

INTRODUCTION

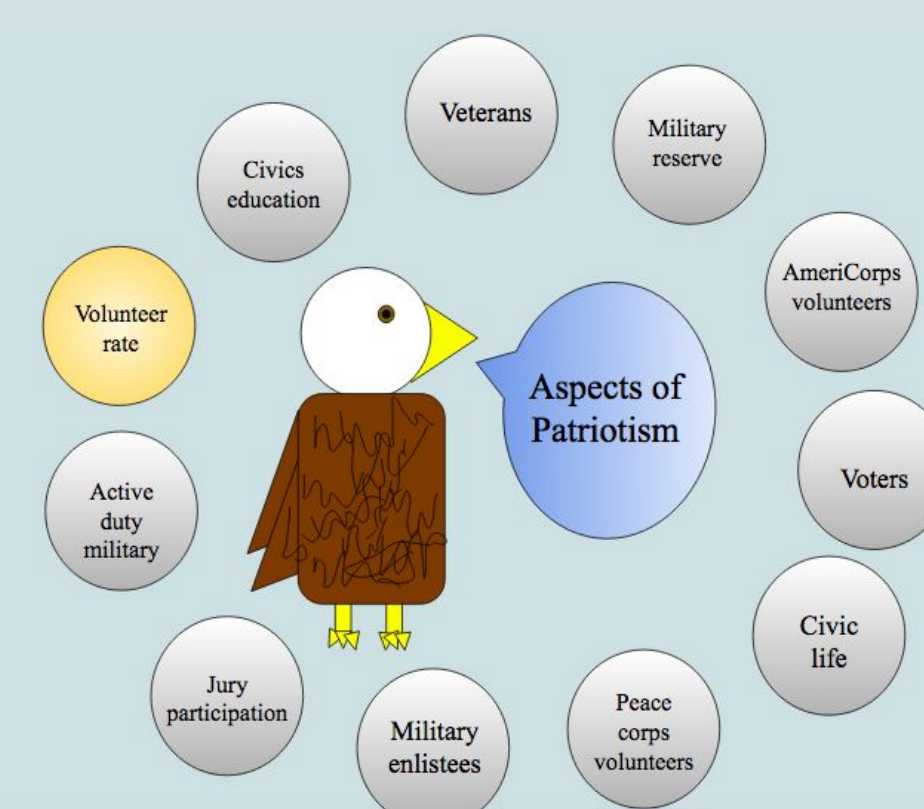


Figure 1

When veterans return from service, it can be challenging to reintegrate into society as they are often judged and face negative stigma around their service (MacLean & Kleykamp, 2014). These struggles can often create low morale within service members who are discharged, retired, or otherwise separated from military service. Studies have shown that patriotism, defined as one's pride and honor toward a country, has helped lessen post-war struggles for veterans. Patriotism is a very broad concept that is hard to define. Therefore, a previously identified component of patriotism will be studied.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Volunteerism is one aspect that impacts patriotism and is something that I practically addressed. My goal was to better understand teenagers in Palo Alto's volunteering patterns in order to better target how volunteerism can be increased. I conducted a survey asking students in the PAUSD about their volunteer tendencies. I collected my responses from Palo Alto High School Social Justice Pathway students and AAR students from Palo Alto High School and Gunn High School. The purpose of this survey was to better understand why students do or do not volunteer and their motivations. The survey had both open response questions and qualitative questions. Once responses were recorded, I coded and summarized the data. The codes were used in order to understand Palo Alto teens volunteering patterns and understand students' reasons for volunteering. Using this information, I assessed what actions can be made to increase volunteerism. I presented my findings to the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce and Christina Owen from the Get Involved Foundation. In order to determine if this study was effective, I got verbal feedback from the individuals I presented to.

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

1. Survey

- Education or Youth Services and Social or Community service are the most popular area to volunteer in.
- Personal Satisfaction and a Connection with the Organization are the most popular motivations to volunteer.
- Time is the main prevention to volunteer
- If individuals were connected with organizations that share their common interests, they would be more inspired to volunteer.

2. Summary Statistics

- Individuals who volunteer regularly are more likely to volunteer as adults
- Individuals who volunteer believe it is more important than those who don't.

