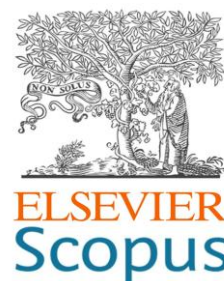




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The Motivational Factors Affecting Volunteer Retention among Non-Profit Organizations: A Questionnaire-Based Study in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: Many non-profit organizations face a difficult challenge related to engaging volunteers and maintaining their engagement. Therefore, this study aimed to fill a gap in current research on volunteer retention in nonprofit organizations by examining the factors that motivate them and increase their retention levels. This study was conducted on non-profit organizations in Saudi Arabia through quantitative research using Multistage Cluster Sampling. The findings indicated that only understanding and social behavior exhibited a statistically significant impact on the retention of volunteers. By contrast, value, career, enhancement, and protective motivation did not demonstrate any statistically significant impact. The findings assist decision makers in non-profit organizations in comprehending the psychology of volunteers and elucidating their behavior.

Keywords: non-profit organizations, volunteers, motivations, retention



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影响非营利组织志愿者保留的动机因素：基于沙特阿拉伯的问卷调查

摘要：许多非营利组织面临着吸引志愿者和维持志愿者参与度的艰巨挑战。因此，本研究旨在通过研究激励志愿者和提高志愿者保留率的因素来填补非营利组织志愿者保留率研究的空白。本研究通过多阶段集群抽样的定量研究对沙特阿拉伯的非营利组织进行。研究结果表明，只有理解和社会行为对志愿者的保留具有统计学意义。相比之下，价值观、职业、提升和保护动机没有表现出任何统计学意义的影响。研究结果有助于非营利组织的决策者理解志愿者的心理并阐明他们的行为。

关键词：非营利组织、志愿者、动机、保留

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Volunteering is a distinct manifestation of altruistic behavior. Individuals engaging in this behavior actively seek opportunities to provide assistance and continue to offer support over an extended period. Given how many nonprofits rely on volunteers, there is a strong and unique link between volunteers and these organizations [1]. With the growth of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) over the past few decades, volunteering has become a crucial component [2]. In recent years, remarkable growth has been observed in Saudi Arabia the non-profit sector. This expansion has shown the industry's capacity to fill in service shortages and substantially contribute to the country's overall development. The non-profit sector's GDP contribution is expected to rise from less than 1% to 5% by 2023, according to Saudi Vision 2030 [3]. Over 1,000 legally recognized non-profit organizations have operated in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as of 2020 and are actively engaged in a variety of fields, including education, health, social services, and the environment [4]. These organizations benefit from a strong culture of both individual and corporate philanthropy within the nation. Because the expansion in the number of non-profit organizations has not been accompanied by an equal evolution in the availability of resources, NPOs are embracing a more practical approach and using processes and techniques that are more extreme in the for-profit sector [5]. The growth of volunteer work is one of the responses implemented by the nonprofit sector. Only recently has the significance and benefits of volunteering begun to be acknowledged [6].

1.2. Problem Statement

An increasing number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have volunteered to become an essential aspect of contemporary society. Volunteers represent a valuable source of altruism and unique offerings for society, and Saudi Arabia needs to support its progress and benevolent endeavors. The

“Voluntary Work Survey 2018” in Saudi Arabia found that 14.7% of the population aged 15 and above engaged in voluntary work. By 2023, the number of volunteers in the volunteer field reached over 843 thousand, representing 23% of the Saudi population. However, many non-profit organizations in Saudi Arabia face challenges in engaging young volunteers and retaining their participation [7]. Attracting and retaining volunteers are two important aspects of the volunteer recruitment process; however, theorizing volunteer experiences, engagement, motivation, and sustainability once volunteers are active within an organization is missing. This research aims to study and analyze the relationship between motivation factors and volunteer retention among NPOs in the Makkah region of Saudi Arabia. Understanding the relationship between these variables will contribute to the design of effective administrative systems and institutional practices that motivate and retain volunteers.

1.3. Study Objective

To examine whether there is a relationship between volunteers' motivation (VM) factors and Intention of Retention (IR).

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed based on the gaps described in the problem statement:

1. Does the relationship between Volunteers' Motivation (VM) factors and Intention of Retention (IR) have a positive nature?

1.1. Does the relationship between Value Motivation (VM) and Intention of Retention (IR) has a positive nature?

1.2. Does the relationship between Understanding Motivation (UM) and Intention of Retention (IR) has a positive nature?

1.3. Does the relationship between Social Motivation (SM) and Intention of Retention (IR) has a positive nature?

1.4. Does the relationship between Career Motivation (CM) and Intention of Retention (IR) has a positive nature?

1.5. Does the relationship between Enhancement Motivation (EM) and Intention of Retention (IR) has a positive nature?

1.6. Does the relationship between Protective Motivation (PM) and Intention of Retention (IR) has a positive nature?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Motivation Factors

