. Development of such identity leads to one preferring to behave or process in a way that is "sex-typed" as appropriate for respective gender (Ruble & Martin, 1998). Putting this into context, a female brought up typically to be caring and gentle is more likely to be motivated by the altruistic factor of volunteering, and may be more willing to volunteer if this aspect is emphasised. This gives rise to the likelihood that volunteering motivations may differ due to gender. Hence, it will be meaningful to examine this possible influence of gender on sport volunteering motivations.

A key rationale for comparing sport volunteering motivations between genders is to determine if different strategies are needed to attract each gender. By understanding the volunteering motivations behind each gender, organisers could utilise customised messages to satisfy the different motivations of each group. This is similar to commercial organisations' marketing technique of market segmentation whereby they break down their target market into segments and customise specific strategies for each segment.

### 3. Aim and Significance of the Study

The study aimed to examine the differences in sport volunteering motivations between genders. Possible results from the study could help sport organisations and event organisers to strategise their messages so as to recruit volunteers of each gender more effectively. For example, if males were found to rate the importance of career-related motivation significantly higher than females, event organisers should tailor their advertising contents to emphasise on career-related benefits to target male volunteers. Similarly, messages to females should highlight opportunities of helping the less fortunate if they rated values as a relatively important motivation to volunteer. In addition, significance testing of ranking of motivators within each gender was also noted for practical reasons. Even though a motivator was found to be more important for a gender, it should not be used as the main enticement if

it was ranked relatively low compared to other motivators among that gender.

Effective strategies to attract more volunteers are crucial for involved sport organizations. More manpower at low costs allows more major sport events to be carried out successfully, generating more profits which can be used to expand on future events. Non-monetary benefits, especially the drive and knowledge that undergraduate volunteers bring, can help to support the events more effectively. This is vital for success and sustainability of the sport scene in Singapore. Furthermore, more sport events may increase the level of sport awareness and participation among the community, leading to a healthier workforce. From the wider perspective, growth in local sport scene creates awareness of Singapore in the region not only as a sporting nation but also as a tourism and investment destination; both important factors of the country's economic health.

## II. Literature Review

### 1. Volunteering Motivation

Numerous researchers have shown that volunteering motivation plays a crucial role behind an individual's decision to contribute time and effort without the expectation of financial reward (e.g., Clary, et al., 1998; Cuskelly et al., 2006; Kim & Chelladurai, 2008). Different approaches such as incentive approach and

functional approach have been applied to explain volunteering motivations.

## 2. Incentives approach to volunteering motivation

This approach examines motivation purely based on incentives. Volunteering motivation is categorized into three types of incentives: utilitarian, affective, and normative (Knoke & Prensky, 1984). Utilitarian incentives refer to the indirect benefits obtained through volunteering, such as the knowledge gained while carrying out a certain role. Affective incentives are described as gaining interpersonal relationships from positive social interactions. Normative incentives are humanitarian motives, such as volunteering with the purpose of helping others (Knoke & Prensky).

## 3. Functional approach to volunteering motivation

The functional approach carries the belief that people engage in activities for different and purposeful reasons (Katz, 1960). This theory suggests that the key in motivating a volunteering behavior is the match between the reasons for performing such an activity and the satisfactions derived from this activity (Clary et al., 1998). While the incentives approach explains motivation solely based on benefits of a certain activity, this approach accounts for the varying nature of human and addresses that people can engage in a same

activity but fulfill different psychological functions (Katz). Based on this perspective, individuals could choose to volunteer for a same event to satisfy varying motives (Clary et al.). Compared to other approaches, Kim, Zhang, and Connaughton (2010) explained that the functional approach "offers a stronger theoretical justification, with more specifically identified dimensions of volunteer motivations" (p. 347). Hence, it is one of the most commonly adopted concepts in volunteerism studies (e.g., Clary et al.; Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis, Griffin, & Frater, 2004; Switzer, Switzer, Stukas, & Baker, 1999).

## 4. Volunteering Motivation Functions

The current study utilized the functional approach (Katz, 1960) to examine volunteering motivations. Five functions or motivators, behind volunteering, were first identified by Clary, Synder, and Ridge (1992): expressive, ego defensive, social adjustive, utilitarian, and knowledge. After a series of modifications, Clary et al. (1998) expanded these five motivators to six. The values motivator replaced expressive, understanding replaced knowledge, social replaced social adjustive, career replaced utilitarian, protective replaced ego defensive, and the enhancement motivator was introduced. The below is the explanation of each of these six motivators.

- 1) Values motivator.

