

## Assessing Event Volunteer Motivational Factors and Quality of Life among University Students

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**Abstract:** Volunteerism is a selfless and altruistic act of individuals dedicating their time, skills, and resources to support various causes and organizations without financial compensation. Hence, this paper aims to propose a conceptual framework for event volunteer motivation among university students and its impact on quality of life. Motivational factors measured by the volunteer motivational scale were proposed as independent variables, and quality of life as the dependent variable. This variable will regress to identify the relationship between quality of life among university students. The motivation to engage in volunteer work significantly impacts an individual's quality of life. However, few studies have been conducted on the impact of volunteering activities on quality of life. Therefore, this study aims to develop a quality of life framework by considering event volunteer's motivation as independent variables. This study will take place at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Puncak Alam Campus whereby students from this university who already experience becoming volunteers will be involved as respondents. It is hoped that the contingency model of sports event volunteer motivation that is developed through this study will contribute to a better understanding of volunteerism and quality of life among students in higher institutions. Encouraging volunteering activities will educate youths to become responsible citizens by practicing a positive quality of life.

**Keywords:** *Volunteerism, Event Volunteer, Volunteer Motivation, Quality of Life*

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### 1. Introduction and Background

Volunteerism is a powerful and selfless expression of community engagement and civic responsibility. It involves individuals dedicating their time, skills, and energy to support various causes, organizations, or initiatives without expecting financial compensation. Whether it's lending a helping hand during a crisis, working on long-term projects, or contributing to the betterment of society, volunteerism plays a vital role in shaping our communities and fostering a sense of collective responsibility. Event volunteerism in Malaysia is a significant and growing phenomenon. Not only in Malaysia, this activity becomes a global trend and the demand for volunteers, especially in special events, shows how significant they are in this industry (Ahmad, et. al., 2020). This is because volunteering activities are considered a wonderful way to give back to your community and make a positive impact. Whether small-scale to large-scale events, event organizer relies on volunteers' contribution to event operation for successful event hosting (Senevirathna et. al., 2023).

In 2011 the former minister of Higher Education, Datuk Seri Hj. Mohamed Khaled Nordin stated that students need to actively participate in social activities and volunteering programs to mold strong characters and valuable human capital for the country (Nordin 2011). A year later, the Malaysian government allocated RM100 million for the 1Malaysia for Youth (1M4U) Volunteer Fund million (Carvalho & Ahmad, 2012); the government hoped to inculcate the spirit of volunteerism, particularly among youth to build a more developed and progressive Malaysia. Apart from that, the government of Malaysia also used volunteerism activities as a medium to change Malaysian's social attitude and values, especially among youth. According to Pah et al. (2017), the spirit of volunteerism among students is required by the state which reflects the identity and spirit of responsible citizens. Meanwhile, Mirsafian & Mohamadinejad (2012) stated that college students are a group that actively participate as a volunteer in an event and give a positive result on social growth.

However, the increasing demand and competitive market in the industry for event volunteers make it hard for the event organizer to recruit volunteers due to inconsistent participation in voluntary programs (Hamzah et al., 2015; Mirsafian & Mohamadinejad, 2012). Therefore, many reasons that influence the

decision to initially volunteer and factors that should influence the way event volunteers returned also show that the perceived behavioral regulation is the best indicator and the effectiveness of a volunteer program is determined by selecting the right volunteers, putting them in the right roles, and maintaining them by a successful management. Hence, the event organizer must understand the motive of volunteer to ensure that suitable opportunities are provided to ensure satisfaction (Lamb & Ogle, 2019). Event organizers need to find the reason for volunteering in the event, as the motives change depend on the size and characteristics of activities (Ahn, 2018). Understanding volunteer motivation is essential for organizations and volunteer coordinators as it can help them attract, retain, and effectively manage volunteers. Without volunteers, the organization cannot survive (Ahmad et al, 2020). By tapping into these motivations and providing a supportive and rewarding environment, organizations can foster long-lasting volunteer engagement and ultimately achieve their missions more effectively.

## 2. Literature Review

**Volunteerism:** Volunteerism generally refers to the act of giving without expecting any return. If social workers get paid for their work, volunteers offer their time and skills without monetary compensation (Sahri et al., 2013). In Malaysia, volunteerism has been recognized as an important aspect of community development and social welfare (Bakri et al., 2021). Moreover, volunteers contribute their skills, time, enthusiasm, moral responsibility, and local awareness to support various social and community initiatives (Hidzir et al., 2021). Event volunteerism in Malaysia plays a vital role in organizing and executing a wide range of events, including cultural festivals, sports competitions, charity fundraisers, and community outreach programs. The significance of volunteerism in Malaysia can be seen through the various events and activities that rely on volunteers (Kamarudin et al., 2020).

