



The role of engagement in retaining volunteers

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Received: 26 February 2024 / Accepted: 16 July 2024 / Published online: 25 July 2024
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Abstract

Under the Theory of Self-Determination, this paper determines the moderating role of volunteers' engagement in their motivation and retention. A study with 761 volunteers from different types of NGOs and SEM methodology shows that (1) higher levels of psychological need to feel competent are associated with higher intrinsic motivation, and (2) higher volunteer satisfaction leads to higher intention to recommend the NGO to others; more in higher engaged volunteers. This study proposes that NGO managers should allow volunteers to choose the tasks that best meet their needs and even design their volunteer opportunities with motivating and meaningful tasks tailored to their preferences. The paper contributes as follows: (1) although the volunteer's motivation has been studied, little research has focused on why a person wishes to volunteer and remain a volunteer; (2) the study of engagement applied to the field of volunteering is relative novel; and (3) there is a weakness in the literature related to the measures used to study volunteering motivations and engagement.

Keywords: volunteer retention; NGO; motivation; engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the recent literature on volunteering, several authors have reflected on the essential role of volunteers in the functioning of many NGOs (Ata et al., 2024). Based on the need for volunteers in these organizations, their retention becomes critical (Conduit et al., 2019), and identifying key variables for their retention is essential for NGO managers to design and execute their policies based on these variables. The leaders of these companies should be concerned about the motivation of their volunteers to avoid burnout (Akinribade, 2023). As mentioned above, one of the main problems NGOs face is the permanence and turnover of volunteers, which has important implications for those organisations that depend on volunteers to carry out their activities. The abandonment of volunteers generates an organisational problem, with undesirable consequences for the users of the programmes in which they collaborate, reducing their quality and even threatening the continuity of the programmes (Harp et al., 2017).

In this sense, this paper focuses on the role that engagement can play as a moderator in the relationships between the antecedents of volunteers' intrinsic motivation and the relationship between this motivation and its consequences. In this sense, two main concepts –intrinsic motivation and engagement– represent the main pillars of this research.

Since the NGOs need to motivate their volunteers to earn their loyalty (Zollo et al., 2017; Gross & Rottler, 2019; Chen et al., 2022), an aspect of great relevance is whether the level of engagement (attachment) shown by the volunteers towards the NGO will affect their motivations. It is identified that coping mechanisms have an essential relationship in the triggering of pathological processes associated with stress, such as burnout; on the other hand, engagement in the workplace would be key to ensuring organizational functioning as well as individual fulfilment (Espín et al., 2022; Ccapa, 2023); motivating

volunteers into the organizations. Thus, it is possible to find work, such as that of Kang (2016), which looks at effective ways of engaging/loyalising volunteers to perform their tasks well and uses engagement to understand volunteers' motivations better. The volunteers collaborate with an NGO, which they consider part of. Volunteers consider themselves part of NGOs, with which they are satisfied.

Therefore, in our study, we propose the study of engagement because it is an active motivational state that explains more thoroughly than other more passive states the behaviours of volunteers, e.g. their satisfaction and loyalty.

In this sense, and despite the scarcity of work on volunteer engagement (Vecina et al., 2012), it is a concept of particular interest in the management of those individuals who, according to the classical definitions, freely choose to help others by dedicating their time to an organizational framework and without receiving economic consideration (Penner, 2002); these volunteers show altruism and search for recognition (Trajano et al., 2023).

The contribution of this paper relies on four main points. First, although the motivation to volunteer has been studied in the literature (Chen et al., 2022), a better understanding of the topic is necessary to improve volunteer management and retention strategy in NGOs (Stukas et al., 2016). As stated by Hansen and Slagsvold (2020), more research needs to be done on why a person wishes to volunteer and remain a volunteer. For this reason, this study adopts a marketing approach to understand the antecedents of volunteers' motivations under the Theory of Self-Determination conceptual framework. In this sense, this paper adopts an innovative approach relating to the context of motivation.

Second, another of the main contributions is the relative novelty of the study of engagement applied to the field of volunteering because research still needs to elaborate on the topic of volunteers' engagement and their behaviours (Aboramadan et al., 2019; Fernandes & de Matos, 2023). This is because the most committed volunteers, those who

are most “engaged”, seem to be the ones who get the most satisfaction in their volunteering experiences (Huynh et al., 2012) and have less intention to leave the NGO (Huynh et al., 2014), thus decreasing turnover. In this sense, the current study shows the prudential value of segmenting the sample of volunteers by differentiating between those with higher and lower engagement.

Third, a weakness in the literature is related to the measures used to study volunteering motivations and engagement. According to Hansen and Slagsvold (2020), most measures consist of a single item, missing the information that multi-item measures can provide. Thus, this paper measures the main concepts following the 5-item Likert scales widely accepted by the literature and adopts an alternative approach to consider them.

Additionally, this research aims to understand better the motivations and engagement of volunteers in a particular country with a strong tradition of volunteerism, Spain. Volunteering in Spain is provided through NGOs. A wide dispersion of associations and social foundations registers at the national, autonomous community, and local levels, where different entities coexist simultaneously and without updating. In other words, no single register of third-sector entities regularly updates the data contained therein, as reflected in the Report on the Preparation of the Directory of the Third Sector of Social Action, published by the Platform of Social Action NGOs (PONGAS, 2019). Volunteering is a phenomenon that has been introduced previously in Spain, but it suffers from high dropout rates, leading to a more in-depth study of volunteers' motivations and engagement (Murillo & Fraj, 2020). In this sense, currently, 8.2% of the Spanish population, i.e., 3.3 million people, carry out some solidarity work, according to the latest report of the Observatorio del Voluntariado (Volunteering Observatory), which has just been published by the Spanish Volunteering Platform (PVE). This study reveals that the typical volunteer is a woman, aged between 25 and 45, with a high level of education,

living in a medium to large population, working and living in a household with two members and no children or dependents (Plataforma del Voluntariado de España- Spanish Volunteering Platform, 2023).

In sum and based on the Theory of Self-Determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985), this investigation tries to analyze whether the motivations of the volunteers, their antecedents (autonomy, competence, and social relationships) and their effects (direct effect on positive emotions, and indirect effects on satisfaction and loyalty) differ depending on their level of engagement. We propose to answer the following question: Can the engagement influence the relationships between intrinsic motivation, its antecedents, and its effects? As Hansen and Slagsvold (2020) state, how to engage and keep volunteers in organizations still needs to be determined.

To reach the objectives and answer the question, a study was conducted with 761 Spanish volunteers from two types of NGOs (365 volunteers from a generalist NGO and 396 volunteers from a specialized NGO). Results confirm the possibility of applying the Self Determination Theory (SDT) in volunteering contexts and the role of engagement in the proposed relationships. The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 2 provides a conceptual framework, followed by methodology in Section 3. Section 4 includes the results and discussion. Section 5 provides conclusions, implications, and suggestions for further research.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Before analysing the role of engagement in the volunteers' motivations, it is essential to lay the foundations of the conceptual proposal that focuses on the volunteer's motivation and its effects. In this sense, this paper proposes the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) for a better understanding of volunteers' intrinsic motivations in a novel way

because it allows us to analyze psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2001) in volunteering contexts. In other words, it relies on intrinsic motivation, i.e., internal and personal decisions, without considering any other external influences or interferences. This theory offers a proposal for a better understanding of the motivational basis of personality and social behaviour and the relation of basic psychological needs to well-being, psychological flourishing, and high quality of life (Ryan & Deci, 2022). This theory postulates that basic psychological needs must be universally satisfied to experience ongoing growth, integrity, and wellness (competence, autonomy, and social relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2022).