Clary et al. (1998) defined the values motivator as "the opportunities that volunteerism provides for individuals to express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others" (p. 1517). For example, one may volunteer with the purpose of helping disabled personnel during sport events.

#### 2) Understanding motivator

Volunteers motivated by the understanding function consider volunteering as an opportunity "to permit new learning experiences and the chance to exercise knowledge, skills, and abilities" (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1518). One may volunteer at a major sport event to learn more about how such events are managed.

#### 3) Social motivator

The third motivator volunteering serves is fulfilling the need to be around and engaged with people. Volunteering can also be seen as an opportunity to "engage in an activity viewed favourably by important others" (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1518). A person may choose to volunteer in a community sport fair because his or her family members value volunteering highly.

#### 4) Career-related motivator

The fourth motivator, career-related, is defined as "a means of preparing for a new career or of gaining career-relevant skills" (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1518). Volunteers may use volunteering as a platform to strengthen their chance of securing a related job. For example,

volunteers at a sport event company may seek to strengthen their chances of getting a permanent position there or to gain relevant skills required for securing a similar job.

#### 5) Protective motivator

Clary, Snyder, and Stukas (1996) conceptualised protective motivator as a mechanism to cope with inner anxieties. This motivator allows the volunteer to escape negative feelings by reducing "guilt over being more fortunate than others and address one's personal problems" (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1518). For example, a person may volunteer at a sport event for disabilities to overcome negative feelings from being more fortunate than the disabled.

#### 6) Enhancement motivator

The enhancement motivator that may be fulfilled through volunteering is identified as "involving a motivational process that centres on the ego's growth and development, and involves positive strivings of the ego" (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1518). Volunteers attracted to this motivator aim to improve self-esteem through a positive volunteering experience, but not in an altruistic sense. For example, one volunteers to be a coach at a soccer clinic for beginners because he or she wants to boost own ego by being better than the rest and being able to teach them.

### 5. Gender Differences in Volunteering

### Motivation Functions

Several studies investigating gender differences in volunteering motivation have indicated that, in various populations, women score higher on most functions than men (e.g., Clary et al., 1996; Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al. 2004; Switzer et al., 1999). A review of these studies highlighted two similarities. Firstly, all results involved females rating some functions higher while remaining functions had no significant difference. None saw males rating a particular function higher than females. Secondly, relative importance placed by each gender on the career-related function seemed to be the least conclusive among the six functions. All these studies found that there was no significant gender difference in career-related function.

Fletcher and Major (2004) tested for volunteering motivations among 51 college medical students and found that women rated four out of the six functions higher than men (i.e., values, enhancement, understanding, and protective) while the career-related and social functions had no significant difference between gender. Switzer and colleagues (1999) also researched on a sample of college medical students and discovered that females rated values and enhancement functions higher than males while the remaining four functions showed no significant difference. These results were replicated to a large extent by Papadakis et al., (2004) who found that females assigned more importance to three functions (i.e., values, understanding, and enhancement) whereas the

other functions had no significant difference. A national survey by Clary and colleagues (1996) showed that females gave more importance to all functions except the career function which had no difference. All studies used the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) as their instrument for testing volunteering motivations.

While there was no significant gender difference shown in career-related motivator, Switzer and colleagues (1999) explored this particular function with the aid of the social role theory of helping (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). This theory states that each gender is, from early childhood, socialised to help in different ways. Males are socialised into heroic roles whereas females are socialised into caring roles. This implies that men is likely to rate instrumental motives (i.e., personal tangible benefits) such as the career function higher, while women will rate concern-related motives such as the values function more importantly (Eagly & Crowley). The latter implication is also in line with all the studies aforementioned which indicated that females rated values significantly higher than males.

Based on results of previous relevant studies such as the above, the six hypotheses were developed.

#### 1) Values.

Past studies (e.g., Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al., 2004; Switzer et al., 1999) using VFI to test gender differences among college students in volunteering motivations showed that fe-

males rated values significantly higher than their male counterparts. A review on volunteerism findings also suggested that females seemed to be more concerned with helping others (Hill & Russell, 2009). This is in line with the social role theory of helping (Eagly & Crowley, 1986) which states that women are more likely to favour concern-related functions such as values. Therefore the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: Females will place significantly higher importance on the values motivator of sport volunteering as compared to males.

## 2) Understanding

Fletcher and Major (2004), and Papadakis et al. (2004) showed that female college students rated the understanding motivator as significantly more important than male counterparts. This was also highlighted by a study on the Commonwealth Games 2002 (Downward, Lumsdon, & Ralston, 2005) whereby female volunteers stated more interest in learning new skills than male volunteers. In the current study, therefore, the following hypothesis will be examined:

H2: Females will place significantly higher importance on the understanding motivator of sport volunteering as compared to males.

