

# From Community Based Identities to Individual Benefits for Volunteers

## A Comparison of Three Sporting Events

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to explore and identify different types of volunteers at three major sporting events: the 2012 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck, Austria; the 2012 GöteborgsVarvet (a half-marathon race), Sweden; and the 2012 FIS World Ski Flying Championships in Vikersund, Norway. Altogether, 37 volunteers were interviewed, and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field, as well as modernization theories, were employed in the analyses. Data revealed that all three groups of volunteers had different motives for volunteer work. The young, international volunteers at the Winter Youth Olympic Games were concerned with learning and gaining experience; the volunteers at Vikersund were motivated by the commitment to the local community; while the volunteers at GöteborgsVarvet volunteered for their local sport club. In conclusion, we argue that there is an increased complexity of volunteer patterns. Theoretically speaking, there is a difference between subfields of volunteering which fit various individual habitus. Clearly, modern volunteers, particularly young people, extend the complexity of the sport field and the volunteering field.

*Key words:* volunteers, volunteering, major sport events, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Bourdieu

Research into volunteerism at sporting events is influenced by recent trends in sociology, which has been dominated by a theoretical approach proposing more individualized biographies, which are not necessarily determined by old patterns of gender, class, or of family socialization (Beck, 1992, 1994, 1997; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1990, 1991). For example, Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) have suggested that there is a distinction between collective and individualistic oriented volunteers, where the latter refers to a type of volunteers that is changing with late modern individualization processes (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2004). In other words, current sporting event volunteers could be expected to be in flux in the sense that they are not determined by social position or static motives when volunteering. One consequence should be that especially young people are to follow modern patterns (or lack of patterns) of biographies (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991).

In this paper, we study sporting event volunteerism by comparing three cases: the 2012 Youth Winter Olympic Games (YOG) in Innsbruck, Austria; the 2012 FIS World Ski Flying Championships in Vikersund, Norway; and the 2012 GöteborgsVarvet (a half-marathon race), Sweden. Empirical studies into sporting event volunteering show a number of patterns in regard to traditional sociological dimensions such as gender, class and ethnicity. In a study of volunteers at the 2011 FIS Nordic World Ski Championship (WSC) in Oslo, Sand (2012) found patterns related to class elements measured by for example education and income. Sporting event volunteers have higher education, are mostly full-time employed and have a relatively high income. Similar findings were revealed by Skille (2012) across three sporting events in Norway (the WSC in Oslo, the 2010 European Handball Championships for Women, and the 2011 'Birkebeinerrittet' – an annual mountain bike race in Norway). An indication of a vague pattern was the fact that the gender distribution was well balanced in all the three events (Sand, 2012; Skille, 2012).

Placing the test event for the WSC in Oslo under scrutiny (the 2010 FIS Ski World Cup), Skirstad and Hanstad (2013) found that 'gender matters' (see also Wollebæk, Skirstad & Hanstad, 2012). Female volunteers were younger than male volunteers (mean = 39 years and 49 years, respectively). Women had on average higher education, but lower income than men (partly because more females were students). Fewer women than men were affiliated to organized sport, and fewer women than men had experience from volunteering at sporting events. During

the test event, the 2010 FIS Ski World Cup, males dominated functions directly related to the sport competitions, while support functions were female dominated. Moreover, the motivation to volunteer at the event differed between females and males. In line with a stronger affiliation to sport among men, men scored significantly higher on the motivational factor 'ski interest' than females. Females scored significantly higher than men on motivational factors related to competence and instrumental/external elements (Skirstad and Hanstad, 2013; see also Downward, Lumsdon, & Ralston, 2005).

Sporting event volunteering is complex. Wollebæk et al. (2012) sketched some of this complexity by leaning on distinctions of traditional versus reflexive volunteers (Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2003, 2004), and using data from the 2010 test event for the WSC in Oslo. Wollebæk et al. (2012) identified two distinct groups of volunteers: one group was dominated by middle-aged and elderly men with event experience and membership in a sport organization; their motivation was primarily linked to an intrinsic interest in sport. The other group was dominated by younger women without event experience (many volunteering for the first time) or sport affiliation, and motivated by extrinsic elements. Wollebæk et al. (2012) mentioned two analytical points for further theoretical discussion. First, compared to other sport volunteers, event volunteers have higher education and are older. Second, and most important, is that there are variations within the sporting event volunteer group.