This approach can help better understand the phenomenon of volunteer motivation novelly because this conceptual framework considers only intrinsic motivation (Chen et al., 2022; Fernandes & de Martos, 2023). Under this theory, when psychological needs are met, volunteers are more likely to be motivated through the meaning and enjoyment of their own activity rather than being motivated through rewards (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2019). The main novelty in applying this approach is that it incorporates the quality of motivation that volunteers experience during their voluntary tasks into the analysis of volunteering (Van Schie et al., 2019). Therefore, this paper focuses on the quality of motivation that volunteers experience rather than the motives or reasons for volunteering (Van Schie et al., 2019).

In this sense, recent work has sought to incorporate this theory into the field of volunteering (for example, Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019; Van Schie et al., 2019; Wray-Lake et al., 2019; Li et al., 2022). These studies consider intrinsic motivation as the driving force behind voluntary participation, showing a positive link between intrinsic motivation and the well-being of the volunteer (Ryan et al., 1996; De Clerck et al., 2019). This motivation is linked to the fundamental concept of “basic psychological needs”, which is innate,

universal, and essential for intrinsic health and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 2002). Under this theory, these basic psychological needs are autonomy, competence and social relations or affinity. Specifically, if these needs are continually met, people will function effectively and develop healthily. Furthermore, these three needs must be met to increase intrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Wu et al., 2016). A previous study (Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019) proposed a model of motivations following the Self-Determination Theory. In this model, three antecedent factors (basic psychological need for autonomy, competence, and social relations or affinity) and various direct or indirect effects of motivations (positive emotions that the volunteer may feel, their satisfaction, the intention to continue volunteering, the intention to abandon the volunteer work, and the intention to recommend the work to others) were considered, analyzing the relationships between these concepts.

Based on this theoretical model, the current study proposes analyzing the possible moderating role of volunteers' engagement.

Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) defined and conceptualized engagement as “a state of positive mind related to work characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption”. According to these authors, vigour means high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, a willingness to invest effort in what is being done, and persistence in situations of difficulty. Dedication means volunteers are strongly motivated and involved in the activity, experiencing a feeling of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Finally, absorption is characterized as being complemented by concentrating on and getting carried away with the task, sensing that time passes quickly.

As Kang (2016) proposes, engagement is an essential complement to understanding the motivations of volunteers. The author states that in many organizations where volunteers are crucial for their missions and operations, it is necessary to find ways to effectively

engage volunteers to perform their tasks well because, as literature has found, engagement is an essential psychological state that can yield voluntary behavioural support, which exceeds volunteers' formal duty, i.e., extra-role behaviours (Khang, 2016).

In the context of NGOs, Gagné (2003) used the term engagement under the name of volunteer work engagement. Haivas et al. (2013) referred to this as simply volunteer engagement. Subsequently, we will refer to this construct as volunteer engagement. Let us remember that, in the field of volunteering, this concept has received far less attention than in other fields and research in this area remains incipient (Vecina et al., 2012). Recently, researchers have assessed the usefulness of engagement in the context of volunteering and concluded that "it is of great practical interest for the management of NGOs" (Vecina et al., 2012, p. 143).

Therefore, in what follows, once the engagement and framing within the volunteering paradigm are defined, then the possible moderating effect of this concept is analyzed in the theoretical model posed. The following is an analysis of the moderating role that volunteer engagement can play in (1) the relationships between motivations and (2) the relationships with their effects.

2.1. Moderation of volunteer engagement on the antecedent of the overall model

Regarding the antecedents of the volunteer's motivation and transferring the postulates of Self-Determination Theory explained above to the sphere of volunteer motivation, it is possible to conclude the antecedent role of the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence, and social relations on the motivations of all human beings. The three basic psychological needs defined are direct determinants of intrinsic motivation, so all three must be achieved to increase intrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Wu et al., 2016; Fernandes & de Martos, 2023). Three direct antecedents of intrinsic motivation

(autonomy, competence, and social relationships) will positively predict a volunteer's motivation to join an NGO (Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019).

In this scenario, we can differentiate between high-engagement and low-engagement volunteers. It can be anticipated that its incidence will be more powerful in the case of individuals with high engagement in the work they develop in the NGO (Haivas et al., 2013). Indeed, for highly engaged subjects who are more linked to the organization, the impact of meeting their basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and sociability) on motivation will be significantly more substantial. Conversely, in individuals with lower levels of engagement, the starting needs (autonomy, competence, and sociability) will also be more tenuous, contributing to increasing the motivations of volunteers, but less so than in contexts of high engagement.

The reason for this intensification of relationships raised in high engagement contexts is explained in various studies that show, for paid work tasks, that workers with high engagement are more active; they feed back into their own performance, seek new challenges, commit to a job well done, have high energy, and manifest an energetic and effective connection with their work (Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2001; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Although the contexts are different (paid work and voluntary work), it is feasible to believe that in the field of volunteering, people with higher levels of engagement exhibit higher levels of commitment. In this sense, the motivation will be significantly higher than that of individuals with lower levels of engagement (Vecina et al., 2012). In fact, Vecina et al. (2012) evaluated the internal structure of the concept of work engagement in a sample of volunteers from the social and environmental area, confirming the structure of the three factors of the construct and showing that volunteers who exhibit a high level of engagement (especially the most senior) behave differently than volunteers with less engagement. Previously, Fourie et al. (2008) found similar

results. In a similar study, Garrosa et al. (2014), when analyzing the volunteers of an association focused on people with cancer and their families, obtained differences between the volunteers who showed moderate and high levels in different dimensions of engagement. Therefore, engagement is a factor capable of reinforcing volunteers' motivation in their work performance.

In addition, Haivas et al. (2013) found that people who have their basic needs (autonomy, competence, and social relations) satisfied end up being more engaged and involved. That is, volunteers who have a higher level of engagement and better cover their psychological intention to leave are more motivated. These authors relied on previous research in which a positive relationship between needs, satisfaction and work engagement was also discovered, both in the context of volunteering and paid work (Deci et al., 2001; Gagné, 2003; Van den Broeck et al., 2008).

In summary, when workers meet their three basic psychological needs in their position (autonomy, competence, and social relations), they will be more motivated, and this will happen more intensely if these workers start with powerful levels of linkage with their company (high engagement) (Haivas et al., 2013).

First, regarding the need for autonomy (being able to carry out a task using one's own initiative), subjects attached to the company and who feel part of it will have the imprint and security of working for themselves independently since they are considered essential pieces of the organization with their own decision-making capacity (Haivas et al., 2013; Bakker et al., 2015). Second, regarding the satisfaction of the basic psychological need to feel competent, it has also been confirmed that those individuals with the highest level of engagement will feel more fulfilled with the activities performed (Baard, 2002; Van den Broeck et al., 2008; Haivas et al., 2013). Third, as regards the need to feel connected and accepted by others (social relations), individuals more attached to the company, with

stronger and more stable links over time, will develop bonds of friendship, communication networks, and affective bonds that are more intense than those of workers whose relationship with the company and fellow workers is less intense (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2009; Haivas et al., 2013).