## 3) Social

The national survey by Clary and colleagues (1996) showed that females rated social motiva-

tor significantly higher than males. Female volunteers at the Commonwealth Games 2002 also agreed more than male volunteers that they were more likely to volunteer if their friends did (Downward et al., 2005). Hence, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H3: Females will place significantly higher importance on the social motivator of sports volunteering as compared to males.

## 4) Career-related

While studies using VFI showed no significant differences between genders in career-related motivation (Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al., 2004; Switzer et al., 1999), a study on psychological functions by Prentice and Carlsmith (2000) argued that males tended to value instrumental needs, such as career-related benefits, more. This view is in line with the aforementioned social role theory of helping (Eagly & Crowley, 1986) which states that men are more likely to help so as to satisfy instrumental motives. Thus, the following hypothesis was put forward:

H4: Males will place significantly higher importance on the career-related motivator of sport volunteering as compared to females.

## 5) Protective

Females were shown to rate protective motivator significantly higher than males in a na-



tional survey (Clary et al., 1996). This finding was supported by a study on college medical students conducted by Fletcher and Major (2004). Hence, the current study expected that there would be a gender difference in protective motivation in the Singapore context:

H5: Females will place significantly higher importance on the protective motivator of sport volunteering as compared to males.

#### 6) Enhancement

Enhancement motivator had been rated significantly higher by females in past studies (Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al., 2004; Switzer et al., 1999). Female volunteers at the Commonwealth Games 2002 also indicated the need to improve self-confidence as a strong reason to volunteer (Downward et al., 2005). Based on the results from the past literature, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H6: Females will place significantly higher importance on the enhancement motivator of sport volunteering as compared to males.

### III. Method

#### 1. Participants

Participants in this study consisted of undergraduates attending a large university in the western Singapore. A total of 126 valid responses were

recruited for data analysis, which composed of 54% male ( $n = 68$ ) and 46% female ( $n = 58$ ). The respondents ranged from 19 to 29 years old, with an average age of 23.2 years old ( $SD = \pm 1.8$ ). 19.8% ( $n = 25$ ) of respondents were from Year 1 and 29.4% ( $n = 37$ ) were from Year 2, while Year 3 students made up 27.8% ( $n = 35$ ) and Year 4 students made up 19.8% ( $n = 25$ ). The study samples were selected from students majoring in sport science and management as the current study aimed to elicit sport volunteering motivations from a pool of young people in a sport-related field of study. Using a convenience sampling method, an online questionnaire was sent to undergraduates, requesting for their voluntary response to the questionnaire. Participants were asked to answer the questions by relating to their experience in or thoughts towards sport volunteering. They were informed that they were free to withdraw from taking part in the study at any time and also assured of the confidentiality to their responses. No reimbursement was given. This research was cleared by the University Ethical Review Committee.

#### 2. Instrument Development

The questionnaire consisted of two sections: the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) (Clary et al., 1998) and a set of demographic questions. The VFI contained 30 items measuring the six functions (i.e., values, understanding, social, career-related, protective, and enhancement) of volunteering motivation. Each function was measured with five items us-

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for VFI Scale

VFI factor and item	Mean(SD)	Mean (SD)	Item-to-total correlation	$\alpha$
<b>Value</b>				
I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself	5.19(1.11)		.61	
I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving	5.11(1.30)	5.36 (.87)	.41	.81
I feel compassionate towards people in need	5.45(1.11)		.70	
I feel it is important to help others	5.88(1.04)		.76	
I can do something for a cause that is important to me	5.19(1.19)		.54	
<b>Understanding</b>				
I can learn more about the cause for which I am working	5.05(1.34)	5.46 (.83)	.52	.81
Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things	5.86(0.97)		.69	
Volunteering lets me learn things through direct, hands-on experience	5.52(1.04)		.68	
I can learn how to deal with a variety of people	5.56(1.10)		.61	
I can explore my own strengths	5.34(1.02)		.57	
<b>Social</b>				
My friends volunteer	4.24(1.57)	3.97 (1.04)	.43	.78
People I'm close to want me to volunteer	3.38(1.53)		.49	
People I know share an interest in community service	4.33(1.35)		.62	
Others with whom I am close place a high value on community services	4.07(1.33)		.70	
Volunteering is an important activity to the people I know best	3.85(1.31)		.61	
<b>Career-related</b>				
Volunteering can help me get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work	4.10(1.52)		.46	
I can make new contacts that might help my business or career	4.27(1.59)	4.11 (1.15)	.59	.78
Volunteering allows me to explore different career options	4.21(1.63)		.57	
Volunteering will help me to succeed in my chosen profession	3.83(1.53)		.59	
Volunteering experience will look good on my resume	4.13(1.65)		.55	
<b>Protective</b>				
No matter how bad I've been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it	4.16(1.49)		.57	
By volunteering I feel less lonely	3.97(1.65)	3.84 (1.20)	.68	.80
Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others	3.58(1.66)		.49	
Volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems	4.10(1.50)		.56	
Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles	3.38(1.68)		.63	
<b>Enhancement</b>				
Volunteering makes me feel important	4.25(1.48)	4.22 (1.19)	.46	.76
Volunteering increases my self-esteem	4.21(1.46)		.64	
Volunteering makes me feel needed	4.04(1.54)		.68	
Volunteering makes me feel better about myself	4.38(1.45)		.69	
Volunteering is a way to make new friends	5.09(1.19)		.18	

