

When True Service Counts: Developing a Volunteerism Attributes Questionnaire (VAQ), An Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Approach

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Abstract Volunteerism is a form of service to do common good that is unpaid, but produces positive outcomes for the society and a rewarding experience on the part of the volunteer. The central aim of this study was to develop, test, and validate a questionnaire for assessing characteristics of volunteerism. The exploratory sequential mixed methods design was applied as a rigorous method in the development of the questionnaire. In this design, a three-phase approach was conducted. The first phase was a phenomenological study that used a semi-structured in-depth interview to describe the attributes of volunteerism based on the accounts of the 7 interviewed volunteers of their lived-experiences. In the second phase, the Volunteerism Attributes Questionnaire (VQ) was developed on the basis of the results of phase 1. In the third phase, two surveys were conducted to establish the validity of the VAQ. The first survey (N=125), Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to determine the factorial structure of the questionnaire and in the second survey (N=422), the constructs of the questionnaire were further validated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). This study offers a unique approach that outlined the process of developing a quantitative instrument for determining volunteerism attributes. It is now feasible for volunteers

from various sectors and cultures to apply the VAQ in determining their inherent values of volunteerism using a common questionnaire.

Keywords Mixed Methods, Sequential Exploratory, Phenomenology, Interviews, Questionnaire Development, Volunteerism

1. Introduction

Volunteerism is defined differently from different countries, yet it remains to be common to many [1, 2]. It is a type of work that it is unpaid and non-obligatory, but volunteers willfully share their time, money, and skills that could be in a form of physical assistance, helping an elderly, providing tutorials online and offline, taking part in activities that promote global benefits, social and moral support, advising, and organizing group activities on behalf of causes and movements, designed to benefit a person, a group, an organization, communities or a cause [1, 3]. In some cultures, volunteerism is shown in selfless act of giving services, effort and resources without seeking any

return [4]. Voluntary activities are performed based on the volunteer's expressed willingness to help in order to improve the lives of community members [3, 5]. These volunteering activities promote civic engagement that unite members of the community to which in turn build a safer and unified society [6]. Most of the work performed by volunteers are without direct financial compensation but volunteers continue to devote and participate in voluntary activities [7]. With this, it can be assumed that there is an inherent value of people helping other people that people practice, and an internalized compassionate motivation to help others. It is something that people already have [3]. This has been the trait of human beings that is inherent since the beginning of time [5]. Numerous factors that motivate people to do voluntary activities were examined in previous research studies, for example a study of Liszt-Rohlf, et al. [4] reported that acquiring new skills, work-related experience, and enhancing qualifications are the motivating factors that encourage young people to volunteer or do voluntary work. While Ackermann [6] attributed volunteering with the person's personality traits to understand the underlying reasons why people volunteer. This is supported by Clary, et al. [7] when they developed the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) that proposed six psychological functions, namely: values, understanding, enhancement, career, social, and protective; that explain why people volunteer. However, Smith, et al. [8] argued that volunteering is a mix of motivations and benefits that varies according to a continuum of volunteer involvement, between regular, and occasional volunteers, and those not volunteering at all. Against this backdrop, the researchers find it noteworthy to investigate the attributes that characterize volunteers. Investigating what motivates volunteers to do common good could not fully reveal why some people devote their time, effort, or energy to voluntary activities while others do not. Several scales were developed to measure volunteerism activities such as the Attitude Toward Helping Others Scale (AHO) which was developed by Webb, Green, & Brashear [9] to measure attitudes influencing monetary donations to charitable organizations. Helping Attitude Scales (HAS) developed by Nickell [10] was used to measure beliefs, feelings, and behaviors associated with helping. The Attitudes toward Charitable Giving Scale [11] measure attitude and the underlying inclination to give or donate to charity. Bales Volunteerism-Activism Scale [12] measures the foundational motivations for serving. The Helping Power Motivation Scale [13] measures one's motivation to help others and one's own responsibility to do public good. Despite evidence of volunteerism scales, none of them documented the attributes of volunteers. Seeing this gap, the researchers find it important to create a specific scale that determines the attributes that characterize volunteers. Doing so will provide insights to organizations to hire the right volunteers that possess the qualities, attributes and characteristics that could support the organization's causes, goals, and activities. This study contends that the attributes

characterizing volunteers need to be explored to answer the research question, "What attributes characterize volunteerism?". Therefore, the goal of this paper is to systematically develop a questionnaire that could be used to determine a person's volunteerism attributes using the exploratory sequential mixed methods approach in order to ensure the questionnaires' fidelity, robustness, and appropriateness [14]. Attracting and retaining volunteers are vital components for non-profit volunteer organizations to sustain its operations. To better recruit and retain volunteers, such questionnaire seeks to contribute by providing information to organizations about the characteristics of each person who are involved in volunteerism activities. This study reported the process of questionnaire development which is presented in three phases. The first phase presents the mapping of the attributes of volunteerism, the second phase outlines the development of the questionnaire; and the third phase is the validation of the developed questionnaire through surveys. This paper concluded with implications and recommendations for future researchers who would conduct similar research studies.

2. Theoretical Background

Several theoretical explanations emerged as a backdrop in the study about volunteerism. For instance, the Theory of Planned Behavior [15] elucidates that motives of volunteering were preceded by intentions influenced by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Clary, et al. [7] developed the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) which postulates the six psychological functions, namely: values, understanding, enhancement, career, social, and protective that explains why people volunteer. Other scholars associated volunteering with individual characteristics, religiosity, social factors, and resources [16, 17, 6]. In this study theoretical models of volunteering of Thoits and Hewitt [18] were applied as its backdrop. Within these frameworks volunteering is seen as a type of work propelled by inner motivation, attitude, and personal characteristics.

