

Volunteering Motivation in Emerging Adults and Generalized Self-Efficacy

Adrianisa Kamila Shabrina^a and Sugiarti Musabiq^b

^aFaculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia; ^bDepartment of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia

*Corresponding author:

Sugiarti Musabiq
Department of Clinical Psychology
Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia
Jl. Lkr. Kampus Raya, Depok, Jawa Barat
Indonesia, 16424
Tel.: +62 217270004
Email address: sugiarti@ui.ac.id

Volunteering Motivation in Emerging Adults and Generalized Self-Efficacy

Abstract- According to the results of a survey conducted by Indorelawan.org, there are many emerging adults (18–29 years old) living in Indonesia. Engaging in volunteerism as an emerging adult requires overcoming many challenges, as the emerging adult phase entails many developmental tasks. If an emerging adult to begin volunteering, they must consider both developmental and volunteering tasks. Of course, each person's decision to volunteer is motivated by something in particular or several such things. Some may volunteer to expand their social networks, further their careers, or to self-actualize, and they believe that these goals will be fulfilled as they fulfil their volunteering and developmental tasks. Such self-affirming beliefs are called generalized self-efficacy. Different motivations for volunteering could be associated with different levels of generalized self-efficacy. This study was conducted to see the connection between volunteering motivations and generalized self-efficacy. Using convenience sampling, 1954 Indonesian citizens were chosen as participants (male = 670, female = 1280, other = 2) 18–29 years' old who were volunteers at the time of the study or who had previously volunteered. The Volunteer Functions Inventory was used to measure volunteer motivations and the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale was used to measure generalized self-efficacy. To explore the relationship between volunteer motivations and generalized self-efficacy, the data were analyzed using a partial correlation method. The results of the study indicate a negative correlation between generalized self-efficacy and protective motives ($r = -0.01$; $p > 0.05$), a positive correlation between social motives ($r = 0.04$, $p > 0.05$) and enhancement motives ($r = 0.06$; $p = 0.05$), and a significant positive correlation between values motives ($r = 0.12$; $p < 0.05$) career motives ($r = 0.07$; $p < 0.01$) and understanding motives ($r = 0.15$; $p < 0.05$), with the motive to understand having the highest significant positive correlation. The six volunteer motivations were found to relate differently to generalized self-efficacy. People who volunteer to protect themselves from unpleasant things are more likely to have lower generalized self-efficacy, and people who volunteer for social reasons, enhancement, their values, and career motives are more likely to have higher generalized self-efficacy.

Keywords: emerging adult, generalized self-efficacy, volunteer, volunteer motivations

Introduction

Indonesia is a developing country, and as such, it has various problems that require resolution. Those problems include (but are not limited to) uneven population distribution, natural disasters, political issues, public economic problems, health quality problems, and lack of facilities and infrastructure (Country Profile—Indonesia, nd). To address these problems and similar problems of other nations, the United Nations has developed a long-term program called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), comprised of 17 goals or outcomes related to community development and prosperity.

The SDGs are expected to be achieved by 2030 (Nino, nd). Their importance and difficulty means that contributions from citizens are also needed to implement programs that will contribute to their fulfillment. One way that citizens can contribute to the fulfillment of the SDGs is to volunteer.

Volunteerism is defined as actions undertaken without coercion to help others, especially those who really need help, time-bound, done in concert with an organization, and without the expectation of any real compensation (Penner, 2002; Snyder & Omoto, 2008; Yadessa, 2015). In Indonesia, Scanlon and Alawiyah (nd) collected volunteering opportunities from 2,293 non-government organizations available in 2012. Some volunteer institutions, such as Indonesia Mengajar and TurunTangan, recorded as many as tens of thousands of volunteers (“Survei Relawan Indonesia” (Indonesia Volunteer Survey), 2016). Indorelawan.org logged at least 51,000 volunteers (Indorelawan, nd). The Indonesian Red Cross recorded more than 1 million volunteers in 2013 (Wijaya, 2013).

Most volunteers in Indonesia were found by Indorelawan.org to be mostly 18–29 years old, meaning that they are emerging adults, following Arnett, Žukauskienė, and Sugimura (2014). Emerging adults are in a transition stage from adolescence to adulthood. One distinctive feature of emerging adults is their need to explore. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is accompanied by the exploration of new, unprecedented worlds, such as the world of work, higher education, and romance (Arnett, 2000): being an emerging adult requires individuals to be busy (Belgard, 2014).

