

Volunteer

[Psychology](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Volunteer An Assignment Submitted by of Establishment XXXX, Section XXXX, Fall Volunteer The recent study by Brominck, Horowitz, and Shepherd (2012) shows that so-called ‘ egoistic’ (self-oriented) and ‘ altruistic’ (society-oriented) motivations for volunteering are interconnected (p. 5). The sample of 112 students on their 2nd year of Psychology program had to respond to the open questions about volunteering. The researchers encountered the problem of clear classification of their student’s remarks, as there has been “ the large degree of cluster overlap within individual participants’ responses” (Bromnick, Horowitz, & Shepherd, 2012, p. 4). The clusters in this research result refer to (1) personal benefits from volunteering such as career pursuits, skills, and personal development, and (2) social benefits (‘ other-focused’ motivation) such as being valued, belonging, generativity, and desire to help (Bromnick, Horowitz, & Shepherd, 2012, p. 5). As a person that studies psychology, I know that there are always some personal benefits behind seemingly altruistic motivation. Firstly, communication skills and commitment are really sought by some employers, so even the sheerest desire to help can turn out to be beneficial for self. Secondly, volunteering is a perfect opportunity of social engagement for those individuals who are not inclined to active communication.

This makes me doubt that ethical orientation of volunteer work (whether it is ‘ self-focused’ or ‘ other-focused’) is a relevant approach to the motivation for volunteering. The question whether volunteering is a conformist practice dictates the dichotomy of ‘ self’ and ‘ others’ and directs attention to the moral problems of self. If we re-direct our attention to social benefit and the assessment of volunteer’s performance as beneficial or non-beneficial, this could cast some light upon the motivation of self. When the only (or

dominant) motivation of a volunteer is to conform, the outcomes are expected to be poor. That is, volunteers' performance may be good regardless from the focus ('self' or 'society') of their motivation. 'Conformity' can be caused either by 'society-focused' reasons (low self-esteem and the consequent need for mimicking the accepted norm of helping others) or by clearly 'self-focused' reasons (e. g., an ability to travel), but the real sign of a conformist approach to volunteering is poor performance. I believe that conformists ultimately do not make productive volunteers.

References

Bromnick, R., Horowitz, A., & Shepherd, D. (Apr 2012). Beyond employability: the benefits of volunteering for psychology students. In: The Higher Education Academy STEM Conference, 12- 13 April 2012, Imperial College, London.