The point made about increased complexity reinforces findings made by Hustinx and Meijs (2011): 'The popular debate on the "new volunteerism" has focused too one-sidedly on the alleged changes in the attitudes and behavior of the volunteers' (p. 5). While former studies have revealed both traditional patterns and modern patterns of sociological characteristics related to sporting event volunteering (Sand, 2012; Skille, 2012), and while the volunteering literature in general has increased its level of nuances (cf. the Hustinx and Meijs quotation above), there is a lack of qualitative research into how the field of sporting events and different people – or groups of people – fit to the field. In that respect, we approach the study of volunteers at sporting events with a balanced theoretical framework, presented in the next section. A balanced theoretical framework refers to a framework which is able to take into account the increased complexity in both traditional and modern patterns of sporting event volunteerism. The purpose of this study is to explore why people volunteer at sporting events, and how they perceive being a

volunteer. Moreover, we identify patterns of volunteerism along dimensions of collective orientation versus an individual orientation.

## Theoretical Framework

The study of sporting event volunteers in contemporary society needs a theory that captures traditional sociological patterns, measured for example by class elements (such as education and income, although not measured here), as well as more modern individualized orientation, e.g. measured by looser affiliation to organizations and instrumental motivation. Inspired by the works of Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003, 2004) and Hustinx and Meijs (2011), we primarily use a theoretical approach based on Lash (1990, 1993b, 1994) who, in turn, leans on Bourdieu's field theory.<sup>1</sup>

A field is defined by positions which have developed throughout history, and which create structures between the positions of actors struggling for the field-specific capital and the field's hegemony (including the definition rights in a field), and the habitus. The structure of a field is defined by the distribution (amount and composition) of capital, which is based on the results of previous struggles, and which directs future struggles (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus is structured and is structuring structures, or systems of durable and transposable dispositions (Bourdieu, 1977). With habitus as an intermediary link, Bourdieu (1977) seeks to overcome the dichotomy and to take account of the dialectical relation between objective structures and subjective preferences for and experiences of social practice.

A particularly clear example of practical sense as a proleptic adjustment to the demands of a field is what is called, in the language of sport, a 'feel for the game'. This phrase (...) gives a fairly accurate idea of the almost miraculous encounter between the *habitus* and a field (...) (Bourdieu, 1990, p.66. Italics in original).

While habitus produces individual as well as collective practices (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990), it implies that individuals from similar social backgrounds create similar habitus. 'So it is because they are the product of dispositions which ... are objectively concerted'; 'the practices of the

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1 We also use ideas of Beck and Giddens of the modernization and the individualization thesis.

members of the same group ... or the same class are endowed with an objective meaning that is once unitary and systematic...’ (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 81). Consequently, it could be hypothesized – and is supported by quantitative research (Sand, 2012; Skille, 2012) – that there are patterns of who does what and why within the field of sporting event volunteerism.

However, there is a broader trend in social scientific thought where the reproductive and taken-for-granted perspectives are challenged by theories of reflexivity and individualization. According to Giddens, ‘the reflexive project of the self, which consists of the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice’ (1991, p. 5). Moreover, Beck explicitly links individualization and self-reflexivity: ‘Individualization of life situations and processes thus means that biographies become self-reflexive, socially prescribed biography is transformed into biography that is self-produced and continues to be produced’ (1992, p. 135). In other words, individualization refers to the detachment from cultural traditions, where a choice is not rooted in family or group customs; it is now rooted in individual reflexivity (Beck, 1992, 1994, 1997; Giddens, 1990, 1991, 1994). As the human individual has become ‘homo optionis’ (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, p. 5), it is possible to diversify individual activities and identities. As individualization requires that there is something to reflect upon and options for choice, a societal counterpart to individualization is pluralization (Giddens, 1991).

Individualization could be interpreted as autonomy, emancipation and self-liberation, but taking into account society’s contradictions and ambivalences ‘it becomes clear that the life of one’s own is an experimental life (...) the restlessness of the age, of the *Zeitgeist*, is also due to the fact that no-one knows how or whether this can be achieved (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, p. 27). Following Giddens’ (1991) theory of late modernity, volunteering at a sporting event needs a personal benefit if it is to be chosen. However, voluntaristic aspects are controlled by habitus; calculations are influenced by incorporated and un-reflected dispositions, as well as by context, time and space (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Lash, 1993a, b, 1994; Ohl, 2004). The point is that when sporting event volunteering is in principle open for everybody, (the result of) the reflections individuals undertake before deciding to volunteer depends on background.

