

(SLIDE 1)

Understanding Host Families and their Motives to Welcome Adults with Intellectual Disability. Paper presented at the 7th. International Short Break Association Conference, Galway, Ireland. 9th. -11th. June 2010.

Presenter: Des. Hanrahan
St. John of God North East Services

Email: des.hanrahan@sjog.ie

Abstract:

Family-based short break services depend on finding and retaining volunteer hosts. However, recruitment and retention is perceived as becoming more difficult and so providers are resorting to employing professional hosts rather than addressing how to improve voluntary provision. This paper is based on a study, which attempts to redress this by increasing our knowledge of volunteer hosts, including why they host. The aim is to maximise productivity. Documentary research was employed to obtain and analyse data from the files of all those who hosted adults with intellectual disability (ID), during the first ten years of an Irish service. A theoretical framework, based on Self-determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000) and a Functional Approach to volunteer motivation (Clary and Snyder, 1999), was used. The study found that hosts' motives were primarily self-determined and included important personal values. These motives were more likely to be associated with durability although those who left did so, because of changes in their personal circumstances. The study concluded that better-informed recruitment is required, together with an emphasis on encouraging and supporting relationships among the stakeholders, and proactively meeting the needs of volunteers.

Part 1

MOTIVATION

This paper will address motivation with reference to hosting behaviour and specifically to the question of what motivates host families to welcome adults with ID, and whether this is related to how long they continue to host. It is based on a larger study (Hanrahan 2007).

MOTIVATION THEORY- DYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY

The concept of human motivation is perhaps the most important variable that social workers have to work with. However, there is a lack of social work literature that addresses itself specifically to this concept (Gold, 1990). Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the difficulty in defining and categorising what we mean by motivation. Indeed “psychologists don’t always agree on how motivational terms should be used” (Zimbardo, 1992: 424). (SLIDE 2)

Early motivation theories portrayed humans as, compelled to react to both internal instincts, and to incentives outside of our control. The instinct to adapt was seen as the motivator. The instinct to volunteer might thus be explained by a human need to “maximise inclusive fitness” by forming useful alliances (Weston, 2002: 337).

More modern theories, for example, Expectancy Value Theories, (Atkinson, 1956), and Attribution Theories (Kelley, 1967; Weiner, 1986) assume that people judiciously chose goals based on what they know about them (sometimes based on past experience) and the value and feasibility of achieving them. Using this framework we might expect volunteers to come forward only after they have informed themselves of the challenges involved, have placed a high value on the likely outcome, and believe that they have a reasonable chance of success.

Among the more recent cognitive perspectives, such as Human Growth Theory (Rogers, 1959; Maslow, 1962; 1970) among others, Maslow is perhaps the most relevant to hosting motivation.

According to Maslow (1970), humans are motivated by an inner need to grow and actualise their highest potential. However, lower level needs, such as physiological and safety needs, must be fulfilled before higher level needs like belongingness, esteem, and self actualising needs, (such as service to others), are met. While Maslow’s work could provide a framework for exploring why people host, there is another theory, a social cognitive theory, which has the potential for practical application to both *host recruitment* and *retention strategies*. This is SDT.

Self-determination theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a general theory of motivation concerned with the development and functioning of personality, within social contexts. The theory focuses on the degree to which behavior is self-determined (University of Rochester, Accessed 2007).

Like most contemporary theories, Self-Determination Theory refers to goal-directed behaviour. However, (SLIDE 3) it differentiates between the content of goals (i.e. what the volunteer hopes to achieve) and the regulatory process through which these goals are pursued, i.e. 'the why' (Deci and Ryan, 2000). (SLIDE 4)

Self-Determination Theory distinguishes two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. However it considers intrinsic motivation to be the evolutionary "prototypic" manifestation of the positive potential of human nature (Ryan and Deci, 2000: 69). It is why we seek challenges, maximise our capacities etc. "Intrinsically motivated behaviours are those which are freely engaged in out of interest, without the necessity of separable consequences, and, to be maintained, they require satisfaction of the needs for autonomy and competence." (Deci and Ryan, 2000: 235). Autonomy refers to a person's need to be causal; the need to own one's actions. Competence refers to achieving or controlling successful outcomes (Hagger *et al.*, 2006: 132). These needs, together with a third, relatedness, (the need to be supported by and to support others), are the innate needs that "give goals their psychological potency and that influence which regulatory processes direct people's goal pursuits" (Deci and Ryan, 2000: 228). (SLIDE 5)

Self-Determination Theory subdivides extrinsic motivation along a continuum of relative autonomy from *externally regulated* motivation (rewards and punishments) through *introjected regulation* (self imposed pressure) to *identification*, "a conscious acceptance of the behaviour as being important in order to achieve personally valued outcomes" (Markland *et al.*, 2005: 816). Identification is similar to intrinsic motivation in that it is fully self-determined. However, unlike intrinsic motivation it has distinguishable consequences.

