The motivation of volunteers
Australian surf lifesavers

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ABSTRACT
Volunteers play a crucial role in contributing to the nation’s economy. The media has helped to underscore the successful roles played by volunteers in national sporting competitions such as the Sydney Olympics and Melbourne Commonwealth Games. However, a larger contribution of volunteers to everyday Australian organisations goes relatively unnoticed and understudied, especially with respect to the motivation of volunteer workers. What are the individual drivers that sustain this effort made continuously in Australian organisations? This paper focuses on exploring the drivers of motivation among volunteers in Australian Surf Lifesaving. The results support the primacy of intrinsic factors and the supporting role of extrinsic factors as organisational resources and practices common to several motivation theories.

INTRODUCTION
The developing research into volunteers has recognised their fundamental importance in making both economic and social contributions. Further, volunteers make up a sizable portion of the activities spent by the Australian population (Noble 1997, p. 1). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has estimated that volunteers contributed 511,704, and 730 million hours from 1995, 2000 and 2006 respectively. The increase in volunteer hours from 1995 to 2000 represents a 27.3% increase in the participation of volunteers over that period. The number of volunteers also increased from 19% of the civilian population volunteering in 1995 to 34% in 2000; with the rise perhaps taking into account the Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Volunteers (ABS 2001). While the ABS has noted that more recent increases are largely due to population trends, including changes in the annual hourly rates, volunteering participation rates appear to have stabilised at about one-third of the Australian population aged 18 years and over (ABS 2007). The economic contributions made by volunteers are clearly significant as work and value-adding (Wilson & Musick 1997, p. 695) but are largely overlooked by economic indicators at national (Warburton & Oppenheimer 2000, p. 5) or organisational (Handy, Mook & Quarter 2006, p. 28) levels. But we do know that volunteers contribute their time to a broad range of community activities including: sport, recreation, emergency services, health, education, arts, hobby, welfare, youth, religious, community services, culture, heritage, environmental, professional, business and union organisations (Noble 1997; Brosnan & Cuskelly 2001). However, the contribution of voluntary work, while significant, has only recently begun to attract a level of scholarly attention necessary to understand the individual and organisational processes which underpin its success and sustain its continuance. As noted by Reed, McNeil & Blunsdon’s (2006, p. 46) research into volunteering time use in older Australians, previous
volunteering is important for its continuance but previous research indicates a ‘complex tapestry of motivations to be considered’. This study focuses on one of Australia’s most enduring volunteering organisations, surf lifesaving, with a focus on the individual-organisational drivers of motivation to volunteer.

What is interesting about the motivation of volunteers is that much of what is known is premised on the drivers of satisfaction and performance in the context of paid employees and for-profit organisations. Developments in motivation theory are therefore assumed to be universal or generalisable to all organisation settings. For example, a common thread among the variants of motivation theory is the role of monetary remuneration as extrinsic rewards that facilitate the meeting of basic physiological needs (Bockman 1971). Because volunteers are not paid, such conventional drivers of motivation cannot be assumed. Despite recent contributions from organisational and social psychology (e.g. Ryan & Deci 2000), few studies in the volunteering literature have attempted to grapple with this difficulty (see Anderson & Cairncross 2005). In this light, less is known about the motivation that sustains the contribution of volunteers. This paper explores the issue of the motivation of volunteers. Using primary data, we attempt to build a model of volunteer motivation and reflect on current motivation theory.

VOLUNTEERING

The ABS defines a volunteer as ‘someone who willingly gave unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills through an organisation or group’ (ABS 2007, p. 3). Pearce (1993) defines a volunteer as a person who does not receive monetary payment for their work. However, such definitions are quite broad and do not describe the characteristics which define a volunteer. Cnaan, Handy and Hadsworth (1996) provide a conceptual framework using volunteer experiences to define volunteers. After analysing 11 definitions of volunteers, Cnaan, Handy and Hadsworth (1996) found there are four common dimensions that define a volunteer. These dimensions are; free choice (ranging from free will to obligation to volunteer), remuneration (from no pay, expense payments to stipends), structure in which the volunteer participates (informal to formal) and beneficiaries (strangers, friends/relatives, oneself) of the volunteer’s actions (Cnaan et al. 1996, p. 371). These dimensions are important to understand as they constrain the basis in which key processes operate in motivating individuals (for further reading into the conceptual dimensions of volunteers see Cnaan, Handy and Hadsworth 1996; Arai 1997; Cnaan et al. 1998; Paull 1999; Cordingley 2000).

