Motivational Drivers Shaping Voluntourism Perceptions and Participation Intention

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of motivational factors like altruistic motivation, personal growth motivation, and cultural exploration motivation on voluntourism by assessing their effects on the overall image, attitudes, and intentions to join voluntourism-based service learning programs in higher education X. Utilizing a quantitative methodology, data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to students at University X who had participated in or expressed interest in service learning activities. The responses were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to determine the relationships between the variables. The findings reveal that altruistic motivation is positively associated with students' attitudes toward service learning, indicating that students driven by a genuine desire to help others tend to perceive these programs more favourably. However, altruistic motivation is not significantly associated with the overall image of service learning. In contrast, both personal growth motivation and cultural exploration motivation significantly enhance the overall image, suggesting that students who seek self-development or intercultural experiences are more likely to form positive perceptions of such programs. Furthermore, the overall image of service learning is significantly associated with student attitudes, and attitude is a strong predictor of intention to participate. These results highlight the central role of motivational drivers and perceptual factors in shaping students' behavioural intentions. The study underscores the importance of designing service-learning programs that address a spectrum of student motivations while fostering a credible and enriching image. Future research should explore the interplay between motivational constructs, consider demographic and contextual variations, and examine the alignment between student expectations and actual experiences in service-learning contexts.

Keywords: Attitude, altruistic motivation, cultural exploration motivation, overall image, personal growth motivation

1. Introduction

Voluntourism, or volunteer tourism, has evolved into a global phenomenon that blends travel with purposeful community engagement. Unlike traditional tourism, voluntourism emphasises meaningful contribution and reciprocal learning between visitors and host communities. When incorporated into educational contexts, particularly within higher education, voluntourism transforms into an experiential learning practice known as service-learning, enabling students to apply academic knowledge through socially responsible action. Through service-learning initiatives, students participate in community-centred activities such as teaching, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation, fostering civic responsibility, cross-cultural competence, and personal development.

Bali, Indonesia, is a prominent voluntourism destination due to its rich cultural heritage, strong communal values, and welcoming environment. These characteristics make Bali an ideal setting for integrating service-learning into university curricula. Student voluntourists in Bali often engage in programs that benefit local communities and their academic and personal growth. Studies by Turker and Widyastuti (2023) and Lintangkawuryan et al. (2023) highlight that voluntourism strengthens sustainable community development and enhances students' employability, empathy, and global citizenship skills. Similarly, Röntynen and Tunkkari-Eskelinen (2024) emphasise that when voluntourism aligns with educational and community-based principles, it generates long-term social and learning impacts.

In higher education, understanding students' motivations for engaging in voluntourism-based service-learning is critical to program design and sustainability. Prior studies have identified three core motivational dimensions: altruistic motivation, reflecting a desire to contribute selflessly to others' welfare; personal growth motivation, representing the pursuit of skill development, learning, and self-improvement; and cultural exploration motivation, denoting curiosity toward intercultural exchange and immersion in local traditions. These motivations influence students' overall image of voluntourism programs, attitudes toward participation, and behavioral intention to join similar activities.

Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), this study posits that students' motivations act as background factors that shape their beliefs, perceptions, and evaluations of voluntourism, subsequently influencing their attitudes and behavioural intentions. Within TPB, attitude toward the behavior, in this case, participating in voluntourism, is a central determinant of intention, mediated by cognitive and affective beliefs about the experience. Thus, motivations may indirectly influence behavioral intention through their impact on image and attitude.

Despite the growing relevance of voluntourism in education, limited research has empirically examined how motivational drivers shape students' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions within an academic service-learning context. Existing studies predominantly address voluntourism as a tourism behavior rather than a pedagogical tool. Therefore, this research seeks to fill that gap by examining the relationships among altruistic, personal growth, and cultural exploration motivations and their effects on overall image, attitude, and intention to join volunteer-based service-learning programs in Higher Education Institution X.

This study contributes both theoretically and practically by clarifying these relationships. Theoretically, it integrates the Theory of Planned Behavior into the voluntourism-service-learning framework to explain how intrinsic and extrinsic motivations translate into behavioral

intentions. Practically, the findings will inform curriculum design, international mobility initiatives, and student engagement strategies supporting the development of global citizenship, empathy, and social responsibility among university students.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical Integration: Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

This study adopts Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as its overarching theoretical framework. TPB posits that behavioral intention is the most immediate predictor of actual behavior and is influenced by three determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of voluntourism-based service-learning, motivations such as altruism, personal growth, and cultural exploration can be conceptualized as background factors that shape students' beliefs about participation outcomes. These beliefs inform their attitude toward voluntourism, determining their intention to join future programs.

Altruistic Motivation

Altruistic motivation represents an individual's intrinsic drive to help others purely out of concern for their well-being, without expecting any material reward or recognition. It reflects a deep-seated moral value rooted in empathy, compassion, and social responsibility. In the context of volunteer-based service learning within higher education, altruistic motivation often manifests through students' willingness to participate in activities that contribute to the public good such as teaching in underprivileged schools, supporting community empowerment, or engaging in environmental conservation projects. These actions are primarily driven by ethical intentions and a sense of civic duty rather than by academic credit or personal gain (McGehee & Santos, 2005).

Recent empirical studies reaffirm that altruistic motivation remains a key psychological antecedent explaining why individuals engage in voluntary or service-learning activities. Yuan and Zhao (2025) found that individuals with strong altruistic tendencies are more likely to persist in volunteering due to the intrinsic satisfaction derived from helping others. Similarly, Irma Pranaitytė (2022) highlighted that altruistic values significantly shape individuals' emotional commitment and positive attitudes toward volunteer activities, particularly when they perceive their contributions as meaningful. In educational settings, altruistic students often view service learning as an ethically fulfilling experience that allows them to apply their knowledge to address real social issues while strengthening their moral and emotional development.

However, altruism alone may not fully determine how students perceive the overall image of service-learning or voluntourism programs. Other factors, such as perceived learning outcomes, cultural immersion opportunities, or institutional support, can also influence program image. Therefore, while altruistic motivation may enhance students' emotional connection and favorable attitudes toward voluntourism, its influence on the broader image of the program may depend on how effectively the program integrates opportunities for learning, reflection, and tangible community impact.

Based on these theoretical and empirical foundations, this study proposes that altruistic motivation plays an essential role in shaping students' attitudes toward voluntourism and their overall evaluation of service-learning programs. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are developed:

> H1: Altruistic motivation is positively associated with students' attitudes toward voluntourism-based service learning.
> H2: Altruistic motivation is positively associated with the overall image of voluntourism-based service learning programs.

