

Voluntary Participation of Youth of Burgos, Ilocos Norte in Disaster Preparedness

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ABSTRACT

Philippines ranks as one of the world's most disaster-prone countries. Floods, typhoons, landslides, earthquakes, volcanoes, and droughts frequently affect its islands, which are located on the boundary of major tectonic plates and in the geographic center of a typhoon belt. Thus, voluntary participation in disaster preparedness is very important. It is essential that volunteers acquire essential skills and knowledge for effective disaster response. For young individual, participating in volunteer activities enhances practical skills, social abilities, leadership qualities, confidence, and self-efficacy. The study aims to identify the factors that drives volunteers to participate in disaster preparedness and assess its effects on personal development and community, and the evaluation on their personal development in disaster preparedness. Using a mixed research method, through explanatory sequential design and a semi-structured questionnaire. The respondents of the study were active youth volunteers, wherein a total enumeration was used in selecting. The study reveals that the primary driving factor for the youth volunteers in disaster preparedness is their knowledge of how to use local resources effectively during disasters. They learned essential skills and knowledge, becoming more active and responsible. This transformative process not only impacts communities but also shapes individuals who are equipped to confront emergencies and contribute meaningfully to society. To increase the knowledge and participation of youth in disaster preparedness activities, it is recommended to create a promotional video that is posted on any social media platform. This way, volunteers will be motivated to continue their valuable work and inspire others to get involved as well.

Keyword : *Voluntary Participation, Youth, Disaster Preparedness, Personal Development, Driving Factors*

1. INTRODUCTION

Voluntary participation is a cornerstone of community engagement and social responsibility, representing a collective effort where individuals willingly contribute their time, skills, and resources for the betterment of society without monetary compensation (Thomas, 2018). Moreover, the volunteer organization managers improve the standards and procedures of disaster volunteer recruitment and selection, and help them gain a deeper understanding of the needs of the disaster volunteers to better motivate them to participate in disaster preparedness (Ishiwatari & Ranghieri, 2014).

In the Philippines, volunteering remains strongly associated with pre-colonial values such as bayanihan (working together as a community because shared problems cannot be accomplished alone), damayan (helping a neighbour in times of personal crisis or grief), or bahaginan (sharing of resources no matter how small) (Aguiling-Dalisay et al., 2004). One of the inherent traits that identifies Filipinos is 'bayanihan,' or the willingness to help others without asking for something in return (Mangasar, 2023).

From simple donations such as food and water, to medical and psychological care, and more, we can help rebuild and help others get back to their normal lives in the wake of adversity. The most effective way to help victims of a natural disaster or emergency is to donate to a disaster relief organization (Catolico & Olivia, 2021). It was noted that most Filipinos provided monetary donations, but donation drives could also accept in-kind donations.

Monetary donations are flexible and provide for culturally beneficial support, and they can be used immediately in response to a crisis (Donham, 2018). Filipinos may have different perceptions since one might prefer physical volunteering while others might opt for word-of-mouth strategy and digital media (Balcik et al., 2010).

In Abra, Ilocos Norte last July 27, 2022, an earthquake which had a magnitude of 7.0 caused the destruction of different infrastructures and the loss of several lives. According to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2022), the joint force-personnel of Bureau of Protection and Philippine National Police of Region 1 were sent to the place to conduct a search and rescue operation. Abra is a mountainous place, in which houses and establishments were built in it. As a result, some buildings collapsed – properties were destroyed and several people were trapped in these buildings. The joint force operation that was conducted were done by our law enforcers, in which, specifically the Bureau of Fire Protection personnel are trained for this kind of operation.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people, including youth, about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their community and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations (CERT, 2022). By involving youth in disaster preparedness and recovery efforts, youth-serving agencies can help to not only increase youths' awareness of particular hazards, but can also enhance the chance that they openly discuss how to adequately protect their families and loved ones and understand how to seek help should their community be affected (Zewde, 2023).

The organized volunteers are required to provide disaster prevention and mitigation training to local residents, collect and report risk information, and organize regular drills and other disaster preparedness activities for local communities (Adams et al., 2017). Thus, voluntary participation in disaster preparedness is very important (Karancı & Akşit, 2000).

