

International Journal of Applied Management

Volume 2 Issue 2

A light gray world map is centered in the background of the page, showing the outlines of continents and major islands.

Decision Making Bodies of Small Sport Organizations: A Study on the Reasons for Voluntary Board Participation

Dimitra Papadimitriou (Ph.D),

Department of Business Management, University of Patras, Greece

Christiana Mavrommati,

Graduate Student of the University of Sheffield

Stella Leivadi (Ph.D),

College of Sport Sciences, Athens, Greece

ISSN 1742-2590

Abstract

This study explored the profile and basic characteristics of individuals who are willing to volunteer for non-profit Greek small organization boards. More specific, the study examined how much and why current boards members are currently involved in the leadership of the sport clubs and addressed two research questions: (1) how important are the five composite needs proposed by Inglis (1994) to the board of directors of Greek sport organizations? And (2) to what extent needs are differentiated based on the level of volunteer involvement and basic demographic variables? The sample consists of 210 respondents who served on the board of directors of 43 Greek horse-riding clubs-members of the Greek Equestrian Federation.

These results indicated that the majority of the board members demonstrate medium to high involvement in board activities and that the most highly rated reasons for voluntary participation in the sport boards were related to contribution. Also a significant effect for the extent of board involvement was evident only for two (i.e., growth, contribution) of the five needs constructs composing the Inglis' instrument. The results are discussed in relation to the practical implications for the volunteer recruitment and management of small voluntary sport organizations.

Keywords: Motivation, volunteer boards, sport organizations, non-profit organizations

Introduction

The majority of Greek sport organizations operate on a non-profit basis with the vital assistance of volunteers who serve in various roles including the board of directors. Much sport development activity is collective and depends on volunteer members who take on action and make things happen. Thus, the motivation, involvement and performance of the voluntary boards relate directly to the survival and effectiveness of the sport organizations. Understanding the membership of the board members in sport organizations is associated with knowing their needs, which drive them to provide voluntary administrative services. The relevant literature contains very few empirical studies exploring these needs and interpreting the voluntary involvement of board members. One of these is the work of Inglis (1994) who employed the four-factor scale of Searle (1989) to record and compare the needs (growth, responsibility, recognition, contribution) of board members and executive directors of single sport organizations. She found statistical support for the application of all factors examined and one more that of relations.

Historically, the voluntary sector constitutes the most significant part of a sport system in many countries, as it is only through the development of the voluntary clubs, a sport can be introduced and grows. As a result, the voluntary roles have been well documented in different countries, which consider the volunteer force as the cornerstone for the survival and growth of sport. Although sport is still high in the preferences of the volunteers to offer services, the voluntary sector of sport is facing serious problems and challenges. Amongst the most widely acknowledged include (1) the recent trend towards professionalization and rationalization of these organizations, which are associated with hiring paid staff and introducing structural changes, (2) the government cutbacks in funds for the voluntary sport sector and the

need for alternative sources of raising funds and energy, and (3) the changing value systems which reduce the capacity of the volunteers to commit themselves in active citizenship (Slack, 1997).

The European Association of Sport Management (EASM) acknowledging the qualitative and quantitative problems in this domain of sport, in 1999, devoted a special issue of the journal titled "volunteers and professionals in sport organizations". Reviewing this literature, we realized that while there has been considerable research on various aspects of volunteering, most of this refers to a non-European sporting setting. There is a need to promote a research agenda which extend the European sport management literature to different types of voluntary activity (i.e., events, sport associations, boards etc) in order to better understand the contemporary context within which volunteers are asked to operate and offer services. Therefore, if understanding of the function of a voluntary sports organization requires full appreciation of the important role of the volunteers then we need studies conducted in the context of the boards of voluntary sports organizations. Such empirical works can appear particular useful in improving the management and leadership of those organizations. In the light of the organization of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, there is no doubt that the significance of volunteers to the wider Greek sport systems is well placed and acknowledged. However, there is a considerable void in the relevant literature about the characteristics and the motivational factors, which explain board voluntarism. Therefore, the purpose of this research was set to explore the profile, the basic characteristics, the extent of involvement and the needs of individuals willing to volunteer on the boards of non-profit Greek sport organizations.