Personal Growth Motivation

Personal growth motivation refers to an individual's intrinsic desire to improve oneself through learning, new experiences, and meaningful challenges. Within the context of voluntourism, this motivation is crucial in influencing individuals to engage in volunteer-based travel that simultaneously supports personal development and contributes to social causes. Personal growth encompasses various dimensions, such as acquiring new skills, expanding knowledge, increasing self-confidence, and fostering adaptability through interactions with diverse cultural and social environments (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Lo & Lee, 2011).

Volunteers driven by personal growth motivation often perceive voluntourism as a transformative experience that enables them to enhance personal and professional competencies. They tend to choose volunteer programs that align with their interests or career aspirations, such as teaching, environmental conservation, or health outreach (Brown, 2005). Moreover, exposure to new social contexts and cross-cultural learning opportunities strengthens their emotional intelligence, empathy, and self-efficacy (Chen & Chen, 2011)
Empirical studies have demonstrated that personal growth motivation significantly influences positive attitudes toward volunteering and voluntourism activities. When individuals recognise that volunteering contributes to societal good and their own self-development, they are more likely to display favourable attitudes and greater commitment to such activities. Furthermore, the sense of personal enrichment derived from voluntourism can enhance the overall image of the voluntourism destination, as participants associate the experience with personal transformation and meaningful engagement (Tomazos & Butler, 2012).

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

> H3: Personal Growth Motivation has a positively associated with Attitude.
> H4: Personal Growth Motivation has a positively associated with Overall Image.

Cultural Exploration Motivation

Cultural exploration motivation refers to the intrinsic desire of individuals to experience, learn, and immerse themselves in different cultures, traditions, and lifestyles. In the context of voluntourism, this motivation goes beyond ordinary travel desires. It emphasises meaningful cultural exchange, interpersonal connection, and mutual understanding between volunteers and host communities (Ooi & Laing, 2010; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Volunteers motivated by cultural exploration often seek authentic and transformative experiences that enable them to interact directly with local people, participate in traditional activities, and gain insight into diverse worldviews (Sin, 2009; Lo & Lee, 2011).

This form of motivation is particularly significant because it aligns with the experiential dimension of voluntourism, where participants contribute to community development and expand their cultural awareness and empathy. Through these interactions, volunteers develop a sense of respect and appreciation toward cultural diversity, which enhances their emotional and cognitive engagement with the host destination (Chen & Chen, 2011)

Moreover, cultural exploration significantly contributes to shaping the overall image of a voluntourism destination. Volunteers who experience deep cultural immersion and authentic encounters tend to associate the destination with openness, learning, and personal transformation. Such positive associations enhance the perceived image of the host community and increase the likelihood of revisitation and positive word of mouth (Tomazos & Butler, 2012).Based on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

> H5: Cultural Exploration Motivation has positively associated with on Attitude.
> H6: Cultural Exploration Motivation has a positively associated with Overall Image.

The Overall Image of Voluntourism

The overall image of voluntourism-based service learning represents individuals' holistic perception of voluntourism as a purposeful travel activity that integrates volunteering, learning, and cultural immersion (Wearing & McGehee, 2013). This image is shaped by cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions, how individuals think, feel, and intend to act toward the voluntourism experience. A positive overall image often emerges when participants perceive voluntourism as an ethically sound, educational, and mutually beneficial form of engagement between volunteers and host communities (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Lo & Lee, 2011).

Motivational factors such as altruism, personal growth, and cultural exploration are essential in shaping this image. Individuals with strong altruistic motives may perceive voluntourism as a moral and socially valuable endeavor, whereas those driven by personal growth and cultural curiosity may associate it with self-development and intercultural enrichment (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2020; Lee et al., 2023). When volunteers develop a positive overall image of voluntourism, they are more likely to express favorable attitudes toward participation, perceiving it as a meaningful and transformative educational experience (Chen & Chen, 2011). Furthermore, the overall image significantly affects intention to join future service-learning or voluntourism programs. A strong, positive image enhances emotional attachment and perceived value, which translates into greater behavioural intention, including the willingness to re-engage, recommend, or advocate for voluntourism opportunities (Tomazos & Butler, 2012; Ong et al., 2021). Therefore, cultivating a positive image of voluntourism is essential for sustaining students' engagement and long-term participation in experiential learning initiatives. Based on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

> H7: Overall Image has positively associated with Attitude.
> H8: Overall Image has positively associated with Intention to Join.

Attitude

Attitude toward voluntourism-based service learning refers to an individual's overall evaluative disposition, whether favourable or unfavourable, toward participating in volunteer-related experiential learning activities (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude reflects the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of one's psychological response to voluntourism. Cognitively, it

involves beliefs about the usefulness, ethics, and benefits of volunteering; affectively, it captures the emotional reactions such as enjoyment or fulfillment; and behaviorally, it denotes the readiness to participate or recommend voluntourism programs.

In the context of higher education service learning, students' attitudes are often shaped by the perceived value, credibility, and authenticity of voluntourism activities. When voluntourism is viewed as a credible, socially responsible, and educationally rewarding endeavor, students tend to form positive attitudes that encourage future participation. Conversely, if voluntourism is perceived as exploitative, poorly organized, or lacking genuine community impact, it may lead to negative attitudes that discourage engagement (Sin, 2009; Ong et al., 2021).

Attitude has been widely recognised as a key antecedent of behavioural intention in models such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Empirical evidence in voluntourism and educational service learning supports that individuals with a favorable attitude toward voluntourism are significantly more likely to express intentions to participate in similar programs in the future (Wearing & McGehee, 2013; Ong et al., 2021). This is because attitude reflects the internalized evaluation of voluntourism's personal and social benefits, which translates into motivation for action.

Based on this theoretical and empirical foundation, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> H9: Attitude has positively associated with Intention to Join voluntourism-based service learning.

