

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275886573>

The Volunteer Functions Inventory: Examination of Dimension, Scale Reliability and Correlates

Article · April 2015

CITATIONS

0

READS

563

1 author:



[Hanan M. Asghar](#)

Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich

15 PUBLICATIONS 2 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

All content following this page was uploaded by [Hanan M. Asghar](#) on 05 May 2015.

The user has requested enhancement of the downloaded file. All in-text references [underlined in blue](#) are added to the original document and are linked to publications on ResearchGate, letting you access and read them immediately.



ISSN 2348 - 0319

Journal home page: <http://www.journalijar.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF INNOVATIVE AND
APPLIED RESEARCH

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Volunteer Functions Inventory: Examination of Dimension, Scale Reliability and Correlates

Hanan Asghar

Department of Psychology, Effat University

.....

Abstract:

Understanding volunteers' motivation has been identified as a key component for managing volunteers in charitable and non-profit organizations. The goal of the present study is to (a) find out the correlation between various motivating factors like values, understanding, enhancement, career, social and protective, measured by VFI, with volunteering behavior in Saudi cultural context and, (b) evaluate the psychometric properties of Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). The sample comprised of 155 registered volunteers working for different Saudi based NGOs and NPOs. The statistical techniques like Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Stepwise Multiple Regression analysis (MR) were used to analyze the data. The results of multiple regression indicated that the six factors (values, career, social, understanding, protection, enhancements) assessed by VFI are significant predictor variables for the criterion variable (volunteers' motivation) in the model ($p < .005$). Exploratory factor analysis proposed a four factor solution, with social as the only construct whose items loaded on its respective factor. The results of this study can be utilized for designing training manuals for volunteer organizations. The findings may also pave a way for future research on volunteerism specifically in Saudi Arabian cultural context as the results suggest a deeper investigation into understanding underlying factors that drive volunteers' motivation.

Key Words: functional theory, volunteers' motivation, psychometric properties, VFI

.....

Over the past couple of years, volunteerism has picked up in Saudi Arabia because of the government's initiative to offer social services with an aim to provide financial support to stabilize economic disparities among its citizens through charitable organizations. For the year 2011 National Budget, Saudi Government spent \$18.32 billion (SR.68.7 billion) i.e., 11.2% of the total budget on health and social affairs (USSABC, 2012). To encourage a culture of volunteerism across the Kingdom, the Saudi Government has taken actions to promote volunteer work and is emphasizing on the need to streamline voluntary activities. (Ghamdi, 2009). Numerous organizations such as The Society of Majid bin Abdulaziz, Young Initiative Group, Injaz-Saudi, Ghayer Hayatk (Change Your Life), and Arab Thought Foundation have to heavily rely on volunteers' engagement in order to attain sustainable development for all sects of society. They encourage and empower youth so that they can take a lead and reach out to the people in need. However, these NPOs and NGOs face challenge of recruiting committed volunteers who can assist in providing a sustainable societal growth. Like many areas of inquiry, the extent to which these practices may affect NPOs and NGOs has not attracted much research specifically in the socio-cultural context of Saudi Arabia. Thus, there is a need to understand volunteers' motives because it will assist organizations in enhancing the volunteer experience through recruiting, placing, and retaining volunteers at right place. It will bring new insights on strengthening volunteers' commitment and participation and will unfold the dynamics behind volunteerism besides serving as a milestone towards designing a training manual for volunteers.

Research on Volunteer Motives

The field of volunteerism has been dominated by concrete evidence on a range of commonly accepted motives which include altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others (e.g., Okun & Schultz, 2003, Penner & Finkelstein, 1998; Toi & Batson, 1982), the willingness to offer help (Cnnan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Levental, 2009), the need to satisfy ones' own self (e.g., Lafer, 1989; Latting, 1990; Pierucci & Noel, 1980; Tapp & Spanier, 1973), and commitment towards the organization, that rely on organizational support (Bozeman & Ellemer, 2008; Brickman, 1987).

A growing body of research indicates that there may not be a simple answer to the question of what motivates a person to volunteer. Is it the egoistic (self-welfare) and altruistic nature that ignites a “voluntary” spark to volunteer? (e.g., Batson, 1991; Levental, 2009, Penner & Fritzsche, 1993). Or are there any external factors such as appreciation, rewards, or organization’s reputation that contributes to volunteers’ motivation? (e.g., Boezman & Ellemer, 2008; Frisch & Gerrard, 1981; Latting, 1990; Martinez & McMullin, 2004). But, research on volunteerism has always been dominated by the factors that drive volunteers because uncovering motivational factors underlying volunteerism assists in planning, recruiting and managing volunteers for volunteer activities. Consequently, in line with the aim of the present study, the researcher examined the volunteer behavior in Saudi based NPOs and NGOs to assist them in recruiting potential volunteers for sustained voluntary activities.

