UNDERSTANDING THE "LIVED EXPERIENCE" OF SPORT EVENT VOLUNTEERS: USING THE HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE AS A GUIDING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

SUSANNE GELLWEILER,* NICHOLAS WISE,† AND TOM FLETCHER†

*Fachhochschule Kufstein Tirol, University of Applied Sciences, Kufstein, Austria
†Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, UK

This conceptual article presents an understanding of the term experience and lived experience by detailing the hermeneutic circle as a guiding framework to capture the volunteer journey of sport event volunteers. Sport event volunteering research has seen increased interest in the past decade, and this article acknowledges that there is a need to reconsider foundation understandings of the notion of experience. Because previous research has encouraged academics to focus less on the structure of experiences, it is therefore necessary to concentrate on meanings that further consider lived experiences as they are produced by individuals. Volunteering at a sport event represents a journey that can be captured at different stages, and this is can be done by putting emphasis on research participants' meanings and memories, as outlined in the conceptual model presented in this article.

Key words: Experience; Lived experience; Volunteer; Hermeneutic circle

Introduction

Efforts to define the term "lived experience" are challenged by the paucity of a clear definition and the ambiguity of the meaning that the word "experience" holds in general. In many research texts, the term "lived experience" remains underexplored. To guide this important area of inquiry, this article engages with foundational research that offers theoretical guidance to develop a framework for understanding the lived experience of volunteers.

This commentary offers conceptual insight that acknowledges early studies focusing on lived experiences, but work needs to be framed in accordance to a particular phenomenon—in this case volunteering at sport events. Scholars have noted that we need to outline what "lived experience" entails (see Diversi, 1998; Mastain, 2006; Papathanassoglou & Patiraki, 2003). Conceptual and explanatory shortcomings of this term were highlighted by McCaffrey (2008), who focused on how people integrate into communities. Efforts to gain an understanding of

Address correspondence to Nicholas Wise, Senior Lecturer in Tourism and Events Management, Faculty of Education, Health and Community, School of Sport Studies, Leisure and Nutrition, Liverpool John Moores University, Barkhill Road, Liverpool, L17 6BD, UK. Tel: 0151 231 4601; E-mail: N.A.Wise@ljmu.ac.uk

lived experiences by exploring definitions of the term "experience" are equally challenging.

Scott (1991), who critiques the negligence of defining experience, addresses "the absence of definition allows experience to resonate in many ways, but it also allows it to function as a universal category—the undefined work creates a sense of consensus by attributing to it an assumed, stable and shared meaning" (p. 788). Therefore, terms like "experience" and "lived experience" need to be explained. In fact, as suggested by Scott (1991), the word "experience" has become a ubiquitous term as it has evolved towards being frequently used in everyday language. In the field of events management, numerous scholars focus on the delivery of experiences (e.g., Allen & Shaw, 2009; Boo & Lu, 2015; Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006; Gellweiler, Fletcher, & Wise, 2017; Sun, May, & Wang, 2016). Although, experiences are embedded into activities and much of what we consume, how we seek, manage, and measure "experiences" challenges researchers to revisit meanings to evaluate the lived experiences that help define people's involvement at sport events (such as volunteers).

Previous research has encouraged academics to focus less on the structure of experiences (see, for example, Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2010; Morgan, 2007; Shilbury, Ferkins, & Smythe, 2013) and to address meanings that further consider lived experiences as they are produced by individuals. Because this article proposes a conceptual framework for researchers interested in volunteering at sport events, this article starts by discussing directions from these areas of study. The article then moves on to frame the notion of experience by focusing on lived experiences, meaning, and memory. This is followed by insight framing hermeneutic phenomenology to lead into the conceptual framework that presents the two loops of the hermeneutic circle to consider for conducting research into the lived experience of sport event volunteers. A discussion then brings forward some research implications followed by a brief conclusion.

