Understanding Factors that Foster Volunteer Commitment in Nonprofit Organizations

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**Introduction**

The life expectancy of a nonprofit organization (NPO) depends on its ability to enlist volunteers and retain them. Losing volunteers creates challenges to an organization’s delivery of services to the community, but it can also mean that other factors are affecting the motivation of the volunteers.

**Methods**

Examining contexts that support the satisfaction of needs which promote a person’s enjoyment of activities and the autonomous self-regulation of behaviors.

**Key Findings**

![Diagram showing traditional reasons and self-determination theory (SDT) for volunteer motivation]

- **Traditional Reasons**
  - No Volunteer Training
  - Lack of Communication
  - Lack of Voluntary Commitment

- **Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**
  - Autonomy
  - Competence
  - Relatedness

Fosters

- Volition
- Motivation
- Engagement

Experience of

- Enhanced performance
- Persistence
- Creativity

Result in

**Literature Cited**


**Conclusions**

- The degree of autonomy supportiveness within the volunteering organization relates to the satisfaction of the autonomy and competence needs, which in turn relates to the degree of autonomous motivation of the volunteer.

- Organizations will need to create a volunteering climate that provides good logic and offers choice, acknowledges the volunteers’ feelings toward the activities, offers positive feedback, and encourages personal initiative.

- People who feel competent, volitional and related to their peers may be more likely to be motivated to engage in behaviors that are more prosocial.

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**Literature Cited**
