

## Recruitment and retention in not-for-profit organisations

Hopkins, Benjamin; Dowell, David

DOI:

[10.1108/ER-10-2020-0450](https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-10-2020-0450)

License:

Creative Commons: Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs (CC BY-NC-ND)

*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Hopkins, B & Dowell, D 2021, 'Recruitment and retention in not-for-profit organisations: tailored strategies for younger and older volunteers', *Employee Relations*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-10-2020-0450>

[Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal](#)

### General rights

Unless a licence is specified above, all rights (including copyright and moral rights) in this document are retained by the authors and/or the copyright holders. The express permission of the copyright holder must be obtained for any use of this material other than for purposes permitted by law.

- Users may freely distribute the URL that is used to identify this publication.
- Users may download and/or print one copy of the publication from the University of Birmingham research portal for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research.
- User may use extracts from the document in line with the concept of 'fair dealing' under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (?)
- Users may not further distribute the material nor use it for the purposes of commercial gain.

Where a licence is displayed above, please note the terms and conditions of the licence govern your use of this document.

When citing, please reference the published version.

### Take down policy

While the University of Birmingham exercises care and attention in making items available there are rare occasions when an item has been uploaded in error or has been deemed to be commercially or otherwise sensitive.

If you believe that this is the case for this document, please contact [UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk](mailto:UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk) providing details and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate.

# **Recruitment and Retention in Not-for-Profit Organisations: Tailored Strategies for Younger and Older Volunteers**

## **Introduction**

A recent special issue of *Employee Relations* examining the “Dynamics of Employment Relations and HRM in Nonprofit Organizations” (Akingbola *et al.*, 2020) investigated aspects such as new public management (O’Rourke, 2020) and governance (Diaz and Rees, 2020). However, there remains little investigation of HRM practices such as recruitment and retention in not-for-profit organisations (Akingbola, 2013; Akingbola *et al.*, 2020), despite researchers recognising the purposeful nature of work without paid reward (Bartram *et al.*, 2017). Given the variety of essential roles in the not-for-profit sector, it is of importance for not-for-profit organisations, volunteers themselves, and also the wider economy, that the specific motivations of these volunteers are better understood. This is particularly important given that one of the key rewards, namely pay, is absent from this type of relationship, and thus the influence of other types of reward must be considered.

Importantly for this study, not-for-profits are affected by contextual constraints linked to age. Two contemporary trends observed are firstly an ageing population in many economies (for example in the United Kingdom, Japan, and Australia), and secondly high youth unemployment (for example across the European Union, but particularly in nations such as Greece and Spain), which together influence the pool of available volunteers. In this context, age becomes particularly important, as there is a large pool of potential youth volunteers who hope to develop skills, but also an increasing number of older community members who volunteer, who are often retired and very experienced. The business-like management of

volunteers (De Clerck *et al.*, 2020; Maier *et al.*, 2014; Young, 2020) and shortages of volunteers (Bussell and Forbes, 2002) require effective strategies to recruit and retain these scarce resources (Ridder *et al.*, 2012). This research therefore investigates motivations and rewards sought by younger people, core-age workers, and older people in order to understand recruitment and retention of volunteers. The findings indicate that a differentiated strategy is needed, as generic recruitment and retention strategies do not fit all volunteer groups. Younger people are influenced by their transition into paid employment, while the older group are transitioning out of employment. By determining differences in motivations to volunteer it is possible to create tailored recruitment strategies, whilst consideration of differences in preferences for rewards allows for development of tailored retention strategies for a diverse pool of potential volunteers and current volunteers.

### **Volunteering and not-for-profit organisations**

Not-for-profit organisations exist in an extremely competitive environment (Dolincar and Lazarevski, 2009), and as such these organisations have increasingly been looking to adopt business strategies as seen in the for-profit sector (Studer, 2016). A key area in which they can do this is through more sophisticatedly developed human resource management techniques (Bartram *et al.*, 2017). However, Cooper *et al.* (2020:1087) recently noted in their systematic literature review of research in non-profit HRM that “We were surprised to see so few articles on NPO recruitment and/or selection of employees during the past four years.” By comparison, research in for-profit organisations over many years has led to complex models of both recruitment and retention investigating the motivations of both younger (Taylor, 2007) and older workers (Henkens *et al.*, 2008). This has been developed mainly in larger organisations, with work on SMEs being less well developed (Nolan and Garaven, 2015).

Kataria *et al.* (2020) note the importance of articles investigating both recruitment and retention in journals such as *Employee Relations*. However, recent studies of recruitment and selection (for example, Prince and Kabst, 2019; Rieucan, 2015) and retention (for example Agus and Selvaraj, 2020; Azeem *et al.*, 2020) continue to be mainly based in a for-profit environment. Importantly, Cnaan and Cascio (1999) note fundamental differences between paid and unpaid work, suggesting that these models of recruitment and retention need substantial development when being transferred from the for-profit sector to the not-for-profit sector. Crucially, Johansen and Sowa (2019:549) state that “Human resource management (HRM) has been shown to impact organizational performance, but more research is needed on particular human resource (HR) practices in nonprofits and their effect on performance”. As such, a key aim of this article is to establish models for recruitment and retention of volunteers in the absence of pay as a reward. In particular, differing motivations across three age groups (young people, core workers, and older people) are established, and differences in preference for rewards investigated.