In summary, we utilise the key conceptual dimensions of volunteers to derive our own definition for this research. Unlike Brosnan and Cuskelly (2001) who simply put the definition of a volunteer as the giving of one’s time for the benefit of others, our definition explicitly addresses each of Cnaan et al.’s conceptual components. This is an important process that focuses both the research (in terms of the conflation of processes among disparate types of volunteers) and the sampling process from which we derive data. For the purposes of this research a volunteer is seen as: one who donates their time without coercion, for no monetary payment, within a formal organisation towards benefiting unknown others and themselves.

Consistent with the above definition, we focus on volunteers in Australian Surf lifesaving, who prevent, protect and save lives through beach patrols and structured training in surf skills and first aid. In Australia, they represent one of the largest volunteer organisations with more than 130,000 members in 305 affiliated clubs who patrol over 400 beaches. In 2006–7, Australian Surf lifesavers carried out 9,318 rescues; 30,063 first aid services; and 203,337 preventative actions, taking the total number of lives saved to 530,000 since 1907 (SLSA 2008). Furthermore, what is interesting and compelling about researching volunteer motivation among Australian surf lifesavers is the interconnectedness of training in order to help others with the role of structured competitions or ‘carnivals’. There has been some research focusing on motivation in competition (e.g. Tauer & Harackiewicz 1999), but none specific to volunteering such as that experienced in Australian surf lifesaving. We now turn to the substantive theoretical frameworks which inform our understanding of motivation.

MOTIVATION AND VOLUNTEERS: MASLOW AND HERZBERG

Some research has been conducted into the motivation of unpaid volunteers. Most research has focused
on volunteers in social services (Kemp 2002). Less research has taken a sporting or emergency services context as the basis for study, although there is a growing literature in recent organisational and social psychology which is relevant to the impact or role of external rewards (Deci, Ryan & Koestner 1999; Tauer & Harackiewicz 1999). However, the main problem with generalising the relatively large contributions made by those such as Maslow and Herzberg and others is the focus on paid workers (e.g. Herzberg used accountants and engineers) to determine motivation in a work context (Wilson 1976; Chedalluarai 1999). Maslow and Herzberg also take prime position in the learning resources in much of the management, organisational behaviour, and human resource texts. However, despite more recent work extending the fundamental concepts of motivation (e.g. Ryan & Deci 2000), this section of the paper initially examines those two major contributors to motivation theory, focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic needs and motivators, before considering more recent advances.

Maslow argued that there are five basic levels of needs (physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation) arranged in a hierarchy of importance (Maslow 1987). Physiological needs refer to those base homeostatic and appetite drives as fundamental to survival (Maslow 1943). Safety needs refer to the security of one’s physical and emotional environment, including freedom from threats and emotional harm. Social needs, in short, refer to love, affectionate relations and belongingness (Maslow 1943). Esteem needs represent ‘strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence…, and for independence and freedom…desire for reputation or prestige…, recognition, attention, importance or appreciation’ (Maslow 1943, p. 382). According to Maslow ‘an individual cannot devote energy toward the satisfaction of needs at one level until the needs at the levels below are satisfied to a reasonable extent’ (cited in Knowles 1972, p. 27). Despite being widely used and the best known theory about motivation, Maslow’s hierarchy approach has attracted considerable criticism. For example, there is little research evidence to support five distinct levels of needs (Steers, Porter & Bigley 1996; Stone 1998). Specifically in the case of volunteers, the physiological level focusing on safety, belonging and esteem needs (Knowles 1972) is partially redundant. While safety needs might not be emphasised in the case of volunteerism, others have noted the significance of esteem needs of volunteers (Mesch et al. 1998).

While the relevance of Maslow’s lower level needs to our study of volunteers are questionable, there is a clear significance of higher level needs such as self-actualisation. According to Maslow, individuals self-actualise when other base needs are met by achieving growth and realising full potential and self-fulfilment (1943, p. 383).

