

Level of Participation of Volunteers in Volunteering Activities in Jerantut District, Pahang

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Abstract

Volunteers are the sole front-liner who are willing to contribute to community services and willing to sacrifice their time and effort without expecting anything in demand. These selfless workers could come from many different backgrounds throughout every corner of our homeland, Malaysia. This study took place in Jerantut district, Pahang with emphasis on characteristics such as gender, type of job, level of education and age. This study aimed to i) describe the demographics of volunteers in Jerantut District, Pahang. (Gender, type of job, level of education, and age); and ii) identify the level of volunteers' involvement into volunteering activities in Jerantut District, Pahang. This is a quantitative study that utilizes Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI) Questionnaire by Clary et al (1998) as an instrument. The overall analysis of the level of involvement of volunteers in volunteering in activities shows that age has a significant correlation, where the younger the age of the volunteer, the higher the level of involvement with a value of ($r = -0.334$, $p \leq 0.001$). In conclusion, this study shows that younger generation has higher altruistic values that contribute to the involvement in volunteering activities. Therefore, this finding could contribute to aid further organization finding potential volunteers in the future.

Keywords: Volunteer, Involvement of Volunteers, Volunteering Activities, Age.

Introduction

The term volunteer had existed since a long time ago. Volunteering is not a new system. We human beings co-exist and thrive on kindness of others up to the point that we have organizations they dedicated to managing volunteers around the world. Thus, it plays an important role in running many activities and social chore to maintain our dignity and

civilization. A definition of 'volunteer' was described efficiently by Norehan (2018) that a volunteer should not expect any reward from any party, especially the community they help. Volunteers should help wholeheartedly to fulfil a need. Volunteers should be the ones who understand the situation and also help to satisfy the needs. Volunteering activities are a form of prosocial behaviour that requires commitment over a long period and it comes in the form of action or act by giving help or assistance to needy (Baron et al., 2009).

Ferreira et al (2012) in their study said that we can see where the volunteering activity itself has gone through a form of evolution as society nowadays is more dynamic and flexible from the point of view of the structure of society itself and this has become more improved with the existence of new goals and visions. Based on this, there are Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that have been developed by the United Nations General Assembly (2015), where they stated that there are 17 goals in the entire sustainable development goal that has been built need the help of volunteers to meet the goal. This study aims to measure the level of involvement of volunteers in activities carried out in Jerantut District, Pahang.

Djastuti (2010) stated that the commitment of volunteers to the organization will determine the success or failure of the organization because it depends on three basic things, namely the management of the organization, the design of a job in the organization, and the commitment given by the organization. Therefore, with the existence of full commitment given by volunteers who are involved in volunteering activity, the volunteer organization may survive for a long time and continue to be able to treat their target groups who are less fortunate.

Norehan (2018) also stated that some individuals join volunteers because they have personal interests that need to be fulfilled such as wanting a name and want to be better known by the community. They only care about the rank and social status they will get. So, they cannot be considered a genuine volunteer because a volunteer should appreciate the main motive of being a volunteer as best as possible. Johari (2019) has stated that volunteering is a form of a challenge especially if a person holds a position in the volunteer association itself because they are required to take responsibility and sacrifice for the target group they are helping. This cause has resulted in not many people being willing to participate in the volunteer program offered

Mel (2016) stated that the field of volunteering is related closely to the characteristics of ethics, civics, and a person's sense of social responsibility for contribution in terms of energy or finance. As we all know, there is an urgent need for volunteers' involvement in various forms of services especially during disasters such as floods, fires, and landslides. There are many negative effects of disasters. Natural disasters can cause property destruction and physical and emotional stress. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2021), the total amount of losses due to natural disasters flood alone in 2021 is worth as much as RM6.1 billion, and the number of victims of the flood reached as many as 71,000 people at its peak. Statistics stated that it has given the impression that volunteer assistance services are very significant. Internal problems publicized in the mass media can cause the able-bodied community in society to be disinterested in participating in any form of volunteering, especially when faced with a disaster. The problem of the number of registered volunteers at that time has clearly shown that there are lacks of community members who are willing to serve by becoming registered volunteers at Jerantut District, Pahang is not exempt from contributing in terms of data that has been issued.

