




# Factors that Contribute to Youth Participation in Volunteering Activities in Sungai Petani

Nurul Najihah Adnan, Siti Fatimah Mohamad Shuhaimi, and Adnan Aminuddin<sup>(✉)</sup> 

Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah,  
08400 Merbok, Kedah, Malaysia  
adnan708@uitm.edu.my

**Abstract.** Volunteering becomes one of the most effective approaches to engaging the youth and supporting their concentration on community activities while fostering their development as grassroots leaders. This study aimed to determine how the youth can be motivated to join volunteering activities by identifying the factors that contribute to the youth's participation in volunteering activities in Sungai Petani, Kedah. This study included 150 youths ranging in age from 15 to 39 years old as respondents. The quantitative method was applied by distributing questionnaires. Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were implemented while conducting this research. Multiple regression and correlation coefficients were both employed to respond to the study questions. The correlation coefficient determines the strength and direction of the association between attitudes, career enhancement, and religious beliefs towards youth volunteering. Meanwhile, multiple regression was applied to identify the most significant factors influencing youths' involvement in volunteer activities. Based on the research findings, there is a strong correlation between youth volunteering and career enhancement, attitude, and religious belief. According to the findings, attitudes are the most influential factor in youth volunteering activities. To summarize, as the nation's future generation, youth are the most essential human resource for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and numerous of these organizations rely on volunteers to play a crucial role in developing a better society. The findings can assist relevant parties, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in reviewing the information and findings of the study when establishing strategies to involve more potential young volunteers

**Keywords:** Attitude · Career Enhancement · Religious Belief · Volunteering Activities · Youth

## 1 Introduction

Volunteering serves as a vital platform for developing and shaping youth's values for all aspects of human development. From a global perspective, volunteerism is a non-obligatory activity that benefits individuals, organizations, or society as a whole and is not financially compensated [1]. On the other hand, volunteering also helps an individual acquire a wide range of abilities through volunteer roles, and these skills can be used

to enhance the quality of life within and around society [2]. Therefore, volunteerism had been defined as an altruistic action that seeks to improve the quality of human lives through the contribution of time or skills by a group of individuals without financial or material gain [3]. Indirectly, volunteering is also intended to guarantee that youth can gain experience, build relationships, increase their professional knowledge, and provides them with an opportunity to test themselves [1]. This is because the volunteering activities will enable them to confront new challenges, interact with and meet people with diverse lifestyles, and manage wide and varied experiences and viewpoints within the organization. Thus, it will facilitate youth to approach useful experiences through the challenges they faced from a broad range of viewpoints.

In the context of ASEAN, specifically Malaysia, volunteering is a productive learning process that includes the participation of manpower and intellectual assistance to society and humanities projects [4]. Volunteers can go behind the scenes, participate in events, establish networking, and contribute to society [5]. In addition, youth participation in volunteer work will have a positive impact towards them as they discover new skills, abilities, and human values in every activity involved [4]. Consequently, youth volunteerism is crucial because it enables students to strike a balance between educational excellence and outstanding character formation requirements in developing first-class students [6].

However, youth are not motivated to volunteer, demonstrating that awareness towards volunteering activities among the youth community is still underwhelming [7]. A statistic revealed only 27.1% of Malaysian youths were involved in volunteer activities [8]. Furthermore, involvement in volunteerism has recently been reported to be declining, especially among university students in Malaysia [6]. Declining youth participation in volunteer activities is a worldwide issue that takes place not simply in Malaysia but also across other developed and developing countries. However, the drop in youth participation in volunteerism should not occur, as the university has executed multiple strategies to stimulate student participation in volunteer activities [6]. Furthermore, university students also can be considered a large group of youth in Malaysia. Therefore, the study intended to explore the factors that contribute to youth participation in volunteering activities. Thus, improvement can be made in the efforts of encouraging youth to be involved in volunteering activities.

## **2 A Review on Factors that Contribute to Youth Participation in Volunteering Activities**

### **2.1 Career Enhancement**

Volunteering activities can provide a personal benefit that may encourage young people to participate in volunteer activities by resulting in enhanced career development. Additionally, volunteering gives adolescents the chance to get experience in a new profession to get a job in the organization where they volunteer in the future, learn new information and skills, receive recommendations for employment, to determine whether the field in which they are volunteering is a good fit for them, to meet people who may be beneficial to their careers, and to be appreciated at their future work because they volunteered [9].