Research on Sport Volunteers

There has being continuing interest among sport and leisure researchers regarding the voluntary sector in general and the participation of individuals in voluntary activity. The following review of literature focuses on the basic characteristics of the sport-related volunteers adopting a cross-national approach. Moreover, some of the structural properties of the board members of sport organizations are described.

In the European context, voluntary services have a long history, with sport, recreation and leisure to represent a significant part. However, the research in these countries, in relation to different aspects of sport-related volunteerism, is only recently gradually accumulating. In Belgium, Slovenia, Greece and Great Britain, where evidence is available, the voluntary work constitutes the backbone of sports organizations and systems which are characterized by large numbers of volunteers, assuming various roles and responsibilities (Ambrozic, Bednarik, Petrovic and Sueman, 1999; De Knop, Martelaer, Heddegem, Wylleman, 1999; Shibli, Taylor, Nichols, Gratton and Kokolakis, 1999). Although this research has repeatedly confirmed the importance of this type of human resources in the above sport systems, various differences are reported in the involvement and the underlying facets of the voluntary contribution.

For example, in Belgium 200,000 volunteers are reported to be active in about 18,000 sports clubs, assuming technical and policy-making roles, without providing high educational achievements. However, qualitative results raise a few issues about the ability of sport clubs to attract and retain volunteers who are also parents of the athletes of these organizations (De Knop, De Martelaer, Van Heddegem, Wylleman, 1999). Findings have shown that only 12.2% of the parents decide to take active

roles in the management of the Belgium sports clubs and women are underrepresented compared to men (De Knop et al., 1999).

In United Kingdom, the voluntary sector is viewed as an important provider of sport and leisure services especially, in an era of tightening constraints on public expenditure. The LIRC survey (Shibli, et al., 1999) has described the volunteers on sports club committees to be more likely men than women, in the 35-59 age category, being in employment, with higher than average level of education. The same study estimated the average involvement of volunteers in sports club committees to be 4.6 hours per week. Interestingly, 'fulfilling the volunteers' needs' or 'the needs of members of the family' rather than altruistic reasons were reported as the major motives for volunteering in the governance of sport clubs in United Kingdom (Shibli et al., 1999).

Research conducted in Slovenia by Ambrozic, Bednarik, Petrovic and Sueman (1999) has shown that volunteers are considered an importance force for the survival of local sports organizations. They dominate the leadership of most Slovene sports or recreational organizations, undertaking roles in relation to managerial operations, medical and referring and coaching. However, for the most part they are not highly educated, as the majority of them have achieved only continuing education certificates (Ambrozic et al, 1999). As in other countries, the voluntary work in this country originates from a number of motives including 'the desire to help the athletes who can be their children' and the 'opportunity to obtain and use power'. Interestingly, the findings underline the dominant role of volunteers in the growing sport organizations which, however, appear to hinder the access of professional staff and to create unstable managing systems with numerous performance problems.

Although in other European countries volunteers seem to be drawn from various demographic categories, in Greece (Papadimitriou, 1995) and France (Malenfant, 1987) certain groups are dominating this particular type of sport involvement when referring to the leadership of sport organizations. Board members of Greek national sport organizations are predominantly men (97.6%) and more likely (68,3%) to be in the age category of 46 years and up (Papadimitriou, 1995), whereas in France, women represent only the 25% of the volunteers (estimated to be around 1 million) who offer their services approximately to 150.000 sports associations. The typical French volunteer belongs to the age category of 40 years old and above and s/he is motivated by altruism and the personal satisfaction derived from this type of work (Malenfant, 1987). The imbalance in the ratio of male to female appears in few sports systems and to some extent is anticipated. This is because male participants dominate the upper levels of the administrative and technical sport hierarchy of the sports systems of various countries. However, the under representation of women in the sport systems has been commented in a variety of sources in terms of its implications on the democratic procedures and performance of amateur sport organizations (Inglis, 1997; Hall, Cullen, & Slack, 1990; Macintosh & Beamish, 1988).