Functional Approach to Volunteers’ Motivation

One of the consistent models that assesses motivational functions underlying volunteer activity and has provided most of the available evidence on the factors that affect volunteers’ motivation is the Functional Motivation Theory developed by Gil Clary and Mark Snyder (1991). The functional approach to motivation proposes that individuals’ personal and social goals can be understood by emphasizing underlying psychological functions that stem from his attitudes and perceptions. The significant implication of functional approach is that, individuals can be persuaded to offer volunteer services by attracting them to relevant psychological factors (Yoshioka et al., 2007). It relies on the premise that the phenomenon of volunteerism can be analyzed in terms of disparity in the motives that are contented, the requirements that are met, and the objectives that are reached which shoot from individual’s persuasion and attitude (Stukas et. al., 2006). In lieu of this conjecture, [Clary et. al \(1998\)](#) theorized that the answer to the complex question of what motivates an individual to volunteer could be unveiled by understanding the processes in the domains of attitudes and persuasion, social cognition, social relationships and personality. Thus, following an analytical review of existing literature and conducting a series of empirical testing, [Clary et al. \(1998\)](#) designed an instrument, i.e., Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) with six motivational functions in order to assess volunteers’ motivation. The six functions and their description with regard to volunteer behavior (motivation) are provided in Table 1

Table 1: *Six Functions Served by Functional Theory of Volunteer’s Motivation (Clary et al., 1998)*

Volunteering Function	Description
Values	Seek opportunities that require actions related to altruism and humanitarian concerns for others
Understanding	Gain experience to acquire new skills and utilize them in real world settings
Social	Strengthen social relationships
Enhancement	Interest towards psychological growth for a boosted self esteem
Career	Gain career related experience for professional development
Protection	Overcome negative feelings and escape personal problems

The functional theory provided a practical framework that can be applied to recruit potential volunteers. This theory has a strong empirical support and is used by researchers all over the world who are interested in studying volunteer behavior. Due to its practical implications, the functional motivation theory has been utilized by researchers as a framework for understanding the underlying factors that affect volunteer motivation (Wijdada, 2010).

One of the conjectures of a functional approach to volunteerism assumes that people offer volunteer services in order to gratify their personal goals because they are purposeful, planners, and goal directed ([Clary et. al, 1998](#)). The importance of fulfilling volunteer motivations can be explained by the Volunteer Process Model (VPM) developed by [Omoto and Snyder \(2009\)](#). According to VPM, volunteerism is associated with interrelated psychological and behavioral attributes which unfold over time and serve in sustained voluntary actions. Therefore, in order to relieve the complexity of volunteer motivation issues, VPM identified three sequential and interactive

stages for volunteerism which contribute to effective management of volunteer service. The first stage, namely the antecedent stage identifies personality traits that drive people towards offering a volunteer service which leads towards exploration of psychological and behavioral features of interpersonal relationships which guides the second stage of VPM i.e., experiences stage. The third stage, namely consequences stage places emphasis on the impact of voluntary action on the knowledge, attitude, perception and behavior at both personal and interpersonal levels. Thus, engaging in volunteer activities offers a wide range of opportunities from personal to professional arenas that leave an everlasting impact on the lives of volunteers and societies in the long run.

In an attempt to identify the role of volunteers' motives towards volunteer activities and satisfaction, Finkelstein (2008) found that low motivation was associated with the length of volunteer service and suggested that the motives behind the volunteer service should be identified prior to volunteers' engagement in volunteer activities. Omoto and Snyder's research is frequently referenced in other literature, has social congruence, is well received among researchers across various disciplines, and has been validated in other studies (Fuentes & Jimenez, 2000).

Furthermore, satisfaction, training, development and perceived external or internal benefits are considered as contributing factors towards volunteering services (Trachtenberg, 2006). This suggests the importance of determining motivating factors with regard to volunteer behavior so that volunteers get appropriately placed in the right place; "a person-situation fit" as proposed by Clary et al. (1998) which allows volunteers to satisfy their needs because their motives get matched with the assigned task.

To test the applicability of the job characteristics model of voluntary behavior, Gagnie and Valerie (2008) conducted a field study to examine the impact of job characteristics on volunteer motivation, satisfaction and intention to quit. The findings of the study suggested that, in order to attain positive outcomes, volunteer's tasks or jobs should be designed in such a way that they foster intrinsic motivation because by doing so, volunteers get satisfied with contextual aspects of their work. From this research, it seems clear that volunteers engage in volunteer activities to satisfy their needs.

In another study with 112 participants Houle et al. (2005) found that volunteers prefer tasks with benefits that match their personality related motives, i.e., people idiosyncratically differentiate tasks on the basis of the motives that ought to be satisfied. Thus, from an applied perspective, it is important to learn about the particular factors that drive volunteers because they are attributed to active involvement in volunteer tasks.

