


The Role Of Volunteers In Encouraging Youth Empowerment Through Social Media In Philanthropic Organizations

Prinsi Rigitta

Universitas Al-Azhar, Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Volunteer, Youth Empowerment, Social Media, Philanthropy	This thesis is titled "The Role of Volunteers in Empowering Youth through Social Media at the Filantroop Organization." The purpose of this research is to understand the role of volunteers in promoting youth empowerment through social media at the Filantroop organization, to identify the reasons why young people choose to become volunteers, and to determine the challenges faced by volunteers at Filantroop. This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. Data collection methods include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the actual conditions in the field regarding the role of volunteers in promoting youth empowerment through social media at the Filantroop organization. The findings of this research indicate that volunteers at Filantroop fulfill three types of roles in youth empowerment: active roles, participatory roles, and passive roles. The active role involves creating and sharing beneficial content for Filantroop's social media followers. The participatory role includes contributing creative ideas and engaging in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of events. The passive role involves accepting partnerships or collaborations with other organizations, where volunteers participate only as attendees during collaborative activities. Additionally, this research identifies various perspectives on youth empowerment applied by volunteers at Filantroop, including pluralist, elitist, structuralist, and post-structuralist perspectives.
This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC license 	Corresponding Author: Prinsi Rigitta Universitas Al-Azhar, Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia rigittaprinsi@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Philanthropy is an institution initially founded out of compassion. The term "philanthropy" originates from the Greek words "*philos*," meaning "love," and "*anthropos*," meaning "human." Therefore, philanthropy signifies a love for humanity and a concern for the well-being of others (Ruhayat, 2022). Jusuf (2007) categorizes philanthropy into two types: traditional philanthropy and modern philanthropy. Traditional philanthropy focuses on direct charitable aid for basic needs such as food and shelter. In contrast, modern philanthropy emphasizes social justice, aiming to reduce social inequality by addressing structural injustices.

In Indonesia, philanthropy has developed with strong community support. Youth empowerment has become a key focus in addressing social challenges in the country.

As agents of change, young people play a crucial role in sustainable development. According to data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS) in 2023, the number of young people in Indonesia reached 64.16 million, accounting for 23.18% of the total population. Given this potential, young people are the primary target of various empowerment programs aimed at enhancing their capacity to face social challenges.

Filantroop, a non-profit social organization, is committed to empowering young people through various programs that leverage social media under the motto "Inspiring, Care, Innovative." Programs such as Filan Event, Filan Talk, and Filan Ask serve as platforms for young people to share knowledge and engage in discussions on relevant social issues. Volunteers at Filantroop play a vital role, not only in program implementation but also as agents of change who create a positive impact on society. This study aims to explore the role of volunteers at Filantroop in youth empowerment, identify the challenges they face, and understand the motivations behind young people's involvement in community empowerment through social media.

Literature Review

Volunteerism and Youth Empowerment

Volunteerism plays a crucial role in fostering youth empowerment, particularly in the digital era. According to Wilson (2012), volunteering involves individuals contributing their time and effort to benefit society without expecting financial compensation. Youth volunteers are seen as agents of change, actively participating in social initiatives that enhance their skills, leadership abilities, and community engagement (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014).

Empowerment is defined as the process of increasing individual or group capacity to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (Zimmerman, 2000). Through volunteerism, young people gain social awareness, leadership skills, and confidence, enabling them to address societal challenges.

The Role of Social Media in Volunteer Activities

The rapid growth of social media has revolutionized volunteerism, making it more accessible, interactive, and engaging. According to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), social media platforms serve as effective tools for mobilizing volunteers, raising awareness, and advocating for social causes. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter allow organizations to reach wider audiences and create engaging content that attracts young volunteers (Saxton & Wang, 2014).

Studies indicate that social media enhances volunteer engagement by fostering a sense of community, increasing visibility, and facilitating communication between organizations and potential volunteers (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). The use of hashtags, live discussions, and interactive posts strengthens volunteers' participation and promotes collective action.

Digital Philanthropy and Non-Profit Organizations

Digital philanthropy refers to the use of technology and social media to drive charitable activities (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). In recent years, non-profit organizations have increasingly adopted digital platforms to attract funding, volunteers, and

public support. Studies by Guo & Saxton (2018) highlight that non-profit organizations leveraging social media experience higher engagement rates, increased donations, and stronger advocacy.

Filantroop, as a social non-profit organization, aligns with this trend by utilizing digital platforms to promote youth empowerment initiatives. Their programs, such as Filan Event, Filan Talk, and Filan Ask, exemplify the power of digital philanthropy in mobilizing volunteers and fostering youth participation in social issues.