### *Motivations to Volunteer*

Consideration of motivations to volunteer allows for the creation of tailored recruitment strategies. In general it is believed that people are driven to volunteer by several motivations and needs (Finkelstien, 2009). An individual may use a combination of motives, and the combination may also change over time (Grönlund *et al.*, 2011). In terms of sociopsychological motives, both altruistic as well as egoistic elements may be driving the individual to volunteer; this would be a multidimensional combination which is unique to the individual (Studer and Schnurbein, 2012). These can be considered as personal and

subjective, and seen as a readiness to respond to certain stimuli (Wilson, 2012). The well-established construct of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators has previously also been explored (Author B, 2019; Suh, 2018). When considering volunteering, an example of an intrinsic motivation to volunteer is satisfaction, or desire to feel useful, whereas an extrinsic motivation might be a desire to increase social recognition (Antoni, 2009).

### *Rewards for Volunteering*

In addition to the motivations as to why individuals may undertake voluntary work, it is important to investigate the rewards that they receive and/or pursue in line with their motivations. If a person is in a mandatory programme of volunteering, they are less likely to show positive intentions to volunteer again in the future (Henderson *et al.*, 2014), so understanding rewards to increase the intention to volunteer again is essential (Ihm and Baek, 2020). Consideration of desired rewards for volunteering allows for the creation of tailored retention strategies. By definition, those who work on a voluntary basis and who are not paid for their work do not receive what would be seen as the most frequently used reward for work – pay. However, further relational and intangible rewards, particularly related to the work environment and to learning and development, are valued by volunteers.

The rewards for people who volunteer can be broadly categorised into economic (coupons, prizes, rebates), social (praise, commendation) or other (certificates, feedback) ‘reinforcers’ which aim to encourage/discourage repeat behaviours and in the case of volunteering to thank those involved (Andreasen and Kotler, 2008; Walk *et al.*, 2019), and which should broadly mirror the reasons why people volunteer (Clary *et al.*, 1998). The rewards mechanism works

along the psychological approach that reinforcement will reward or punish certain behaviours, with the aim being to encourage repeat, long-term volunteering (Andreasen and Kotler, 2008). These rewards may be of different value for different groups – for example, we may find that younger workers value the opportunity to use voluntary work as an opportunity to learn new skills, whereas older people value the involvement of working within a group of people. We turn now to investigate both motivations and rewards differentiated by age (John et al., 2011), investigating first the case of young people.

### *Young people and volunteering*

A young worker is defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) as a worker between the ages of 16 and 24 (ILO, 2011). For this group, unemployment levels across many economies of the world have been described as a crisis (ILO, 2013) following the economic downturn of 2008, and early evidence suggests that it is sectors with high proportions of younger workers that are being disproportionately badly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. In advanced economies, the number of young people unemployed rose by around 25% following the financial crisis (ILO, 2013). Across the OECD prior to the pandemic, the youth unemployment rate of 11.1 % was higher than the average of 5.2% (OECD, 2020), although this had declined in the last three years from 13.9% (OECD, 2020). In the US, the youth unemployment rate of 8.6% is again higher than the national average of 3.6%. Within the EU, the UK youth unemployment rate is higher than the average at 11.3% as compared to 3.8%. Spain and Greece are performing particularly badly, with average unemployment rates of 14.1% and 17.4%, and youth unemployment rates of 34.4% and 39.9% (OECD, 2020). These have again declined from youth unemployment rates three years previously of 48.4% and 49.8% respectively (OECD, 2020). These figures are all

likely to worsen again, however, following the Covid-19 pandemic. During the periods of unemployment these young people are experiencing, they may wish to develop skills in order to aid in transitions into paid employment. Voluntary work can give them an opportunity to do this. By providing this opportunity, a non-profit organisation can receive labour from these young people in return for non-economic benefits.

Periods of work experience have historically been important for young people as the start of their working lives are hampered by a lack of skill development and work experience. Shildrick *et al.* (2012) note that there is often a long-term churn between employment and unemployment at the start of a person's working life. Periods of unemployment can be used to develop skills, perhaps via a training course, or through an unpaid or voluntary role. When in employment, the initial jobs that young people do are often low skilled, low paid, low quality and on a temporary basis (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012). As a result, there is little or no opportunity to develop skills to move into permanent roles. This makes skill and experience development during periods of unemployment particularly important, with voluntary work providing such opportunities. In a qualitative study of young people's experiences of unpaid work and, in particular, self-initiated work experience, Simms *et al.* (2013:49) find that "they found these experiences very helpful and were acutely aware that they were developing the skills that future employers would require, although they were often quite vague about what those skills were. They were very positive about these experiences even where they had concluded that they did not wish to pursue a career in that area." Younger people can, therefore, clearly benefit from volunteering, and this is a valuable potential pool of volunteers for not-for-profit organisations.

### *Older people and volunteering*

Despite the mutual benefits of sourcing younger volunteers, many not-for-profits continue to rely on older volunteers who are often retired. This means that the numbers of older volunteers are proportionally much higher than younger ones (Broadbridge and Horne, 1994; Hank and Erlinghagen, 2014; Ingen and Dekker, 2011). Although these groups both provide valuable resource for not-for-profits, we may find differences in their motivations to volunteer, and therefore a need for differing recruitment and retention strategies. For example, Birkett (2013) notes that retirees see their change in employment status as an opportunity to do voluntary work (see also Duberley *et al.*, 2014). Additionally, competing demands for time for this group are not necessarily paid employment, as we see with the core age group, but social and caring responsibilities. Moving into retirement can challenge identity and lead to new lifestyles (Barnes and Parry, 2004). Activities undertaken such as volunteering may help retiring older people form new identities or constitute a continuation of a career (Cook, 2015; Schau *et al.*, 2009). As such, not only in retirement but also in the lead up to retirement, we could see aspects of identity as important for older volunteers.

