

Factors Influencing Volunteer Motivation amongst Trained Satria Volunteers of the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports

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Abstract: Volunteer decisions are heavily influenced by motivation, particularly when monetary rewards or recognition are not in play. While existing research has provided insights, there remains a gap in understanding specific motivational factors. This study aims to address this gap, focusing on the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports, a significant choice due to its recent initiation and substantial volunteer base. The research concentrates on 508 trained Satria volunteers nationwide, utilizing a stratified sampling technique based on shared characteristics. Diverse analyses, including demographic, reliability, descriptive, correlation, and regression, were employed to uncover crucial insights. Positive correlations establish links between motivation and factors such as values, community involvement, interpersonal contacts, career orientation, and personal growth. Aligning opportunities with individuals' core beliefs, fostering a sense of belonging, emphasizing social aspects, linking volunteering to skill development, and highlighting intrinsic rewards are pivotal for maximizing volunteerism. The findings of this study shed light on the factors that influence volunteer motivation among the trained Satria volunteers registered with the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports. These insights are particularly valuable for government agencies, as they pinpoint key motivational drivers that should be prioritized to encourage volunteers to dedicate their time and expertise to future volunteer opportunities. It also helps the ministry to design and implement future programs that align with the motivations, needs, and preferences of young people. By incorporating the identified motivational factors, the ministry hopes to create more engaging and effective volunteer opportunities, attracting and retaining young volunteers.

Keywords: *Volunteer motivation, Trained Satria Volunteers, Self-enhancement, Community Involvement, Interpersonal Contacts, Career Orientation, Personal Growth, Extrinsic Rewards.*

1. Introduction

The practice of volunteering is expanding in Malaysia, where it is frequently linked to everyday activities in the community and has the potential to generate a large number of volunteers (Faranadia, Bukhari, Kamal, Normala, Lukman, & Azlini, 2018). Engaging in volunteer activities makes a substantial contribution to the well-being of both citizens and communities (Mekonen & Adarkwah, 2022). Volunteering strengthens civic participation, which in turn fosters the social cohesiveness of the community and nation, making it essential to the social growth of a country (Tan, Lopez, Tam, Ng & Goh, 2020). Volunteering can be done on an individual basis; however, most volunteers work with organizations and groups that coordinate activities for a shared cause (Grey & Stevenson, 2019). Volunteer motivation has been demonstrated as having a strong, positive relationship with volunteer behavior and sustainability (Aydinli, Bender, Chasiotis, Van de Vijver & Cemalcilar, 2014; Wilson, 2012). Clary and Snyder's model of volunteer motivation makes a significant contribution to our comprehension of this intricate field, offering practitioners a valuable framework for crafting and implementing successful volunteer programs (Clary, Ridge, Stukas, Snyder, Copeland, Haugen and Miene, 1998). Based on Clary et. al (1998), the Volunteer Function Index (VFI) offers a framework for recognizing volunteers' motivations and organizing suitable volunteer opportunities to address these motivations. In addition, Clary et. al (1998) emphasize the need to take volunteers' needs into consideration when creating and implementing programs and services to cater to their needs. Furthermore, the VIF developed by Clary et. al (1998) remains a vital source for understanding volunteer management and motivation, skillfully blending theoretical concepts with practical applications.

Clary and Snyder's volunteer motivation theory is a rich contribution to our understanding of this complex area, providing practitioners with a useful model for designing and implementing successful volunteer schemes

(Clary, Ridge, Stukas, Snyder, Copeland, Haugen & Miene, 1998). According to Clary et. al (1998), the Volunteer Function Index (VFI) offers a means of identifying what encourages volunteers and constructing appropriate volunteer activities to meet those needs. Besides that, Clary et. al (1998) also highlighted the importance of paying proper attention to volunteer needs in designing and conducting programs and services for serving their aims. The success and sustainability of most community-based services also rely to a great extent on volunteer recruitment and retention. This is why numerous charitable service organizations depend on volunteers to provide invaluable services to their communities (Ainsworth, 2020). Although volunteering exists in many societies, Asia has one of the lowest volunteerism rates, with only 20% of the population participating, compared to the 22% and 40% recorded by the Americas and Oceania (Tan et. al, 2020).

Through comprehending volunteer motivations, effective management can be employed to ensure that the advantages of assistance outweigh potential negative consequences for individuals and the community. The Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports is chosen for this study, as despite its recent launch in July 2022, it has successfully attracted 230,905 registered volunteers as of March 6, 2023 (data sourced from an email from a Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports officer). Consequently, this paper aims to identify the factors influencing volunteer motivation among a population of 508 trained Satria volunteers deployed by the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports across Malaysia. Sukarelawan Anak Malaysia (Satria) is a flagship volunteer initiative by the Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia, designed to harness the energy and enthusiasm of Malaysian youth for various community service activities. Satria was launched on July 16, 2022, on National Youth Day in Tuaran, Sabah. Satria aims to create a professional and efficient platform for Malaysian youth to volunteer their time, particularly in post-disaster and recovery activities.

