

# Understanding and Assessing the Motivation Factors of University Students' Involvement in Volunteerism

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**Abstract**— Volunteerism is one of the areas that is increasingly gaining attention in improving capabilities among students in Malaysia. Volunteering activity is such a noble work that able to give value to human development and improving social skills. Hence, it is crucial to this research to identify the factors of student involvement in volunteerism. Information were collected at a University Sultan Zainal Abidin among the members of student's volunteer organization that involved 210 respondents. This study used quantitative method and all the information obtained were conducted through survey. The results showed that factor gaining a reward or honor found to be negatively related to volunteer and other factors were positive related to the volunteer. The Ministry of Higher Education should ensure that volunteering is always raised as a living culture amongst students and nurtured within them. Hence, it can be developed the soul to sympathy and courtesy, harmonize the community with concern and affection in the pursuit of sustainable community development.

**Keywords**— Volunteerism, Volunteer Management, Retain, Malaysia

## I. INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism in Malaysia is growing and locating in the development of volunteerism is often associated with the common human life of the community and able to produce many volunteers [1]. Briefly, volunteerism is the act of giving or willingness to do something for the benefit of others [2]. [3] stated that volunteering aimed at helping others or organizations without compulsion and without any payment or material compensation. According to [4], volunteerism is a charitable activity. [5] defines voluntary activities as a work performed without financial rewards. Hence, in general, volunteerism can be defined as a non-paid work with the support of the organization [6]. In addition, volunteers are very important as they contribute expertise, skills, knowledge, and energy [7]. [8] have pointed out that the involvement of young people, especially students, in voluntary activities has increased.

Student's exposure to volunteerism has become an important agenda in the Malaysian education system. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) has established the volunteers Council of University Malaysia (MASKUM) under the secretariat of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors/Rectors (Student Affairs). The involvement of students in this activity is seen as an important step in creating a responsible, caring and capable student contributing to nation and country development. According to [9], Higher Education Institutions provide a

conducive environment for learning and new ideas and this can be the basis for the behavior of activism.

Through the Malaysia Youth Policy, volunteerism has been emphasized as a necessity to create talented human resources and capable of contributing to all levels of life [10]. Students are highly educated people who can be the best examples to society. Volunteerism programs are able to produce responsible students towards social issues that exist among the community as they need to engage directly to help the imbalance inherent in a society [11]. According to [12], students who involved in volunteerism have been identified have significant changes in their socio-social aspects.

This situation exists as they have the experience of communication with various levels of society rather than those who are not experienced in social activities. While research conducted by [13] shows that university students engaging in voluntary activities have more disciplined lifestyle, high self-confidence and ability to manage their time more systematically. Thus, students can be successful in academics as well as in developing themselves to be better person [14]

According to [15], the spirit of volunteerism is one of the values that must exist and must be sown among the younger generation and youth because they are the determinants of our nation's future.

In addition, it shows that participating in community service enables students to be "rewarded" with many self-development such creating positive attitude, leadership, sympathy, empathy and etc. Therefore, in the next section, researchers explained in detail regarding the motivation factors of student involvement.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to [16], they have revealed that motivating factors are important in cultivating a volunteer's interest and commitment. Meanwhile, [17] and [18] was studying on motivational factors and their relationship to recruitment, a division of tasks and training of a volunteer program. The results showed that motivation is important in the management of volunteerism programs and will succeed if they have the right strategy. [19] and [20] conducts a study of altruism and its relationship with the motivation of a volunteer that altruistic individuals will gain unrealistic benefits such as self-satisfaction as they can help others.

On the other hand, [21] was conducted a research on the influence of rewards as a motivation factor in volunteer involvement. Hence, the results showed that the rewards could reasonably improve the spirit of volunteerism if the current economic situation is suppressing the lives of the community or volunteers. Meanwhile, [22] found that financial rewards did not make a person more motivated for voluntary work. [23] also examines aspects of satisfaction with motivation in volunteer work. He found that high satisfaction was achieved by volunteers making them more motivated to serve in volunteerism.