Although retirement represents a change in status, retirees may wish to undertake volunteer work that is similar to their previous paid work in order to both draw upon this experience, and also to ensure a continuous identity (Ibarra, 1999; Sargent *et al.*, 2013). In contrast to young people's issues, we could therefore expect a different set of motivations and rewards for older volunteers. Given that older cohorts are more likely to be transitioning out of work, it is less likely they will be motivated and rewarded by work related aspects including career and economic considerations. For older adults, altruistic and religious values, physical health, and frequent contact with friends are all linked to volunteering engagement (Dury *et*



*al.*, 2015). For older adults the benefits derived from volunteering include increased levels of subjective health when compared to non-volunteers (Li *et al.*, 2013).

### *The changing donation landscape*

The Covid-19 pandemic has created significant changes to both the supply of and demand for voluntary workers, with differing impacts along the age spectrum. Importantly, these are not static changes to the donation landscape, and these are likely to endure for many years. This is also underlined by the need for charities to provide more in terms of public services given public finances in countries such as the UK (Mohan and Bennett, 2019). This therefore requires a sophisticated approach to recruitment and retention of volunteers. Firstly, the predicted ongoing recession and high levels of unemployment are likely to be most keenly felt by young people. The pandemic has caused lasting damage to sectors with higher proportions of younger workers, such as high street retail, leisure and hospitality (UK Government, 2021). This will in turn lead to high levels of youth unemployment, and a potential need to reskill to seek employment in different sectors. Previous unemployment crises have led to young people seeking new areas in which to train, and a desire for these skills to be certificated (Lailoti, 2019). At the other end of the age spectrum, older workers are more likely to take advantage of voluntary severance packages offered by employers wishing to reduce their workforce, and thus to move into an unforeseen early retirement. These new entrants to volunteering, who may be unaware of the potential benefits, must be targeted by not-for-profits in order to realise the potential mutual gains of volunteering.

Given the unequal health impacts of the pandemic, it is older people who are more likely to require assistance as provided by the third sector. However, there has been a significant shift in the way that this kind of help is delivered, with the growth of new organisations who have filled specific new gaps in provision, for example delivering shopping to those self-isolating. In the case of financial donation, this is found to have increased to neighbours, friends, and family as opposed to more formal charity donation (Authors, 2021). Resource scarcity is compounded for smaller organisations who are found to receive lower levels of financial donation (Ressler *et al.*, 2020). ‘Giving’ during the pandemic has therefore been characterised by greater levels of informality, both in the giving of money but also through the giving of time to local and informal providers. These smaller organisations will face differing recruitment and retention challenges because, as seen in the for-profit sector, these organisations frequently lack human resource experience or expertise (Nolan and Garaven, 2016).

These changes are likely to endure as smaller providers who dealt with the initial health issues of the pandemic develop to address the economic and social issues caused by both the health and economic harm. As such, it is useful to draw also upon HRM literature related to recruitment and retention in SMEs. These are characterised by higher levels of informality in their HR processes (for example Timming, 2011), which are often conducted by people in the organisation without specific HR experience or knowledge (Behrends, 2007). Importantly, Nolan and Garavan (2015) note that literature related to HR practices in SMEs is not as developed as in large organisations. Additionally, it has been noted that HR practices from large organisations may not be easily transferred to SMEs because of the levels of informality in those organisations (Nolan and Garavan, 2016; Wapshott *et al.*, 2014). Similarly, practices related to recruitment and retention as found in large charitable organisations such as the Red

Cross or WWF may not be suitable for smaller organisations in the voluntary sector (Smith and Grove, 2017).

Smaller organisations in the not-for-profit sector are likely to face similar issues to SMEs in the for-profit sector, particularly related to recruitment and retention. For example, newly formed organisations in the for-profit sector are noted as providing lower levels of reward (Nyström and Elvung, 2015), while Nyström (2019) notes the difficulties that new and smaller organisations face when attempting to recruit new starters. Additionally, it may be that the expectations placed on volunteers within these smaller organisations are similar to those expectations placed on workers within smaller organisations in the for-profit sector. For example, Stewart and Knowles (2000) find that for-profit SMEs expect immediate contributions from new hires, even on graduate schemes for young workers, and this may also be the case in smaller third sector organisations who concentrate on immediate results rather than long-term development and retention. As such, in developing recruitment and retention strategies we incorporate here findings from across the for-profit HRM literature in order to acknowledge the variety of firms in the third sector.

### **Research Aim**

Given the drive of organisations in the not-for-profit sector towards more business-like practices, particularly in the context of high youth unemployment and altered transitions into retirement, this research investigates how people may differ in their motivations to volunteer, and rewards sought from volunteering. We postulate that youth motivations are aligned with the need to find paid work and that, by comparison, the older group of 65+ years will be

concerned with life fulfilment and enrichment. By using age segments, a differentiated model of recruitment can be generated. Further, this research aims to investigate the influence of age on attitudes towards rewards and benefits, thus allowing for the development of tailored retention strategies. By investigating volunteering with a focus on different age groups, we may be able to better understand rewards and motivations in greater depth. For example, employers report that some form of work experience often aids young people with transitions from unemployment into a job (Handy *et al.*, 2009; Jones, 2000). By comparison, we expect social rewards and public recognition to be more important for the older group (Cook, 2015). Integrating literature from the for-profit sector related to both large organisations and SMEs, we develop tailored recruitment and retentions strategies for younger and older volunteers.