Thus, the research's objectives are to i) describe the demographics of volunteers in Jerantut District, Pahang according to (Gender, type of job, level of education, and age); and ii) identify the level of involvement of volunteers in volunteering activities in Jerantut District, Pahang.

Methodology

This questionnaire was conducted purposefully on more than 160 volunteers. These volunteers are the one who join the volunteering activities at Jerantut District located in Pahang Darul Makmur. A total of 120 people consisting of active and inactive volunteers participated in answering this set of questionnaires. Research findings from this questionnaire are in the form of quantitative data. A Likert scale has been used as a measuring tool in question items. This quantitative study will use a Volunteers Functions Inventory (VFI) questionnaire by Clary et al., (1998) as its instrument provided by the researcher to the volunteers registered at Jerantut District, Pahang. This questionnaire has been built to test the motives of individuals who join volunteers. It has 30 questions with six (6) functions: - Protective, Values, Career, Social, Understanding, and Enhancement.

Table 1

Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) Functions

No.	Motive	Explanation
1.	Values	According to Clary & Snyder (1999), one of the most important factors in the VFI is ones' value because pure values is a part in human nature, and it is projected in the quality of work put out by these volunteers. This statement is also supported by Nur Raihan & Azizan (2013) who state that volunteers with good qualities often share a selfless trait and altruism when it comes to engaging in volunteer works.
2.	Protective	Nur Raihan & Azizan (2013) stated that the protective nature also exists profoundly in these volunteers' portrait such enthusiasm in their volunteering activities.
3.	Career	Emmeline (2010) also stated that the nature of "career" is crucial in playing a role in motivating the volunteers. Volunteers must participate in the activities held because it is often used as a steppingstone to improve the qualities that they have within themselves in their efforts to strengthen their position. This is good for them, especially in the field related to their career. Even so, this factor is often a time constraint for volunteers to get involved because they have a career that they need to take care of.
4.	Social	According to Smith et al (2010), when volunteers involve themselves by socializing in volunteering activities, they can indirectly improve their behaviour and promote good civic among fellow volunteers and the surrounding community. Their involvement can produce good citizens and practice a beautiful culture.

5.	Understanding	According to Aishah & Tajul (2013), volunteers will do their best to take action in their efforts to have skills in ensuing that their understanding needs can be fulfilled.
		Therefore, volunteers will always try to understand the strength that is within themselves because they will always try to find answers to all the questions that play in them minds.
6.	Enhancement	Che Fazilah & Shaffie (2020), stated that volunteers have the potential to improve and develop their psychological aspects to be stronger by the way they participate in volunteering activities. This factor is often matched with motivation, behaviour and other elements that researchers want to study related to the level of volunteer involvement such as intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

Data acquired from this study uses a measurement build by (Rusinah and Sudirman, 2003). This data set was then analyzed using IBM SPSS to get a description in the form of frequency, mean, and percentage of all respondents. By using this instrument, the researcher was able to collect data according to the desired quality. Next, the researcher can make a deep conclusion in the form of quantitative data that coincides with the objectives of the study that has been carried out.

The measurement method used in this study shows that the higher the total score, the higher the level of volunteer involvement. The higher the total score from one factor in the Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI), the higher the motivation of volunteers to participate in volunteering activities at Jerantut District, Pahang. In the Research Training Module Based on Rusinah and Sudirman (2003), we can conclude that a value between one (1) to three (3) is low, a value between three (3) to five (5) is medium meanwhile a value between five (5) to seven (7) is considered as high.

Correlation tests have been used to measure and test the relationship of variables using Spearman's Rho coefficient. It is to explain the information obtained and see the relationship between the variables. This test uses Spearman's Rho coefficient method because it will express the relationship between variables that are interval scales and ratios (Piaw, 2009). In this study, the Spearman's Rho correlation test aims to identify the relationship between the variables: The demographic profile of volunteers, namely age, gender, type of job, and level of education with the level of involvement of volunteers in Jerantut District, Pahang.

Results

Table 2

Volunteer Demographic Information

Objective i) Describe the demographics of volunteers in Jerantut District, Pahang. (Gender, type of job, level of education, and age).