Clary and Snyder's functional approach model utilizing the Volunteer Function Inventory has applicability to multiple disciplines and a wide variety of diverse forms (universities, children's services, healthcare, disaster relief, and online panels) of volunteering. It has been used to assess volunteers' motivation in different cultural contexts and has a high reliability and validity. The functional approach identifies the motivational foundation of actions that lead to developing valid and reliable instruments to assess volunteers' motivation. Table 2 provides a summary of studies utilizing VFI and reliability evidence with regards to volunteer behavior in different contexts.

Table 2: Summary of Studies on VFI in Various Contexts

Study	Sample	Overall Reliability (α)	Subscale Reliability (α)		
Greenslade & White (2005)	141 volunteers from a welfare organization	.89	CAR	.93	
			SOC	.91	
			ENH	.89	
			PRO	.84	
			UND	.86	
			VAL	.90	
Okun et al. (1998)	372 RSVP and 409 hospice volunteers	.92 and .93	CAR	.88	.84
			SOC	.83	.80
			ENH	.83	.83
			PRO	.79	.83

			UND	.82	.83
			VAL	.84	.81
Philips & Philips (2012)	328 volunteers from an NPO	.85	CAR	.88	
			SOC	.81	
			ENH	.85	
			PRO	.82	
			UND	.87	
			VAL	.85	
Trogdon (2005)	291 members from parks and recreation citizen board members	.82	CAR	.82	
			SOC	.83	
			ENH	.82	
			PRO	.83	
			UND	.80	
			VAL	.83	
Vocino & Polonsky (2011)	314 online panelists	.92	CAR	.94	
			SOC	.91	
			ENH	.93	
			PRO	.91	
			UND	.91	
			VAL	.89	
Wu et al. (2009)	279 UG student volunteers from a university	.81	CAR	.82	
			SOC	.91	
			ENH	.73	
			PRO	.70	
			UND	.83	
			VAL	.86	

Note. RSVP= Retired and Senior Volunteer Program; CAR= career; SOC= social; ENH= enhancement; PRO= protection; UND= understanding; VAL= values

Indeed, a couple of prior studies (eg., [Bang & Ross, 2009](#); [Okun et al., 1998](#); [Philips & Philips, 2010](#);) have provided evidence for the intact early identification of volunteers' motives with volunteering through the use of Volunteers Functions Inventory (VFI). Therefore, volunteer recruitment, retention, and satisfaction are tied to volunteer's experience with regards to the fulfillment of underlying motives behind volunteer activity which can be assessed by VFI. The practical implications of functional approach at organizational level include improvement in recruitment efforts and reduction of volunteers' turnover rate by identifying their motives behind volunteering. [Widjaja \(2010\)](#) proposed that organizations should utilize the VFI to determine the motivations of their volunteers and attempt to match the type of roles they fill with their personal motivations. Also, it can assist organizations to

promote the ongoing nature of volunteering (Clary et. al, 1998).

As it is evident from the studies that constitute literature review for the undertaken research, most of the studies utilizing VFI have been conducted in Western cultures. Since, the researcher has not find any study that assessed volunteers' motivation in the specific socio cultural milieu of Saudi Arabia, the researcher examined the motivating factors behind volunteerism through VFI and evaluated its psychometric properties to identify a probable factor structure with regards to the volunteer behavior. It will assist organizations in recruiting volunteers for prolonged volunteer activities and allow them to utilize the results for designing volunteer training manuals. The research will contribute to the functional approach of volunteerism and will provide evidence for the adaptation of VFI scale in the near future.

Methodology

Overview

The researcher used convenience sampling technique and followed quantitative approach to analyze data. The Volunteer Functions Inventory Scale developed by Clary et. al (1998) was used to assess volunteers' motivation with regards to volunteer behavior in Saudi Arabian cultural context.

Participants

The participants of the study were adults who had served as volunteers in Saudi based NPOs or NGOs. The sample comprised of 155 participants (24 men, 131 women, M= 24.3 years, SD= 7.8, R= 46) who were requested to respond to an online Volunteer Function Inventory scale with demographic variables.

Of the participants, 69.7 percent were Saudi who indicated that they were serving as volunteers in Saudi based organizations. Other demographic details including age, gender, nationality, marital status, education level, employment status and duration of volunteering were also collected.

Procedure

The VFI used in this study is a self-reporting scale. 15 Saudi based organizations were sent a cover letter through the internal email system along with a link to the questionnaire. The participants were provided the necessary information about the purpose of the survey, and were instructed that they may choose not to participate. They were also assured that their identity as well as responses will be kept strictly confidential and will be used only for the research purposes.

However, the researcher did not get enough responses and shared the link of questionnaire on Social Media. To increase and speed up the data collection process, the researcher included volunteers from a Non-Profit educational institution who encouraged UG female students to take the online questionnaire and reach the community to fulfill their course requirements for UG degree.

