



Corporate volunteering

A case study centred on the motivations, satisfaction and happiness of company employees

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Abstract

Purpose – Given the increased awareness about the social issues in organisations and the need for more research, particularly in the area of employee voluntary activities, the purpose of this paper is to analyse the motivations that lead employees to agree to participate in the corporate volunteering activities promoted by their companies, as well as to assess their level of satisfaction and happiness with the activity of volunteering.

Design/methodology/approach – This research had the collaboration of a company to develop the case study about its volunteering programme and for the collection of data through an electronic questionnaire.

Findings – The results indicate a similar hierarchical organisation of the motivations when compared with some previous studies. The volunteers' experience is satisfactory in all aspects, and is positively related to feelings of happiness. However, the results evidence a weak/moderate relation between volunteers' motivations and happiness/satisfaction.

Practical implications – More efforts are needed to improve the volunteers' training and formation, which was pointed as the less satisfactory aspect (similarly to other studies). Thus, it is necessary to question the methods usually used in the training provided, which may involve the restructuring of the training plan to adapt it to the employees' needs and to guarantee the quality of the work.

Originality/value – A great part of the existent research is focused on the motivations of "conventional" volunteers which collaborate occasionally with non-profit organisations. Thus, present study will expand the research in the area of corporate volunteering, contributing to better understand what really motivates, satisfies and makes volunteers happy with this activity.

Keywords Corporate social responsibility, Employees behaviour, Voluntary actions, Motivation (psychology), Employee involvement, Employee relations, Corporate volunteering, Satisfaction, Motivations

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The contemporary economic and social context calls for revised formulations of the role of enterprises in society, namely in terms of their social responsibility and in the way they could incentivise and involve their own employers in "community friendly activities", namely by promoting the volunteering. Consequently, corporate volunteering has merited greater attention among profit-making organisations, which have begun to contribute to non-profit causes and organisations, helping to respond to some of the problems existing in society.

Given the difficulties that modern-day society has in responding to all social problems, there has been an increase in the number of individuals participating in voluntary activities, whether promoted by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), voluntary agencies, the public sector or companies (Basil *et al.*, 2009).



Since an increasing number of organisations outside the third sector are undertaking voluntary activities, particularly private companies, as part of their policy of corporate social responsibility (CSR), its study has been gaining interest and will be covered by this research.

Given the increased awareness about the social issues in organisations and the need for more research (Lukaszewski and Stone, 2012), particularly in the area of employee voluntary activities (Liu and Ko, 2011), present study intends to analyse the motivations that lead employees to agree to participate in the corporate volunteering activities promoted by their companies, as well as to assess their level of satisfaction and happiness with the activity of volunteering. To this end, a group of employees participating in the volunteer programme of a large-sized company operating in the oil sector, henceforth referred to as Company A, was selected.

The paper is structured this way: it begins with a theoretical component, containing a literature review that examines such aspects as CSR, corporate volunteering and the characteristics and motivations of volunteers. This is followed by the presentation of the research methodology and the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained. Finally, the conclusions of the study are presented, as well as the limitations and some proposals for future lines of research.

2. CSR and the role of the corporate volunteering

The concept of CSR is based on the premise that companies consume natural resources, which are the heritage of humankind, and that their survival is strongly dependent on society. Therefore, in exchange, they should at least be efficient in their use of all these resources. Social responsibility is an integral part of the concept of sustainable development, which belongs to the social dimension and combines with the economic and environmental dimensions to form the three pillars of sustainability.

The strategic areas in which CSR can be involved were pointed by Kotler and Lee (2005) and include corporate social marketing, cause-related marketing, cause promotions, corporate philanthropy, socially responsible business practices and community volunteering, which will be particularly treated in this research.

Mozes *et al.* (2011) point to the relationship between corporate volunteering and social responsibility, arguing that corporate volunteering is both an offshoot and a strategic activity of CSR. Thus, corporate volunteering is one of the instruments that companies most use in their CSR strategy in order to contribute to a fairer and more sustainable global development, so that these organisations have begun to attach ever greater importance and value to corporate volunteering (Peloza *et al.*, 2009).