**Event Volunteers:** Volunteer activities are crucial and their contribution that leads to the success of an event can't be denied by others. Involving volunteers in an event will significantly reduce the cost of event operation. Therefore, the vital services offered by event volunteers in event operations have caused a requisite to understand the event volunteer better (Kim et al., 2020). Volunteering can be defined as an action or activity in which time is given freely without expecting any return (Sahri et al., 2013) to benefit another person, group, or organization (Wilson, 2000). Meanwhile, Holmes et al. (2010) defines volunteering as a non-salaried service that requires an obligation in terms of time, effort and skills development. The biggest challenges faced by event organizers are recruiting and retention (Senevirathna et al., 2023); whereas the previous study conducted by Holmes et al. (2022) stated meeting the volunteer expectation is important to ensure the retention for future events.

**Volunteer Motivation:** Volunteer motivation plays a crucial role in predicting future volunteering intentions (Senevirathna et al., 2023), where volunteer motivation significantly influences an individual's intention to continue volunteering in the future. Jung & Ha (2021) stated volunteers who are motivated by a sense of purpose and fulfillment is more likely to have future intentions to continue volunteering. Furthermore, other studies have shown that volunteers who are motivated by the opportunity to make a difference or contribute to a cause are more likely to have higher intentions of volunteering in the future (Cho et al., 2020). Understanding and nurturing volunteer motivation can be an effective strategy for organizations to retain and foster long-term commitment (Gudzinskiene & Kurapkaitiene, 2022). In addition, factors such as ability and opportunity also impact an individual's future volunteering intentions. Volunteers with the necessary skills and resources are more likely to have future intentions to continue volunteering in an event (Marta et al., 2010). These factors can include things like time availability, access to volunteer opportunities, and support from the organization (Koutrou, 2018).

The volunteer motivation scale is an instrument used to evaluate the underlying motivations of individuals who choose to volunteer for events or organizations (Angosto et al., 2021). It consists of multiple factors and dimensions that help researchers understand the specific reasons individuals have for volunteering. These factors can include interpersonal contact, personal growth, expression of values, career orientation, and extrinsic rewards. (Ahmad et al., al. 2020; Bang & Ross, 2009; Bang & Chelladurai, 2003).

**Expression of Value:** Hidzir et al., (2021), define expression of values as how individuals feel a sense of

responsibility towards those who are less fortunate and the importance of being part of essential social communities. In addition, Bang & Ross (2009) stated expression of values is a concern for others where people try to express or act on important values such as their contribution will lead to the success of an event. This element is in line with the purposive by Farrell et al. (1998) where people tend to do valuable things for the community (Bang & Ross, 2009) and aim to give back something to the society. Meanwhile, Strigas & Jackson (2003) stated, that purposive motives relate to the desire of volunteers to benefit their actions to the organization and contribute to the event and the community. With this value, people tend to support and create a healthier community (Hidzir et al., 2021).

**Career Orientation:** Career orientation expresses gaining experience and career contacts where people who volunteer at the event aim to acquire knowledge and gain career-related experience through volunteering activities (Clary et al. 1998, Bang & Chelladurai 2003). The same elements of understanding are portrayed by Clary et al. (1998) where the understanding functions involve the opportunity among the volunteers to create a new learning experience, exercise knowledge, skills and abilities. Moreover, through volunteering activities individuals can be exposed to new skills and experiences that have the potential to enhance their career development (Xie et al., 2020). For example, volunteering in a relevant field can provide practical experience and networking opportunities that may lead to job offers or advancements in a particular career path. Volunteering also allows individuals to create networks and make valuable connections within their chosen field, which can open doors to career opportunities (Josam et al., 2022).

**Interpersonal Contact:** The volunteer motivation scale includes the variable of "interpersonal contact" as one of the motivations for volunteering. This variable assesses the extent to which individuals are motivated to volunteer to engage in social interactions and establish meaningful connections with others (Kamimura et al., 2018). In addition, interpersonal contact is described as a situation where people meet and communicate with the purpose to create networking in the community that they serve (Bang & Chelladurai 2003, Bang & Ross 2009). Volunteers who are motivated by interpersonal contact may seek opportunities to interact with others, build relationships, and contribute to the social fabric of their community (Serrat-Graboleda et al., 2021). These individuals may value the personal connections they make while volunteering and may find satisfaction in forming bonds with fellow volunteers, community members, or those they are serving.