Elements of Maslow’s hierarchy of base and growth needs are also broadly representative of Herzberg’s two factor model (Herzberg 1968) featuring intrinsic (motivators) and extrinsic (hygiene factors) aspects of individual satisfaction and dissatisfaction respectively. Intrinsic motivators are satisfying factors and are intrinsic to the content of the job itself. These include achievement, recognition, challenging work, responsibility, growth and development (Wilson 1976; Steers et al. 1996). Hygiene factors, on the other hand, result from extrinsic, non-task related factors which include policies, administration, interpersonal relations, status, security, and money (Wilson 1976; Steers et al. 1996). Hygiene factors relate to dissatisfaction due to the context where work is carried out (Chelladuarai 1999). In volunteer studies the terms can be referred to as altruistic (motivators) (Mesch et al. 1998) and instrumental (hygiene) motivation respectively. Henderson’s (1981) description of volunteers agrees with more formal definitions of altruism as driven by a desire to help others or as enacting an opportunity for emotional association with others and to serve the community (Phillips 1982; Mesch et al. 1998). While we recognise a wider, and more specific, focus on altruism and empathy in both the psychological (Batson 1997) and sociological literatures (Simmons 1991) we wish to focus on those organisational elements which relate to intrinsic and extrinsic motivations among Australian surf lifesavers. Even so, the role of instrumental motivation, or extrinsic hygiene factors, is not as easily applied to such volunteers (for further examples of the application of Herzberg’s two factor theory, see Horton Smith 1981 and Mesch et al. 1998).

Additionally, what is foreshadowed in Herzberg’s work is the interdependence between extrinsic and intrinsic factors. More recently the culmination of experimental research has shown that certain types
of negative extrinsic rewards and feedback can disrupt otherwise positive intrinsic motivation (Deci, Ryan & Koestner 1999). While it is not our intention to test more recent theoretical developments, including Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), (see Ryan and Deci 2000), or the role of verbal feedback and tangible rewards on free-choice time or interest (see Deci, Ryan & Koestner 1999), the constellation of contextual supports which conduce or undermine intrinsic motivation are important. To this extent, we underscore the intent of our research to focus on developing an understanding of motivation in a well-recognised and successful voluntary organisation, especially one which has high retention and motivation among its unpaid members. Maslow and Herzberg’s theories of motivation, do not easily apply to such volunteers. At least in studies of human resources, such theories are entrenched in, and have as a focus, motivation at work. Consistent with Clary, Snyder and Stukas (1996, p. 486) our study focuses on ‘the internal, psychological forces that move people to overcome obstacles and become involved in volunteer activity’. Instead of asking why do people work, in the context of this study we address the question of why do people volunteer?

FUNCTIONAL APPROACHES

The work of Clary and Snyder and others, has made a contribution central to the functional explanation of motivation among volunteers. The functional approach is:

explicitly concerned with the reasons and the purposes, the plans and the goals, that underlie and generate psychological phenomena – that is, the personal and social functions being served by an individual’s thoughts, feelings and actions (Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Copeland, Stukas, Haugen & Miene 1998, p. 1516).

The functional approach asks questions such as ‘What function or purpose is served for a person when he or she holds a certain attitude or behaves in a certain way?’ (Clary, Snyder & Ridge 1992, p. 335). Volunteers can make a choice to volunteer freely to an organisation, based on their individual motivation (Lucas & Williams 2000). Further, in terms of volunteering, people engage in volunteer work for different motivational reasons and to achieve important psychological goals (Clary, Snyder & Ridge 1992; Omoto & Snyder 1993, 1995; Clary et al. 1996). Therefore this approach, among volunteers, examines what motives are satisfied, what needs are met and what goals are attained through volunteering.

The various efforts of functional contributions to motivation theory for volunteers have centred on the development of the Volunteers Functional Index (VFI) developed by Clary and Snyder and colleagues (1992; 1996; 1998; 1999) on American adults’ giving and volunteering. Later, the VFI has been used to research motivation of numerous volunteers including: those over 50 years of age; volunteers and retention in policing; AIDS volunteers; gender differences amongst upcoming medical professionals; and more recently to help with the demographic profiling and establishing motives of sport volunteers (Okun, Barr & Herzog 1998; Lucas & Williams 2000; Omoto & Snyder 1993; Fletcher & Major 2004; Strigas & Newton Jackson 2003). In Australia, Anderson and Cairncross (2005) used the VFI to indicate the six functions (values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement) present in regional tourism volunteering. Similarly, Stukas, Daly and Cowling (2005) provide for an excellent demonstration of the survey operationalisation of the VFI items and six functions.