Indonesia has many emerging adult volunteers. Deciding to volunteer is not easy for busy people, as volunteering tasks are time consuming and sometimes challenging. Furthermore, volunteers do not receive any real or immediate compensation. It is easy to choose not to volunteer and focus instead on other developmental tasks, but there many other individuals choose to volunteer in the midst of this. An individual’s decision to volunteer requires one or several particular motivations.

An individual’s motivation to volunteer was studied by Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Copeland, Stukas, Haugen, and Miene (1998), who found six types of such motivations, namely, the protective motive (motivation to protect themselves from unpleasant things), the values motive (motivation to express personal values), the career motive (motivation to develop one’s career), the social motive (motivation to establish and maintain social relationships with others), the understanding motive (the motivation to acquire knowledge and use knowledge), and the enhancement motive (motivation to feel more satisfied with oneself).

Individuals decide to volunteer for reasons that they consider important. The importance of the reason may be the biggest driver for an individual to volunteer. Volunteering could mean that the individual is sure that he or she is capable of dealing with developmental and volunteer tasks. This self-affirming belief is known as self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief a person has in their ability to act in a way that affects the events that impact their lives (Bandura, 1994). The role of self-efficacy in everyday life determines how one feels, thinks,

motivates oneself, and behaves. High self-efficacy can improve the self-achievement and well-being of a person in various ways. People with high self-efficacy see difficult tasks as challenges and not threats to avoid, meaning that they can reduce stress and the risk of depression. On the other hand, people with poor self-efficacy avoid difficult tasks because they feel threatened and keep their own inadequacies and obstacles in mind, so that low self-efficacy individuals are more at risk of stress and depression (Bandura, 1994).

The idea of self-efficacy is closely related to the idea of stages of human development, including that of the emerging adult stage. According to Bandura (1994) an emerging adult must begin to face the pressures and expectations of multiple parts of life, such as one's career, higher education, or marriage. This is supported by Arnett (2000), who stated that being an emerging adult means, for many individuals, no longer depending on one's parents to explore the world of work and romance, the two worlds that are most often considered measures of maturity. To be able to overcome these challenges, those at the developmental stage of emerging adult is helped by high self-efficacy.

High self-efficacy enables a person to gain skills and improve their self-competence. These skills and competencies can help an emerging adult to face tasks and challenges in their development stage. On the other hand, a person who is becoming an emerging adult and has low self-efficacy is immersed in feelings of self-doubt. This can hinder the development of competencies and self-skills that can help overcome challenges. The lack of adequate skill and competence can make life as an emerging adult full of stress and depression (Bandura, 1994).

These considerations led the authors to examine the relationship between volunteerism and self-efficacy among emerging adult volunteers. To match the distinctive feature of the stage of an emerging adult, which is full of tasks and concerns, the concept of self-efficacy used in this study is generalized self-efficacy, defined by Scherbaum, Cohen-Charash, and Kern (2006) as the belief that an individual has in that individual's ability to be able to display certain levels of performance in various situations.

Previous study of volunteerism and generalized self-efficacy was performed by Stukas (2014), who found that the motivation to volunteer is associated with the generalized self-efficacy in Australian volunteers of 18–89 years old in different ways. This result shows that each dimension of volunteer motivation relates differently to self-efficacy, with protective motives and career dimensions having negative correlations and the remaining motivations being positively associated.

Although study on the relationship between volunteer motivations and generalized self-efficacy has been done, it remains difficult to find work that investigates the relationship between volunteer motivation and generalized special self-efficacy in emerging adults. For that reason, this study explored the relationship between volunteer motivations and generalized self-efficacy in volunteers who were emerging adults.

The findings of Stukas (2014) led us to hypothesize that each of the dimensions of the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) would correlate differently and significantly with generalized self-efficacy. Social, career, understanding, and enhancement variables would correlate positively due to their relationship to fields where self-efficacy is fundamentally important and where personal skills are required. Protective motives would correlate negatively because those who would tend to flee from their problems have insufficient levels of self-efficacy, as indicated by Bandura (1994).

Method

A. Participant and Instruments

The criteria for participants in this study were: Indonesian citizens 18–29 years old and having volunteered/currently volunteering. Based on these criteria, we gathered data from 1954 Indonesian citizens (male = 670, female = 1280, other = 2) using convenience sampling.

The instruments used by this study were the six-dimensional VFI, developed by Clary et al. (1998) to measure volunteer motivation, and uni-dimensional New Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSES) by Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001), which was used to measure generalized self-efficacy. Both instruments use a Likert scale a 6-point scale (1–6, with 1 meaning not at all important/accurate and 6 meaning extremely important) for volunteer motivation and a 4-point scale (1–4, with 1 meaning strongly disagree and 4 meaning strongly agree) for generalized self-efficacy. The VFI has 30 items, and the participants responded to each. Scale 1 The NGSES has 8 statements.