It is supported by the findings demonstrated that youth volunteers had a strong desire for volunteerism because they wanted to get more experience handling events, especially when the event work was aligned with their potential career goals [10]. Moreover, a career is linked to students' desire to gain work experience and improve their resumes by volunteering [11]. This is because students can meet individuals directly associated with the firm by participating in volunteer activities. The more people they meet, the more likely they will be able to get more job opportunities in the future for their career enhancement.

## **2.2 Attitude**

Youths' intention to continue volunteering will be influenced by their attitude toward volunteering activities [12]. The study's findings showed that purposeful motives are an important determinant of voluntary attitudes. Those who want to help make events a success and contribute to society demonstrate that youth with a positive attitude toward volunteering are motivated by a higher purpose. In the context of Malaysia, youth who have been active in volunteer activities from an early age are known to have a more open attitude toward alleviating and improving the conditions around them in the Malaysian community's engagement in charitable endeavors [13]. It is in parallel with a study that discovered the altruism element will influence the attitude of volunteers to engage in volunteering activities [7]. Altruism is the act of helping others without expecting anything in return out of concern for society.

## **2.3 Religious Belief**

Religious students were encouraged to take part in volunteer work for altruistic reasons of being helpful to society and doing something for others [14]. Besides that, every religious belief and value had become a driver to infuse humanistic values towards boosting the youth's motivation to do volunteer work [15]. This is demonstrated by the Christian belief that people are obligated to aid and assist those in need, which pushes most volunteers to participate in volunteer activities [16]. In fact, in the context of Malaysian studies, religiosity had a beneficial and significant impact on Malaysian Muslim students that motivates them to volunteer [17]. As religious believers, they should revive their spirit in volunteerism by reflecting on the religious ideals that underpin volunteerism. However, it is contradicted by research which found religion is not included as a significant factor contributing towards volunteerism among youth [18].

## **3 Methodology**

Researchers adopted a quantitative design approach, which is a cross-sectional study, in examining the relationship between youth's participation in volunteer activities and other independent variables. The survey was distributed via self-administered questionnaires Google survey forms, and social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram. Researchers have applied Roscoe's Rule of Thumb [19], which stated that the sample size that can be used is between 30 to 500. Thus, the sample size used in this study was

150 youth from Sungai Petani, Kedah. Researchers applied purposive and convenience sampling techniques towards the respondents between the age of 15 and 39 who live in Sungai Petani.

In addition, descriptive statistics, correlation and multiple regression analysis were applied by the researcher in this study. Research objective 1 used descriptive analysis to show the total average mean score for youth participation in volunteering activities in Sungai Petani. Meanwhile, correlation coefficients were utilized in research objectives 2, 3, and 4 to indicate the relationship between independent variables (attitude, career enhancement, and religious belief) toward the dependent variable (youth participation in volunteering activities). Moreover, multiple regression may assist in determining the most influential factors influencing youth participation in volunteer activities (research objective 5).

## 4 Findings

### 4.1 Profile of Respondents

Table 1 indicates that the majority of respondents were female (64.7%) and the remaining were male (35.3%). Most of the respondents were between the age of 20 and 24 (74.7%), followed by other age categories (Table 1). In terms of ethnicity, Malay responded the most in the questionnaires (90.7%) followed by Chinese (4.7%), Indian (4.0%), and lastly, Other which consists of Bumiputera Sabah (0.7%). Furthermore, most respondents were Islam (90.7%). Hinduism and Buddhism both recorded a similar percentage (4%). It was followed by the Christian respondents (1.3%). For the level of education, most of the respondents graduated with a Degree (64.7%), followed by Diploma (18.0%), and SPM (13.3%) and the least were PT3 and Certificate (2.0%).

### 4.2 Measure of Goodness

Reliability is a crucial part of conducting a study to identify the quality of the questionnaire. It can be measured through Cronbach's alpha value. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient range between 0 and 1 [20]. For Cronbach statistic, the perfect value in reliability is 1, 0.90–0.99 considered excellent, 0.80–0.89 as good, 0.70–0.79 as acceptable, 0.60–0.69 as questionable, 0.50–0.59 as poor, and 0.00–0.49 as unacceptable. Based on Table 2, Cronbach's alpha for youth volunteering (0.833), career enhancement (0.852), attitude (0.846) and religious belief (0.864) was above 0.7, thus all variables are considered as good and reliable.