## **Methodology**

To investigate the motivations of people to undertake voluntary work, secondary data about volunteering is used and analysed with ANOVA and Chi-square. The research uses data from the Citizenship Survey, which is a national survey conducted in the UK (n=16,966). The survey was run every two years from 2001, and then yearly from 2008, by the Department for Communities and Local Government to assess, amongst other things, community engagement. The data has been used for a range of research purposes, from volunteering (Mohan and Bennett, 2019) to diversity and health outcomes (Russell Jonsson and Demireva, 2018). The sample is designed to be representative of the UK population, and to give broad insights into the population and its behaviours and views. The analysis uses three age category variables to identify motivation and reward variations; these categories being a youth group of those aged up to 24, a core, and an older group of those 65 years and

over. The analysis in this paper concentrates on the development of recruitment and retention strategies for the oldest and youngest group, comparing them both to each other and also to the core group. An alternative approach to using age cohorts would be to use a lifecycle, such as that utilised by Bussell and Forbes (2003). However, lifecycles in general have been criticised for various reasons (for example, Day, 1981; Lambkin and Day, 1989), and their problematic implementation makes them unviable for research such as this.

The two methods of analysis which are used to investigate the research questions are ANOVA and Chi-square. ANOVA and Chi-square techniques allow the understanding of relationships between variables and group membership (Hair *et al.*, 2010). ANOVA assesses group differences of variance (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Using a single dependent variable (group membership) ANOVA indicates if the mean variance for the independent variables is significantly different (Hair *et al.*, 2010). The dependent variable is categorical while the multiple independent variables are continuous. Chi-square testing (contingency tables) is used to assess significant relationships between categorical variables (Malhotra *et al.*, 2012); that is, to establish if variables are significantly different for each group included (Malhotra *et al.*, 2012). These techniques allow the researchers to understand volunteering motives and differences amongst age categories.

## **Results**

The sample includes 16,966 people who were selected to represent the broader UK demographic. The youth component of the sample consists of 1863 people, which is 11.0% of the sample. The older group of those aged 65 and over is made up of 3293 people,

equivalent to 19.4% of the sample. For the total sample 9135 people (53.8%) were female. Amongst younger people, this was 977 people (52.4%), and in the older group this was 1828 people (55.5%). Firstly, the analysis involves self-reported ‘pro-social behaviours’ (including volunteering, see Table 1) from the last 12 months. For pro-social behaviours there are a number of differences between the cohorts of interest and the core group. In each case there were significant differences between the three categories used for the estimate ( $p < 0.01$ ). When comparing younger people and the older group, there were significant differences for each of the pro-social behaviours ( $p < 0.01$ ), apart from *Formal volunteering in last 12 months* which indicated no difference between the two groups ( $p > 0.01$ ). The most striking differences between younger people and older groups are the extent of informal volunteering and employer volunteering. It is the informal volunteering that also aids the larger *Formal or informal volunteering in 12 months* for the younger category. The other area for consideration is workplace volunteering, but given employment rates this is not surprising.

### **Insert Table 1: Pro-Social Behaviour by Age Group**

In terms of understanding hours given to formal and informal volunteering, differences were analysed using ANOVA, with the results summarised in Table 1. For the younger people 5.69 hours, for the core group 6.60 hours, and for the older group 9.30 hours were given in the last 12 months to formal volunteering. When comparing the youth and older groups (difference = 3.61 hours), this difference in hours is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). For informal volunteering, the mean time given was 4.82, 4.15 and 5.25 hours respectively. Yet, when comparing the youth and older group by ANOVA, there is not a significant difference

( $p > 0.01$ ). So despite having a higher proportion of volunteers, the amount of time given on average is not different. This seems to go against the idea that the mid-life group has less time to volunteer but may be linked to the definition of informal help as this could incorporate caring responsibilities undertaken by the core age group.

Having reviewed the nature of pro-social giving with regards to volunteering, we now move to understand the motivations of the different groups. This allows not-for-profits to tailor recruitment strategies to different groups. To complete this exploration, again Chi-square analysis is used to examine significant differences between groups. There are several key features of interest here. Firstly, a network effect is apparent, with family and friends more likely to be cited as a reason to volunteer by younger people than the older group. 26.7% of young people cite this reason as compared to 16.8% of the older group. This might be expected if we assume that older people have established more of their own networks and are less reliant on others to provide connections, although this also goes against the idea that volunteering is often used as a means to overcome isolation and loneliness in age. The cause and general need for volunteers in the community were more likely to be cited by the older group, as was religion and life philosophy. It could, therefore, be argued that older individuals have more philanthropic reasons for volunteering. Skills, career, and qualifications were all significantly more likely to be cited by the younger than the older age group, including 'skill use' which might refer to academic qualifications held by young people without corresponding practical knowledge (Simms *et al.*, 2013). These strongly indicate the importance of impact on future paid employment for younger people as compared to older workers, and the need for not-for-profits to highlight these potential benefits when recruiting young people. This is summarised in Table 2.

### **Insert Table 2: Motivations to Volunteer**

Thus the general trends driving younger people and older groups into volunteering appear to be divergent. Younger people are more likely to cite aspects related to employment, rather than community needs, social needs, or life aspects like religion and philosophy. There is more of a network effect with younger people wanting to improve/help and more likely to be pulled in by family/friends. Yet this is not coupled with social and community needs. For the older group, making friends, answering the need in the community, and lifestyle areas such as spare time, philosophy and religion are all more important than for younger people.

Moving now to the rewards for volunteering, and identifying links with retention of volunteers, we see a similar trend to that set out in the motivations to volunteer (summarised in Table 3). Again, the differences presented are between the youngest and oldest groups. There are no differences in the responses regarding enjoyment, a chance to do something they are good at, health, and stress related items. The older group has greater levels of agreement with making friends, satisfaction, getting out of oneself, and feeling needed. Conversely, younger people have a greater level of agreement with broadening experience, personal achievement, and increased confidence. Further, younger people have significantly higher proportions agreeing with the employment related items, improving prospects, learning skills, and getting qualifications.

