



Motivation for Being a Volunteer of Ruamkatanyu Foundation Rescue Volunteers, Pathum Thani Province

**Piyawadi Pariwaraphan¹, Phrakrusankrarak Eakapatra Abhichanto²,
Prasit Kaewsri³**

Affiliated¹: Graduate Student, Master of Arts Program in Psychology of Life and Death, Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, 13170, Thailand

Affiliated^{2,3}: Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, 13170, Thailand

✉¹: piyawadee018@gmail.com (Corresponding Email)

Received: 04 April 2025; Revised: 10 May 2025; Accepted: 19 June 2025

© The Author(s) 2025

Abstract: This research aimed to study the level of motivation for volunteering among rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province and to examine differences in motivation based on personal factors including gender, age, education, marital status, and years of service. A mixed research method combining quantitative and qualitative approaches was employed. The sample consisted of 250 participants selected through simple random sampling. The research instrument was a questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .837. Data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics. Results revealed that overall motivation for volunteering was at a high level (mean = 4.13). When analyzed by specific factors, all aspects were rated high: happiness in work showed the highest mean (4.36), followed by desire to see others relieved from suffering (4.20), self-worth (4.15), having volunteer role models (4.15), admiration for the organization (4.07), and support from friends (3.86). Comparison based on personal factors showed no statistically significant differences. This research demonstrates that motivation for volunteering stems more from internal factors than external ones.

Keywords: motivation, volunteering, rescue volunteers, Ruamkatanyu Foundation

1. Introduction

Volunteer work is considered a vital component of sustainable social development, particularly in disaster relief and emergency assistance. The Ruamkatanyu Foundation is a public health organization with the primary objective of helping disaster victims throughout the Kingdom of Thailand, including accidents, disasters, floods, storms, fires, or threats arising from unrest, as well as assisting the poor or unclaimed deceased, and general charitable work. The organization operates without regard to nationality, religion, or social class, and expects no compensation whatsoever (Sangphan, online). This organization has been operating continuously for over 53 years, demonstrating that being a Ruamkatanyu volunteer involves being a giver and sacrificing oneself to help and solve problems for others, helping them escape from suffering without expecting any reward. Motivation is a crucial factor that drives human behavior in volunteer work. Sukbamrungsin (2010) stated that motivation is something within

a person that serves as a driving force, the power of each individual that enables them to accomplish tasks successfully through a process arising from human expectations, needs, and life goals, creating a drive toward goals. Therefore, motivation influences stimulating individuals to exhibit behavior in a particular direction and maintaining that behavior to achieve what they expect or desire. Studying motivation helps us understand behavioral trends of individuals.



Figure 1: Volunteer Association, Ruamkatanyu, Pathum Thani Province

Source: Facebook page: Volunteer Ruamkatanyu Association, Pathum Thani Province

The Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province has over 520 members operating in all 7 districts: Khlong Luang, Thanyaburi, Lat Lum Kaeo, Lam Luk Ka, Nong Suea, Sam Khok, and Mueang Pathum Thani districts. They face incidents daily as this area has dense population with major highways serving as passages to Bangkok (Singhra, personal interview, August 20, 2023). This prompted the researcher's interest in studying the motivation for volunteering among this group to understand the factors that drive them to sacrifice time, physical strength, mental energy, and possibly personal property to help others without expecting compensation. The challenges faced by these volunteers include sacrificing rest time to help those in distress, sometimes requiring extended periods of continuous work, and potentially facing dangerous situations that may threaten their lives while helping injured victims without considering their own safety. Currently, those entering Ruamkatanyu volunteer work must make significant personal sacrifices, and due to the difficult nature of the work, strong motivation is required to engage in such volunteer activities.

2. Objective

- 1) To study the level of motivation for volunteering among rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province
- 2) To examine differences in motivation for volunteering among rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province based on personal factors including gender, age, education, marital status, and years of service

3. Research Methodology

This research employed a mixed research method combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain comprehensive data and clearly answer research questions. This mixed methodology approach enables deep and comprehensive understanding of the studied phenomenon, where quantitative data provides understanding about levels and differences in motivation, while qualitative data provides understanding about context and meanings behind such motivation. The integration of both approaches enhances the validity and reliability of research findings by allowing triangulation of data from multiple sources and methods.

3.1 Population and Sample

The population for this research consisted of 500 Ruamkatanyu Foundation volunteer staff members in Pathum Thani Province. The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula at a 95% confidence level, resulting in a sample size of 250 participants (Worapongdhon, 2018). Sample selection used simple random sampling to ensure every unit in the population had equal opportunity for selection, which helps reduce selection bias and makes research results reliably applicable to the population. This sampling method ensures representativeness of the sample and enhances the generalizability of findings to the broader population of rescue volunteers in the foundation.