To gather the data, the instruments were bundled into a single questionnaire that also contained the consent form and questions to extract demographic data. Printouts of the questionnaire were used to gather data directly from volunteer organizations in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek), as well as from the volunteer team at Mount Sinabung, Sumatra Utara. The authors made a digital version of the questionnaire as well and posted it online, following up with promotion on social media, inviting everyone eligible to complete it. The online version was completed by 1524 participants, and data on 430 more were obtained from offline data gathering.

B. Data Gathering and Analysis Method

The relationship between volunteering motivation and generalized self-efficacy was obtained through analysis using a partial correlation method, which was also used because the volunteer motivation variable includes by six kinds of motivations. Descriptive analysis was also conducted to investigate the demographics of the participants.

Results and Discussion

The descriptive analysis of the data indicates that the participants in the study were from various regions in Indonesia and were 18–29 years old. The demographic data indicate that the population was not evenly distributed. Most participants were women, aged 18–21 years, with high school or vocational school education, and living in Java.

Table I. Demographic Data

Variables	Categories	n	%
Sex	Male	672	34,3%
	Female	1280	65,6%
	Others	2	0.1%
Education	High school incomplete	10	0.5%
	Completed high school	1248	63,9%
	Associates or university degree	696	35.7%
Age	18–21	1077	55.1%
	22–26	795	40.7%
	27–28	82	4.2%
Residence	Within Java	1789	91.5%
	Outside Java	165	8.5%

In addition to the demographic variables, we collected participants' experience in volunteering. The majority of the participants had been doing their most recent volunteering for 1–12 months, 1–9 hours a week, and had been involved in 1–3 volunteer organizations before the last volunteering they had done.

Partial correlation is used to show the relationship between volunteering motivation and generalized self-efficacy (Table I). Each of the six dimensions of volunteering motivation correlates differently with generalized self-efficacy, as shown in Table II.

Table II. Correlation Results

Motives	Generalized self-efficacy (r)	Significance	r ²
Protective motive	-0.01	0.6	0.0001
Values	0.12 *	0.00 *	0.0144
Career	0.05 *	0.02 *	0.0025
Social	0.04	0.08	0.0016
Understanding	0.15 *	0.00 *	0.022
Enhancement	0.06	0.05	0.0036

*. Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table II shows a negative correlation between the protective motive and generalized self-efficacy ($r = -0.01$, $p < 0.05$), a significant positive correlation between the values motive and generalized self-efficacy ($r = 0.01$, $p < 0.05$), a significant positive correlation between the understanding motive and generalized self-efficacy ($r = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$), a positive correlation

between the career motive and generalized self-efficacy ($r = 0.05$, $p < 0.05$), a positive correlation between the social motive and generalized self-efficacy ($r = 0.04$, $p < 0.05$), and a positive correlation between the enhancement motive and generalized self-efficacy ($r = 0.06$, $p < 0.05$).

The data analysis indicated that the protective motive has a negative correlation with generalized self-efficacy, while other dimensions of volunteering motivation correlate positively. The career and understanding motives, among these, correlate significantly. These results contradict the finding in a study by Stukas et al. (2014) among Australian volunteers with a broader age range, where the career and protective motives were negatively associated with generalized self-efficacy, while the other motivations correlated positively.

The positive correlation between career motives and generalized self-efficacy in this study suggested that where individuals decide to volunteer mainly to support or develop a career, those individuals also had high generalized self-efficacy. This correlation is possibly linked to the demography of this study. Emerging adults need to explore worlds unfamiliar to them, including the world of work and career (Arnett, 2000). This particular demographic characteristic may cause this result and its difference from that of Stukas et al. (2014). The volunteering world may be a world that must be explored in advance by an individual to support career ambitions, so it may drive individuals who are motivated to do volunteering. Individuals are convinced that they can volunteer and support their careers through such volunteering.

The understanding motive had the highest correlation in the coefficient index ($r = 0.15$), and the correlation was significant. This means that an individual with a high understanding motive who pursues volunteering has high generalized self-efficacy. If this is compared with the finding on the understanding motive by Clary et al. (1998), the understanding motive encourages people to volunteer to acquire knowledge and practice previously acquired knowledge. The understanding motives also includes the desire to gain knowledge. Knowledge of a new subject can be used to help gain mastery experiences that enhance self-efficacy. This explains the significant positive relationship found between understanding and generalized self-efficacy.