In sum, the antecedents of volunteers' motivation will be enhanced in contexts of high engagement. In this sense, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a (eng): Volunteers with a higher need for autonomy report a higher intrinsic motivation. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

H1b (eng): Volunteers with a higher need to feel competent report a higher intrinsic motivation. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

H1c (eng): Volunteers with a higher need to socially relate report a higher intrinsic motivation. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

2.2. Moderation of volunteer engagement on the effects of the overall model

Along with the antecedent of volunteers' motivations, a series of effects of intrinsic motivation can be summarised in three: positive emotions, satisfaction, and loyalty (intention to continue, intention to stay and intention to recommend) (Bigné & Andreu, 2004; Kim et al., 2019; Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019; Oh, 2019; Cho et al., 2020; Cho et al., 2023). In this sense, diverse authors state that intrinsically motivated individuals build a positive attitude and mind, resulting in positive emotions during the activity (Gagné, 2009; Cho et al., 2020). These positive emotions can also increase volunteer satisfaction

(Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019). This volunteer satisfaction can increase their loyalty (Bigné & Andreu, 2004; Cho et al., 2020).

In this scenario, the relationship between motivation and its effects on the volunteer (positive emotions, satisfaction, and loyalty) can be affected depending on the level of engagement of the volunteers, as we try to justify next.

On the one hand, in terms of the effect of motivation on emotions, it can be anticipated that its impact will be more substantial in high-engagement contexts. Thus, for the lucrative field, Bakker and Derks (2010) indicate that the linkage with work (engagement) is deeply related to diverse emotions, such as enthusiasm, happiness, satisfaction, and energy - all positive emotions. That is, greater engagement will enhance positive emotions in the workplace. In the same vein, Salanova et al. (2011) relate engagement in organizations with positive emotions. Similarly, Shirom (2011) showed, in a literature review, that vigour, one of the components of engagement, is revealed as a positive affective state related to work, going beyond a mere specific positive emotion. In short, the relationship between the motivations and emotions of the workers grows as they engage with the company.

On the other hand, regarding the effect of positive emotions on satisfaction, the impact of these emotions will also be stronger in contexts of high engagement since satisfaction and engagement are closely related terms. Indeed, the literature states that satisfaction and engagement are linked concepts representing two sides of the same coin (Harter et al., 2002; Macey & Schneider, 2008). Harter et al. (2002, p. 269) define engagement as “the involvement and satisfaction of the individual, as well as enthusiasm for work”, finding high correlations between employee satisfaction and engagement. In the same vein, Macey and Schneider (2008) claimed that satisfied individuals tend to show a higher level of commitment, and Vecina et al. (2012) confirmed that the engagement of volunteers is

positively related to their satisfaction. So, the higher the level of voluntary engagement, the greater the volunteer's satisfaction with their work. In the lucrative field, we find numerous studies that link high levels of engagement with high levels of emotion and satisfaction. For example, the work of Vila et al. (2012) revealed that a higher level of engagement increases sellers' satisfaction.

Accordingly, we can propose the following hypotheses:

H2 (eng): Volunteers with higher intrinsic motivation report more positive emotions. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

H3 (eng): Volunteers with higher positive emotions report more satisfaction. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

Similarly, Vecina et al. (2012) verified, in contexts of high volunteer engagement, the relationship between higher levels of job satisfaction and greater loyalty to the company, on the one hand, and lower desire to leave it on the other. Thus, for these authors, satisfied volunteers were found to be the most loyal to the organization (less apt to leave it), partly because of the stronger link (engagement) they have developed with it. Similarly, Malinen and Harju (2017) confirmed that the level of engagement the volunteers present can improve their satisfaction, which can explain their intention to continue volunteering.

Additionally, Alfes et al. (2016) showed how higher engagement levels are negatively associated with leaving the NGO. Their study was developed in a sample of more than a thousand volunteers from a charity in the UK, and the authors concluded that engagement is a positive psychological state linked to a range of beneficial individual and organizational outcomes. Among them stands out, in the positive terrain, the happiness of the volunteer, which reflects satisfaction; and, in the negative field, the intention to

leave the organization is noted, or their lack of fidelity to the NGO. These results confirm a previous study by Huynh et al. (2014) with emergency services volunteers, in which the researchers demonstrated a negative relationship between engagement and rotational intentions. Cox et al. (2018) obtained similar results on a sample of online volunteers.

In short, engagement is a conceptual blend of commitment, job satisfaction, and loyalty; the last element is the intention to repeat the experience and recommend others (Bakker et al., 2011). This explains the subsequent findings of Gross and Rottler (2019), which show that recommendation (or word-of-mouth-WOM) is positively influenced by the satisfaction and identification of volunteers with the organization. So, the higher the level of engagement, the greater the positive influence of the volunteers' satisfaction with the NGO on their intention to recommend others to volunteer within it.

As such, the following hypotheses are considered in which the possible moderating effect of engagement is contemplated in the relationships between satisfaction and intentions to remain/leave the NGO and recommend it.

H4a (eng): Volunteers with higher satisfaction report higher intention to remain in the NGO. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

H4b (eng): Volunteers with lower satisfaction report higher intention to leave the NGO. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

H4c (eng): Volunteers with higher satisfaction report higher intention to recommend the NGO. This relationship is stronger for higher-engaged volunteers than for low-engagement volunteers.

Figure 1 contains the moderating role of engagement in the theoretical model proposed, where a central hypothesis can be stated:

H: The engagement plays a moderating role in the relationships established.

Figure 1. Proposed model: the moderator role of engagement

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and data collection

The study was conducted with a population consisting of volunteers in NGOs who are over 18 years old and residing in Spain. An online questionnaire was created using the SurveyMonkey tool and distributed via mail and WhatsApp. Non-probabilistic snowball sampling was followed, specifically the non-discriminative exponential version of the snowball method proposed by Voicu and Babonea (1997). This sampling is particularly appropriate when the population of interest is difficult to reach, and compiling a list of possible participants poses difficulties for the researcher (Etikan et al., 2016). Following a procedure like that of other authors (Bidee et al., 2013), prior contact was made with the leaders of various NGOs and associations. As there is no single register of Spanish NGOs, we made a list of the leading NGOs by consulting, among others, the registers that appear in the Plataforma del Voluntariado (<https://platavoluntariado.org>) or the Guía de ONGD - Coordinadora Valenciana de ONG (www.cvongd.org). Considering their activities, these NGOs can be classified into generalist and specialist NGOs (Vakil, 1997). It must be noted that there is a lack of consensus on defining and classifying NGOs (Vakil, 1997). For the sake of simplicity, in this study, following Vakil's (1997) recommendation, we consider two categories of NGOs according to the number and type of activities they carry out: on the one hand, generalist NGOs, characterised by their diverse lines of work and services, even broad and varied, such as the Red Cross, whose main lines of action include, for example: Social Intervention, Health and Relief, and International Cooperation. On the other hand, there are specialist or specialised NGOs, defined as those

that specialise in a specific type of sector of activity, such as health, defence of disadvantaged groups, charity, etc. (Boni Aristizábal and Ferrero, 1998).