The "volunteer motivations model" posits that the desire to volunteer occurs in the presence of motivating factors [18]. Every volunteer has their own personal motivation to offer their talents, skills, resources, money or time to an organization without expecting any material incentives or monetary compensation [19]. Motivations can be about bringing social change, giving a sense of achievement, personal growth, involving families in volunteering work, serving the community, creating an affiliation, or personal satisfaction [20]. One of the most important aspects of motivation is the opportunity that volunteers can engage in purposeful activities to fulfill certain goals that bring intangible rewards such as inner joy or fulfillment [7]. In regard to explaining motivations behind volunteering, some scholars theorize multiple dimensions of motivations

such as altruistic and egoistic [21], intrinsic and extrinsic [22]. On one hand, altruistic motives engage volunteers for the welfare of others, while egoistic motives engage volunteers for their own welfare [21]. On the other hand, volunteers who are intrinsically motivated find inner satisfaction, while those who are extrinsically motivated are waiting for external rewards [22]. The motivations behind the desire to volunteer vary from person to person. Understanding their motivations will help organizations develop, support, and retain volunteers [18]. The “values and attitudes model” highlights that a person’s values and attitudes influence volunteering [18]. The values and attitudes possessed by volunteers were transmitted to them by role models, such as their parents and leaders in the school, church, and the community [23]. Those who are exposed to such role models will show their acquired values and attitudes in their volunteering activities, such as prosocial attitude, empathy, or a positive outlook in life [24]. Other authors support that volunteer behavior in this case reflects the attitudes and values of their parents or leaders that were modeled to them in their childhood [25, 26]. However, it was also found out that some volunteers develop these values and attitudes after the volunteering experience [23]. The “volunteer personality model” links personality with volunteering behavior [18]. In this context, volunteering reflects a person’s personality. By nature, some people are generous, helpful, and active in community or civic activities. Whether they come from their upbringing or genes, there are always people who always do an extra mile or take initiative to help others [2]. According to Akduru & Guneri cited in Halisa, et al. [20], personality makes a person’s volunteering experience more meaningful. It is characterized by behavior affected by the person’s inner world or internal conditions. Individuals with high internal control, high emotional stability, and high self-esteem would be more likely to volunteer [18].

These theoretical models show that motivations, values, attitudes, and personality are precursors of volunteerism that help shed light on determining the attributes that characterize volunteers.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Volunteerism and Motivation

Volunteering motives are important in explaining volunteer engagements and understanding whether volunteering is an inherent behavior of a person or influenced by outside factors. Previous research studies examined and documented the underlying motives in people’s volunteering activities [7, 15, 19, 20, 27]. There are various motivational reasons that encouraged people to volunteer that may indicate the person’s functional motives that are most relevant to them [22] which are classified as intrinsic (altruistic) and extrinsic (egoistic) motivations [21,

28]. When a volunteer enjoys helping others even without compensation, material rewards, or recognition, the person receives internal reward due to an intrinsic motivation to care, to help, and to offer services for the welfare of others. The volunteer finds fulfillment in the volunteer work itself since the motives are internal [29]. In this view, volunteers who are intrinsically motivated feel happy and will be devoting their resources, money, time, effort, and skills to complete the assigned tasks without expecting any reward, but they envisaged their contributions for the welfare of others, betterment of humankind and the society [30]. Moreover, intrinsically motivated volunteers do not allow external factors to hinder them in volunteering [22, 31]. In contrast, some people see volunteering as extrinsically rewarding [32] it gives people opportunities for career advancement, creates a stronger social network, provides monetary compensation, incentives, praise, promotion, or recognition [20, 33, 34]. People who are motivated by tangible rewards or extrinsic factors engage in volunteer activities for their own benefit [22]. Hence, the reasons people perform volunteering activities are probably motivated by intrinsic or extrinsic factors, or for some people a combination of the aforementioned motivators.

3.2. Volunteerism and Social Factors

Volunteerism is perceived as a social activity [16, 35]. Social factors such as social context, social integration, and social roles afforded to influence a person’s volunteering activities [16]. The social context refers to the social norms of the community where people live. In this context, if volunteering is an acceptable norm, people in that community tend to participate more in volunteering activities [17, 36]. On one hand, social integration refers to the social affiliations, social contacts, and social networks people have that influence their propensity to volunteer. Studies reveal that volunteers are recruited by family, neighbors, friends, acquaintances in social organizations where they belong [23, 24, 25, 26]. People with extensive social contacts, networks, and affiliations increase the likelihood of being recruited and be involved in volunteering. Within this frame, volunteering also cultivates social relationships [37, 38]. On the other hand, social roles refer to volunteerism as a form of civic engagement [39]. People with strong civic orientation are more active in volunteering activities and tend to volunteer more often [40]. These activities can be in a form of soliciting names for petition, joining in social movements, or involving in philanthropic behaviors [1, 3]. From this standpoint, volunteering plays an important role in building a unified and civil society [9, 39].

3.3. Volunteerism and Personality Traits

A relationship between volunteering and personality traits was reported in several studies [6, 17, 23, 41, 42]. Personality traits that influence volunteering are

extraversion [6], empathy [41] and conscientiousness [42]. Extraversion is characterized as being friendly, sociable, active, talkative, and outgoing [6]. Due to this personality trait, extraverts have a larger social circle that makes more likely to be asked to volunteer, and more likely for them to accept the offer [18, 20]. Empathy is a personality trait that compels people to understand the feelings of others, especially those who are in pain and offer to help them. Empathy allows individuals to share their feelings to others that draws them towards getting involved in volunteering activities [41]. Conscientiousness is a personality trait that relates to being responsible, self-organized, efficient and hardworking. This also includes characteristics of order and logic [7, 42]. People with a high level of conscientiousness tend to manage their time to carry out their social obligations such as participating in volunteer activities [42]. Conscientious volunteers are committed to adhering to volunteering schedules, and they are more likely to work long hours since they consider volunteering as an opportunity for a larger cause [42]. These personality traits of extraversion, empathy, and conscientiousness become important factors when volunteering is taken into account.

3.4. Volunteerism and Prosocial Behavior

Volunteerism is an inherent human behavior that is a part of social activity that people engaged into [2, 35]. Voluntary involvement and social activities are closely linked; those who volunteer more are people with high involvement in social activities [16]. The reason for this is attributed to the person's prosocial behavior, like volunteering or helping others [41]. By definition, prosocial behavior is a voluntary behavior intended for common good out of concern for others. This includes sharing, helping, comforting, and a range of positive behaviors resulting in benefits for others, and sometimes cost for the self [43]. Research showed that people who engage in prosocial behaviors, such as spending money on others, sharing resources, giving away one's time and skills to help others, are happier and more satisfied in life [44]. With this, people continue to volunteer and help others since these types of behavior increase people's happiness that led the way to higher well-being and life satisfaction [32]. If the intent of the prosocial behavior is more on increasing the welfare of others the prosocial behavior becomes altruism driven by altruistic motivation [29, 31]. Several studies revealed that an association exists between altruistic attitudes and volunteering behaviors [7, 22, 31, 32]. In fact, altruism focuses on the continuum of helping others even if the cost outweighs the benefits associated with helping or volunteering. In other words, altruism is a selfless act of helping motivated by the innate desire (altruism) to help others [3,5]. However, other researchers argue that volunteering is a form of self-serving act because human egos (egoism) are involved, whether the service is voluntary, the person committing the act still

receives benefits from helping, such as recognition, awards, fame, etc. [19]. Although, some scholars perceived that volunteering is primarily driven by self-interest [19, 2]. other scholars believed that a volunteer is capable of altruism [3, 5]. Therefore, volunteering can be both driven by egoistic and altruistic reasons [7]. It is in this debate that the researchers would find out in detail if the act of helping or volunteering is driven by altruism or not. Thus, in this study, we considered altruism and altruistic impulse as drivers of the prosocial behavior and considered to be indices of attributes that characterize volunteerism. If the attributes that characterize volunteers are known, organizations can better attract volunteers by developing persuasive activities that match the specific characteristics of an individual volunteer or organizations. This research in developing a volunteerism attributes questionnaire has practical implications in the recruitment and sustainment of volunteer work force and volunteer organizations.