Sport Event Volunteering

Volunteering opportunities are rapidly expanding, and thus is challenging researchers to understand personal and reflective meanings associated with volunteering. Increasingly, there are expanding volunteer opportunities in the fields of sport and events recently (see Benson & Wise, 2017; Nichols & Ralston, 2012; Nichols, Taylor, Barrett, & Jeanes, 2014; K. A. Smith, Lockstone-Binney, Holmes, & Baum, 2014). In particular, sport volunteering research has put much attention on sports clubs (e.g., Lee, Kim, & Koo, 2016), training (e.g., Minnaert, 2012), governance (e.g., Shilbury et al., 2013), and recruitment (e.g., Lockstone & Baum, 2010). There is also a range of literature that has looked at volunteering at sport mega-events (e.g., Dickson, Benson, & Terwiel, 2014; Edwards, Dickson, & Darcy, 2009; Giannoulakis, Wang, & Gray, 2007; Hallmann & Harms, 2012; Love, Hardin, Koo, & Morse, 2011). Concerning volunteering at sport events, Baum and Lockstone (2007) argued research in this area requires further conceptual depth to holistically explore some of the meanings behind why people volunteer, including the volunteer journey. Nichols (2013) noted that volunteering plays a significant role in sports policy, and with pressure to volunteer, much research has focused attention on volunteer motives (see Allen & Shaw, 2009; Costa et al., 2006; Hayton, 2016; Treuren, 2014). But it is essential that research attempts to further understand the value and meaning of the lived experience as this will lend further interpretation based on meanings and memories associated with the volunteer journey.

There are meanings associated with the lived experience of those who travel to volunteer at sport events. Given of the element of mobility, scholars have presented models to explore the volunteer journey (e.g., Skirstad & Kristiansen, 2017). For instance, Skirstad and Kristiansen (2017) have developed a framework to characterize voluntarism and how we need to consider its development over time to understand the "volunteer life-cycle," which involves individual, organizational, and societal features—which will influence why individuals volunteer. Elements presented in the work by Skirstad and Kristiansen (2017) are useful, and this article attempts to extend these features to consider personal narratives of experience also over time. Moreover, and pertinent to the conceptual model outlined in this article, is the temporal nature of being a sport events volunteer. Although numerous events are held annually in the same place,

volunteering may be a regular occurrence by members of a community. However, for one-off events, for which such studies the focus of this article is concerned with, traveling to participate is sojourn. Sport events will always attract a base of local volunteers to generate social impacts and reinforce pride in place (A. Smith, 2012), but for others, the mobility aspect contributes to the emotional journey volunteering at a sporting event—which is often linked to an individual's social identity or personal connection with a particular sport (see Fairley & Gammon, 2005; Giannoulakis et al., 2007; Jæger & Mathisen, 2017). Traveling to volunteer will transition how an individual perceived their role, as anticipation builds before, during, and after volunteering occurs. Journeys associated with being a volunteer will differ based on an individual's motives and experience, but it is essential to capture these lived meanings articulated through hermeneutic phenomenology.

Despite the type or regular occurrence of events, detailed among the existing literature are some core themes positioning what sport and event volunteering does. Sport helps create a sense of cohesion and bounds people through shared emotional connections to promote a sense of community (Cuskelly, 2008; Kristiansen, Skirstad, Parent, & Waddington, 2015) and to increase human and social capital (see Bradbury & Kay, 2008; Cuskelly, 2008; Darcy, Dickson, & Benson, 2014), which makes people feel like they belong and have mutual support. Chalip's (2006) work attempted to shift practical and conceptual perspectives by identifying how social outcomes were leveraged. There exists leveraging of individual skills contributing to human/social capital development (Darcy et al., 2014); however, research has highlighted that people are often seeking skills in line with their future aspirations (Hayton, 2016).

To ensure that the needs of contemporary volunteers are adequately managed, it is important to consider key factors contributing to both projected and perceived understanding of what an individual will do and thus "experience." Although there are a number of critical themes observed in the literature on sport and events volunteering, this article attempts to contribute an in-depth approach to understanding the volunteer journey, which is useful to managers because it acknowledges that an in-depth understanding of experience (particularly the lived experience) is at the core of the volunteer journey.