<i>Demography</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
GENDER		
Male	30	25
Female	90	75
AGE		
18-30 Years Old	30	25
31-40 Years Old	16	13.3
41-50 Years Old	28	23.3
51-60 Years Old	39	32.5
61 Years old and above	7	5.8
CAREER		
Stay-at-home Mom	54	45
Students	14	11.7
Self-employed	27	22.5
Government Servant	10	8.3
Private Sector	7	5.8
Pensioner	8	6.7
EDUCATION LEVEL		
Standard 6	2	1.7
Form 3	15	12.5
Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM)	53	44.2
Vocational College	8	6.7
Diploma/STPM	25	20.8
Degree	17	14.2

From the total of 120 volunteers from Jerantut District, Pahang, only 90 volunteers participate in the survey. They consist of women representing 75% of the total respondents. The age group of 51-60 years old also contributed as much as 32.5% of the total respondents and also the majority age group who participated as volunteers at Jerantut District, Pahang. A total of 54 volunteers are stay-at-home moms and they represent 45% of the total number of respondents. Those who have a Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) as their highest education are the majority of the volunteers who participate with a frequency of 53 people and represent 44.2% of the total percentage.

Table 3

The level of volunteer involvement in volunteering activities at Jerantut District, Pahang

Objective ii) Identify the level of involvement of volunteers in volunteering activities in Jerantut District, Pahang.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Gender					
2. Age	0.265**				
	.000				
3. Career	-0.373**	-0.183**			
	.000	.000			
4. Education	-0.065	-0.354**	0.275**		
Level	.085	.000	.000		
5. Level of	-0.032	-0.334**	0.061	-0.004	
Involvement	.394	.000	.105	.910	

**Correlation is significant at the $(p) \leq 0.001$ level.

We can identify that age has a significant relationship with the level of volunteer involvement ($r = -0.334$, $p \leq 0.001$) with a relationship that negative, that is, the younger the volunteers, the higher their level of involvement in volunteering activities at Jerantut, Pahang. The relationship is also in a moderate level according to the interpretation of the correlation coefficient (Vaus, 2002). Siti Raba'ah et al (2020) also support the statement that the study found that volunteers aged between 19 and 23 years old are the majority of 606 or 50.5% of the total number of respondents. Harian (2021) also reported that there is an increase in the number of youth volunteer members in Malaysia as they have recruited more than 10,000 youth volunteers through the National Youth Volunteers initiative (BENA).

Conclusion

The results of the analysis of the study have found that the majority of respondents are women compared to men and they are also less than 50 years old. The analysis also found that the majority of them are stay-at-home moms with the highest level of education in the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM). The data obtained from the Department of Social Welfare's Statistics (2019) supports this statement as it also note that the number of female volunteers is more than the participation of male volunteers. The results of the study also found that among the four (4) selected demographics, namely gender, age, type of job, and level of education, only age affects the level of participation of volunteers in volunteering activities at Jerantut, Pahang with a negative relationship with a moderate level of association.

The results of the study found that this study has impacts from several important aspects. In summary, this study is about the level of participation of volunteers in volunteering activities. This study hopefully can contribute to form a reading material and can be used as a reference in the scientific field and knowledge about volunteering. This study is also a branch of the field of humanitarian studies that is often used as a study by other researchers. As stated by Marshall and Taniguchi (2012), the study of the work in the field of humanitarianism and volunteering can contribute to the improvement of the literature. This study is also expected to provide exposure to the organizations involved regarding the level of participation of volunteers under their management. Although the respondents are volunteers, we can conclude whether their level of participation in the organization is high or vice versa. At the same time, this study hopefully can determine their commitment while serving together as volunteers.

In conclusion, the results of this study can be used as a form of benchmark, guide, and foundation to improve the level of participation of volunteers at Jerantut, Pahang in every aspect. It also helps to improve some internal aspects of managing the volunteers and volunteering activities. This is because the need for volunteers is crucial in the current era as there are urgent needs such as natural disasters such as floods, especially in the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia such as Kelantan Darul Naim, Terengganu Darul Iman, Pahang Darul Makmur and also in some areas in the state of Ehsan et al (2018) discuss the importance of volunteer preparation in helping related communities and victims involved in and affected by natural disasters. For now, the need for volunteer services is very high and it covers some important aspects that are important in their efforts to respond to urgent situations. A high level of volunteer involvement can help ease some burdens of the authorities to maintain the stability, harmony, and function of society.

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