Intention to Join Voluntourism

Intention to join voluntourism refers to the individual's plan or decision to participate in voluntourism activities in the future. This intention is often influenced by the individual's motivations, attitudes, and the perceived benefits of voluntourism. Studies have shown that a firm intention to join voluntourism is associated with a higher likelihood of actual participation, as individuals with a clear intention are more likely to take the necessary steps to engage in voluntourism (Ajzen, 1991). The overall image and attitude toward voluntourism also influence the intention to join voluntourism. For example, individuals who have a positive image of voluntourism and a favorable attitude toward it are more likely to express a firm intention to participate in voluntourism activities. Additionally, factors such as the availability of opportunities, the perceived ease of participation, and the support from social networks can also affect the intention to join voluntourism (Brown & Lehto, 2005).
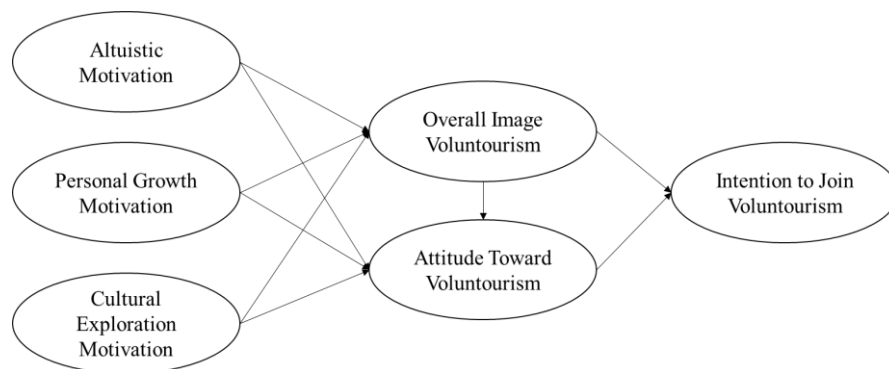
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to investigate the relationships between altruistic motivation, personal growth motivation, and cultural exploration motivation on the overall image of volunteer-based service learning, students' attitudes, and their intention to participate in such programs within Education Institution X. The study aimed to identify how these motivational factors shape students' perceptions and behavioral intentions in the context of higher education service-learning initiatives.

The target population comprised undergraduate students enrolled in programs that integrate or promote community-based learning, volunteerism, or cultural engagement activities. A purposive sampling technique was applied to ensure relevance to the research objectives. Respondents were selected based on the following criteria: (1) students who had previously participated in volunteer-based service learning, or (2) students who expressed interest in joining similar programs.

Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire administered via Google Forms. Each construct was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Prior to full deployment, a pilot test was conducted to ensure reliability and clarity of the items. In total, 151 valid responses were obtained for analysis.

This study utilized Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) using SmartPLS 4.0 software for data analysis.

This analytical technique was chosen because it is well-suited for predictive modelling and theory development, particularly when examining complex relationships among latent variables and when the data do not meet strict normality assumptions. SEM-PLS also allows simultaneous assessment of measurement validity and structural relationships, comprehensively evaluating the proposed model.

Given the cross-sectional nature of this study, the results represent associations rather than causal relationships. Therefore, interpretations regarding directionality should be made with caution. Moreover, although steps were taken to reduce common method bias (such as ensuring respondent anonymity and varying item wording), self-reported survey data may still introduce perceptual bias.

Overall, this methodological approach systematically explores motivational influences on students' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions toward structured volunteer activities. The findings are expected to contribute to designing and implementing service-learning curricula that effectively balance personal development, cultural learning, and social contribution within higher education contexts.

Demographic Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate that the majority were female students (65.6%), while male students accounted for 34.4%. Most participants were within the 21–23-year age group (53.6%), suggesting they were predominantly undergraduate students in their middle academic stage. Regarding volunteering experience, 42.4% of the students reported participating in one volunteer activity, 33.8% had joined two, and 23.8% had participated in more than three volunteering programs. This distribution shows a relatively balanced level of exposure, where both first-time and experienced volunteers are represented. Such diversity in experience provides meaningful variation for analyzing motivational and attitudinal differences among students engaging in volunteer-based service learning programs.

Table 1. Demographic

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	52	34.4
	Female	99	65.6
Age	18–20 years	47	31.1
	21–23 years	81	53.6
	24–26 years	18	11.9
	>26 years	5	3.3
Volunteer Experience	1 time	64	42.4
	2 times	51	33.8
	More than 3 times	36	23.8
Total		**151**	**100.0**

Table 2. Measurement

Construct	Code	Measurement Items
Altruistic Motivation	AM1	I want to help other people through voluntourism activities.
	AM2	I feel motivated to contribute to social change through voluntourism.
	AM3	I feel satisfied when I can make a positive difference in others' lives.
	AM4	I want to give something back to communities in need.
	AM5	I am interested in participating in voluntourism because of my humanitarian values.
Personal Growth Motivation	PGM1	I am interested in voluntourism to develop my personal skills.
	PGM2	I believe voluntourism will give me opportunities to learn new things.
	PGM3	Voluntourism will help me discover my untapped potential.
	PGM4	I want to join voluntourism to enhance my life experiences.
	PGM5	I am confident that voluntourism will provide me with opportunities for personal development.
Cultural Exploration Motivation	CEM1	I am interested in voluntourism because I want to understand other cultures.
	CEM2	Voluntourism gives me a chance to learn about new customs and traditions.
	CEM3	I want to experience different ways of life through voluntourism.
	CEM4	I am attracted to exploring new places and cultures through

Construct	Code	Measurement Items
		voluntourism.
	CEM5	Voluntourism provides me with opportunities to broaden my cultural perspectives.
Overall Image of Voluntourism	OIV1	I believe the voluntourism programs I join positively impact local communities.
	OIV2	Volunteering is an effective way to contribute to social causes while travelling.
	OIV3	I believe voluntourism allows meaningful cultural exchange between volunteers and locals.
Attitude Toward Voluntourism	ATV1	I think participating in voluntourism is a positive thing.
	ATV2	I believe voluntourism is a good way to spend my leisure time.
	ATV3	I consider voluntourism to be a beneficial activity.
	ATV4	I feel pleased with the idea of participating in voluntourism.
	ATV5	I think voluntourism is a worthwhile activity.
Intention to Join Voluntourism	INV1	I intend to participate in voluntourism activities in the future.
	INV2	I will look for opportunities to join voluntourism programs.
	INV3	I want to engage in voluntourism activities soon.
	INV4	I am committed to participating in voluntourism when given the opportunity.
	INV5	I have a firm intention to take part in voluntourism.
	INV6	I am determined to join the voluntourism program I have planned.