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims to determine the driving factors, effects of the voluntary participation of youth, and evaluation of personal development on disaster preparedness in Burgos, Ilocos Norte. Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents as to:
 - 1.1. Age
 - 1.2. Gender
 - 1.3. Employment
 - 1.4. Educational Attainment
2. What are the driving factors of voluntary participation in disaster preparedness among youth volunteers?
3. What are the effects of voluntary participation of youth in Burgos, Ilocos Norte as to:
 - 3.1. Personal Development
 - 3.2. Community
4. What is the evaluation of the head of the youth organization on the personal development of the youth volunteer?

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Protection Motivation Theory (1975) explains how individuals respond to threats and take actions to protect themselves. PMT indicates that the voluntary involvement of youth in disaster preparedness is influenced by their perception of threat severity, vulnerability, and belief in the effectiveness of recommended actions. PMT suggests that youth are motivated to engage in preparedness activities if they see potential disasters as serious threats and feel vulnerable to the consequences.

4. SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

The study focused on the voluntary participation of youth in disaster preparedness, particularly the driving factors of volunteering in disaster preparedness among the youth, the effects of voluntary participation of youth in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, as to personal development and community, and the evaluation on the personal development.

The study is only limited to the (50) active youth volunteers in Burgos, Ilocos Norte. This study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Youth. This study aims to understand the reasons people volunteer in disaster preparedness activities and their impact on personal development and community. It also encourages youth to participate in these activities, as it provides valuable skills that will be beneficial not only during disasters but also for their lives. The study emphasizes the importance of voluntary participation in disaster preparedness.

MDRRMC. This study will provide valuable insights and benefit the MDRRMC by increasing human resources, enhancing disaster preparedness activities, improving response time and recovery, and developing important skills and knowledge for youth volunteers.

Community. This study aims to educate the community about the benefits of volunteering and encourage participation in disaster preparedness activities. It aims to increase volunteers and enhance the community's ability to cope with and respond to disasters. Youth volunteers can also help authorized personnel during disaster management operations, enhancing the community's resilience and preparedness.

Researchers. This study will serve as a reference for future studies on disaster voluntary participation and provide a foundation for future researchers to explore related aspects in the field.

6. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Disaster preparedness. In this study, it refers to the proactive measures taken in advance by the local government of Burgos to improve the resilience of youth volunteers in mitigating and responding to disasters.

Voluntary participation. In this study, it refers to a youth's voluntary participation in disaster preparedness activities with the goal of expanding their knowledge and developing their readiness abilities.

Youth. In this study, it refers to youth with an age range of 15–30 years old in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, who actively participate in disaster preparedness activities.

7. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This article summarizes and analyzes the Children & Youth Forum and youth participation in the process during and leading up to the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in 2015. An organizing committee consisting of international students and young professionals brought together around 200 young professionals and students from around the globe to exchange ideas and knowledge on reducing disaster risk, building resilient communities, and advocating for the inclusion of youth priorities within the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (SFDRR). The knowledge exchange during the Forum was structured around a Toolbox for Resilience that connected to the SFDRR section on Priorities for Action. This article presents the outcomes of these young people's participation in the disaster risk reduction capacity building events and policy-making, as well as the follow-up actions envisioned by the young participants of the Forum. The voices of the younger generation were heard in the SFDRR and young people are ready to expand their actions for the framework's effective implementation. Young people call on technical experts, donors, NGOs, agencies, governments, and academia to partner with them on this journey to create a more resilient tomorrow together (Cumiskey et al., 2015).

8. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGNS

This study used mixed-method research, a procedure that combines elements of quantitative research and qualitative research to answer the research question. It can help to gain a more complete picture than a standalone quantitative or qualitative study, as it integrates the benefits of both methods (Tegan, G., 2021).

An explanatory sequential design, which consists of two interconnected phases, was used in this study. The study begins with the collection and analysis of quantitative data, focusing on answering the study's questions, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in response to the quantitative results (Cresswell, J., & Plano, C.V., 2017).

8.1 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were fifty (50) male youth volunteers, wherein a total enumeration was used in selecting. Total enumeration sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique that involves examining the entire population that has a particular set of characteristics (Canonizado, 2021).

9. PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

The said data were presented in tabular form by the specific posited on the statement of the problem.

