

ENHANCING MOTIVATION FOR CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT AMONG SENIOR VOLUNTEERS: AN IPA-BASED ANALYSIS

Chun An Chen

Department of Business Management, Chung Hua University
cachen@chu.edu.tw

Shu Yen Lu

Department of Business Management, Chung Hua University
suen@520702@gmail.com

Abstract

Many countries are facing an aging population and declining birth rates, making the advancement of social welfare a critical issue for governments. To ensure that older adults can live their later years with health and dignity, and to address the shortage of manpower in social welfare work, encouraging seniors to actively participate in volunteer activities is a promising approach. However, maintaining the ongoing involvement of senior volunteers is a significant challenge. This study uses survey questionnaires and IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis) to investigate ways to enhance the motivation of senior volunteers for continued participation.

Key words: Volunteer, Continued engagement, Seniors, IPA

Introduction

According to statistics from the World Health Organization, the global population aged 60 and above has already surpassed the number of children under 5 years old. This demographic shift has significant implications for various aspects of public life in the 21st century (Grinin, Grinin & Korotayev, 2023). Engaging in beneficial activities helps mitigate these impacts. Volunteer service is a highly favored activity among seniors, contributing to societal

welfare while maintaining personal health and well-being. Many studies have documented the benefits of volunteering (Lam, Yeung & Chung, 2023). Encouraging seniors to participate in volunteer activities can leverage their human capital to realize their social value. Establishing strong social support networks can also help improve and enhance the psychological health of older adults (Wu et al., 2023).

Volunteer service refers to unpaid and non-mandatory activities undertaken

by individuals (Wu et al., 2023). Many organizations engage volunteers primarily because their services are free, but they cannot always guarantee that volunteers will be available. Additionally, due to varying levels of experience and training, the quality of service provided by volunteers is generally lower than that of paid employees for the same nonprofit activities. Despite this, volunteers still constitute a significant portion of the workforce (Berenguer, Haskell & Li, 2023). Organizations that utilize volunteers may be concerned about issues such as high turnover, absenteeism, unreliability, and work quality (Arnon, Almog-Bar & Cnaan, 2023). Therefore, exploring ways to enhance the motivation for continued volunteer participation is a topic worth investigating.

As mentioned earlier, this study will explore how to enhance the motivation for continued participation among senior volunteers. This approach aims to improve the health and sense of purpose of older adults, as well as increase the stability of the volunteer workforce within organizations.

Methodology

This study involves distributing questionnaires to senior volunteers and analyzing the data using IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis).

Questionnaire Design

This study designed the questionnaire based on relevant literature, including four main sections: A) Benefits of Volunteering, B) Willingness to Volunteer, C) Motivation for Volunteering,

and D) Organizational Leadership, with a total of 33 questions. After being revised by scholars in the relevant field, the questionnaire was pre-tested with 10 senior volunteers. The questionnaire items are detailed in Table 1. Participants were asked to rate the importance of each item regarding their sustained motivation as volunteers and their current level of satisfaction.

Survey Participants

The questionnaire targeted individuals aged 50 and above with experience as volunteers. A total of 116 completed questionnaires were collected.

Importance Performance Analysis

IPA helps managers understand the needs of respondents regarding products, services, or management and make corresponding improvements. It has been widely applied in many studies (Wu, Kuo, Yang, Chang & Chen, 2023). In this study, the collected questionnaires were used to calculate the average values of importance and satisfaction for each item, which provided the coordinates for each item. By calculating the average importance and performance of all items, we obtained the central coordinates. Using this information to create a graph, all items were divided into four quadrants.

The first quadrant represents the "Keep Up the Good Work" attributes. This area indicates items that are performing well and have strengths and potential opportunities. The second quadrant, labeled "Possible Overkill," includes attributes that are of lower importance but have strong performance. This

suggests that limited resources might be invested here, and could be reallocated to improve efficiency. The third quadrant is marked as "Low Priority," containing attributes that require less attention. The fourth quadrant is "Concentrate Here," revealing attributes that, despite their high importance, are performing poorly. This quadrant is crucial for policy interventions as it highlights service weaknesses and areas needing improvement to meet client expectations (Babalola, 2023). (See Figure 1)

Results

Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis was conducted on the questionnaire results. The questionnaire comprised four categories, with Cronbach's α values for each category as follows: Job Satisfaction (0.916), Continued Participation (0.914), Motivation for Participation (0.922), and Leadership Traits of Leaders (0.966). These values indicate high internal consistency of the scale.