ing a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 'not at all important/accurate' (1) to 'extremely important/accurate' (7). The statements of the individual items were presented in Table 1. The VFI had been used in numerous past studies pertaining to volunteer motivations by Clary and colleagues (e.g., Clary & Snyder, 2000; Clary, Snyder, & Stukas, 1996; Stukas, Clary & Snyder 1999), and other researchers (e.g., Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al., 2004; Switzer et al., 1999). Switzer et al. who investigated gender differences among college students in volunteering motivations revealed high reliability and validity of the scale, supporting the Clary and colleagues' (1992) statement that "the VFI is reliable and valid and has a solid conceptual base" (p. 339). The second section of the questionnaire consisted of four demographic questions: gender, age, year of study, and race. Other than age which was an open-ended question, the rest were in a closed format whereby participants can select their choices from a given list.

### 3. Data Analysis

This is a quantitative study which used statistical analyses to test the six hypotheses. All data analyses were conducted using PASW Statistics 18.0. Descriptive statistics, in the form of means and standard deviations for each measure and the demographic breakdown of the participants, were employed. Despite the VFI being used and tested in the aforementioned studies, this study still examined its

reliability as Singapore college students were demographically and culturally different from overseas samples. Reliability of the scale was examined by the internal consistency test calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients with cut-off value of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) and item-to-total correlation coefficients with cut-off value of .50 (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989).

Gender was the only independent variable in this study while the six motivators were dependent variables. A one-way MANOVA test with the probability level of .05 was conducted to compare the mean scores between the males and females to test whether there is a significant gender difference for each of the motivators. On a side note, ranking of motivators was statistically examined by using paired sample t-test to compare motivators' scores.

## IV. Results

### 1. Preliminary Analysis

#### 1) Reliability analysis

Reliability analysis indicated that all six motives' Cronbach's alphas were higher than the suggested cut-off of .70. Most individual items' item-to-total correlations were also higher than the threshold of .50; five items' item-to-total correlations were slightly lower than .50, ranging from .41 to .49 (see Table 1). One problematic item under the enhancement motivator, "volunteering is a way to make new friends" had

a item-to-total correlation of .18 and was thus removed from the further analysis. This item's low correlation was possibly because it was heterogeneous from the other four items. While the four items focused on self-benefits, this item was about making new friends. After removing this item, the new Cronbach's alpha for the enhancement motivator increased to .81.

## 2. MANOVA for Gender Differences in the Six Motivators

A one-way MANOVA indicated that gender had a significant influence on the importance placed on sport volunteering motivators; Wilks's Lambda = 0.87,  $F(6, 119) = 3.07$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .13$ . To answer each of the six hypotheses, follow-up ANOVA testing was conducted (see Table 2). The univariate analyses indicated that there were significant gender differences in three of the six motivators; values, understanding, and protective. The results showed that females placed significantly higher importance on the values motivator of sport volunteering as compared to males;  $F(1, 124) = 4.91$ ,  $p = .028$ , hence supporting H1. Similarly for the understanding motivator, fe-

males scored significantly higher than males;  $F(1, 124) = 5.06$ ,  $p = .026$ , supporting H2. However, H3 was not supported as there was no significant difference between genders in the social motivator;  $F(1, 124) = .98$ ,  $p = .75$ . The results of career-related motivator also showed no significant difference;  $F(1, 124) = .63$ ,  $p = .43$ , thus failing to support H4. H5 was supported as results indicated females placing significantly more importance on the protective motivator than males;  $F(1, 124) = 4.43$ ,  $p = .037$ . Lastly, results were not in line with H6 as there was no significant difference between genders in the enhancement motivator;  $F(1, 124) = 1.08$ ,  $p = .30$ .