4. Materials and Methods

Study Design

The exploratory sequential mixed methods approach was selected as the appropriate design for this type of study [14, 45]. The intent of this mixed methods study was to qualitatively explore the attributes of volunteers through in-depth interviews of small sample size [45] and determine the appropriateness of the qualitative results and its broad applicability with the quantitative results. This design combines interpretivism and positivism paradigms. It started with qualitative approach framed within the context of interpretivism that collected data from in-depth semi-structured interviews to understand the meanings of the lived-experiences of the volunteers. Then it shifted to the positivist view in the next phase which included sample surveys of volunteerism attributes. Also, a three-stage approach was utilized in this design. The first phase explored the phenomena through qualitative data collection and analysis. The findings of this initial exploration were used to develop the questionnaire that was administered to a larger population. The second phase was built from the first qualitative phase which is the development of the quantitative feature, the Volunteerism Attributes Questionnaire (VAQ) that was based on the findings of first phase. The third phase was the quantitative data collection to test the overall validity of the questionnaire. Procedural diagram for conducting the exploratory sequential research design is shown in Figure 1. In all the stages, data collection protocols were observed and informed consent was sought to allow participants the option to freely participate or withdraw the interview and survey at any point. Protection of the anonymity and privacy of the participants were observed by keeping their identifying features confidential and by coding their responses. Confidentiality of the shared information was

also secured through a secure data storage system.

Phase 1: Mapping the Attributes of Volunteerism

The goal of this phase was to explore the descriptions of the attributes that characterize volunteerism on the basis of the lived-experiences of the interviewed volunteers. The qualitative phase of this study employed phenomenology as its design. Phenomenology is a qualitative inquiry approach wherein the participants described to the researcher their lived-experiences about a phenomenon being investigated [46]. Data collected through in-depth interviews were conducted to a particular group of individuals with first-hand knowledge and experience about volunteerism to provide a rich, detailed, description of the attributes that characterize volunteers [47].

Participants

The qualitative phase used purposeful sampling [45] to recruit seven participants with experiences in volunteerism activities to participate in the interviews. This sampling procedure involves identifying and selecting volunteers that are experienced and knowledgeable about volunteerism and they are able to explicitly communicate the essence of their volunteerism lived-experiences in an expressive, reflective, and articulate manner. Their willingness and their availability to participate the interviews were also considered as a screener criterion for choosing them [46, 47]. Among the interviewees, 57% are men and 43% are women and they were from different locations, UAE (3), Philippines (1), Thailand (1), Switzerland (1), and Mozambique (1). All of them are Filipinos.

Data Collection

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews using a semi-structured interview questionnaire to elicit the participants' experiences, attitudes, and the meanings they put into their volunteerism behavior in the way they experience it [47]. The phenomenological interviews were structured following these three main domains of interviewing, namely: contextualization, apprehending the phenomenon and clarifying the phenomenon [47,48]. The study was conducted in 2020 during the time of Covid-19 pandemic, hence, face to face interviews were not possible, instead they were conducted online via zoom video communication that lasted between 90 – 120 minutes. Video interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interviews were conducted by the researcher who underwent training on in-depth interviewing.

Data Analysis

A team was organized to analyze the qualitative data [48]. The analysis of qualitative data was guided by the thematic analysis framework and the phases of qualitative

data analysis of Watkins, et al. [48]. These phases include preparing and organizing the data, transcribing the data, becoming familiar with the data corpus, coding the data, and producing themes from underlying coded passages. Phase 1, this phase included the gathering of all video recorded interviews in one location, name and date each file, create a master data list, and store in a secure location. Phase 2 involves data transcription steps, the verbatim transcription that captured every utterance of the participants [49] and the emic to etic transcription, where the emic perspective is the insider's view of reality of how participants perceived the phenomena, while the etic perspective is the observer's subsequent attempt to take the descriptive information of gathered data, organize, analyze, compare, and translate in terms of the outsider's own understanding [50]. This phase deepens the researchers' understanding of the participants' perspectives. In phase 3, the data analysis team used an Excel spreadsheet to organize and manage transcribed data [48]. The spreadsheet was divided into columns with the following headings: transcript number, questions asked, participants' responses, notes, codes, and themes. The researchers assigned codes in phase 4. The codes at this phase connect the participants' statements, experiences, and reflections with specific conceptual ideas [49] followed by identifying the frequency of codes to determine which code was the most significant and frequently cited throughout the data [50]. In phase 5, the researchers bring together various related recurring categories and collapsed them into themes and subthemes. These themes were determined through a combination of deductive and inductive methods [51] and then used to form the basis of the construction of the volunteerism attributes questionnaire.

Validity in Qualitative Phase

Procedures for establishing validity of qualitative data were obtained through a member-checking, thick, rich description, and peer reviews [50, 52]. Member-checking is the process of testing data, preliminary categories, and interpretations with the participants from whom the original constructions were collected. In this procedure, emergent themes, categories, and descriptions were sent back to the participants so that they can confirm the accuracy and credibility of the narrative accounts. Then, researchers incorporate the participants' comments into the final narrative. According to Creswell [52], thick, rich descriptions are deep, dense, detailed accounts of the experiences of the participants. The purpose of this validation process is to immerse the readers to the events being described in the study. Researchers write in vivid detail making the interaction of two persons alive. Finally, a peer review was sought from someone who is familiar with the phenomenon being investigated [50, 52]. Written feedbacks provided by the peer reviewers were incorporated in the final report.

Results and Discussion of Phase 1

Volunteerism happens when the need arises and when people contribute to its purpose. The sole purpose of volunteerism is to help others, a situation or even a cause. Several volunteers in diaspora have been selected to share their experiences, this phenomenological research describes the interesting tales of volunteers who imparted themselves in contributing to the true meaning of service. Resulting from qualitative data analysis, three themes and nine sub-themes emerged. The three themes were intrinsic, decisional, and attitudinal which are considered as the major attributes of volunteerism and the nine sub-themes, namely: exemplifying spirit, enduring service, commiserating will, (intrinsic); integrating life, prioritizing options, fortifying commitment, (decisional);

generous heart, introspective mind, and self-actualized individual (attitudinal) were the main components of the attributes of which each attribute is composed of three themes. Discussion of the themes and sub-themes is presented below.