Measures

The participants responded to the designed questionnaire with demographic variables along with VFI scale. The VFI requires respondents to report on a 7-point Likert Scale and presents thirty items with reasons that volunteer look for while offering volunteering services to an organization (Reasons for Volunteering). The values of the response scale range from 1 (not at all important/accurate for you) to 7 (extremely important/accurate for you). The score ranges from 5-35 on each function with a total of 30-210 on all items of Reasons for Volunteering. The item numbers for each subscale are: career (#1, #10, #15, #21, and #28), social (#2, #4, #6, #17, and #23), values (#3, #8, #16, #19, and #22), protective (#7, #9, #11, #20, and #24), understanding (#12, #14, #18, #25, and #30) and enhancement (#5, #13, #26, #27, and #29).

The reliability of the VFI scale was assessed by using both internal consistency estimate ($r = .92$) and split-half ($r = .94$). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each of the subscale indicated a high reliability. (career, $\alpha = .87$, protection, $\alpha = .84$, social, $\alpha = .79$, values, $\alpha = .73$, understanding, $\alpha = .78$, enhancement, $\alpha = .84$)

Data Analyses

The VFI has not been tested in the context of operating Non-Profit/Non-Governmental organizations in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the researcher aimed to evaluate the psychometric properties of VFI with regards to volunteers' behavior. During the first phase of data analysis, the score for each of the six functions was calculated that was followed by calculating the total score on 30 items for Reasons of volunteering. Descriptive statistics and correlations among VFI's functions and total score on reasons items was calculated. With respect to importance, volunteers' motive's score was related to the total score in the following ascending order: values ($r = .57$), social ($r = .64$), career ($r = .76$), understanding ($r = .76$), protection ($r = .84$) and enhancement ($r = .86$). All factors were positively correlated with each other and were significant ($p < .05$). The weakest positive correlation was between career and values motives of volunteering ($r = .17$) and the strongest positive correlation was between protection and enhancement motives for volunteering ($r = .73$). Thus, the scores on volunteer motives were moderately correlated with the total score on reasons items.

Multiple regression analysis using the stepwise method was used to examine whether the VFI's motives for volunteering (values, understanding, enhancement, career, social, and protection functions) are significant variables of volunteers' motivation. Consequently, the dependent variable was the total score on reasons items and each score on six functions of VFI were the independent variables.

To identify a probable factor structure for the psychometric evaluation of VFI's reasons of volunteering, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) utilizing principal components as the extraction method was done. The dimensionality of the 30 items from the VFI scale was analyzed using maximum likelihood factor analysis.

Results

The main goal of the study was to examine the underlying factors of volunteerism (motives) besides evaluating the psychometric properties of VFI with volunteers' behavior in Saudi Arabian cultural context. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well the functions of VFI predicted volunteers' motivation. Results indicated that all six predictors were significantly related to the criterion variable. Table 3 shows that model 1, which included only enhancement score (ENH) accounted for 71% of the variance (Adjusted $R^2 = .716$). The inclusion of social score (SOC) into model 2 resulted in an additional 15% of the variance being explained (R^2 change = .863) while scores of understanding (UND), protection (PRO) and career (CAR) accounted for 91%, 95%, 97% of variance respectively. The final model 6 also included values score (VAL) and this model accounted for 98% of the variance (Adjusted $R^2 = .989$). Each model had significant F values and the overall model reported was significant ($p < .05$).

Table 3: Model Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F Change	Sig. F Change
1- ENH	.85	.72	.72	385.38	.00
2- ENH, SOC	.93	.87	.86	167.57	.00
3- ENH, SOC, UND	.95	.91	.91	75.91	.00
4- ENH, SOC, UND, PRO	.98	.95	.95	134.23	.00
5- ENH, SOC, UND, PRO, CAR	.98	.97	.97	63.27	.00
6 - ENH, SOC, UND, PRO, CAR, VAL	.99	.99	.99	304.05	.00

Note. ENH= score on enhancement items; SOC= score on social items; UND= score on understanding items; PRO= score on protective items; CAR= score on career items; VAL= Score on values items

Furthermore, collinearity statistics were examined. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), ranged from 1 to 3.091 and tolerance ranged from .384 to .835 indicating a stronger relationship between predictor variables. Since the VIF values are below 10 and tolerance level was over .1, multicollinearity was not a problem. These results indicate that scores on motives of volunteering functions are significant predictor variables for the criterion (volunteerism).