This study aims to analyze factors influencing volunteer motivation, and in this study, considers Expression of Values (IV1), Community Involvement (IV2), Interpersonal Contacts (IV3), Career Orientation (IV4), Personal Growth (IV5), Extrinsic Rewards (IV6), and Love of Volunteerism (IV7) among trained Satria volunteers. Volunteerism is a critical component of crisis management and nonprofit organizational operations, as volunteers end up providing the foundation for essential tasks during emergencies and daily operations of these organizations, delivering necessary services and support to those in need.

Research Objectives

Therefore, the specific research objectives (ROs) are outlined below:

- RO1: To examine the relationship between the expression of values and volunteer motivation.
- RO2: To examine the relationship between community involvement and volunteer motivation.
- RO3: To examine the relationship between interpersonal contacts and volunteer motivation.
- RO4: To examine the relationship between career orientation and volunteer motivation.
- RO5: To examine the relationship between personal growth and volunteer motivation.
- RO6: To examine the relationship between extrinsic rewards and volunteer motivation.
- RO7: To examine the relationship between love of volunteerism and volunteer motivation.
- RO8: To examine the most significant factor that influences volunteer motivation.

2. Literature Review

Malaysia has implemented a range of strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing volunteer motivation, employing a holistic and multifaceted approach. These initiatives integrate diverse methods and policies designed to foster a robust culture of volunteerism across the country.

Volunteer Motivation

According to Wilson and Son (2022), volunteer motivations encompass the diverse reasons individuals have, or reasons perceived by others, for participating in voluntary work, which plays a crucial role in supporting the third sector's institutions and civil society; however, despite the well-established institutionalization of volunteering, the participation rate remains relatively low, with only about a quarter of the adult population engaging in such activities annually. According to Suandi, Hamzah, Ismail and Shah (2014), understanding volunteer motivation is a pivotal aspect of volunteerism that aligns with the Social Exchange theory, which posits that sustained volunteer efforts depend on the perceived rewards either exceeding or balancing out the

associated costs, suggesting that individuals are motivated to contribute to volunteer activities to the extent that they perceive their efforts are adequately rewarded and are likely to seek equilibrium when they sense an imbalance between their contributions and the rewards received. Volunteers play a vital role in the operation of our modern communities; thus, their dedication to non-profit organizations is a significant social issue. In addition, Alajmi and Alasousi (2018) in their research stated that motivation is a management technique for influencing behavior based on an understanding of what motivates individuals to act. It is the process of arousing, energizing, directing, and maintaining behavior and performance; it is the process of motivating individuals to take action to achieve a specific objective (Alajmi & Alasousi, 2018).