Theme 1: Intrinsic Attribute

Scholars documented that the concept of volunteerism is positively associated with intrinsic behavior that comes from within which is particularly motivated by internal motives, values, and positive attributes that are satisfied by the volunteer activity itself [22]. Volunteer activities motivated by intrinsic attributes are inherently rewarding and do not expect the prospect of any external reward [22, 29, 32].

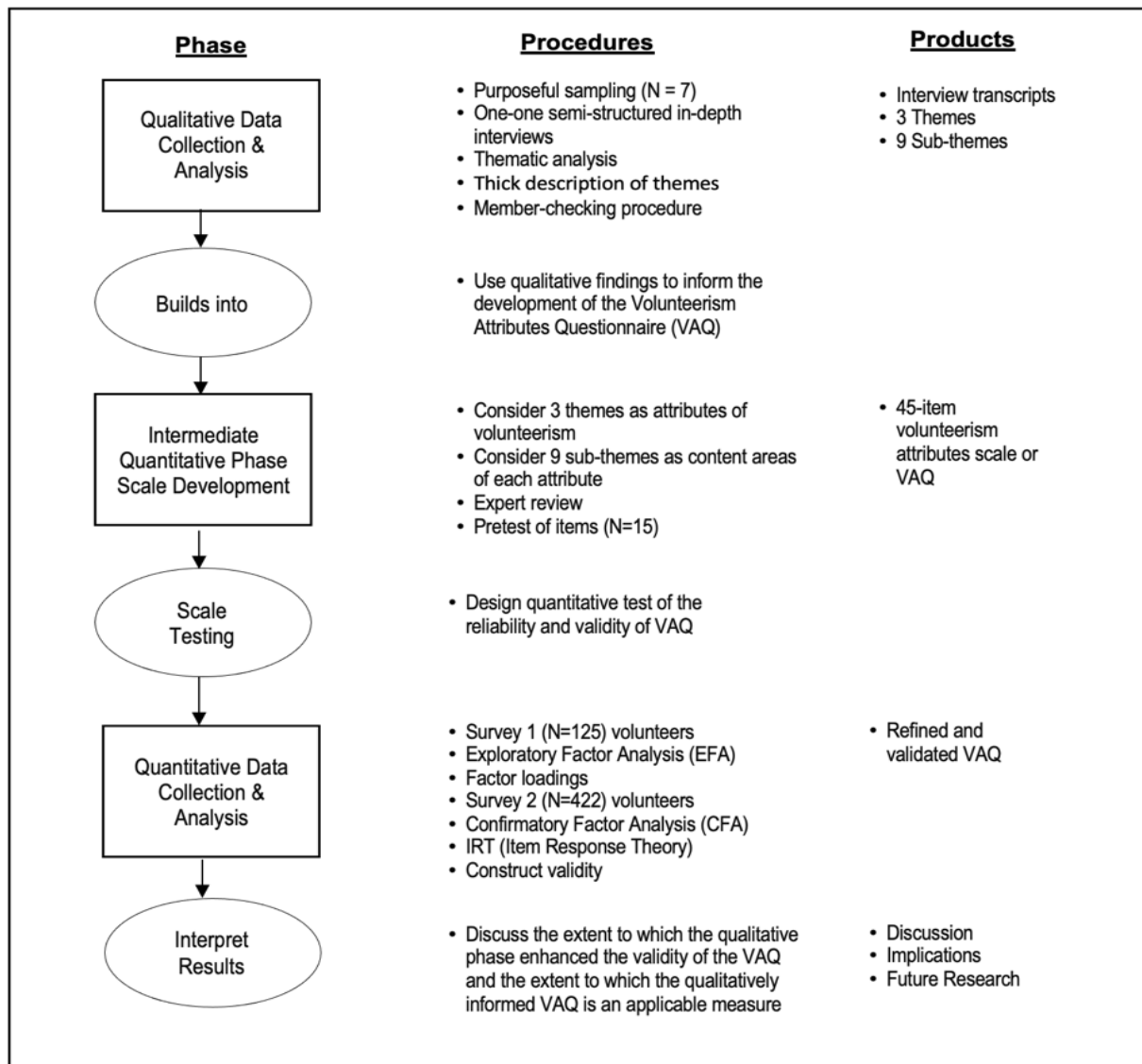


Figure 1. Procedural diagram of exploratory research design for testing and validating a volunteerism attributes questionnaire

There are several factors that promote intrinsic motivation to volunteer, such as stimulation, conquering challenges, fulfillment, and self-determination [30, 32]. Findings of this study added exemplifying spirit, enduring service and commiserating will as attributes that promote intrinsic motivation. Understanding the attributes that promote intrinsic motivation to volunteer can help illuminate how it works and why it can be beneficial.

Exemplifying Spirit

Exemplifying spirit means selflessly giving oneself to serve voluntarily to benefit the disadvantaged and those in need. Done by many volunteers if not all, this was declared by this respondent, “... *there’s a lot of innate, good will among Filipino volunteers, the good heart, being together and all, in a way those are good traits, those are good qualities, and they are in a way part of that good will that is needed to be a volunteer.*” [R3]. This reflection is the representation of their beliefs as a volunteer, their characterization of their volunteerism affirmed by these respondents:

“Filipinos, by nature, we are community oriented, Filipinos gather together.” [R6]

“So, for us volunteerism is very natural for Filipinos, because it is more on social, it’s more about camaraderie.” [R1]

The exemplifying spirit to Filipinos is embedded in them, may seem automatic as pronounced by this respondent, “...*even the poor, when they see their “kababayans” or people around them needing, they are ready to help*” [R4].

Undoubtedly, exemplifying spirit is the very driver of every volunteer in doing what they do whenever they volunteer. Every volunteer motivated by exemplifying spirit serves with a smile in finding purpose in his or her productivity [7].

Enduring Service

Enduring Service, in the context of volunteerism, is defined as volunteering untiringly, whether it entails long hours of work, extending time, being available whenever called for to serve and never ceasing to serve until a volunteer gets old, as long as he/she is able, and as long as he/she is needed [20]. This has been substantiated by one of the statements of a respondent, “*I will continue (to volunteer) to the best that I can, while I still have the energy and my body can still do it.*” [R7], other respondents support this as they mused:

“Well, I retired in January 2012, I came back from Rome, Italy to Manila, we’ve been continuing (to volunteer) until today.” [R3].