Regarding reflexivity we follow Lash, who is inspired by Bourdieu’s sociology of fields when he sees modernization as ‘a process of progres-

sive differentiation of these fields' (Lash, 1990, pp. 238-9). Differentiated fields require a specialized capital and necessitate a differentiated habitus. Further, the postmodern shift implies a de-differentiation of fields, which is associated 'not only with a new type of habitus, but with a characteristically "decentred" habitus, in which classificatory schema can be loose and blurred' (Lash, 1990, p. 253). Modernization processes do not necessarily undermine the credibility and functions of social institutions such as sport in general and sporting events in particular.

Lash (1990) recasts the theory of Bourdieu (1977, 1990) to account for social change, holding that the notion of reflexive modernization, in particular as developed and used by Giddens (1990) and Beck (1992), 'can best be developed via Bourdieu's habitus' (Lash, 1993b, p. 204). For sporting event volunteering, this means that volunteers have both traditional sociological characteristics and a mind with free will. Again we follow Lash (1999), who holds that in addition to a *groundless* ground, modernity has a *groundless ground*. Also individual choices have a point of departure. This point varies. Background for choices can therefore be measured as structured according to classificatory variables (such as gender and class). Although new classes are created in the reflexive modernity, 'personnel filling these class positions are typically determined by more particularistic, "ascribed" characteristics' (Lash, 1994, p. 134). In conclusion, including these theoretical points with the research into volunteerism at sporting events mentioned above, we seek to identify collective versus individualistic patterns of orientations for sporting event volunteerism.

## Methods

Data was collected from three different events in three countries during the period January–May 2012. These comprised the YOG in Innsbruck, Austria, a new event with young participants and young volunteers; the FIS World Ski Flying Championships in Vikersund, Norway, a one-off event with a combination of young and old volunteers; and finally the GöteborgsVarvet in Gothenburg, Sweden, a traditional half-marathon event with experienced volunteers. We used a qualitative approach in this case study. Interviews were conducted by the researchers during and after the different events. The following provides an overview of our data collection and analysis techniques.

### *Settings*

The first sample comprised volunteers from the YOG in Innsbruck, Austria, January 13–22, 2012. During ten days in Innsbruck 1059 athletes from 70 nations, representing seven International Federations (IF) and 15 different sports, competed at eight different venues. A total of 1357 volunteers participated in Innsbruck of which 80 per cent were aged 18–29: 66 per cent were students. The volunteers represented 59 different nations (IYOGOC, 2012a, b).

The second sample comprised volunteers from the FIS Ski Flying World Championships in Vikersund, Norway, February 22–26, 2012. Vikersund is the biggest ski flying hill in the world with 246.5 meters as its record jump. The event attracted more than 60,000 spectators (Vikersund 2012, 2012) and 1400 volunteers took part. The organizer had no official statistics about the volunteers, but an unpublished survey carried out by the authors showed that the mean age was 45 years and that 36 per cent of the volunteers were women ( $n=671$ ). But in the group born 1975 or later, 53.8 per cent of the volunteers were women.

The third sample consisted of volunteers from GöteborgsVarvet in Gothenburg, Sweden, May 10–13, 2012. The main organizer was Göteborgs Friidrottsförbund [Gothenburg Track and Field Association], and 39 different sport organizations contributed, resulting in approximately 3500 volunteers taking part in the sporting event. GöteborgsVarvet is an annual half-marathon running race (first hosted in 1980) which is the largest half-marathon running competition in the world with 62,000 entries (2013). In comparison to the other two events, GöteborgsVarvet include all runners (elite and none elite), and has a separate children's race, as well as the 'Special GöteborgsVarvet' for young and old participants with various types of disability.

### *The interviewees/the volunteers*

Altogether, we interviewed 37 persons by conducting a convenience and purposeful sampling procedure since we wanted different types of responsibility to be presented (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Table 1 provides an overview of the participants interviewed in the three samples of volunteers.

