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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Miriam Priti Mohan, Registration Number: 1530085, PhD Scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Thursday, 19 November 2026, at 09.30 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis	:	**Social Identity and Representations of Volunteerism among Young Adult Volunteers**
Discipline	:	**Psychology**
External Examiner - I	:	**Dr Chetan Sinha** Professor Department of Psychology and Education O.P. Jindal Global University Sonipat - 131001 Haryana
External Examiner - II	:	**Dr Sreenivas M** Professor Department of Psychology Center For Psychological Counselling Jnanabharati Campus Bangalore University Mysore Road Bengaluru - 560056, Karnataka
Supervisor	:	**Dr Baiju Gopal** Professor School of Psychological Sciences, Education and Social Work CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru - 560029 Karnataka

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts, and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva–voce examination.

Registrar (Academics)

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 09 November 2026

ABSTRACT

Volunteerism as a form of helping is extensively discussed in the prosocial behaviour literature. Young adults form a significant part of the demographic dividends in India ; in addition, increased volunteering trends of this population in non-governmental organizations and volunteer only organizations in the social service sector, indicates their active and current participation in social change. This study fills a gap in the literature by exploring how shared social identities develop when volunteers actively participate in and communicate their views about the social change they strive towards, by working within group and organizational settings. The present study used a qualitative research methodology within the interpretivist paradigm. 22 regular volunteers in the age range of 18-32, from a specific urban local setting in India were interviewed in depth. Two methods were used to explore their experiences qualitatively namely : A word association task (Part 1) used to generate responses that were spontaneous and brief in content followed by an in-depth interview (Part 2). Content analysis of the word associations in Part 1 yielded 24 codes that were further abstracted to five categories or representations of volunteerism. The findings show that while many of the ideas expressed were in line with the extant literature on volunteerism, specific facets of volunteerism such as action, specific beliefs about helping, focus on the self as a driving force and nature of group interactions were emphasised on by this demographic of volunteers. Sentiment analysis of the responses further indicated participants' positive affective state. Interview data was analysed using Thematic Network Analysis to arrive at five global themes. The findings provide insight about how helping becomes a central theme in the personal identity of volunteers. A desire to express their value for helping leads them to seek opportunities in the context of volunteer organizations. Specific intragroup processes play a role in an emergent social identity, and have implications for both personal transformation and societal change. The findings show that expressions of both individuality and social identity are considered significant by those who volunteer. Integration of part 1 and part 2 show that young adult volunteers' views of volunteerism are similar to existing conceptual frameworks but add new insight into the role of identity processes that develop within the groups they volunteer in. Further practical implications are discussed with regard to tapping into these findings for developing robust service learning and community service programmes and considering crucial life-stage developmental needs for continuity in volunteering.

Keywords: social identity, representations, volunteerism, volunteer groups , group processes

Publications:

1. **Mohan, M.**, & Gopal, B. (2026). Representations of Volunteerism among Young Indian Adults: An Indian Philosophical Perspective. International Journal of Traditional Healing and Critical Mental Health, 3(2), 61–77. Published Peer reviewed Journal Article : Indexed in GOOGLE SCHOLAR
   Link:https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=en&user=zBOhUvsAAAAJ & citation_for_view=zBOhUvsAAAAJ:0EnyYjriUFMC