“Yes. I will continue (to volunteer). Until death. I am still strong. As I have told you my life is doing work for the people.” [R4]

Remarkably, it appears that no one will get tired of serving voluntarily, their energy and capability are the limit, their endurance is immense when it comes to serving. This

is a sacrificial form of volunteerism attribute, wherein characterized by looking outwardly to benefit others rather than to oneself [20]. In the realm of enduring service through volunteerism, this becomes continuous due to satisfaction and not based on outward motivation. They continue to serve because they remain motivated and are willing to endure [8].

Commiserating Will

Commiseration constitutes the practice of compassion [3, 5]. Commiseration exemplifies a palpable expression of love for those who are suffering, and it is alleged to be the animation of humanistic values such as accountability, altruism, integrity, and respect for others [41]. This is professed by one respondent, “*Filipinos by nature are very helpful... I have been through different countries, and you can see how Filipinos help each other, even if they do not know each other, even if they live far apart, from north or from the south, they do not hesitate to give help. It’s the compassion; it’s the faith that Filipinos can...*” [R4]

This trait is common to volunteers, their will is always inter-twined with commiserating, that can be said as their soft spot, being spoken the same by this response:

“...at the height of the pandemic and I found out a lot of Filipinos were hungry and then someone is donating a truckload of goods, I went that way regardless of the pandemic (COVID-19).” [R2]

Commiserating Will is beautifully translated in serving that is rooted from within to benefit the many as emotionally revealed by this respondent, “*It is very meaningful. Why? Because it is the expression of love. It is the expression of compassion. It is the expression of service and that is what I am called for. To love, to be compassionate and to obtain this love, is to be of service.*” [R4]

True volunteers are already born with it. It is inherent in the character of the volunteers to express compassion in whatever form it may be [9, 10, 11].

Theme 2: Decisional Attribute

Voluntary work is non-compulsory and mostly unpaid, performed by individuals directly for others or through an organization or social network [23]. Due to the demand of high-commitment and passion in this type of activity, engaging in volunteer activities requires a degree of appropriate decisions to make [42]. Previous research studies on the factors that influence people to participate in voluntary engagements were extensive [23, 26]. Several factors such as gender, age, marital status influenced a person’s decision to volunteer [24]. However, looking deeper into the reasons why people decide to volunteer contributes important knowledge to understanding why people do voluntary work. Some may say that they volunteer because of an altruistic desire to care for others, a desire to learn new things, a desire to maintain social connections, a belief in fulfilling social obligations, or

spiritual motivations [25]. In addition, the in-depth interviews revealed the following decisional attributes that made people decide to volunteer, they are integrating life, prioritizing options, and fortifying commitment. These are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

Integrating Life

A volunteer's life is as regular and normal as everyone else, having daily routines – family, friends, work and personal activities. All are integrated, including their volunteering activities. *“Well, family, we are together, that's why we are here together because that is our life already, we have of course children, we deal with our kids and our grandkids, but we find time for them, it's the question of being able to find time, a shared meal, a shared prayer life is very important, the spiritual dimension to us is important.”* [R3], which is supported by other respondents with their sharing:

“...planning is very strictly enforced, yes, we do our planning in advance, that way, things are attended to, families not neglected, community services not neglected and work also got its own demands.” [R6]

“...as much as possible I want to take my family. I encourage my wife to be a volunteer too. It's a quality time for us when we are there, at least we are together and then we are doing these things voluntarily. There are times that I tried to involve my organization in my voluntary activities. I tried to link some of my activities in my company where I am employed.” [R1]

Integrating life of volunteers values the importance of family, friends, and corporate social responsibility [11, 12]. With the condition that volunteers treat this as equally important, they remain to believe on altruism, the perceived responsibilities, and the obligation to give back through volunteering without neglecting their livelihood and the personal life [53]. Volunteers' integrating life still recognizes certain boundaries among home, non-work roles, paid and unpaid work, treating it with flexibility [3] which is a permeable barrier [54].

Prioritizing Options

In every activity that everyone one does, there are simple decisions needed to be done and prioritize. Volunteering is not the only thing volunteers do, they have other life obligations and responsibilities to do. Knowing and setting priorities help volunteers organize their lives, *“for me personally, you also need to know your priority. First, your family, then your work and then your voluntary activities. My priority is of course my family, then work and then my volunteering.”* [R1]

A real volunteer understands how to manage their time and priorities, one of the respondents commented on this as follows:

“I make sure that I have quality time also for myself, so from time to time, I spend a time off from my

voluntary work. I am spending it with my family and myself. I would really set aside that time where I am not going to open my phone or even my Facebook and I just lay down in my bed or just hang out with my kids. So, there is a proper balance. So, it is just like managing your time... You just need to know your limitations.” [R2]

Prioritizing is an activity that deals with discretion and the positioning of things in proper order according to importance, relevance, sequence, significance and/or value using evaluation process that creates ranking [24]. This decisional attribute pertains to what and where that may sometimes cause confusion if not properly processed. There is complexity behind the process of decision making and proper comparisons must be done to come up with the correct hierarchy on time. Individuals volunteer without neglecting their duties and obligations [7]. Their decisional compass is directed by their proper prioritizing options and is consistent in real caring for and concern of their work, their family, friends, and their volunteering.

Fortifying Commitment

Commitment has never dissipated with volunteers, this is very serious to them, the assurance of this trait has always come side by side with their volunteering and treated very personal, *“...make sure that you have your time, you can commit yourself not only the time, but the effort also. Volunteers, at least should be clear on what they really want and then they should be ready to commit themselves to sacrifice. It is called sacrifice for others.”* [R1], that is strongly upheld by the statements of other volunteers.

“... if you really want to volunteer, you need to be determined because if you are halfhearted, you'll fall by the way side. You have to be determined. Maybe these are the key words – determination, commitment and dedication to the work.” [R3]

“...should have a certain sense of commitment also, that they cannot just say ok I am coming to volunteer my time and talent, resources and then half way through the program or the project they pull out, and this is one thing which they really dislike among some volunteers.” [R6]

In the context of volunteerism, commitment is fortified in the sense that the level of personal dedication to complete a task becomes a decisional attribute expressed in the determination in achieving a goal in having a strong sense of mission and in engaging in an unwavering relationship founded by the will to sacrifice with great importance [7, 9, 10,11]. The fortifying commitment of volunteers is drawn from a disciplined life, acting with the strength of will and deriving from their religiosity as directed by their moral ascendancy, specifically driven by their social conscience. Commitment must be solid when volunteering.

Theme 3: Attitudinal Attribute

Attitude is the perception of a person to the world and how a person or a group reacts to it. It is the reaction of an individual whether they “like it or not, want it or not” the concept, situation, scenario, objects, places even time – these are being conveyed through affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects [23]. Literature shows that attitude drives volunteerism and it is reflected in the behavior of the volunteers [18, 20]. A volunteer with the right attitude is a self-sacrificing individual who performs duties and obligations to the highest level to realize goals and achieve inner satisfaction [20]. In this study, three attitudinal attitudes of volunteers were identified: generous heart, introspective mind, and self-actualized individual.

Generous Heart

Generosity does not only alleviate the needy through giving, or the volunteering of talent, treasure, time and relationship, but an exceptional behavior with a deep understanding of the heart as told by one of the respondents, “I think, the key here is you have to be generous, with your time, with your money, and with your relations with others and that summarizes it all. Because, if you will be “stingy” stingy with your time, with your resources, and you don’t want to relate with your colleagues, nothing will happen. The relationship with colleagues, money, is just a resource, use it, go ahead, if you need to use the money to be effective to whatever you are doing or task, go ahead, then with time, if you want it can be 24/7.” [R3]

Continuous flow of resources is a necessity not an option, as kind heart moves things, a generous hear makes things happen and this is supported by these snippets of stories:

“There is a concept that I need a lot time, in terms of resources, it should be the same since it’s a voluntary activity, you have to sometimes shell out funds from your own resources. [R1]. “It’s difficult to do community service if you have no one to go to. In terms of resources, instead of me going to Starbucks and buy coffee, I would just eat something that I can save then I’ll just spend it on other things so, it’s a priority. That’s how I typically to do it...” [R2]

Introspective Mind

When volunteering, it is important to examine oneself, clear of what they want to do, reflecting on their will from inside and out. This is the fervent practice of every volunteer, a behavior that is specifically unique to volunteers in their life of serving and sharing. It is who they are for the sake of their beneficiaries, this had been indicated by the testimony of this respondent: “Volunteers should have a clear mind or clear intention because when you volunteer yourself you commit yourself. It’s your own decision, no one will force you, so you should be really decided on what you want to happen in your life...” [R1], similarly expressed by other respondents:

“Volunteers are giving people, like you and me, we

like to give, we like to help. There is that desire to go out of way to help others. There has got to be some number of skills and experience to make them understand and know themselves better before they can contribute to the community, because if they come without any understanding of who they are and what they are doing, sometimes it could be tragic” [R6]

For some, introspective mind swims through the heart and goes deeper to the soul as manifested by these two respondents respectively: “Find this niche in your heart if you will enjoy helping other people, because it is part of your experience in the past, because it is really personal.” [R7], “...should be matured enough, filled with spirituality, living the faith, because it’s difficult to do volunteer work if you are not matured, and if you are not strong in faith because being matured and strong in faith, you can do many things with full of love.” [R4]

Self-actualized Individual

It is in volunteering that one finds personal growth, enlightenment, and self-discovery leading to self-actualization. These are evident in the musings of this respondent, “Well, I’m still a person, all the traits as a person, in relations to myself, with others, relations with God, they’re all there, I mean, that is one whole, you can’t parcel that out, so, have I become a better person? Yes, of course, because you have to be with others, you get sharpened you know, your skills, better mindset, better skillset you are able to lead others, able to articulate better, so, all that, it is included, the sharpening, the outcome of volunteerism.” [R3]

Apparently, part of volunteers is having their own direction to grow themselves, volunteerism is one of their channels, this has been supported these respondents:

“I become who I become! ...you got there because you volunteered...” [R5] “I became more meaningful as a person.” [R4]. “It’s amazing, I have become really humble, I realize I can’t do a lot of things, only those within my means, I have seen the little that I do, has got a huge ripple effect. I have become more understanding, more giving in the process”. [R6]

Phase 2: Questionnaire Development

In Phase 2, the questionnaire was developed, and evaluated its validity using face validity and internal consistency reliability. Three themes and 9 sub-themes emerged after data analysis. The 3 themes were the major attributes of volunteerism and the 9 sub-themes were the main components of the attributes. Based on the content of the interviews, an item pool of 45-items was developed describing each attribute and components of volunteerism. To examine the content validity of the questionnaire, face validity was conducted. This involves the expert looking at the items in the questionnaire and agreeing that the test is a

valid measure of the concept which is being measured [55]. Three researchers who are experts in qualitative and quantitative research reviewed the items in the questionnaire for face validity. Suggestions from these experts were incorporated in the instrument. A pre-test on 15 respondents who are involved in volunteerism activities was conducted for the purpose of exploring the questionnaire's internal consistency reliability. Internal consistency concerns the extent to which items on the test or questionnaire are measuring the same thing. Coefficient alpha is typically used during questionnaire development with items that have several response options such as 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree [56]. The results yielded a Cronbach alpha of .98 for the overall questionnaire. In this questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha for each attribute was .88 (Intrinsic), .86 (Decisional), and .96 (Attitudinal), respectively which means that the questionnaire has a good internal consistency [57] which is above the minimum value of .70 for a newly developed questionnaire [57]. The face validity and internal consistency reliability test provided the initial validity and reliability of the developed questionnaire. The developed questionnaire was composed of 45-items divided into 3 main components with each component comprising 15 items.

Phase 3: Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

Two surveys were administered in this phase to further examine the construct validity of the developed questionnaire using the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

Survey 1 Exploratory Factor Analysis

The first survey was intended for EFA. It is appropriate for this purpose since the intent of the research is to create a measurement instrument that reflects a meaningful underlying latent dimension(s) or construct(s) represented in observed variables [58]. In EFA, a latent variable is called a factor and the associations between latent and observed variables are called factor loadings [59]. Factorial validity validates the contents of the construct employing the statistical model called factor analysis [60].

Participants

The developed questionnaire was administered to a sample of 125 volunteers that were randomly chosen from various volunteer organizations. This phase ideally calls for random sampling which is an unbiased representation of the chosen population and the recommended sampling frame for exploratory sequential design [45]. Participants were recruited by personal invitation through email and requesting voluntary participation in the survey. The participants of this survey were volunteers from various organizations in the Middle East (56%), Asia (33%), Europe (22%), North and South America (13%), and Australia (1%). Majority of them are full-time employed

(81%), others are business owners, students, retired, unemployed, and part-time employed (9%). They have been in the volunteering service for more than 10 years (32%), 3-5 years (29%), 6-10 years (16%), while others are just starting (below one year to 2 years) 29%.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a survey via an online interface using the Google form that was distributed via email. The participants understood that their participation was voluntary and they can withdraw at any point in the survey. They also understood that the purpose of the research was to determine the attributes of volunteerism. Participants rated their agreement with the items on a four-point Likert scale (4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Mostly Agree, 2 – Moderately Agree, and 1 – Slightly Agree). The survey took between 10-15 minutes to complete. A total of 125 completed the survey.