3.2 Research Instrument

The quantitative research instrument was a questionnaire divided into two parts: Part 1 contained general information about respondents with 4 items covering gender, age, education, and years of service. Part 2 contained information about motivation for volunteering with 60 items using a 5-point rating scale. The instrument's quality was verified by 5 experts, with Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) calculation and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha coefficient yielding .837 (Pisanbut, 2013). For qualitative research, in-depth interviews were conducted with 9 key informants divided into volunteer representatives and experts. The interview guide was structured to explore motivation factors comprehensively while allowing flexibility to pursue emerging themes and insights during the interview process.

3.3 Collection of Data

Quantitative data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 250 sample participants, with the researcher personally collecting data to ensure quality and completeness. Data collection took approximately 2 months, coordinating with area supervisors from each district to gain cooperation from volunteers. For qualitative data collection, in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, with audio recording and note-taking during interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes to obtain detailed and comprehensive information covering the desired study topics. The qualitative component provided rich contextual information that complemented and enhanced the quantitative findings.

3.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis used descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and inferential statistics including t-tests and one-way ANOVA with statistical significance set at 0.05 level. Qualitative data analysis used content analysis with triangulation to verify data reliability by comparing information from different sources and presenting descriptive information to support and explain quantitative research results for greater clarity and understanding. The mixed-method approach allowed for comprehensive analysis that captured both the breadth of motivation patterns through statistics and the depth of individual experiences through qualitative insights.

4. Result

Analysis of motivation data for volunteering among rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province revealed that overall motivation was at a high level with a mean of 4.13 and standard deviation of 0.411. This finding indicates that rescue volunteers have relatively high motivation for volunteer work, reflecting their commitment and sacrifice in helping others. The high level of motivation suggests that these volunteers have strong driving forces for performing their duties and are likely to continue their volunteer work sustainably. The consistency of high motivation across the sample indicates the stability and genuineness of their commitment to volunteer service.

When analyzed by specific factors, all aspects were rated at high levels, ranked from highest to lowest as follows: Happiness in work showed the highest mean at 4.36 with standard deviation 0.500, indicating that volunteers feel great happiness and satisfaction in volunteer work. Helping others and seeing positive results from their actions creates feelings of pride and joy. The desire to see others relieved from suffering had a mean of 4.20 with standard deviation 0.495, showing that volunteers have strong empathy and desire to help others escape from hardship, which aligns with Buddhist principles of loving-kindness and compassion. This finding reflects the altruistic nature of volunteer motivation and the deep concern volunteers have for others' wellbeing.

Self-worth and having volunteer role models both had equal means at 4.15, with self-worth having standard deviation 0.511 and having volunteer role models having standard deviation 0.518. These results show that volunteers feel they have value and ability to help others, while also having role models or exemplary figures who inspire their volunteer work. Admiration for the organization had a mean of 4.07 with standard deviation 0.508, indicating that volunteers feel pride and admiration for their affiliated organization. Finally, support from friends had the lowest mean at 3.86 with standard deviation 0.592. Although this was the lowest score, it was still at a high level, showing that support from colleagues plays an important role in creating motivation.

Table 1: Motivation for Volunteering by Aspect

Motivation Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Happiness in work	4.36	0.500	High
Desire to see others relieved from suffering	4.20	0.495	High
Self-worth	4.15	0.511	High
Having volunteer role models	4.15	0.518	High
Admiration for the organization	4.07	0.508	High
Support from friends	3.86	0.592	High
Total	4.13	0.411	High

Comparison of motivation based on personal factors revealed that rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province with different personal factors including gender, age, education, marital status, and years of service showed no statistically significant differences in motivation for volunteering. Gender comparison showed male volunteers had a motivation mean of 4.09 and female volunteers had a mean of 4.18, with $F = 0.480$ and $Sig = 0.489$, indicating no significant difference. Marital status comparison showed single volunteers had a mean of 4.12 and married volunteers had a mean of 4.13, with $F = 5.898$ and $Sig = 0.846$, also showing no significant difference.

Comparisons by age, education, and years of service using one-way ANOVA

revealed no statistically significant differences in all variables. Age comparison had $F = 0.893$ and $\text{Sig} = 0.723$, education comparison had $F = 1.138$ and $\text{Sig} = 0.238$, and years of service comparison had $F = 0.910$ and $\text{Sig} = 0.688$. These research results demonstrate that motivation for volunteering is a stable characteristic that does not depend on such personal factors.

