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The Impact of Volunteer Motivation (Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic) on Psychological Well-being of NGO Volunteers

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the psychological well-being of NGO volunteers, with an additional focus on gender differences. A purposive sample of 80 volunteers from NGOs in Ranchi district was selected. Tools used included the Volunteer Motivation Inventory (based on Clary et al., 1998) and Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (1989). Results from the t-test revealed that volunteers with intrinsic motivation scored significantly higher on psychological well-being compared to those with extrinsic motivation ($p < 0.01$). This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), suggesting that intrinsic motivation—rooted in personal growth and altruism—enhances emotional health. However, the study found no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female volunteers, indicating that gender may not significantly influence mental health outcomes in the context of volunteering. These findings underscore the importance for NGOs to foster intrinsic motivations through meaningful engagement, role alignment, and opportunities for personal fulfillment. The study contributes to existing literature by addressing a gap in developing country contexts and highlights the psychological benefits of value-driven volunteerism in NGO settings.

Keywords: *Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, Psychological Well-being, NGO Volunteers, Gender Differences*

Volunteering is a cornerstone of community development, with NGOs relying extensively on volunteers to carry out their missions. The motivation behind volunteering—whether driven by internal satisfaction or external rewards—plays a significant role in shaping volunteer behavior and emotional outcomes. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in activities for personal growth, altruism, or fulfillment, whereas extrinsic motivation is fueled by external factors such as recognition, certificates, or career advancement. According to Deci and

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Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985), intrinsic motivation fosters autonomy and internal satisfaction, while extrinsic motivation is shaped by external pressures or rewards. Clary et al. (1998) found that intrinsically motivated individuals tend to remain committed to volunteer service for longer durations and report higher levels of satisfaction. Davis et al. (2003) further emphasized that volunteers who find deeper meaning in their roles experience enhanced psychological well-being. Supporting this, Ryan and Deci (2001) noted that intrinsic motivation contributes to improved emotional regulation, engagement, and mental health. Despite global interest in volunteer motivation, there remains a research gap in developing countries, particularly in NGO contexts. Recent Indian studies, such as Sharma and Jain (2020), highlight that alignment between volunteer values and organizational roles positively influences psychological well-being. However, few studies have compared the specific effects of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation on volunteers' mental health outcomes. This research aims to bridge that gap by exploring how different motivational orientations influence the psychological well-being of NGO volunteers.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the psychological well-being of NGO volunteers.
2. To compare the psychological well-being levels of male and female NGO volunteers.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the psychological well-being of NGO volunteers.

H₂: There is a significant difference in psychological well-being levels between male and female NGO volunteers.

Sample

The sample for the present study was consisting of 80 Volunteer who were chosen based on a purposive sampling technique from types of motivation intrinsic and extrinsic psychological well-being on NGO Volunteers in Ranchi district.

Tools

1. **Volunteer Motivation Inventory (VMI):** An adapted version of Clary et al.'s Volunteer Functions Inventory (1998) was used assess whether volunteers were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. It consists of statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale, focusing on internal satisfaction and altruism (intrinsic) versus recognition and rewards (extrinsic).
2. **Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale:** To assess the psychological well-being of the participants, the 42-item version of Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (1989) was used to measure six aspects of well-being: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Participants rated items on a 6-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicated greater psychological well-being. Both tools are reliable and widely used in psychological research.

RESULT

To test the hypotheses, t-test was applied on obtained scores of psychological well-being.

Impact of types of motivation on psychological well-being among volunteer

To find out the impact of subgroups of types of motivation (intrinsic vs extrinsic) on psychological well-being among voluntaries t-test was applied.

Table 01

t-test showing difference in psychological well-being based on type of motivation (intrinsic vs extrinsic)

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean difference	t	df	p-value
Intrinsic Motivation	40	185.2	12.8	3.21	3.21	78	0.002
Extrinsic Motivation	40	172.4	13.5				

**significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS: Not Significant

Figure 01

Mean scores of (intrinsic vs extrinsic) voluntaries on Psychological Well-being

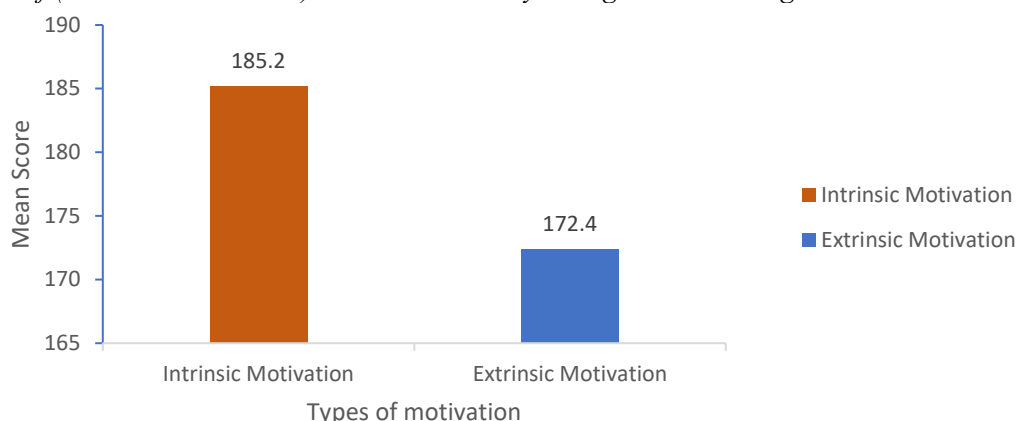


Table no 01 and figure no 01 it is clear that the mean score of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation voluntaries was found 185.2 and 172.4 in psychological well-being respectively. and Mean difference was found 3.21. SD (intrinsic vs extrinsic) voluntaries were 12.8 and 13.5 respectively. The t- ratio was found 3.21 which was significant at 0.01

Impact of types of gender on psychological well-being among volunteer

Table no 02

t-test showing difference in psychological well-being based on gender (male and female).

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Mean difference	t	df	p-value
Male	40	178.6	13.9	2.5	0.96	78	0.340
Female	40	181.1	14.2				

**significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS: Not Significant

Figure 02

Mean scores of (Male and female) voluntaries on Psychological Well-being

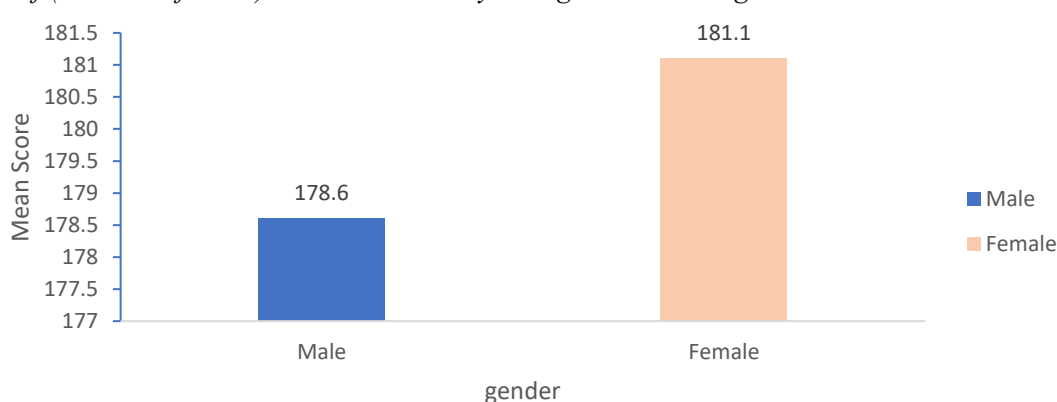


Table no 02 and figure no 02 it is clear that the mean score of gender (male and female) was found 178.6 and 181.1 in psychological well-being respectively. and mean difference was found 2.5 SD (male and female) voluntaries were 13.9 and 14.2 respectively. The t- ratio was found 0.96 which was no significant.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to explore the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the psychological well-being of NGO volunteers and to examine gender differences in well-being levels. The findings

revealed that volunteers with intrinsic motivation had significantly higher psychological well-being scores compared to those with extrinsic motivation. This supports Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985), which posits that behaviors driven by intrinsic factors such as personal growth and internal satisfaction lead to enhanced psychological outcomes. Similarly, Clary et al. (1998) and Ryan & Deci (2001) observed that intrinsically motivated individuals experience greater emotional regulation, fulfillment, and mental well-being. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Davis et al. (2003), who highlighted that meaningful engagement in volunteer work significantly enhances a person's sense of purpose and emotional stability. Recent Indian research by Sharma and Jain (2020) also aligns with the current results, indicating that value-aligned intrinsic motivation improves satisfaction and psychological well-being among NGO volunteers. However, the study found no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female volunteers. This contradicts some earlier research suggesting that women often report higher emotional expressiveness and well-being in volunteer settings (e.g., Eagly & Crowley, 1986). The absence of a significant gender difference in this study might be due to equal levels of volunteer engagement, similar exposure to NGO environments, or cultural norms promoting equality in prosocial behavior among males and females in the region studied. Overall, the results highlight the positive impact of intrinsic motivation on mental well-being and suggest that NGOs should foster internal motivations by creating meaningful roles and recognizing personal growth. Gender may not be a determining factor in psychological well-being within volunteering contexts, at least within the sample studied.

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