[24] found that motivation was contributed by career, social, value, understanding, enhancement, and self -protection. According to [25], good leadership can enhance the motivation of a volunteer. From the aspect of behavior, [26] relates to the tendency of university students. His study found that university students tend to be volunteers and potentially provide great support to agencies or organizations. In fact, this group should not be ignored in volunteer recruitment because their contribution can reduce the current social burden.

There are many things that can motivate volunteers and are influenced by the type of volunteer activities and their organizations [27]. As volunteers, they have the potential for social development and emotional development. [28] study that the motivation factor of involvement in volunteers is important in promoting volunteer's interest and commitment.

Involvement in volunteerism is driven by the nature of altruism or the desire to do good to others. Altruism comes from human nature and the application of social values in individuals. According to [29], altruism is a person's motivational state that aims to improve the well-being of others. Altruism refers to the attitude or behavior of individuals without expecting any external rewards. While the behavior of altruism does not expect external rewards, individuals will gain unrealistic benefits such as self-esteem and relief because they can help others [30]. Function Theory developed by [31] states that each individual can perform the same actions for different reasons. The Function Theory is the psychological theory used in the study of volunteers since the last decade [32]. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the motivation factor of student participation in volunteerism.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The focus of this study is to identify the factors of student's involvement in volunteerism. Researcher conducted a survey towards student volunteerism organization in Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin. The questionnaire was distributed to all members of the student volunteerism organization that consisted of undergraduate and diploma students. The questionnaire was distributed via email during semester break 2018. The survey generated 210 valid responses among members of student volunteer organization. The result shows more women responded to the survey (76.7%) than men

(23.3%). The majority of the respondents in education levels were formed under-graduate (87.1%) and diploma (12.9%).

In form of instrumentation, researchers have provided into three part of questions: 1) Respondents Background. 2) Respondent's Experience. 3) Factors Involvement in Volunteerism. In analyzing information obtained, researchers were used a descriptive analysis to clarify the phenomenon of volunteerism.

### IV. RESULTS

The questionnaire distributed include questions on whether students participated in activities volunteer and listed three kinds of activities including motivation program, community program, and environmental program. In total, 30.5% of respondents reported taking part in motivation program, 56.2% of respondents taking part in community service. While 43.8% of respondents reported taking part in an environmental program. All respondents who reported at these volunteering activities were asked 16 Likert-style questions about their factors getting involved in volunteerism. Students were asked to indicate the answer on a scale 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'. Then, the percentage has been computed based on all responses.

In order to identify the factors of student's involvement, the analysis was carried out using descriptive statistic which analyzes data by percentage and frequency. The findings of this analysis are given in Table 1 and the result showed the factors of student's involvement in volunteerism. First-factor involvement is 'helping others' in total 99.5% respondent strongly agree with that factor. It shows the same result of the study that was done by [33], the purpose of the most individuals doing volunteer activities is to help the needy and fulfilling the basic need of life.

Second-factor involvement is 'finding self-satisfaction through volunteering activities' in total 97.6%. According to [34], he found that high satisfaction was achieved by volunteers making them more motivated to involve in volunteering. Third factors are 'get acquainted and expanding the relationship with others' shows total 98.1% of respondents get involved in volunteer because of this factor. According to [35] found that individuals involved in volunteering are to meet the social goal with others. The fourth factor is 'spending my free time with beneficial activity' in total 97.6%. The fifth factor is 'achieve career goal' in total 91% respondents very agreed with that factor. According to [36] which stated six social functions in volunteers. One of these is a career that is maintaining career-related skill. Then, 94.8% of respondents involved in volunteer were for 'meet and cooperate with the important people'. As stated by [37], that volunteerism is a social function that may offer opportunities to work with important people.

Next factor is 'improving a social skill (community, leadership etc.)' in total 99.5% of respondents was involved in volunteering because of this factor. Enhancing this factor also

explained by [38] that young volunteer is more motivated by career factor and improving skill through volunteers. Next factor is 'being an example to other people' show that 91.9% of respondents engage in a volunteer. The ninth factor is respondents involved in a volunteer to 'maintain membership in organization' show that 85.8%. Then, 63.8% respondents indicated they wanted to 'fulfill the merit needs for college application'. And 56.7% of respondents' shows that they wanted to 'fulfill the merit need for scholarship requirement. Another factor is 'get reward and honor' of 38.5% of respondents involved in volunteerism. Which is the percentage of this factor shows that less than 50% of respondents are not volunteering to obtain any reward or honor.