In this way, six NGOs collaborated most in disseminating the questionnaire, contributing the most significant number of responses from their volunteers to the research. These organizations were the Spanish Red Cross, Caritas Diocese of Valencia, Casa de la Caridad Valencia (Valencian Association of Charity), Spanish Association against Cancer (AECC), Food Bank of Valencia, and Moms in Action. The response rate was quite varied, reaching a rate of 48%, for example, in the Spanish Red Cross, due to the size of the organization and the proximity to its volunteers of the volunteer manager who made frequent reminders of the mailing during the questionnaire collection period. In contrast, the response rate for other NGOs was 5% or even lower (i.e., Moms in Action). In these cases, additional collaborations were sought to increase the sample size (i.e., Economists without Borders or Everyone's Shop). Thus, after eliminating invalid questionnaires, we collected 847 responses, which allowed us to have a final sample of 761 valid questionnaires from Spanish volunteers over 18 years old: 365 volunteers collaborated with a generalist NGO, and 396 volunteers developed their volunteer work in a specialized NGO. Of the collected questionnaires, 86 were considered invalid as they contained questions that had not been answered.

It must be noted that in terms of the size (small, medium, and big) and the activities (generalists, specialists) of the NGOs, we achieved a varied and heterogeneous sample. On the one hand, the generalist NGO volunteers belong to the Spanish Red Cross, one of Spain's largest NGOs. On the other hand, in the sample of volunteers from the specialist NGOs, some belong to large NGOs, such as Cáritas Diocesana and AECC, two of the largest NGOs in Spain. Still, some belong to small NGOs, more of a local nature, such as Casa de la Caridad, Moms in Action, or even very small NGOs, such as SPAB.

Table 1 shows that the sociodemographic characterization of the volunteers' sample is as follows: 65% (495) are women, and 266 are men (35%). In total, 52.2% of the sample is between 18 and 45 years old, with 43.6% being single and 43% married. As for their employment situation, 30% of the sample were full-time employees. The sample distribution reflects the specific demographics of the Spanish case regarding the ageing population pyramid (20% of the volunteers are pre-retired or retired) and in the labour market, with high unemployment and precarious employment rates. Of the respondents, 13.8% are unemployed, and 13.5% are employed part-time.

Table 1: Sociodemographic profile of the sample

3.2. Measuring variables

The various concepts were measured following 5-item Likert scales proposed and widely accepted in previous studies (Table 2). In this sense, the basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and social relationships/affinity) were measured following the proposal of Haivas et al. (2013); intrinsic motivation was measured using the scale proposed by Gangé et al. (2015); the positive emotions were evaluated following the proposal of López-Gómez et al. (2015); the volunteer satisfaction was measured with the scale of Güntert et al. (2016), the intention to leave was evaluated following the proposal of Wisner et al. (2010); the intention to leave was measure with the scale proposed by Gallarza et al. (2010); and the intention to leave was evaluated by the scale of Jiménez and Fuertes (2005).

To measure the level of engagement, we employed the scale of Rodríguez-Montalbán et al. (2014) of the UWES-9 scale of Schaufeli et al. (2006) (3 items for vigour: Vig1. In my volunteer work, I feel full of energy, Vig2. I am strong and vigorous in my volunteer work, Vig3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work as a volunteer. to go

to work as a volunteer. 3 items for dedication: Dedic1. I am enthusiastic about my volunteer work, Dedic2. My volunteer work inspires me, Dedic3. I am proud of the work I do as a volunteer, and 3 items for absorption: Abs1. I am happy when I am absorbed in my work as a volunteer, Abs2. I am immersed in my volunteer work, Abs3. I get “carried away” by my volunteer work). Then, the median of all the items was calculated. If a volunteer reached less than 3.89 points out of 5, we classified this individual as low/medium engaged. If the volunteer got punctuation of more than 3.89 points out of 5, we considered this subject highly engaged.

Table 2: Concepts measurement (5-point Likert Scales)

Related to the engagement variable, and according to Hair et al. (2019), a moderator can also be a continuous/metric variable treated as categorical if it can be divided into several groups. In this sense and as previously indicated, the sample was divided into two subsamples:

- A subsample of volunteers (265 individuals) with low and medium levels of engagement.
- Another subsample of volunteers (496 individuals) with high levels of engagement.

To decide which group everyone should be included in, the median of the volunteer’s engagement was calculated in the overall sample, with a value of 3.89 points out of 5. Thus, the first subsample encompasses volunteers (265) who had an engagement of less than 3.89 points, which we call low and medium level, and, in the other subsample composed of 496 volunteers, those who had an engagement level of 3.89 points, or more were included.

The median obtained in the global sample is a relatively high value. The reason is that people who volunteer without remuneration tend to have a higher level of engagement than the population average (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2009; Fourie et al., 2008).

Additionally, the annexe lists the items of each scale used in this study, and more details related to the psychometric characteristics of the measurement model are provided.

3.3. Statistical Techniques

We started the data analysis with a confirmatory factorial analysis (CFA) to test the psychometric characteristics of our instrument in the global sample and the two subsamples of volunteer engagement. The sample was divided into two groups, as explained in previous lines. The models' fit was good, and the instrument was reliable and valid. Then, we did an SEM (structural equation model) of our causal model. Finally, we analyzed the moderator effect of volunteers' engagement within the relations proposed in the causal model through a multi-group analysis. The data was analyzed using SPSS and EQS software.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

As explained before, the eight hypotheses were tested first without considering the moderating role of engagement. In this case, except for the first hypothesis (H1a), all the hypotheses are accepted.

After this, the sample was divided into 265 low-engaged volunteers and 496 high-engaged volunteers, following the procedure explained below. It is observed that the results obtained converge with those achieved for the overall sample (Table 3). In fact, in both samples, less engaged and more engaged volunteers, the same hypotheses are supported, that is:

- Volunteers with higher competence and social relationships are more intrinsically motivated.
- Volunteers who are more intrinsically motivated present more positive emotions.

- Volunteers with more positive emotions are more satisfied.
- More satisfied volunteers present lower intention to leave the NGO and higher intent to remind into and recommend the NGO.

Table 3: Moderator effect of volunteer engagement: High level of volunteer engagement versus low level

Second, the Lagrange multiplier test (Lmtest) was used following Aldás and Uriel (2017) to see if the differences between such coefficients are significant. This is shown in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Figure 2. Moderating role of volunteer engagement

On the one hand, the results reflect that the moderating effect is insignificant in six of the eight hypotheses. Specifically, H1a (eng), H1c (eng), H2 (eng), H3 (eng), H4a (eng), and H4b (eng) are not supported. That is, in both samples, these relationships occur with the same intensity and there are no significant differences ($\chi^2_{H1a}=0.16$, $p>0.05$; $\chi^2_{H1c}=0.22$, $p>0.05$; $\chi^2_{H2}=0.99$, $p>0.05$; $\chi^2_{H3}=0.01$, $p>0.05$; $\chi^2_{H4a}=0.006$, $p>0.05$; $\chi^2_{H4b}=0.09$, $p>0.05$).

On the other hand, the results show that, on the contrary, H1b (eng) and H4c (eng) could be supported since, in both cases, significant differences are identified ($\chi^2_{H1b}=2.78$, $p<0.01$; $\chi^2_{H4c}=4.64$, $p<0.05$). Specifically, the association between the need to feel competent in the work and intrinsic motivation is significantly higher for volunteers with a high level of engagement than for volunteers with lower levels of engagement ($\beta_{\text{stand low-eng}} = 0.42$; $\beta_{\text{stand high-eng}} = 0.52$; $t = 8.86$). So, H1b (eng) is supported. Similarly, the association between being satisfied in the position and the intention to recommend the organization is also significantly higher for volunteers with higher levels of

engagement than those with lower levels ($\beta_{\text{stand low-eng}} = 0.41$; $\beta_{\text{stand high-eng}} = 0.22$; $t = 10.55$). So H4c (eng) would also be accepted.