9.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

This section presents the demographic profile of the respondents as to their age, gender, educational attainment, and employment.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
15 – 20	26	52%
21 – 25	24	48%
26 – 30	0	0
Gender		
Male	50	100%
Female	0	0
Educational Attainment		
Elementary Graduate	14	28%
High School Graduate	29	58%
College Graduate	7	14%
Employment		
Employed	1	2%
Unemployed	49	98%

Table 1 shows that the age bracket of 15-20 garnered the highest percentage with 52%, followed by the age bracket of 21–25 with 48%, and no respondents between the ages of 26–30 was recorded. Out of the 50 respondents of this study, it was found that 100% of the population consists of all males – no female youth volunteers in Burgos, Ilocos Norte was recorded. With regards to their educational attainment, 58% of respondents have completed high school, 28% of them completed elementary, and 14% of them completed college. Finally, it is projected that only 2% of the respondents is employed and the rest of them are unemployed.

9.2 Driving Factors of Voluntary Participation in Disaster Preparedness

This section identifies the primary driving factors of voluntary participation in disaster preparedness among youth volunteers.

Table 2: Driving Factors of Voluntary Participation in Disaster Preparedness

Driving Factors	Mean (x)	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
1. Contribute in the mitigation/prevention of the probable worse effect/s of incoming disasters.	3.56	Strongly Agree
2. Help other people who needs immediate assistance during disasters.	3.42	Strongly Agree

3. Be knowledgeable on the proper use of local resources available to solve community needs during disasters.	3.58	Strongly Agree
4. Promote collaboration, and overall productivity in my community during disasters.	3.54	Strongly Agree
5. Gain experience necessary or as a preparation for my future career.	3.52	Strongly Agree
6. Reduce the expenditures necessary to maintain community operations, particularly in terms of labor costs.	3.42	Strongly Agree
7. Create connections with the people that works within my municipality.	3.38	Strongly Agree
8. Promote civic responsibility for the engagement of the people in my community	3.3	Strongly Agree
9. Develop basic life safety and survival skills.	3.4	Strongly Agree
10. To influence to other people with regards to disaster preparedness.	3.42	Strongly Agree
Total Weighted Mean	3.45	Strongly Agree

Scale	Range Value	Descriptive Interpretation	Verbal Interpretation
4	(4.00-3.25)	Strongly Agree	Youth are strongly motivated and encouraged to participate in disaster preparedness activities.
3	(3.24-2.50)	Agree	Youth are motivated and encouraged to participate in disaster preparedness activities.
2	(2.49-1.75)	Disagree	Youth are not motivated and encouraged to participate in disaster preparedness activities
1	(1.74-1.00)	Strongly Disagree	Not motivated and encouraged to participate at all.

Table 2 shows that the primary driving factor of the youth volunteers in disaster preparedness is for them to be knowledgeable on the proper use of local resources available to solve community needs during disasters with a mean of 3.58, followed by their desire to contribute in the mitigation/prevention of the probable worse effects of incoming disasters with a mean of 3.56. The youths' desire to promote collaboration and overall productivity in the community during disaster and gain experience necessary or as a preparation for future career garnered a mean of 3.54 and 3.52 respectively. To help other people who needs immediate assistance during disasters, to reduce the expenditures necessary to maintain community operations, particularly in terms of labor costs, and to influence to other people with regards to disaster preparedness obtained an equal means of 3.42. The desire to develop basic life safety and survival skills and to create connections with the people that works in the community acquired a mean of 3.4 and 3.38 respectively. Lastly, the promotion of civic responsibility for the engagement of people in the community was scaled with the lowest mean of 3.3. This indicates that, from highest to lowest rating, youth are strongly motivated and encouraged to participate in disaster preparedness activities, as a verbal interpretation.

The survey reveals a strong correlation between volunteer motivation, a sense of community, altruistic values, and meaningful opportunities. It emphasizes the importance of a supportive environment that aligns with intrinsic desires to contribute to the greater good. A strong community bond is crucial in inspiring commitment to volunteer work, suggesting that a sense of belonging and interconnectedness within a community can encourage active altruistic endeavors.

9.3 Effects of Voluntary Participation as to Personal Development

This section discusses the effects of the voluntary participation of youth in disaster preparedness on personal development. Personal development refers to the development of the youth volunteers' abilities as a result of engaging in disaster preparedness activities.

