MOTIVES OF VOLUNTEER WORKS:
SELF- AND OTHER-ORIENTED MOTIVES

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The purpose of this research is to collect and interpret diverse work motives of volunteers. It can be considered that diverse volunteer works have diverse work motives, so we saw 51 volunteer leaders or subleaders with diverse volunteer works and asked them the work motives in free answer manner. As a total, 171 responses involving work motives were obtained, and these responses were classfied into three superordinate categories: other-oriented motives, self-oriented motives, binary (self-oriented and other-oriented) motives, inconsistently with a naive view that volunteer works were altruistic. Most of volunteers responded self-oriented motives in volunteer works. These results were discussed in terms of social desirability in responding and changes in motives with actual experiences of works. It was also found that the self-oriented motives were extremely prevailing among the younger. It was interpreted as an impact of new movements of social welfare such as normalization and integration.

Key words: work motives, self-oriented motives, other-oriented motives, social desirability, changes in work motives, normalization, integration.

PROBLEM

The importance of volunteer work has been emphasized in terms of both social and individual aspects. As sociologists and community psychologists have pointed out, the works have a social significance in that they benefit others. On the other hand, the pedagogists have stressed that the individual aspects of volunteer works have some substantial values for volunteers themselves. For example, volunteer works may encourage developement of volunteers for self-actualization and independence (Kravitz, 1987).

Various kinds of attempts have been conducted on recruitment and retainment of members in order to facilitate volunteer works. According to Miller, Powell, and Seltzer (1990), such attempts have generally focused on how to satisfy volunteers' personal needs and to enhance their commitments. King and Gillespie (1985) also insisted that it is necessary to know about the motives of volunteers in order to give them a more satisfactory experience in the works.

One academic survey of motives in volunteer works in Japan was done by Japanese Economic Planning Agency (1981). The research involved only 9 items for

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answering motives, which were composed of a priori. The items were as in the following: "I want to help others", "I want to spend my leisure time doing valuable activities", "My family or friends recommended me to do volunteer work", "I can utilize my own abilities and skills in this kind of work", "A community circle invited me to do them", "My education and religion influenced me", "My position in a group requires me to do them", "This work gives me positive social evaluations", "I have no specific reason for the work". Although these were important motives in volunteer works, they do not seem enough. Other kinds of motives were stressed by some researchers, for example, "aspiration" (Higashiyama, 1990) and "reciprocation" (Schindler-Rainman & Lippitt, 1979; Okamoto, 1981)". In addition to them, we can assume a greater variety of motives for the workers. We thought that past research did not cover the full range of motives in this area. It is now needed to collect motives by more open methods such as an oral interview.

There are a number of different kinds of volunteer work. Each kind of work may have its own unique motives. Chida (1984), who interviewed volunteers participating in a therapy of autistic children, found two different work motives, that is, desires for experiences in clinical practices and a concern for austic children. These motives were undoubtedly determined by the work contents. Do motives change with the work contents? Or, are there some common motives across all work areas? The main purpose of the present study was to examine these issues.

METHOD

Subjects : The survey was done in Sendai City, which is one of the largest cities in Japan. According to a report by Japanese Economic Planning Agency (1981), the number and variety of volunteer groups were related to the size of cities. Big cities have many volunteer groups and this may give researchers an opportunity to contact diverse work groups and thus access to different aspects of volunteers' psychological characteristics. Sendai City was regarded as an appropriate place for the present survey in this regard.

One hundred and seventy-one volunteer groups were publicly recognized in 1985 by the Sendai Social Welfare Association, and 55 of them participated in the Sendai Volunteer Association coordinated by the Volunteer Center. We selected 35 groups belonging to the Volunteer Association for the present survey. We also made contact with additional groups (16) which did not belong to the Association in order to collect as many kinds of motives as possible.

These groups were selected based on the following three criterions. The first criterion was to have the four basic characteristics: voluntariness, altruism, free-for-service, and continuity. On this criterion, self-help groups, which did not have altruistic characteristics, were not selected. The second criterion was to have a history of more than three years. The third criterion was to have members of more than 10

persons.   We interviewed leaders or subleaders of these selected volunteer groups.   It
was of course desirable to directly interview all members of each group.   But we
adopted, as a preliminary survey, a tactic of choosing only one member as an inter-
viewee in each group.   This method enabled us to make contacts with many groups.
The interviewees were asked not only about their own motives but also about motives
which he or she thought the other members had.   The reason that we chose leaders or
subleaders as interviwees was that they were expected to be aware of the work motives
of other members.