**Personal Growth:** Bang & Ross (2009) identify personal growth as gaining a new perspective, feeling important and needed where volunteers may discover themselves to do unexpected things that will increase their self-esteem. According to Clary et al. (1998), personal growth is a key aspect of volunteer motivation, as individuals may choose to engage in volunteer activities to gain new experiences, acquire useful skills, and develop themselves personally. The types of volunteer opportunities undertaken by respondents were often seen as opportunities for personal growth and sometimes also intended as a part of future life plans, lifelong learning and personal improvement. Ahmad et al. (2020) stated other studies might namely this factor differently such as enhancement egoistic but it leads to the same meaning.

**Community Involvement:** Community involvement refers to individuals' engagement in activities, initiatives, and events that contribute to the betterment of their local community or society as a whole (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2014). The motive of community involvement in volunteering stems from individuals' desire to actively participate in and contribute to their communities, making a positive impact on others and the overall well-being of society. A study conducted by Bang & Ross (2009) rephrased the wording of the patriotism factor to Community Involvement and found this factor is fit for smaller special events at the local community level and becomes one of the crucial components for recruiting and retaining event volunteers.

**Extrinsic Rewards:** In the study of volunteer motivation, extrinsic rewards play a significant role in influencing individuals' decision to engage in volunteer activities (Weinberg & Gould 2003). They are external factors that are offered to volunteers to motivate and encourage their participation. Extrinsic focus on tangible incentives such as monetary compensation, gifts, and recognition (Kim et al., 2022); merchandise, food vouchers, monetary, memorabilia, etc. (Bang & Ross 2009). Furthermore, Strigas & Jackson (2003) stated that feeling of satisfaction is classified as an intangible reward that focus on the internal factor that volunteer felt during volunteering activities.

**Quality of Life:** Quality of life was defined as an individual's satisfaction with his or her life dimensions compared with his or her ideal life. An individual's value system and the cultural environment where he or she lives depend on the evaluation of quality of life (QOL) (Gilgeous, 1998). Back then in the past, the term QOL was not widely used and the term socioeconomic status, level-of-living, and social status was used to composite measures of families' living conditions. Hagerty (2001) defined QOL as a term that implies the quality of a person's whole life, not just a separate part. Based on studies conducted on Quality of life in Japan by Inoguchi and Fujii (2009) found that comprehensive policies aimed at improving family life, such as establishing childcare centers and reducing working hours, were necessary to improve the quality of life and well-being in Japan. Based on studies conducted by Azahan et al. (2009) on the quality of life in Malaysia's intermediate city from urban dwellers perspective the researchers examined their income and distribution, education, health status and family living. Pukeliene and Starkauskiene (2011) mentioned that quality of life can be measured using the model for measurement of quality of life that was categorized into external environment (namely natural environment, economic environment, social environment and political environment) and internal environment (physical wellbeing, individual development wellbeing, social wellbeing and material wellbeing). However, Schalock and Verdugo (2002) stated that their quality of life model is composed of eight-first-order correlated factors such as emotional well-being, self-determination, personal development, rights, material well-being, interpersonal relations, physical well-being and social inclusion.