### **Insert Table 3: Rewards for Volunteering**



Of further interest when considering the rewards for volunteering are the areas which are not significantly different, thus identifying commonalities that can be used when retaining volunteers. These rewards are: chance to do what they are good at, enjoyment, community valance, and health/stress benefits. The latter in particular is more commonly associated with older volunteers but applies equally to the younger group. However, there are some significant differences and the trend seems to correspond with the motivations to initially get involved with volunteering. Younger people are more concerned with employment, skills and qualifications than the older group. They have a far greater level of agreement with confidence, which can also be a key area for job interviews. Broadening experiences and achievement can also be loosely tied to employment, with younger people getting far more reward from these two areas. The older group is more concerned with meeting people, feeling needed, getting out of themselves, and feeling less selfish. Thus they are more concerned with personal gains, social integration, communication, and recognition than the younger group. By identifying and recognising both similarities and differences, it is now possible to indicate how recruitment and retention strategies for different groups of volunteers can be developed by not-for-profits.

### **Discussion, conclusions, and implications**

The first interesting finding for both further research and comment is the difference between the levels of informal volunteering, particularly in the current donation landscape. The Chi-square analysis indicated a significant difference. It is the older group that gives more time to formal volunteering ( $p < 0.01$ ) and, while not significantly different, more time to informal volunteering ( $p > 0.01$ ). While we see a large disparity between the hours given between

younger people and the older groups for formal volunteering, there is no significant difference when it comes to informal giving of time. Thus, the first finding shows the importance of finding the right motivators and rewards to entice younger people into formal organisational settings, particularly if they are recent entrants with experience only of informal settings.

A second area of discussion to emerge from the results is the large disparity between younger peoples' motivations and rewards. 40.6% of youth volunteers were motivated by the chance to learn new skills, yet only 27.1% note it as a satisfactory reward for the gift of labour. Similarly, 9.1% cite qualifications as a motivation to volunteer, yet only 5.2% name it as a reward with which they are satisfied. This speaks to the need of organisations to better cater to younger people, who can be a valuable source of volunteering hours. This may be a particular issue, however, for smaller organisations with lower levels of HR experience (Nolan and Garavan, 2016) or who may concentrate on immediate results rather than long-term development. In contrast, the older group have some interesting rewards which outstrip the motivations to give time. Perhaps the most salient is the friendship and companionship aspect. In terms of motivations, 39.3% of the older group indicated this was a reason to get involved. Yet interestingly, when referring to rewards from the experience, 57.9% cited friendship as a key reward/benefit. Again, as with the younger people, there is perhaps a misalignment around what the benefits and rewards are to this older group, and thus a requirement to tailor recruitment and retention strategies for this group.

### *Recruitment and retention*

When considering motivations to donate resources, perhaps unsurprisingly, young people are found to be less able to give financially to charitable organisations as compared to older age groups. Importantly, financial pressures on younger people are also likely to have increased since the Covid-19 pandemic given the severe impacts on sectors such as retail and hospitality in which they are more likely to be based. However, young people are able to give their labour, particularly during times of unemployment (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012), or as seen in the Covid-19 pandemic response in the United Kingdom, in times of furlough. By examining motivations to undertake voluntary work, charitable organisations can better create opportunities for young people to volunteer. The items that they found most important were those related to their future paid work. Rather than positive feelings about themselves, young people require some kind of formal recognition that they have participated in voluntary work, and as a result have developed skills that are of value to potential employers. These compare to previous models which have focussed on the core group, with recruitment based around financial donation to exploit higher levels of disposable income in a context of time poorness, and satisfaction in the work done acting as a retention strategy by speaking to those reward items more highly valued by the core group.

### **Insert Diagram 1: Tailored Recruitment and Retention Strategies**

The findings indicate that younger people have different motivations to volunteer, thus requiring a different recruitment approach. We term this a *Skills Development* approach. Owing to the problems with developing skills at the start of an individual's career (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012) or in times of unemployment, voluntary work can provide an opportunity to overcome this. Importantly, Simms *et al.* (2013) find that work experience is found to be

more useful when individually arranged, rather than through formal work experience programmes. This is particularly important for smaller third sector organisations, who may be able to tailor the programme to the individual rather than have a uniform offering, as also seen amongst SMEs in the for-profit sector who tailor their graduate or apprenticeship programmes. It is important that smaller not-for-profits use insights gained from for-profit SMEs to tailor the roles that they can offer to the 16-24 group in order to ensure that they can use the experience to gain skills.

When considering the retention strategy, it is further noted that younger people have differing preferences for rewards than the core 25-64 group, and so not-for-profits should follow what we term a *Certification* approach. Younger volunteers have a clear requirement to have some kind of formal acknowledgement for the role they have undertaken, detailing the skills that they have developed, which can aid with their transition into paid work. Although this would present little extra cost to the not-for-profit organisation, this formal recognition is of great value to younger people at the start of their careers. This is, however, not an area in which smaller organisations in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors are likely to have specialist expertise (Behrends, 2007), and thus non HR specialists must be able to assist with this certification. Importantly, not-for-profit organisations must recognise that tailored rewards for volunteering will lead to improved retention of this younger cohort, even as they move into paid employment.