Table 1 *Overview of the 37 interviewed volunteers from three different events*


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 Youth Olympic Games | Innsbruck, January 2012, n=18
 

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*Gender, position and responsibilities of interviewees:* 3 head volunteers, 1 female and 2 male (Sport initiations, Media communications, Sport and Production services); 15 volunteers, 9 female and 6 male (IT and technical support, Exhibition area, Volunteer center, CEP, websites, Assistance at the Ice Stadium, Competition Secretary, Media communication, Brand protection, Sport and production services, Sports, and Arts project)

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 Ski Flying World Championship | Vikersund, January 2012, n=8
 

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*Gender, position and responsibilities of interviewees:* 8 volunteers, 3 female and 5 male (Venue area, Accreditation, Rigging of fences, Security, The media service center, Tickets, Parking)

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 GöteborgsVarvet | Half-marathon, Gothenburg, May 2012, n=11
 

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*Gender, position and responsibilities of interviewees:* 5 head volunteers, 3 female and 2 male (Information, Start numbers, Storing of luggage, Medals, Medical aid); 6 volunteers, 3 female and 3 male (Information, Start numbers, Parking, Storing of luggage, Medals)

### *Data Collection*

Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted during the events at different locations (e.g. the venue, café, restaurant), wherever was convenient for the interviewee. The interviews were conducted with interview guide prompts and questions developed from previous qualitative research on volunteers (Skille & Hanstad, 2013), according to institutional ethical guidelines. We tailored an interview guide and some adjustments were undertaken for the different interviewees depending on the city, type of event, and being annual or not. Most of the interview guides included questions relating to (a) general background information; (b) what being a volunteer means to them; (c) how they perceive being a volunteer at a particular event; and (d) their relationship to leaders at different levels of the event. The flexible interview guide allowed questions to be reordered such that participants' responses could be probed in more detail. Follow-up questions were used in order to elicit in-depth responses from the participants. The interviews ended with the open process-feedback question: 'Do you have anything else to add?' Probes and follow-up questions were also used in order to further explore responses, and the interviews lasted between 20 and 75 minutes.



### *Data Analysis*

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, resulting in 144 pages single-spaced raw text. Question-focused analyses were used as the starting point when organizing the raw data (Patton, 2002). The researchers read and reread the transcripts in order to become familiar with the data. Themes, quotes and paraphrased quotes representing a meaningful point or thought were individually identified. Segments from the three different events which had similar themes and represented the same main category were grouped together: the raw text was content analysed using the procedures recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994). Tables 2 and 3 provide an outline of the themes that emerged from the content analysis. In addition to the table, quotes were included in the presentation and interpretation of the data (see, for example, Kristiansen, Murphy and Roberts, 2012). Anonymity was assured (Patton, 2002). Consequently the interviewees' job responsibility is not included.

The three authors had a meeting where they discussed and consensually validated themes and quotes into patterns of like responses in the data, and a summary label for the category was determined.

## Results

The volunteers from the three different events have the same understanding of what it is to be a volunteer and they use approximately the same wording when giving a definition: 'To do something without being paid', is the short version. After establishing a common understanding of volunteerism as a sport phenomenon, a discussion of the results focuses on two main areas. First, we discuss why they chose to be volunteers. Second, we discuss the perceptions of being volunteers at the three events under study and compare the experiences of the volunteers. Examined together, and compared to the three various events studied, we were able to discuss how volunteers at sporting events fit in relation to theoretical assumptions presented above.

### *Community identity versus the individual benefits*

Data from the three sporting events put under scrutiny revealed three different profiles of the reasons to become a volunteer among the interviewees (see Table 2).

Table 2 *Overview of the main reasons for being a volunteer at three different events (the order is based on time of the event)*

Youth Olympic Games

<i>Main categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Cultural differences	At home everybody does some type of voluntary work (Austria) I have always liked voluntary work Father was volunteer at major events Where I come from, volunteerism is connected to working for underprivileged countries (England) No-one did it back home (German) No tradition for it, exciting to be here
School program	Bonus (experience) by studying in Innsbruck Great to practice and improve your German Used vacation in the Erasmus program
Curriculum Vitae	I would not put in on my résumé, my tasks have been pretty basic Depends on what type of job you are applying for It would look good on the CV Will be good when applying for internships Wanted to be part of the CEP because of a bachelor in culture

Ski Flying World Championship

<i>Main categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Spirit of Vikersund	I live here, we got to help in order to host events Do it for the local sport club You meet a lot of new people The entire community takes part in this They need volunteers to pull this off Social aspect by meeting people We work more and harder than being told to
Family tradition	All members of my family are volunteers here I learned the values of this type of work as a child Important not being paid for everything one does.
Curriculum Vitae	I meet important people in the business Being committed here helps you to get jobs Important for young people without much work experience Shows that I contribute to a better society Important to put on your CV

GöteborgsVarvet

<i>Main categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Money	Raise money to their local sport club We don't have to do lotteries!
Social aspect	Enjoy meeting new people and spend quality time with their team mates Community Festival

The jacket	Everybody admitted using it, a sign of belonging Creates identity Almost a fight for them I have a friend that only comes for the jacket We just get this ugly t-shirt
Feel-good	Love helping people It is better than prozac Volunteer family
Curriculum Vita	Important to put on the résumé Mention this social commitment in interviews

Of the three groups in the sample, YOG volunteers stand out as the most differentiated group and with a clearer individual orientation towards why becoming a volunteer. Furthermore, the international group of volunteers from the YOG also revealed that they had very different experiences from home because of parents' attitudes and cultural differences (see Table 2). 'It [i.e. being a volunteer] has never been emphasized as important by my parents, they simply took part themselves, and it simply is like that in the countryside in Austria' [YOG, male, 24 years old]. The volunteers came from 59 nations, and a significant number of volunteers were recruited by their international school program from the nine educational institutions in the Tyrol region which promoted the opportunities at the YOG:

Because I study at the University of Innsbruck I got an e-mail from the headmaster, stating the need for volunteers. We were encouraged to take part in this two week event, and we were told about the clothing we would receive. Finally, when I learned that we would also get free from the University I was like 'Why not, sounds good, it would be a great experience' [YOG, male, 22 years old].

Overall, the YOG data indicated an individually-oriented motivation for volunteering. This was even more present when the volunteers talked about the experience as something they wanted to add on their résumé. As one explained it: 'I think it looks good on a CV to do volunteering and offer what you can do for free' [YOG, female, 24 years old]. Those who knew their future profession were more direct in their statements, and some come to work with, for example, culture or the media to gain job experience.

The Ski Flying World Championship in Vikersund attracted a different set of volunteers – the local community. 'I am so proud of Vikersund and being here makes you feel part of something bigger than yourself'

[Vikersund, male, 52 years old]. Volunteers at the ski flying championships were clearly committed to the village and the event in an integrated way. On the one hand it was the ski flying in itself, and on the other hand the spirit of or the commitment to Vikersund, both being two sides of the same coin to the volunteers. When Vikersund almost lost its status as the national venue for ski flying, key persons in the community worked hard towards politicians and the FIS at the end of the 1990s (Kaggestad, 2011). After the ski flying arena reopened in 2011, Vikersund has been the largest ski jumping hill in the world, an accomplishment the volunteers referred to with pride as something the entire community did together:

We have had several years without competitions and almost gave up hoping that we would host any events again. But the ski jump is improved, we are supported by the National Ski Federation again, and I think everyone knows that we would not be here without the volunteers [Vikersund, male, 49 years old].

Furthermore, the interviewees' will to volunteer was part of a tradition: 'My family has always been doing volunteer work' [Vikersund, male, 35 years old]. It was emphasised that in a small community everyone has to help at the different arenas whether it is the church, sport clubs or the scouts. However, some of the younger volunteers also emphasized that the event was a great meeting place where one could come into contact with or work side-by-side with a future employer. One interviewee actually chose to work as volunteer in the area where he hoped to build his career: 'I am interested in media relations, so for me working with this is great experience. And it will look good on my CV' [Vikersund, male, 20 years old]. Others stated that being a volunteer revealed that they were committed to the local community, and one admitted that it was an important factor for his last job. So, socialization to volunteering may come from different sources, as revealed by the fact that both a family orientation and a more individual orientation is found in the same event. As with the YOG, the CV focus dominated among young volunteers at the ski-flying event. However, young volunteers did not dominate at the ski-flying event as they did at the YOG.

Volunteers at GöteborgsVarvet became volunteers because of commitment to their sport club, which received money as a result of the volunteers' work. All the interviewees gave one version of this fact, for example: 'I do it for my sport club, it gives us so much money that we don't have to organise any lotteries!' [GöteborgsVarvet, female, 44 years old];

altogether approximately 50 sport clubs in the local area make the event possible each year. In addition to raising money for their club, the volunteers also have the additional benefit of spending some time together. Several admitted that the event represented a great opportunity to catch up, especially for those that were not so involved in the clubs as previously. Making a contribution at GöteborgsVarvet represented a great opportunity: 'I started out for my daughter and worked the required hours for her club. Now I work here because I enjoy the atmosphere and being here with the others' [GöteborgsVarvet, female, 51 years old].