According to Kotler and Lee (2005), corporate volunteering refers to the support programmes developed for voluntary activities inside companies. It involves organising the willingness to perform voluntary work among employees and managers, sometimes incorporating their relatives, former employees who have now retired, suppliers, distributors, service providers, clients or business partners, mobilising people in a spontaneous and non-compulsory fashion, and stimulating their involvement in causes that are of collective interest. It educates people in matters of citizenship, bringing out the best in each person.

Allen (2003) argues that corporate volunteering provides new sources of talent and energy for solving community problems, and encourages the corporate citizenship (Pajo and Lee, 2011). He also adds that corporate volunteering can help meet strategic goals, strengthening the relationships and the public image of corporations. It is seen as an increasingly important factor for the development of

human resources, since it can contribute to the construction of individual skills and knowledge.

Seen from another point of view, volunteer programmes strengthen the image of a company, particularly in the eyes of the press and opinion makers, ending up reaching segments that influence public opinion in general. In the same way, Smith (1996) defends that, as a strategic initiative of CSR, corporate volunteering enables companies to improve their public image, while at the same time providing social benefits to the community, also making it possible to generate added value through their humanitarian initiatives.

It is therefore to be expected that, when properly implemented, corporate volunteering will bring benefits to the various groups involved in the process, namely to society (solving social problems and improving the quality of life), employees (satisfaction, learning, motivation) and the company itself (reputation, image, notoriety).

3. Motivations, satisfaction and happiness with volunteering activities

Motivation is a complex psychological process that results from an interaction between the individual and his surrounding environment (Latham and Pinder, 2005). Some authors maintain that there are motivations underlying the development of voluntary activities that can be divided into various categories. Morrow-Howell *et al.* (2003), for example, identified three main motivational categories for volunteers: material, altruistic and social. For Fisher and Cole (1993), however, the motivations that lead people to engage in volunteering should be classified in terms of psychological needs, conscious motives and perceived benefits.

Other authors like Clary *et al.* (1998) based their research on a functional approach, stressing that individuals take part in voluntary activities for different motives, in order to satisfy their needs. In order to measure those motivations, they used the volunteer functions inventory (VFI) scale to identify six categories of motivations that explain why individuals volunteer: Values (altruistic and humanitarian concerns about others); Understanding (acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences); Enhancement (personal growth, self-esteem and psychological development); Social (strengthening the relationship with others); Protective (reducing negative feelings and problem solving); and Career (professional experience and valorisation).

Volunteering helps to build a fairer and more balanced society, so that it is important not only for the beneficiaries of this activity, but also for the individuals who give up their time and skills with the aim of contributing to a more equal society. In the same way as the individual person benefits from voluntary activities, companies also derive advantages from the situation, and there may even be a correlation between the satisfaction gained from voluntary work and the turnover of businesses (Watson and Abzug, 2005).

According to Pajo and Lee (2011), recent researches suggest that employees might benefit from volunteering through the development of human and social capital; usually it is perceived as an efficient way to develop or enhance job-related abilities including teamwork, leadership and communication; and it can promote social networks and trusting relationships.

Various authors have argued that voluntary activities are positively associated with the satisfaction and well-being of the individual. For example, Farrell *et al.* (1998) suggest there is some linkage between volunteer satisfaction, volunteer motivations and actual experience. Furthermore, Morrow-Howell *et al.* (2003), Greenfield and Marks (2004) and Wu *et al.* (2005) all state that voluntary work is directly linked to a greater satisfaction with life and well-being and that a greater involvement with volunteering (in terms of time dedicated) is also related with these feelings.

Many volunteers therefore value the non-financial rewards (Hsieh *et al.*, 2008), hoping that their work will be appreciated, and even more formally recognised, by the organisation (Brudney, 1990). In this way, the fact that the volunteer gains such recognition is considered to be very important, just as recruitment and training are factors that can also influence an individual's performance in the organisation.