Another line of research has explored the needs and motives of the volunteers in sport organizations and events. The growing research in volunteer motivation records a number of reasons to how people decide to volunteer and suggests a few models as alternative conceptual maps of this agreeably multifaceted phenomenon (Caldwell & Andereck, 1994; Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Farrell, Johnston and Twynam, 1998; Papadimitriou & Karteroliotis, 2002). Although there are variations in volunteer motivation models (ranging from unidimensional models to four factor perspectives) at the microlevel, most of them are composed of intrinsic and extrinsic factors or altruistic and self-interested dimensions as all them pervading voluntary activity (Stebbins, 1996). Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991) have proposed a unidimensional

model drawn from the theory of commitment to welfare, which suggests that volunteers may act from a combination of motives, both altruistic and egoistic. However, evidence is provided which sustains that people offer voluntary services, which can be explained by multiple motivational dimensions. For example, similarly to Morrow-Howell and Mui (1989), the study of Caldwell and Andereck (1994) recorded purposive, solidary and material benefits. They also found that purposive was the most important category of motives for outdoor recreationists, followed by solidary and material benefits.

In the case of major sporting events, Farrell, Johnston and Twynam (1998) found that volunteer motivation could be conceptualized with a four-dimension model including purposive, solidary, external traditions and commitments motives. This research led also to the development of a 28-item scale, widely cited as Special Event Volunteer Motivation Scale (SEVMS). However, further statistical testing and exploration of the construct space of volunteer motivation based on SEVMS, in a sample of prospect volunteers for the Olympic games, led to the extraction of a three-dimensional structure with similar content to the SEVM scale (Papadimitriou & Karteroliotis, 2002).

A few research endeavors have focused on the volunteer motivation within the context of leadership of amateur sport organizations. As Inglis indicates (1994), knowing the needs of the board members is important not only for recruiting and retaining volunteers but also for understandings the leadership of amateur sport organizations and for probing into the dynamics of the volunteer-staff relationship. Based on the need theories of motivation, Searle (1989) developed a four dimensional instrument to measure board member needs in a municipal recreation context. These motivational constructs were growth, responsibility, contribution and recognition. Inglis (1994) extended further this inventory by adding the relations construct and testing the new instrument in the boards of provincial sport organizations in Canada. That particular study examined both level of importance and of fulfillment of the above five composite needs. Evidence was provided documenting the high importance placed by the board members on the examining needs and gender differences were detected in regards to the rankings of these needs (Inglis, 1994). The present work employed the particular reliable and valid instrument to measure the importance placed by the Greek board members on five composite needs. This study extends the above two works by investigating the application of the above instrument in a different cultural settings and by exploring differences based on the respondents' level of involvement on the boards of amateur sport organizations.

Boards in Sport Organizations

Theoretically, the composition, functions and interactions of committees and boards have been associated with a number of issues, which seem to influence the behavior and performance of voluntary sports organizations or clubs. There are various normative descriptions, which delineate the characteristics of well functioning board of directors which are directly applicable to sport associations (Houle, 1989; Connors, 1988; Knauft, Berger & Gray, 1991). Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that the inability of an organization to respond to individual needs, and provide a participative and democratic environment can cause abolition of voluntary members (Schein, 1988). The empirical findings are growing in relation to various aspects of the volunteers' behavior on boards or committees of sport organizations. The most frequent subjects of interest include the roles and needs of the boards members, the

structural attributes of sport organizations, and the perception differences on the influence in decision-making, organizational effectiveness and organizational commitment (Inglis, 1994; 1997; Cuskelly, et al., 1998; Papadimitriou & Taylor, 2000; Thibault, Slack, & Hinings, 1991).

More specifically, Inglis (1997) has reported findings, which clarify the roles of the boards of directors of sport organizations by exploring perceptual differences between board members and executive directors. Mission, planning, executive director, community relations and policy were rated as important roles associated with the leadership of amateur sport organizations. Interestingly, the ratings for the performance of the board on the four roles were lower than the ratings for importance (Inglis, 1997).