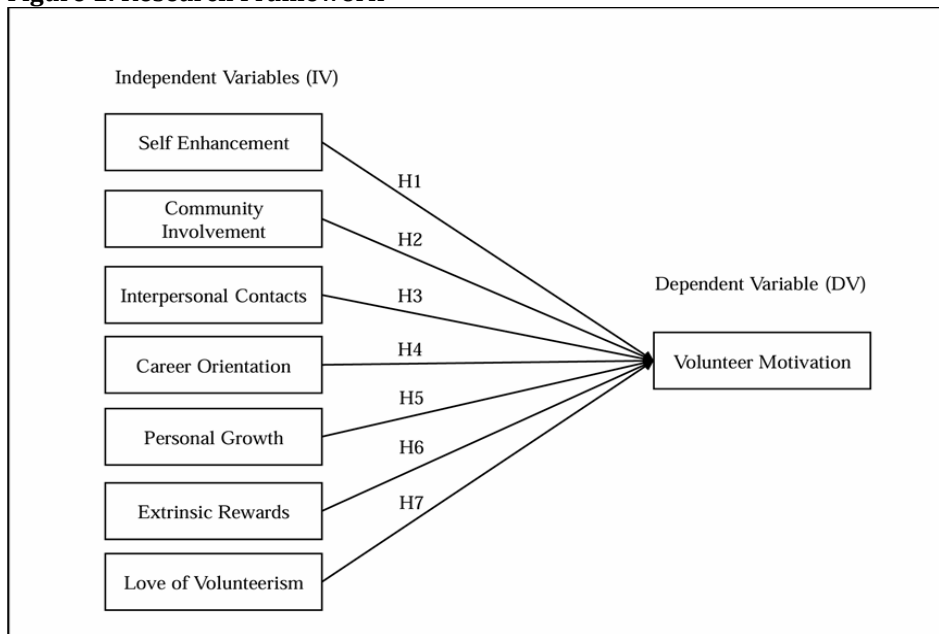
Maslow's Theory of Hierarchical Need

Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs states that people are motivated when their needs and desires are known and fulfilled. According to Maslow (2000), human beings are stimulated by the need to fulfil or maintain the various conditions on which these basic satisfactions depend, and also some higher-order intellectual desires. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, introduced in his 1987 book, individuals can be explained in terms of various needs at a given time. This model is particularly useful when attempting to explain the motivation for volunteering, as the various motives can typically be traced to these psychological needs. Thus, knowledge of the hierarchy of needs can offer insightful remarks as to why people choose to volunteer and what they expect to gain out of it. Generally, volunteer motivation may be understood by Maslow's hierarchy because different individuals would be motivated by the need to complete different ranks of this hierarchy through volunteering. From the literature, the following model (Figure 1) was developed.

3. The Methodology

The survey questionnaire has been developed by adopting and modifying the material from previous studies conducted by Faranadia et. al (2018) and Vinnicombe and Wu (2020). It was thereafter validated by a faculty expert to measure factors of volunteer motivation among the sample of 508 trained Satria volunteers of the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports. The research intends to identify the association among Expression of Values (IV1), Community Involvement (IV2), Interpersonal Contacts (IV3), Career Orientation (IV4), Personal Growth (IV5), Extrinsic Rewards (IV6), and Love of Volunteerism (IV7), which all affect the dependent variable, Volunteer Motivation (DV). The study aimed at a sample of 508 trained Satria volunteers who were trained under the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports across the country. The population consisted of 508 people across the country.

Figure 1: Research Framework



4. Empirical Results

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of relationships between the independent variables and volunteer motivation. The results revealed significant positive correlations between Expression of Values ($r = .62, p < .01$), Community Involvement ($r = .58, p < .01$), Interpersonal Contacts ($r = .54, p < .01$), Career Orientation ($r = .47, p < .01$), and Personal Growth ($r = .46, p < .01$) with Volunteer Motivation. These findings support the inclusion of these variables in the regression model.

The main objective of regression analysis is to construct a model and understand how changes in the independent variables are associated with changes in the dependent variable. The regression analysis result is shown in Table 1 below. Based on Table 1, the Regression Analysis table, the value of "R" represents the correlation coefficient, which measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. In this case, the value is approximately 0.845. In this research, R^2 is approximately 0.713, meaning that about 71.3% of the variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables, suggesting 28.7% to be accounted for in future research. Adjusted R Square provides a more accurate estimate of how well the model fits the data while penalizing the inclusion of unnecessary variables. In this research, the adjusted R^2 is approximately 0.709. The F-value is the ratio of the regression mean square to the residual mean square. In this case, the F-value is 177.645. The F-value is used to test whether the overall regression model is statistically significant. The larger the F-value, the more evidence you have against the null hypothesis that all coefficients are equal to zero.

The regression equation is $F(7, 500) = 177.645, P < 0.001$ and the Predictive DV: Volunteer Motivation = $0.381 + 0.244$ (IV1: Expression of Values) + 0.204 (IV3 Interpersonal Contacts) + 0.145 (IV2: Community Involvement) + 0.137 (IV4: Career Orientation) + 0.134 (IV5: Personal Growth) Thus, 5 of the IVs which are Expression of Values (IV1), Community Involvement (IV2), Interpersonal Contacts (IV3), Career Orientation (IV4), and Personal Growth (IV5) were significant predictors and related to the dependent variable.

Table 1: Regression Analysis

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	.381	.102		3.736	.000
IV1: Expression of Values	.244	.046	.254	5.322	.000
IV2: Community Involvement	.145	.047	.155	3.109	.002
IV3: Interpersonal Contacts	.204	.047	.212	4.366	.000
IV4: Career Orientation	.137	.050	.139	2.755	.006
IV5: Personal Growth	.134	.053	.139	2.523	.012
IV6: Extrinsic Rewards	.009	.025	.010	.338	.736
IV7: Love of Volunteerism	.016	.038	.017	.420	.675
Dependent Variable: Volunteer Motivation					
R	0.845				
R^2	0.713				
F Value	177.645				
Significance	0.001				

Discussion

The motivation for volunteering stems from the understanding that individuals can participate in the same volunteer activities while being motivated by a range of diverse and multifaceted reasons. This acknowledgment highlights the intricate nature of human behavior and the multitude of factors that influence individuals' choices to devote their time and energy to charitable pursuits. For instance, one individual may opt to volunteer to visit hospital patients as a reflection of their deeply ingrained personal principles, guided by a

genuine desire to alleviate feelings of loneliness and offer companionship to those in need. Conversely, another individual may perform the same volunteer duty with a more strategic intention, viewing it as a conscious step towards realizing their long-term career aspirations in the healthcare industry. Through this process, they seek to gain first-hand experience and expertise that may enhance their professional credentials and prospects.