In this survey, the groups were classified into four categories based on the kinds
of recipients whom the groups worked for : the disabled, senior citizens, the normal,
and infants.   There were 22 groups for the disabled, that is, for visually, auditorily,
or physically handicapped adults and children.   The works were to read books or talk
with hands for the handicapped, and sometimes to help academic education of chil-
dren.   Seventeen groups worked for the senior citizens, particularly for those who
lived alone or lived in homes for the aged.   Volunteers held lunch parties for them or
visited the homes to talk with them or to wash their diapers.   Five groups for the
normal were engaged in helping men and women of all ages with telephone life-line
work or in supporting foreigners.   Seven groups for the young children were engaged
in caring for both healthy and handicapped or in playing with them.

Procedures :   The interview was individually conducted in April through October
in 1989.   An interviewer met interviewees at their own houses or workplaces, and he
asked them a number of prepared questions.   In order to collect naive responses, the
interviwees were recommended to talk freely about motives of the work.   Specifically,
the interviewer told interviewees as follows : "Would you tell me about motives of
your work ?   Could you tell me about other members' motives, too ?   I think there are
a variety motives for volunteers.   Please, let me know about them."

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Categories of Work Motives :   As a total, 171 responses involving work motives
were obtained.   Each interviewee gave 3.4 responses on average.   First, these
responses were clustered into 30 categories based on their similarities.   Then, these
categories were further grouped into three superordinate categories : other-oriented,
self-oriented, and binary (self-oriented and other-oriented) motives (see Table 1).   The
other-oriented motives were those which have intentions to benefit others.   The most
frequent category, "request from the city" included responses such as "Social welfare
staffers request me to help needy others."   The second frequent category, "social
service" consisted of responses such as "I wished to serve my society."   The third
frequent category, "experiences of the disabled" consisted of responses such as "An
experience of illness made me sympathize with the disabled."   The fourth category,
"to organize communities" included responses such as "I wish to make the communitiy

Table 1. Work Motives of the Volunteers

Categories of Motives	Frequencies of Responses					Percentages of Respondents
	For disabled	For senior	For normal	For infants	Total	
Other-oriented motives						
Request from the city	2	7	1	1		
Social service	2	3	2	0		
Experience of the disabled	2	3	0	0	32	54.9
To organize communities	0	4	1	0		
Service for the particular persons	2	0	1	1		
Self-oriented motives						
To make (keep) friends	6	5	1	4		
Attraction of the beneficiaries	9	0	1	6		
Attraction of activities	10	0	3	3		
Self-enlightment	4	2	1	3		
Putting the theory into practice	3	3	2	1		
Inducement from familiar friends	5	2	0	1		
Attraction of group members	1	1	1	4		
Experience of taking a course	5	0	0	2		
Advantage of employment	5	0	0	1		
Utilizing spare time	1	2	2	1		
Self-actualization	0	1	3	0		
Attraction of the work itself	2	0	1	0	129	86.3
Looking for a useful life	1	2	0	0		
Making a good appearance	2	0	1	0		
Understanding oneself	1	0	1	0		
Understanding a human being	1	0	1	0		
Exchange of information	1	0	1	0		
Mistrust of humans	1	0	1	0		
Attractiveness of the work place	2	0	0	0		
Personal health	1	0	0	0		
Effect of mass communication	1	0	0	0		
Short work time	1	0	0	0		
To master skills with ease	1	0	0	0		
Impossibility of getting reemployment	0	0	0	1		
Binary (self-oriented and other-oriented) motives						
Reciprocity	1	8	1	1	11	21.6

a better place to live." The least frequent category, "service for the particular persons" included responses such as "wishes of doing something for children".