Although the evidence is not yet consistent, a few researchers have pointed out the growing professionalization and bureaucratization of the non-profit sport organization and their direct effect on the role of the volunteers serving at the boards and committees (Thibault, Slack, & Hinings, 1991; Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995). It has been indicated that changes in the internal structure and the processes of the Canadian sport organizations have confined the role of the volunteers in decision-making, raising questions of shared leadership between paid staff and volunteer boards. However, evidence associated with some European sport organizations failed to provide support for the above structural changes reconfirming the dominance of the simple, amateur structural arrangements (Papadimitriou, 2002). Whereas, concerns have been reported about the affect of these structural changes on the behavior and commitment of the volunteers, little research has been undertaken to this direction, in a sporting organizational context. An exception is the work of Cuskelly, et al., (1998) which reported that participation in the decision making, perceived committee functioning and satisfaction of the individual needs to be significantly related to the behavioral involvement and commitment of the volunteers.

Probing into the dynamic relationship between volunteers and professionals, Auld and Godbey, (1998) have empirically documented differences in their perceptions of influence in decision making at the board level, in Canadian National Sport Organizations. The two groups found not to perceive as reciprocal their level of influence across various decision areas. Professionals perceive to hold responsibility of the day-to-day operations and policies and volunteers in organizational planning, management and domestic liaisons. In the same line, the qualitative results of Papadimitriou (1995) illuminated further the differences in the perceptions of what constitute an effective board among various stakeholders of Greek National Sport Organizations. Although, volunteers play a central role in the leadership of these organizations, there is no clear picture of the normative antecedents, which make a board an effective decision-making mechanism in a sporting context.

The work of Cuskelly, McIntyre and Boag (1998) shed light on the critical antecedents of the commitment of volunteers serving in the boards of community-based sport organizations. The good functioning of the committees, in terms of open decision-making processes, resolving conflicts, and reevaluating group processes was found to influence volunteers to develop a stronger sense of commitment to the sport organizations. Furthermore, significant differences have been reported between paid staff and volunteer administrators in the levels of organizational commitment and involvement in sport (Cuskelly, Boag & McIntyre, 1999). Research has shown that volunteers compared to paid staff display lower level of continuance commitment, which may indicate weaker interest in the survival, and development of the sports organization (Cuskelly, et al., 1999).

Research Questions

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the profile and the basic characteristics of individuals who are willing to volunteer for non-profit sport organization boards. More specific, besides basic demographic characteristics, the study examined how much and why current boards members are currently involved in the leadership of the sport clubs. Additionally, the present study addressed also the following research questions:

1. how important are the five composite needs proposed by Inglis (1994) to the board of directors of Greek sport organizations?
2. to what extent needs are differentiated based on the level of volunteer involvement and basic demographic variables?

Method

Sample

The sample of the present study consisted of 210 respondents who served on the board of directors of 43 Greek horse riding clubs that are officially registered members of the Greek Equestrian Federation. The particular sport clubs were selected because of their pure voluntary nature of leadership and operations. A self-addressed packet with a cover letter, the research questionnaire and a pre-paid envelope was distributed to a total of 210 respondents who were asked kindly to fill it out. The response rate was 62% as 131 questionnaires were returned back and were appropriate for analysis. The sample ranged in age from 25 to 70, with the majority to belong to the age group of 36-55. In terms of gender, males consisted the 50,4% (66) of the total sample and 49,6% of the respondents were females.

Instrument

The survey instrument employed in this study consisted of two parts. The first part asked board members to rate, on a 5-point scale, the degree of importance placed to 17 statements describing various needs related to growth, responsibility, contribution, recognition and relations. The second part consisted of demographics and measures of voluntary involvement. This 17-item scale originates from the 21-item need inventory which was proposed by Inglis (1994), and it was gradually modified to accommodate the particular organizational setting. As mentioned above, the origins of the particular scale (Inglis, 1994) lie in the work of Carver (1990), Gilligan, (1982), Hardy (1990) and Houle (1989). The particular instrument was employed because it provided established face validity and acceptable reliability. However, since the scale was translated and slightly modified to apply in a Greek organizational context, pilot tests were undertaken to reassure internal consistency. The internal consistency of the total scale was estimated with Cronbach's alpha and it was found in agreement with the acceptable standards ($\alpha=.82$) (Stevens, 1992). The respective alpha reliability coefficients of the Greek version ranged from .65 to .84, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency for the scale and each of its sub-scales.