Table 3: Effects of Voluntary Participation as to Personal Development

Personal Development	Mean (x)	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
1. I became more aware about the law related to disaster preparedness.	3.54	Strongly Agree
2. I became knowledgeable about the procedures and protocols necessary during situations of disasters and calamities.	3.54	Strongly Agree
3. I gained more knowledge necessary for basic life safety and survival.	3.48	Strongly Agree
4. I became more alert, calm and confident with regards to my actions as a response to emergency situations.	3.58	Strongly Agree
5. I became more aware of the signs of possible disasters such as flood, tsunami and landslides.	3.42	Strongly Agree
Total Weighted Mean	3.51	Strongly Agree

Scale	Range Value	Descriptive Interpretation	Verbal Interpretation
4	(4.00-3.25)	Strongly Agree	The personal development of youth is highly effective when participating in disaster preparedness activities.
3	(3.24-2.50)	Agree	The personal development of youth is effective when participating in disaster preparedness activities.
2	(2.49-1.75)	Disagree	The personal development of youth is not effective when participating in disaster preparedness activities.
1	(1.74-1.00)	Strongly Disagree	Not Effective at all

Table 3 shows that the greatest effect of volunteerism as to their personal development is that they became more alert, calm, and confident with regards to their actions as a response to emergency situations, with a mean of 3.58, followed by the respondents being more aware of the law related to disaster preparedness and being knowledgeable about the procedures and protocols necessary during situations of disasters and calamities, with a mean of 3.54. Second to the last effect of volunteerism is that the respondents gained more knowledge necessary for basic life safety and survival, which garnered a mean of 3.48. The least among the effects of volunteerism on the personal development of the respondents is being more aware of the signs of possible disasters such as floods, tsunamis, and landslides, with a mean of 3.42. The majority of respondents claimed to have strongly agreed that their personal development is highly effective when participating in disaster preparedness activities, as a verbal interpretation.

Disaster volunteering is a significant way for individuals to contribute to communal well-being and personal development. It involves various stages such as preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery, fostering resilience, empathy, and solidarity. Volunteers develop skills like adaptability and effective communication while

navigating challenges in disaster response. This transformative process not only impacts communities but also shapes individuals who are equipped to confront emergencies and contribute meaningfully to society

In 2008, Aldrich N. Benson stated that disaster education aims to provide knowledge among individuals and groups to take actions to reduce their vulnerability to disasters. According to some evidence, it is important for vulnerable people to learn about disasters. There are different methods to educate vulnerable people, but no method is better than another. Trained people can better protect themselves and others. In this regard, planning and designing comprehensive educational programs are necessary for people to face disasters. However, Hackbarth et al. (2012) state that disasters may put the victims in a state of despair and shock. This traumatic experience disrupts the fully functioning lives of the victims and brings loss for individuals, families, and communities.

9.4 Effects of Voluntary Participation as to Community

This section discusses the effects of the voluntary participation of youth in disaster preparedness on the community. People in the community are now more aware and knowledgeable of what needs to be done before, during, and after a disaster.

Table 4: Effects of Voluntary Participation as to Community

Community	Mean (x)	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
1. Encouraged the community and increase the number of disaster volunteers.	3.36	Strongly Agree
2. People in the community are now more knowledgeable about the things that are necessary to be done before, during and after a disaster.	3.44	Strongly Agree
3. The authorities in my community are conducting programs/seminars intended to promote disaster preparedness.	3.28	Strongly Agree
4. Opportunities for skill development for the people and the chance to make a positive impact have increased.	3.36	Strongly Agree
5. The community strengthened social bond and support for sustainable development.	3.4	Strongly Agree
Total Weighted Mean	3.36	Strongly Agree

Scale	Range Value	Descriptive Interpretation	Verbal Interpretation
4	(4.00-3.25)	Strongly Agree	Voluntary participation in the community is highly effective because youth are now more aware and knowledgeable about disaster preparedness.
3)	(3.24-2.50)	Agree	Voluntary participation in the community is effective because youth are aware and knowledgeable about disaster preparedness.
2	(2.49-1.75)	Disagree	Voluntary participation in the community is not effective because youth are not aware and knowledgeable about disaster preparedness.
1	(1.74-1.00)	Strongly Disagree	Not Effective at all.

Table 4 shows that the greatest effect of volunteerism as to the community is that the people in the community are now more knowledgeable about the things that are necessary to be done before, during, and after a disaster, with a mean of 3.44, followed by the strengthened social bond and support for sustainable development in the community with a mean of 3.4. Next to the effects in the community are the encouragement of the community, the increase in the number of disaster volunteers, the increase in opportunities for skill development for the people, and the chance to make a positive impact with a mean of 3.36. The least among the effects of volunteerism on the

community is the conduct of programs and seminars intended to promote disaster preparedness by the authorities in the community, with a mean of 3.28. It implies that voluntary participation in the community is highly effective because youth are now more aware and knowledgeable about disaster preparedness as a verbal interpretation.