If we accept SDT, then a possible hypothesis might be: 'that hosts expressing more autonomous motivation are more likely to continue to provide better quality breaks than hosts who experience a self imposed or external coercion'.

A complimentary framework is Functional Theory and particularly the approach adopted by Clary, Snyder and their colleagues (Clary and Snyder, 1991; 1999, Clary *et al.*, 1994a; 1994b; 1996; 1998)

VOLUNTEER MOTIVATION

In the international volunteer literature, a common framework is to refer to the needs that volunteers hope to meet through volunteering. (SLIDE 6) Clary *et al.*, (1996; 486) identify "six categories of motivation (or psychological functions) that may be served by volunteering". These are values functions, understanding functions, enhancement functions, career functions, social functions, and protective functions. (SLIDE 7) Using this framework we might expect hosts to volunteer in order to express values important to the self. Alternatively, volunteers may see hosting as an opportunity to develop or practice related skills, enhance their self esteem, enhance their careers, meet people and/or provide opportunities to deal with anxieties and conflicts about caring, disability etc.

ECONOMIC THEORY (SLIDE 8)

Finally, a category of social science theories that, perhaps has been neglected by social workers, is economics. However to understand human behaviour and volunteer motivation in particular, it is important to examine what this discipline has to offer. This is especially so, given the current trend towards employing professional hosts and salaried support carers (Carlin, 2006; Heslop *et al.*, 2003)

Many economic studies use intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to analyse volunteer behaviour (e.g. Cappellari and Turati, 2004). Meir and Stutzer (2004: 4-5) conclude (pp. 16) that people who emphasise intrinsic goals are more satisfied with life; that volunteers tend to rate

intrinsic goals more than extrinsic goals and that people who place more importance on intrinsic goals benefit more from volunteering. Consequently we would expect those who apply to host, for intrinsic reasons, to remain longer than those volunteers who apply for extrinsic reasons.

Economists who concentrate on intrinsic/extrinsic motivation tend to study the effects of rewarding people for volunteering. Many have been influenced by Self-Determination Theory (Deci, Koestner and Ryan, 1999), most notably Bruno Frey, who developed Motivation Crowding Theory (Frey, 1997; Frey and Goette, 1999). This theory suggests that external rewards, such as monetary incentives, may under certain conditions undermine (or *crowd out*) a person's intrinsic motivation to volunteer for, or continue with, a particular task. (Frey and Jagen, 2001).

CONCLUSION

Many of the motivation theories examined for this study would provide robust frameworks for any motivation study. However, given the voluntary status of the primary hosts and the current trend towards professionalism, (SLIDE 9) a combination of the Functional Approach to Volunteering, and an Economic Reward Approach as influenced by Self-Determination Theory, was used. This arrangement facilitates a broad, and inclusive, social science approach to analysis. It also offers social workers engaged in recruiting host families and foster carers, a framework for examining initial and ongoing motivational factors associated with both voluntary and professional service designs. (Anderson, 2001; Bates *et al.*, 1997; Carlin, 2006; Heslop *et al.*, 2003; Tarleton, 2003).

Part 2

WHY DO PEOPLE APPLY TO BECOME HOSTS?

(SLIDE 10)

REASONS FOR APPLYING TO HOST

An examination of the file notes of fifty-seven principal hosts, who took part in an adult short-breaks scheme produced 239 documented references, to thirty-eight separate reasons as to why hosts decided to apply to the service. The reasons varied from pre-disposing factors, such as experience, to discrete events/catalyst, such as being asked, to other 'motives' such as altruism. This mirrors a division found in the literature.

The most frequently recorded reason for hosting (SLIDE 11) was that the hosts had already had personal experience of people with intellectual disability (n = 47; 83 per cent); a pre-disposing factor. Twenty-four of them had gained this experience as volunteers, sometimes with other short-break services. Eleven had direct nursing experience and thirteen had other related work experience. Twelve gained this experience within their own family or with close friends. Many of these hosts were among those fourteen hosts who cited reasons of empathy with people with ID, with their families or with related social issues. A quarter of hosts had thought about hosting "for some time" before arriving at their decision. Two people had thought about fostering.