4. Results and Discussion

Results

a. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity measures the extent to which indicators of a construct correlate positively with each other. In SmartPLS, convergent validity is assessed by examining the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and the loading factors of the indicators. A loading factor greater than 0.6 (Chin et al. 1998) and an AVE value greater than 0.5 indicate good convergent validity, meaning the indicators consistently measure the same construct (Hair et al., 2014). The AM3 indicator on the Altruistic Motivation variable is maintained despite having an outer loading value of 0.650, because it is still within the acceptable tolerance limit according to the criteria proposed by Chin et al. (1998). Chin explained that an outer loading value above 0.50 is still valid and can be maintained if the construct has good overall reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3. Outer Loadings

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Criteria
Altruistic Motivation	AM1	0.778	Valid
	AM2	0.833	Valid
	AM3	0.650	Valid
	AM4	0.813	Valid
	AM5	0.801	Valid
Attitude Toward Voluntourism	ATV1	0.852	Valid
	ATV2	0.677	Valid
	ATV3	0.871	Valid

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Criteria
	ATV4	0.878	Valid
	ATV5	0.869	Valid
Cultural Exploration Motivation	CEM1	0.829	Valid
	CEM2	0.892	Valid
	CEM3	0.747	Valid
	CEM4	0.860	Valid
	CEM5	0.855	Valid
Intention to Joint Voluntourism	INV1	0.831	Valid
	INV2	0.885	Valid
	INV3	0.793	Valid
	INV4	0.850	Valid
	INV5	0.840	Valid
	INV6	0.864	Valid
Overall Image Voluntourism	OIV1	0.839	Valid
	OIV2	0.842	Valid
	OIV3	0.895	Valid
Personal growth Motivation	PGM1	0.774	Valid
	PGM2	0.824	Valid
	PGM3	0.768	Valid
	PGM4	0.845	Valid
	PGM5	0.840	Valid

b. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

AVE is a measure used to assess the amount of variance captured by a construct in relation to the variance due to measurement error. AVE is calculated as the average of the squared loadings of the indicators associated with a construct. An AVE value above 0.5 suggests that the construct explains more than 50% of the variance in its indicators, indicating good convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Altruistic Motivation	0.605
Attitude Voluntourism	0.693
Cultural Exploration Motivation	0.702
Intention to Joint Voluntourism	0.713
Overall Image Voluntourism	0.738
Personal growth Motivation	0.657

c. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of the internal reliability of a construct, indicating how consistently the indicators measure the same construct. The values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better reliability. A value above 0.7 is generally acceptable, although lower values may be acceptable depending on the research context (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). And composite Reliability is a measure similar to Cronbach's Alpha but is considered more accurate in the context of SEM-PLS because it considers the loadings of each indicator on the construct. Composite Reliability is also used to assess the internal reliability of

constructs, with a recommended value above 0.7 indicating good reliability (Hair *et al*., 2014). Unlike Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability does not assume that all indicators have the same reliability.

Table 5. Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Altruistic Motivation	0.835	0.884
Attitude Voluntourism	0.887	0.918
Cultural Exploration Motivation	0.893	0.922
Intention to Joint Voluntourism	0.919	0.937
Overall Image Voluntourism	0.822	0.894
Personal growth Motivation	0.870	0.905

d. Discriminant Validity

Table 6 presents the results of the discriminant validity test based on the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, where the square root of the AVE ($\sqrt{AVE}$) for each construct, shown on the diagonal, should be higher than its correlations with other constructs. The results indicate that all constructs, Altruistic Motivation, Attitude Toward Voluntourism, Cultural Exploration Motivation, Intention to Join Voluntourism, Overall Image of Voluntourism, and Personal Growth Motivation, meet this requirement. This demonstrates that each variable is distinct from the others, confirming that discriminant validity is achieved and that the measurement model is suitable for further structural analysis (*inner model*).

Table 6. Discriminant Validity

	Altruistic Motivation	Attitude	Cultural Exploration Motivation	Intention to Join Voluntourism	Overall Image Voluntourism	Personal Growth Motivation
Altruistic Motivation	0.778					
Attitude	0.756	0.833				
Cultural Exploration Motivation	0.558	0.648	0.838			
Intention to Join Voluntourism	0.691	0.746	0.549	0.844		
Overall Image Voluntourism	0.558	0.674	0.605	0.590	0.859	
Personal Growth Motivation	0.723	0.759	0.586	0.637	0.645	0.811

e. R-Square

Table 7 displays the R-Square Adjusted values, which indicate the proportion of variance in each endogenous variable explained by its predictors in the model. The results show that Attitude Toward Voluntourism has an R^2 value of 0.711, meaning that 71.1% of its variance is explained by the influencing variables, indicating a strong explanatory power. The variable Intention to Join Voluntourism has an R^2 of 0.565, suggesting that 56.5% of its variance is explained by the predictors, which is considered moderate. Meanwhile, Overall Image Voluntourism has an R^2 of 0.489, meaning 48.9% of its variance is accounted for by its antecedents, also within a moderate range. These results imply that the structural model has acceptable explanatory capability for the key endogenous constructs in voluntourism behavior.

Table 7. R-Square

Variable	R Square Adjusted
Attitude	0.711
Intention to Join Voluntourism	0.565
Overall Image Voluntourism	0.489

f. F-Square

F-Square (f^2) values, which measure the effect size of each exogenous variable on the endogenous variables in the model. According to Chin (1998), f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively. Based on the results, Altruistic Motivation has a moderate effect on Attitude (0.195) and a small effect on Overall Image (0.009). Attitude shows a large effect on Intention to Join Voluntourism (0.519). Meanwhile, Cultural Exploration Motivation and Personal Growth Motivation exhibit small-to-moderate effects on Overall Image and Attitude. These findings suggest that Attitude plays the most substantial role in influencing Intention to Join Voluntourism, while motivational factors contribute modestly to shaping attitude and image.

Table 8. F-Square

Variable	Attitude	Intention to Join Voluntourism	Overall Image Voluntourism
Altruistic Motivation	0.195		0.009
Attitude		0.519	
Cultural Exploration Motivation	0.056		0.131
Intention to Join Voluntourism			
Overall Image Voluntourism	0.067	0.032	
Personal Growth Motivation	0.107		0.125

g. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is a measure used to detect multicollinearity among indicators in a structural equation model. Multicollinearity occurs when two or more indicators are highly correlated, which can inflate standard errors and reduce the reliability of regression coefficients. According to Hair et al. (2021), VIF values below 5.0 indicate that multicollinearity is not a concern, while values below 3.0 are generally preferred for better model stability. Based on the table, all indicator VIF values range from 1.348 to 3.185, which are well below the critical threshold of 5.0. This result confirms that no multicollinearity problem exists among the indicators, and each indicator contributes uniquely to measuring its respective construct. Therefore, the measurement model demonstrates good discriminant validity and indicator independence.