The psychometric evaluation of VFI scale through exploratory factor analysis was conducted to identify a probable factor structure. The initial extraction based on principal components analysis resulted in extraction of six factors which confirmed the priori model as proposed by VFI's creators. Initial Eigen values indicated that the first

four factors accounted for 33%, 9%, 7% and 5% of the total variance. The fifth and sixth factor had Eigen values just over one and each explained 7% of the variance. Based on the results of scree plot, the four factors were rotated using oblique rotation. The pattern matrix indicated that the first factor will have 9 items (#1, #10, #13, #15, #21, #25, #28, #29, #30), the second factor will have 8 items (#3, #8, #12, #14; #16, #18, #19, #22). Five items (#2, #4, #6, #17, #23) got loaded on the third factor while eight items (#5, #7, #9, #11, #20, #24, #26, #27) got loaded on fourth factor. The first factor was named as career, followed by values, social, and protection in accordance with the constructs of the original VFI scale. The pattern matrix revealed that items on one construct, i.e., social loaded on its respective factor. Furthermore, all factors were close to the VFI's original, i.e., career included Items #1, #10, #15, #21, #28 with an addition of four items (Item #13, #25, #29, #30), values included #3, #8, #16, #19, #22 with an addition of two items #12 and #14 (originally belonging to understanding subscale of VFI) and protection that added three items (#5, #26, #27) from enhancement subscale on original VFI. The factor loadings for the career function ranged from .30 to .86; for the values function, loadings ranged from .51 to .78; for the social function, loadings ranged from .55 to .77; for the protection function loadings ranged from -.41 to -.85. The resulting subscales for the four factors are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Factor loadings with principle component analysis with oblique rotation for 30 items on VFI Scale

Items	Career	Values	Social	Protection
1. Foot in the door	.72			
10. Make new contacts	.81			
13. Increase esteem	.47			
15. Explore career options	.76			
21. Success in profession	.60			
25. Deal with people	.54			
28. Experience will look good	.85			
29. Make new friends	.48			
30. Explore strengths	.39			
3. Concern for fortunate		.78		
8. Concern for people		.75		
12. Learn about a cause		.38		
14. New perspective		.51		
16. Feel compassion		.75		
18. Hands on experience		.52		
19. Help others		.68		
22. Do for a cause		.51		
2. Friends volunteer			.65	
4. Volunteer for people			.77	
6. Interest in service			.68	
17. Value service			.55	
23. Activity to people			.64	
5. Feel important				-.45
7. Forget problems				-.81
9. Feel less lonely				-.71
11. Relieve from guilt				-.41
20. Solve problems				-.60

24. Good escape	- .85
26. Feel needed	- .69
27. Feel better	- .70

Additional Analyses. One way ANOVA indicated a significant effect ($p < .05$) of age on career ($F(2, 152) = 13.66, p = .000$), values ($F(2, 152) = 3.26, p = .04$), and enhancement ($F(2, 152) = 6.85, p = .001$). Furthermore, an independent-samples t test was conducted to evaluate whether gender, nationality, marital and employment status contribute to any significant differences on the six motives of VFI. The test was significant for gender and values, $t(153) = 2.32, p = .02$ with males ($M = 29.50, SD = 4.44$) scoring higher than females ($M = 26.88, SD = 5.19$). Furthermore, marital status indicated a significant effect ($p < .05$) on career, $t(146) = -3.71, p = .00$, understanding, $t(146) = -2.34, p = .02$, and enhancement, $t(146) = -2.60, p = .01$ with unmarried respondents scoring high on career ($M = 26.60, SD = 5.97$), understanding ($M = 29.07, SD = 4.54$) and enhancement ($M = 26.88, SD = 6.36$) as compared to married counterparts (career, $M = 21.78, SD = 8.87$, understanding, $M = 26.92, SD = 5.55$, and enhancement, $M = 23.64, SD = 6.88$). The t test also revealed a significant effect ($p < .05$) on career, $t(153) = -3.11, p = .002$ and values, $t(153) = -2.80, p = .005$ functions of VFI. For the career motive, those who were employed scored lower ($M = 22.82, SD = 9.60$) than those who were unemployed ($M = 26.50, SD = 5.11$). On the contrary, those who were employed scored higher ($M = 28.77, SD = 4.75$) than those who were unemployed ($M = 26.42, SD = 5.21$) on the value function. No statistically significant differences ($p > .005$) were found between nationality and motives of volunteering.

Validity was assessed by performing Pearson correlation. Correlation coefficients were computed to examine how well the functions of VFI predicted volunteers' motivation. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 5. Moderate to high correlations were found between VFI and its scales and provide evidence for construct validity.

Table 5: Correlation among the six subscales of VFI (total score of reasons of volunteering items)

	VFI	Career	Social	Values	Understanding	Enhancement	Protection
VFI	--						
Career	.76**	--					
Social	.64**	.35**	--				
Values	.57**	.17*	.32**	--			
Understanding	.78**	.60**	.25**	.54**	--		
Enhancement	.86**	.67**	.41**	.35**	.63**	--	
Protection	.84**	.50**	.50**	.36**	.55**	.73**	--
M	150.38	25.15	21.52	27.28	28.41	25.79	22.23
SD	28.57	7.29	6.46	5.15	4.92	6.73	7.56
α	.93	.87	.79	.73	.78	.84	.84

** $p \leq .01$

* $p \leq .05$

Discussion

The focus of this study was to investigate the underlying factors that affect volunteers' motivation in Saudi Arabian cultural context. There were three purposes of this research (a) find out the correlation between various motivating factors like values, career, social, understanding, protection, and enhancement measured by Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) with volunteering behavior, (b) evaluate the psychometric properties of VFI and (c) study the effect of various demographic variables such as age, gender, nationality etc., on the six functions assessed by

VFI. Although similar studies have been conducted in different cultural contexts, but the researcher did not find any empirical study that examined volunteerism in Saudi based NPOs or NGOs.