The Term "Experience"

The term "experience" has been the subject of discussion by German philosophers such as Dilthey, Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer and subsequently in the literature on phenomenology. In contrast to the English language, the term "experience" holds two different meanings in the German language: these are *Erfahrung*, which is the notion of gaining knowledge and learning the truth, and *Erlebnis* (Gadamer, 2004). Gadamer (2004) explored the origins and meaning of experience as *Erlebnis*, whose usage in the German language was not seen before the 1870s. It derives from the verb *erleben* that literally means "to live to see" (Burch, 1985, p. 5) or "to still be alive when something happens" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 53). Of significance here is the prefix "er," which stands for "from out of something according to its own essential measure" (Burch, 1985, p. 5) and also forms part of the following two nouns: *das Erlebte* and *das Erlebnis*. The former noun *das (Er-)lebte*, which is the past tense of the German verb *leben* (to live) and thus depicts *das Erlebte* as something that has been lived through in the past and represents an outcome. In contrast, *(Er-)lebnis* is understood as "the process and result of living" (Burch, 1985, p. 5) and beholds the literal meaning of "what unfolds and endures from life by virtue of life itself."

As suggested by Heidegger (2007), the link between "experience" and "life" has been lost in translation from German to English and is reestablished by referring to this type of experience as "lived experience" (p. iv). This distinction between the two nouns *das Erlebte* and *das Erlebnis* comes into better focus in the work of Dilthey (1976) who differentiates between "mere experience" and "an experience" that nevertheless shares the feature of experience which:

> Like its congeners, life and history, includes what men do and suffer, what they strive for, love, believe and endure, and also how men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine. (p. 201)

However, as suggested by Turner (1986), "mere experience" holds the notion of "chronological temporality" (p. 34) and a sense of passiveness—referring to mere experiences are characterized by a beginning and an end and their occurrence in sequential order (while events are endured and accepted as such). Furthermore, they take place in a sequential manner that allows their accommodation in the flow of the individual's history. In contrast, "an experience" protrudes from ones passing hours and years due to the individual's response to external events that may have a transforming and/or formative effect. This understanding of experience takes the idea of *Erlebnis* further. Moreover, Dilthey (1976) also allocated the concept of temporality and a processual structure to such experiences, he views this type of experience as being subject to "an initiation and a consummation" (p. 210), which reflects the sense of activeness as opposed to passiveness in "mere experiences." This aspect becomes apparent in the individual's active involvement in structuring these experiences through thinking, feeling, and the allocation of meaning in distinctive acts and events resulting in a specific experience that stands out (see Turner, 1986). Thus, "an experience" represents the individual's responses to an external event that become memorable, that is, they are recognized in retrospect (Burch, 1985).

Inherent in the descriptions of both "a mere experience" and "an experience" is the aspect of experiences belonging to the individual and being part of one's personal life and history, which suggests that experiences are in fact idiosyncratic. This link is reflected and elaborated on by Gadamer (1976) who noted:

> Everything that is experienced is experienced by oneself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this one's self and thus contains an unmistakable and irreplaceable relation to the whole of this one's life . . . its meaning remains fused with the whole of movement of life and constantly accompanies it. (p. 58)

Gadamer's quote holds multiple connotations: firstly, it highlights the close link between meaning and lived experiences. Secondly, it entails the notion of continuity in terms of its enduring presence in a person's sense of self and thus a person's identity; however, at the same time it raises the question about one's consciousness as a prerequisite for lived experiences to be perceived as such.

Lived Experiences and Meaning

The term "meaning" refers to those linguistic and cognitive categories that serve the purpose of defining, justifying, and interpreting aspects of one's view of reality (Krauss, 2005). As such, they are individually constructed. Turner (1986) advocated that meaning represents the core of human existence as human beings strive to make sense of and find meanings in their life and experiences. This is partly in reflected in the quotes by Chen (2001), who stated that "life experience generates and enriches meanings, while meanings provide explanation and guidance for experience" (p. 319), and by Krauss (2005), that suggested that "a person draws meanings from or gives meanings to events and experiences" (p. 762). Drawing from the work by Schutz (1967), this interrelationship between lived experiences and meanings is not as simple as it seems and needs to be illuminated further by addressing the conditions that have to exist for experiences to bear a meaning. Thus, lived experiences as such do not hold any meaning, but instead, they only become meaningful when they are recalled and accessed in retrospect.