Given the need to consider various factors influencing volunteer motivation, several studies have devised instruments that offer a comprehensive perspective. Comparable research methodologies were devised and employed that had six dimensions in their repertoire: values, understanding, social, career, enhancement, and protective [8]. They established their own theory, the Value Function Inventory (VFI), which identifies six distinct motivations that compel individuals to engage in volunteer activities. It is important to note that all volunteers possessed at least one of these motivations. According to [9], adherence to altruistic and humanitarian values is a primary factor influencing individuals. In addition, individuals engage in volunteer activities due to factors related to comprehension, as volunteering offers novel learning opportunities that contribute to the development of their knowledge, competencies, and capabilities. Furthermore, engaging in volunteer activities enables individuals to enhance the quality of their social interaction. Volunteers strive to enhance their professional trajectories. Additionally, individuals strive to achieve a protective objective by engaging in volunteer activities, as it allows them to alleviate negative emotions, such as guilt, stemming from their relative advantage and prosperity compared to others.

2.2 Volunteers Retention

Retention refers to the capacity of volunteers to maintain active engagement and participation over an extended period of time [10]. According to [11], the notions of retention and turnover are completely interrelated. It has been suggested that to mitigate turnover, it is imperative to carefully examine the factors that motivate individuals to remain within an organization, as well as those that prompt them to depart. From a managerial standpoint, it is evident that a significant issue lies in the fluctuating nature of the volunteer base, which manifests through a considerable turnover rate. This poses a challenge in recruiting new volunteers [12]. Therefore, numerous volunteer organizations are facing challenges in maintaining a consistent presence of dedicated volunteers over extended durations, which is attributable to a range of various factors [13]. Numerous empirical investigations have elucidated that a substantial cohort of individuals

who partake in festival events initially manifest elevated levels of enthusiasm, which subsequently undergoes a gradual diminution in their level of interest. The issue at hand may be attributed to several potential causes, including suboptimal practices in volunteer management and insufficient training, a dearth of verbal recognition, and inadequate communication skills resulting in inadequate support [14].

2.3 Volunteers Motivation and Retention Relationship

The presence of volunteers within non-profit organizations (NPOs) is of utmost importance. To enhance volunteer relations and retention, it is imperative to conduct an analysis of the potential factors that may influence volunteer motivation [15]. Upon closer examination of volunteer motivation and volunteer retention, numerous researchers have noted a correlation between these two variables in diverse contexts [16]. According to [8], the length of time volunteers commit to the host organization is positively correlated with their motivation level. Researchers have dedicated significant time and effort to comprehending the traits of volunteer motivation, particularly as they pertain to retention. This includes examining the distinctions between other- and self-oriented motivations [17-20], and exploring the various purposes that volunteers accomplish [8]. After extensive research in various contexts [16], multiple researchers observed a correlation between volunteer motivation and volunteer retention. Motivation is a prevalent area of focus in retention research, with particular attention given to examining various motivational factors. Among these factors, altruism, social motivation, and learning motivation have been identified as the most frequently occurring elements [21]. The examination of the correlation between volunteer retention and motivation holds significant importance, as it facilitates the development of a comprehensive approach to human resource management within non-profit organizations. Therefore, based on [22], the adoption of support, training, and recognition management strategies, in addition to taking into account different aspects of volunteer motivation, such as value, understanding, social, career, esteem, and protection, have a positive effect on volunteer retention. According to [2], managers of non-profit organizations prioritize the implementation of strategies aimed at motivating their volunteers. According to [22], volunteering, particularly in the festival context, has been the subject of several studies examining various motivations for social volunteerism [23-24], esteem-related volunteer motivations [25], value-driven volunteerism [24, 26-27], understanding volunteer motivations [24], and

career-oriented volunteer motivations [23, 25]. These studies found significant associations between these motivations and intention to continue volunteering with their organizations.

3. Conceptual Framework

According to Figure 1, this study has seven main variables:

- Independent Variables:

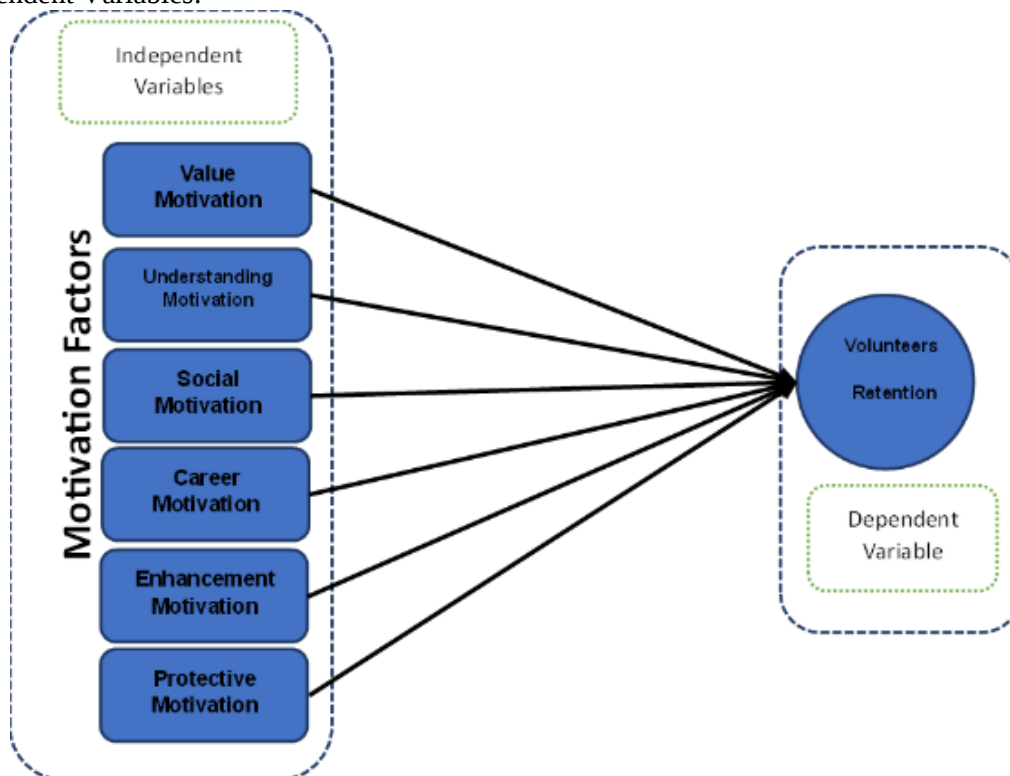


Figure 1. Conceptual framework (developed by the authors)

4. Methodology

This study applied a quantitative method and used structural equation modelling (SEM) for statistical analysis. The study used a quantitative data collection method and a fieldwork survey to collect data on how Motivation Factors affect volunteer retention. This study included a sample of volunteers who spent a year or more volunteering in NPO's in the Makkah region of Saudi Arabia. The respondents were randomly selected using Multistage Cluster Sampling. A total of

262 respondents participated in this survey.

5. Results

The examination results of the hypothesized direct effects showed that two out of the six paths were statistically significant (Table 1).

Because volunteers play a significant role in the growth of individuals, maintenance of social order, and satisfaction of social needs, there has been an explosion of volunteer efforts worldwide.

Table 1. Results of hypothesized direct effects (developed by the authors)

Path	Unstandardized Estimates		Standardized Estimates	t-value	p-value	Hypothesis Results
	Estimate	S.E.	Beta (β)			
VM→VR	-0.045	0.069	-0.041	-0.641	0.521	H2.1 Rejected
UM→VR	0.195	0.077	0.189 ^a	2.526	0.012	H2.2 Supported
SM→VR	0.097	0.044	0.151 ^a	2.171	0.030	H2.3 Supported
CM→VR	-0.058	0.042	-0.109	-1.385	0.166	H2.4 Rejected
EM→VR	0.055	0.08	0.063	0.688	0.491	H2.5 Rejected
PM→VR	0.08	0.065	0.099	1.235	0.217	H2.6 Rejected

^a Mean significant relationship at 0.05 level

As asserted in [28], it is a commonly held belief that volunteers help and provide resources to individuals who are less fortunate or who face other forms of disadvantage because of their expertise, availability, passion, ethical obligation, and knowledge of the local context.

For a significant amount of time, volunteering has received inadequate attention, inadequate research, and inadequate recognition. According to [6], the significance and value of volunteering have only recently been recognized. Therefore, this study aimed to fill a gap in the existing research on nonprofit organizations by investigating the factors that motivate volunteers, which increases the intention to retain volunteers.

6. Conclusions

The research results indicate that only social and understanding motivation had a statistically significant impact on the retention of volunteers. By contrast, protective, enhancement, career, and value motivation did not demonstrate any statistically significant impact. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for non-profit organizers in their ongoing endeavors to attract and engage volunteers. Study outcomes can assist decision-makers in non-profit organizations and regulatory bodies in Saudi Arabia and others in comprehending the psychology of volunteers and elucidating their behavior toward volunteering. This study can help design motivation and incentive systems that appeal to the desires and emotions of volunteers, which is expected to increase the number of volunteer hours, the number of volunteers, and the continuity of volunteering for a long time.

The research limitations include the small sample size of 242 volunteers, limited scope to the Makkah region, and closed-ended questions. The findings of this study may not be applicable in broader contexts. Therefore, more research is needed to study motivation factors and identify volunteer retention elements. Mediator variables that may have an impact can also be highlighted, such as the mediating role of HR practices and volunteer satisfaction. The research did not include a study of demographic variables, so there is an opportunity to investigate this topic as well.

Declarations

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, A.D.M.A. and A.A.; methodology, A.D.M.A. and M.I.A.B.A.; formal analysis, A.D.M.A. and A.A.A.; visualization, M.I.A.B.A.; writing—original draft preparation, all authors contributed equally; writing—review and editing, A.D.M.A.; project administration, A.A.A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version

of the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available in this article.

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Funding information is not available.

Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Al Madinah International University, Malaysia.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript. In addition, the ethical issues, including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancies have been completely observed by the authors.

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