

Title: IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY IN SOCIAL WORK ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG YOUNG ADULTS- AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Background:

Volunteering has proven to be beneficial for one's psychological well-being over the years across various nationalities. Previous researchers have reported a wide range of evidence of volunteering leading to psychological well-being among the volunteers along with increased empathy and related facets. However, effects of volunteering in social work have been majorly studied among older adults and not much among the younger adults. Along with that, volunteering studies have been rarely surfaced in the Indian context.

Material and Methods:

A purposive sample of 100 individuals within the age range of 21-30 years [Volunteers = 50 (Males=23, Females=27), Non-Volunteers=50(Males=29, Females=21)] were considered for an analytical type of cross-sectional study after screening them via an information schedule and were administered the pre-determined questionnaires namely, GHQ 12 [Cronbach's alpha 0.9], The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) [Cronbach's alpha .70 to .78].

Duration of this study was 1 year (2018-2019).The collected data was found to follow a normal distribution and accordingly parametric statistical calculations were done using the software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.

Results:

Volunteers differed significantly from non-volunteers in terms of general mental well-being. Personal distress as a facet of Interpersonal Reactivity was found to be inversely associated with mental well-being among volunteers. Perspective taking and Fantasy were found to be predictors of Empathic Concern.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that volunteering does have a significant effect on the mental well-being of young adults, but the enhancement of empathy correlates in relation to volunteering require further exploration.

Key words: Empathy, Mental well-being, Personal distress, pro-social behaviour, Social Work, Young volunteers.