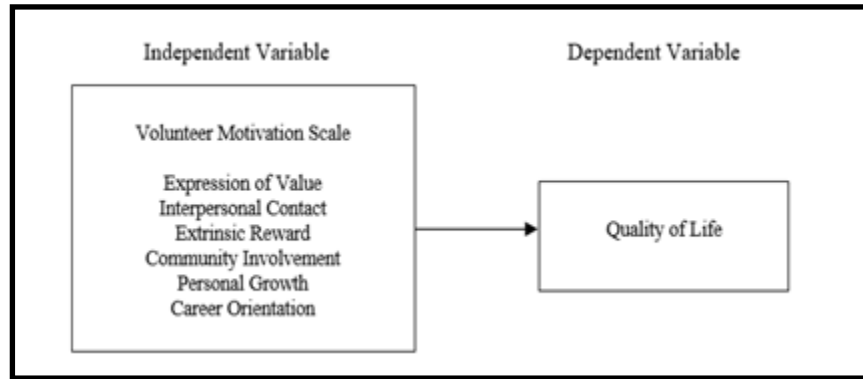
Based on the study conducted by Gray & Stevenson (2020), volunteerism promotes feelings of belonging, which in turn impacts the volunteers' well-being. Through volunteerism, individuals will interact with other volunteers who share the same social identity thus creating a group identity that is fundamental to volunteers' motivations and experiences of volunteering. Positive volunteering experiences can be improved by fulfilling volunteers' desires for social connection, interest, self-growth, recognition, and support (Same et al., 2020). In addition, a study conducted by Bowe et al. (2022) on coordinated community help during the COVID-19 pandemic found that volunteerism is not only beneficial to the well-being of the people in need but also to the volunteer who offers the help. This community helping program encourages psychological bonding among community members by building a sense of community identification and unity during the pandemic. In the case of a pandemic situation, community volunteerism helps both volunteers and the community to increase well-being and reduce depression and anxiety.

### 3. Methodology

The design of the study is correlational research where the analysis developed in this study is based on the examination of the volunteer motivation scale adapted from Bang & Chelladurai (2003) and Bang & Ross (2009). Meanwhile, for quality of life instruments will be adapted from Schalock and Verdugo (2002). The data will be collected among higher institution students who are experienced in volunteering at an event. The research design for this study will be correlation research to explore volunteer motivational factors and quality of life among students in higher institutions. The population of this study will include students from the Faculty of Business and Management (FBM) UiTM Puncak Alam Campus and the sample size for this study will be 300 students. All data will be analyzed using SPSS software. Reliability analysis will be conducted to measure the stability and consistency of the instrument used. Correlation and regression analysis will also be used to measure the correlation and impact between variables.

**Proposed Conceptual Framework:** To conduct this study, the event volunteer motivational scale serves as the independent variable (IV) which consists of Expression of Value, Interpersonal Contact, Extrinsic Reward, Community Involvement, Personal Growth, and Career Orientation. Meanwhile, Quality of Life is labeled as the dependent variable (DV).

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework



Based on the framework above, the hypothesis will be tested as the following:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between expression of value and quality of life among university students.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal contact and quality of life among university students.
- H3: There is a significant relationship between extrinsic reward and quality of life among university students.
- H4: There is a significant relationship between community involvement and quality of life among university students.
- H5: There is a significant relationship between personal growth and quality of life among university students.
- H6: There is a significant relationship between career orientation and quality of life among university students.

**Practical Implication:** This study uncovered several key factors that influence volunteers' involvement in an event. The factors include expression of values, interpersonal contact, career orientation, and personal growth. Event organizers, nonprofits, and community leaders should consider these factors when searching for and hiring volunteers. Furthermore, recognizing the contributions of volunteers and expressing gratitude is not only a sign of appreciation but also a powerful tool to boost morale and motivate volunteers to continue giving their time and energy. It is suggested that future researchers who are interested in exploring similar study in the future are encouraged to use a similar framework.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

Understanding event volunteer motivation is essential for the success of any event and the sustainability of volunteer programs. Volunteers play a pivotal role in the execution of various events, from community service activities to large-scale festivals. Motivating volunteers is not a one-size-fits-all approach; understanding the motive behind the involvement will help event organizers find the volunteers that fit their requirements. This is to ensure that they can work well and have fun with their work at the same time as well as avoid unnecessary pressure while doing their work. The motivation to engage in volunteer work significantly impacts an individual's quality of life. Volunteer work not only contributes to the betterment of society but also has numerous benefits for themselves. It is generally agreed that volunteering plays an important role in contributing to people's subjective well-being or perceived life satisfaction (Dolan et al., 2008). In the field of conceptualization, the awareness of the importance and the components that form quality of life are increasing in the community (Stimson et al., 1999). For volunteers, engaging in voluntary service can enhance their cognitive functioning and functional ability, as well as improve their perceived life quality (Wang et al., 2022). Previous literature stated that volunteering activities may improve the health and quality of life among volunteers (McDonald et al., 2012) as it is linked with a good environment for living. In



addition, volunteer work also can help individuals maintain their physical and mental well-being (Islam et al., 2015) as well as boost self-esteem, social status, and overall life satisfaction (Aseanty et al., 2022). Therefore the purpose of the study is to identify the factors that determine event volunteers' motivation factors that contribute to the quality of life among volunteers in higher institutions.

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