Hunting desertion in Norway

Motives, barriers and attitudes towards retention measures

Oddgeir Andersen & Bjørn P. Kaltenborn
Background

- Historically, approximately 10,000 people graduate from Norway’s national hunting education program each year (in average, 8700 per year since 2000)
- 50% of the graduates become “never starters”
- If a hunter doesn’t buy a national hunting license for 3 years in a row, they are listed in the national hunting registry as a ”Passive Hunter”.

Passive Hunters increase over time (data from the 1999 cohort)
Some theory:

- Decker and colleagues (1991) suggested 3 phases/stages in the process of becoming a hunter:
  1. Interested in hunting
  2. Trying/exploring
  3. Continuation

- Desertion rates are highest in phases 1 & 2
Phase 1: Interested in hunting

• Mandatory to take a 30 h hunting course, which...
  • ...is theory-based
  • ...gives only a brief practical exercise in shooting at a practice range
  • ...gives no practical exercises related to hunting

• Finally; pass an multiple-choice examination (50 questions, 80% must be correct)
Phase 2: Trying and exploring

- 40% of the candidates had previous experience with hunting
- More females than males had hunting experience
Phase 3: Continuation

- Why do 50% of the participants drop out / never start hunting shortly after graduating from the course?
Study methods

- 3000 "passive hunters" sent postal questionnaires: 2000 males (ages 16-25), 1000 females (ages 16-50)
  Received 1113 responses (37 %): 617 males and 496 females
- Questionnaire’s main topics: (1) Motives for becoming a hunter, (2) Barriers following graduation and (3) Actions for overcoming perceived barriers.
- The main factors for each topic was identified by using PCA (initially) / PAF (when re-analyzing), and relationships between barriers and actions were analyzed with path-analyses.
### Motives- PCA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Chronbachs alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Nature experience</td>
<td>0.853*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Hunt for game meat</td>
<td>0.782*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Family and friends</td>
<td>0.779*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Skills, learn something new</td>
<td>0.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Option in the future</td>
<td>0.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Course at school/ in the army</td>
<td>-0.067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 factors with satisfying reliability (Cronbach’s alpha)
## Barriers - PAF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Lack experience</th>
<th>2 Not prioritized</th>
<th>3 Obstructions</th>
<th>4 Not interested</th>
<th>5 Social barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2</strong></td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3</strong></td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 4</strong></td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 5</strong></td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factor correlations:
- Factor 1: 0.89
- Factor 2: 0.79
- Factor 3: 0.68
- Factor 4: 0.58
- Factor 5: 0.54

Explained variance:
- Factor 1: 28.6
- Factor 2: 9.2
- Factor 3: 7.2
- Factor 4: 5.8
- Factor 5: 5.8

Cronbach’s Alpha (α):
- Factor 1: 0.89
- Factor 2: 0.79
- Factor 3: 0.68
- Factor 4: 0.65
- Factor 5: 0.54
## Actions – PAF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1 Skills and interests</th>
<th>2 Access and support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha (α)</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained Variance</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The relationship between age and gender on barriers and actions
More specifics on the results

Statements respondents’ agreed with most:

- **Motives**: ”to have exciting experiences”, ”travel in amazing natural settings” and ”hunt if I chose”
- **Barriers**: ”Too busy with school”, ”lack necessary equipment” and ”have little practical experience”
- **Suggested remedies**: ”Shooting practice for beginners”, ”lost interest without knowing why” and ”knowing more about how to handle wild game after it is shot”
Main differences between genders

Common to WOMEN:

• Less concerned with acquiring meat from wild game
• More concerned with having experiences in nature
• Greater interest in opportunities to learn more connected to shooting, hunting of specific wild species and handling of felled game
• Seek a greater degree of participation and encouragement from their families as they begin hunting careers.
Main differences between genders

Common to MEN:
• depend more on transportation early in their hunting carriers
• higher motivation to become hunters than women
• Often have relatives who they hoped would invited to go hunting
• greater motivation to eat wild game
• Seek more excitement associated with hunting, less expensive licenses for youths
Main differences across addresses:

- The motives for having experiences, acquiring meat from wild game were more important for those who lived in small towns than those who lived in larger cities.
- Access to hunting opportunities is more limited if one lives in a larger city than small towns or villages.
Recommendations for the Norwegian Hunting and Fishing Association (NJFF)

- Make families aware of the importance of continuing to encourage newly educated hunters at the start of their hunting careers. A youths’ social network can be critically important for them to succeed with beginning new activities.
- Increase focus on continued education (i.e., holding local hunting and slaughtering courses) as a part of hunters’ education. Continued education should be advertised by local associations in connection with hunters permit courses, when participants’ motivation to start hunting is probably highest.
- Include more information on hunting possibilities and outlets locally and regionally (especially near urban areas), as well as on the internet and other areas where hunters permit courses are organized.