Another feature that influences the process of attaching meaning to lived experiences is the attitude of the individual towards the object of attention such as her or his lived experience: as one's attitudes undergo changes as she or he proceeds through life, the meaning of a particular lived experience is equally subject to alterations, also referred to by Husserl (1974) as "attentional modifications" (p. 90), in the form of changes in angles and temporal distance from which a lived experience is retrospectively viewed.

Building on the discussion above, Burch (1985) elaborated on the concept of lived experience and identified its ambiguity in terms of the "reflexive immediacy" that precedes "explicit reflection." The aspect of "reflexive immediacy" refers to Dilthey's (1983) idea of the individual's "immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life," which infers the notion of self-given awareness of life, which is "awareness unaware of itself" (p. 223). This

paradox becomes clearer in the following quote by Dilthey (1983), who suggested:

> A lived experience does not confront me as something perceived or represented; it is not given to me, but the reality of lived experience is therefor-me because I have a reflexive awareness of it, because I possess it immediately as belonging to me in some sense. Only in thought does it become objective. (p. 223)

As such, the individual is conscious of his or her existence as well as of occurrences in one's life, which is a prerequisite for lived experiences to be reflected on (i.e., before it can be processed, interpreted, and allocated a specific meaning it has to be become subject to explicit reflection).

The literature on lived experiences leads towards the psychological perspective of self and memory as being interdependent: in reference to the works by Locke (1973) and Grice (1941), who advocated that the self is defined by a person's memories of personal experiences, there is the shared understanding that the memories of one's past make up oneself (see Bruner, 1994; Tessler & Nelson, 1994; Levine et al., 1998; Pillemer, 1998), while at the same time the self is perceived as a prerequisite for the one's ability to remember. In order for a thought to be a memory rather than an imagination in one's mind, it must be regarded as something that has previously occurred in one's life course and of which one has been aware of in order for it to be recalled at a later point (Howe & Courage, 1997; McCormack & Hoerl, 1999; Wheeler, Stuss, & Tulving, 1997) or as Klein (2001) termed it: "memory requires more than mere dating a fact in the past. It must be dated in my past" (p. 26).

Reconsidering a Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Gadamer (2004) conceptualized understanding as "a movement between the interpreter's past and present in which understanding, and creation of meaning emerge incrementally as the back and forth process take space between parts and the whole" (see Dahlberg, Drew, & Nystrom, 2001, p. 83), which reflects the following concepts by Gadamer and which allowed Heideggers' work on hermeneutic phenomenology to progress further and provides a conceptual foundation. For example, the aspect

of prejudice reflects the notion of prejudgment and foremeaning inherent in Heidegger's work. Like Heidegger, Gadamer links prejudices that are to be understood as preunderstanding (Fleming, 2003) to not only the past but also to the present as tradition in terms of the social and cultural environment that shapes the individual's world of understanding, and prejudices emerge in a person's understanding of new things. Therefore, "prejudices nail us to the past as well as to the future, as understanding includes memories and anticipations" (Dahlberg et al., 2001, p. 83). In the context of this research, the aspect of prejudice (i.e., preunderstanding of sport event volunteering) applies to the interpretation of data. This limitation to complete openness and to grasp the full meaning of a thing or text as the meaning of something is anticipated before it is fully understood is reflected in Gadamer's (2004) referral to understanding as "horizon," which is "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (p. 301). This horizon that is the outcome of the coexistence of an individual's experience of something new and one's personal historical tradition in the form of prejudices must be challenged if something is to be understood in a new way:

> Applying this [horizon] to the thinking mind, we speak of narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth. . . . A person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. On the other hand, to have a horizon means not being limited to what is nearby. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 302)

However, by going beyond what is visible requires the horizon to be expanded which is achieved by reexamining, testing, and shaping existing viewpoints through new insights. As meaning of new insights are derived from and influenced by what we think we know, or do not know, past and new horizons merge—thus leading to a "fusion of horizons." This metaphor implies that understanding can never be achieved on its own but builds on prior knowledge, one's experiences, and historicity. Thus, understanding is in fact an ongoing fusion of horizons. However, in order to allow these insights to emerge in full, Van Manen (1997) recommended that the researcher has to venture out and try to

look for the hidden rather than the obvious. Furthermore, Gadamer (2004) recommended researchers to revisit preunderstandings in relation to the research topic in order to "bring before me something that otherwise 'happens behind my back'" (p. xxix) through a process of self-reflection. Taking this advice to heart, the process of the researcher's fusion of horizons was documented through a reflective journal.