The VFI is useful in further identifying elements which give purpose to individual volunteering. As such, Malsow’s, Herzberg’s and functional approaches to motivation are used in order to develop an initial framework of the spectrum of motives salient to volunteers in Australian Surf lifesaving. We feel, that on an epistemological basis, the use of interpretative and subjective methods need first be utilised in order to explore and identify the motivation and rewards which help surf lifesavers remain active members. The complexity involved in interconnecting individual and organisational concepts, each embedded in rich individual and institutional histories, require we shorten the distance between the researcher and the participant with qualitative methods. We draw on the key contributions of motivation theory, as covered in this paper, to help explore, build, and develop an understanding of the motivation of volunteer surf lifesavers.
METHOD: SAMPLE, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Fourteen in-depth interviews were undertaken. Grounded theory was chosen as the best method with semi-structured in-depth interviews to be conducted with surf lifesavers from two different surf lifesaving clubs. Grounded theory is used to develop new approaches to existing knowledge or emergent theory where there is little existing research (Goulding 1998). Grounded theory is an interpretive approach which relies on the perspectives and voices of the interviewees to gain deeper understanding of the area (Strauss & Corbin 1994; Goulding 1998).

The sample size chosen for this study was 20 surf lifesavers, however sampling was discontinued, after adequate emergence of theoretically relevant categories and themes (i.e. theoretical saturation, see Glaser and Strauss 2006) was reached, at 14 individuals – comprising seven surf lifesavers from Noosa Heads Surf Life Saving Club and seven from Sunshine Beach Surf Life Saving Club in Queensland. Snowballing sampling was used to start the research process where two surf lifesavers from each of the two clubs were chosen, contacted and interviewed. These two surf lifesavers then gave the researcher possible interviewees to contact, resulting in snowball sampling. The technique of theoretical sampling was followed (Glaser & Strauss 2006). This comprised a series of three sampling strategies which reflect three coding/analysis approaches within early, intermediate and advanced stages in concurrent data collection and analysis (for greater detail see Strauss & Corbin 1998, pp. 201-16). Initially open sampling was used to determine what factors were broadly affecting motivation and rewards to retain surf lifesavers. Using open sampling, seven surf lifesavers were interviewed, four from Noosa Heads and three from Sunshine Beach. Each interview was transcribed and then coded to obtain categories. Second, relational, or variational, sampling was used in order to focus on (i) new persons with different experiences to add to the emerging theory and, (ii) how the emerging categories related to each other (Strauss & Corbin 1994, 1998). In this second stage another four interviews were conducted to gather new information and discover further categories from the new interviewees. Finally, discriminate sampling was used, which was focused to fill in and redefine emerging categories. This sampling technique was used for the remaining three interviews in which the questions were redeveloped to strengthen the gaps that had emerged. The interviews were transcribed. Categories and their relational structures were obtained using the constant comparison method (Spiggle 1994). This method comprises comparing responses for differences and similarities in the development and reinforcement of emerging categories or themes.

Given the evolution of the sampling, based on the findings, the semi-structured interview questions varied from the beginning to the end of the study. An example of an initial question is: How long have you been a surf lifesaver and why did you become a surf lifesaver? As more interviews were conducted, further questions were asked. For example: What keeps you coming back each year to donate your time? or Have you ever thought about resigning as a surf lifesaver? Questions were also asked regarding the emergent common themes, for example, What type of lifestyle benefits do you get out of being a surf lifesaver?

The constant comparison method was used to compare the interviews analytically after they were transcribed to explore the differences and similarities within each interview by applying logic and making inferences from the data (Spiggle 1994). The similarities and differences were noted and helped to establish nodes and sub-categories. Comparison helped to guide the researcher, in terms of theoretical sampling, to find interviewees which would help to strengthen categories that had emerged. The constant comparison method is a part of the grounded theory process and can be examined in detail elsewhere (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 1994).

The data were analysed through the cross-indexing and comparison of data sources. Advanced analysis included the further examination of gender, locality and tenure as a surf lifesaver across the coded categories. In each analysis (e.g. between males and females) a comparison was made of the differences and similarities in the emergent categories. This analysis was conducted to further deepen the results by analysing and discovering further differentiation within categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results comprise five major emerging categories. These are lifestyle; facilities; service to the
community; competition; and barriers and constraints. Each are briefly discussed before reflected on motivation theory.

