

1. Introduction





1.1 Overview

The demographics of Singapore are changing. It is predicted that by 2012, 1 in 5 Singaporeans will be aged 65 and above (MCYS, 2007). With the increase in the aging population, there will inevitably be a greater demand for volunteers to help ease the shortage of professional staffing (Chiang, 2000). The youth population is one resource elderly-related services can draw on. Based on the 2000 National Youth Council (NYC) survey, 71% of youths had never done volunteer work in the past one year. Of those who had not volunteered, 57% indicated that they were not likely to do so, with 16% of them citing “no friends for company” as a main reason for not volunteering (National Youth Council, 2007). This is a worrying trend.

The purpose of this study is to explore what motivates the youths who are currently volunteering with the elderly. It is projected that youths in Singapore are motivated by a genuine desire to help, and not because of external incentives. With the profiling of the youth volunteers, this study will be able to recommend strategies for elderly-related agencies to better attract youth volunteers. Promoting interactions between the youth and elderly will help youths develop a sense of empathy and respect for their elders, while the elders will regain a sense of purpose.

This research does not examine why youth are not attracted to providing elderly-related services, or community work, in general. In this study, youths are defined as young persons (male and female) aged 13 to 20 years old.

Legend:

-  Background information
-  Purpose of the study
-  Limits of research
-  Definition of terms