Given the reliance of many not-for-profits on the ‘grey army’ of older people (Broadbridge and Horne, 1994) it is also important that the recruitment and retention strategies for this group speak to their motivations and reward desires. It has already been noted that a change

in employment status from employment to retirement (Birkett, 2013) is seen by older people as an opportunity to spend increased time working on a voluntary basis (Duberley *et al.*, 2014). This may be particularly pronounced with an unforeseen or unplanned shift, for example through a Covid-19 influenced redundancy or severance. With regard to recruitment of this older group, not-for-profits should follow what we have termed a *Lifestyle Change* approach. This should allow these volunteers to apply the skills that they already possess, thereby retaining an important link with their paid work identity as they transition into retirement (Cook, 2015; Ibarra, 1999; Sargent *et al.*, 2013), whilst also allowing for the creation of new social links as they leave the paid workplace (Grönlund *et al.*, 2011).

With regard to retention, what we term as a *Social Benefits* approach should be followed. The older group are less likely to need any kind of formal certification, as they do not require this for paid career advancement. What is clearly shown, however, is the desire amongst this group to obtain ongoing social benefits, even though this is not always noted as an initial motivation to volunteer. Different sized organisations may, however, find differing levels of ease with which to offer this sort of reward. A newer or smaller organisation may have fewer volunteers with whom to socialise, and also may be based on meeting an immediate need as seen in the for-profit sector (Stewart and Knowles, 2000). Networks of not-for-profits may be able to collaborate to overcome these issues. As these workers move into a new employment status which may challenge their identity formation (Barnes and Parry, 2004) and which may be aided by some sort of continuation with previous career (Schau *et al.*, 2009), it is clear from our findings that once involved in volunteering, a larger proportion of older people see increased social interaction as a reward (57.9%) than those who initially cited it as a motivation (39.3%), and thus incorporating social activities alongside voluntary work will increase retention. As with the *Certification* approach toward younger people, this

carries little, if any, cost for not-for-profits. However, by tailoring rewards towards the requirements of the different age groups, not-for-profits will be able to improve the retention of their volunteers.

What is clear from our findings is that volunteers should not be considered as a homogeneous group. It is also clear that not-for-profits need to utilise more insights from for-profit organisations, particularly related to human resource management, in order to recruit and retain volunteers. While much literature in the not-for-profit sector has concentrated on financial donation (e.g. Authors, 2021; Wunnava and Lauze, 2001), both younger and older people are able to offer time donations. However, it is clear that these groups have some very different motivations to volunteer, and also differing desires for reward. By following tailored recruitment and retention strategies in this new context, these not-for-profit organisations can maximise the potential pool of volunteers, whilst also optimising rewards for those who volunteer.

Future research may identify how organisations have operationalised the recommendations here. The use of comparative methods including ANOVA and Chi-square can be extended with regression to identify satisfaction with regards structured approaches to retention and recruitment. Moreover, contextual effects on recruitment and volunteer strategies, such as the type of volunteer organisation, may also be investigated. While beyond the scope of this paper, the need for further research is apparent to refine and continue to develop the findings included here for the benefit both of individuals and volunteer organisations.

## **References**

Agus, A. and Selvaraj, R. (2020), “The mediating role of employee commitment in the relationship between quality of work life and the intention to stay”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 6, pp. 1231-1248.

Akingbola, K. (2013), “A model of strategic non-profit human resource management”, *International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organisations*, Vol. 24 No. 1 , pp. 214-240

Akingbola, K., Baluch, A., Brunt, C. and Cunningham, I. (2020), “Editorial”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 5, pp. 1045-1054.

Andreasen, A. R., and Kotler, P. (2008), *Strategic marketing for nonprofit organizations*, Pearson Prentice Hall, London.

Antoni, G. A. (2009), “Intrinsic vs extrinsic motivations to volunteer and social capital formation”, *Kyklos*, Vol. 62 No. 3, pp. 359–370.

Azeem, M.U., Bajwa, S.U., Shahzad, K. and Aslam, H. (2020), “Psychological contract violation and turnover intention: the role of job dissatisfaction and work disengagement”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 6, pp. 1291-1308.

Barnes, H., and Parry, J. (2004), “Renegotiating identity and relationships: men and women’s adjustments to retirement”, *Ageing and Society*, Vol. 24 No. 2, pp.213–233.

Bartram, T., Cavanagh, J., and Hoye, R. (2017), “The growing importance of human resource management in the NGO, volunteer and not-for-profit sectors”, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 28 No. 14, pp. 1901-1911

Behrends, T. (2007), “Recruitment practices in small and medium size enterprises: An empirical study among knowledge-intensive professional service firms”, *Management Review*, Vol. 18 No.1, pp. 55-74.

Birkett, H. (2013), “The embedded nature of the retirement experience: a life course study”, *Birmingham Business School Discussion Paper Series*, 2013-11.

Broadbridge, A., and Horne, S. (1994), “Who volunteers for charity retailing and why?”, *Service Industries Journal*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 421–437.

Bussell, H., and Forbes, D. (2002), “Understanding the volunteer market: the what, where, who and why of volunteering”, *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 244–257.



Bussell, H., and Forbes, D. (2003), “The volunteer life cycle: a marketing model for volunteering”, *Voluntary Action*, Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 61-79.

Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., and Miene, P. (1998), “Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: a functional approach”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 74 No. 6, pp. 1516–30.

Cnaan, R. A., and Cascio T. A. (1999), “Performance and commitment: issues in management of volunteers in human service organizations”, *Journal of Social Service Research*, Vol. 24 No. 3/4, pp. 1-37.

Cook, S. (2015), “Redirection: an extension of career during retirement”, *The Gerontologist*, Vol. 55 No. 3, pp. 360-373.

Cooper, E.A., Phelps, A.D. and Rogers, S.E. (2020), “Research in nonprofit human resource management from 2015 to 2018: Trends, insights, and opportunities”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 5, pp. 1055-1100.

