



First Contact: First Impressions

Cheryll Martin, Volunteering Auckland

Selina Akhter, Unitec

Aims and Benefits

The research:

- Explores strengths, barriers and areas for development of volunteer recruitment processes of NGOs.
- Identify effective processes to build the capacity of NGOs to better place and engage with volunteers



Why

Volunteering Auckland

- VA registered over 5,000 volunteers during 2014, an increase of over 65% from the previous year. VA wanted to know how NGOs were coping with the increase in referrals from VA.
- VA receives feedback from volunteers who have been referred to NGOs, through an Automated Feedback System [AFS]. The VACRM database receives data on the outcome of volunteer referrals three weeks from the original referral. [Self-selected by the volunteer]. What did the volunteers say ...?

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- Develop capacities of academics to engage in community research projects
- Strengthen relationship with community organisations to better understand the dynamics of organisations and needs of diversified communities

Methodology:

A mixed method design: Quantitative and Qualitative

CRM Database of Volunteering Auckland: 237 cases

Qualitative: Short stories (gathered from an automated email system)

Ethics: Sought permission from Volunteering Auckland

Analytical models: Descriptive, crosstabs and thematic analysis

Philosophy: Transformation--balancing of power between academic researchers and community organisations

Findings:

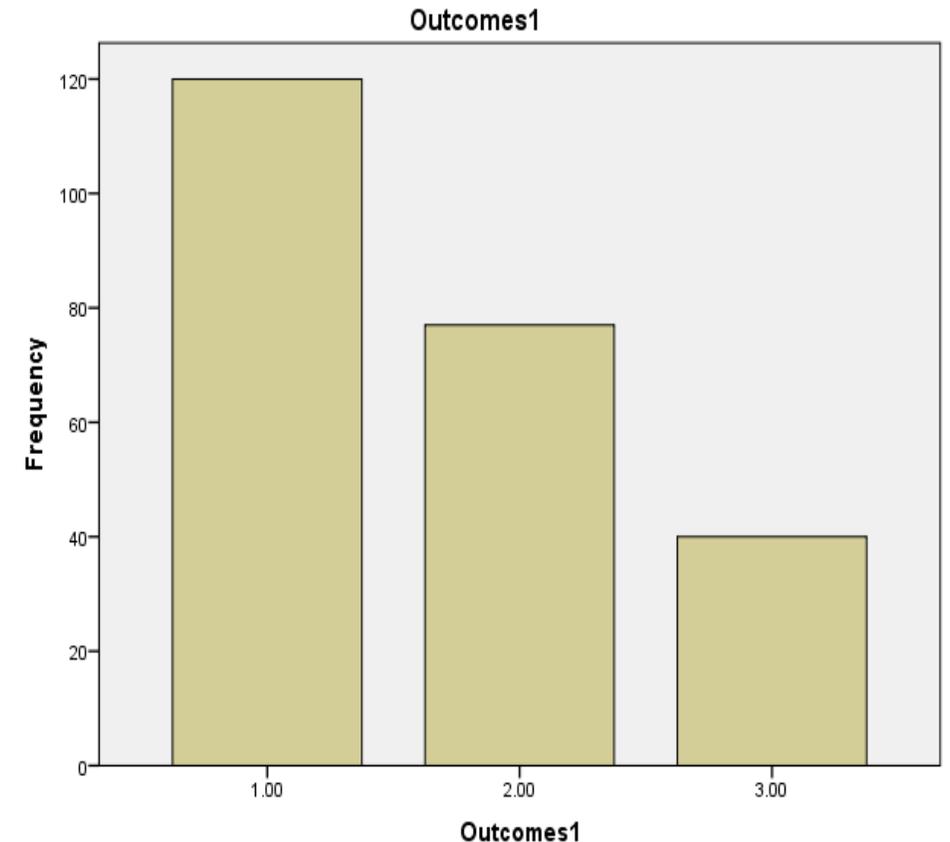
Referral outcomes

1= Decided to start, contact made and continued with the referral

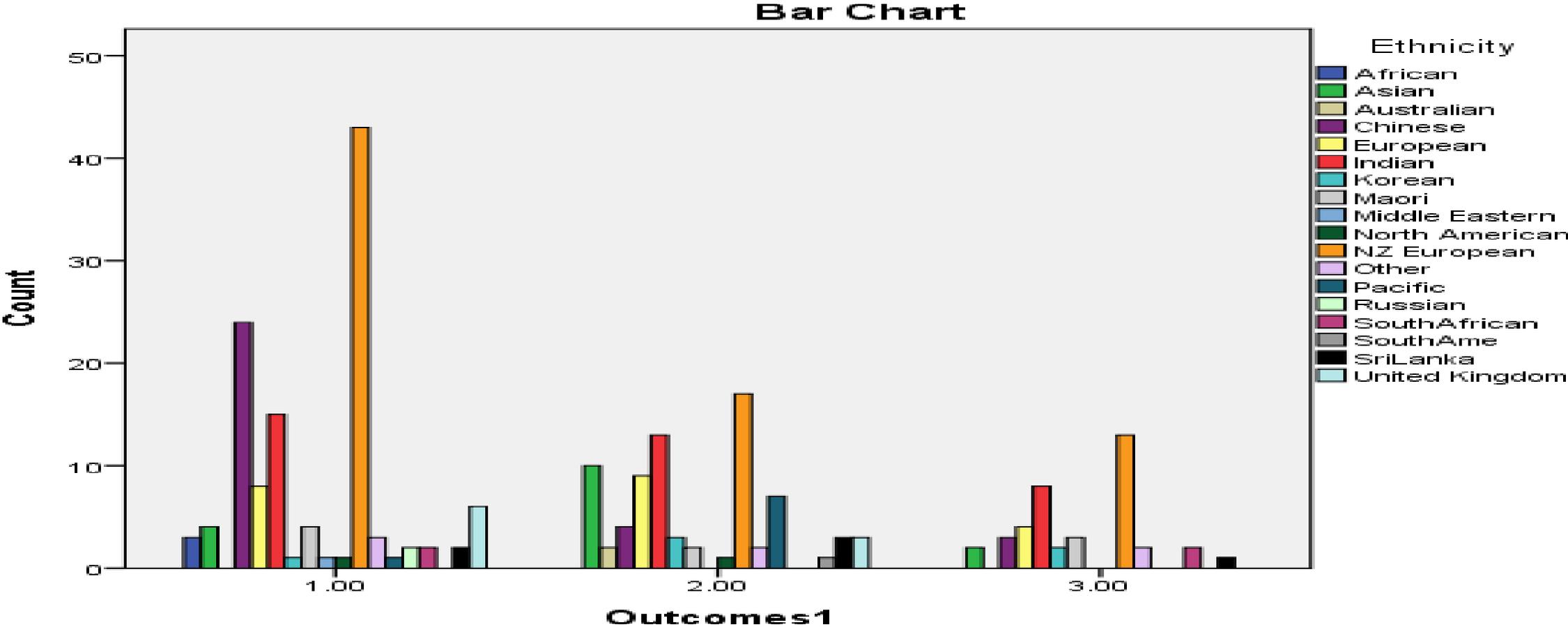
2= Details were exchanged but the NGOs did not contact volunteers

3= Volunteers chose not to follow through with the referral

Referrals Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage
Outcome 1	120	50.4
Outcome 2	77	32.4
Outcome 3	40	16.8
Total	238 (237)	99.6 (1 missing)