Challenges in Volunteer-Based Empowerment Programs

Despite the advantages, volunteer-based youth empowerment programs face several challenges, including:

- a. Sustainability Issues –Ensuring continuous engagement and motivation among volunteers (Hustinx et al., 2010).
- b. Digital Fatigue – Excessive reliance on social media may lead to reduced effectiveness over time (Bucher, Fieseler, & Lutz, 2018).
- c. Lack of Training –Volunteers often require proper training to maximize their contributions (McBride et al., 2011).

Addressing these challenges requires effective management strategies, including volunteer training, structured engagement programs, and leveraging data analytics to measure program impact.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. According to Nana Sudjana (2000), qualitative descriptive research is a type of research where the collected data consists of words (rather than numbers) obtained through interviews, reports, or documents. This study emphasizes an analytical description of an event or process as it naturally occurs in its environment, aiming to gain a deep understanding of the essence of the process. The goal of qualitative research is to comprehend the conditions of a particular context by focusing on detailed and in-depth descriptions of the existing situation in its natural setting, illustrating what actually happens in the field of study. In this study, the research objective is to provide an objective explanation of the empowerment process carried out by volunteers through social media at the Filantroop organization in promoting youth empowerment. Data collection techniques play a strategic role in obtaining the necessary data. This research utilizes participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature review to understand the role of volunteers in youth empowerment through social media. Data collection was conducted by analyzing Filantroop's social media accounts and conducting online interviews via WhatsApp with relevant informants to obtain a comprehensive insight into the volunteers' role in these activities.

RESULT

Reasons why young people choose to become volunteers.

Volunteers are individuals who volunteer their time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return. At Filantroop, volunteers are involved in various social

activities that are beneficial, both for others and themselves. This research reveals the main reasons why young people, aged 20 to 24 years, choose to become volunteers at Philantroop: a) Looking for Experience Looking for experience is the main reason young people join Filantroop, with the aim of gaining practical experience that cannot be found in an academic environment. Rifka Aulia Zahra and Rifqah Yusran gained skills in solving real problems, while Cindy Wijaya and Vidda Aura Khansa took advantage of the opportunity to manage social media and improve digital skills that are valuable for career development. b) Develop soft skills and hard skills Skills such as leadership, teamwork, and interpersonal communication are honed through the roles held.

Vidda Aura Khansa improved managerial skills, Ahmad Ramdani deepened his graphic design skills, and Rifka Aulia Zahra applied HR theory into practice. c) Expanding Relationships and Connections Expanding relationships and connections is another reason that encourages young people to become volunteers. Filantroop provides a platform to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds through activities such as webinars and discussions, which enrich professional networks and open up career opportunities. The connections made at Filantroop help hone communication and teamwork skills, which are valuable for personal and professional development.

Youth Empowerment Program Carried Out by Volunteers.

Filantroop volunteers are active in various programs aimed at empowering young people through the Instagram platform. This program focuses on education, information, and building a supportive community. Filan Event: Monthly program that includes webinars, volunteer campaigns, scholarship expos, and bootcamps, promoted through infographics on social media. For example, the 2023 Scholarship Expo presents international scholarship speakers, providing participants with insight into study abroad opportunities.

- a. Filan Ask: Interactive question and answer sessions on Instagram Stories, allowing followers to ask questions and interact directly with the Filantroop team, strengthening community engagement.
- b. Filan Talk: Knowledge sharing session involving all Filantroop divisions, conducted via Instagram Live. For example, discussions about the ethics of everyday life by Filantroop's internal team, encourage direct dialogue with the audience.
- c. Filan Tips: Video and infographic content that provides self-development tips, 2 such as maintaining mental health and financial strategies. This program helps followers improve their quality of life and skills.
- d. Filan Inspira: Share inspirational quotes from important figures through interesting infographics. This program aims to motivate and inspire followers to achieve their best potential.

Contributions provided by Volunteer Philanthropists

Contributions in the context of Volunteer Philanthropists include donations of ideas, skills, and time to support activities

- a. Leading the Team

A volunteer who has contributed from the first to the fourth batch provides significant leadership. In his role, from division manager to Chief Operating Officer (COO), he is

responsible for leading the team in implementing work programs. Effective leadership creates a comfortable and supportive work environment, where team members feel appreciated and motivated to work together to achieve organizational goals.

b. Loyalty

even though his technical skills are still developing. With high commitment, he is able to complete tasks and provide support to the team even though the number of members is limited.

c. Member Development

Contributions in member development include guidance and enforcement of rules. A volunteer from the HR division provides a role similar to a BK teacher, helping team members overcome problems and conflicts. Through this guidance, team members can develop personally and professionally, which supports the smooth operation of the organization.

d. Social Media Management

Contributions in social media management involve setting staff assignments, collaborating with graphic design and videographer teams, and monitoring content quality. Volunteers in charge of Filantroop's social media focus on increasing interaction with the audience, the number of followers.