Tabel 9. VIF

Indicator	VIF
AM1	1.876
AM2	2.131
AM3	1.348
AM4	2.060
AM5	1.957
ATV1	2.616
ATV2	1.466

Indicator	VIF
ATV3	2.713
ATV4	3.027
ATV5	3.090
CEM1	2.289
CEM2	2.976
CEM3	1.667
CEM4	2.543
CEM5	2.432
INV1	2.344
INV2	3.185
INV3	2.172
INV4	2.835
INV5	2.574
INV6	3.116
OIV1	1.696
OIV2	1.879
OIV3	2.171
PGM1	1.920
PGM2	2.056
PGM3	1.971
PGM4	2.535
PGM5	2.550

h. Q-Square

Q-Square (Predictive Relevance) measures how well the model and its parameters reconstruct the observed values. It is obtained through the construct cross-validated redundancy method in PLS-SEM. A Q^2 value greater than 0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance, meaning the exogenous variables can effectively explain the endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2021). Based on Table 8, the Q^2 values for each endogenous variable are as follows Attitude 0.484, Intention to Join Voluntourism 0.389 and Overall Image Voluntourism = 0.344. Since all Q^2 values are above zero, it confirms that the model has strong predictive relevance for these constructs. According to Chin (1998), Q^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large predictive power, respectively. Therefore, the results indicate that Attitude has a large predictive relevance, while Intention to Join Voluntourism and Overall Image Voluntourism show moderate to high predic.

Table 10. Q-Square

Variable	SSO	SSE	Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)
Altuistic Motivation	755.000	755.000	
Attitude	755.000	389.538	0.484
Cultural Exploration Motivation	755.000	755.000	
Intention to Join Voluntourism	906.000	553.620	0.389
Overall Image Voluntourism	453.000	297.232	0.344
Personal Growth Motivation	755.000	755.000	

i. SRMR

The Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is an index used to assess the goodness of fit of a structural model in PLS-SEM. It represents the difference between the observed correlations and the model's predicted correlations. According to Henseler et al. (2015), an SRMR value below 0.10 indicates an acceptable model fit, while a value below 0.08 suggests a good fit. This study's SRMR value is 0.081, indicating that the model has an acceptable overall fit. The d_ULS (2.862) and d_G (1.305) values represent discrepancy measures between the empirical and model-implied covariance matrices; smaller values indicate better fit. The Chi-Square (1,049.451) shows the overall discrepancy between observed and model-implied covariances, while the NFI (0.719), though below the ideal threshold of 0.90, still demonstrates a moderate model fit. These results suggest that the proposed model adequately represents the observed data.

Table 11. SRMR

	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.081
d_ULS	2.862
d_G	1.305
Chi-Square	1.049.451
NFI	0.719

j. Path Coefficient

In hypothesis testing within SmartPLS, the path coefficients are assessed to determine if the relationships between constructs are statistically significant (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

Table 12. Path Coefficient

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	P Values
Altruistic Motivation -> Attitude	0.350	0.346	0.084	0.000
Altruistic Motivation -> Overall Image Voluntourism	0.100	0.116	0.100	0.317
Attitude -> Intention to Join Voluntourism	0.639	0.631	0.074	0.000
Cultural Exploration Motivation -> Attitude	0.170	0.166	0.075	0.024
Cultural Exploration Motivation -> Overall Image Voluntourism	0.325	0.319	0.091	0.000
Overall Image Voluntourism -> Attitude	0.194	0.197	0.068	0.005
Overall Image Voluntourism -> Intention to Join Voluntourism	0.160	0.164	0.081	0.049
Personal Growth Motivation -> Attitude	0.280	0.282	0.083	0.001
Personal Growth Motivation -> Overall Image Voluntourism	0.382	0.377	0.112	0.001

Discussion

a. The Relationship Between Altruistic Motivation and Overall Image of Voluntourism

Altruistic motivation is the intrinsic desire to help others without expecting personal gain. In the context of volunteer-based service learning in higher education, this motivation is commonly linked to students' sense of social responsibility, empathy, and civic engagement. Previous studies have indicated that altruistic values are positively associated with favorable perceptions of service learning, positive attitudes, and a greater likelihood of future participation in similar programs (Choi & Kim, 2022; Brown & Lehto, 2021; McDonald & Dominguez, 2020). Altruistically motivated students often perceive service learning as a morally meaningful endeavour that allows them to contribute to community development while reinforcing personal values.

Interestingly, altruistic motivation did not significantly affect the overall image of voluntourism (p-value = 0.356 > 0.05). This implies that altruism alone may not sufficiently explain how students form their evaluations of service learning at University X. There are several plausible explanations for this result. First, students' motivations in academic service learning are often multifaceted, encompassing altruism and desires for academic credit, skill development, employability, or intercultural exposure (Yorio & Ye, 2012; Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011). Nguyen et al. (2023) found that perceived learning and career benefits tend to substantially influence participation more than purely altruistic values in higher education contexts.

Second, the perceived impact of the contribution plays a key role. Students may view their involvement as symbolic or superficial, particularly when engagement is short-term or lacks meaningful community interaction. According to Murray and Lawton (2021), positive perceptions of service learning emerge when students feel their contributions generate visible social outcomes. Third, there may be a mismatch between expectations and program delivery.

Students with strong altruistic intentions may anticipate deeper involvement in problem-solving, but program limitations, logistical barriers, or minimal reflection activities could lead to disappointment (Thompson et al., 2022). Fourth, the diversity of student backgrounds and academic goals may shape how they perceive service programs. For instance, students from professional fields such as business or engineering may prioritise practical skill acquisition over humanitarian impact (Gonzalez et al., 2020). These findings suggest that altruism alone is not a sufficient motivational foundation in education-based service learning (Warren, 2020).

Universities should, therefore, integrate multiple motivational dimensions such as personal growth, cultural learning, and academic relevance to foster broader engagement and a stronger overall image of volunteer programs. Enhancing structured reflection, community feedback, and visible learning outcomes may further strengthen students' perceptions of program value.

b. The Relationship Between Altruistic Motivation and Attitude Toward Voluntourism
The results of this study indicate that altruistic motivation has a positive associated with students' attitude toward volunteer-based service learning, with a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This suggests that students who are intrinsically motivated by a desire to help others are more likely to develop a favorable attitude toward engaging in structured volunteer programs offered by their educational institution.

In the context of higher education, altruistic motivation reflects a student's internalised values related to civic responsibility, empathy, and social contribution. When students perceive that their involvement in service learning allows them to make a genuine difference in underserved communities, such as teaching children in rural areas or contributing to environmental sustainability, they tend to develop more positive affective and evaluative judgments about the program. This aligns with earlier research indicating that intrinsic prosocial motives significantly shape learners' attitudes toward engagement activities (Chen & Chen, 2011; Alexander & Bakir, 2011).

Furthermore, Warren (2020) and McDonald & Dominguez (2020) found that altruistic tendencies strongly predict sustained emotional commitment and positive attitude toward community-based learning, especially when students can reflect on their personal impact. These attitudes are critical, as they influence immediate participation and long-term behavioral engagement, including advocacy and peer encouragement.