The researcher used a quantitative, explanatory and non-experimental design to investigate the problem under study. The study's most intriguing finding is, among the six scales values (VAL) was found to be least internally consistent. Does this suggest that the value function may not be relevant when analyzing volunteers' motives? Davila and Diaz-Morales (2009) found the value function to be less consistent ($\alpha = .61$) as compared to other functions. Similarly, Vocino and Polonsky (2011) found values to be least consistent ($\alpha = .89$) against other motives. These results suggest that the construct of values differ from one cultural setting to another and therefore, items on values subscale may be revised to make them relevant to a specific socio-cultural context. The present pattern of findings is an indication that the values function on VFI requires a revision if VFI is intended to be adapted in Saudi Arabia and the religious aspect may be integrated. A society that operates under Islamic values is likely to be influenced by the religious implications that stem from Quran and Sunnah which in turn could be one of the factors that motivate volunteers to engage in voluntary activities.

Furthermore, in the present study, values function was not significant to the volunteers whose experience was less than three months. On the contrary, values were significant ($p = .004$) function for the volunteers whose experience was above 11 months. The discrepancy in the results could be due to differences in the nature of the sample. The volunteers who had been involved in voluntary activities for more than 11 months may have belonged to middle or late adulthood group who may not have been looking for any other motive related to career, enhancement or others. Consistent with past research that has attempted to correlate values with old volunteer's satisfaction and intention to continue with volunteer work (eg., Allison et al. 2002; Finkelstein, 2007) values was found to be a salient motive with the length of volunteering. The present findings clearly contradict the evidence provided by Okun & Schultz (2003) who found that age is not a significant predictor of values.

Moreover, the weakest correlation between career and values motives ($r = .17$, $p = .018$) implicates that these two factors require further investigation. The result is consistent with prior study that examined the correlations among VFI's motives and divulged a negative correlation ($r = -.05$) between career and values function (Okun & Schultz, 2003). Another study conducted by Allison et. al (2002) revealed a zero correlation between career and values. Since majority of the participants in the present sample were undergraduates and belonged to young adult group, it is likely that they look for a better career opportunity ($r = .76$) while engaging in voluntary actions. Consistent with the findings of Calderalla et al. (2010) and Houle et al., (2005) career is a significant factor in determining young adults' volunteerism. These results contradict the past studies (e.g., Auld, 2004; Burn et al., 2007; Gillath et al., 2005) whose results indicated that career function is an insignificant motive behind students' engagement in voluntary behavior.

The present study is not without its limitations that need to be considered while evaluating the major findings. Firstly, the study did not have a sample representation from all operating Saudi based NPOs and NGOs. Furthermore, the researcher cannot conclusively say that the current research is inclusive of both genders because the response rate from male volunteers had been minimal. Additionally, the inclusion of female volunteers from a non-profit educational organization has accounted for a sample bias. Also, the discrepancy in age and education level has to be reduced while examining correlations among demographic variables towards volunteers.

One avenue for future research is to modify the items of values subscale in order to make it a valid assessment tool for understanding volunteer behavior in socio-cultural context of Saudi Arabia. It is vital to incorporate the religious aspect while studying volunteer behavior besides re-evaluating the psychometric properties of VFI. Another avenue for future research is to seek a better understanding of the voluntary behavior by using a mixed methods design that may explain motivating factors pertaining to volunteer behavior in Saudi culture. In future studies, it will be important to determine the motives in relation to outcomes of volunteering to assess satisfaction and commitment towards the organization.

Conclusion

The present study suggests that the functions assessed by VFI are motivating factors in determining volunteers' motivation with regard to volunteer behavior in Saudi Arabia. The VFI had been a psychometrically sound instrument to assess motivation for volunteers from Western and Eastern Asian cultures. The results of the study provide evidence for the utilization of VFI in Saudi culture as well. However, items on values scale may be refined and expanded perhaps by rewriting the items through incorporating the religious aspect and then re-evaluating the psychometric properties of VFI to reflect the specific socio-cultural milieu of Saudi Arabia. Future research is needed that will investigate the possibility of identifying more factors besides adaptation of VFI. It may be aimed at explaining relationships among volunteer motives, organizational commitment and volunteer's satisfaction in

governmental and non-governmental charitable or welfare organizations to strengthen the generalizations for VFI in Saudi culture.