4.2. Discussion

As Figure 2 shows, volunteers' level of engagement moderates only two of the hypothesized relationships: the relationship between the basic psychological need to feel competent (H1b (eng)) and the intrinsic motivation, as well as the relationship between the satisfaction of the volunteer in the position and the intention to recommend volunteering to others (H4 (eng)). According to the work of Garrosa et al. (2014), "the decision to volunteer and be linked to their activity in time with energy, dedication, and absorption is a personal and motivational decision deeply connected with the meaning that volunteers give to their lives and the activities they undertake" (p. 538).

As hypothesized, the association between the need to feel competent and intrinsic motivation will be stronger among high-engagement individuals. This result is consistent with various studies in the framework of paid work (Salanova et al., 2000; Bakker et al., 2011). As Haivas et al. (2013) state, previous research has found similar results both in a volunteering and a non-volunteering context. In this sense, applying this to the volunteer field, the volunteers most engaged in and linked to the organization exhibit higher levels of commitment, so the effects of feeling competent on intrinsic motivation will be potentially magnified in these individuals.

For its part, the relationship between the satisfaction of the volunteer and the intention to recommend the volunteering also increases in the environments where volunteers are more engaged. Thus, Macey and Schneider (2008) established that satisfied individuals tend to show a higher level of commitment, confirming the high relationships between employee satisfaction and engagement, as Harter et al. (2002) previously stated. The

works of Vecina et al. (2012) and Alfes et al. (2016) concluded, in the same vein, that volunteers' engagement significantly predicts volunteer satisfaction and intention to recommend, respectively. These findings in the volunteer contexts can help managers better understand the psychological needs surrounding engagement that are conducive to recruitment and retention (Phillips et al., 2019; Ata et al., 2024).

In contrast, the rest of the moderations under investigation were not substantiated. This means that first, the association of having covered the need for social relationships and the intrinsic motivation of the volunteer is similar between high-engagement volunteers and low/medium-engagement volunteers. Secondly, both the association of the intrinsic motivation and the positive emotions of the volunteer and the association of these and the satisfaction of the volunteer are also similar between the two subsamples defined according to the level of engagement. Finally, the association between volunteer satisfaction and the intention to remain or leave is similar between the two subsamples outlined.

These results could be explained by the fact that the volunteers in our sample all have a relatively high level of engagement. As we have anticipated in previous sections and following Salanova and Schaufeli (2009), these levels of engagement are higher than the average levels of engagement of the population. This could result in us comparing two subsamples in our study, both with a high level of engagement (even if we label one of them as volunteers with a medium/low level of engagement). Indeed, the median value obtained from our overall sample of volunteers is relatively high, as it is reasonable to assume that volunteers' engagement level is higher than the population average. This, therefore, supports the findings of Musick and Wilson (2003), who anticipated that a high level of engagement might indicate that the volunteer role was vital to that person.

The results prove that engagement is an emerging psychosocial process in positive organizations, focusing on the extraordinary, an indicator of well-being and happiness for work (Salanova et al., 2016). For these authors, engagement influences performance and helps generate healthy, resilient organizations.

In Crawford et al.'s (2010) investigation into traditional, non-voluntary workers, the authors concluded that engagement explains, more fully than other more passive emotional states, people's behaviours in the workplace. A study by Shantz et al. (2014), explicitly referring to volunteering, also concluded that engagement has the potential to explain better the factors that lead volunteers to devote time to their voluntary tasks. Similarly, Curran et al. (2016) indicate that engagement relates to a volunteer's positive mental state towards their required tasks.

5. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present paper tries to analyze the moderator role of volunteer engagement in the context of intrinsic motivation. To do this, we have carried out a study with 761 volunteers from different types of Spanish NGOs. The results allow us to draw a series of conclusions and implications that should be considered considering the data obtained, i.e., this is a cross-sectional study.

5.1. Conclusions

Our study confirms the relevance of the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) for a better understanding of volunteers' intrinsic motivations. Under this theory and considering our results in the context of the Spanish volunteers, we can conclude that intrinsic motivation is critical to developing positive emotions that translate into satisfaction and loyalty (retention and recommendation). This theoretical contribution

aligns with those achieved by Fernandes and de Martos (2023), contributing principal to two research streams: the studies on engagement and service management and the studies on volunteering and non-profit services.

Additionally, our research has other two theoretical contributions. First, active motivational states such as engagement will be crucial when volunteering, as volunteers provide their services without extrinsic motivations, as advanced by previous researchers such as Kang (2016) or Fernandes and de Martos (2023).

Secondly, concerning the level of engagement of the volunteers, all volunteers have a level of engagement with a relatively high value. Indeed, the median obtained from our overall sample of volunteers has a relatively high value. In this sense, a high level of engagement could indicate that the volunteer role was vital to that person (Musick & Wilson, 2003).

When the moderating role of the level of engagement of the volunteer was added, the same results could be obtained as in the overall sample, indicating that the intensity of the coefficients is slightly higher in the case of high-engagement volunteers. However, only two of the relationships raised did the moderating effect prove significant.

In the first of these two relationships, the level of engagement of the volunteer moderates the relationship between the basic psychological need to feel competent and intrinsic motivation. This means that the need to feel competent is associated with the most intense intrinsic motivation among high-engagement volunteers. Therefore, in those volunteers with a high level of engagement, the association displayed by the need to feel competent in the task and the intrinsic motivation is significantly higher than in the case of volunteers with a lower level of engagement. These results partially confirm the work of Haivas et al. (2013), which stated that the antecedent of motivation will be intensified in contexts of high volunteer engagement.

In the second confirmed relationship, the association between the satisfaction of the volunteer and the intention to recommend the volunteering to third parties is also significantly more substantial in high-engagement volunteers than in medium/low-engagement volunteers. These results confirm the previous findings obtained by authors such as Vecina et al. (2012), Alfes et al. (2016) or Fernades and de Martos (2023), which already indicated that volunteers' engagement significantly predicted the satisfaction of the volunteer and their intention to recommend.

As regards unconfirmed relationships, it could be concluded, as anticipated in the results section, that by presenting our overall sample of volunteers with medium and medium-high levels of engagement, the two subsamples might need to be more heterogeneous. These conclusions align with those of Musick and Wilson (2003). In this sense, we open the doors for future research to prove this line.

5.2. Managerial implications

Due to the results and conclusions reached, the following management implications are proposed.

First, since the impact of the psychological need to feel competent on intrinsic motivation is significantly more substantial in high-engagement volunteers, NGO managers are advised that this psychological need for a feeling of competence has become the top priority. Ensuring NGO volunteers, especially the most committed, feel helpful and competent in their tasks is critical. This will improve their self-esteem and self-confidence, reinforcing their volunteer identity and feeling empowered (Ata et al., 2024). To achieve this, NGO managers should allow volunteers to choose the tasks that best meet their needs and even design their volunteer opportunities with motivating and meaningful tasks tailored to their preferences. It is, therefore, necessary to find the

optimal point between what NGOs need and what best suits the needs of these volunteers to ensure the recurrence of their collaborations and fidelity.

Second, given that the impact of volunteer satisfaction on the intention to recommend is significantly more substantial in high-engagement volunteers than in low-engagement volunteers, NGO managers are advised to inform these volunteers of the impact their contributions generate periodically. In this way, managers will make volunteers aware of the importance and relevance of the tasks they carry out in the NGO. To this end, managers could implement metrics illustrating the impact of volunteer contributions and techniques for recognizing individual contributions.