## V. Discussion

### 1. Summary of Findings

This study investigated the influence of gender on sport volunteering motivations among undergraduates in a sport-related field of study. Six motivators (i.e., values, understanding, social, career-related, protective, and enhancement) were

Table 2. Difference between Genders in Importance of Motivators to Sport Volunteering

Motivators	Mean score (SD)		Mean difference between gender	F	p-value
	Female	Male			
Value	5.55(.78)	5.21(.91)	.34	4.92	.028*
Understanding	5.64(.71)	5.31(.91)	.33	5.06	.026*
Social	3.94(1.12)	4.00(.98)	.06	.098	.75
Career-related	4.20(1.14)	4.03(1.17)	.17	.63	.43
Protective	4.08(1.11)	3.63(1.23)	.45	4.43	.037*
Enhancement	4.10(1.25)	4.32(1.13)	.22	1.08	.30

tested. Females rated values, understanding, and protective motivators significantly more important than males, supporting H1, H2, and H5, respectively. No motivator was rated significantly higher by males, mirroring past studies (e.g., Clary et al., 1996; Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al. 2004; Switzer et al., 1999). This further strengthened the suggestion that females are more favourable towards volunteering (V, 2008).

Females placed significantly more importance on the values motivator than males. This result was in line with studies done (Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al., 2004; Switzer et al., 1999) using VFI. This finding could be explained by the social role theory of helping (Eagly & Crowley, 1986) which suggests that women are more likely to favour concern-related functions such as values. This also fit the feminine stereotype of women being the more caring gender (Papadakis et al.).

Females rated the understanding motivator significantly higher than males, mirroring past studies (Fletcher & Major, 2004; Papadakis et al., 2004) on volunteering motivations. Protective motivator was also rated significantly higher by females, corresponding to findings by Clary and colleagues (1996), and Fletcher and Major. These two findings seemed to support suggestions that females more often volunteer in sport for extrinsic motives including personal benefits while men do so because of their interest in sport (Downward et al., 2005; Skirstad, 2011).

Females' extrinsic sport volunteering motivations may also extend to career benefits, as explained below.

Contrary to the prediction, males did not rate career-related motivator as more important than females. A possible explanation for this unexpectedly high importance placed by females could be that sport is a traditionally male-dominated profession. Females in the sport-related field of study may feel that they are at a disadvantage compared to males in terms of career opportunities. Hence, they use opportunities available, such as sport volunteering, to improve their likelihood of career success. This is in the line with Fletcher and Major's (2004) suggestion that women believe they need to "exercise every opportunity to excel" (p. 113) in a traditionally male-dominated profession.

Social and enhancement motivators also failed to reflect the predictions of females scoring higher than males. These findings suggested that social and egoistic differences between genders may be decreasing, at least in the sport volunteering context. While these results contradicted the studies used to support the respective hypotheses, they were in line with Fitch's (1987) study which showed no gender difference among collegians in these two motivations.

## 2. Practical Implications

This study provided understanding on gender differences in sport volunteering motivations. Such information can help sport

companies and practitioners strategise their volunteer recruitment campaigns. Messages should emphasise on benefits related to understanding (e.g. opportunity to learn new skills) and values (e.g. opportunity to help the less fortunate) especially if they aim to attract more female volunteers, as these two motivators are not only more important to females than to males, but also ranked as the two most important motivators. Recruitment aside, giving women volunteers more opportunities to directly help the less fortunate and to learn new skills may possibly contribute to retain them. The current findings continued the trend of males being less favourable towards volunteering, highlighting a problem which volunteering organisations and government agencies can look to correct by improving their perception towards volunteering. Overall, findings from this study can act as guidelines that could be based on to improve local sport volunteerism and thus potentially aid the growth of Singapore's sport industry.

### 3. Limitations and Future Studies

Sample in this study was only drawn from a sport-related course, and hence results cannot be generalised to all undergraduates in Singapore. Future studies can examine gender differences among undergraduates from other fields of study, or even among other age groups. This paper only tested for and showed that there are gender differences in sport volunteering motivations. Further research investigating reasons behind these dif-

ferences should be done to establish a more in-depth understanding of sport volunteering motivations. Lastly, studies on how such differences in motivation influence intention and actual volunteering behaviour for each gender are recommended.

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