

Chapter 5

Brazil



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Abstract Volunteering in Brazil is historically connected to religious initiatives, but the complexity of its concept has changed over time. From simple acts of charity, regarded as assistencialism, it evolved to be considered an instrument of social change. The Brazilian volunteer is an engaged, active, and participative citizen who, by donating time, work, and talent to causes of social interest, seeks to solve social problems. Despite an estimated workforce of 33 million volunteers, the rate has changed little in the last decade and is considered low compared to other countries. Volunteering is regulated by the law N° 9.608/98. In Brazil, volunteering mostly takes place in religious, health, social assistance, or educational organizations of a private or public nature. The field of sports and physical activities favors volunteering initiatives that meet social demands, mostly using sports as a tool for social inclusion, integration, and education of socially excluded populations. Health promotion activities, event organization, or sports club management are other practices of sports volunteers. Sports mega events have also benefited from the work of volunteers in the last decade, a fact that has generated critics and protests. Currently, the state, with its neoliberal perspective toward social problems, entails to the civil society an increasing responsibility to meet the social demands, thus masking its own inefficiency.

5.1 Meaning and Understanding of Sports Volunteering

Brazil is the largest country in Latin America and the fifth most populated in the world, home to 207.7 million citizens. The country is listed as one of the most socially unequal in the world, with 10% of the population living near poverty or below the income poverty line (United Nations 2016). Increasing social problems threaten Brazilian society constantly. The country improved economically and

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socially in the last two decades but is currently going through a deep political and economic crisis that jeopardizes the social achievements of the past (Martins 2017; Oliveira and Rossignoli 2017). Achievements can also be credited to the work of an engaged and active volunteer workforce, especially in the field of political militancy.

The volunteer's responsibility to develop the Brazilian society increases at the same rate as the problems volunteers face. Through participation in religious, political, educational, cultural, health, or sports institutions, the volunteer acts as a driver of social change, being a central part of the Brazilian civil society. To comprehend its meaning, a brief history of volunteering in Brazil is presented.

5.1.1 Brief History of Volunteering in Brazil

Volunteering in Brazil starts with the foundation by the Portuguese Catholics of the Holy Houses of Mercy in the 1600s, the first institutions with volunteers in the workforce. Volunteering at the time was driven by a feeling of compassion and realized through acts of charity, which was strongly encouraged by churches at the time. Thus, volunteering has a strong religious character, reinforcing moral values and religious aspects through its practice. From the 1600s to the 1900s, consequently, volunteering was regarded as *assistencialism*.¹ In the 1900s volunteer work expanded due to a greater involvement of the state and the appearance of new institutions, such as the Red Cross, the Scout Movement, and the immigrant sports clubs (D'Aiuto and Bramante 2006). However, by the 1930s, the government centralized most social assistance initiatives as part of its welfare policies, consequently reducing voluntary practices. It was only in the 1960s that the voluntary sector became influential again and engaged in a combative spirit propelled by a feeling of indignation. The failure of welfare policies and the inefficiency of the state increased political activism, and with the repression of the military regime, activists turned their efforts to voluntary initiatives. This shift added the idea of social change to the practice of volunteering (Corullón and Medeiros Filho 2002).

During the 1970s and the 1980s, the number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and associations rose, composed of a more politicized volunteer workforce that contributed to the democratization of the country, the safeguarding of civil rights, and the construction of a civil society (Landim 2001). In this context the campaign Sports for All began in 1977. Supported by volunteers, it proposed the democratization of physical activities and sports, which resulted in a greater accountability from the state over sports and leisure policies in the 1990s. Another landmark was the creation of the Child's Pastoral (*Pastoral da Criança*) in 1983,

¹Assistencialism are policies of social or financial assistance which attack symptoms and not causes of social ill, imposing silence and passivity to the recipient (Freire 1974).

considered one of the most important NGOs in Brazil (D’Aiuto and Bramante 2006; Cavalcante et al. 2015).