1. **Lifestyle** This category contained information regarding lifestyle aspects of surf lifesaving which motivated individuals to volunteer. Within this category, the surf lifesavers mentioned health/fitness, socialising and area (in terms of locality where they had been volunteering) as all motivators to why they volunteer. For example Interviewee G, It is a good social thing, you have lots of friends that get involved in it, and you find your have more than just lifesaving in common, like similar healthy lifestyle and love the outdoors...

2. **Facilities** Facilities define features of the club that are offered to surf lifesavers. Facilities can be broken into several sub-categories including: ‘bronze medalion’ and ‘club’ aspects. The bronze medallion category refers to the training process and learning modules used to gain an elite award. For example Interviewee F, ‘needed to be able to do resuscitation as part of being a still water teacher’, and Interviewee D, ‘To do your bronze medallion, you also had to commit to a certain amount of hours on the beach’. The club includes lockers, showers, uniforms, access to subsidised food and beverages as noted by Interviewee K, ‘Free barbeques, hot showers and reduced prices of beer in the club’.

3. **Service to community** Noosa Heads and Sunshine Beach surf lifesavers live in an area that is close to the beach; many grow up by the beach and consequently they understand the danger of drowning. This provides deeper community values as leading to participation in surf lifesaving. Surf lifesavers therefore give their time to help provide beach safety, leading to perceptions of service to the community. For example, Interviewee M, ‘My initial motivation was to give back to the community as I had grown up by the beach’ Similarly, Interviewee L, ‘I suppose it’s my way of giving back to the community’, and Interviewee A, ‘I think it is a good thing to do for the community’.

4. **Competition** Interviewees regarded competition as an important part of the motivation and the reasons why they remain a surf lifesaver. ‘Competition’ has three sub-categories: ‘enjoyment’, for example Interviewee D stated, ‘I love competition with surf lifesaving as it doesn’t matter good or bad you are or how old you are as no one cares as long as you give it a go as I am not really that good’; ‘trips away’ on national and international competitions; and ‘provides a challenge’ for example, Interviewee B, ‘Chasing my goals basically as I haven’t achieved what I set out to do and that is why I keep coming back. I want to be an Australian champion in surf boat racing’.

5. **Barriers and constraints** The final major category is ‘barriers and constraints’. Barriers and constraints are defined by the negative aspects that affect motivation and retention of surf lifesavers. The sub-categories within this node are ‘changing laws relating to discrimination and bullying’; ‘time’, for example Interviewee D, ‘I found it hard especially during competition season as I have lot[s] of commitments as I work weekends and if I am not working I have carnivals and it is like when do I have time to do my patrols?’; ‘ability to do as much as you can do’; ‘commercialisation of the club’; ‘beach conditions’; ‘people not listening’; ‘male dominance’ and ‘public liability’. The frustration of individuals with regards liability is evidenced by Interviewee N, ‘… and people are going to be suing people like me for doing things the right way. There is no way of getting around it’.

The emergent categories are compared to the motivation literature presented earlier in the paper. These include Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg’s Two Factor Model and the Functional Approach to motivation. For example, the ‘Lifestyle’ category in column three of Table 1 readily reflects aspects of Maslow’s lowest need – physiological, as oriented towards health and fitness, but also towards social needs, as friendship. In the same column, Maslow’s safety needs appeared not to relate to our ‘Lifestyle’ category, hence the presence of crosses and ticks. The reader is reminded at this point, the larger research study comprised up to twelve sub-categories under each of the primary category-columns provided in this Table, and that each category is considered as a clear representation of elements of motivation listed in the rows. Table 1 presents this comparison where ticks represent overlap between emergent categories and theoretical concepts.
We take Table 1 as an important step in the contribution to understanding motivation in volunteering. In part, Table 1 enables us to deal with the long-standing debate within and between the various approaches to motivation. Conceptually, the overlapping elements in Table 1 facilitate the gathering together of the threads central to the core and peripheral elements of motivation among our group of volunteer surf lifesavers. To assist in the synthesis of a model, the results summarised in Table 1 can be taken as data themselves for representation in a Cluster Analysis. It should be underscored here that such an analysis is useful only for the purpose of assisting in the visual interpretation of our results already presented, that is, the Cluster Analysis does not purport to introduce or reflect any further reliability or validity of the category results and their cross-references to the theoretical elements presented in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the relative combination of conceptual elements according to the clustering of the presence (ticks) or absence (crosses) of cross-referencing using SPSS Cluster Analysis for nominal data. As such, Figure 1 shows the similarity in grouping conceptual elements as evidenced by patterns of corresponding empirical results presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation Theory</th>
<th>Level of agreement over categories</th>
<th>Lifestyle</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Service to the community</th>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>Barriers and constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maslow</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Physiological</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-actualisation</td>
<td>5/5</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Motivators (intrinsic/altruistic)</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hygiene (extrinsic/instrumental)</td>
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<td>×</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values</td>
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<td>×</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
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<tr>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhancement/esteem</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
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<td>×</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