References

- Allison, L. D., Okun, M. A., & Dutridge, K. S. (2002). Assessing volunteer motives: A comparison of an open-ended probe and likert rating scales. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 12*, 243-255, doi: [10.1002/casp.677](https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.677)
- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Auld, C. (2004). Behavioral characteristics of student volunteers. *Australian Journal on Volunteering, 9*(2), 8-18.
- Bang, H., & Ross, S. (2009). Volunteer motivation and satisfaction. *Journal of Venue and Event Management, 1*(1), 61-77.
- Batson C. D., & Shaw, L. L. (1991). Evidence for altruism: Toward a pluralism of prosocial motives. *Psychological Inquiry, 2*(2), 107-122. Retrieved February 23, 2012 from <http://education.ucsb.edu/janeconoley/ed197/documents/batsonevidenceforaltruism.pdf>
- Boezeman, E. J., & Ellemers, N. (2008). Pride and respect in volunteers' organizational commitment. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 38*, 159–172.
- Boezeman, E. J., & Ellemers, N. (2008). Volunteer Recruitment: The role of organizational support and anticipated respect in non-volunteers' attraction to charitable volunteer organization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*(5), 1013-1026.
- Burns, D. J., Toncar, M., Reid, J., Anderson, C., Wells, C., Fawcett, J., & Gruben, K., (2007). Volunteering: A comparison of the motivations of collegiate students attending different types of institutions. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration, 24*(5), 46-58.
- Caldarella, P., Gomm, R. J, Shatzer R. H., & Wall, D. G. (2010). School-based mentoring: A study of volunteer motivations and benefits. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 2*(2), 199-216.
- Clary, E. G., & Snyder, M. (1991). A functional analysis of altruism and pro-social behavior: The case of volunteerism. *Review of Personality and Social Psychology, 12*, 119–148.
- 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), 1516-1530.
- Cnaan, R., & Goldberg-Glen, R. S. (1991). Measuring motivation to volunteer in human services. Special Issue: Methods for research and intervention with organizations. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 27* (3), 269-284.
- Davila, M. C., & Diaz-Morales, J. F. (2009). Age and motives for volunteering: Further evidence. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 2*, 82-95.
- Frisch, M. B., & Gerard, M. (1981). Natural helping systems: A survey of Red Cross volunteers. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 9*, 567-579.
- Finkelstein, M. A. (2007). Correlates of satisfaction in older volunteers: A motivational perspective. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration, 24*(5), 6-12.

Finkelstein, M. A. (2008). Volunteer satisfaction and volunteer action: A functional approach. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 36(1), 9-18.

Fuertes, F. C. & Jimenez, M. L. V. (2000). Motivation and burnout in volunteerism. *Psychology in Spain*, 4(1), 75-81. Retrieved April 17, 2010, from Psychology in Spain Web site: <http://www.psychologyinspain.com/content/full/2000/7.htm>.

Gagnie, M., & Valerie, M. (2008). Designing volunteers' tasks to maximize motivation, satisfaction and performance: The impact of job characteristics on volunteer engagement. *Motiv Emot*, 32, 11-22.

Ghamdi, A. H. (2009, April 15). Need to streamline voluntary work emphasized. *Arab News*. Retrieved February 23, 2012, from <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=121575&d=15&m=4&y=2009&pix=kingdom.jpg&category=Kingdom>

Gillath, O., Shaver, P. R., Mikulincer, M., Nitzberg, R. E., Erez, A., & van Ijzendoorn, M. H. (2005). Attachment, caregiving, and volunteering: Placing volunteerism in an attachment theoretical framework. *Personal Relationships*, 12, 425-446.

Greenslade, J. H., & White, K. M. (2005). The prediction of above-average participation in volunteerism: A test of the theory of planned behavior and the volunteers function inventory in older Australian adults. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 145(2). 155-172.

Grossman, J. B., & Furano, K. (1999). Making the Most of Volunteers. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 62(4), 199-218.

Houle, B. J., Sagarin, B. J., & Kaplan, M. F. (2005). A functional approach to volunteerism: Do volunteer motives predict task preference. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 27(4), 337-344.

Lafer, B. (1989). Predicting performance and persistence in hospice volunteers. *Psychological Reports*, 65, 467-472.

Latting, J. K. (1990). Motivational differences between Black and White volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 19, 121-135.

Leventhal-Haskil, D. (2009). Altruism and Volunteerism: The perceptions of volunteerism in four disciplines and their impact on the study of volunteerism. *Journal of the Theory of Social Behavior*, 39: 3, 271-297. Retrieved on January 25, 2012 from: http://mgsm.academia.edu/DebbieHaskiLeventhal/Papers/185021/Altruism_and_Volunteerism_The_perceptions_of_altruism_in_four_disciplines_and_their_impact_on_the_study_of_volunteerism

Martinez A. T., & McMullin L. S. (2004). Factors affecting decisions to volunteer in non-governmental organizations. *Environment and Behavior*, 36(1), 112-126. Retrieved on January 25, 2012 from: http://fishwild.vt.edu/faculty/mcmullin/Martinez_reprint.pdf

Okun, M. A., Barr, A., & Herzog, A. R. (1998). Motivation to volunteer by older adults: A test of competing measurement models. *Psychology & Aging*, 13(4), 608-621.