3. Feedback

- Data patterns aligns with data that has been collected with a large sample size
- Palo Alto is a hub for non profits and community service opportunities

DATA AND FINDINGS

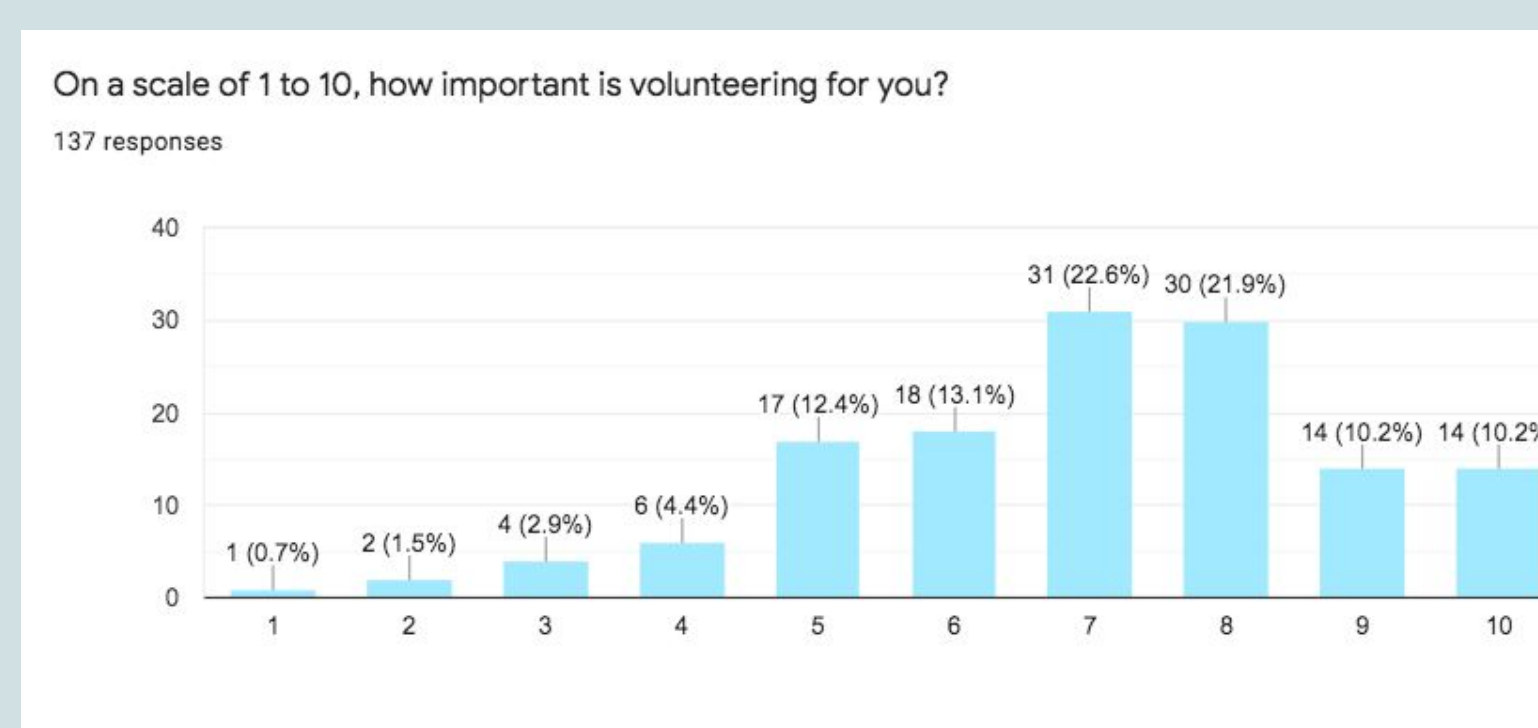


Figure 2

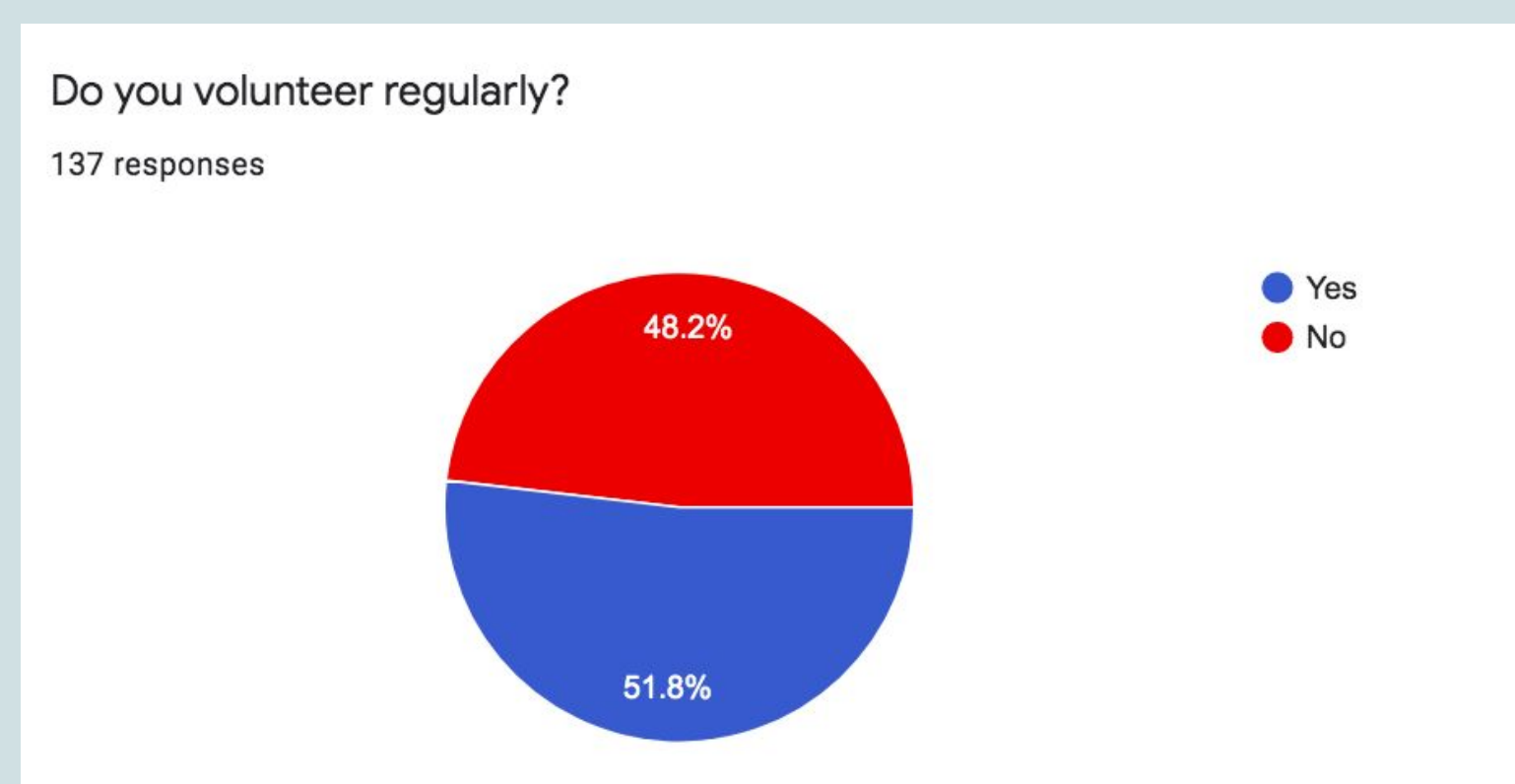


Figure 3

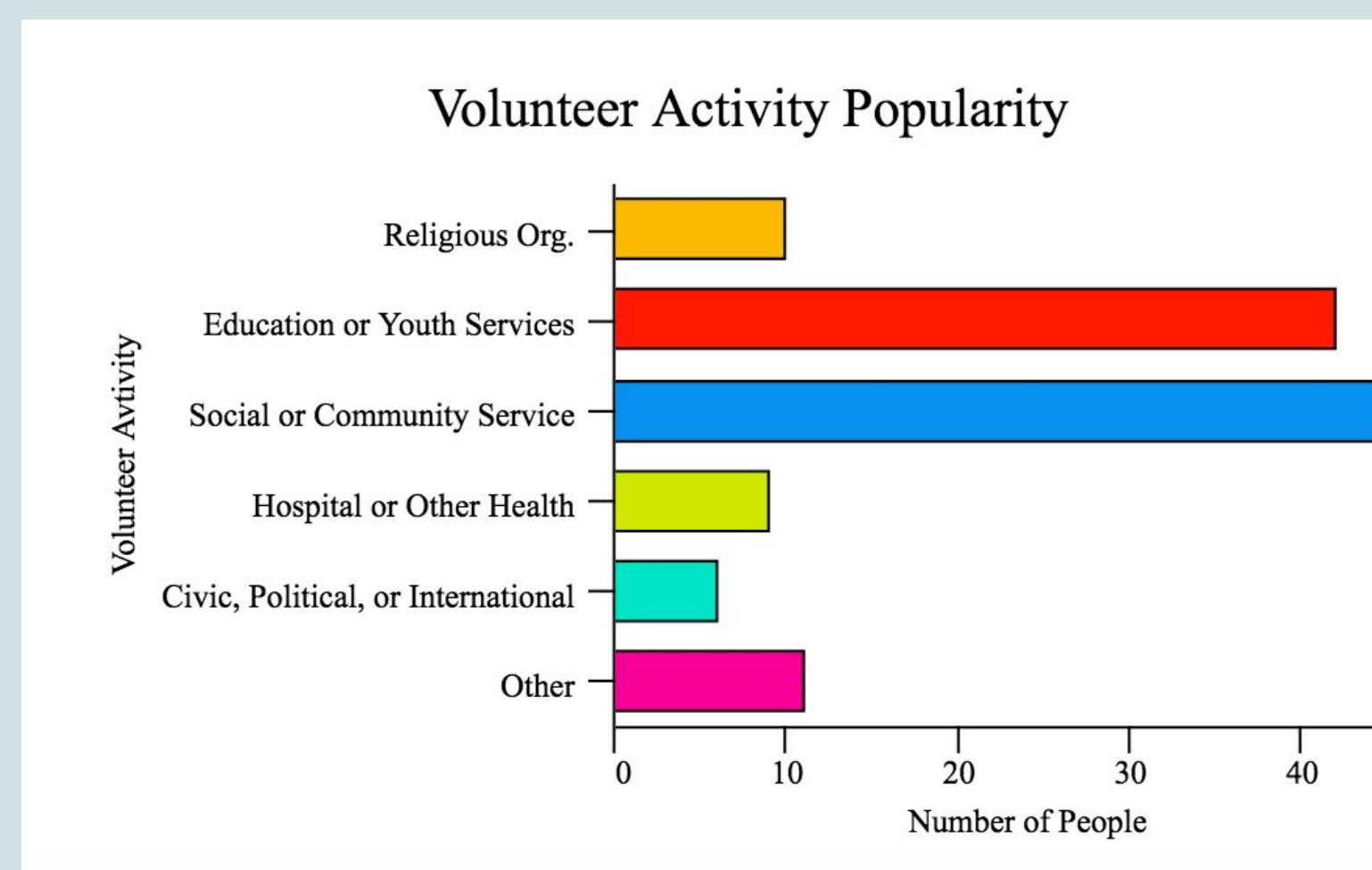


Figure 4

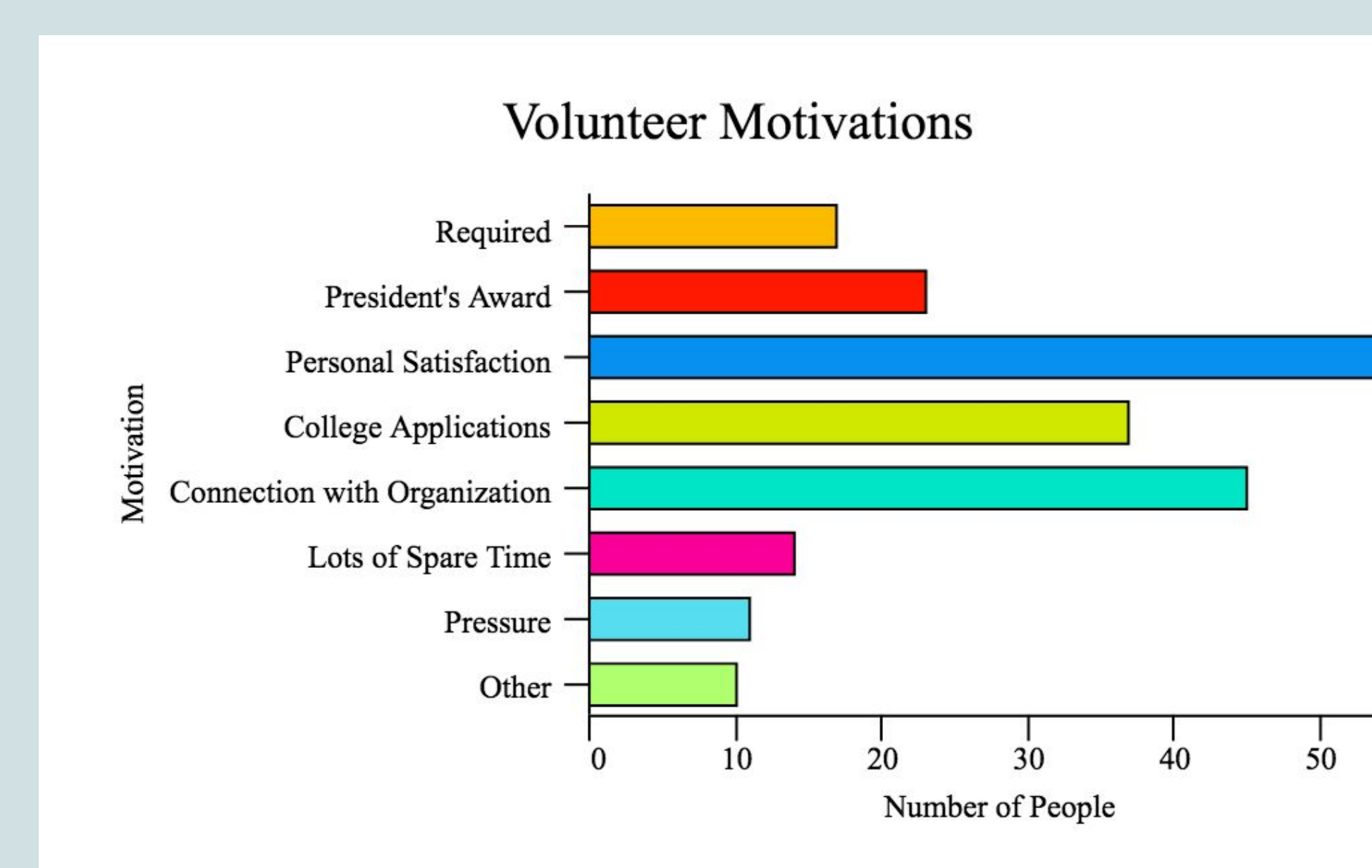


Figure 5

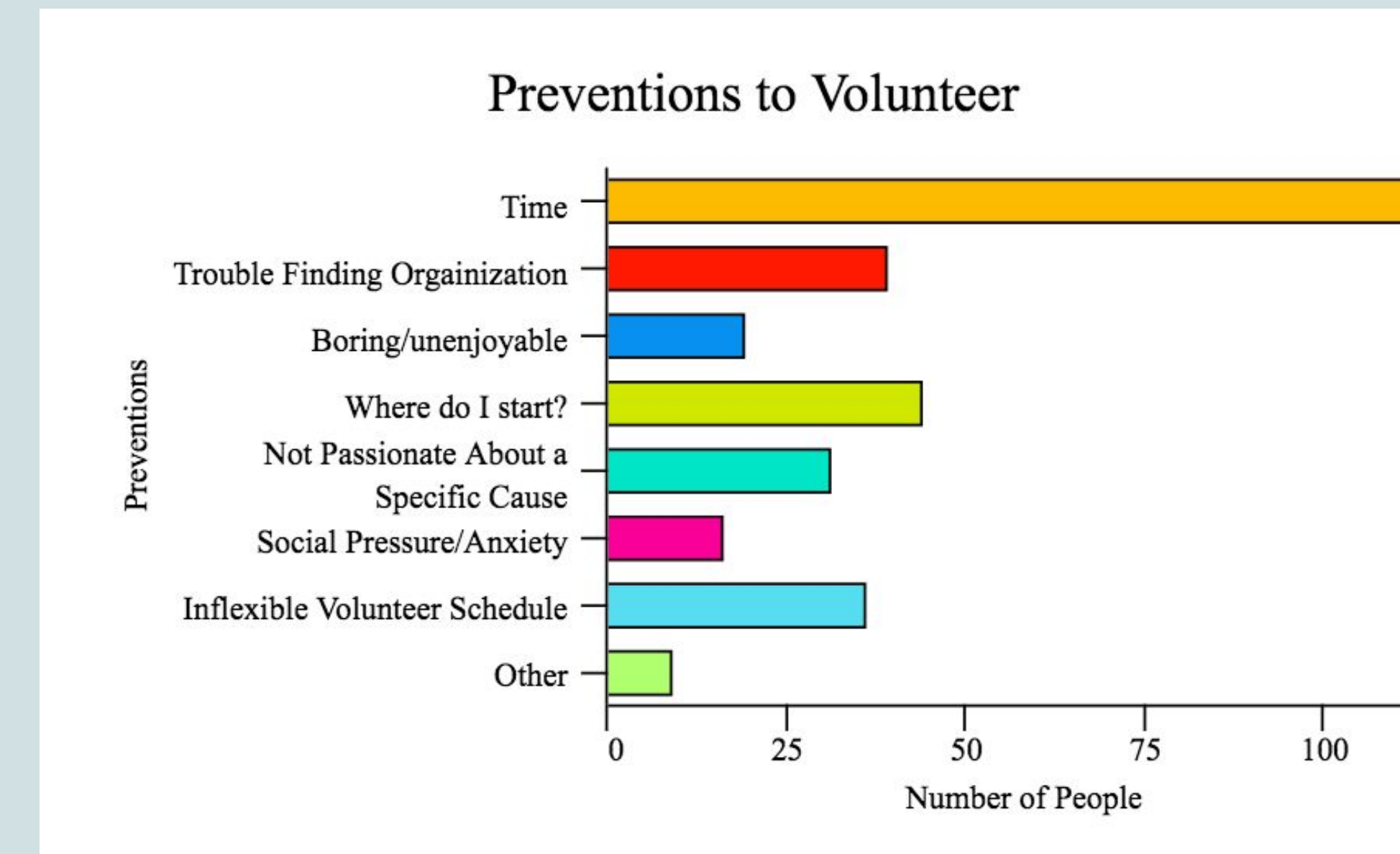


Figure 6

When asked "what could inspire you to volunteer in the future?", distinct themes emerged. From the responses, six patterns were determined. The