Conclusions and Suggestions

In conclusion, our findings show that the six dimensions of volunteering motivation correlate differently with generalized self-efficacy, according to the nature of the motives. In support of previous research, it was found that the protective motive correlates negatively in volunteering with generalized self-efficacy, while the other five dimensions positively correlate. This study also found the novel finding that career motives correlate significantly with generalized self-efficacy among emerging adult volunteers, likely because emerging adults are considering how to pursue a career. A follow-up study that was more sufficiently enhanced and would examine the relationship between the career motive in volunteering and generalized self-efficacy might be needed for deeper understanding on this point.

Suggestions

Generalized self-efficacy in the context of volunteerism is a fairly rare topic in discussion, so it would be interesting to explore further. Subsequent research can additionally explore the generalized self-efficacy of volunteers by taking account of their duration of volunteering and their degree of activity in volunteering organizations. The participant's central occupation, whether that person works full time or volunteers full time could also be considered. The particular field in which their volunteering, is undertaken, such education, health, or the environment could also be considered. For richer data, qualitative or longitudinal studies may also be conducted.

The relationship between generalized self-efficacy and volunteering motivation could be pursued in future research that could lead to deeper understanding of the dynamics between these two variables.

Added Value

This study could be used as a basis for volunteer intervention programs. Because volunteering tasks may be demanding, volunteers require high levels of self-efficacy. Lower levels of generalized self-efficacy could lead to burnout and an increased turnover rate. Through knowledge of volunteer motivations and needs, organizations could set up suitable training programs for their volunteers. Suitable training and human resources development programs that accommodate volunteers' needs could raise or maintain levels of generalized self-efficacy among volunteers and minimize burnout.

Acknowledgement

We thank Pusat Krisis Fakultas Psikologi (Crisis Center, Faculty of Psychology) Universitas Indonesia for making this research possible through their funding, Tim Relawan Erupsi Sinabung Pusat Krisis Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Indonesia Sinabung (Crisis Center's Volunteers Team for Mount Sinabung Eruption) for help in data gathering in Sinabung, North Sumatra, and all the participants along with everyone who directly or indirectly aided this study.

References

- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469.
- Arnett, J. J., Žukauskienė, R., & Sugimura, K. (2014). The new life stage of emerging adulthood at ages 18–29 years: Implications for mental health. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 1(7), 569-576.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191.
- Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press.
- Belgard, S. (2014). *Why volunteer?: Perspectives from College Students*. (Doctoral's dissertation). Department of Family and Consumer Studies, University of Utah, United States of America.

- Chen, G., Gully, S. M., & Eden, D. (2001). Validation of a new general self-efficacy scale. *Organizational Research Methods*, 4(1), 62-83.
- Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., & Miene, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1516.
- Country Profile - Indonesia. Un.org. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/esa/earthsummit/indon-cp.htm>
- Indorelawan.org. Retrieved from <https://indorelawan.org/>
- Nino, F. Sustainable development goals-United Nations. *United Nations Sustainable Development*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>
- Penner, L. A. (2002). Dispositional and organizational influences on sustained volunteerism: An interactionist perspective. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(3), 447-467.
- Scanlon, M. & Alawiyah, T. (n.d). *NSSC PUBLICATION-Research Series #1: The NGO Sector in Indonesia: Context, Concepts and an Updated Profile*, by Megan McGlynn Scanlon and Tuti Alawiyah. Ksi-indonesia.org. Retrieved from <http://www.ksi-indonesia.org/en/news/detail/nssc-publication---research-series-1-the-ngo-sector-in-indonesia-context-concepts-and-an-updated-profile-by-megan-mcglynn-scanlon-and-tuti-alawiyah>
- Scherbaum, C. A., Cohen-Charash, Y., & Kern, M. J. (2006). Measuring general self-efficacy: A comparison of three measures using item response theory. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(6), 1047-1063.
- Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (2008). Volunteerism: Social issues perspectives and social policy implications. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 2(1), 1-36.
- Survei Relawan Indonesia. (2016). *Indonesian Volunteering Hub*. Retrieved from <http://ivh.or.id/survei-relawan-indonesia/>
- Stukas, A. A., Hoye, R., Nicholson, M., Brown, K. M., & Aisbett, L. (2016). Motivations to volunteer and their associations with volunteers' well-being. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 45(1), 112-132.
- Volunteerism and the Global Goals | UNV. (2017). Unv.org. Retrieved from <https://www.unv.org/volunteerism/volunteerism-and-global-goals>
- Wijaya, A. (2013). *Di Tempat Ini, Kemampuan Relawan PMI Diasah*. Retrieved from <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/490698/di-tempat-ini-kemampuan-relawan-pmi-diasah>
- Yadessa, T. (2015). *Motivational factors among volunteers: The case of rotaract clubs in Addis Ababa*. (Thesis). Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa