

A total of 72 volunteers decided to fill out the survey. Among them, 38 were women and 32 were men, while 2 volunteers did not provide any information. The average age of all volunteers was 25 years (men 26,97 ± 8,7; women 24.1 ± 5,8) (Figure 1).

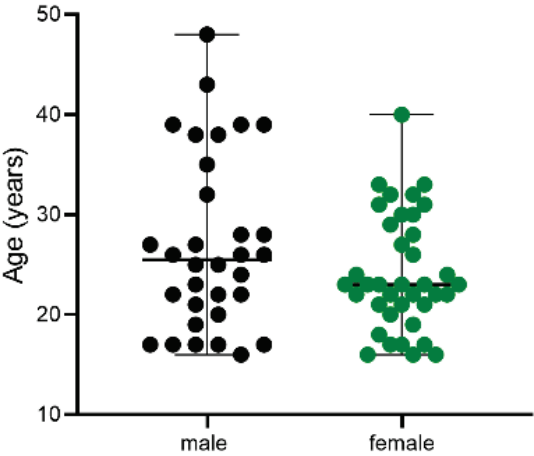


Figure 1. Age distribution between the male and female active volunteers that filled the survey during the project lasting

The main part of the survey consisted of a series of questions related to the main motivation for becoming a volunteer. When applicants were asked for the main reasons for volunteering, the following responses emerged (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The answers within the survey related to the main motivation reasons were graded at scale from 1-7 (1 lowest importance, 7 highest importance). Answers were divided into three groups, based on the high (green), intermediate (grey) and low (red) grade ranking (N=73).

Two highest ranking responses are shown below:

(a) Volunteering is a way to make new friends

(b) I can do something for a cause that is important to me

(a) There were no significant differences between men and women in the responses to the questions offered. However, age-specific responses differed slightly between groups (15-20, 21-30, and 31-older) (Figure 3).

As expected, the motives of the youngest group are primarily focused on making new friends and gaining experience that could be useful later in life. In addition, volunteering in the beach handball projects included in this study allowed the young volunteers to overcome certain personal problems they were struggling with. All of these important answers to the questions could help in improving future strategies to engage volunteers specifically interested in beach handball to participate in future beach handball projects

Strategies to engage the younger volunteers should include additional content within the projects and future tournaments that provide an environment for further socialization and meetings with the other groups important to each tournament organization (officials, volunteers, players, tournament organizers, etc.). Socialization events among youth are of great importance, as well as additional content that can be used during volunteers' free time.

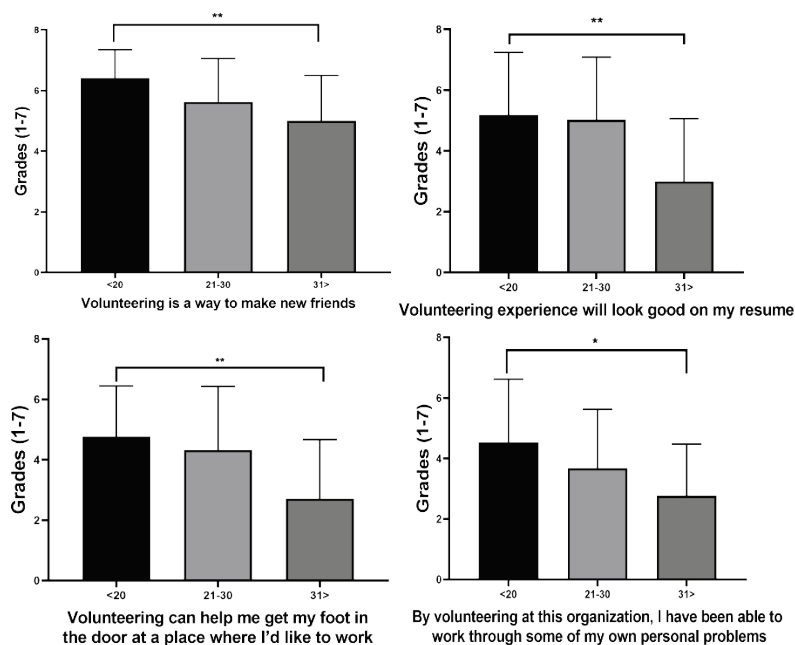


Figure 3. Answers among the age-related groups (<20 years, N=17 black bars; 21-30, N=37, grey bars; 31+ N=17) Mann-Whitney test (* p<0.05; ** p<0.005)

(b) Unlike the younger volunteers who have a higher motivation to participate in this type of meeting, the real challenge is to attract older volunteers, especially those who have been involved with beach handball events in the past. The specific environment and tasks during each beach

handball project could be more easily organized if experienced volunteers could be involved more. The response b) reveal the needs of volunteers in terms of what they find valuable during their volunteering, and the future strategy for developing beach handball volunteering should be based on these responses. Indeed, a high level of commitment to the goals that are important to each individual relates to specialized and specific handball-oriented needs of volunteers helping to promote the sport itself as a valuable goal. A comparison of the volunteers of different age shows that this goal is very important, especially for older volunteers aged 30 and above (Figure 4a), and the future strategy should be precisely focused on attracting and retaining older and thus more active volunteers, as they have specific knowledge about the sport itself.