Table 2: Comparison of Motivation by Personal Factors

Personal Factors	Group	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	Sig
Gender	Male	144	4.09	0.409	0.480	0.489
	Female	106	4.18	0.408		
Marital Status	Single	146	4.12	0.446	5.898	0.846
	Married	104	4.13	0.356		

In-depth interviews with key informants provided data supporting quantitative research results. Most volunteers stated they entered volunteer work because of their desire to help others and the happiness received from seeing others get help. Expert interviewees also pointed out that motivation for volunteer work comes from virtue and good hearts, which are deeply embedded in each person's mind, rather than depending on external situations or personal factors. The fact that motivation does not differ according to personal factors reflects the special nature of volunteer work as work done with heart and sacrifice for others without considering personal benefits.

5. Discussion

The research finding that motivation for volunteering among rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province was overall at a high level aligns with the nature of volunteer work that requires commitment and sacrifice to help others. The need to help society and satisfaction received from meaningful work are important factors resulting in high motivation. This is considered positive motivation, or what Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto, 1998) calls striving for goodness, wanting good things, desiring beautiful things, wanting to make beautiful things happen and become reality, thus wanting to do or striving to do, creating love for work or love for the work done, working with happiness. Virtue in the heart thus becomes a driving force or motivation for volunteer behavior. This aligns with studies by Wanchai et al. (online) who found that promoting virtue affects volunteer behavior in all aspects.

Happiness in work having the highest mean reflects the importance of job satisfaction in volunteer work. This study result aligns with Bunlon's (2021) research finding that internal factors promoting motivation for volunteer work according to Buddhist psychology principles include having a heart full of loving-kindness, having morality within oneself, sacrificing to help others without expecting reward, sharing and giving, having a giving heart, having good attitudes and positive thinking, having empathy for others, diligence and perseverance, thinking of helping others, and working with heart. The fact that volunteers have high happiness in work indicates they receive satisfaction from helping others and see value in what they do, which is an important driving force in maintaining continuity in volunteer work.

The desire to see others relieved from suffering having the second highest mean reflects the Buddhist principles of loving-kindness and compassion. As Phimphiriyakul et al. (2022) stated, dharma principles for promoting volunteer work include loving-kindness, the desire for others' happiness, and compassion, feeling sorry and wanting to help others escape from suffering. This is also considered a Buddhist approach called the Bodhisattva path. According

to Dhammaditto's (2022) study on promoting volunteering according to Bodhisattva principles, promoting volunteering creates human consciousness according to existing feelings to become a mind of giving, sacrifice, helping others and society so that others have happiness. Having a volunteer spirit according to Bodhisattva principles involves the desire to help others escape from suffering or problems.

High self-worth and having volunteer role models aligns with studies by Dhammaditto et al. (2020) who found that perceiving one's own abilities and seeing self-worth are factors that create volunteer behavior, and having volunteer role models. Having volunteer role models is thus an important motivation that gives volunteers inspiration for work. Besides personal role models, the Ruamkatanyu Foundation is also considered a good organizational role model, and volunteers themselves want to be examples for others, showing public spirit and social responsibility.

High admiration for the organization reflects the importance of having strong and trustworthy organizations. Studies by Chutikamee et al. (2022) found that being in a good organization helps promote volunteers' self-development, reflecting the importance of organizations that affect volunteers in terms of self-development and promoting volunteer work. The Ruamkatanyu Foundation is considered a reputable organization, and working in the organization is considered an honor for some people. Because of admiration and trust in the organization, this becomes an important motivation for volunteers to work with the foundation.

Support from friends having the lowest but still high mean shows that motivation from having supportive colleagues and working together is an important factor helping promote feelings of participation and being part of a team. This aligns with Bunlon (2021) who found that having good friends who invite participation in good activities and helping others in society who are in distress, having good friends is considered a Buddhist principle that promotes beautiful things such as volunteer work or dharma practice for mental and wisdom development.

The comparison results showing that motivation does not differ according to personal factors aligns with Zhang Ruohuan's (2019) study of volunteers at the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation Taiwan in Thailand, which found that gender, age, education, marital status, and income showed no differences in motivation for volunteer work. This research result shows that motivation for volunteering is a stable characteristic not dependent on personal factors, but may depend more on internal characteristics and good hearts of individuals. Phorungphanom (2011) described characteristics of people with volunteer qualities as including sacrifice for society, helping others, and commitment to development and working for society.