After the end of the military regime and redemocratization of the state at the beginning of the 1990s, the volunteer gradually became an actor of social change, and a participative and active citizen, as civil society was regarded as the best alternative to an inefficient state (Corullón and Medeiros Filho 2002). At that time, the creation of the Citizenship Action Against Hunger, Misery and for Life (*Ação da Cidadania Contra a Fome, a Miséria e Pela Vida*) was a representation of this meaning. Created by the sociologist Herbert de Souza in 1993, it aimed at eradicating hunger and misery in the country, and with the support of prominent personalities and media vehicles, it stimulated every citizen to create solutions for the problem of hunger in Brazil (D’Aiuto and Bramante 2006). Corullón and Medeiros Filho (2002) have stressed that the creation of the Volunteers Program by the state in 1996 was decisive for the development of an organized volunteering movement. The program’s purpose was to implement a modern culture of volunteering based on the concept of efficiency of the services and on the qualifications of volunteers and institutions. This new vision was disassociating from the ideas of charity and alms-giving. It represented a volunteer culture closer to the logics and values of the market (Landim 2001). Following the Volunteers Program, the state regulated volunteer work through law N° 9.608/98 (Federal Republic of Brazil 1998). Broadly, it determines the following:

- Volunteering is a nonpaid activity provided by a private individual to a public entity of any nature or to a private not-for-profit organization with civic, cultural, educational, scientific, recreative, or personal assistance objective.
- Volunteering does not generate employment bonds nor labor obligations.
- Volunteering demands the celebration of a volunteer contract between parts, specifying the object and conditions of the work.
- Volunteers may be reimbursed for proved expenses incurred during the development of their activities.

Thus, defining, promoting, and regulating voluntary work ratified another meaning of volunteering assumed in the 1990s. Even if classic aspects from its religious origins are present, such as compassion, solidarity, and charity, the emphasis is on education and the professional qualifications of people. The essence of this new volunteerism is to overcome assistencialism and to promote active citizenship (Corullón and Medeiros Filho 2002).

5.1.2 Defining Volunteering

It is difficult to find one specific definition for volunteering in Brazil, due to its multifaceted character and forms. However, *voluntariado* (the word for volunteering in Portuguese) can be understood more clearly through the work of Landim (2001). According to Landim (2001), there are three dimensions of volunteering in Brazil:

the charity volunteering, the militant volunteering, and the new volunteering. Culturally, the meaning of volunteering transits through these three dimensions, and traits of each can be found simultaneously in an action or individual.

The first dimension is related to charity and mutual assistance, associated with religion and the idea of assistencialism. It is of an individualistic character. Volunteering is characterized by social interactions marked by personification and ties of solidarity and reciprocity, incurring obligations to the ones involved. Volunteering, before an individual autonomous choice, is regarded as an obligation, a commitment, and a consequence of that mutual dependence. It is difficult to identify if the volunteering is public or private, religious, or historical.

The second dimension corresponds to militancy and activism. Volunteering here relates to the participation in social movements, in the organized civil society and organizations that fight for social justice, rights, and equality. It is usually an organized and collective action that seeks social change and progress.

The third dimension is referred to as “new volunteering.” In this case, volunteering is developed through official initiatives, for instance, the United Nations Volunteers program, the FIFA Volunteer program, or state programs. The official character of these initiatives contributes to the visibility of this type of volunteering. Volunteering is associated with ideas brought from the labor market, such as competence, efficiency, results, and talent.

5.1.2.1 Money and Volunteering

The Brazilian Volunteer Law suggests that volunteers might be compensated for the expenses incurred during their activities, and this compensation can assume different natures. Forell and Stigger (2017) investigated the meaning of volunteering in a public social program where volunteers received an allowance for their work. The authors noted that the payment to volunteers brought some uncertainty to the notion of volunteering, as whether or not participants were really volunteers. Some statements even pointed to the nonexistence of volunteering in cases of monetary compensation. For some volunteers, the exchange of money for work reduces their expectations of the long-term benefits obtained from volunteering.

Money is also a topic of discussion when it is seen as a substitute for volunteering. Most people (70%) believe the donation of money or resources is not a substitute for the need for volunteering (Itaú Social Foundation 2014).