In reference to the hermeneutic circle that was introduced by Heidegger (2007), Gadamer (2004) elaborated on the understanding of the hermeneutic circle, in terms of the context of text: "the circular movement of understanding runs backward and forward along the text and ceases when the text is perfectly understood" (p. 293). Text in this research refers to meanings produced and transcribed by a volunteer during their volunteer journey. With regards to the transcript as text, the need to understand what it is like to enact the role of a sport event volunteer requires the researcher to also enter and engage in the hermeneutic circle both in the text and during the research process to allow a rich text to be generated. Thus, texts are narratives, data embedded in the data of interview accounts, or self-reflections based on interactions, feelings, and observations recorded in diary records kept by volunteers throughout the volunteer journey. Given that inductive research with volunteers involves capturing data over the course of the experience, the meanings produced are individual self-reflexive interpretations based on transitioning and shifting contexts—to produce textual accounts of qualitative data (see Harris, 2006; Wise, 2011, 2014). Such shifts are identified based on changing feelings and personal moods linked to expectations, shifting emotional accounts, and reactions. Thus, interpretations of data will correspond with the entering and/or leaving of different phases, or "parts" (as detailed later in this article). This was likely to be achieved by paying close attention to and exploring the accounts of the research participant through further inquiry in the dialogue, which inevitably raises the question when to terminate the research process. This matter is further complicated by the warning of Gadamer (2004) about the "fore-conception of completeness" which builds on the idea that not only "a text should be completely express its meaning–but also what it says should

be the complete truth" (p. 294). In view of these arguments, researchers must accept that the discovery of meaning is an infinitive process as one's viewpoint on things is continuously formed through new fusions of horizons and take the courage to decide when sufficient information has been generated to provide a satisfactory answer to the research question. A more tangible idea is provided by Bollnow (1982), who suggested halting inquiries the way "good conversations tend to end: they finally fall into silence" (p. 97).

In reference to the choice of a suitable research method, the question arose if there were any predetermined sets of fixed procedures and techniques of conducting hermeneutic phenomenology and to what extent they would have to be adhered to. Again, there seems to be a divide among scholars; for example, Van Manen (1997) did not advocate any particular methods or methodologies for hermeneutic phenomenology. In comparison, Jasper (1994) recommended methods that allow the research participants to provide an account of their lived experiences in a spontaneous way such as audiotaped interviews, group discussion, or diaries. Merleau-Ponty (1956), who is a follower of existentialist phenomenology that combines phenomenological description, reduction, and interpretation, added more artistic methods such as poetry, art, or photography through which the meanings of experiences may be accessed, in consideration of the analysis of the collected data. Alternatively, Diekelmann, Allen, and Tanner (1989) and Benner (1994) have developed a step-by-step set of procedures for hermeneutic analysis following Heideggerian beliefs.

Building on the concept of the researcher as explorer, Van Manen (1997) devised a discovery-oriented approach that is free of any predescribed method for investigating lived experiences as such. He refers to the metaphor by Heidegger who perceived the phenomenological reflection as the researcher's journey on unmarked paths and tracks through a forest that eventually lead to a clearing where one may find something revealed in its essential nature. Like those paths, methods "need to be discovered or invented as a response to the question at hand" (Van Manen, 1997, p. 29). Gadamer (2004) took the issue a step further by suggesting that the "method of phenomenology and hermeneutics is that there is no method!" (p. 296). In reference

of the contrasting viewpoint of using a strictly pre-described set of analysis steps on one hand and Gadamer's generic argument that there is in fact no specific method as such, Van Manen (1997) provided the researcher with a bridge between these two sides by concluding that "the broad field of phenomenological scholarship can be considered as a set of guides and recommendations for a principles form of inquiry that neither simply rejects or ignores tradition, no slavishly follows or kneels in front of it!" (p. 85). Thus, the set of procedures for analyzing hermeneutic phenomenological data provided by different authors (e.g., Benner, 1994; Diekelmann et al., 1989) are to be perceived as helpful tools rather than obligatory activities.