The second column presented in Table 1 shows the extent to which each theoretical concept (row) is validated across the emerging categories.
The dendrogram in Figure 1 is interpreted as combining elements from left (individual elements) to right (all combined). Looking first at the top-left of the dendrogram in Figure 1, three elements are relatively tightly packed (Social, Social VFI, and Physiological) with a fourth (Hygiene) added into the cluster. This cluster broadly represents extrinsic factors. However, looking next at the tight combination of self-actualisation and motivators (with a third factor, enhancement/esteem (VFI), added into the cluster) represents intrinsic factors. The bottom five factors, combined in one tight dyad with other factors combining cumulatively to the right, represents predominantly other VFI elements. In understanding this grouping, it is helpful to consider the extent of confirmation of each element by checking Table 1. The overall result is a formulation of two main groups of factors, primary and secondary.

The primary factors of motivation draw from each of the three approaches to motivation discussed previously. The components which comprise the primary basis of volunteer motivation are Maslow’s ‘self-actualisation’, Herzberg’s ‘motivators’, and ‘enhancement/esteem’ from Functional motivation theory. This group is designated as primary not only because of the overarching cross-references in our empirical results (see Table 1), but because of the primacy of intrinsic motivation in general theory. The Cluster dendrogram (see Figure 1) represents these conceptual elements in a tight grouping. Importantly, these represent intrinsic motivators which are embedded in the ‘meaning’ rather than in the ‘external value’ of volunteering. While distinct, our data also indicates that the fingerprint of motivation among Surf lifesavers has secondary elements. Thus while it is tempting to underscore the primacy of intrinsic motivators, such that Surf lifesavers remain active volunteers because of self-esteem and enhancement through the ability to save beach patrons, the wider theory and our results also point to important extrinsic factors.

The secondary factors of motivation are drawn from Table 1 and comprise: ‘hygiene’, ‘physiological’ and ‘social’ elements. Such factors are broadly related to extrinsic motivating factors. For example, ‘social’ is concerned with satisfying a social need, such as participation in surf lifesaving with family and friends; ‘physiological’ needs are met by free food and drink and some facilities such as hot showers; ‘hygiene’ factors include uniforms, trips away and competitions/carnivals (e.g. Club, State, and Australian Championships). Such secondary motivating factors are extrinsic in providing important tangible rewards, and should be considered important in light of facilitating the primary intrinsic motivators. Our results indicate much consistency with what is known

![Figure 1: Dendrogram of clustering of theoretical elements cross-referenced with study results](image-url)
about the potential of extrinsic rewards to facilitate and disrupt the power of otherwise positive intrinsic motivation (Deci, Ryan & Koestner 1999). At least in our study of Australian surf lifesaving provides an ideal example of how positive connections between external and extrinsic organisational resources reinforce strong intrinsic motivations in driving successful volunteering motivation and retention.

Taken together, the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and reward contribute to a greater understanding of the motivation of volunteers in the context of Australian Surf lifesaving. Not unexpectedly, the intrinsic sense of individual purpose is paramount in volunteering in our sample of Surf lifesavers. It is not surprising that the Surf Lifesaving organisation is proud to claim saving over half a million lives since conception in 1907. As an organisation, Surf Lifesaving has a strong sense of culture, history and purpose in saving lives. In terms of organisation, both physical resources and management of training and competitions forms a solid base for the secondary factors enhancing motivation among surf lifesavers. These represent extrinsic factors. As such, the story of motivation among our group of volunteer Surf lifesavers, is not one of only intrinsic drivers of motivation. Rather, the constellation of factors group together higher-level meaning and purpose but also resources and practices which help to promote motivation.

