



Creating and Evaluating a New Framework for Understanding Changes in Volunteer Administrative and Management Practices

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There is a lack of certainty around the necessary tasks of volunteer management. Investigating a new framework reveals the particular impact of third-party involvement and the need for further research.

Can differences in how volunteer practitioners vary in their approaches to management be adequately represented within a simple framework (see next page)?

An online survey of almost 400 Dutch volunteer managers reveals heightened acknowledgement of volunteer perspectives alongside the continued adoption of a human resources approach across management models. Shared value creation increases demands on managers, but further research is needed into both communication within these partnerships and practices in membership-based organisations.

#VolunteerManagement #VolunteerEngagement #Framework #Collaboration

Background & Context



- Traditional models of volunteer management have focussed on either the volunteer or the organisation and have followed the instrumental and hierarchical Human Resources Management approach.
- Building on three key previous research streams, the Volunteer Stewardship Framework ('VSF') focuses instead on volunteer engagement. It posits four forms of volunteer management practices according to the combination of:
 - (1) how volunteer energy is accessed ('**private**' or '**common**')
 - **private**: an organisation has direct access to volunteers via an existing affiliation
 - **common**: volunteers are previously unknown to the organisations
 - (2) how volunteers are guided in creating value
 - **unitary**: one organisation has responsibility for the volunteer
 - **shared**: this responsibility is shared
- The hypothesis that different management practices will exist in each of the four different form of management practice within the VSF was tested empirically through analysing managers' classification of the importance of various management practices.

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Take aways & Learnings



- The investigated managerial tasks (e.g., regular supervision and communication with volunteers) were incorporated to varying degrees across the four different models of management practice investigated, although there was consistent recourse to a Human Resources Management approach towards managing volunteers.
- Both forms of shared management practices also encompassed communication and marketing tasks relating to partnership working between home and host organisations. The centrality of inter-organisational communication within these practices requires additional research.
- The most notable difference in the importance assigned to differing management practices was found in the membership model, where volunteer managers were the least likely to judge the investigated practices as important (e.g., searching for organizations to place volunteers).
- The overlap in practices, challenges and opportunities between volunteer management in different organisations reveals the need for researchers and practitioners to consider management models collectively, rather than individually, as currently the case.
- Those working in a paid capacity were more likely to view the different management aspects investigated as important, suggesting professional managers are particularly likely to have adopted these tools.
- Future research would do well to take a more international approach, to include all parties involved in partnerships, and to further refine the management practices investigated.

		Volunteer Energy Access	
		Private	Common
Volunteer Guidance	Unitary	Membership	Service
	Shared	Secondary	Intermediary

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