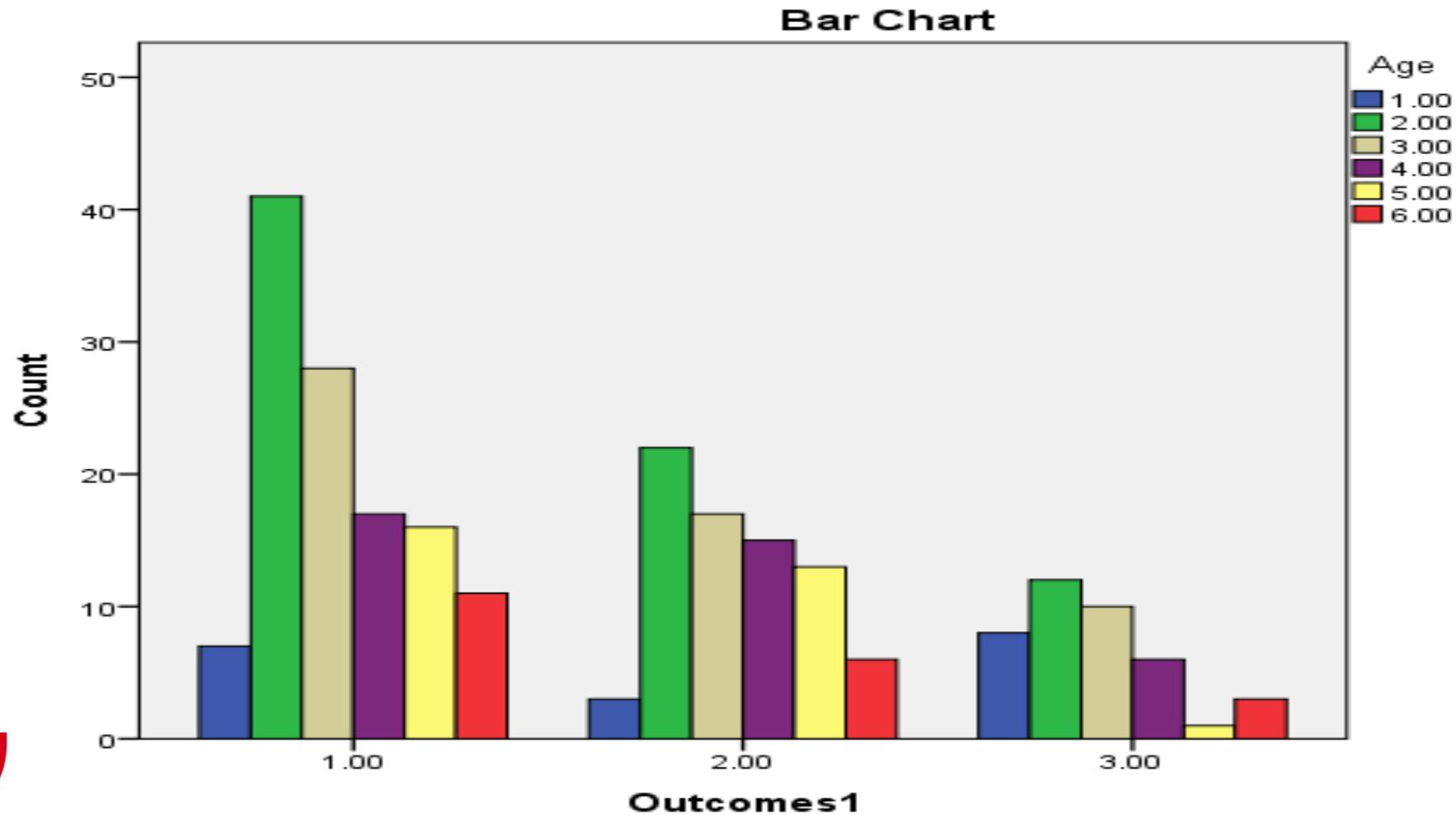


Referral outcomes by ethnicity



Referral outcomes by age

1= 15-19, 2=20-29, 3=30-39, 4=40-49, 5=50-59, 6=60+



First impressions:

- positive
- professional
- friendly
- roles are worthwhile
- timely communication
- responsible person for volunteer recruitment

First impressions:

“I am now very happily volunteering regularly with [NGO], and in a few weeks I'm going to have a trial run with the [role]”.

“I was referred to the [NGO's] branch. Very helpful. I was going to proceed with training but the dates did not suit me. It took a while for someone to get back to me in the beginning. Afterwards it was straightforward and easy to make contact”.

“I enjoy volunteering at [NGO]. It has a very good volunteer organizer, which is really helpful”.

“I have already started my volunteer job and it goes well. Very efficient and useful”.

First impressions: Challenges-key themes

- Did not hear back from organisation [NGO]
- Already filled the position but did not let [volunteer] know
- Organisation did not show respect and responsibility
- Poor communication
- No follow up and feedback
- The training is too basic
- Poor hand over

First impressions:

“I think they are very rude not to answer my mail”.

“Rang several times and left messages but didn't get back to me”.

“I went to the venue and left my details and have not yet heard back from anyone: Not as helpful as I was expecting”.

“I am surprised the organisations requiring volunteers take so much of time in their organisation process”.

First impressions:

“Emailed twice, never heard a thing back from them, a little disappointed, and thought they could have least said something about why if they didn't want me. A little gun shy to try again”.

“The person concerned was never available. Got hardly any response from others”.

“The organisations that I didn't hear back eventually contacted me, but it took them more than a month to do so and at that point I had decided to move on”.

First impressions:

“[NGO] Funds Collector was a great experience. However, I did not hear back from them after monies was collected, even though they said they would send out information on how much I had raised, and a certificate of volunteering as proof of participation”.

“I found the follow up to be quite unprofessional, thus making me to not want to participate with the [NGO] any longer”.

First impressions:

“The employer already selected someone else. I phoned and emailed. Without any response for three days. Not a pleasant experience”.

“they have already hired another person” they said.

“But the position is still there [on the website]”

“Please remove my name from Volunteering list. Companies don't reply to mails and they don't tell you whether they need you or not...very demotivating”.

Q & A?

- What does this mean for the future of volunteering?
- What do we need to do as NGOs to ensure Best First Impressions?
- How can Volunteering Auckland assist?



Conclusion:

- Key messages
- Limitations of the present phase

Future:

- Further research-in depth interviews of both NGOs and volunteers to get a clearer picture of the reality.
- Development of support mechanisms to assist in the development of effective volunteer recruitment within an NGO setting