Positive attitudes rooted in altruism are further reinforced when students experience emotional satisfaction or moral fulfillment during or after their service. For example, students who mentor children or contribute to meaningful community projects often report increased self-worth and purpose factors reinforcing the belief that service learning is a valuable academic and social experience (Nguyen et al., 2023). As a result, these students are more likely to recommend the program, participate in similar initiatives, and integrate service values into their personal and professional identities.

In addition, the role of institutional support and program structure cannot be overlooked. According to Murray & Lawton (2021), service learning programs that provide visible impact metrics, community feedback, and reflection opportunities help reinforce students' altruistic motivations and improve their program attitudes. When students see tangible results from their involvement and feel acknowledged for their contribution, the emotional payoff of helping others is validated, enhancing overall attitude.

In summary, the significant relationship found in this study reinforces existing theories in service learning and prosocial education. It confirms that altruistically motivated students are more likely to hold favorable attitudes toward university-based service learning, especially when programs are designed to provide both meaningful impact and reflective learning.

c. The Relationship Between Personal Growth Motivation and Overall Image of Voluntourism

The results of this study indicate that personal growth motivation has a positive associated with overall image of volunteer-based service learning, with a p-value of 0.001 (< 0.05). This finding suggests that when students are driven by a desire for self-improvement, such as learning new skills, building self-confidence, or gaining deeper life insight, they are more likely to perceive service learning programs as valuable, meaningful, and impactful.

In the context of higher education, personal growth motivation is a key factor in shaping students' perceptions of experiential learning. Students who engage in service learning often report gains in areas such as leadership, communication, adaptability, critical thinking, and intercultural awareness (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Yorio & Ye, 2012). These competencies are not only essential for academic and professional success but also contribute to students' holistic development. When students recognise that service learning provides opportunities for real-

world application of their knowledge, they begin to associate these programs with transformative learning experiences. This perception significantly enhances the overall image of service learning as a community-oriented activity and a platform for personal advancement.

Nguyen et al. (2023) argue that students who perceive high developmental value in university-run service programs report higher satisfaction and long-term commitment. Personal growth also includes reflective processes, through which students make meaning of their experiences. Reflection activities such as journaling, group discussions, or critical debriefs encourage students to examine their values, assumptions, and personal goals (Eyler, 2002). These reflective insights deepen their emotional connection to the learning experience and reinforce a positive image of the service program (Brown & Lehto, 2005; Warren, 2020). This is especially true when students face challenges or ethical dilemmas in the field, which prompt growth in resilience and empathy.

In addition, service learning often exposes students to diverse cultural settings and unfamiliar social issues, expanding their worldview. Zahra & McGehee (2013) and Bringle et al. (2016) found that such exposure helps develop intercultural competence, a key component of personal growth in globalized education. Students who internalize these experiences tend to view service learning as enriching and eye-opening, enhancing their perception of its educational and developmental value.

The positive effect of personal growth motivation on the overall image is also consistent with findings from Wearing et al. (2008), who emphasize that the long-term benefits, such as improved confidence, emotional maturity, and global citizenship, leave a lasting impression that elevates how students remember and advocate for service learning programs. While personal growth motivation is centred on self-development, it often interacts with altruistic motives, creating a more holistic and balanced perception of service learning. According to Callanan & Thomas (2005), students often view their experiences as mutually beneficial, helpful to the community, and meaningful for themselves, further reinforcing a positive and sustained image of service learning.

In summary, the significant influence of personal growth motivation on the overall image of service learning underscores the need for educational institutions to design programs that contribute to social good and provide structured opportunities for student development. When service learning is aligned with students' personal and professional goals, it strengthens program image, enhances participation, and fosters a more profound commitment to civic engagement.

d. The Relationship Between Personal Growth Motivation and Attitude Toward Voluntourism

The results of this study indicate that personal growth motivation has a positive associated with students' attitude toward volunteer-based service learning, with a p-value of 0.002 (< 0.05). This finding highlights that students who are driven by a desire for self-development, learning, and personal transformation are more likely to develop a favorable attitude toward engaging in structured service learning activities offered by their university.

In higher education, personal growth motivation is increasingly recognised as a critical factor in shaping how students perceive and engage with experiential learning programs. Students motivated to enhance their skills, expand their worldview, and improve their self-efficacy often

view service learning as a constructive avenue for self-exploration and competence-building. These students tend to associate service learning with community contribution and opportunities to gain leadership, communication, and cross-cultural understanding skills, outcomes that are highly valued in academic and professional settings (Lyons & Wearing, 2008; Yorio & Ye, 2012).

Such perceptions foster a positive evaluative stance (attitude) toward service learning, as students begin to see the activity as mutually beneficial: helping communities while also helping themselves grow. Eyler & Giles (1999) argue that service learning becomes most meaningful when students experience intellectual and personal challenge, especially in unfamiliar environments. These challenges allow students to reflect on their identity, values, and future goals, which deepens their emotional and cognitive engagement with the program. Moreover, this positive attitude is further reinforced through satisfaction derived from personal achievements. When students recognise tangible growth through problem-solving, managing real-life tasks, or navigating cultural differences, they are more likely to view the experience as worthwhile and rewarding. According to Nguyen et al. (2023), students who perceive service learning as contributing to their personal and professional development are more satisfied and more likely to re-engage in future activities and promote the program to their peers.

This connection between personal growth and attitude is also supported by Murray & Lawton (2021), who found that structured reflection and mentoring enhance students' awareness of how their experiences translate into life skills, thus elevating their affective evaluations of the program. Such attitudinal positivity is essential for program sustainability in higher education, as it fosters ongoing participation, peer influence, and institutional reputation enhancement.
In summary, students motivated by personal growth tend to hold more positive attitudes toward volunteer-based service learning, because they see it as a meaningful path to personal enrichment and transformation. Universities seeking to improve engagement in service learning programs should therefore design initiatives that explicitly highlight opportunities for skill-building, self-awareness, and reflection, core elements that align with students' internal motivations for growth.

e. The Relationship Between Cultural Exploration Motivation and Overall Image of Voluntourism

The results of this study indicate that cultural exploration motivation has a positive associated with overall image of volunteer-based service learning, with a p-value of 0.002 (< 0.05). This finding suggests that students motivated by a desire to engage with and understand different cultures tend to form a more favorable perception of service learning programs that involve intercultural or international components.