Volunteerism that is consistent with people's personal values and aspirations can be a manifestation of self-actualization, since people consciously pursue chances to contribute meaningfully to causes that they are passionate about. Volunteering can then go beyond mere satisfaction of lower-level needs and become closely related to higher-level needs like social belonging and personal growth. When individuals have their lower-level needs met, they are more likely to engage in volunteer work, which may serve to satisfy other needs in the hierarchy of Maslow. These results are in accordance with Clary et al. (1998), who also pointed out that value expression and social involvement are the key themes in volunteer motivation. In consonance with Mekonen and Adarkwah (2022), internal drivers of personal growth and contributions to the community were more powerful predictors of sustained volunteering. Ironically, though contrary to Wilson (2012), who expressed that extrinsic factors play critical roles in certain situations, this study found extrinsic rewards to be statistically insignificant to Malaysian youth volunteers.

5. Implications and Limitations

Findings offer significant observations of the most important variables that have considerable influence on volunteers' motivation, offering a detailed picture of the nuanced dynamics of the volunteer world. This is particularly significant because it draws attention to the specific variables that influence Satria volunteers' motivation in the Malaysian Youth and Sports Ministry. Through the identification and exploration of these determinative factors, the research contributes to an enhanced understanding of the underlying motivators for reasons behind individuals to engage in volunteer service under this context. Such knowledge is instrumental in informing strategic decision-making operations and program development initiatives aimed at enhancing volunteer engagement and satisfaction for Satria volunteers. Besides, through the elucidation of what drives volunteer motivation, the study offers helpful directions towards the application of certain interventions and assistance measures with a view to establishing a more favorable environment for volunteerism in the Malaysian Youth and Sports Ministry. Lastly, the research results serve as a valuable guide for policymakers, organizational executives, and stakeholders involved in volunteer management and community development activities, informing responsible decision-making and the formulation of effective strategies to enhance volunteer participation and contribution towards ministry goals and objectives. Nonetheless, Extrinsic Rewards and Love of Volunteerism failed to be determinants influencing Volunteer Motivation among Trained Satria volunteers. Within the research question structure, these findings suggest that although volunteers will respond positively to extrinsic rewards in the form of money or material gain, such rewards are not the greatest or most potent motivator of volunteers. Other drivers, such as intrinsic motivators or self-enrichment, may be more significant in creating volunteer motivation. This outcome highlights the complexity of volunteer motivation, where extrinsic rewards contribute but may not be as impactful as other motivational drivers. However, despite the strong correlation, the regression analysis reveals that love of volunteerism was not statistically significant in predicting volunteer motivation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has illuminated several key factors that significantly influence volunteer motivation. Expression of Values, Community Involvement, Interpersonal Contacts, Career Orientation, and Personal Growth were identified as central factors that drive volunteer motivations by the study. It is important for organizations, policymakers, and program developers to identify and actualize the place of these factors to develop effective volunteer programs. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, human behavior is guided by a development through successive levels of needs, namely physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. This theoretical view can be applied to understand the motive of volunteering. Expression of Values is a powerful motivator, emphasizing the alignment between volunteer activity and a person's core values and beliefs. This alignment causes one to feel greater commitment and attachment towards volunteer actions. Community Involvement promotes the importance of belonging to a community and contributing to a greater cause, which fulfils social and esteem needs by enhancing one's sense of identity and worth in a community.

Interpersonal Contacts stress the social aspect of volunteering, illustrating how interpersonal relationships and friendships can contribute to motivation and enjoyment. This factor aligns with social needs in Maslow's hierarchy, where being part of a group and forming relationships are paramount. Career Orientation supposes that volunteers will be motivated by the possibility of skill development and career growth, fulfilling both esteem and self-actualization needs via avenues of personal and professional growth. Lastly, Personal Growth embodies the innate advantages volunteers gain from volunteering, such as gaining new skills, new experiences, and personal development. This is also in alignment with Maslow's self-actualization, wherein individuals try to realize their potential and abilities.

For organizations to unlock the potential of volunteerism, they must consider these factors in program design, such that volunteer opportunities spark the interest of participants on a personal and meaningful level. In addition, subsequent research should investigate the dynamics and variations of the factors between different demographic groups. By having an in-depth insight into the dynamics between the factors like Expression of Values, Community Involvement, Interpersonal Contacts, Career Orientation, and Personal Growth, researchers and practitioners are able to design more targeted and high-performing volunteer programs. This will increase the sustainable and meaningful culture of volunteer engagement, ultimately enhancing the impact and longevity of volunteer work.

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