first being "friends." It appeared that individuals would volunteer if their friends were doing it with them. The second pattern was a "reward." Whether this reward was extrinsic, such as money or the President's Award, or intrinsic, such as personal satisfaction and joy, individuals wanted to get something out of the time they spent volunteering. The third theme was "accessibility/flexibility." Individuals were interested in finding volunteer opportunities that had fewer hours, a flexible schedule, and were close. The fourth theme was a "connection." Many respondents were interested in volunteering with an organization that supported the causes they were involved with or inspired by. The fifth theme was "time." This pattern was prevalent throughout the whole survey and many saw that they could only volunteer if they had more time. The last theme was "uncertainty." Respondents did not know what could motivate them to volunteer and were currently uninspired.

- There is an association between those who volunteer regularly and those who are likely to volunteer as an adult.
- There is no significant statistical relationship between those who volunteer regularly and those who think volunteering should be a graduation requirement.
- There is an association between those who volunteer regularly and the importance of volunteering.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

1. Community Engagement Program

- Students struggle to find an organization that they connect with
- Implementation at Paly would allow high school students to learn about community service opportunities easier

2. Meaningful Experience

- Students want to participate in meaningful community service
- Resources needed to be readily available to connect students

3. Further Studies

- How can students learn from each others community service opportunities?
- How can community engagement programs get a large platform?
- In what ways can Service Days at Paly be improved to engage more students?

4. Time

- Primary reason why students felt they could not volunteer
- In what ways could the school district give students more time to give back?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

Special thanks to Eugene Carragee, Ms. Chute and my classmates for helping make this project possible.

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