In higher education, cultural exploration motivation reflects students' interest in gaining intercultural competence, broadening global perspectives, and experiencing the daily lives, values, and traditions of diverse communities. Service learning programs, especially those involving international placements or culturally diverse local communities, provide unique opportunities for students to immerse themselves in authentic, lived cultural experiences, which significantly enhance how they perceive the value and impact of such programs (McGehee & Santos, 2005; Bringle et al., 2016).

Students driven by cultural exploration are likely to view service learning as more than just a volunteering activity; they perceive it as a gateway to experiential cultural education. This

aligns with current trends in global education, where the emphasis is on learning through immersion, empathy, and cross-cultural communication. As Leask (2020) notes, structured intercultural experiences in academic programs contribute to developing critical global competencies and often result in greater satisfaction and positive image perceptions.

Moreover, cultural immersion provides personal enrichment and reflective growth, further reinforcing the program's image. When students feel that they have engaged meaningfully with local communities, learned about different worldviews, and reflected on their own assumptions, they are more likely to view the service learning experience as transformative and impactful (Sin, 2009; Nguyen et al., 2023). These enriched interactions also generate positive emotional associations, essential in forming a long-term positive image of the program.

Cultural exploration motivation also aligns with students' increasing preference for authentic and ethical educational experiences. Rather than classroom-bound instruction, students increasingly seek learning opportunities that involve real-world interaction with diverse populations. According to Raymond & Hall (2008), educationally embedded cultural experiences are more likely to result in long-lasting positive perceptions of learning initiatives, especially when students perceive both mutual benefit and cultural respect.

Importantly, integrating cultural components into service learning not only enhances the program's image but also promotes inclusive values and global citizenship, which are core goals of many institutions' internationalization strategies. Soria & Troisi (2014) highlight that domestic and international service learning programs with cultural exposure significantly increase students' intercultural self-efficacy and social responsibility, reinforcing positive perceptions of program quality and institutional commitment to global engagement.

In summary, students motivated by cultural exploration tend to view service learning as a valuable and enriching experience, leading to a stronger and more positive overall image. For institutions, this underscores the importance of integrating cultural immersion, community interaction, and reflective learning into service programs to meet students' expectations and deepen their educational experience.

f. The Relationship Between Cultural Exploration Motivation and Attitude Toward Voluntourism

The results of this study indicate that cultural exploration motivation has a positive associated with overall image of voluntourism, with a p-value of 0.021, which is less than 0.05.

Cultural exploration motivation is the desire to immerse oneself in and understand different cultures through travel. This motivation plays a significant role in shaping an individual's attitude toward voluntourism (volunteer tourism). Individuals driven by cultural exploration are likely to view voluntourism as appealing because it allows them to experience new cultures while contributing to community development. This dual benefit aligns with their intrinsic desire for cultural immersion and learning, thereby fostering a positive attitude toward voluntourism. According to McGehee and Santos (2005), people motivated by cultural exploration often perceive voluntourism as a valuable opportunity to gain deeper cultural insights and engage meaningfully with different communities.

This motivation enhances the overall appeal of voluntourism, as it caters to the growing interest in authentic and immersive travel experiences. Volunteers with a strong interest in cultural

exploration will likely see voluntourism as a form of altruistic service and a chance for personal enrichment and cultural engagement. Sinclair and Stabler (1997) support this positive perception, highlighting that the opportunity to explore and learn from new cultures can significantly influence one's attitude toward voluntourism, making it more attractive and fulfilling.

Moreover, cultural exploration motivation can contribute to a more favourable attitude toward voluntourism by enhancing the perceived value of the volunteer experience. When volunteers feel that their activities provide valuable cultural knowledge and personal growth, they are more likely to have a favourable view of voluntourism. Studies such as those by Wearing and McGehee (2013) support this perspective. They suggest that the cultural benefits of voluntourism can enhance participants' overall attitudes, making them more appreciative of the activity's potential to offer both personal and communal benefits.

In summary, cultural exploration motivation shapes attitudes toward voluntourism by emphasising the activity's role as a gateway to artistic learning and personal growth. Volunteers who are driven by a desire to explore new cultures often view voluntourism as a rewarding experience that provides significant cultural and personal benefits, which in turn fosters a positive attitude toward the activity

g. *The Relationship Between Overall Image of Voluntourism and Attitude Toward Voluntourism*

The results of this study indicate that the overall image of volunteer-based service learning has a positive associated with students' attitude toward participation, with a p-value of 0.008 (< 0.05). This suggests that students' collective perception of the quality, relevance, and impact of service learning programs significantly influences how positively they evaluate and respond to such initiatives. In higher education, the overall image refers to how students cognitively and affectively perceive service learning as a learning model. Multiple factors shape this image, including the clarity of program objectives, perceived learning outcomes, community relevance, and institutional support. When students perceive service learning as well-organized, impactful, and aligned with academic and civic goals, they are likelier to develop a positive attitude toward it. This attitude, in turn, influences their willingness to participate, engage deeply, and advocate for the program among peers (Bringle et al., 2016; Soria & Troisi, 2014).

A positive overall image emerges when students associate service learning with meaningful personal growth, community engagement, and intercultural learning. According to McGehee and Santos (2005), such perceptions enhance students' attitudes by reinforcing that their efforts produce personal and social benefits. Conversely, when the overall image is negative or ambiguous, such as when students perceive the program as tokenistic, poorly implemented, or disconnected from real community needs, this can lead to scepticism or apathy toward participation (Callananananan & Thomas, 2005).

In today's digital age, social narratives also highly influence the overall image, including peer testimonials, social media exposure, and media representation. Positive reviews and visual storytelling from previous participants can create a favorable impression, increasing students' trust and enthusiasm. On the other hand, exposure to criticism, such as accusations of performative volunteering or lack of sustainability, can tarnish the image and result in more critical or cautious attitudes, especially among socially aware student populations (Warren, 2020; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Furthermore, research suggests that institutional branding and

framing of service learning initiatives also contribute to constructing this image. When universities present these programs as integral to student development and provide academic scaffolding such as reflection sessions, mentoring, and community partnerships, the image becomes more credible and appealing (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

In summary, the findings confirm that the overall image of service learning plays a critical role in shaping students' attitudes. A strong and positive image built on credibility, impact, and personal relevance fosters favourable attitudes and promotes higher engagement levels. Therefore, institutions must cultivate this image through effective program design, authentic storytelling, and responsive community partnerships.

h. The Relationship Between Overall Image of Voluntourism and Intention to Join Voluntourism

The results of this study indicate that the overall image of volunteer-based service learning has a positive associated with students' intention to join, with a p-value of 0.042 (< 0.05). This finding suggests that students' general perception and evaluation of service learning, whether they see it as valuable, credible, and impactful, directly influences their willingness to participate in such programs.