Results

For the analysis of the results, we computed basic descriptive statistics, factorial analysis, and a series of One-way ANOVA tests. Respondents were asked to indicate their extent of involvement on various board activities (i.e. participation in committees and board meetings, attendance to championships and total time devoted to the sport club). These results are presented in Table 1. The majority of the respondents (78.6%) served voluntarily in up to two committees and participated in maximum two boards meetings (80.1%) per month. Only 23% of the respondents stated that they keep constantly out of championships and 33.6% that devoted up to 15 hours monthly to the activities of the sport club. These results indicate that the majority of the board members demonstrate medium to high involvement in board activities.

Table 1: Volunteer involvement in board activities.

TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT	%	
TOTAL DEVOTED TIME/ MONTHLY		
Low (1- 15 hours)	33.6	44
Medium (16-32 hours)	34.4	45
High (36-150 hours)	32.1	42
PARTICIPATION IN COMMITTEES		
None	19.8	26
One-two	78.6	103
Three and more	1.5	2
PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS		
None	8.4	11
One-Two	80.1	105
Three and more	11.4	15
ATTENDANCE TO CHAMPIONSHIPS		
None/monthly	22.9	30
One-two/ monthly	42	55
Three and more/ monthly	35.2	46

Table 2 reports the means and standard deviations for the 17 items consisting the needs scale. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of these items in making the decision to volunteer on the board of their sport club. The three most important items were “to contribute to the youth’s needs” (M=3.92), “to improve things in the club” (M=3.74) and “to contribute to the solution of athletes’ problems” (M=3.73), while the three least important items were “the opportunity to learn new skills” (M=2.48), “to develop personal relationships” (M=2.88) and “the club acknowledges my contribution” (M=2.90). It should be noted that contribution items were rated higher than items related to personal growth. Also, none of the item was rated above 4.0 and below 2.0 on a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations on the 17 board member needs items (N=131).

Board member needs	M	SD	Board member needs	M	SD
Contribute to the youth	3.92	.96	Operate the club in the current economic conditions	3.05	1.04
Improve things in club	3.74	1.05	Help other board members	3.03	1.09
Contribute to the solution of athletes' problems	3.73	1.04	Others perceive my contribution important	2.94	1.07
Help to the sport development	3.66	1.08	Develop PR that can be capitalized professionally	2.90	1.17
Actively participate in non-profit sport	3.53	1.03	The club acknowledges my contribution	2.90	1.09
Successfully complete a task	3.47	1.03	Meet new people	2.88	1.14
Learn more about the sport	3.32	1.17	Develop personal relationships	2.86	1.19
Work with others	3.15	1.01	Opportunity to learn new skills	2.48	1.18
Desire for more responsibility	3.06	1.13			

The 17-item inventory was reduced into meaningful constructs, by using principal components analysis with Varimax rotation. This analysis (see Table 3) extracted five factors, which were labeled as *contribution*, *growth*, *relations*, *responsibility* and *recognition*. This factor structure explained 68,56% of the initial variance which, according to general specifications, is considered very satisfactory (Stevens, 1992). The comparable content of all extracted constructs with those subscales proposed by Inglis (1994), not only reconfirms the work of Inglis but also justifies the employment of the same terminology. Therefore, the first factor titled *relations* reflects the need of the board member to work with others and develop personal relations ($\alpha=.84$). The second factor contains needs that fit into the *growth* construct proposed by Inglis (1994). These needs relate to the development of new skills and to acquiring knowledge about the sport and its development ($\alpha=.74$). The third factor, titled *contribution* ($\alpha=.71$), illustrates the importance placed by the board members to make contribution to youth need in relation the sport and to participate actively in district sport development. The fourth factor, termed *responsibility* ($\alpha=.74$), reflects the need of the board members for assuming social responsibility and pursuing career opportunities. The last factor, termed recognition ($\alpha=.84$), contains needs that associates board involvement with external acknowledgement of voluntary contribution. Means and standard deviations were computed for each newly extracted factor and are presented in Table 4. These results indicate that boards members ranked higher their need for *contribution* (M=3.55) and *growth* (M=3.33) compared to needs reflecting *recognition* (M=2.91) and *responsibility* (M=2.97), which where rated as less influential for deciding to serve on sport organization boards.