6. Conclusion

Research on motivation for volunteering among rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province found that overall motivation was at a high level (mean = 4.13). When analyzed by aspects, happiness in work had the highest mean (4.36), followed by desire to see others relieved from suffering (4.20), self-worth (4.15), having volunteer role models (4.15), admiration for the organization (4.07), and support from friends (3.86) respectively. Comparison based on personal factors showed no statistically significant differences, indicating that motivation for volunteering comes more from internal factors of individuals rather than external factors. This study provides deep understanding of volunteer motivation that can be applied to developing and promoting sustainable volunteer work. This research also created new knowledge showing that motivation for volunteer work has characteristics of stable internal traits not dependent on personal factors, but driven by happiness in work, self-worth, and desire to help others.

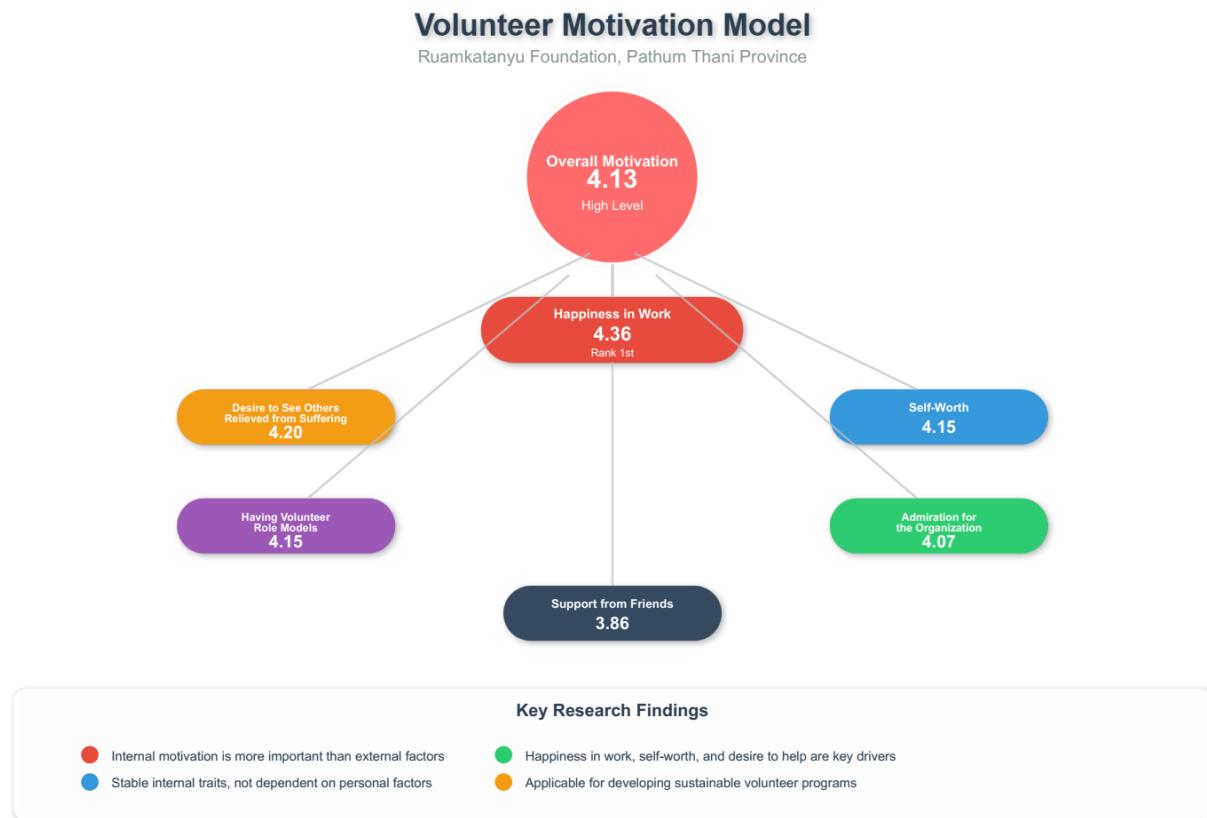


Figure 2: Volunteer Motivation Model - Ruamkatanyu Foundation, Pathum Thani Province

7. Recommendation

7.1 Recommendations for Implementation

Organizations should promote happiness in work since it was the factor with the highest mean by creating good work environments and providing emotional or psychological support, such as creating friendly atmospheres and giving praise and encouragement to increase happiness and satisfaction in volunteer work. They should strengthen empathy and helping others by organizing activities that help volunteers clearly see results of helping others, such as sharing success stories of assistance. Organizations should create volunteer role models and organizational participation by promoting senior volunteers as role models for newcomers and creating opportunities for modeling good behaviors in the organization. They should develop social support systems since "friend support" had the lowest mean score by developing policies to strengthen support networks among volunteers, such as creating online communities or organizing activities that build relationships and closeness among volunteers.