5.1.2.2 Episodic and Continuous Volunteering

A study by the Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics (IBOPE 2011) pointed out that approximately half of the volunteers in Brazil are volunteering continuously, with a defined frequency, while the other half do it sporadically, even just once a year. Santos et al. (2016) investigated the motives to engage in

temporary or continuous volunteering projects, highlighting that Brazilian volunteers are more motivated by altruistic reasons and personal interests. The scenario for episodic volunteering, a topic still scarce in scientific publications in Brazil, was the 2014 FIFA World Cup. The authors identified that for the continuous volunteers, the higher motivation was related to personal benefits, such as acquiring knowledge or information, developing new skills, improving the curriculum, and networking. Episodic volunteers, besides being interested in personal benefits, also demonstrated an altruistic motivation, related to the benefits of society, realizing good actions, collaborating, and helping others. The authors concluded that motivation in continuous volunteering is associated with a higher level of professionalization of the volunteer's work, while in temporary projects, volunteering is more romanticized, a more philanthropic vision, resembling its historical concepts.

5.2 Volunteer Workforce in Brazil

Possessing the fifth largest population in the world combined with a great demand for volunteers, due to extensive social problems within the country and an inefficient state, should lead to an increase in the volunteer workforce in Brazil, but relative numbers indicate that for the past two decades little has changed.

Salamon et al. (2013) claim that the impact of volunteering in the Brazilian economy is estimated to be 0.6% of the GDP, a value close to 15 billion USD in 2013. In 2000, an estimated 22.6% of the population – 19.7 million people – donated time to an institution or to an individual outside their closest relationships (Landim 2001). Ten years later, another report pointed out that the volunteer rate was 25%. This percentage was split by 11% of active volunteers and 14% of people who had volunteered in the past (IBOPE 2011; Table 5.1).

More recently, a study from the Itaú Social Foundation (2014) suggested that 11% of Brazilians were volunteering, equivalent to 16.4 million volunteers. Another 17% had volunteered before but were not engaged in any activity at that moment. The remaining 72% admitted having never participated in voluntary initiatives.

An international study on solidarity by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) allows comparisons with 139 countries, and it indicated an evolution of the Brazilian volunteer rate in recent years. In 2016, the World Giving Index (CAF 2017) asked individuals if they had volunteered time to an organization in the past month, and results indicated that 20% of Brazilians had done so. This number was higher than the 18% of 2015, the 13% of 2014, and the 16% of 2013. Brazil ranked 63rd in 2016, 79th in 2015, and 99th in 2014. The rate also points to Brazil being the fifth country in absolute number of volunteers, with an estimated 33 million people volunteering in 2016.

Table 5.1 Brazil's volunteer characteristics

Characteristic	Status quo in Brazil
Population size	207.7 million ^a
Official languages	Portuguese
Volunteer rates (year)	13% (2014), 18% (2015), 20% (2016) ^b
Existence of voluntary sports clubs	Yes
List of large-scale events hosted in the last 10 years	2007 Pan American Games, 2011 Military World Games, 2013 World Youth Day, FIFA Confederations Cup Brazil 2013, 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil, Rio 2016 Olympic Games, Rio 2016 Paralympic Games
Sports volunteer rates	17% of volunteers develop sports activities ^c
The word for volunteering	<i>Voluntariado</i>
The meaning of the word	Active participation of the individual in society, which arises from the will to contribute to social change and to his/her own development, not demanding a compensation for his/her work
Events/occurrences that have influenced volunteering	Creation of <i>Pastoral da Criança</i> and APAE; repression from the military regime; Citizenship Action Against Hunger, Misery and for Life in 1993; creation of the Volunteers Program in 1997; passing of Volunteer Law 9.608/98; International Year of Volunteers of the UN; 2007 Pan American Games; 2014 FIFA World Cup; Rio 2016 Olympic Games; Rio 2016 Paralympic Games

Sources: ^aUnited Nations (2016); ^bCAF (2017); ^cOECD (2015)

5.2.1 Profile of Volunteers in Brazil

When it comes to gender, the Brazilian population is composed of more women (51.5%) than men (48.5%). The study from IBOPE (2011) maintains that this trend applies to the volunteer workforce, with slightly more women volunteering. Most Brazilian volunteers are employed full time or part time (67%) and have kids (62%). Lower classes participate less in volunteering activities (17%). Education is rather high, with 58% having at least completed secondary school. Most of the activities are developed in religious institutions (49%).