The thirteenth factor is understanding the problems faced by others' shows that 99% of respondent get involved in volunteering. According to [39], volunteering is to understand the problem of communities. Another factor is 'self-training to be a community leader in the future' shows that 97.1% of respondents get involved in volunteer because of this factor. Based on the study by [40] state that individuals who have high leadership qualities can increase their motivation in volunteerism. In total 97.6% of respondents motivated by factor 'religious beliefs. And the last factor involvement in volunteerism is 'my friend also a volunteer' in total 76.2% of respondents get involved because of this factor.

Table 1: Factors of Student's Involvement in Volunteerism

	Factors Involvement	Frequency	percentage
1	Helping Other People	209	99.5
2	Finding Self Satisfaction Through Volunteering Activities	205	97.6
3	Meeting New People and Expanding Relationship with Others	206	98.1
4	Spending My Free Time with Beneficial Activity	205	97.6
5	Achieve Career Goals	191	91.0
6	Meet and Cooperate with The Important People	199	94.8
7	Improving Social Skills (Communication, Leadership etc.)	209	99.5
8	Be an Example to Other People	193	91.9
9	volunteering for a membership requirement	180	85.8
10	Fulfilling the Merit Needs for College Application	134	63.8
11	Fulfilling the Merit Need for Scholarship Requirement	119	56.7
12	Gain A Reward or Honor	81	38.5
13	Understanding the Problems Faced by Others	208	99
14	Self-Training to Be a Community Leader in the Future	204	97.1
15	My Religious Believe	205	97.6
16	My Friend Also A Volunteer	106	76.2

## V. DISCUSSION

In overall, the spirit of volunteerism amongst students is good. [41] concluded that the youth involved in community development had the potential to solve problems and can make a decision also to be a leader. Therefore, knowing the factor of student's involvement is very important to identify why they are participating in volunteer activities. This paper has focused on one dataset on the factor of student's involvement for volunteerism, which is quantitative. The analysis of descriptive statistic allows us to identify the frequency and percentage factors involvement. The decision to join an activity volunteer depends on many different factors. As such these finding adds to an existing analysis that identifies students volunteering motivations as a combination of altruistic and egoistical drivers [42].

When collecting the responses, we found some problems that would limit the scope of our research. The biggest problem we found was to encourage the member of student's volunteer organization to participate in the research in the period of time set (one month). So, as the result, we got very few responses out of this member of student volunteer organization after a month the survey distributed.

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors volunteering among members of student volunteer organization which is to explore the findings of the study why they participated in volunteering. The results from the analysis revealed several interesting findings. There is a statistically negative factor that has been identified. Gain a reward or honor, which is an egoistic motivation found be negatively related with volunteerism by the respondents [43]. Several other factors revealed a positive result to volunteerism. These finding revealed that factors of student's involvement in volunteerism is helping other people, finding self-satisfaction through volunteering activities, meeting with new people, spending their free time by doing volunteer work, achieve career goal, meeting important people, improving social skill such as communication skill, leadership and other, be an example to other people, understanding the problems faced by others, self-training to be a community leader in the future and they involved in volunteer work because of their religious belief. All the factors mentioned above show the result of 90% and above. Other factors involvement volunteer including for membership requirement, fulfilling the merit needs for college application, fulfilling the merit needs for scholarship requirement and their friends also a volunteer.

Hence, the factors of student involvement in volunteerism enable individual/group who have this same thought and purpose set up an organization that upholds the noble goal to help others, recovering, developing and empowerment the less fortune or marginalized communities.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study attempts to identify the factors of student involvement in volunteering. Volunteerism is an



activity, program or service planned and implemented sincerely and voluntarily. Volunteer activities, programs or services should not only benefit to individuals and communities who are helped but also have a positive impact on the volunteers themselves. Without us noticing, student involvement in volunteering giving the best impact on the aspects of student personality, self-esteem, and motivation that makes them an icon and the best example for other students. The higher education institution should ensure volunteering is always raised as a living culture amongst students and nurtured within them. With that, they can educate the soul to sympathy and courtesy, harmonize the community with concern and affection in the pursuit of sustainable community development

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