Older volunteers need new ways to maintain their interest in beach handball events. The most important reason for volunteering for the older group was related with the personal causes important for each person separately. When volunteers responded to the question and were grouped into different age categories, a slight increase in ranking toward the older group was noted, which was in contrast to most of the questions asked previously (figure 4b). Although there were no statistically significant changes, the trend toward older volunteers and the representation of the inner cause/force that is a primary driver for the more experienced volunteers is a good starting point for future direction strategies in attracting older volunteers.

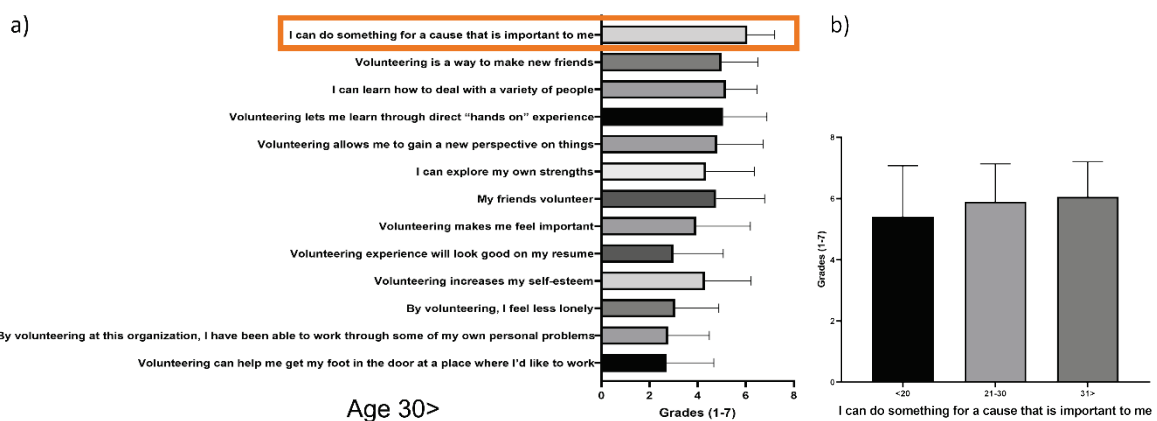


Figure 4. a) The survey responses to the questions related to the volunteers older than 30 years. b) Summarized comparison of the answer related with the participant's motivation among different age groups.

One of the main reasons why participants older than 30 years volunteer for beach handball projects is the motive of self-actualization. In other words, they are already self-accomplished people and one of their main motives is to support the cause that is important to them as individuals. Thus, there is an urgent need to develop strategies to attract these types of volunteers to future beach events.

Regarding the satisfaction with volunteering at the beach events in this project, it can be noted that the average grade is higher compared to the questions related to the reasons for volunteering.

In other words, the volunteers are satisfied with the experience during the project period. Their average scores on three questions related to satisfaction are shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Volunteering satisfaction expressed through a questions and answers section.

Consistent with this finding, 86.1% of volunteers indicated that they would volunteer at the same event again next year. 2.8% indicated that they would not volunteer at all, while 11.1% indicated that they would prefer to volunteer at another organization.

Since one of the project goals was to relate the impact of fair play and its importance within the sport where it is the main rule (and thus could be used as a great platform and promotion in recruiting new volunteers), we wanted to explore how volunteers express and feel about fair play and what this expression means to them (Figure 6).

As expected, **mutual respect and respect of any kind** was one of the most frequently used words in the responses. Other important answers, such as positive mood and equal distribution of tasks, could also be used when planning future actions to recruit volunteers. Getting to know all participants is obviously very important for volunteers.

Even though this was one of the few negative responses, it gives a good perspective on how we need to direct our future activities.

More events that promote social interaction among participants are extremely important for everyone involved. Beach handball could be a great platform to achieve this because the atmosphere before, during and after the games is very different from traditional sports like indoor handball. Tolerance and good relations between officials and players are well implemented through the rulebook and there are really rare incidents where both sides were part of a major incident. This type of behavior is approved/appreciated and has become a normal social pattern within the beach handball community. What needs to be done is to introduce the volunteers to the rest of the event participants to familiarize the players and officials with the tasks required to achieve the goal or organize the beach handball event. Further familiarization could be a potential step forward that could benefit all parties involved in the organization of a beach handball event. In other words, players and officials need to become aware of volunteer's duties in order to appreciate more the effort required for their better experience during the event.