Third, regarding metrics, our recommendation would be the implementation in every NGO of a guide of indicators with which to measure the impact and actions of each volunteer. These must be comparable and easy-to-apply indicators, being sophisticated enough to be based on the type and size of the NGO. These metrics will form the basis of the formal recognition of volunteering that must be implemented in each NGO. This gives rise to a transparent system, known and assumed by all, in the institutional recognition acts that each NGO designs. Moreover, a system of informal, non-standard recognition related to human relations should be created in the culture of the NGO.

These informal recognition activities must be personalized individually, as ongoing recognition is crucial for volunteers to feel appreciated and engaged. All this should be completed within an open and permanent communication framework by the volunteer coordinators, in which achievements and efforts are discussed, congratulating the volunteers sincerely, recognizing above all the results, but also the effort with words of daily encouragement and positive feedback.

In short, the more positive the volunteer's experience, the greater their commitment. A volunteer committed to an NGO will be willing to continue their relationship with it,

invest effort, and participate in NGO actions and initiatives. The challenge for NGO managers and managers is to provide volunteers with an active role in creating actions and policies, committing them to the project, thus making them feel involved in the NGO.

5.3. Limitations and further research

It should be noted that the results, conclusions, and implications should be understood in the context of the research carried out. Thus, the smallest NGOs, in most cases, are the ones with the least resources and the greatest need for volunteer labour, and they may even be the least demanding in the admission of volunteers. The NGOs must create the policies, but some (the small ones) have such weak structures that the volunteers can make the policies.

This may also be conditioned in the Spanish case because, during the last decades of the 20th century (Marbán Gallego et al., 2020), there was a significant increase in the number of NGOs. This phenomenon has continued since the beginning of the current century. However, the percentage of the volunteering population has stabilized and has shown a slight tendency to decrease since 2014 (Observatorio del Voluntariado, 2022). This means that Spanish NGOs are smaller than the average size of NGOs in the countries in our environment, with very small NGOs existing with fragile structures.

The research summarised here has certain limitations that can become future lines of inquiry. The main limitation relates to the nature of the sample: the volunteers were from a specific geographical area and a limited number of NGOs. Thus, in the future, research could be extended to more NGOs covering more forms of volunteering across a broader geographical area. Additionally, this study looks at volunteers from various NGOs with different characteristics. Therefore, future work should analyze whether the results of this research differ according to the nature of the NGO. Finally, this study focuses on a

determinant number of variables, but further research could contemplate other variables, such as the personal characteristics of the sample as gender or age or the volunteers' time or add other relationships among variables as a possible direct effect of intrinsic motivation on satisfaction, in line with previous recent studies such as Forner et al. (2024).

6. SUMMARY OF PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

NGO managers are advised that the psychological need for competence has become the top priority.

NGO managers need to find the optimal point between what NGOs need and what best suits the needs of these volunteers to ensure the recurrence of their collaborations and fidelity.

NGO managers should periodically inform their volunteers of the impact their contributions generate.

NGO managers should implement a guide of indicators to measure each volunteer's impact and actions.

ONG managers could carry on personalized informal recognition activities as ongoing recognition for volunteers to feel appreciated and engaged.

DECLARATIONS

Funding (information that explains whether and by whom the research was supported)
Not applicable.

Conflicts of interest/Competing interests (include appropriate disclosures)
There is no conflict of interest.

Availability of data and material (data transparency)
Data could be sent under petition.

Code availability (software application or custom code)
Not applicable.

Ethics approval (include appropriate approvals or waivers)
Not applicable.

Consent to participate (include appropriate statements)
Not applicable.

Consent for publication (include appropriate statements)

All the authors accept the article publications and, if necessary, changes in the manuscript according to the rules, and we give rights to the editor.

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ANNEXE: Psychometric characteristics of the measurement model and data analysis techniques

Psychometric characteristics of the measurement model (reliability and validity) were analyzed using a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) following the recommendations of Hair et al. (1998) (annexe). As the annexe shows, absolute and relative adjustment indices indicate reasonable adjustment. The literature review and using scales validated in previous investigations guarantee content validity. Regarding convergent validity, and following Fornell and Larcker (1981), all the factor loadings were significant at 1% ($t > 2.56$) and greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998) (see Table 3). In factors F1, F2, F3, and F4, we found some loadings lower than 0.70 but higher than 0.60 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), eliminating only those indicators with loadings lower than 0.70 that caused problems of internal consistency or discriminant validity, but without compromising the content validity of the original scales. Related to reliability, and following Fornell and Larcker (1981), three measures were used: Cronbach's (1951) alpha coefficient, the composite reliability analysis, and the average extracted variance. Additionally, discriminant validity was demonstrated: (1) in all cases (except for the covariance between the factors F4 and F5, which approaches the recommended value), the square of the covariance between pairs of factors was less than the AVE for each construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and (2) a comparison of the 95% confidence interval for the correlations between constructs did not include the value "1" (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

After this, the theoretical model was analyzed through a robust maximum-likelihood estimation, using structural modelling equations and multi-sample analysis, following Aldás and Uriel (2017). SPSS 19 and EQS 6.2 software were used.

Results of convergent validity and reliability

				Reliability coefficients	
Factor	Items	Standard. Charge	T	Cr	Ave
F1 Autonomy	I feel like I can make a lot of inputs to deciding how my job gets done.	0.69**	20.65	0.87	0.52
	I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job	0.71**	21.51		
	When I am at work, I have to do what I am told (reverse-scored).	0.72**	22.04		
	On my job I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am (reverse-scored).	0.76**	23.72		
	I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work.	0.76**	23.99		
	There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to go about my work (reverse-scored).	0.69**	20.79		
F2 Competence	I do not feel very competent when I am at work. (reverse-scored).	0.73**	21.86	0.81	0.59
	Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working.	0.76**	22.97		
	When I am working I often do not feel very capable. (reverse-scored).	0.82**	25.62		
F3 Social relationships	I really like the people I work with.	0.74**	22.82	0.87	0.50
	I get along with people at work. (reverse-scored).	0.73**	22.45		
	I consider the people I work with to be my friends.	0.66**	19.57		
	People at work care about me.	0.74**	22.99		
	There are not many people at work that I am close to.	0.68**	20.19		
	The people I work with do not seem to like me much. (reverse-scored).	0.61**	17.71		
	People at work are friendly towards me.	0.72**	22.07		
F4 Intrinsic motivation	Because I enjoy this volunteer activity very much	0.86**	28.30	0.82	0.61
	Because the volunteer activity I do is interesting	0.79**	24.88		
	Because the volunteer activity I do is a lot of fun	0.67**	20.03		
F5 Volunteer satisfaction	Overall, I like my volunteer activity a lot	0.84**	28.01	0.91	0.66
	All and all, I am satisfied with my volunteer activity	0.77**	24.84		
	I am satisfied with my volunteer tasks	0.79**	25.49		
	My volunteer activity gives me a lot of satisfaction	0.88**	30.02		
	Overall, my volunteer activity is great	0.77**	24.80		
F6 Positive emotions	Interested in things	0.75**	23.97	0.94	0.62
	Excited	0.80**	26.21		
	Strong	0.76**	24.14		
	Enthusiastic	0.83**	27.68		
	Satisfied with myself	0.77**	24.59		
	Awaked	0.78**	25.24		