Eleven hosts are reported to have hosted because they wanted to continue to provide a service to an adult who had been supported through a children's scheme. Eight people said that they hosted because they already knew the prospective guest. Eleven hosts said that they wanted to host because they and/or their family were lucky or fortunate in life; some said that because of their good fortune, they "wanted to give something back".

To give parents, families or the prospective guest, a break, was cited by ten hosts. This sentiment was prevalent in other reasons such as wanting to 'contribute'(4) or, to host as an extension of welcoming

children from Chernobyl (2) or as an alternative to working with the Samaritans (2).

Some hosts mentioned the benefits to themselves as reasons for hosting. Seven are reported as saying that it would be good for their own children and three mentioned the benefits for the whole family. Nine said that they liked or enjoyed such activities; eight found it fulfilling and in two cases they were motivated by a known psychological need. Three people cited 'empty nest syndrome'.

Ten people cited 'having time on their hands', as being important to their decision. One person was motivated by the prospect of having company. Two people had "always wanted to do nursing" and hosting provided an opportunity to do something not unrelated.

In two instances the reward was seen in investment terms (the prospect of reciprocity), while the cost to benefit was attractive to one person as was the benefits of being able to do something without leaving home, to another.

A group of people said that they were influenced by seeing an add (4), reading a newspaper article (4), hearing a radio interview (3) and/or seeing a poster about the service. Eight people were influenced by the act of being asked to consider hosting, sometimes by another host or by a member of staff. In one case her daughter suggested that she do it, while in another the children's positive attitudes were influential. Nine people reported reasons related to knowing someone who already hosted. Other reasons were ideological (1), religious (1) and admiration for the idea (2).

A brief word about retention (SLIDE 12)

Twenty-seven (47 per cent) of the fifty-seven primary hosts had left the service during the ten years studied. Twelve left, having hosted for less than three years. Indeed, all twelve left either during, or upon completion of, their first year of hosting. A further nine hosts left after hosting for between three and five years, inclusive, and six people left the service having spent at least six years as hosts.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND HOSTING LONGEVITY.

For some hosts, what appears to be multiple reasons for applying to the service, can be combined into fewer or, in some cases, just one inclusive reason. For others the reported reasons are more disparate.

“Her reasons for applying are related to the fact that she has a close friend who has a child with Downs Syndrome. She has also nursed people with ID in hospital. However she had thought about fostering or adoption and also about becoming a volunteer with The Samaritans, but she saw our newspaper coupon and filled it in. She thought it would be a good thing to do for all the family ‘a project’; it would be good for the children.”

The literature review identified three categories of hosting motivation: predisposing factors (e.g., past experience), catalysts (e.g., being asked or seeing an advertisement) and reasons for hosting (e.g., altruism, reward). In many of the cases, reported in this study, hosts had reasons from all three categories:

“I work with people with ID [predisposing factor], I saw an add on the [service] notice board [catalyst] and recognised the person involved and thought I could do it as a job [reward], not for charity.”

In order to analyse whether there is any relationship between the hosts' motives for hosting and the length of time that they hosted, their motives are analysed, with reference to two motivation theory frameworks –The Functional Approach (Clary *et al.*, 1998; Houle *et al.*, 2005; Snyder, *et al.*, 2000), and Self Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

Functional motivation and longevity

The hosts' motives were allocated according to which of the six social or psychological goals, developed by Clary and his colleagues (Clary and Snyder, 1999:157), they sought to satisfy.

Nineteen of the fifty-seven hosts expressed a need to meet more than one function through hosting. The most common motive related to the *Values function* (Slide 13). Forty-one hosts (72 per cent) were motivated to host in order to express and act on values important to the self. Fifteen hosts (26 per cent) were motivated by an *Understanding Function* or the opportunity to increase their, or their families', knowledge of the world, and to develop and practice caring skills and unrealised nursing ambitions, that might otherwise go unpractised. Eleven hosts (19 per cent) were motivated by a *Protective function* and applied in order to cope with inner anxieties and conflicts, thus affording some protection for the ego. (e.g., to reduce feeling of guilt associated with being lucky in life or more fortunate than the guests or their families, or because of some incident in their past lives). Ten (18 per cent) were motivated by a *Social function* which helped them to fit in and get along with social groups that were important to them. This included people who were friendly with other active hosts. Only one person was motivated by a *Career function* and no one expressed motivation associated with an *Enhancement function* (i.e. for psychological development or enhanced esteem).