In terms of reflecting upon the role of extrinsic rewards, particularly with regards the organisational and social psychology literatures, much of the secondary factors reported appear to represent feedback as informational rather than controlling (Deci, Ryan & Koestner 1999) in nature (e.g. see Interviewee D in ‘Competition’ results section). Furthermore, while not systemic in our data from Surf lifesavers, volunteering organisations should be aware of the potential of ‘barriers’ (e.g. male dominance, litigation or bullying) in undermining intrinsic motivation. If anything, our study of Australian Surf lifesavers is a good example of how a volunteer organisation moves individual extrinsic motivation from what Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 72) term one of compliance with external regulation to one of congruence and awareness of integrated regulation. What would be interesting, and certainly beyond the scope of our immediate study, is to examine the dynamics of extrinsic motivation across the 50,000 Australian Surf lifesaving members termed ‘nippers’, aged 5–13 years old (38% of all members). More specifically, we would ask what types of extrinsic motivation are experienced, and is the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation consistent across such large age ranges. Again, such questions are not only a compelling matter of individual experience but one of how Surf lifesaving organisational processes engage their volunteer members.

Finally, the status of the Functional approach to motivation, particularly in studies of volunteering, is ubiquitous for motivation theory. The Volunteers Functional Index (VFI) is an objective tool which tends to take reference from several motivation theories. As such as the limitations of our own study are entrenched in a lack of representativeness and generalisability, the strengths are in the rich detail within which interviewing can discover the full explanatory interplay of a socially-maintained reality. In this light, we hope our study contributes to a larger research program the aims of which are to theoretically generalise and whose implications can build strength in other volunteering organisations.

CONCLUSION

The ABS surveys (2001, 2007) on volunteering show that while volunteering hours are increasing over time, the median annual hours of Australian volunteers have declined from 2000 to 2006. In part, this is due to the shifting sands of demographic change and patterns of consumption. If anything, the changes forewarn of a need to understand the motivation which drives and retains individuals in volunteering roles. In our study, the key factors of motivation are the primary drivers related to intrinsic motivation and rewards. The primary motivators which reward and motivate surf lifesavers are promulgated through a duality of individual participation in structured and meaningful training and are enacted and self-actualised as an awareness of a wider contribution to the community safety. In short, such intrinsic motivations are authentically experienced by Surf lifesaving volunteers and their training resonates with both a beach lifestyle and social contribution.

The secondary motivating factors are extrinsic in nature and are therefore tangible motivators and rewards. These include: making new friends which provides comradeship; or a reward at the end of the
volunteering days which provide comfort, recognition and appreciation; or ability to compete and become a champion in the context of surf lifesaving. In contrast to the primacy of intrinsic motivation, organisational stakeholders should also consider the ways in which resources, training, and performance can be used to internalise and integrate positive extrinsic motivation among volunteers.

The primary and secondary motivating factors, reported here, are not inconsistent with much of the contributions of motivation theory. However, two important implications of this research should be reiterated. First, intrinsic motivation is important, perhaps paramount to volunteering as might be assumed in a variety of volunteer organisations (e.g. State Emergency Service, Greenpeace or charity collection). However, our research provides a distinction, descriptively consistent with research on the role and impact of extrinsic rewards, that such factors have an impact on intrinsic motivation. Second, while income-based extrinsic rewards are clearly not relevant to volunteers – other extrinsic factors do take up such roles in volunteering organisations and may help to explain the relative success of Australian Surf lifesaving in the recruiting, retaining and functioning of its volunteer members.

In Australia, as in other parts of the world, if volunteers are to continue to add un-measured value, we must focus research on unpacking and understanding the dynamics of individual motivation and its organisational contexts. Our study has not solved the problem of volunteer motivation insomuch as raised further questions relevant to its understanding. For example, what aspects of organisational culture and climate are likely to lead to greater intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation, and their interactions, among volunteers? Or we might ask, how can leaders provide vision to intrinsically inspire volunteers in light of particular external barriers which members face? We suggest that future researchers consider the dual impact of purpose and resource in studies of volunteering at both individual and organisational levels.

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