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## Motivational Factors for Volunteering Applicable to Retiring & Retired Alumni of IIT and IIM

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**Abstract:** The main objective of this paper is to study volunteer motivation of retiring and retired alumni of IIT and IIM in India, if they were to help and work for the Skill India initiative of the Government of India, without any personal gains, monetary or otherwise. The research uses conceptual models as well as multiple dimensions of volunteer motivation evolved through various research studies conducted in the past. Volunteering model used consists of a multidimensional construct where various dimensions used are Recognition, Social Interaction, Reciprocity, Reactivity, Self-Esteem, Social, Values, Understanding, Protective, and Career Development.

A survey questionnaire was administered through emails and other electronic media such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Whatsapp etc. The questionnaire uses volunteer motivation inventory comprising of forty four reasons that a respondent might have for engaging as a volunteer. The respondents had to indicate how much they agree or disagree with the reasons on a five point Likert scale. For every respondent, ten scores were computed for the ten different motivations covered by the volunteer motivation model. Lowest score on a scale represents least effective motivation, and highest score on a scale represents most effective motivation for the respondent.

Data analysis involved ranking all the items of the motivation scales in reducing order of their motivational strength, to determine how important each of the motivation dimension is for the respondents if they were to volunteer in future.

**Key Words:** Volunteering, Motivation, Skills, Social Volunteers, Skill Building, Skill India

### INTRODUCTION

Since over 40 years, researchers have been engaged in discovering what could motivate volunteering. Literature survey was conducted to study the existing conceptual models of volunteer motivation, the way these have been adopted for use on those people who help and work for others without any personal gains,

monetary or otherwise. The review of past studies has provided a comprehensive understanding of dimensions considered in empirical studies by researchers for different sectors that have used volunteer services.

As we notice volunteering is fairly common when it comes to serving persons adversely affected by natural calamities. However society would benefit immensely from volunteering by way of betterment of quality of human life through efforts directed towards skill development of unemployed and under-employed persons. It would be helpful to make use of the knowledge, experience and skills of volunteers to help nonprofit organizations to strengthen their efforts in the area of skill building which can tremendously gain from Volunteering and even governments should promote such participation from its better-off or well-placed citizens.

Even though it may be difficult for volunteers to find time because of their preoccupation with personal or professional engagements, but volunteering brings immense benefits to the volunteers as well. It could also provide them an opportunity to make new friends, learn new things, feel useful, and in old age slow down mental aging process, among others.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this paper is to study volunteer motivation of retiring and retired alumni of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in India, if they were to help and work for the Skill India initiative of the Government of India, without any gains, monetary or otherwise. The research uses a conceptual model consisting of multiple dimensions of volunteer motivation evolved through various research studies conducted in the past. The Volunteering model used consists of a multidimensional construct where various dimensions used are Recognition, Social Interaction, Reciprocity, Reactivity, Self-Esteem, Social, Values, Understanding, Protective, and Career Development.

### **Skill development- a Govt. of India (GOI) initiative**

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was formed by GOI in 2008 to achieve the target of skilling and up-skilling 150 million people in India by 2022 through promoting private sector initiatives in the area of skill development. (NSDC, 2014) Govt. of India has realized that it cannot provide skills to everyone by itself and has to seek participation of industry and various citizen groups. Therefore, NSDC has been formed to invite private participation in providing support services such as course development, trainer training, quality of education adherence, and use of technology to create large transformational type of gains. Further, such initiatives have to take along all the stakeholders in seeking placement support for the trained manpower, which is the ultimate test of success of the training initiatives.

As per the Controller Auditor General (CAG) audit, although NSDC was formed with the expectation that it would attract sizable private funds, however NSDC had to depend upon the public exchequer for Rs 1,673 crores or 99.69% of funds it used till March, 2014 (Hindustan Times, 21Oct., 2015). According to a report submitted by the subgroup consisting of chief ministers, bringing skill training within the reach of such a large population is a huge challenge in the country (ET 27 Oct., 2015). The subgroup has recommended utilizing the expertise of retired persons for imparting skills in addition to using available machines and premises of major private sector units and public sector units.

Instead of just depending on Government funds, NSDC is keen to seek funds from corporates. It is also wanting to tap the corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds (Livemint 4 Nov., 2015). The Skill India Mission success is highly dependent on the mobilization of adequate funds. According to the sub-group of chief ministers report, the Government of India requires innovative mechanisms to mobilize resources and the Skill India mission should not face funds constraint. Much against its liking, today most finances are from the government budgetary resources (ET 27 Oct., 2015).