### 4.3 Descriptive Analysis

In measuring the extent of youth participation in volunteering activities in Sungai Petani, the Likert scale was used to determine the mean value. Table 3 indicates that the highest mean value recorded was 3.77 while the least mean value was 3.20. According to [21], mean values 1–3 are considered as low, 3–4 are considered average, and 4–5 are considered as high extent. Therefore, the value for the average mean score for the youth

**Table 1.** Demographic (n; 150).

Profile	Number of Respondents	Frequency (%)
<b>Gender</b>	53	35.3
Male	97	64.7
Female		
<b>Age</b>	20	13.3
15 - 19	112	74.7
20 - 24	7	4.7
25 - 29	5	3.3
30 - 34	6	4.0
35 - 39		
<b>Ethnicity</b>	136	90.7
Malay	7	4.7
Chinese	6	4.0
Indian	1	0.7
Others		
<b>Religion</b>	136	90.7
Islam	2	1.3
Christianity	6	4.0
Hindu	6	4.0
Buddhism		
<b>Level of Education</b>	3	2.0
PT3	20	13.3
SPM	3	2.0
Certificate	27	18.0
Diploma	97	64.7
Degree		

**Table 2.** Reliability Analysis (n; 150).

Variables	No of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Youth Volunteering	5	0.833	Reliable
Career enhancement	6	0.852	Reliable
Attitude	5	0.846	Reliable
Religious belief	6	0.864	Reliable

participation in volunteering activities in Sungai Petani is 3.56. These results show that youth in Sungai Petani has average participation in volunteering activities as depicted in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Mean Score Result (n = 150).

Dependent Variables	Mean
I believe I can gain new knowledge	3.77
I believe youth participation important for society	3.74
I realize volunteering can boost confidence	3.70
I love being a volunteer	3.40
I will always take the opportunity to volunteer	3.20
Average mean score	3.56

**Table 4.** Pearson Correlation (n = 150).

Relationship between variables	Pearson Correlation (r-value)	Sig. 2-tailed (p-value)	Relationship
Youth Volunteering & Career Enhancement	0.610	0.000	Moderate positive
Youth Volunteering & Attitude	0.674	0.000	Moderate positive
Youth Volunteering & Religious Belief	0.519	0.000	Moderate positive

#### 4.4 Correlational Analysis

In measuring the strength of correlation, Guilford Rules of Thumb [22] outlines the value of 0.90 to 1.00 has a very strong relationship, 0.70 to 0.89 strong relationship, 0.40 to 0.69 moderate relationship, 0.20 to 0.39 weak relationship, and very weak relationship is 0.00 until 0.19 (Table 4).

#### 4.5 Regression Analysis

Table 5 demonstrates attitude has the strongest influence towards youth participation in volunteering activities. It is because the p-value of attitude is 0.000, and  $p < 0.05$  indicates that attitude is a significant value. In addition, the standardized beta value of attitude ( $\beta = 0.454$ ) is greater than career enhancement and religious belief, which demonstrates that attitude is the most significant influence towards youth participation in volunteering activities.

**Table 5.** Regression Correlation (n = 150).

Variables	Beta (Standardize)
Career Enhancement	0.293
Attitude	0.454
Religious belief	0.065
$R^2$	0.519
$F$ -value	52.478
Sig	0.000
Durbin Watson	1.760

## 5 Discussion

Despite the claim of low Malaysian youth volunteering participation [6], the study found that the average level of youth volunteering in Sungai Petani 3.56 falls between 3 and 4. This finding demonstrates that youth who are exposed to volunteering has a diverse set of skills and interests that will enable them to make a significant contribution. As a result, each of the youth has different motivators for participating in volunteer activities because these activities require commitment, time, and energy to help those in need. Furthermore, the high level of youth participation in volunteering activities correlates with the age group of respondents' demographic profile. It was discovered that respondents were divided into five age groups: 15–19, 20–24, 25–29, 30–34, and 35–39. According to the results, 74.7% of respondents are between the ages of 20 and 24. At this age, the youth tend to be exposed to volunteering activities in their academic institution as most of the respondents in this age group are degree students. Hence, the finding, showed that most of the youth are attracted to participate in volunteerism.

A study indicated a link between career enhancement and volunteering participation [5]. It primarily focused on the individual benefits to enhance their career development. It allows them to add relevant professional experience to their resumes. This statement is in line with the statement that indicated youth motivation for volunteering could be related to value-added towards career [4]. The findings were aligned with the scholars' perspectives, indicating that there is a relationship between career enhancement and youth volunteering. Furthermore, 80% of respondents strongly agreed that career enhancement can be achieved by soft skills possessed by ones. Based on the findings, it was determined that youth participation in volunteer activities facilitates the development and acquisition of new skills that can be applied to career advancement. In addition, the respondent is expected to take part in co-curricular courses as one of the prerequisites to strengthen the respondent's interest in volunteerism via uniform bodies such as KESATRIA, PALAPES, SUKSIS, and SISPA at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). Through these co-curricular courses, respondents have been exposed to numerous opportunities to interact with the public, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which can be used to improve communication skills and network for career advancement.