An additional factor for being a volunteer was the *Jacket*. Obviously, the jacket is an identity factor for the volunteers since it symbolizes both belonging to the event and continuity. The volunteers admitted that it was important for them and that they enjoyed wearing it. As GöteborgsVarvet is well known in the local community, some sort of status is attached to the jacket as well. It is the symbol of belonging. The continuity element is manifest by the fact that the next year's date for the half-marathon is printed on the jacket. First, this encourages the owner to wear it at least for one year. Second and most important is that the future date makes the jacket a symbol going beyond just having 'been there, done that'. It creates expectations about the contribution next time, and it establishes GöteborgsVarvet as something ongoing, also between events. Some groups did not get the jacket and received t-shirts instead, which were considered 'ugly', and as one said: 'We are simply furious about not getting the jackets' [GöteborgsVarvet, female, 24 years old].

The 'feel-good' factor was mentioned by some of the volunteers. One explained: 'I have been a volunteer here for nine years, and I have met only two grumpy people. Being a volunteer here and absorb the atmosphere is better than taking Prozac; people should become volunteers instead of using medication' [GöteborgsVarvet, female, 49 years old]. Or, as someone else explained: 'My wife and I started out 7 o'clock this morning, we wanted to make everything ready before the others arrived. It is fantastic being here, I am already looking forward to next year' [GöteborgsVarvet, male, 53 years old]. There was complete consensus about this commitment to the event. Furthermore, factors of an individually-oriented motivation for volunteering like adding the work on the CV, was not stressed much in this group.

*Perceptions of their tasks and working conditions at the three events*

Data also revealed differences in the volunteers' perception of their tasks at the event (see Table 3).

Table 3 *Overview of the main categories and examples of how the volunteers perceived their tasks during the event.*

Youth Olympic Games

<i>Main categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Important role	Make the event run smoothly Tight budget: 1440 volunteers are vital Positive feedback from school teachers Without us the event would not exist Important as organizers of the public and all the school kids
Olympic spirit	Unforgettable Olympic experience Incredible to meet all these people Touching Opening Ceremony Olympic identity by wearing the same clothes We represent the Olympic spirit outside the venues Nice to talk to the athletes
Problems in doing their jobs satisfactorily	It is hard not being able to answer peoples questions because you lack overview of the city I have no idea where everything is here at the Congress center I have an easy job, but my friend is exhausted by standing outside all day The team leader is not dedicated to his work and lack overview We could have been put into work if it had been better organized

Ski Flying World Championship

<i>Main categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Supportive climate	It gives me great joy to contribute, no task too little We are like a family during the event Get tickets to the events The spectators appreciate the job we are doing Little distance between leaders and volunteers
Appreciation – or not?	The organizers always mention the importance of the volunteers in the media vs. We should have been better appreciated The leaders show an interest in my well-being vs. Experienced negative episodes of volunteer treatment
Learning aspects	I have a lot of experience from volunteer work, and have learned a lot You get to know an organization You learn that there are people different from you out there Learn to be positive under stress

## GöteborgsVarvet

<i>Main categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Important responsibility	Every job is important 'Foot soldier' I have had this job for ten years, know how to do it We are an important part of the event
Supportive climate	Enjoy taking part in the event We are being looked after by the management You spend time with the other members in your sports team, catch up! We let the new ones be trained by the older ones so they develop the right attitude
Need of appreciation from the management	It is important to get a thank you note Don't like to be taken for granted Maybe they could put in a thank you to us in the newspapers

Several obvious differences appeared when comparing the three datasets. First of all, many of the volunteers' tasks, such as handing out bananas, do not require any special skills. Therefore, execution may be considered 'boring' and below their level by some. Undoubtedly, all volunteers prefer to have challenging tasks, especially when the event goes on for days. The volunteers at GöteborgsVarvet felt that they were 'important for raising the standard of this event, and it actually gives you energy to take part in it' [GöteborgsVarvet, Female, 58 years old]. Clearly, they accept the tasks given based on the fact that they all contribute to the final results. The same quote also underlines the importance of the supportive climate, something which may be a reason for this acceptance.

In contrast, the volunteers at the YOG complained over several aspects of the job situation (see Table 3), and appear slightly more negative to their tasks and organization of their shifts and location. As one revealed when talking about the organizing of the volunteers by the Innsbruck Youth Olympic Games Organizing Committee:

I think our job as volunteers is important for the YOG. But I also think that we could have been better organized as a lot of the time you hang around and do nothing. You actually want to do something, but they have no idea what you are able to do ... and they have not been around long enough themselves to know everything [YOG, female, 22 years old].