EFA Results

Factorial Analysis was conducted using the R software. A factorability check was conducted for the 45 items before conducting the exploratory factor analysis. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test was used to measure the sampling adequacy [67] and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was used to investigate the factorability of the data [68]. The KMO results of 0.92 and a significant test statistic indicated by Bartlett's test of sphericity $p=2.22e-16$; $\chi^2=3744.514$ implied that these results indicated that the data set was appropriate for factor analysis [61]. In the EFA, all 45 items were subjected to Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation. The EFA analysis revealed seven factors. The criteria to determine the inclusion of factors and items are based on the factor loadings and Cronbach alpha coefficient [62]. Items with more than 0.45 factor loadings [69] and factors with a reliability of .70 or higher were chosen [57]. Factor 1 (11 items with factor loadings ranging from .501 to .967) $\alpha = .96$. Factor 2 (11 items, .456 to .931) $\alpha = .96$. Factor 3 (5 items, .531 to .943) $\alpha = .94$. Factor 4 (4 items, .603 to .919) $\alpha = .91$. Factor 5 (4 factors, .607 to .717) $\alpha = .91$. Factor 6 (3 factors, .699 to .717) $\alpha = .84$. Factor 7 (3 factors, .702 to .787) $\alpha = .91$. As depicted, all items were good measures of their respective factors, from this result, the initially developed questionnaire was refined with seven factors and 41 statements.

Survey 2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFA was conducted to test the factorial structure and the model fit of the questionnaire from the results of the first EFA survey. A new data set was collected from different participants using the EFA-generated questionnaire. The CFA was executed by means of structural equation modeling (SEM) using the R software.

Participants

New data set was collected from 422 participants that

were drawn from various volunteer organizations in Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Italy, KSA, Mozambique, Norway, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, UAE, UK, USA, and Iceland. The gender ratio of the participants, 38% men and 62 % women. The average age of the participants was 36.45 (SD 13.57). The average years of serving as volunteers was 5.86 (SD 5.35).

Data Collection

A refined questionnaire has 41 items and the same response scale was used. The survey comprised a total of 8 sections. The first section sought the demographic profile of the participants and the informed consent to participate in the survey. In this section, a screener question was included to make sure that the participants were reflective of the desired population. Sections 2 to 8 contained the attributes of volunteerism. Before each section, instructions were provided. A total of 422 responses were collected.

Quantitative Results of Second Survey

The descriptive results (means, SD) and intercorrelations of the second survey are presented in Table 1. On a scale of 1-4, the participants expressed their agreement to the factors as evidenced by the reported

means that ranged from 2.84 to 3.46. This suggests that participants agreed to the manifestations of the attributes of volunteerism. Factors also showed positive inter-correlations which means that the attributes of volunteerism are associated with each other.

CFA Results

To verify the factorial structure of the VAQ, CFA was carried out with structural equation modeling (SEM) and the examination of the multiple indexes of the model fit was carried out using the following criteria for accepting the model as a good fit: the model chi-square (χ^2/df), comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) with a value of greater than .90, root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) with a value of less than .05. [55]. A summary of the good model fit evaluation is shown in Table 2. All the seven models show CFI and TLI values that are well above .90 which is the criterion used as an indication of a very good fit [63]. The RMSEA of .06, .07, and .08 suggest that the factor model represents a good approximation [64] while the RMSEA of less than .05 indicates an excellent approximation [64]. The non-significant chi-square model of Models E, F, G does not affect the good model fit because this is rarely used as sole index of model fit [65]. Therefore, the models are good fit.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelation of Factors (N=422)

Factor	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	3.39	.617							
2	3.46	.598	.866						
3	3.25	.690	.748	.761					
4	3.21	.701	.728	.740	.735				
5	3.13	.702	.752	.754	.711	.667			
6	2.84	.782	.589	.539	.616	.600	.668		
7	3.14	.751	.681	.573	.555	.530	.521	.490	

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2. Model Fit Indices of Structural Equation Models (SEM)

Models	Model Chi-Square			CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
	χ^2	df	p				
A	154.79	44	.00	.97	.96	.07	.02
B	54.34	14	.00	.98	.97	.08	.02
C	6.65	2	.03	.99	.98	.07	.01
D	5.72	2	.05	.99	.99	.06	.01
E	Non-significant			1.00	1.00	.00	.00
F	Non-significant			1.00	1.00	.00	.00
G	Non-significant			1.00	1.00	.00	.00

Based on the results obtained from a series of validation, a seven-factor model revealed a good fit to measure the attributes of volunteerism. The seven-factor model has 35 items with valid factor loadings and high values of consistency and reliability through EFA and CFA reinforcing the validity of the questionnaire. The final questionnaire of 35 items is called Volunteerism Attributes Questionnaire (VAQ).

5. Discussion

The current exploratory sequential mixed methods study investigated the attributes of volunteerism. The use of this design afforded the opportunity to develop, test, and validate a questionnaire to assess a person's volunteerism attributes. The procedure of questionnaire development followed three phases. In the first qualitative phase, a phenomenological study using semi-structured in-depth interviews was carried out to describe the attributes of volunteerism based on the articulated essences of the shared lived-experiences of the seven interviewed volunteers. Themes that were generated from this phase were validated using member-checking procedure, thick, rich descriptions, and peer reviews. In the second phase, the questionnaire was developed on the basis of the results of the in-depth interviews. Data integration occurred in this phase with the qualitative findings that helped us to identify the characteristics and attributes of volunteerism that was used to structure the questionnaire and create individual items. A pre-test was conducted to respondents who are involved in volunteerism activities for the purpose of exploring the questionnaire's internal consistency

reliability. The face validity and internal consistency reliability test provided the initial validity and reliability of the developed questionnaire that was composed of 45-items divided into 3 main components with each component comprising 15 items. In the third phase, two surveys were conducted to establish the validity of the questionnaire. In the first survey, EFA was conducted to 125 participants to determine the factorial structure of the questionnaire. Based on the EFA result, the initially developed questionnaire was refined, with seven factors and 41 statements. The factor loadings of all items were good measures of their respective factors [58] and all the factors were internally consistent and well defined by their items as indicated by the alpha coefficients [66]. The second survey was drawn from 422 participants and the constructs of the EFA-generated questionnaire were further validated using CFA. By examining multiple indexes, the models were found to be a good fit. The validated final questionnaire was composed of 35 items, called the Volunteerism Attributes Questionnaire. This methodological process allowed us to advance a model for developing the volunteerism attributes questionnaire that was adapted from Creswell and Plano-Clark's [70] and Zhou [71] instrument design using the exploratory approach that involves validation phases. The developed framework is a four-step approach that integrates development and validation. It consists of: step 1: qualitative exploration and validation, step 2: integration, questionnaire development and validation, step 3: questionnaire testing and validation, step 4: administer questionnaire to target group. The entire process for this suggested framework is shown in Figure 2.