Day, G. S. (1981), “The product life cycle: analysis and applications issues”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 45 No. Fall, pp. 60–67.

De Clerck, T., Aelterman, N., Haerens, L., and Willem, A. (2020), “Enhancing volunteers capacity in all-volunteer nonprofit organizations: The role of volunteer leaders' reliance on effective management processes and (de)motivating leadership”, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, EarlyView.

Diaz, D.A. and Rees, C.J. (2020), “Checks and balances? Leadership configurations and governance practices of NGOs in Chile”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 5, pp. 1159-1177.

Duberley, J., Carmichael, F., and Szmigin, I. (2014), “Exploring women’s retirement: Continuity, context and career transition”, *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 71-90.

Dury, S., Donder, L. D., Witte, N. D., Buffel, T., Jacquet, W., and Verté, D. (2015), “To volunteer or not the influence of individual characteristics, resources, and social factors on the likelihood of volunteering by older adults”, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 44 No. 6, pp. 1107–1128.

Finkelstien, M. A. (2009), “Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivational orientations and the volunteer process”, *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 46 No. 5-6, pp. 653–658.

Grönlund, H., Holmes, K., Kang, C., Cnaan, R. A., Handy, F., Brudney, J. L., and Zrinščak, S. (2011), “Cultural values and volunteering: a cross-cultural comparison of students’ motivation to volunteer in 13 countries”, *Journal of Academic Ethics*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 87–106.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., and Anderson, R. E. (2010), “*Multivariate data analysis*, Pearson Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Hank, K. and Erlinghagen, M. (2014) “Demographic change and the role of older people in the voluntary sector”, in S. Harper and K. Hamblin (Eds.) *International Handbook on Ageing and Public Policy*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp. 398-409.

Henderson, A., Pancer, S. M., and Brown, S. D. (2014), “Creating effective civic engagement policy for adolescents quantitative and qualitative evaluations of compulsory community service”, *Journal of Adolescent Research*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp.120–154.

Henkens, K., Remery, C., and Schippers, J. (2008), “Shortages in an ageing labour market: an analysis of employers’ behaviour”, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 19 No. 7, pp. 1314-1329.

Ibarra, H. (1999), “Provisional selves: experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation”, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 44 No. 4, pp.764-791.

Ihm, J. and Baek, Y.M. (2020), “Why do participants in voluntary organizations leave? Exploring the relationship between value congruence and length of stay”, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, EarlyView.

International Labour Organization. (2011), *Tackling youth employment challenges*, International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin.

International Labour Organization. (2013), *Global unemployment trends for youth 2013: a generation at risk*, The International Labour Office, Geneva.

Johansen, M.S. and Sowa, J.E. (2019), “Human resource management, employee engagement, and nonprofit hospital performance”, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp. 549– 567.

John, P., Fieldhouse, E., and Liu, H. (2011), “How civic is the civic culture? Explaining community participation using the 2005 English Citizenship Survey”. *Political Studies*, Vol. 59 No. 2, 230-252.

Jones, F. (2000), “Youth volunteering on the rise”, *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 36-42.

Lalioti, V. (2019), “Training-related dimensions of apprenticeship programmes in crisis-ridden Greece: an exploratory study”, *International Journal of Training and Development*, Vol. 23 No.1, pp. 51-68.

Lambkin, M., and Day, G. S. (1989), “Evolutionary processes in competitive markets: Beyond the product life cycle”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53 No. 3, pp. 4–20.

Maier, F., Meyer, M., and Steinbereithner, M. (2016), “Nonprofit organizations becoming business-like a systematic review”, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 45 No. 1, pp. 64–86.

Malhotra, N. K., Birks, D., Wills, P. (2012), *Marketing research: an applied approach*, Pearson, Harlow.

Mohan, J., and Bennett, M. (2019), “Community-level impacts of the third sector: does the local distribution of voluntary organisations influence the likelihood of volunteering?”, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, Vol. 51 No. 4, pp.950-979.

OECD (2020), *Youth unemployment rate*. Available at <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/youth-unemployment-rate.htm> accessed 3 September 2020

O'Rourke, P.P. (2020), "How NPM-inspired-change impacted work and HRM in the Irish voluntary sector in an era of austerity", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 5, pp. 1101-1116.

Nolan, C.T. and Garavan, T.N. (2015), "Human resource development in SMEs: a systematic review of the literature", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 18 No.1, pp. 85-107.

Nolan, C.T. and Garavan, T.N. (2016), "Problematizing HRD in SMEs: a "critical" exploration of context, informality, and empirical realities", *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 407-442.

Nyström, K. and Zhetibaeva Elvung, G. (2015), "New firms as employers", *Labour*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp.348-366.

Nyström, K. (2019) "Working for an entrepreneur: heaven or hell?", *Small Business Economics*, EarlyView.

Prince, N.R. and Kabst, R. (2019), Impact of national culture on organizations' use of selection practices, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 41 No. 6, pp. 1145-1161.

Ressler, R.W., Paxton, P., and Velasco, K. (2020), "Donations in social context", *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, EarlyView.

Ridder, H.-G., Piening, E. P., and Baluch, A. M. (2012), “The third way reconfigured: how and why nonprofit organizations are shifting their human resource management”, *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 605–635.

Rieucan, G. (2015), “Getting a low-paid job in French and UK supermarkets: from walk-in to online application?”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 37 No. 1, pp. 141-156.

Russell Jonsson, R. K., and Demireva, N. (2018) “Does the ethno-religious diversity of a neighbourhood affect the perceived health of its residents?”, *Social Science & Medicine*, Vol. 204, pp.108-116.