### **Importance of Volunteers**

Volunteers can provide instrumental support to Public and private education institutes, and these institutions have to appreciate the contribution made by volunteers as they are very useful in bringing about skill improvement in people (Executive, 2004) and (ZAPPALÀ, 2000).

The country should proactively seek the participation of a higher proportion of citizens who make a conscious decision to volunteer. The purpose of this research is to study motivational needs of retired persons who are well educated, financially well settled, and have lifelong industry experience, and could be motivated and facilitated to work in the area of skill development initiatives of the Government of India.

What motivates a volunteer is very difficult to identify, but it is very important to understand the underlying motivators so that their needs could be addressed to make them interested. This understanding would help in their recruitment as well as keep them motivated on the job. (Esmond, Judy; Dunlop, Patrick, 2004).

### **Way Forward**

NSDC needs to provide funding support to its skill development centers so that they in turn could support services such as course development, trainer training, quality of education adherence and use of technology for covering a large number of persons. Therefore, we have to rope in the help and participation of various stakeholders in seeking funds from the private sector, particularly their CSR funds. The IIM and IIT retiring and retired alumni could help in soliciting contributions from the private sector. The alumni have good contacts in the corporate world as they themselves have been part of top corporate management by virtue of their educational and professional background. Further, they could also contribute by providing help in career counseling & mentoring, job placement, and also share their knowledge and experience with students.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Volunteering**

In volunteering, individuals undertake activities, without any financial demands, and for the benefit of someone other than the self. Different organizations get time and energy contributions from millions of people every year. (Independent Sector, 2001) As per a national survey conducted in 2000, formal volunteer organizations in US had over 44% adults as volunteers with an age 21 years or more. There could be various forms of volunteer activities, such as working for voluntary organizations, working for social change, soliciting money donation, or blood donations (Wilson, 2000). Other ways to contribute as volunteers are providing help in community organizations such as social and health welfare organizations (Papadakis, Griffin, & Frater, 2004).

Volunteers address a breadth of services in religious organizations, hospitals, sport clubs, schools, and other community organizations. Hence, volunteers contribute not only to social welfare, but they are also a part of the integral manpower resource of various organizations (Bussel & Forbes, 2002). However, money donation or blood and material donations are not classified as volunteering even if these entail spending some time by donors (Australia, 2015).

### **Why study Volunteer motivations?**

Volunteer recruitment and retention is increasingly becoming a concern for Volunteer managers (Bussel & Forbes, 2002). Applying well proven marketing techniques for volunteer recruitment and retention is the requirement of many volunteer organizations. Many researches have tried to understand the motivations that individuals have so that they give their effort and time to various organizations (Penner, L.A.; Finkelstein, M.A., 1998).

While many volunteers initially start doing volunteering to avail learning opportunities, acquire experience, gain competencies, serve the society, and get recognition and growth; they remain active and enthusiastic till they achieve their motives, and thereafter they lose motivation and hence lose interest in the voluntary organizations (VSO Jitolee, 2006). On account of lack of motivational policies from the volunteering organizations and due to poor volunteer performance, benefits from volunteers may trail behind the costs of having them. In such a situation, the volunteer managers should step in and develop strategies that could motivate the volunteers who are non-performing. However, it is shown by various studies that, instead of addressing the issues of lack of motivation that leads to drop in performance, volunteering organizations start attributing the causes as lack of volunteer's skills and expertise (Wright, Larsen, & Higgs, 1995).

Volunteer retention may get affected by motivation issues (Penner, L.A.; Finkelstein, M.A., 1998). If volunteers receive benefits that are relevant to their primary motivations then they are most likely to be satisfied and continue to do volunteer service (Clary E. G., et al., 1998). It was found in these studies that volunteer intentions to involve in volunteer service may be predicted by their volunteer motivations and organizations may have to pursue these motivations so as to recruit the volunteers.

(Papadakis, Griffin, & Frater, 2004) From the perspective of organizations who engage volunteers, it would help to gain knowledge of factors that motivate people to volunteer in various organizations so that they could deploy this knowledge in improving their processes for volunteer planning, recruiting, and management. (Hartenian, 2007) Investment in training is not considered worthwhile by many organizations. Even if volunteers are unpaid members of an organization, they need to be trained so that they become as competent as the regular staff (Cunningham, 1999). In many cases voluntary sector success gets handicapped by inadequate training of its volunteers (Amos-Wilson, 1996).