Table 3. The factorial structure of the board member needs scale.

Factor	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Factor 1: Relations					
Opportunity to develop personal relationships	.845				
Opportunity to help other board members	.679				
Opportunity to meet new people	.845				
Opportunity to work with others	.772				
Factor 2: Growth					
Opportunity to learn new skills		.739			
Opportunity to successfully completion of a task		.603			
Opportunity to learn more about my sport		.582		.395	
Opportunity to improve things within the club		.700	.417		
Opportunity to help the development of the sport		.694			
Factor 3: Contribution					
Opportunity for active participation in district sport		.543	.546		
Opportunity to contribute to the solution of athletes' problems			.830		
Opportunity to contribute to the youth needs			.801		
Opportunity of operating the club in the current economic conditions	.353	.411	.363		
Factor 4: Responsibility					
Desire for more responsibility				.817	
Opportunity to develop relationships that I can capitalize professionally				.778	
Factor 5: Recognition					
The perception of others that my contribution is important					.888
The perception that my contribution is acknowledged by the club					.816
Eigenvalues	3,04	2,74	2,16	1,87	1,83
Variance explained (Total: 68,56%)	17,90	16,17	12,70	11,01	10,77

The One-way analysis of variance produced an overall significant effect for the extent of board involvement only for two of the five needs constructs (see Table 5). Significant mean differences were found among the three subgroups (with low, medium and high involvement measured in average time spent at the club) only for the constructs of *growth* ($F = 4.630$, $p < .01$) and *contribution* ($F = 3.87$, $p < .05$). Interestingly, no other significant differences were found while exploring the effect of board involvement (measured by participation in committees, championships, and board meeting) on the five needs constructs.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations for the five board member needs sub-scales.

Factors	Means	SD	Alpha
Contribution	3.55	.74	.71
Growth	3.33	.77	.74
Relations	3.01	.91	.84
Responsibility	2.97	1.03	.74
Recognition	2.91	1	.84

Table 5: Means and SD and one- way ANOVA results for the five factors by board involvement.

Factors	Low Involvement		Medium Involvement		High Involvement		F	Sig
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Growth	2.81	.83	3.10	.94	3.37	.75	4.63	.01**
Relations	2.78	.86	3.15	.83	3.01	1.03	1.89	.15
Contribution	3.45	.76	3.51	.72	3.85	.66	3.87	.02*
Responsibility	2.81	1.13	3.01	1.04	3.11	.93	.95	.39
Recognition	2.97	.87	2.90	1.10	2.89	1.06	.07	.93

**significant at $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Discussion

The results from the factorial analysis indicated that board member needs is a multidimensional construct, which could be explored to a great extent by a five-factor scale. These were relations, growth, contribution, responsibility and recognition (see Table 3). Though the groundwork of this work is attributed to Inglis (1994) and Searle (1989), who initially approached this particular construct as multidimensional one, the evidence from this study enhanced this view further. Individuals offer volunteer services as board members for a number of reasons or for seeking satisfaction for multiple needs.

The present results, though failed to reproduce, in content, the exact sub-scales suggested by Inglis (1994) and Searle (1989), they confirmed overall the validity and reliability of the above instrument in the Greek language and culture. The majority of the items in each extracted construct are similar to those proposed by Inglis (1994) and overall the particular model demonstrated acceptable statistical and conceptual attributes. The five factors identified in this study explained 68,56% of the total variance, which indicates, enhanced construct validity and adequate representation of the initial scale. It is important to note that the relations subscale, which was initially suggested by Inglis (1994) as relevant to the needs of the board member, remained unchanged in this structure. The fact that this particular dimension became the first factor to appear from the factor analysis suggested that relations is an important component to explain volunteering involvement in the boards of the Greek sport clubs.