Sargent, L., Lee, M., Martin, B., and Zikic, J. (2013), “Reinventing retirement: New pathways, new arrangements, new meanings”, *Human Relations*, Vol. 66 No. 1, pp. 3-21.

Schau, H. J., Gilly, M. C., and Wolfinbarger, M. (2009), “Consumer identity renaissance: the resurgence of identity-inspired consumption in retirement”, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 36 No. 2, pp. 255–276.

Shildrick, T., MacDonald, R., Webster, C. and Garthwaite, K. (2012) *Poverty and insecurity: life in low-pay, no-pay Britain*, Policy Press, Bristol.

Simms, M., Hopkins, B., and Gamwell, S. (2013), *Skills for sustainable employment: Strategies to tackle youth unemployment*, UnionLearn, London.

Smith, S.L. and Grove, C.J. (2017), “Bittersweet and Paradoxical”, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, Vol. 27 No.3, pp. 353-369.

Stewart, J. and Knowles, V. (2000), “Graduate recruitment and selection practices in small businesses”, *Career Development International*, Vol. 5 No. 1, pp. 21-38.

Studer, S. (2016), “Volunteer management responding to the uniqueness of volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 45 No. 4, pp. 688–714.

Studer, S., and Schnurbein, G. (2012), “Organizational factors affecting volunteers: a literature review on volunteer coordination”, *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, Vol. 24 No. 2, pp. 403-440.

Suh, J. (2018), “Human capital inflow in nonprofits: Entry-level employees’ sector shift”, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, Vol. 28 No. 4, pp. 471– 489.

Taylor, J. (2007), “The next generation of workers in Australia: their views on organizations, work and rewards”, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 16 No. 10, pp. 1919-1933.

Timming, A.R. (2011), “What do tattoo artists know about HRM? Recruitment and selection in the body art sector”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 33 No. 5, pp. 570-584.



UK Government (2021) HMRC coronavirus (COVID-19) statistics, Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmrc-coronavirus-covid-19-statistics#coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

Walk, M., Zhang, R., and Littlepage, L. (2019), ““Don't you want to stay?” The impact of training and recognition as human resource practices on volunteer turnover”, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp. 509– 527.

Wapshott R., Mallett O., and Spicer D. (2014), “Exploring change in small firms’ HRM practices”, Machado C. and Davim J. (Eds.) *Work Organization and Human Resource Management*. Springer International, Cham, Switzerland, pp.73-92.

Wilson, J. (2012), “Volunteerism research: a review essay”, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 41 No. 2, pp. 176–212.

Wunnava, P. V., and Lauze, M. A. (2001), “Alumni giving at a small liberal arts college: evidence from consistent and occasional donors”, *Economics of Education Review*, Vol. 20 No. 6, pp. 533–543.

Young, D. (2020), ““I was never trained to do any of that” – personalisation and the impact of the “customer” on employment relations in voluntary sector social care”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 5, pp. 1117-1133



**Table 1: Pro-Social Behaviour by Age Group**

	<b>16-24</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>25-64</b>
Civic participation in last 12 months***	21.7	29.5	32.9
Formal volunteering or informal help in 12 months***	57.6	53.0	59.9
Informal help in last 12 month***	48.7	44.2	51.5
Formal volunteering in last 12 months	31.7	31.3	34.4
Employer volunteering in last 12 months***	4.5	0.5	6.6

(\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05), figures are %

**Table 2: Motivations to Volunteer**

<b>Item</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>25-64</b>
I wanted to improve things/help people*	53.1	47.2	57.3
I wanted to meet people/make friends	35.2	39.3	26.2
The cause was really important to me***	26.1	38.2	38.7
My friends / family did it***	26.7	16.8	19.7
It was connected with the needs of my family/friends	12.4	11.5	24.7
I felt there was a need in my community***	18.4	28.5	27.7
I had spare time to do it***	26.7	35.2	22.9
I felt there was no one else to do it***	2.5	6.0	8.7
It's part of my religious belief to help people**	12.9	23.9	19.4
It's part of my philosophy of life to help people***	11.2	25.6	23.1
I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills***	40.6	7.2	16.2
I thought it would give me a chance to use my existing skills*	24.2	19.7	22.1
It helps me get on in my career***	24.9	0.5	7.3
It gave me a chance to get a recognised qualification***	9.1	0.5	1.8

(\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05), figures are %

**Table 3: Rewards for Volunteering**

<b>Item</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>25-64</b>
I meet people and make friends through it***	44.5	57.9	43.3
I get satisfaction from seeing the results*	50.4	56.3	63.4
It gives me a chance to do things I'm good at	23.2	25.9	25.7
It makes me feel less selfish as a person*	15.6	21.1	21.9
I really enjoy it	57.4	61.3	56.7
It broadens my experience of life***	35.5	18.0	27.0
It gives me a sense of personal achievement*	29.8	23.5	29.2
It gives me a position in the community	6.3	4.3	6.9
It gets me 'out of myself'***	7.1	23.0	10.7
It gives me more confidence***	27.1	6.2	10.3
It makes me feel needed***	6.3	17.1	10.6
It improves my physical health	12.7	10.9	7.2
It makes me feel less stressed	7.3	5.6	8.6
It gives me the chance to improve my employment prospects***	12.7	0.2	3.5
It gives me the chance to learn new skills***	27.1	5.2	11.9
It gives me the chance to get a recognised qualification***	5.2	0.3	1.4

(\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05), figures are %

Diagram 1: Tailored Recruitment and Retention Strategies

	<b>Recruitment</b>	<b>Retention</b>
<b>16-24</b>	Skills Development	Certification
<b>65+</b>	Lifestyle Change	Social Benefits