Due to the fact that various authors have stated that the concept of satisfaction is important for voluntary work, Ferreira *et al.* (2012) decided to research this theme by using a sample of hospital volunteers to ascertain their level of satisfaction with the company bodies responsible for the management of human resources. With this study, it proved possible to conclude that human resource management practices may in fact influence the level of satisfaction of volunteers; in this actual case, training is shown to be the most important factor for volunteer satisfaction.

Since Clary *et al.* (1998) maintain that voluntary activities can help to satisfy the motivations highlighted in the functional approach, these motivations can therefore be linked with the question of individual satisfaction with voluntary work. Thus, as far as satisfaction with corporate volunteering is concerned, the following research hypothesis may be formulated:

H1. The motivations underlying voluntary practices influence the level of satisfaction of employees.

Voluntary activities are not only associated with satisfaction, but also with the well-being and happiness of volunteers. Happiness can be defined as a basic emotion characterised by a positive emotional state, marked by the sensation of well-being and pleasure, together with a feeling of success associated with a clear understanding of the world. In turn, Mogilner *et al.* (2012) argue that happiness is malleable, changing from one moment to the next throughout a person's lifetime. For Gilbert (2006), happiness is very subjective and has different meanings for each individual, but most individuals are capable of classifying their own levels of happiness and satisfaction with their life (Lyubomirsky and Lepper, 1997).

For Nadeem (2009), the happiest individuals appear to be those who help others. His research confirms such a link, showing that happiness is related with volunteering (in terms of giving up one's time, experience and money), suggesting a cyclical relationship between happiness and volunteering. At the same time, the results obtained by Borgonovi (2008) suggest that voluntary work is positively correlated with two indicators of well-being – health and happiness. The author also suggests that volunteering can increase a person's level of happiness since it helps to reduce anxiety about one's status.

Thus, with the aim of discovering whether there is any relationship between the various motivations for engaging in voluntary work and the level of happiness of employees, the following research hypothesis was formulated:

H2. The motivations underlying voluntary work influence the level of happiness of employees.

As far as the relationship between satisfaction with volunteering and happiness and well-being is concerned, Musick and Wilson (2003) maintain that volunteering may increase self-confidence and provide volunteers with the psychological resources needed to deal with stress, improving their social integration, which is itself linked to well-being.

In the same way, Thoits and Hewitt (2001) state that volunteering can help to reduce psychological stress and lessen its negative consequences. This increases satisfaction with life, the will to live and self-respect, while reducing the symptoms of depression and anxiety. Wei *et al.* (2012) also claim that volunteering may help to reduce loneliness, depression and other forms of emotional deprivation.

In order to understand whether there does in fact exist a relationship between satisfaction with volunteering and happiness, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H3. Satisfaction with the programme of volunteering and the happiness of employees may be positively related.

4. Methodology

4.1 Sample

In order to choose a sample of participants for this study, a previous collection of available information about companies operating in Portugal, which, under the scope of their CSR organised employees' volunteering programmes, was undertaken. Some national and international companies manifested some interest in the theme, but, in fact, was Company A the one that immediately demonstrated its willingness to collaborate in the study. This way this company was chosen to serve as the sample, which included 222 employees[1] who were also, at the same time, volunteers in the organisation's volunteer programme.

Company A, classified as a large corporation, is a holding company operating as a group in the sector of oil and natural gas production. Its activities are rapidly expanding on a global scale, and it has established a presence in Portugal, Spain, Brazil, Angola, Venezuela, Mozambique, Cape Verde, etc.

The company has been demonstrating its concern with the surrounding community. Thus, certain aspects are contemplated under the scope of its CSR policy, such as: the code of ethics, environmental and economic sustainability, safety, internal communication plans, and partnerships with charitable institutions, international cooperation and corporate volunteering. As part of its mission, in the scope of corporate volunteering, it is committed with the education, the environment and energy efficiency, the road traffic safety, and the health and well-being. The involvement of the company's employees with the community includes team volunteering, skills volunteering, on-the-job activities and guidance and coaching.