7.1 Policy Recommendations

Policies should be developed to promote training and learning related to volunteer development, focusing on creating self-worth, developing emotional and psychological skills, and emphasizing creating inspiration from good role models. There should be recognition and motivation policies for organizations since volunteers admire their organization, with policies emphasizing recognition of organizational achievements and supporting good image creation to create pride among volunteers and attract more people in society to participate in volunteer work. Systems for continuous evaluation and monitoring of volunteer motivation should be developed to enable appropriate improvements and development of support.

7.1 Recommendations for Future Research Policy

Future studies should include additional qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews with volunteers to understand true internal motivation, challenges, or feelings they experience in volunteer work to obtain deeper information regarding emotions and attitudes. Research should expand to study volunteer groups in other areas to compare whether motivation and factors related to volunteering differ in various contexts, such as in other provinces or groups working in other agencies besides disaster relief foundations. Studies should examine factors affecting volunteer retention to understand causes that make some volunteers remain in work for long periods while others stop volunteer work. Research should develop models for creating motivation for volunteer work appropriate to Thai contexts based on Buddhist dharma principles.

Acknowledgement

The researchers thank all rescue volunteers of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation in Pathum Thani Province who cooperated in answering questionnaires and providing interviews. Thanks to experts who provided advice and verified research instruments, as well as advisory faculty who provided guidance and support throughout the research process.

Declarations:

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethics of Human Research (if any) : This research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee. Certificate of Approval (COA) No. 3268/2568.

Open Access: This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which allows for use, sharing, adaptation, distribution, and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as proper credit is given to the original authors and source, a link to the Creative Commons license is provided, and any modifications are clearly indicated. Any third-party material included in this article is covered by the same Creative Commons license unless otherwise credited. If third-party material is not covered by the license and statutory regulations do not permit its use, permission must be obtained directly from the copyright holder. To access the license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

Boonma, N. W. (n.d.). *Factors influencing volunteer activities of disabled students in the Hearts Beyond a Hundred community at Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University* [Conference paper]. Sustainable Rural Development Conference 4. <https://cscd.kku.ac.th>

Bunlon, P. (2021). Motivation for volunteer work according to Buddhist psychology principles among people of various occupations in Thai society. *MCU Humanities Review*, 7(1), 72.

Chutikamee, C., et al. (2022). Study of supporting factors in eliminating defilements of dharma path doctor volunteers. *Philosophy Ashram Journal*, 4(1), 104–105.

Dhammaditto, P. J. (Channaang). (2022). Promoting volunteering according to Bodhisattva principles. *Mahachulalongkorn Academic Journal*, 8(1), 71–72.

Dhammadachiro, P. M. W., et al. (2020). Models for creating volunteering and public benefit among university students in Loei Province. *Journal of Roi Kaensarn Academy*, 5(2), 97–98.

Phimphiriyakul, P., et al. (2022). Application of Buddhist volunteering with village health

volunteers (VHV) work in Seamed Subdistrict, Mueang Buriram District, Buriram Province. *MCU Buriram Academic Journal*, 7(2), 132–133.

Phra Dhammapitaka (P. A. Payutto). (1998). *Education as a development tool that still needs development*. Buddhist Dharma Foundation.

Phorungphanom, T. (2011). *Rewards from being a volunteer according to social exchange theory: A case study of Japanese volunteers at Baan Rom Sai Foundation* [Master's thesis, Chiang Mai University].

Pisanbut, S. (2013). *Creating and processing questionnaire data*. Withayapat.

Sangphan, K. (n.d.). *Motivation for performance of volunteer rescue workers at Rom Sai Foundation, Satun Province*. <http://www.mpa-mba.ru.ac.th>

Sukbamrungsin, S. (2010). *Work motivation of teachers at Laem Chabang Engineering School, Chonburi Province* [Master's thesis, Burapha University].

Wanchai, A., et al. (n.d.). *Development of nursing students' volunteer behavior using virtue projects*. <https://so06.tci-thaijo.org>

Worapongdhon, T. (2018). Population, samples, and sample size for research. *Journal of Health Promotion and Environmental Health*, 21–22.

Zhang, R. (2019). *Study of the relationship between motivation and happiness of volunteers: A case study of Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation Taiwan in Thailand* [Master's thesis, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University].