Towards a Conceptual Framework
for Researching the Lived Experience
of Sport Event Volunteers

This section is concerned with the presentation of themes and subthemes that explicate the interpretative dimensions of the meaning of being a sport event volunteer. The interpretation of the lived experiences of sport event volunteers derives from the need to develop a conceptual framework that bring into account the stages of experience and immersion that a volunteer goes through. Therefore, to understand the lived experiences of sport event

volunteers, it requires the participants to coproduce knowledge by outlining and sharing stories and viewpoints, and it also requires the researcher to maintain a comprehensive dialogue with the research participants to reflect on in analyses and interpretations.

As the phenomenological approach of this study is informed by the hermeneutic circle, the presentation of the interpretation in this study is concerned with reflecting the ongoing movement between "the whole" and "the parts" (Dahlberg et al., 2001). As the circle is perceived as a closed shape, questions will emerge where and how to begin with the interpretation of data—should the interpretation of the data begin with the smallest element. Start with the subthemes and build towards the overarching theme, or should this process be reversed, by first discussing the themes and then exploring the subthemes. Both approaches are commonly used in hermeneutic phenomenological studies and are in fact linear in nature and do not reflect the loop of the hermeneutic circle. For the latter to be achieved, the interpretations of the lived experiences of volunteers are outlined in Figure 1, presented as follows: first, the overarching themes representing "the whole" must be introduced and briefly described. This is followed by an exploration of the subthemes, "the parts" from which the core meanings emerge before concluding by returning to the overarching themes.
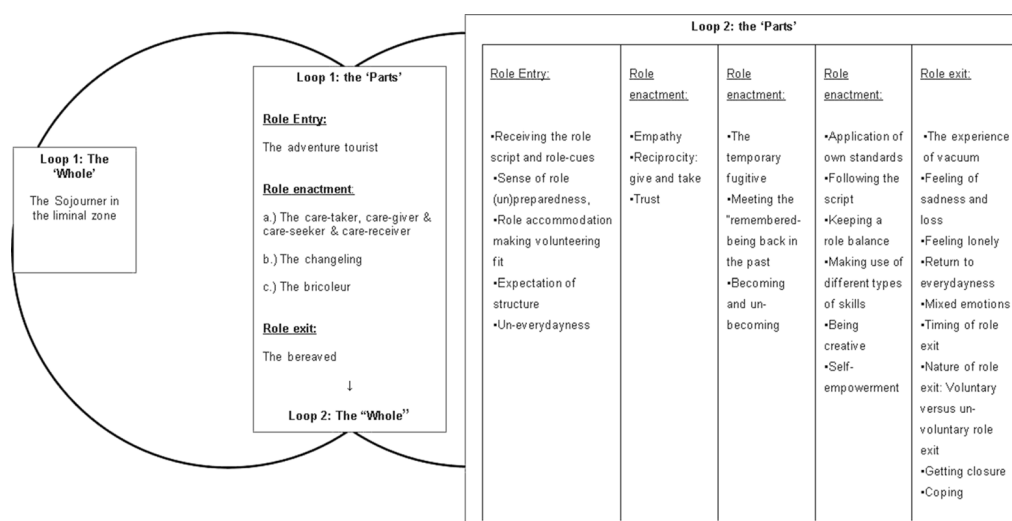

Figure 1. Application of the two loops of the hermeneutic circle to the study.

In view of the different stages of being a volunteer along with the journey of the phases of volunteering at an event, three main substages indicate the role performance: role entry, role enactment, and role exit. Over the duration of volunteering, it may be observed that three separate hermeneutic circles occur. Such a model is important to consider when focusing on sport event volunteering. The temporal limitations of volunteering at sport events means an individual will go through different phases. To fully adhere to the concept of hermeneutic circle, these have to be integrated into and perceived as another set of "parts" that constitute the whole. Because events are bound by time constraints, it is important that researchers capture data at different phases from entry, throughout enactment and to the exit phase because an individual's experiences associated with the event will transform due to the temporary act of volunteering as indicated in Loop 2 (the "parts") of Figure 1.