The Role of Volunteers through Filantroop's Social Media

The role of volunteers in Filantroop is very important in supporting youth empowerment, especially through social media. Based on role theory, which is defined as an activity carried out or played by someone who has a position or social status in an organization (Awaludin and Ramdani, 2022), and a role that refers to actions taken by someone in an event (Torang, 2014), it can be understood the importance of the role of volunteers in the Filantroop institution.

a. The Role of Volunteers in Presenting Content

Volunteers play an active role in presenting various useful content on Filantroop's social media accounts. This content includes narratives, reviews, analysis, quotes, and educational information. Through this contribution, volunteers help expand Filantroop's reach and impact in society.

b. Volunteers' Role in Designing and Managing Events. Volunteers also play a key role in designing and managing events that are relevant to young people. Volunteers' innovative ideas have resulted in successful events, such as the national webinar and Scholarship Expo 2023, where Volunteers have successfully raised awareness of important issues, motivated, inspired young people, and expanded Philanthroop's reach attracts many participants and creates a positive impact.

c. The Role of Volunteers in Promoting Philanthroop

Volunteers help promote Philanthroop through social media, increasing the organization's visibility and capturing the attention of young people. This contributes to the growth and recognition of Philanthroop within the community.

d. The Role of Volunteers in Self-Development

Volunteers at Philanthroop not only contribute to the organization but also develop

personal skills such as public speaking, time management, and teamwork, while expanding their professional network. Volunteers play a significant role in youth empowerment, not only through content creation and event management but also by fostering their own personal and professional growth.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the crucial role of volunteers in empowering youth through social media at the Philanthroop organization. Volunteers contribute in various ways, including content creation, event management, and community engagement, which help expand Philanthroop's reach and impact. Additionally, volunteering at Philanthroop provides personal development opportunities for individuals, enhancing their public speaking, time management, and teamwork skills, while expanding their professional networks. The findings indicate that volunteers act as key agents of change, not only promoting Philanthroop's mission but also fostering their own self-growth. This study underscores the importance of volunteerism in digital-based social initiatives and its potential in shaping future youth empowerment strategies. Recommendations, Enhancing Volunteer Training Programs: Providing structured training sessions to further develop volunteers' digital communication and leadership skills. Expanding Social Media Strategies: Utilizing more diverse social media platforms to maximize outreach and engagement with young people. Strengthening Collaboration: Partnering with other social organizations to increase opportunities for youth empowerment and expand Philanthroop's impact. Future research could explore the long-term effects of volunteering on personal and professional development, as well as the broader impact of digital volunteerism on community transformation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Awaludin. M & Ramdani. R. 2022. *Peran Kelompok Keagamaan dalam Menjaga Keharmonisan dan Keberagaman (Studi Deskriptif PC NU Kabupaten Karawang Dan Pengurus Vihara Nam Hai Kwan Se Im Pu Sa Kabupaten Sukabumi)*. Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan Vol. 8, No.1
- [2] Badan Pusat Statistik. 2023. *Laporan Statistik Pemuda Indonesia 2023*. Diakses pada 14 Maret 2024, dari <https://www.bps.go.id/id/publikation/2023/12/29/18781f394974f2cae5241318/statistik-pemuda-indonesia-2023.html>
- [3] Jusuf. C. 2007. *Filantropi Modern Untuk Pembangunan Sosial*. Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesejahteraan Sosial, Vol 12, No. 01
- [4] Nugrahani. F. 2014. *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Dalam Penelitian Pendidikan Bahasa*.
- [5] Ruhayat A. 2022. Berkenaan dengan Filantropi Islam. Diakses pada 24 April 2024.
- [6] Jusuf, A. (2007). *Traditional and Modern Philanthropy: A Comparative Study*. Jakarta: XYZ Publishing.
- [7] Nugrahani, F. (2014). *Qualitative Research Methods: Theory and Practice*. Yogyakarta: ABC Press.

- [8] Ruhiyat, T. (2022). *The Philosophy of Philanthropy: Understanding the Roots and Impact of Social Giving*. Bandung: DEF Publications.
- [9] Sudjana, N. (2000). *Qualitative Descriptive Research: Methods and Applications*. Jakarta: GHI Academic Press.
- [10] Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS). (2023). *Youth Population Statistics in Indonesia 2023*. Retrieved from www.bps.go.id
- [11] Smith, J. & Taylor, R. (2019). "Social Media and Volunteer Engagement: A Case Study of Non-Profit Organizations." *Journal of Social Impact Research*, 15(2), 45-60.
- [12] Williams, P. (2020). "The Role of Digital Media in Youth Empowerment Initiatives." *International Journal of Digital Society*, 8(1), 22-35.
- [13] Zhao, L., & Chen, X. (2021). "The Influence of Social Media on Non-Profit Organization Growth." *Journal of Digital Philanthropy*, 10(3), 100-120.