In the context of higher education, the overall image encompasses students' collective understanding of service learning as an academic and civic experience. When service learning is viewed positively as a well-designed initiative that promotes personal development, intercultural competence, and meaningful community involvement, students are more likely to express a strong behavioral intention to participate. This aligns with previous findings by McGehee and Santos (2005), who emphasised that a favourable perception of voluntourism programs can increase individuals' motivation to join by emphasising both self-enrichment and community contribution.

Positive overall image is often shaped by several reinforcing factors, including peer endorsement, institutional branding, prior participant testimonials, and media representation. For instance, students who learn about the program through success stories or peer experiences are more likely to associate it with quality, impact, and relevance. According to Soria & Troisi (2014), students who perceive global learning opportunities as credible and transformative report a higher intention to engage in similar academic initiatives.

Furthermore, Nguyen et al. (2023) argue that institutional transparency and clarity of program objectives also significantly contribute to building a strong program image, enhancing participation intention. When students see that service learning aligns with their academic and career goals, and that their contributions are respected and visible, they are more likely to commit. Conversely, a negative or ambiguous overall image can lead to skepticism and reduced participation. Concerns such as ethical issues, lack of community impact, poor coordination, or cultural insensitivity may erode students' trust in the program. Callanan and Thomas (2005) noted that perceptions of voluntourism that appear exploitative or misaligned with local needs can significantly diminish participants' enthusiasm and willingness to join. Similarly, Warren (2020) highlights that when service programs lack authenticity or are seen as performative, students' behavioral intentions are adversely affected.

In summary, the overall image of volunteer-based service learning influences students' intention to participate. A positive image, grounded in perceived value, meaningful impact, and

alignment with students' goals, fosters more substantial commitment and engagement. Therefore, institutions must cultivate this image through quality program design, transparent communication, and authentic student narratives to enhance student participation and long-term program success.

i. The Relationship Between Attitude Toward Voluntourism and Intention to Join Voluntourism

The results of this study indicate that attitude toward volunteer-based service learning has a positive associated with students' intention to join, with a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This finding underscores the crucial role that students' evaluative judgments, beliefs, feelings, and predispositions toward service learning play in influencing their willingness to participate.
In the context of higher education, attitude refers to how students positively or negatively assess service learning as a learning and community engagement activity. When students view service learning as meaningful, enriching, and aligned with their personal and academic goals, they are significantly more likely to express a strong intention to engage. This is consistent with Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that attitude is a key predictor of behavioral intention, especially when the behavior is voluntary and purpose-driven.

A positive attitude toward service learning typically develops when students perceive the activity as a means of achieving personal growth, cultural understanding, career preparation, and societal contribution. According to McGehee and Santos (2005), favourable perceptions of volunteer experiences, especially when framed within ethical, community-centred structures, lead to higher willingness to engage. In the university context, such attitudes are strengthened when reflection sessions, faculty involvement, and visible community impact support service learning. Conversely, a negative attitude often shaped by concerns over program effectiveness, ethical issues, or misalignment with student values can significantly reduce intention to participate. Callanan and Thomas (2005) emphasize that skepticism arises when students view service learning as exploitative, disorganized, or lacking in real-world relevance. This perception not only lowers trust but also diminishes motivational drive.

Interpersonal and media influences, such as peer recommendations, alumni narratives, social media portrayals, and institutional framing also shape attitudes. Wearing and McGehee (2013) highlight that positive peer testimonials and role modelling profoundly influence student decision-making. Students tend to form more favorable attitudes and subsequently stronger behavioral intentions when promoting service learning through inspiring stories, community success, or faculty engagement. The findings confirm that attitude strongly and reliably predicts students' intention to join service learning activities. Educational institutions should, therefore, actively foster positive attitudes by ensuring program transparency, ethical alignment, academic integration, and opportunities for student reflection. A strong, well-supported attitude drives participation and strengthens long-term civic engagement and institutional loyalty.

5. Conclusions

This study offers valuable insights into the motivational factors influencing students' engagement in volunteer-based service learning and their effects on students' perceptions and behavioural intentions within higher education. By examining altruistic, personal growth, and cultural exploration motivations, this research sheds light on how these factors may shape students' overall image, attitudes, and intentions toward participation.

The findings suggest that personal growth and cultural exploration motivations are positively associated with the overall image of service-learning programs, indicating that students who value self-development and intercultural experiences tend to perceive such programs more favorably. Conversely, altruistic motivation did not significantly influence the overall image, implying that altruism alone may not determine students' evaluative judgments in academic contexts where practical or career-related benefits are also salient. Furthermore, a positive overall image is associated with more favorable attitudes and stronger intentions to join service learning programs.

These results highlight the importance of universities designing service learning initiatives that integrate multiple motivational pathways combining personal growth, cultural enrichment, and social contribution. Such an approach can strengthen students' perceptions of program value and foster greater engagement. However, as this study employed a cross-sectional design, causal interpretations should be made with caution, and future research using longitudinal or experimental methods is recommended to capture better how these motivations and perceptions evolve.

Limitations

While providing valuable insights into students' motivations and perceptions toward volunteer-based service learning, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, it employed a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to infer causal relationships between motivational factors, overall image, attitude, and intention. The observed associations should therefore be interpreted as correlational rather than causal. Second, the research relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias or response tendencies that do not fully reflect participants' genuine motivations or experiences. Third, the study's sample was limited to a single higher education institution, which may constrain the generalizability of findings across different cultural, disciplinary, or institutional contexts. Lastly, the study focused on individual-level motivations without incorporating external or contextual factors such as program structure, institutional support, or community feedback, which could also influence students' evaluations of service-learning programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research on volunteer-based service learning should adopt a more integrative and longitudinal approach to better capture the complexity of students' motivational dynamics. Instead of examining altruistic, personal growth, and cultural exploration motivations in isolation, future studies are encouraged to explore how these motivational constructs influence students' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. Furthermore, employing longitudinal or mixed-method research designs would allow scholars to trace the evolution of students' motivations and perceptions before, during, and after participation, offering more profound insights into the long-term educational and civic outcomes of such experiences. It is also recommended that future research examine potential discrepancies between students' initial expectations and their actual post-participation experiences, as these gaps may influence their satisfaction, perceived impact, and willingness to re-engage in similar initiatives. Lastly, subsequent studies should give greater attention to the ethical and community dimensions of service learning, including the perspectives of local beneficiaries and partner organisations, to ensure that these programs enrich student learning and deliver equitable, sustainable, and mutually beneficial outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

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