IPA Analysis

The study calculated the average values of importance and performance for each item, as listed in Table 1. The overall average importance was 4.28, and the overall average satisfaction was 4.21. These values were used as the central coordinates for the IPA plot. Each item was then plotted according to its values on the coordinate chart, resulting in the IPA analysis diagram shown in

Figure 1. Items falling into the fourth quadrant are those that need prioritized improvement. Specifically, these include items A1, D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, and D9.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aims to explore how to enhance the motivation for sustained volunteer participation, focusing on senior volunteers and employing the IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis) method for analysis. The results indicate that the items in the fourth quadrant, which should be prioritized for improvement, are primarily related to the leadership style of the organization managing the volunteers. Senior volunteers, having extensive work experience and possibly having been former supervisors themselves, tend to have their own ideas and generally hope for an improvement in the performance of the leaders of the volunteer-managing organizations. This includes the ability of the organizational leaders to timely and effectively adjust organizational goals, serve as role models within the organization, make wise decisions on various volunteer service issues quickly, and effectively secure sufficient resources to achieve goals. Furthermore, leaders should demonstrate excellent insight, fairly evaluate volunteer behavior, maintain a good overall reputation, and gain recognition from other organizational leaders.

Table 1. Content of each item and IPA value

Item	I	P	Q
A: Benefits of Volunteering	4.41	4.17	IV
A1.Volunteering showcases my talents	4.39	4.29	I
A2.Volunteering stimulates my personal potential	4.42	4.39	I
A3.Volunteering improves interpersonal skills	4.38	4.40	I
A4.Volunteering makes life more fulfilling	4.79	4.43	I
A5.Volunteering increases my knowledge and experience	4.31	4.29	I
A6.Volunteering helps me make friends	4.02	3.99	III
A7.Volunteering earns me more recognition	4.08	3.93	III
A8.Volunteering enhances my social reputation	4.32	4.31	I
A9.Volunteering provides collaboration opportunities	4.41	4.17	IV
B: Willingness to Volunteer			
B1.Willing to continue participating in and promoting volunteer activities	4.08	4.22	II
B2.Willing to strive towards the volunteer organization's goals	4.22	4.21	III
B3.Willing to recommend volunteering to friends and family	3.88	4.01	III
B4.Willing to invest more time in promoting volunteer services	4.08	4.10	III
B5.Willing to find resources to support volunteer services	4.02	3.99	III
B6.Willing to put more effort into volunteer work	4.13	4.11	III
B7.Continued volunteering is enjoyable and voluntary for me	4.47	4.36	I
C: Motivation for Volunteering			
C1.Volunteering is an opportunity for self-challenge	4.08	4.25	II
C2.Volunteering improves my quality of life	4.12	4.19	III
C3.Volunteering broadens my horizons	4.27	4.32	II
C4.Volunteering makes life happier	4.23	4.34	II
C5.Volunteering is driven by a desire to give back to society	4.34	4.37	I
C6.Volunteering is about doing something meaningful	4.46	4.32	I
C7.Volunteering is because I am part of society	4.45	4.29	I
C8.Volunteering is because I want to help more people	4.35	4.30	I
D: Organizational Leadership			
D1.The leader effectively adjusts organizational goals	4.32	4.08	IV
D2.The leader sets an example within the organization	4.38	4.21	IV
D3.The leader makes wise decisions quickly	4.52	4.16	IV
D4.The leader secures necessary resources effectively	4.28	4.14	IV
D5.The leader communicates well with volunteers	4.39	4.25	I
D6.The leader shows insight and fairly evaluates volunteer behavior	4.31	4.10	IV
D7.The leader gains recognition from the volunteer community	4.33	4.26	I
D8.The leader receives affirmation from other leaders	4.27	4.11	III
D9.The leader has a good reputation and is recognized for their abilities	4.41	4.15	IV
Mean	4.28	4.21	