Okun, M. A., & Schultz, A. (2003). Age and motives for volunteering: Testing hypothesis derived from socioemotional selective theory. *Psychology & Aging*, 18(2), 231-239, doi: 10.1037/0882-7974.18.2.231

Omoto, A. M., & Snyder, M. (2009). Who gets involved and why? The psychology of volunteerism. In Lo, T. W., Holosko, M. J., & Liu, E. S. C., (Eds.), *Youth empowerment and volunteerism: Principles, policies and practices*. (pp. 3-20) Koloon: Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong Press.

Penner, L. A., & Fritzsche, B. A. (1993). *Measuring the prosocial personality: Four construct validity studies*. Paper presented at the 101st Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Penner, L. A., & Finkelstein, M. A. (1998). Dispositional and Structural Determinants of Volunteerism. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 74(2), 525-537.

Philips, L. C., & Philips, M. H. (2010). Volunteer motivation and reward preference: An empirical study of volunteerism in a large, not-for-profit organization. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*.75 (4).

Pierucci, J., & Noel, R. C. (1980). Duration of participation of correctional volunteers as a function of personal and situational variables. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 8, 245-250.

Saudi Government Allocates \$154 Billion in 2011 Budget (2012). Retrieved February 23, 2012, from U.S.-Saudi Arabian Business Council: <http://www.us-sabc.org/custom/news/details.cfm?id=891>

Stukas, A. A., Daly, M., & Clary, E. (2006). Lessons from research on volunteering for mobilizing adults to volunteer for positive youth development. In Clary E. G., & Rhodes, J. E., (Eds.), *Mobilizing adults for positive youth development: Strategies for closing the gaps between beliefs and behaviors* (pp. 65-72). Retrieved from <http://books.google.com/books>

Tang, F., Choi, E., & Morrow-Howell, N. (2010). Organizational support and volunteering benefits for older adults. *The Gerontologist*. Retrieved March 16, 2012 from <http://gerontologist.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2010/03/08/geront.gnq020.full.pdf+html>

Tapp, J. T., & Spanier, D. (1973). Personal characteristics of volunteer phone counselors. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 41, 245-250.

Toi, M., & Batson, C. D. (1982). More evidence that empathy is a source of altruistic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 43, 281-292.

Torgdon, S. E. (2005). *Parks, recreation and tourism management* (Master's thesis, North Carolina State University). Retrieved from <http://repository.lib.ncsu.edu/ir/bitstream/1840.16/2636/1/etd.pdf>.

Trachtenberg, J. (2006). *Sustaining volunteer motivation in the non-profit organization: Reasons for volunteer attrition and possible solutions in the Binghamton American Heart Association*. (Capstone Project). Retrieved from Binghamton University, College of Community and Public Affairs in Public Administration website: <http://www2.binghamton.edu/ccpa/public-administration/current-students/capstone/Jeanette%20Trachtenberg.pdf>

Vociono, A., & Polonsky, M. J. (2011). Volunteering for research: A test of the psychometric properties of the volunteer functions inventory with online penallists. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 23(4). 508-521, doi:10.1093/ijpor/edr013

Widjaja, E. (2010). Motivation behind volunteerism. CMC Senior Theses. Paper 4. Retrieved January 25, 2012 from http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1015&context=cmc_theses

Wu, J., Lo, T. W., & Liu, E. S-C. (2009). Psychometric properties of the volunteer functions inventory with Chinese students. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 37(6). 769-780, doi: 10.1002/jcop.20330

Yoshioqa, C. F., Brown, W. A., & Ashcraft, R. F. (2007). A functional approach to senior volunteer and non-volunteer motivations. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 14(5), 31-47. Retrieved February 25, 2012 from http://www.ijova.org/PDF/VOL24_NO5/IJOVA_VOL24_NO5_Yoskioka.pdf

Acknowledgements

This research was conducted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelors of Science in Psychology (Spring 2012) at Effat University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The researcher is thankful to Mark Snyder, who gave permission to use his Volunteer Functions Inventory for this research. The researcher is also thankful to Tabassum Rashid for her unstinted support, supervision and guidance besides bringing endless enthusiasm towards the research.

This research was supported by The Society of Majid bin Abdulaziz, Effat University and Young Initiative Group.

Correspondence concerning this paper should be addressed to Hanan M. Asghar, Center of Excellence in Writing and Speaking, Effat University. E-mail: hasghar@effat.edu.sa