The self-oriented motives were those which were self-serving motives. We listed the self-oriented motives in order of frequencies. "To make friends" represented responses such as "I wanted to make friends in the groups." "Attraction of the

beneficiaries" included responses such as "I like children." or "I wanted to better understand the disabled." "Attraction of activities" included responses such as "I was interested in those activities." Categories of "self-enlightment" or "self-actualization" and so forth were also regarded as self-oriented. The motives, "attractiveness of the work places" and "short work time", seemed to be motives when members began the work.

The binary (self-oriented and other-oriented) motives consisted of responses such as "If I serve the elderly now, I will be served for when I become old." and "My work benefits both myself and others."

Self-oriented motives : The right end column of Table 1 shows percentages of interviewees who gave responses in each superordinate categories. About half of all respondents gave some other-oriented motives, and the majority of them gave one or more self-oriented motives. Each respondents gave 0.63 other-oriented motives and 2.53 self-oriented motives in average. It should be noted that self-oriented motives were very common among the respondents in the present study. The volunteer work is generally regarded as beneficial for others. Nevertheless, why did our respondents regard their volunteer work as serving for themselves. There are two possible reasons for it.

(1) Social desirability in responding : To say "work for others" is to say "my work is valuable." As impression management theorists have assumed, people attempt to impress others with good images. An image of modesty is a very desirable social identity among Japanese. The interviewees might have prefered "work for themselves" to "work for others" in order to impress their modesty. In fact, one interviewee said, "I am not doing something especially good." The interviewees might have suppressed other-oriented motives in order to express modesty and to live stylishly (Iwabuchi, 1986). However, this possibility needs to be examined by further research.

(2) Changes in work motives : We should have distinguished between motives in participating into volunteer groups and those of preserving the works. In fact, some respondents said, "The present motives are not the same as those at the beginning of the works". If we focused on initial motives, the respondents might have answered more other-oriented motives. We inferred that initial motives were more other-oriented, but they would have changed into self-oriented ones. For, most volunteers may have realized during engagement in the works that the works are giving them many good things. For example, some respondents said "The work gives me good friends." and "I feel growing up as a human being." Meguri (1987), who have educated volunteers for decades, noted that recognition of self-oriented motives is necessary for volunteers to continue their work over one year. There may be another factor of such a change in motives. It is a negative experience with the recipients. If a volunteer explicitly or implicitly expresses an attitude of "for you" during his or her works, the recipients may perceive a dominant relationship between the volunteer and

Table 2.   Percentages of Respondents

Categories of Motives	20's	30's, 40's	50's	more than 60
Other-oriented motives	7.7	63.6	63.6	86.7
Self-oriented motives	100.0	81.8	100.0	66.7
Binary motives	0	9.1	28.6	58.3
N	14	11	11	15

them, and so they may feel unpleasant about the volunteer.   These negative encounters with the recipients may have reduced attitudes of "for you".

Age differences in Work Motives :   Table 2 indicates percentages of the respondents at each age level who answered each work motives category.   The respondents in their thirties or forties were put together because of their small samples.   Rates of the self-oriented motives were generally high across all age groups.   On the other hand, there were remarkable variations with ages in the other-oriented motives.   That is, the respondents in their twenties reported obviously less other-oriented motives than the other age groups.   We interpreted it to be caused by new movements in the realm of social welfare in this country.   Within past two decades, new theories of social welfare such as normalization or integration have been introduced in Japan. These theories asserted that the disabled should live together with the non-disabled. As influenced by these theories, the young volunteers may have regarded the relationship between volunteer workers and recipients as equal(or horizontal) such as "living together" or "give-and-take" (Okamoto,1981).   Most interviewees in their twenties were students (92.9%), and thus we could assume that they have been exposed to these new movements.

CONCLUSION

We found three basic categories of motives in volunteers works based on responses of 51 volunteer leaders or subleaders to our interview : other-oriented, self-oriented, and binary oriented motives.   A majority of the interviewees responded self-oriented motives in volunteer works, inconsistently with a naive view that volunteer works were altruistic.   We discussed these results in terms of social desirability in responding and changes in motives with actual experiences of works.   It was also found that the self-oriented motives were prevailing especially among the younger.   It was interpreted as an influence of new movements of social welfare which have emphasized the equal relationship between volunteer workers and recipients.

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