Second, and as implicitly stated in the above quote: the YOG is a one-time event. The perception of continuity and stability related to the event organization that seems to be obvious in the statements from volunteers

at GöteborgsVarvet is completely absent in those from the YOG. Others also complained about lack of organization by some of the young leaders who lacked experience. In relation to this point it is important to remember that the YOG volunteers have no identity with either the local community (as the volunteers in Vikersund) or the local area around a main city (as the volunteers in GöteborgsVarvet). Instead, they share an eagerness to experience (for themselves) the *Olympic spirit*, which is supposed to make up for everything:

I really didn't expect that we would have to work for so long, nine to seven. And be here all the time. We have one day off in ten days, and you really need this one day. Yes, it is more exhausting than I thought. And I have a quite easy job, I think about those who are standing outside the whole day, who are preparing the pits or security. It is so cold at the moment, and they are standing outside all day (...). But we are gaining a lot too, like our uniform and the lunch every day and this connection to different nationalities; I like just to speak English to someone or get to know ... I just love it. Watching the opening ceremony, for me it was really touching, I was standing there and 'Hey, I am part of it as well', and it is great. Yes, I think it gives you a lot, when you are willing to give something back [YOG, female, 24 years old].

As the above quotation indicates, there are pros and cons related to the experience of being a sporting event volunteer. The main point is thus that different perceptions are related to different motives to participate, when one helps out and identify oneself with the local community or area; one is willing to accept more 'boring tasks' because it serves a goal bigger than volunteers' benefits. Even though some of the Vikersund ski flying volunteers would complain over lack of food for volunteers, and also lack of information from leadership, they would also underline examples of the voluntary spirit:

Sometimes we don't get all the information we need, but I guess this is natural in an event of this size. You need to be positive and I am proud of being from Vikersund. To give of my time to the local community and be part of something as big as this event, is great. There are so many people here working hard to make this ski jump 'survive', it is nothing for me to contribute with three or four days once a year. I am so proud that this little community can manage this, and I guess that's why we are all here as volunteers [Vikersund, male, 52 years old].



Third, the sentiments in the above quote may also reflect the volunteers' age. Age may be relevant for the perception of volunteer work, as older volunteers tend to be more positive than younger ones. As a young volunteer at GöteborgsVarvet admitted: 'It is always the same group of old volunteers who participate, and it varies among the younger members of my sport club. When they retire from sport, they also leave the volunteer work here' [GöteborgsVarvet, female, 20 years old]. Moreover, in GöteborgsVarvet many of the more experienced volunteers worry about the culture and stamina of the younger volunteers and about future events that depend on this type of voluntary work. Some of the volunteers claimed that they were part of 'volunteer families', and that they had raised their kids in their own spirit, and succeeded. Others admitted that the youths were a little more spoiled today and that 'I had to force my daughter to be here today. She thinks this type of work is really boring' [GöteborgsVarvet, female, 51 years old]. Or, as this experienced volunteer pointed out:

It is getting harder and harder to make the younger volunteers take part in events. We have a difficult age pyramid here: there is a clear majority of 'older' volunteers. Also, GöteborgsVarvet is special, as each club is responsible for their task, so it doesn't require as much as other events [GöteborgsVarvet, male, 68 years old].

All in all, motivation for and perception of being volunteers at sporting events is a complex phenomenon. In the following, we discuss this complexity, focusing upon the young volunteers, by the application of theory.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The data shows indications of collective orientation as well as indications of individualization. However, the analysis is not straightforward. Although the three contexts under investigation were sampled in order to represent different positions on an old–young axis, it is not the case that Vikersund volunteers are solely collective in their motivation, and that volunteers at the YOG are purely individualists. There are examples of both traditional and modern patterns in the data in general, and in the data within each event. To pick up on the theoretical framework (Bourdieu, 1990), we see different patterns of match between the field of

sporting events and individual habitus. Some are more clear-cut and traditional and some are more nuanced and modern (cf. Lash, 1990, 1999). Let us elaborate.

First, it is evident that many of the volunteers at all three events, but especially in Vikersund and Gothenburg, did not merely seek personal rewards but volunteered out of a sense of commitment to broader collective organizations. This was perhaps less true of the young volunteers at YOG in Innsbruck, who first and foremost were looking for an experience which was personally rewarding and who had no great commitment either to the owner of the event (IOC) or the organizing committee. In contrast, in Gothenburg, volunteers related the motivation for working at the event to the benefits for their sport club. For example, through the income they generated by working at the event, the volunteers helped their sport clubs with a significant amount of the clubs' annual budget. In addition to having a good time, it was the income to their sport club which was the overriding factor for volunteering. While the sport club was important in Vikersund, too, the volunteers' rather stable and reproductive habitus of sport and volunteerism was closely associated with a strong sense of community. As Kristiansen and colleagues (Kristiansen, Skirstad, Waddington, & Parent, in review) suggest, this is a way of expressing, celebrating and reinforcing their commitment to, and identification with, the local community. As in Gothenburg, it was emphasized that being affiliated with organizations in the civil sector is important, and that this was related to the existence and identity of the community of the city. This may be more important in Vikersund where the clubs get less money from volunteering; the point is that although the volunteers generate money for their sport club, they are often members of several sport clubs in Vikersund. The volunteers often work double shifts, and their primary commitment is to the community as a whole rather than to a specific sport club.