4.2 Collecting data and variables

The data collection was made by means of a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was built on the web platform and the link was sent to the company's volunteer employees. The company participated in the dissemination of the questionnaire, by placing it online on its intranet service for three months.

The questionnaire was administered to collect information about the motivations underlying corporate volunteering practices, satisfaction with volunteering and happiness. Socio-demographic variables were also included (gender, age, income, educational qualifications, etc.) and other questions related with volunteering (the time spent on such activities, the number of activities in which they have participated, other volunteering projects in which they also participate) in order to facilitate the characterisation of the individual.

As far as the assessment of the motives to volunteer is concerned, the VFI scale developed by Clary *et al.* (1998) was used, in which six motivational categories are

presented: Career, Enhancement, Social, Protective, Understanding and Values. The scale consists of 30 reasons why an individual might volunteer, based on a Likert scale in which the respondents to the questionnaire classify their statements according to their respective degrees of importance. This scale has already been tested and validated for Portugal, firstly by Ferreira *et al.* (2011), and subsequently by Paço and Agostinho (2012).

To measure satisfaction, just like Ferreira *et al.* (2012), we used the satisfaction with human resource management (SHRM) scale, which makes it possible to assess the satisfaction of volunteers with regard to the company's human resource management bodies. This scale is composed of seven questions and was adapted from the studies by Jiménez *et al.* (2009) and Silverberg *et al.* (2001).

Lastly, the subjective happiness scale (SHS) was used, with the aim of asking respondents to classify themselves with regard to their levels of happiness (Lyubomirsky and Lepper, 1997). Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1997) studied the capacity of individuals for classifying their levels of happiness through this scale, testing and validating it. The SHS has four items that can be used to measure levels of happiness by assessing the individual's affective and cognitive parts.

5. Results

In terms of sample characterisation, this study presents a sample consisting of 222 volunteers belonging to Company A. As far as the distribution by gender is concerned, it can be seen that slightly more women (52.3 per cent) than men responded to the questionnaire, whereas, in the case of age, most volunteers were in the 31-40 age group (34.7 per cent). In all, 77.9 per cent of respondents had a university level of education; 68.9 per cent had children; and a significant proportion (41.9 per cent) were situated in the income bracket of people earning "over €2,000".

Regarding other profile characterisation questions, as far as the number of voluntary activities undertaken under the scope of the volunteer programme is concerned, most of the respondents (90.6 per cent) said that they had already undertaken "1-3 activities" up to the time when the questionnaires were answered. About the number of hours spent undertaking voluntary activities, 66.1 per cent of respondents said that they spent "1-10 hours" per week, 57.2 per cent said that they did not take part in any other volunteering projects beyond the voluntary work they were doing through the company, and, finally, 54.1 per cent remained volunteers for a period of "1-5 years".

Next, in order to obtain a more complete picture of the results, a table is presented (Table I) with some statistics describing the main constructs. An assessment was also made of the reliability of all the dimensions of the Motivations, including Satisfaction and Happiness, using Cronbach's α test.

Variables	Mean	Mode	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach's α
Values	4.152	4.00	1	5	0.620
Understanding	4.012	4.00	2	5	0.820
Enhancement	3.353	3.00	1	5	0.677
Social	2.681	3.00	1	4	0.748
Protective	2.352	1.00	1	5	0.800
Career	1.994	1.00	1	4	0.885
Satisfaction	3.719	2.00	2	5	0.811
Happiness	3.671	3.00	3	5	0.434