Consequently, this "double loop" of the hermeneutic circle in the form of two levels on which movement between the whole and the parts occur: representing the first loop, "the whole" in the form of an overall interpretation and the lived experiences as a volunteer journey. This is highlighted in Figure 1 to present the need to capture lived experiences as a participant navigates through the three phases of role entry, the role enactment, and the role exit stage resulting in five subthemes that represent "the parts" of "the whole" in this first loop. These subthemes are (1) role entry: the adventure tourist; (2) role enactment: the care taker, care giver, & care seeker; the changeling; the bricoleur; and (3) role exit: the bereaved. In the second loop, these "parts" then function as "the whole" that links to another set of "parts" in the form of respective subsubthemes. For example, "the adventure tourist" that is a feature of the role entry stage represents a "whole" and consists of the respective subthemes, which are (a) receiving the role script and role cues; (b) sense of role (un)preparedness; (c) role accommodation—making volunteering fit; (d) expectation of structure; (e) role ambiguity; and (f) un-everydayness and make up "the parts." The second loop leads back to the first loop to reflect on the overarching themes that will emerge based on an individual's lived experience.

Drulák (2004) distinguished between three types of metaphors: sedimented, conventional, and unconventional. He suggests that sedimented metaphors are usually presented in the form of statements and derive from common background knowledge, thus they do not require further explanation. Similarly, conventional metaphors are "automatic, effortless and generally established as a mode of thought among members of a linguistic community" (Turner, 1986, p. 55), thus no clarification is needed. In contrast, the unconventional metaphor challenges the common sense as it brings together two areas of experience that are not congruent, in a novel and creative way (Drulák, 2004). By linking two familiar concepts in a new and unfamiliar way, unconventional metaphors allow the learning of new knowledge and gaining new insights (Drulák, 2004; Lakoff, 1993; Petrie & Oshlag, 1993; Sticht, 1993), in line with the description by Jensen (2006). In relation to this study, the overarching subthemes are outlined in Figure 1.

Looking at the first loop, the idea that volunteers are sojourners in a liminal zone. Because volunteers are depicted as temporary rather than permanent residents in a place, individuals come to a place to be a part of a community, but only stay for a predetermined amount of time only to leave and return to their home (and move on to another event in the future). The volunteer is a sojourner, applicable to the context of sport event volunteers, because they leave to stay somewhere else for a while before returning to the place he/she has come from or moving on to another location. The sport event volunteer temporarily enters the role of a helper at sport events, which they themselves are of "limited time duration; that is, they are not continuous" (Dimmock & Tiyce, 2005, p. 356). Once the role has been enacted, she/he leaves it and moves on to another role or returns to existing roles—thus the sport event volunteer as sojourner can be perceived as being temporally and spatially displaced. The latter perspective relates to the concepts of the "liminal/liminoid zone" that that is defined by Getz (2008) as "a zone that must be delineated in both spatial and temporal terms" (p. 178). In the case of the research respondents the liminal zone refers to the sport event environment including the volunteer role that the individual must temporarily perform,

and which take him/her to the specific geographical areas in which he/she enacts the volunteer role. Consequently, the sport event volunteer can be seen as being temporarily suspended from his/her everyday reality.

Discussion and Research Implications

The literature on lived experience hold a number of implications for those researchers who are concerned with studying lived experiences and volunteering at sport events—but can be explored at any range of events. The hermeneutic circle is a useful approach to adopt because it allows each participant to reflect on their individual voluntary journey. The parameters of this approach are also useful for events managers so that they can identify trends based on reactions and feelings of volunteers (Treuren, 2014). Being able to recognize transitioning phases that volunteers will go through assists with manage times where volunteers are likely to experience hardships or mixed emotions. For example, the concept of "attentional modifications" addressed by Husserl (1974) refers to the idea that the meaning that a lived experience holds for an individual is subject to change, and therefore has to be continually observed over the duration of an event—during the entry, enactment, and exit. Thus, the meaning that research participants allocate to their lived experiences of volunteering at a particular sport event during the time of research may not be the same that was attached to their experiences at an earlier stage or that they would attach at a later point in time. Furthermore, such work is important when focusing on sporting events especially because an individual is likely to travel and invest great extents of time to be a part of an event that the individual closely associates with a sport, an event, and the community (see Cuskelly, Hoye, & Auld, 2006; Nichols & Ralston, 2012; Skirstad & Kristiansen, 2017).