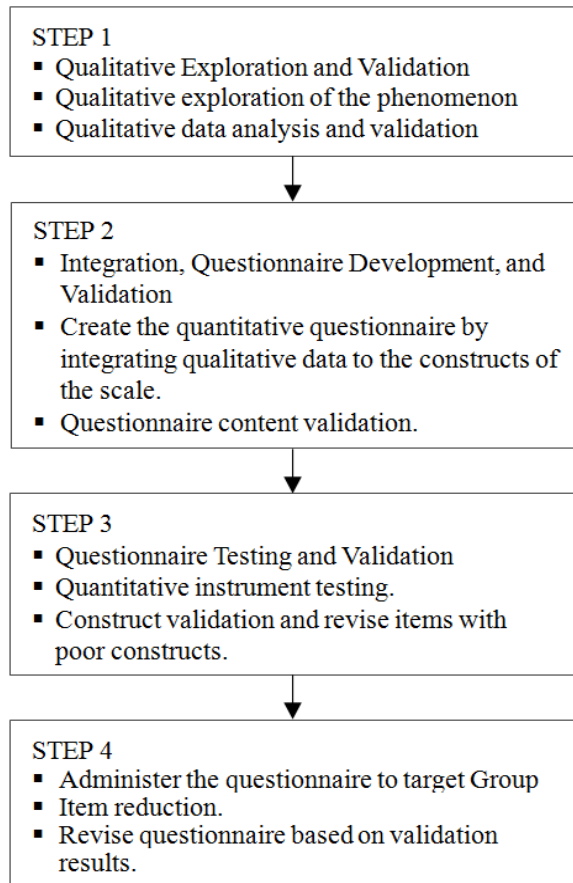


Figure 2. Four-step Approach to Questionnaire Development

Step 1: Qualitative Exploration and Validation

In this step, the central phenomenon is investigated in detail using qualitative approaches such as interviews, focus groups, observation notes, etc. The research questions should guide the investigator in collecting detailed information pertaining to the phenomenon. When qualitative data is explored and analyzed, validation strategy is required to provide concrete and valid evidence to the content or the items of the questionnaire.

Step 2: Integration, Questionnaire Development, and Validation

This is the step where qualitative data are integrated to develop the quantitative instrument. This step transforms qualitative data into measurable items. Qualitative data should consist of codes, sub-themes or themes and quotes as evidence of the themes. First, convert themes to dimensions and the quotes to individual items in the scale. Second, determine the format of item responses such as a Likert scale response format. Then, content-based validity is conducted for the developed questionnaire.

Step 3: Questionnaire Testing and Validation

In this step, a pilot test is conducted to the content-validated questionnaire. The numeric data from item responses are collected and sent to statistical

treatment for internal consistency using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Items with poor measures will be revised.

Step 4: Administer Questionnaire to Target Group

In this step, numeric responses are statistically analyzed using factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The standardized factor loadings are further examined to indicate which items are best, good, or acceptable. Poor items are deleted which resulted to item reduction. Model Fit Indices of Structural Equation Models (SEM) were used to evaluate the model fit. After combining the results from different analyses, the questionnaire was revised until the entire validation results are acceptable.

This study has outlined the process of developing a quantitative questionnaire related to attributes of volunteerism. The VAQ appears to be useful for diverse volunteer organization types, not specific to any particular industry and it is applicable to all members of the organization. This sort of generalizability should enhance the instrument's value in organizational settings helping them recruit the right volunteers. In addition, by integrating the data at the second phase afforded the opportunity to fully realize the value of an in-depth qualitative component to this research that helps ensure a more valid instrument. It is now feasible for volunteers from various sectors to apply the questionnaire in determining their inherent values of volunteerism using a common questionnaire.

6. Conclusions

The approach of adding a qualitative process to the quantitative phases allowed us to capture a holistic view of the attributes of volunteerism based on the shared experiences of the participants. Through in-depth interviews, a complete understanding of the phenomenon was reached. The actual experiences of the participants have also enhanced the constructs of the measurement tool contributing to its integrity and validity. Furthermore, by integrating a qualitative component to the questionnaire afforded the creation of a robust instrument that went through a rigorous process. It is noteworthy to underscore that with this approach we were able to realize how valuable the qualitative component of this research to the development of the questionnaire of which we recommend to current and future mixed methods researchers to consider using similar approach to their future mixed methods research projects.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has made a significant contribution to the methodological approach in developing an instrument that measures attributes of volunteerism. Despite its

contribution, the study has limitations. First, the instrument reflects the themes generated from the experiences of the participants drawn from one unique culture. Further research to test the instrument to a multi-cultural group is needed to remove the skepticism on its universal applicability. Second, the study focused on the lived-experiences of individuals who are members of volunteer organizations, it did not speak of the experiences of those volunteer individuals who are not members or affiliated with any organization. This exclusion is important to note where volunteering experiences of these individuals are important. Therefore, it will be interesting

to replicate this study to integrate appropriate items into the questionnaire based on the volunteering experiences of a different set of individuals.

Authors' Notes

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Appendix 1

Volunteerism Attributes Questionnaire (VAQ)

1	I do what I can to alleviate the condition of other people
2	I support organizations that help the less fortunate
3	I assist the disabled and the sick
4	I strengthen the weak
5	I spend my money when needed in my volunteer service
6	I know what I want when I volunteer
7	I review myself, what I can contribute before I volunteer
8	I always assure myself that I am determined to help
9	I clear my mind of any negative thoughts in volunteering
10	I ensure that I am fit to help
11	I volunteer unconditionally
12	I am humbled when I volunteer
13	I serve thinking that many would benefit
14	I strengthen my spirit when I face challenges in volunteering
15	I feel fulfilled when I help others
16	I will continue to volunteer as long as I live
17	I extend my volunteer service when needed
18	I will never get tired of helping others
19	I serve with my talent, skills and knowledge
20	I help for free and without anything in return
21	I believe in camaraderie
22	I allot a schedule for my volunteer works
23	I support fundraising activities
24	I promote volunteer service in my work place
25	I participate in my company volunteering service
26	I feel the sense of mission when I volunteer
27	I give my 100% dedication when volunteering
28	I regard my volunteer service as a personal commitment
29	I stay focused when I volunteer
30	I finish what I started in any volunteer activity
31	I involve my family in my volunteering activities
32	I finish my office work then I volunteer in my free time
33	I volunteer after completing my daily tasks
34	I ensure that my responsibilities are attended before volunteering
35	I do my volunteer service after attending my family

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