The results also indicated that the most highly rated reasons for voluntary participation in the sport particular boards were related to contribution. More specifically, items such as opportunity to contribute to the youth, opportunity to improve things within the club, opportunity to solve athletes' problems, obtained the

highest ratings. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the least important reason was related to the opportunity to learn new skills, whereas among the next least rated reasons were the opportunity to develop personal relations and meet new people (see Table 1). These results are partially consistent with those described by Inglis (1994) which suggested that besides contribution and growth, some recognition related needs are considered important for volunteer involvement in boards. The higher ratings of the board members on contribution items may relate to the fact that most Greek board members are also parents of athletes or previous athletes and thus view their role on the board as a means to promote the needs of the youth or athletes. This is also associated with dominant views in the Greek culture, which stress the importance of sport as a social-educational tool for young individuals, and talented athletes, which has to be supported by older. Therefore, these differences can be attributed to cultural deviations and to perceptions of board activity and benefits.

When the total sample was spitted into members with low, medium and high involvement in voluntary sport boards, the analyses of variance revealed significant differences for the factor means of growth and contribution. Volunteer board members, who spend the most time on board activities, placed higher levels of importance on the needs of contribution and growth. Similar results have also reported by Cuskelly et al (1998) which suggested that volunteer administrators who demonstrate higher levels of organizational commitment in community-based sport organizations, place also higher level of importance on the benefits of altruism. The present findings were also consistent with those of Inglis (1994) as far as this concerns the low levels of importance, which were placed by board members on the needs constructs of relations, recognition and responsibility. These ratings were also found irrespective of the extent to which board members were involved to the administrative activities of the sport club. This may indicate that intensive involvement in the administration of non-profit sport clubs might be interpreted more by the need of the volunteers to develop skills and knowledge and to provide opportunities for sport participants and less as a result of seeking personal growth, recognition and responsibility.

Nevertheless, the differences on the ratings of the needs between low and highly involved board members deserve further exploration in order to be fully understood. Probing into alternative board member needs and establishing associations with volunteer roles, motivation, organizational variables and commitment can represent a promising avenue for future research. The governance of the voluntary sport clubs represents one of the most important components of the efficient and effective operation of voluntary sport organizations. However, as Cuskelly et al., (1998, p 200) concluded, "... the development of organizational commitment amongst volunteers in sport is a complex process that requires further exploration". Therefore, such explorations should take into account the peculiar internal environment of the sport clubs in terms of structures, processes and behaviors (Cuskelly et al., 1998).

The findings of this study, by delineating the needs for board involvement have important implications for board development. Volunteers are not remunerated for their services and their extent of involvement and commitment develops around values and needs. The five dimensions verified by this study, represent board member needs, which should be taken into consideration for developing efficient strategies to enhance the membership and the functionality of the voluntary boards of sport clubs. Research wise, the 17-item five-dimension scale for board member needs presented in this work represents a valid and reliable instrument for use in studies that explore the relationship between boards member needs and a variety of behavioral and organizational outcomes. These constructs will allow continued

investigation on how board member needs influence organizational and behavioral outcomes in the context of sport clubs. Furthermore, the whole instrument represents a tool to explore and understand the multiple roles of board members, and how role enactment influences board and organizational competences in a sporting context (Widmer, 1993).

However, if the ultimate purpose of this stream of research is to understand the nature of the dynamic board in sport, future research is required on this multi-dimensional scale of board member needs. Given that one of the limitations of this work is lack of generalizability of this instrument across all Greek sport clubs, the 17-item scale should be administered to additional samples of board volunteers from different sports. The outcome of these replications can test further the psychometric properties of this particular conceptual structure and expand the applicability of the instrument. Furthermore, an additional testing of this scale can be achieved by conducting a longitudinal study on board member needs aiming at establishing evidence of predictive validity. For example, establishing correlations between the dimensions of the scale and other measures of board members behavior (i.e., organizational commitment, length of volunteer involvement, roles assumed) could provide further proof of validity.