Because sport events are liminal, it is important to capture data while volunteers are directly involved—to capture the lived experiences throughout the journey so that emotions and reactions are recorded accordingly based on an individual's feelings. This aspect seems of particular importance if the study on lived experiences requires the researcher to interact multiple times with a particular research participant over a stretch of time. The process of studying the lived experiences of sport event volunteering may further be challenged by the fallibility of memories in terms of the problems of individuals to access and recall stored data at times even though memory storage is described as being of a permanent nature (Keller, 1999; Spinelli, 2005). In view of the adopted research focus of this commentary that rests on the lived experiences of sport event volunteers, it is the episodic component that the research is concerned with, it requires sport event volunteers to recall a specific period of time in their lives when they were helping with the staging of a particular sport event and to retrieve specific memories in relation to this activity. In addition, in order to establish what it was like to have been a sport event volunteer at a particular event and to provide the researcher with a personal narrative, the individual person has to have the ability to self-reflect and to be conscious of the past. This refers to the capacity to know about one's mental state that he or she has experienced at a specific moment in the past (Wheeler et al., 1997; McCormack & Hoerl, 1999). These issues relate to the aspect of distortion of memories (and meaning) over time that according to Schacter (1997) is inevitable as memory by nature is "invariably and inevitably selective" (p. 348) due to the influence of social and psychological factors on information collection, storage, and retrieval processes.

Another issue emerges from the idiosyncrasy of lived experience that challenges researchers how we know what the particular moments and activities that have been lived through by the research participant were really like. From the point of view of the researcher who is as an outsider to a sport event volunteer's lived experience, the issues of authenticity emerge (see Keller, 1999). It is the research participant who has lived through being a sport event volunteer and who is required to reflect on what she or he has lived through. Moreover, the volunteer needs to articulate her or his lived experiences, and their accounts cannot be verified by the researcher who, consequently, is placed in the position of having to trust that the accounts provided by the research come as close to the original state in which the research participants were at the

time. Furthermore, as lived experiences are in fact owned by the person who lived through them, the researcher relies on the research participants' willingness to recall moments of their past and share these with him or her. This finding suggests that research ethics may come into play, for example in terms of how the researcher negotiates the access to data (i.e., the research participants' lived experience). In addition, the concepts of "sympathetic introspection" (see Hammersley, 1999, p. 140) and "taking the role of the other" (Mead, 1934, p. 151) both hold the following research implications: (1) research findings have to be presented in such a way that they allow sympathetic introspection to take place and (2) the question about the finitude of understanding has to be addressed in terms of the possibility to reach the stage where one has gained a full understanding of sport event volunteers' experiences of "being in the world." Holroyd (2007) provided the following insight: "it is important to recognize that all resulting understanding will never be complete as some experiences will remain undiscovered!" (p. 1).

Conclusion

This article has outlined how the hermeneutic can be applied to the interpretation and presentation of data by adopting the "double loop" of the hermeneutic circle. Furthermore, it has provided an overview of the overarching theme and two levels of subthemes and has highlighted the use of metaphors to consider when interpreting findings. This conceptual article offers an approach for researchers who conduct research in the area of volunteering at sport events. Although this article offers foundational conceptual guidance to show how the model was informed, it offers a starting point for researchers to consider and amend over time as more research is conducted in this area. As noted above, this article suggests this framework for research on sport events, but it can be considered in other fields of event volunteering accordingly.

There exist a number of implications for future research plan in the area of sport event volunteering in view of the temporal structure of lived experiences mentioned above, and this will put emphasis on research participants' meanings and memories. Another factor derives from the issue of interpretation: as lived experiences are recalled by the individual, they are subject to interpretation and the attachment of meaning by the individual who owns them (Van Manen, 1997), or as Gadamer (2004) stated "everything that is experienced is experienced by oneself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this one's self" (p. 302). At the same time, their account about these lived experiences is subject to interpretation by the researcher. Thus, the researcher must choose a suitable methodology that mirrors these aspects of subjective interpretation and provides tools that allow both the individual to recall and reflect on their lived experiences and for meaning to emerge.

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