To identify group characteristics, the study by IBOPE (2011) segmented the volunteering workforce into three profiles: the traditional (31%), the participative (49%), and the connected (20%) volunteer. The traditional volunteer is over 50 years old, is married with children, belongs to the lower classes, and has a lower level of education. Volunteers commit themselves for more than seven years, with no frequency. The volunteers are highly satisfied with volunteering. The participative volunteer is 30 years old or younger, highly educated, and of a higher social class. This individual is usually a student or part-time worker and volunteers for less than one year, but regularly. This individual tends to work in educational organizations.

Besides fundraising, the main activities of this volunteer involve culture, education, and sport. This volunteer tends to be more critical toward volunteering. The connected volunteer works full time and is between 25 and 59 years old and has a good education. This individual is a social media user and has full access to technologies. Volunteering frequency is not established. This volunteer works in social assistance institutions, usually serving children or young people.

5.3 Volunteer Management in Sports

Of 290,000 nonprofit institutions, 72% depend solely on the work of volunteers. The number of sports and recreation organizations relying on volunteers is estimated to be around 25,000, with 80% of them concentrated in the South and Southeast regions (IBGE 2012). In a country like Brazil, many NGOs use sports as a tool for social change, supporting socially vulnerable youngsters, promoting citizenship, human development, and social inclusion. Volunteers in these organizations have a duty to transmit sporting values like discipline, teamwork, and leadership, to prepare youngsters for their future as citizens (Pinto and Oliveira 2017).

Besides NGOs, sports clubs also engage a large volunteer workforce, although the number of sports clubs has been reduced from 30,000 in the 1970s to 11,000 in 2017 (DaCosta 2006; Fenaclubes 2017). Sports club volunteering is found in both amateur and professional levels, with notorious cases appearing in professional football, where volunteer directors are called *cartolas*, occupying highly politicized roles, with great power and visibility. In recent years, volunteering in professional sports became the focus of a series of critiques, mainly due to the lack of professionalization of these volunteers and the use of the role for personal benefits (Mattar 2014).

5.3.1 *Volunteers in Sports Mega Events*

One of a number of arguments to justify the investments in sporting mega events in Brazil was the social legacy of the culture of volunteering. The first international mega event in Brazil was the 1950 FIFA World Cup; however, its organization and operationalization were conducted by hired workers and public employees. There were some big sporting events with the participation of volunteers in the past, such as the 1963 Universiade in Porto Alegre and the 1963 Pan American Games in São Paulo; however, these used a smaller proportion of volunteers compared to recent mega events (D'Aiuto and Bramante 2006).

In the last decade, Brazil has hosted a series of sports mega events that, added up, had a volunteer workforce of almost 120,000 people. The first event in this series was the 2007 Pan American Games in Rio de Janeiro, which had the support of 15,000 volunteers. Next was the 2011 Military World Games, also in Rio de Janeiro, with an estimated workforce of 10,000 volunteers (Bush 2011).

In 2013 and 2014, Brazil hosted the FIFA Confederations Cup and the FIFA World Cup, respectively. For these events, FIFA had a program to select volunteers designated to work at the official sites, while the Brazilian government launched an independent program for volunteers under its own responsibility that worked in public spaces like airports or at tourism information points. The program from FIFA received 152,101 registrations. From this, a total of 5,652 volunteers were selected to work in the Confederations Cup, 43% being female and 57% male volunteers. Another 13,153 volunteers were selected to work in the World Cup, spread across 12 different host cities. In 2014, Brazilians accounted for 93% of the workforce, with 53% male volunteers and 47% female volunteers (FIFA 2014). Contrary to FIFA's report, no official data on the government's program were available, with estimates prior to the events indicating that 7,000 volunteers would be selected for work during the Confederations Cup and 18,000 for the World Cup.

The 2016 Summer Olympic Games and the 2016 Summer Paralympic Games were both hosted in Rio de Janeiro. The volunteer selection process for both events received 242,757 applications worldwide, with 60% coming from Brazil (IOC 2016). Women accounted for 50% of the applications, and 50% of the Brazilian applicants were 25 years old or younger. The initial prediction was to select 70,000 volunteers, later reduced to 50,000. For the Olympics Games, 35,000 volunteers were selected from 161 countries, while 15,000 volunteers worked on the Paralympic Games. Approximately 30% of the selected volunteers did not turn up for their allocated shifts at the Games, with individuals citing poor training and working conditions as justification for absenteeism (Lima 2016).