Table Functional motivation by hosting longevity THIS IS CONDENSED IN SLIDE!

Motives	Group A (n=12)		Group B (n=9)		Group D (n=24)		Other (n=12)		Totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Values C1	8	(66.7)	6	(66.7)	19	(79.2)	8	(66.7)	41	(71.9)
Understanding C2	3	(25.0)	1	(11.1)	8	(33.3)	3	(25.0)	15	(26.3)
Enhancement C3										
Career C4	1	(8.3)							1	(1.8)
Social C5	4	(33.3)	2	(22.2)	2	(8.3)	2	(16.7)	10	(17.5)
Protective C6	2	(16.7)	4	(44.4)	4	(16.7)	1	(8.3)	11	(19.3)
Total motives	18		13		33		14		78	

(SLIDE 14) There would appear to be some relationship between functional motivation and longevity in that a greater proportion (79 per cent and 33 per cent) of those who hosted for over six years, were

motivated by *Value Functions* and *Understanding Functions* respectively, when compared with those who had left the service earlier (67 per cent and 19 per cent).

In contrast to this, *Social Function* motives were underrepresented among those who hosted for over six years when compared with the other groupings. *Protective function* motives were overrepresented in the group that hosted for three to five years (not shown on slide).

Turning next to.....

Self-determined motivation and longevity (SLIDE 15)

Using a SDT analysis, hosts' motives were allocated according to whether they represented relatively autonomous self-determined reasons or whether they represented low self-determined, or controlling reasons, using *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* categories. The extrinsic categories included three sub-categories: *external*, *introjected*, and *identified*.

Table: Self-determined motivation (autonomy) by longevity. SLIDE INCOMPLETE

Self-determined motives	Group A (n=12)		Group B (n=9)		Group C (n=24)		Other (n=12)		Total (n=57)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
<i>Autonomous</i>										
INTRINSIC	2	(10.0)	4	(20.0)	8	(40.0)	6	(30.0)	20	(35.1)
EXTRINSIC										
Identified	4	(15.3)	3	(11.5)	15	(57.7)	4	(15.4)	26	(45.6)
<i>Controlling</i>										
Introjected	5	(55.6)	2	(22.2)	1	(11.1)	1	(11.1)	9	(15.8)
External	1	(50.0)					1	(50%)	2	(3.5)

Eighty-one per cent (n=46) of the fifty-seven hosts were motivated by autonomous self-determined reasons. Twenty of them (35 per cent of all hosts) were motivated by *intrinsic* reasons, such as, the enjoyment and fulfilment that they expected from the activity of hosting or the challenges associated with it; the other twenty-six (46 per cent of all hosts) were motivated by *identified* reasons, in that they placed a high value on the outcomes for the guests and their families, and because

hosting was important to them personally and was entered into without pressure.

Nineteen per cent (n=11) were motivated by controlling low self-determined reasons. Nine of them (16 per cent of all hosts) were motivated by *introjected* reasons. While these hosts recognised the benefits of hosting, they wanted to host in order to relieve some guilt or anxieties that they had about their own good fortune, or because it would bother them if they did not do something to help. The other two hosts (3 per cent of all hosts) were motivated by *external* rewards.

Half of the forty-six people who are recorded as having given autonomous (high self-determination) reasons, hosted for over six years while just six of them (13 per cent) left after the first year. This contrasts with the finding that only one of the eleven people, who gave controlling (low self-determination) reasons, hosted for more than six years, while the majority of them (n=6; 55 per cent) left after the first year (SLIDE IS INCOMPLETE). The contrast between these two groups is even more marked when the twelve people who were still hosting at the time, but who had less than 6 years experience and more than three years experience, are excluded from the analysis.

SUMMARY

The findings indicate that the majority (79 per cent) of hosts remained for longer than their initial one year commitment.

Most people applied to host in order to express or to act on values important to the self (n=41; 72 per cent) and these tended to remain hosting as did those who were motivated by a desire to develop their understanding and practice of care skills (n=15; 26 per cent).

The hosts were mostly self-determined in their motives (n=46; 81 per cent) in that twenty of them (35 per cent) applied for intrinsic reasons and twenty-six (46 per cent) applied because the activity was important to them personally. These motives were more likely to be associated with those who remained hosting than less self-determined or controlling motives. The implications of these findings, for the service and for future research, are discussed elsewhere (Hanrahan, 2007).

Thank you.