The attitude of student volunteers contributed to the motivations and intentions to continuously involve in volunteering activities [12]. This can be seen through the determination of attitude towards volunteering in the research had indirectly mediated the relationship between the volunteer motivations and intentions among university student volunteers at a special event. Hence, the attitude of student volunteers towards volunteerism can motivate them to actively participate in volunteering. On another hand, the finding of this research also can be supported by a past study which emphasized that attitude and youth intention to volunteer to have a significant relationship ( $r = 0.714$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) [3]. The research concluded that the higher the attitude is portrayed, the more the intention of youth to volunteer. Therefore, it is proven that the finding of this study was relevant to the scholars' opinions where the attitude of youth can influence their participation in volunteering activities. From the result obtained, it illustrated that 77.3% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement "I can adopt positive behaviour." Most of the respondents believe that a good attitude can be embedded in oneself that can influence them to involve in volunteering activities.

Religion significantly inspires young people to volunteer. In a study of 50 Muslim young people aged 19 to 23 years old at a Malaysian public university, most respondents agreed that volunteerism and religion are strongly linked, and most of them are familiar with volunteer work. The following viewpoint is supported by a study [18] to see how religious beliefs influence Chinese college students' charitable donations. The finding conducted by the author shows that religious beliefs eventually prove to have a positive impact on charitable giving among mainland Chinese college students. In addition, religious faith is claimed as a strong motivator for most volunteers, who are motivated to help others in need because of their beliefs due to Christian belief [16]. The Christian belief is about the people expected to help and support those in need, which drives most volunteers to participate in volunteer activities. This implies that the majority of youth believe that their religion can guide them to contribute their commitment to society, for example by participating in volunteering activities. Thus, based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that the relationship between religious belief and youth participation in volunteering activities has been accepted.

Attitude is found to have the greatest impact as the most influential factor towards youth participation in volunteering activities in Sungai Petani. A study found a direct positive and significant effect of attitude on volunteering intention [3]. The result showed that attitude has a high influence over the intention to volunteer. This can relate to the findings of a past study which highlighted that most of the respondents were involved in volunteerism because of their altruistic attitude [7]. Hence, the findings of this research supported that the attitude of the youth is a significant element in influencing their participation in volunteerism. In addition, there were various programs implemented by government and non-government agencies in Sungai Petani which turn to be the push factor among Sungai Petani residents, especially youth. Therefore, it demonstrates that attitude has a big impact on the involvement of youth in volunteerism.



## 6 Recommendations

Several recommendations can be implemented to enhance future research. The adoption of conventional data collection techniques as a frequently used traditional approach can be implemented. Direct questionnaires are the most appropriate conventional data collection technique that can be employed. Before handing out questionnaires, the researcher will greet respondents and briefly explain the researcher's purpose. The researcher will wait for the respondents to complete the surveys [23]. Implementing this approach in future studies will make data collection more convenient because it will be able to reach the more targeted respondent, who will be able to answer the question honestly. Moreover, the target respondent for future research can be enlarged to get more data from youth about volunteering activities. Youth as a respondent can be increased above 150 respondents to ensure the finding of the research can represent the youth in Sungai Petani as a whole. Hence, the result of the findings will be more accurate since the researcher can reach large numbers of youth in the research area.

## 7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study found that attitude is the main contributor to youth participation in volunteering activities. Despite that, other factors also have a significant impact to influence youth involvement in volunteerism. A lot of benefits can be gained by youth through active participation in volunteering activities. For that reason, many efforts from various parties including the government and non-governmental organizations have been conducted to encourage a lot of participation from youths in volunteering activities. It is vital to nature the volunteerism spirit with the high number of active participations from youth in volunteering activities in Malaysia since many positive impacts of volunteering are shown clearly. The establishment of Yayasan Sukarelawan Siswa (YSS), Majlis Sukarelawan Universiti Malaysia (MASKUM), Federation of Peninsular Malay Students 4 Association (GPMS), Malaysian Association of Youth Clubs (MAYC), and Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) can become the institutions that will play the vital role to enhance the volunteerism spirit among the youth. It also will involve the government and non-governmental organizations to cooperate in increasing the awareness of voluntary activity. Cooperation from all parties is required to guarantee that obstacles faced by youth can be reduced. This is essential to stimulate participation in volunteer activities and to inculcate volunteerism among students.

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