Volunteering has been a crucial part of communities' disaster preparedness and response. In recent years, there has been a growing focus on strategic disaster approaches, integrating development efforts. Volunteer engagement is essential at both local and international levels, ensuring community resilience and fostering core values like solidarity and shared destiny. Recognizing volunteers' pivotal role is crucial for effective disaster risk mitigation strategies.

According to Brennan et al. (2005), communities have always faced disasters, and volunteerism has always been present in preparing for and coping with them. With growing focus in recent years on the development and implementation of strategic approaches to disasters, including building on the connections with development, volunteerism needs to be fully included in the discourse. Moreover, Godschalk et al. (1999) emphasized that mitigation encapsulates a suite of strategies designed to reduce societal susceptibility to loss by implementing activities in advance of hazard events to prevent or minimize the potential for a hazard event to become a disaster, which encompasses one or more of several activities. It includes strategies such as land use planning to protect areas susceptible to hazard activity and/or constructing engineered structures that can withstand or divert specific hazards. Knowledgeable residents help others identify what to do to manage their risk and act as a contact and liaison point linking the community and risk management agencies (Indian, 2008; Paton et al., 2008).

9.5 Evaluation on the Personal Development of the Youth Volunteer

This section discusses the evaluation of the head of the Burgos Youth Organization on their personal development to assess whether or not the youth volunteers have made improvements in volunteering for disaster preparedness.

The researchers asked the participant what qualities he observed in youths before they volunteered. He stated and elaborated that:

“Mostly ana da idi, haan da pay unay matured, kaadwan idi ket bulakbol da ngem idi, kada ayayam latta iti panpanonoten da kasi organization mi ket football, Football Club Burgos.”

(Mostly, they were not very mature. Most of them prioritizes football only because our organization is a football club.)

It was then asked how these young volunteers were encouraged to take part in disaster-related activities, and he answered that:

“Naallukoy ko dagitoy kakadwak gapo iti panagakadwa mi metlaeng iti soccer, naallukoy ko isuda nga haan lang nga dapat nga deta pinagay-ayam isot pinag-aktibo mi dapat met nga nga ada maitulong mi ditoy lugar mi nga Burgos iso nga umay damut agparticipate kadagita nga activities aktibidad iti Burgos.”

(I encouraged these youths because we are teammates in soccer. I persuaded them that we should not only focus on playing but also on activities that could help our community in Burgos.)

Regarding the changes and improvements, the researchers asked the head what he observed in the behavior of the young volunteers as a result of their participation in the program. It was addressed when he said that:

“Ti nakitak nga nagbaliwan da ket mas mature dan, mas aktibo ken haan kailngan nga mabagbagaan idan kadaaaa amo dan ti araramiden dan ada initiative dan nga kailngan da tumulong. Haan ko kailngan talaga nga kasarita idan nga umay tumulong kasjay amo dat bagbagi dan nga kailngan dat tumulong kas iti didigra.”

(Most of the changes that I noticed is that they have become more mature, more active and does not need to be told because they already have the initiative that they shall help. By volunteering they realized they really needed to finish their study, for the to have a better life in order for them to be more able to help other people.)

It implies that the youth of Burgos, Ilocos Norte, started volunteering at an early age, despite being immature and only interested in soccer. Over time, they learned essential skills and knowledge, becoming more

active and responsible. Their voluntary work positively impacted their personal development, as they realized the importance of education for a better life and societal contribution.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that males aged 15-20, high school graduates, and unemployed individuals are more likely to volunteer in disaster preparedness in Burgos, Ilocos Norte.

The researchers concluded that making effective use of local resources during disasters is the primary motivation for youth in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, to volunteer in disaster preparedness.

The findings of the study prove that youth in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, benefit significantly from voluntary participation when it comes to personal and community development.

The study found that youth in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, started volunteering at an early age, gaining essential skills and knowledge, and subsequently enhancing their personal development.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- MDRRMC. It is highly recommended that the MDRRMC of Burgos, Ilocos Norte, may use the promotional video "Empowering Tomorrow: Youth in Action for Disaster Preparedness" to encourage more young individuals to get involved in disaster preparedness. By posting the video on their social media platform, they can reach out to those who are not yet volunteers and inspire them to take action.

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