I: Importance P: Performance Q: Quadrant

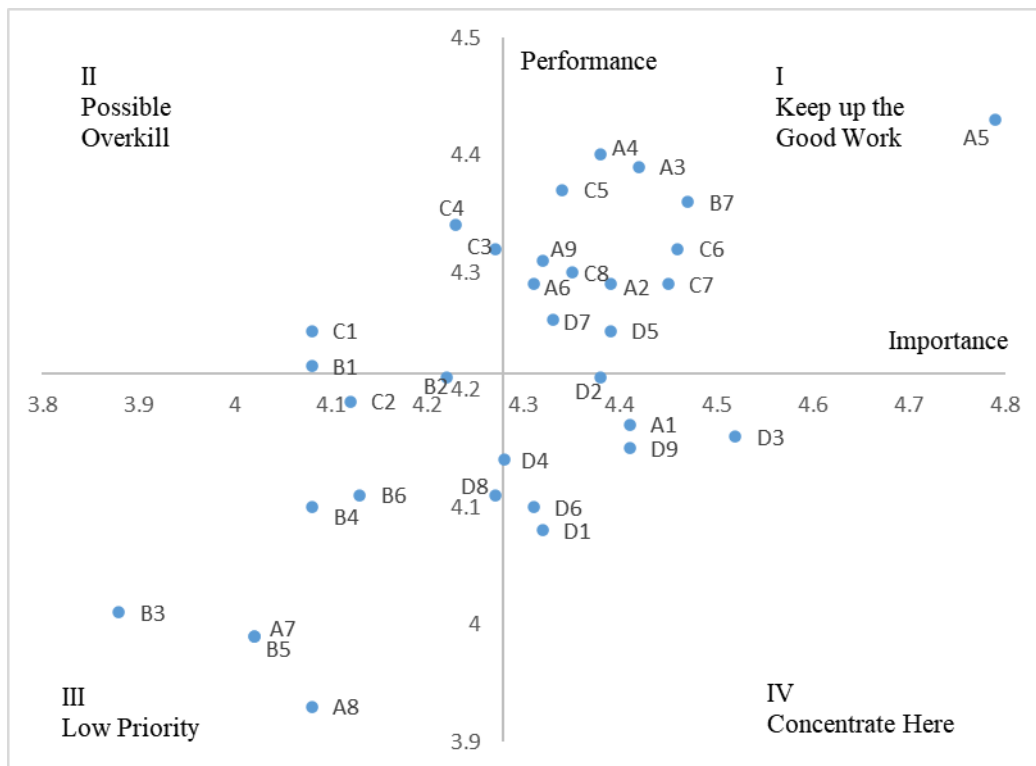


Figure 1. IPA Analysis Diagram

The study results show that organizational leaders play a crucial role among volunteers, but volunteers are relatively dissatisfied with the performance of these leaders. This dissatisfaction may stem from the current standardized nature of volunteer work, which limits the leaders' scope for innovation; scheduling issues; or perhaps differing subjective opinions and perspectives that require patient communication. It is recommended that relevant units provide more training for organizational leaders and volunteers, invite scholars to guide both leaders and volunteers, strengthen two-way communication, expand interpersonal relationships, and enhance the stability of volunteer service to create a win-win, harmonious society.

References

- Arnon, L., Almog-Bar, M., & Cnaan, R. A. (2023). Volunteer engageability: A conceptual framework. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 52(6), 1633-1659.
- Babalola, T. O. (2023). Adopting Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) model to assess land governance in the peri-urban areas of Ibadan, Nigeria. *Land Use Policy*, 133, 106850.
- Berenguer, G., Haskell, W. B., & Li, L. (2023). Managing volunteers and paid workers in a nonprofit operation. *Management Science*.

Grinin, L., Grinin, A., & Korotayev, A. (2023). Global Aging: An Integral Problem of the Future. How to Turn a Problem into a Development Driver?. In *Reconsidering the limits to growth: A report to the Russian association of the club of Rome* (pp. 117-135). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Lam, A. H., Yeung, D. Y., & Chung, E. K. (2023). Benefits of volunteerism for middle-aged and older adults: Comparisons between types of volunteering activities. *Ageing & Society*, 43(10), 2287-2306.

Wu, C. H., Kuo, P. L., Yang, C. H., Chang, Y. C., & Chen, T. L. (2023). Importance-performance analysis (IPA) in analyzing the satisfaction of administrative support in teaching practice research programs. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 1943.

Wu, Z., Xu, C., Zhang, L., Wang, Y., Leeson, G. W., Chen, G., ... & Yue, X. G. (2023). Volunteering and Depression among Older Adults: An Empirical Analysis Based on CLASS 2018. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, 25(3), 403-419.