In many respects, these findings are in line with, and add to, earlier quantitative studies on sporting event volunteers in Norway (Sand, 2012; Skille, 2012), all of which show a clear pattern of the volunteers. However, there is an important difference between those quantitative studies and this qualitative study: in the earlier studies, the term "resourceful" was used to describe volunteers who were characterized by high income and education, but in this study volunteers were characterized as "resourceful" if they had specific skills and knowledge needed for positioning in the field of sport as well as in the field of sporting events

(cf. Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). These volunteers in this study represent a group with a specific background who know what the ‘game of volunteerism’ is all about. The game of volunteerism is about having long experience of volunteering, as in the case of some interviewees in Vikersund who had volunteered at the same event (or its predecessor) since the 1970s. Without underplaying the relevance of various socialization agents, one interpretation is that these volunteers have a tacit understanding of volunteering because learning to become a volunteer took place during family socialization (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990), as many of the volunteers indicated.

Second, and more so than others, young volunteers showed signs of an individualistic attitude where personal benefits counted more than collective elements, and consequently, volunteers at the YOG displayed a more individualistic approach to volunteerism at sporting events. But young volunteers at other events also revealed this attitude, which was observed by the old volunteers at GöteborgsVarvet and caused concern about what might happen in the future. The experienced volunteers remarked on the change in attitudes among the young volunteers to participate; the young volunteers also complained more over unimportant chores. With young people’s focus on their CV, it can be interpreted that young volunteers utilize sporting events for the creation of their individual biography (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Young volunteers develop their life story through autonomy and emancipation and less by commitment to collectivities such as sport clubs. Therefore a time-limited and intensive project such as a sporting event is suitable for young people, the generation of the late modern era, the *Zeitgeist* (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Moreover, the personal beneficial focus on volunteering was visible in young people in particular as they approached the sporting events with an instrumental aim, asking ‘what is in it for me?’

Regarding why people volunteer and how they experience it, our data support Lash’s version of modernization theory which combines the traditional sociological approach focusing on collective patterns with the modernist approach focusing on individualization (Lash, 1990, 1993a, b, 1999). Whilst our data does not say anything about any possible trend moving from collective volunteerism towards individualistic volunteerism (Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2003), the three cases here rather show how young and old volunteers work together. New volunteers, frequently young persons, add to the older, experienced volunteers; they thus extend the complexity of the sport field and the volunteering field.

Furthermore, this process seems to happen in a higher speed in major cities than in local communities where people might depend more on each other. Following Lash (1999), the apparently groundless also have a ground. In that respect, the young people who choose to volunteer have a rationale, which varies, for example, according to gender, class and family socialization.

In theoretical terms, we have argued that people think, but do not respond mechanically and rationally, to societal conditions after 'objective' weighing of costs and benefits. People are situated, i.e. enabled *and* constrained, by external and internalized culture. In sum, we have observed an increased complexity in both the empirical field of sporting event volunteerism and in the theoretical development of modern social theorizing. We do not move from traditional and collective to modern and individualized volunteerism. We see that new forms of volunteerism are added to old forms (Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2003, 2004; Hunstinx and Meijs, 2011; Sand, 2012; Skille, 2012), and that sociological theory has to, and partly does develop along the same lines (e.g. Lash, 1990, 1993a, b, 1994, 1999); individualization is also patterned.

All in all, this paper has showed, first, that old patterns still remain within sporting event volunteerism, and second, that there are also new patterns within sport volunteerism. The main contribution of this paper, however, is to show how old and new patterns of sporting event volunteering develop across different (old and new) sporting events. What this paper does not show (despite some small indications about socialization and recruitment) is how the various patterns are created. One idea for future research is to follow processes of parenting and other ways of socialization and recruitment into sporting event volunteerism. In that respect, adding socialization theory to the theoretical framework applied here must be considered fruitful.

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