References

- Ambrozic, F., Bednarik, J., Petrovic, K., & Sueman, R. (1999). Model characteristics of voluntary sport organizations in Slovenia. *European Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 28-38.
- Auld, C. J., & Godbey, G. (1998) Influence in Canadian national sport organizations: Perceptions of Professional and volunteers. *Journal of Sport Management*, 12(1), 20-38.
- Caldwell, L. L., & Andereck, L. K. (1994). Motives for initiating and continuing membership in a recreational-related voluntary association. *Leisure Sciences*, 16, 33-44.
- Cnaan, R. A., & Goldberg-Glen, R.S. (1991). Measuring motivation to volunteer in human services. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, 27, 269-284.
- Carver, J. (1990). *Boards that make a difference: A new design for leadership in nonprofit and public organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cuskelly, G., McIntyre, N., & Boag A. (1998). A longitudinal study of the development of organizational commitment amongst volunteer sport administrators. *Journal of Sport Management*, 12(3), 181-202.
- Cuskelly, G., Boag A., & McIntyre, N. (1999). Differences in organisational commitment between paid and volunteer administrators in sport. *European Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 39-61.
- De Knop, P., De Martelaer, K., Van Heddegem, L., & Wylleman, P. (1999). Parents as volunteers in sports clubs. *European Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 104-112.
- Farrell, M. J., Johnston, E. M., & Twynam, D. G. (1998). Volunteer motivation, satisfaction, and management at an elite sporting competition, *Journal of Sport Management*, 12 (3), 288-300.
- Houle, C.O. (1989). *Governing boards: Their nature and nurture*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Knoke, D. (1981). Commitment and detachment in voluntary associations. *American Sociological Review*. 46, 141-156.
- Morrow-Howell, N., & Mui, A. (1989). Elderly volunteers: Reasons for initiating and terminating services. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 13, 21-34.
- Stebbins, A. R. (1996) *Volunteering: A serious Leisure perspective*. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 27 (2), 211-224.
- Stevens, J. (1992). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Thibault, L., Slack, T., & Hinings, C.R. (1991). Professionalism, structures, and systems: The impact of professional staff on voluntary organizations. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 26 (2), 83-99.

Kikulis, L., Slack, T., & Hinings, C.R. (1995). Does decision-making make a difference? Patterns of change within Canadian national sport organizations, *Journal of Sport Management*, 9, 273-299.

Malenfant, C., (1987). Sociabilities and volunteering in sports associations in France. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 22(4), 281-293.

Inglis, S., (1994). Exploring Volunteer Board Member and Executive Director Needs: Importance and Fulfillment. *Journal of Applied Recreation Research*, 19(3), 171- 189.

Inglis, S. (1997). Roles of the board in amateur sport organizations, *Journal of Sport Management*, 11(2), 160-176.

Papadimitriou, D. (1995). The Organisational Effectiveness of Greek National Sports Organisations: An Empirical Application of the Multiple Constituency Approach. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. The University of Sheffield, UK.

Papadimitriou, D., & K. Karteroliotis (2002). Motivation to volunteer in the Olympic games: Testing the special event volunteer motivation scale. Paper presented in the 10th European Congress on Sport Management, Finland. 4-7 September.

Papadimitriou, D. & Taylor, P. (2000). Organizational effectiveness of Hellenic National sports organizations: A multiple constituency approach. *Sport Management Review*, 3(1), 23-46.

Papadimitriou, D. (2002). "Amateur structures and their effect on performance: The case of Greek voluntary sport clubs. *Managing Leisure*, 7(4): 205-219.

Shibli, S., Taylor, P., Nichols, G., Gratton C., & Kokolakis, T. (1999). The characteristics of volunteers in UK sport clubs. *European Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 10-27.

Illesley, P. J., (1990). *Enhancing the Volunteer Experience: New Insights on Strengthening Volunteer Participation, Learning and Commitment*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.

Searle, M. S., (1989). Measuring recreation board members' needs. *Recreation Research Review*, 14(3), 41- 50.

Widmer, C., (1993). Role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload on boards of directors of nonprofit human service organizations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 22 (4), 339-356.