Table I.
Descriptive statistics and
Cronbach's α

Table I shows that the motivational factor that is considered as the most important by volunteers is the one related with Values, with an average score of 4.152. And this is also the area where there is less dispersal to be noted in the responses, which confirms the importance of altruism in the process of volunteering (as defended by Burns *et al.*, 2006). Next comes Understanding (4.012), reflecting the importance both of the practice itself and of experience, and Enhancement (3.353), which is associated with personal development. The motivation that is regarded as least important is Career, which recorded a score below the point of indifference (1.994). As far as this factor is concerned, together with Protective, it was also the one where the lowest mode value was found (1). In this case, individuals seem to place less importance on the knowledge and skills that they can gather in a particular area by doing voluntary work (Lee and Won, 2011). This hierarchical organisation of the importance attributed to motivations was also found by Agostinho and Paço (2012), who analysed a sample of volunteers working with a non-profit organisation. As far as Satisfaction and Happiness are concerned, it can be seen that both constructs obtained average scores of close to 4 points.

The Cronbach's α tests presented in this study are considered to be "good", in the case of the motivational factors Understanding, Protective and Career. Nevertheless, there seems to be less internal consistency in the case of the motivational factors social (acceptable) and Values and Enhancement (both "questionable"). Again, some of these results are in line with those obtained by Agostinho and Paço (2012) and, in some cases, they are slightly lower than the values presented in the study made by Clary *et al.* (1998). However, overall, the scale presents a reliability level considered to be "excellent" (0.917). As far as the evaluation of the reliability and consistency of the variables Satisfaction and Happiness is concerned, the first can be considered "good", but the second is considered "unacceptable", which may be related with the rather general nature of the construct indicators. Thus, subsequent analyses involving this construct may present some problems.

With the aim of discovering whether the motivations that underlie the activity of volunteering influence the level of satisfaction of employees, a multiple regression analysis was carried out, in addition to the study that was made of the determining coefficients and simple correlations. Nevertheless, to see if functional relationships may be inferred between the dependent variable (Satisfaction) and the independent variables (Motivations), it is necessary to ensure that the model's assumptions are valid. Hence, checks were made to see if the errors displayed an average null measurement and constant variance, and to see if the errors followed a normal pattern of distribution (using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) and whether there was error independence (using the Durbin-Watson test). As the model's assumptions were confirmed, the model was deemed valid across all the variables analysed. The analysis performed is shown in Table II.

Analysis of the determining coefficient, R^2 , in which $R^2 = 0.107$ enables us to state that 10.7 per cent of the variation noted in the dependent variable Satisfaction is explained by the independent variables Values, Understanding, Enhancement, Social, Protective and Career, with the remaining variation being explained by factors that are beyond the scope of this model. In turn, the simple correlation coefficient (R), in which $R = 0.327$, demonstrates that there is a positive, but moderate correlation between the variables ($R > 0.3$), i.e. they tend to vary in the same direction. This means that, on average, any increase in the independent variables leads to a rise in the dependent variable Satisfaction.

In order to undertake an analysis of model variance, the F -test was applied with its associated determined p -value of 0.000, which leads us to reject the null hypothesis that there is no correlation between the dependent and independent variables. The results

Model	R	R^2	R^2_{adj}	$\hat{\sigma}$		
1	0.327 ^a	0.107	0.082	0.4975		
		Analysis of variance				
		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
Regression	6.357	6	1.059	4.281	0.000 ^b	
Error	53.210	215	0.247	–	–	
Total	59.567	221	–	–	–	
		Coefficients				
	Coefficient	σ	t	Significance		
Constant	2.574	0.309	8.329	0.000		
Values	0.346	0.073	4.735	0.000		
Understanding	–0.076	0.058	–1.307	0.193		
Enhancement	–0.014	0.068	–0.210	0.834		
Social	0.083	0.066	1.258	0.210		
Protective	–0.052	0.053	–0.984	0.326		
Career	–0.020	0.050	–0.406	0.685		

Table II.

Multiple regression analysis (satisfaction and motivations)

Notes: ^aPredictors: (constant), Values, Understanding, Enhancement, Social, Protective, Career; ^bdependent variable: Satisfaction $\alpha = 0.05$

of the multiple regression analysis point to the acceptance of the hypothesis formulated, since satisfaction with the experience of volunteering is correlated with the type of motivation that the volunteer displays.