	Inspired	0.81**	26.98		
	Helpful	0.82**	27.34		
	Concentrated	0.77**	24.70		
	Active	0.79**	26.05		
F7 Intention to Recommend	I would encourage friends and/or family to volunteer for this organization.	0.88**	30.92		
	I would not recommend doing volunteer work for this organization (reverse-scored).	0.92**	33.38		
	I would discourage those close to me from volunteering here (reverse-scored).	0.95**	35.37	0.96	0.85
	I would recommend that others consider volunteering for this organization.	0.92**	33.08		
F8 Intention to leave	I frequently about abandoning this organization	0.84**	23.27	0.85	0.74
	It is likely that leave this organization in next year	0.98**	27.06		
F9 Intention to remind	I will probably continue performing tasks of volunteer within the organization during the next six months	0.87**	30.25	0.93	0.82
	During the next 12 months	0.99**	37.53		
	During the next 24 months	0.85**	28.99		

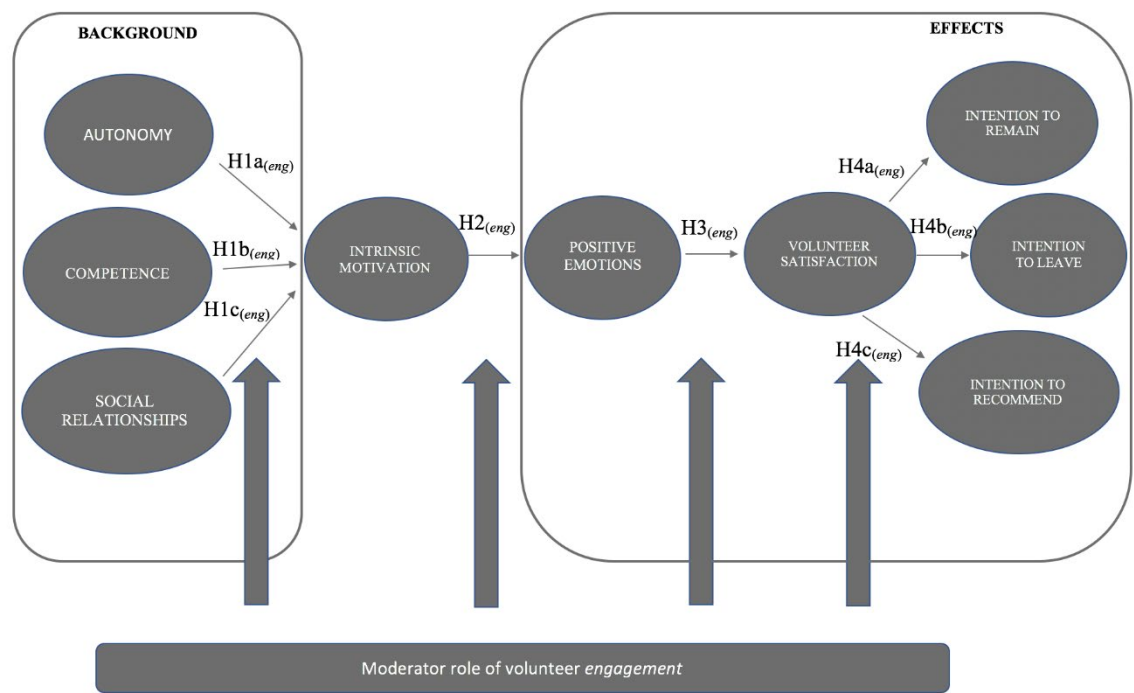
- $\chi^2=2492,86$; $df=824$; Relative=3≤3
 - Absolute indexes: GFI=0,856; AGFI=0.835; RMSEA=0,052;
 - Relative fit indexes: CFI=0,930; IFI=0.930; NFI=0.9.
- Standardized estimates presented. **p<0.01; *p<0.05*

Discriminant validity results

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9
F1	0.52	[0.59-0.70]	[0.63-0.73]	[0.47-0.60]	[0.52-0.63]	[0.37-0.50]	[0.48-0.60]	[-0.26 ; -0.10]	[0.34-0.47]
F2	0.42	0.59	[0.50-0.63]	[0.68-0.78]	[0.66-0.76]	[0.53-0.64]	[0.40-0.53]	[-0.17 ; -0.01]	[0.34-0.47]
F3	0.46	0.32	0.50	[0.49-0.62]	[0.55-0.66]	[0.42-0.55]	[0.55-0.65]	[-0.30 ; -0.15]	[0.43-0.55]
F4	0.28	0.54	0.31	0.61	[0.83-0.89]	[0.48-0.60]	[0.48-0.60]	[-0.25 ; -0.10]	[0.41-0.54]
F5	0.33	0.50	0.36	0.73	0.66	[0.54-0.65]	[0.53-0.64]	[-0.32 ; -0.18]	[0.47-0.58]
F6	0.19	0.34	0.24	0.29	0.35	0.62	[0.32-0.45]	[-0.23 ; -0.08]	[0.35-0.47]
F7	0.29	0.22	0.36	0.29	0.34	0.15	0.85	[-0.31 ; -0.16]	[0.44-0.55]
F8	-0.18	0.01	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.02	0.06	0.74	[-0.47 ; -0.35]
F9	0.17	0.16	0.24	0.22	0.28	0.17	0.25	0.17	0.82

AVE –Shaded diagonal; (II) **(CORREL)²** – Lower triangle; (III) **INTERVALS** – Upper triangle