These events and their volunteering programs were not immune to critics, despite their economic and sporting success. Legal experts and academics in Brazil considered that volunteering was used as a substitute of formal labor, as a means of reducing costs. In the case of FIFA, which made a huge profit from the events, a public manifesto was released by labor legal experts accusing the institution of breaking the volunteers' law, despite the existence of a temporary law (12.663/12) safeguarding FIFA's interests (Boitempo 2014).

5.4 Volunteering, State, and Civil Society

Although the origin of volunteering in Brazil, rooted in religious initiatives, is similar to other countries, the difference is that in Brazil, these associations are legitimized by the state, while in other countries the voluntary sector seeks state autonomy (Cavalcante et al. 2015).

Landim (2001) affirms that volunteerism can assume a negative connotation in the eyes of the people because of a historical addictive relationship between state and society, and public and private agents, which was developed in the contexts of patrimonialism and corporatism. Philanthropic actions were long associated with the exchange of favors, political patronage, and diversion of public resources.

Public programs to stimulate volunteering have been founded in this context. One example is the National Volunteering Program (PRONAV), operating from

1979 to the beginning of the 1990s. With volunteer cores spread nationally, the coordination of the program was the responsibility of the first ladies of national, state, and municipal levels. This centralization on state actors facilitated actions of patronage, disruption of public resources, and assistencialist practices, which reproduced inequalities and hierarchies across the nation.

Melo et al. (2015) claim that during the 1990s, a neoliberal perspective was adopted by the state that reduced costs and reviewed the machinery of government. In the neoliberal logic, social problems are the responsibility of individuals, and they must be solved in the private sphere, be it through the individual's own efforts or, when this is not possible, through private institutions of the civil society, linked to volunteering or donation practices (Bonfim 2010).

Thus, state actions that should guarantee social rights were substituted by private initiatives from the civil society, including in the field of sports. This became a common process, and, during the 1990s and 2000s, there was a significant increase of private nonprofit organizations executing public policies or privately financed projects (Melo et al. 2015). For the authors, this process of decentralization of state actions, by delegating state functions to private organizations, highlights a process of commercialization of social policies. Through legal instruments, the state transfers the responsibility for the execution of social policies to the civil society.

This process was investigated by Forell and Stigger (2017), who identified a precarious implementation of sports and leisure policies by volunteers in the state program "Open School" (*Programa Escola Aberta*). The use of a voluntary workforce led to impoverished intervention practices in the cases studied, first because it did not attract the required skilled workers and, second, because of a discontinuity on volunteering (volunteers regularly dropped out of the program). The sum of these factors generated a prejudice to the beneficiaries in the sense that most of the activities developed had no pedagogical basis. Additionally, similarities to formal employment were found, with volunteers being compensated per number of hours or days of work and subordinated to the directors of the school.

In this type of relationship between state and society, based on a neoliberal paradigm, it is expected that the services provided by private organizations and their volunteers are more qualified than the state services and that these organizations represent society's aspirations. However, heterogeneous interests and purposes, mismanagement of resources, and lack of transparency have all led to poor services provided, especially in sports initiatives, portraying a frequent scenario in Brazil (Melo et al. 2015).

5.5 Conclusion

Brazil is flooded with social problems that appear to have no solution, but through social initiatives and volunteer work, many demands not addressed by the state are being met. The work of volunteers must be praised, and since they are more politicized, they now promote an active citizenship and democratic participation to society.

Despite the work undertaken by volunteers, the culture of volunteering should be addressed by private organizations and the state and by academics. Volunteering rates have changed little compared to past decades, and people need to be stimulated to volunteer once more. State and civil society need to review their responsibilities concerning the development and implementation of social policies, since the current model often receives criticism.

Finally, volunteering demands more academic studies, since there is a lack of literature on the topic – for instance, on episodic volunteering, consequences of sports events volunteering or the impact of compensation on volunteers' motivation.

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