Testing of the regression coefficient β_1 is provided by the t -student test, which is associated with a significant p -value of 0.000 for Values; in the other cases, there is no statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). These results allow us to state that only the independent variable Values significantly affects the dependent variable Satisfaction, indicating that the greater the motivation related with the factor Values, the greater is the satisfaction with the experience of volunteering). Note that the value of the regression coefficient is positive ($\beta_1 = 0.346$) and represents a variation of 34.6 per cent in Satisfaction caused by a positive unitary variation in Values.

Since the factor Values is related with altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others, our results seems to corroborate the research carried out by Wei *et al.* (2012) who concluded that the motivation to help others and the community brings more pleasure and satisfaction to these volunteers than more individual motives.

In order to ascertain whether the motivations that underlie the activity of volunteering influence the level of happiness of company employees, a statistical procedure was followed that was comparable with the previous one. After checking the statistical assumptions that are necessary in order to carry out the regression analysis, this analysis was then made, as can be seen in Table III.

As far as the determining coefficient, R^2 , is concerned, in which $R^2 = 0.050$, it is possible to state that only 5.0 per cent of the variation in the dependent variable Happiness is explained by motivations, with the remaining variation being explained by other factors. The simple correlation coefficient (R), in which $R = 0.223$, indicates a positive, but weak correlation between the variables.

In order to analyse the model's variance, the F -test was applied, resulting in an associated determined p -value of 0.085. The results therefore lead us to reject the hypothesis that had been formulated, since happiness is not correlated with the type of motivation displayed by the volunteer.

Model	R	R^2	R^2_{adj}	$\hat{\sigma}$	
1	0.223 ^a	0.050	0.023	0.5276	
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
Regression	3.140	6	0.523	1.880	0.085 ^a
Error	59.855	215	0.278	–	–
Total	62.995	221	–	–	–
	Coefficient	σ	t		Significance
Constant	3.262	0.328	9.955		0.000
Values	0.176	0.077	2.272		0.024
Understanding	0.005	0.061	0.075		0.940
Enhancement	–0.068	0.072	–0.952		0.342
Social	0.001	0.070	0.012		0.990
Protective	–0.108	0.056	–1.920		0.056
Career	0.070	0.053	1.319		0.188

Notes: ^aPredictors: (constant), Values, Understanding, Enhancement, Social, Protective, Career; dependent variable: Happiness $\alpha = 0.05$

Table III.
Multiple regression
analysis (happiness
and motivations)

In this analysis, the regression coefficient β_1 , provided by the t -student test, is associated with a significant p -value of 0.024 for Values; as far as all the other factors are concerned, there is no statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). These results allow us to state that only the independent variable Values significantly affects the dependent variable Happiness. The value of the regression coefficient is positive ($\beta_1 = 0.176$) represents a variation of 17.6 per cent in Happiness caused by a positive unitary variation in Values.

There does not, therefore, appear to be any correlation between the level of happiness and motivations for volunteering, although authors such as Plagnol and Huppert (2010) argue that happiness, well-being and quality of life may be benefits that derive from the performance of voluntary activities.

Finally, $H3$ is intended to test whether satisfaction with the volunteer programme is positively associated with the volunteers' feeling of happiness. We chose to carry out the Spearman correlation test and Cohen's κ test, in order to establish a correlation between the overall satisfaction variable (participation in this volunteer programme left me feeling satisfied) and the overall happiness variable (I consider myself to be a generally happy person).

Analysing the statistical results, when the overall satisfaction variable is crossed with the overall happiness variable, it can be seen that the most satisfied individuals are those who claim to be happiest, which corroborates the findings of Plagnol and Huppert (2010) and Borgonovi (2008), who state that volunteering is associated with a greater sense of well-being and that happiness, friendship, quality of life and health may be benefits that derive from the performance of volunteering activities.

However, Cohen's κ test resulted in a value of 0.050 with a significance of 0.299; in turn Spearman's ρ correlation test obtained a score of -0.007 , with a significance of 0.923. It can therefore be seen that there is no statistical significance, which means that the hypothesis initially presented cannot be confirmed.