### **Volunteer Motivation Dimensions**

In a research by Judy Esmond and Patrick Dunlop in 2004, the below volunteer motivation dimensions in Figure 1 were used on different volunteers in various organizations in Western Australia. The research was conducted in 5 stages. The dimensions were improvised at each stage to enhance the capability to accurately capture the motivation to volunteer (Esmond, Judy; Dunlop, Patrick, 2004):



**Figure 1: Volunteer Motivation Dimensions**

The above various motivation dimensions are:

- **Value helping others** (helping others) - whereby one places emphasis on helping others as part of one's belief (Clary, E. G.; Snyder, M.; Ridge, R., 1992)
- **Reciprocity** - whereby one believes that if you do good to others, God will do good to you
- **Recognition** - wherein one gets motivated by the recognition accorded to one's contribution and capabilities
- **Understanding** - wherein volunteering offers skill building and experience in areas that are usually not available, and helps in learning more about the world around an individual, and volunteer gets to learn more about the world (Clary, E. G.; Snyder, M.; Ridge, R., 1992)
- **Self-Esteem** - wherein one's own esteem and worth goes up in one's own eyes
- **Reactivity** wherein one volunteers to minimize sufferings of others in the areas in which one experienced such sufferings in the past
- **Social** - wherein one emulates the behavior of others seen as significant by the group to which one belongs (Clary, E. G.; Snyder, M.; Ridge, R., 1992)
- **Protective** - wherein one feels a reduction in negativity about oneself which may be due to some guilt or other personal problem (Clary, Snyder, & Ridge, 1992)
- **Social Interaction** - wherein one sees a chance of socializing with others as an opportunity to expand one's social circle
- **Career Development** - wherein experience gained and networking with others can lead to new employment opportunities

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **First Stage: In-depth interviews**

The research consisted of three stages. In the first stage, In-depth Interviews of 12 persons were conducted and the respondents were drawn from the target population. The purpose of these interviews was to discover and identify the demographic dimensions that they felt would be relevant for subsequent segmentation and profiling of the target population. The selection of the participants was done on convenience basis, depending upon who was available at the time of the discussion. The in-depth interviews helped in arriving at the various demographic variables such as retirement age, number of dependent parent & children, gender, country of residence, etc.

### **Second Stage: Validation of the Survey Instrument**

In the second stage, a sample survey was conducted to test the validity of the survey questionnaire. It was administered on a sample size of 15 persons from the target population. Based on their feedback, the survey questionnaire was suitably modified with the aim to maximize its accuracy in assessing volunteer motivations.

### **Third Stage: Primary survey**

In the third stage, a survey was conducted in which the revised questionnaire was sent to a random sample from the target population.

#### ***Target population***

Persons who have already retired or going to retire in next 5 years and who are alumni of IITs and/ or IIMs.

#### ***Sample size***

The Survey questionnaire would be administered on over 300 persons from the target population.

#### ***Sampling procedures***

IIT and IIM Alumni can be seen as a sum of all the various cohorts who have graduated in the past, and each cohort is a cluster representing the other cohorts, especially the cohorts who are in the age group of retiring and retired persons. Responses were invited from all the persons in the chosen sample, and hence the sample could be assumed to be random and all the statistical tools could be applied.

#### ***Method of data collection***

The survey questionnaire was shared through email/ LinkedIn/ Facebook to the persons in the sample chosen for the survey.

#### ***Analysis and Results***

The survey questionnaire comprised of forty four reasons that a respondent might have in engaging as a volunteer. Under the survey questionnaire, using a five point scale, the respondents were to indicate how



much they agree or disagree with these reasons. Here is a bar chart depicting the responses received from 140 such respondents till now:

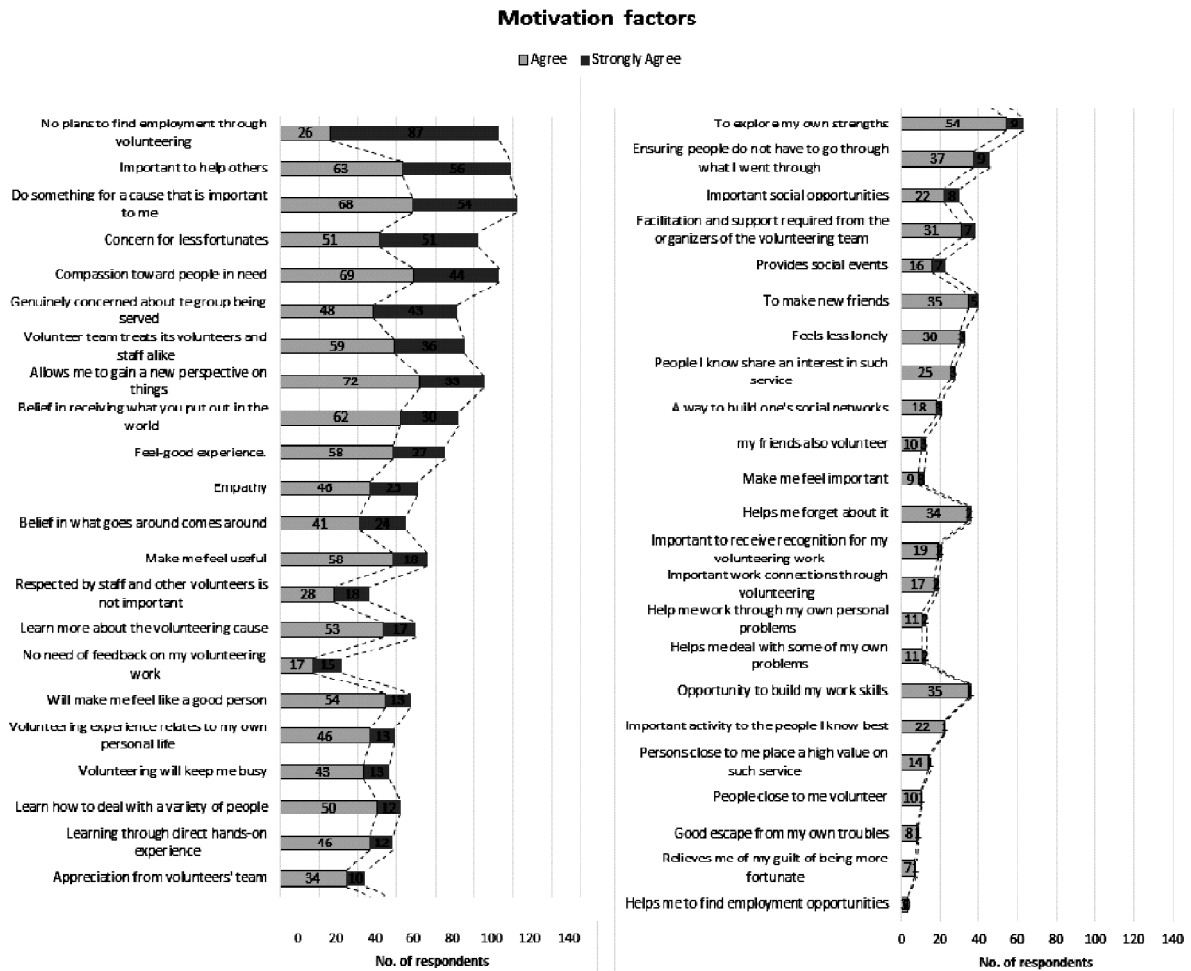


Figure 2: Survey questionnaire responses

As is evident from Fig. 2 above, respondents are not looking at volunteering to find employment, but their most important reason for volunteering is the importance they place on helping others.

It is understandable why the respondents are not looking for employment opportunities because they are at the stage of retirement, have already earned all their life, and income generation is not their need, instead they want to help others as they have compassion towards people in need as well as concern for the less fortunate ones.

### Motivation factors at play

Further, based on the above responses, ten scores were computed for the ten different motivation dimensions covered by the volunteer motivation model, i.e., Recognition, Social Interaction, Reciprocity, Reactivity, Self-Esteem, Social, Values, Understanding, Protective, and Career Development. Here is a bar chart depicting the scores against these motivation factors:

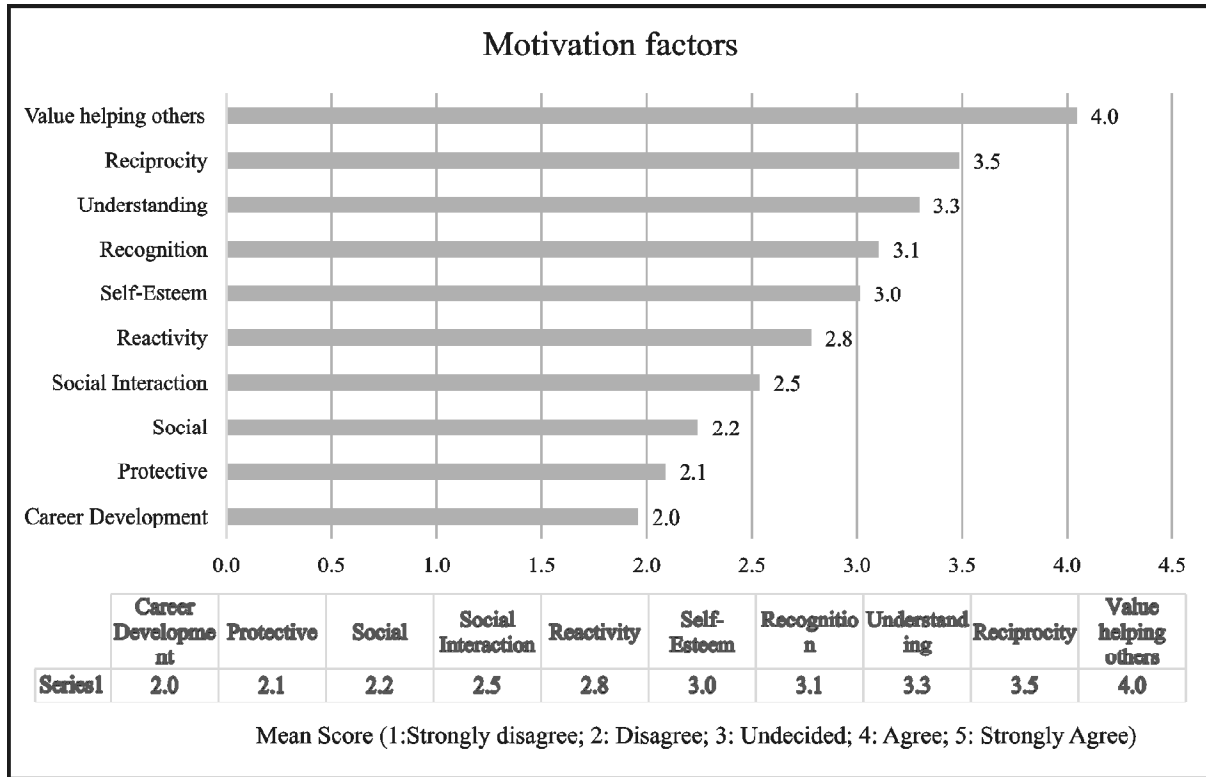


Figure 3: Motivation factor scores

Mean scores for all survey items were calculated to find out to what extent each of the motivation factors is important for respondents so that they could be volunteers. Further, the mean scores were ranked in reducing score values which depicts reducing order of their motivational strength. Lowest score on a scale represents least effective motivation, and highest score on a scale represents most effective motivation for the respondents.

The results show that the respondents value helping others the most, whereby they place emphasis on helping others as part of their belief.

Reciprocity is the next most important dimension which means that they believe that if they do good to others, God will do good to them.

Next three dimensions are of Understanding, Recognition and Self-esteem with score between 3.0 and 3.3. They somewhat agree with Understanding dimension as it has a mean score of 3.3, implying that volunteering somewhat helps in learning more about the world around them.

However Recognition and Self-esteem at score of 3.1 and 3.0 respectively clearly point out that they are not moved by the recognition accorded to their contribution and capabilities, also they do not see their esteem and worth going up in their self-image.

The respondents somewhat disagree with the concept of Reactivity and Social-interaction as the motivating dimensions. At a score of 2.8 on the Reactivity dimension implies that they do not take up volunteering because it is a way to minimize sufferings of others in the areas in which they experienced



such sufferings in the past. Also, at a score of 2.5 on Social-interaction, volunteering is not seen as a chance of socializing with others or as an opportunity to expand one's social circle.

The respondents have scored 2.2, 2.1, and 2.0 on Social, Protective and Career development dimensions respectively. This implies that the respondents are not at all looking at volunteering as a way to Career Development by way of gaining experience or do networking with others so as to find new employment opportunities. Also, they do not see this to be a way wherein they could get a feeling of reduction in negativity about themselves (Protective) which may be due to some guilt or other personal problem. Further, the respondents also disagree that Social dimension could be the motivation behind volunteering wherein one emulates the behavior of others seen as significant by the group to which one belongs.

## CONCLUSIONS

IIT and IIM alumni place highest importance on helping others as the reason for volunteering. They highly disagree with seeking employment opportunities as the motivation for doing volunteering. They strongly hold the belief that doing good to others will be reciprocated by God doing good to them in return. The respondents have shown indifference to Understanding, Recognition and Self-esteem dimensions, and shown disagreement to the idea of Reactivity and Social-interaction as the motivating dimensions.

The respondents have shown a clear disagreement to Social, Protective and Career development dimensions implying that the respondents are not at all looking at volunteering as a way to do networking with others, or reduction in negativity about themselves due to some guilt or other personal problem. Further, the respondents also disagree that emulating significant others could be a reason behind volunteering.

Even though volunteers provide their services without expecting any compensation, it would be wrong to assume that their motivation levels are not influenced factors or any kind of encouraging measures. Therefore voluntary organizations should align their motivation strategies and processes of volunteer recruitment, induction and training to harness maximum benefits from volunteering support.

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