Figure 1. Proposed model: the moderator role of engagement



Source: Based on Lorente et al. (2019) and own elaboration

Figure 2. Moderating role of volunteer engagement

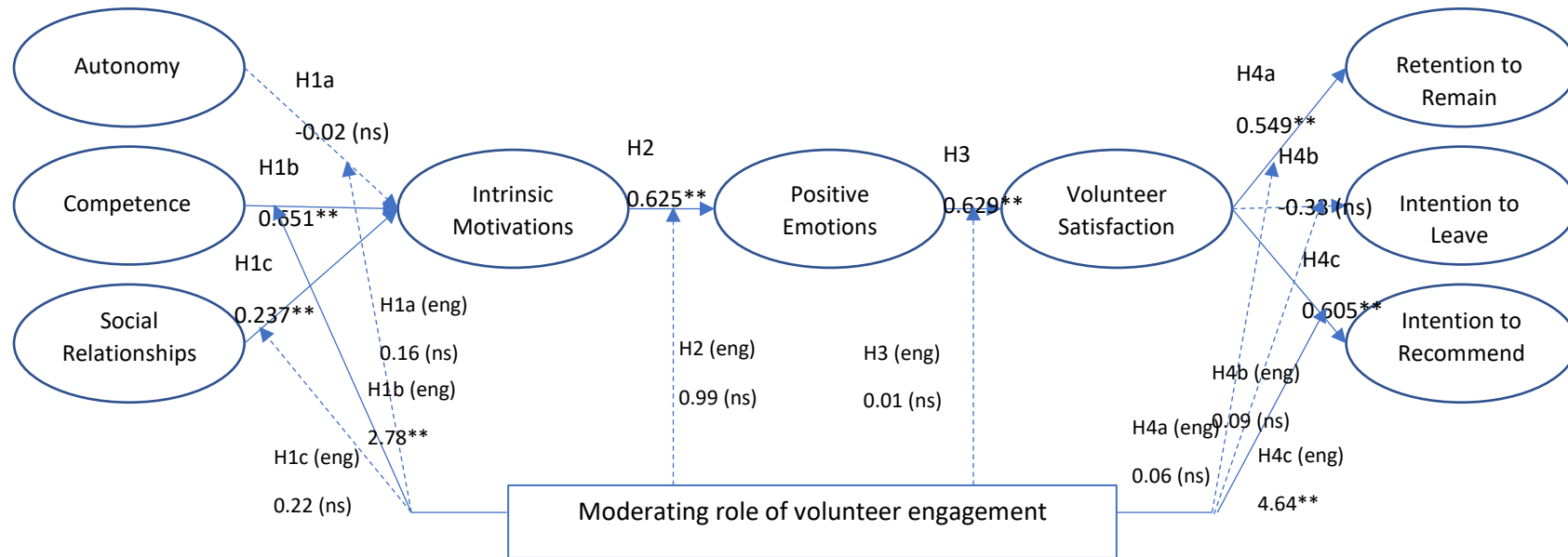


Table 1: Sociodemographic profile of the sample

		Freq	%
NGO	Spanish Red Cross	365	48.0%
	Valencia Diocesan Caritas	88	11.6%
	Casa de la Caridad de Valencia (Valencian Assoc of Charity)	81	10.6%
	AEECC, Spanish Association Against Cancer	49	6.4%
	Food Bank of Valencia	20	2.6%
	Mums in Action	19	2.5%
	InteRed Foundation	13	1.7%
	SPAB Soc Protectora Animales Burjassot (Animal Protect Society)	11	1.4%
	Economists without Borders	10	1.3%
	La tenda de tot el món (Everyone's Shop)	10	1.3%
	AVAPACE, Valencian Assoc for Cerebral Palsy Support	9	1.2%
	ASINDOWN Valencia	9	1.2%
	Fundación Pequeño Deseo Valencia (Little Desire Found.)	9	1.2%
	Other	68	9%
Age	18 - 25 years old	142	18.7%
	26 - 35 years old	122	16.0%
	36 - 45 years	133	17.5%
	46 - 55 years	147	19.3%
	56 - 65 years	134	17.6%
	66 - 75 years	73	9.6%
	Over 75 years old	10	1.3%
Work situation	Full-time employee	228	30.0%
	Employed part-time	103	13.5%
	Unemployed	105	13.8%
	Not in paid employment	41	5.4%
	Pre-retired	154	20.2%
	Disabled	16	2.1%
	Student	114	15.0%
Number of children	0 children	375	49.3%
	1 child	104	13.7%
	2 children	190	25.0%
	3 children	66	8.7%
	More than 3 children	26	3.4%
Gender	Male	266	35.0%
	Female	495	65.0%
Civil status	Single	332	43.6%
	Married	327	43.0%
	Separated-Divorced	75	9.9%
	Widowed	27	3.5%
Volunteer time	Less than 1 year	160	20.15%
	Between 1 and 2 years	166	20.91%
	Between 2 and 3 years	116	14.61%
	More than 3 years	352	44.33%

Table 2: Concepts measurement (5-points Likert Scales)

Concept	Items	Authors
Autonomy	I feel like I can make a lot of inputs to deciding how my job gets done.	Haivas <i>et al.</i> (2013) adapted the satisfaction scale developed by Deci & Ryan (2000) for volunteering.
	I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job.	
	When I am at work, I have to do what I am told (reverse-scored).	
	On my job I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am (reverse-scored).	
	I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work.	
	There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to go about my work (reverse-scored).	
Competence	I do not feel very competent when I am at work. (reverse-scored).	Haivas <i>et al.</i> (2013) adapted the satisfaction scale developed by Deci & Ryan (2000) for volunteering.
	Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working.	
	When I am working I often do not feel very capable. (reverse-scored).	
Social relationships	I really like the people I work with.	Haivas <i>et al.</i> (2013) adapted the satisfaction scale developed by Deci & Ryan (2000) for volunteering.
	I get along with people at work. (reverse-scored).	
	I consider the people I work with to be my friends.	
	People at work care about me.	
	There are not many people at work that I am close to.	
	The people I work with do not seem to like me much. (reverse-scored).	
	People at work are pretty friendly towards me.	
Intrinsic motivation	Because I enjoy this volunteer activity very much	Gagné <i>et al.</i> (2015)
	Because the volunteer activity I do is interesting	
	Because the volunteer activity I do is a lot of fun	
Volunteer satisfaction	Overall, I like my volunteer activity a lot	Güntert <i>et al.</i> (2016)
	All and all, I am satisfied with my volunteer activity.	
	I am satisfied with my volunteer tasks.	
	My volunteer activity gives me a lot of satisfaction.	
	Overall, my volunteer activity is excellent.	
Positive emotions	Interested in things	López-Gómez <i>et al.</i> (2015) adapted the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) of Watson <i>et al.</i> (1988), translated into Spanish by Sandin <i>et al.</i> (1999).
	Excited	
	Strong	
	Enthusiastic	
	Satisfied with myself	
	Awaked	
	Inspired	
	Helpful	
	Concentrated	
	Active	
Intention to Recommend	I would encourage friends and/or family to volunteer for this organization.	Wisner <i>et al.</i> (2005)
	I would not recommend doing volunteer work for this organization (reverse-scored).	
	I would discourage those close to me from volunteering here (reverse-scored).	
	I would recommend that others consider volunteering for this organization.	

Intention to leave	I frequently about abandoning this organization	Gallarza <i>et al.</i> (2010)
	It is likely that leave this organization in next year.	
Intention to remind	I will probably continue performing tasks. of volunteer within the organization during the next six months	Jiménez & Fuertes (2005)
	During the next 12 months	
	During the next 24 months	
Engagement Low/medium (average< 3,89) High (average>3,89)	In my volunteer work, I feel full of energy	Rodríguez-Montalbán <i>et al.</i> (2014), following Schaufeli, Bakker y Salanova (2006).
	I am strong and vigorous in my volunteer work.	
	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work as a volunteer. to go to work as a volunteer.	
	I am enthusiastic about my volunteer work.	
	My volunteer work inspires me.	
	I am proud of the work I do as a volunteer.	
	I am happy when I am absorbed in my work as a volunteer.	
	I am immersed in my volunteer work.	
	I get “carried away” by my volunteer work.	

Table 3: Moderator effect of volunteer engagement: High level of volunteer engagement versus low level

HYPOTHESIS			Low engagement β _{stand}	High engagement β _{stand}	t
χ^2 (Differences)					
ns	0.16	H1a (eng): Autonomy -> Intrinsic motivation stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	0.03	0.03	0.52
√	2.78**	H1b (eng): Competence -> Intrinsic motivation stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	0.47**	0.52**	8.86
ns	0.22	H1c (eng): Social Relationships -> Intrinsic motivation stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	0.17**	0.19**	3.39
ns	0.99	H2 (eng): Intrinsic motivation -> Positive emotions, stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	0.42**	0.42**	9.93
ns	0.01	H3 (eng): Positive emotions -> Volunteer satisfaction, stronger in high-engagement than low-engagement	0.37**	0.39**	8.51
ns	0.06	H4a (eng): Volunteer satisfaction -> Int to remain, stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	0.39**	0.47**	11.10
ns	0.09	H4b (eng): Volunteer satisfaction -> Int to leave, stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	-0.33**	-0.26**	-7.49
√	4.64*	H4c (eng): Volunteer satisfaction -> Int to recommend, stronger in high-engagement than in low-engagement	0.41**	0.42**	10.55

Note: Differences between groups * P < 0.05 ** P < 0.01 ns: non-significant