6. Conclusions

Despite the fact this research was carried out in the scope of a corporate volunteer programme, the motivations that were examined received similar scores to those obtained by the study of Farrell *et al.* (1998), with the variables related with the factor Values being identified as the most important motivational category for people to engage in volunteering. In contrast, the motivational category related with Career was considered less important, in keeping with the findings of Rocha (2011) and Agostinho and Paço (2012).

In attempting to ascertain whether the motivations underlying volunteering activity influenced satisfaction, it was found that satisfaction with the experience of volunteering is effectively correlated with the type of motivation that the volunteer presents, especially as far as the motivational factor Values is concerned. Thus, in analysing the relationship between the different types of motivation and satisfaction, it was understood that the greater the volunteers' concern with helping others, the greater is their satisfaction with the experience. The fact that the data show that this motivational category is the one that most influences satisfaction is a finding that is in line with the results obtained by Rocha (2011) and the approach adopted by Clary *et al.* (1998), where it is defended that satisfaction depends on the benefits obtained by volunteers in relation to their motivations. It should be noted that all volunteers present a high level of satisfaction, which allows us to conclude that, in general, the experience of the volunteers taking part in Company A's volunteer programme is in line with their prior motivations.

The research led to the idea that happiness is not correlated with the type of motivation that the volunteer presents. On the other hand, satisfaction with the activity of volunteering also does not seem to influence the level of happiness. It is therefore likely that these variables are independent of one another. It should further be noted that the scale for measuring Happiness presented problems at the level of reliability, so that this may have affected the results.

Taking the explanation of the question of satisfaction a little further, one pertinent and relevant conclusion that can be drawn from the study is the fact that the variable relating to training (I'm satisfied with the training offered in order to improve my work as volunteer) recorded the lowest score amongst all the variables used to measure the construct. This result leads us to question the method used by Company A in the training that it provides to its employees participating in its volunteer programme. Ferreira *et al.* (2012) focus on the importance of this question and defend the idea that recruitment and training may influence the satisfaction of volunteers, and that satisfaction is a key factor in maintaining their services.

Thus, one of the recommendations to be made to Company A may involve the restructuring of the training plan to adapt it to the needs of its employees, or, in other words, carrying out a survey of training requirements and developing training and recruitment processes designed to guarantee the quality of voluntary work, making recruitment a selective mission for locating and attracting volunteers and making training a process designed to instruct the volunteer in specific aspects related with the skills and behaviours that they need in order to undertake their voluntary work.

Regarding the limitations of this study, the size and type of the sample can be pointed. It would be useful to have samples of volunteers from other companies operating in different sectors of activity. It would be useful to discuss if respondents working for a company operating in the oil production sector, with a great impact on people's lives and on the environment, may respond differently from people working in other activity sectors.

Another limitation of this study is the fact that there are only a few studies available on the theme of corporate volunteering, which makes comparisons difficult.

Despite the limitations found and presented earlier, carrying out this study made it possible to identify some lines of future research that may prove to be important. The first of these would be to apply the questionnaire, using the same scales of measurement, at other companies (from the same sector or from different sectors to that of the company in question) that include as part of their CRS strategy the development of activities in the field of corporate volunteering, so as to allow for the possibility of a comparative study.

Another line of future research would be to replicate the same questionnaire at other subsidiary companies in the various countries where the company operates, with the aim of discovering whether there are any differences at the level of the motivational factors of satisfaction and happiness, and whether these differences can be explained by the cultural and socioeconomic aspects of each country.

The third line of future research could be to analyse the impact of corporate volunteering in greater depth at those institutions and bodies that receive volunteers or develop partnerships with the business world, in order to better define this reality, attract more volunteers, develop more projects in the field of corporate social responsibility, and motivate and encourage other companies to consider including these activities in their own CSR strategy.

Note

1. A total of 900 employees-volunteers are enrolled in company database.

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