

# **Satisfaction with Informal Volunteering during the COVID-19 Crisis: An Empirical Study Considering a Swiss Online Volunteering Platform**

Stefan Trautwein<sup>1</sup> [ORCID: 0000-0002-2464-819X], Florian Liberatore<sup>2</sup> [ORCID: 0000-0001-7147-6485], Jörg Lindenmeier<sup>1</sup> [ORCID: 0000-0001-6736-7067], Georg von Schnurbein<sup>3</sup> [ORCID: 0000-0002-6660-1875]

<sup>1</sup>University of Freiburg, Germany

<sup>2</sup>ZHAW School of Management and Law, Winterthur, Switzerland

<sup>3</sup>University of Basel, Switzerland

**Corresponding Author:** Georg von Schnurbein

## **Affiliations**

**Stefan Trautwein**, Center for Public and Non-Profit Management, University of Freiburg, Wilhelmstr. 1b, 79085 Freiburg, Germany, Email: [stefan.trautwein@vwl.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:stefan.trautwein@vwl.uni-freiburg.de)

**Florian Liberatore**, Winterthur Institute of Health Economics, ZHAW School of Management and Law, Gertrudstr. 15, 8401 Winterthur, Switzerland, Email: [florian.liberatore@zhaw.ch](mailto:florian.liberatore@zhaw.ch)

**Jörg Lindenmeier**, Center for Public and Non-Profit Management, University of Freiburg, Wilhelmstr. 1b, 79085 Freiburg, Germany, Email: [joerg.lindenmeier@vwl.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:joerg.lindenmeier@vwl.uni-freiburg.de)

**Georg von Schnurbein**, Center for Philanthropy Studies, University of Basel, Steinengraben 22, 4051 Basel, Switzerland, Email: [georg.vonschnurbein@unibas.ch](mailto:georg.vonschnurbein@unibas.ch)

### **Authors' Note**

We are very grateful to Mr. Amadeus Petrig for granting access to the Amigos platform and for his support in the data collection process.

### **Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Funding**

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **ORCID iDs**

Stefan Trautwein <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2464-819X>

Florian Liberatore <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7147-6485>

Jörg Lindenmeier <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6736-7067>

Georg von Schnurbein <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6660-1875>

### **Supplemental Material**

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

### **Keywords**

COVID-19 crisis, informal volunteering, long-term volunteering, online platform support, volunteer functions inventory, volunteer satisfaction

## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a huge wave of compassion. In particular, online volunteering platforms established channeling help for high-risk groups. It is unclear under which conditions volunteers were satisfied with their COVID-19 volunteering mediated by these platforms and whether they will continue their engagement after the crisis. Therefore, and considering personal susceptibility to COVID-19 infection, this study analyzes the effects of different platform support for volunteers and the fulfillment of volunteers' motives. The study is based on an online survey of a sample of 565 volunteers who registered at and were placed by a Swiss online platform. Fulfillment of distinct volunteer motives and platform support drive COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction. Moreover, motive fulfillment and platform-related support indirectly impact willingness to volunteer long-term via volunteering satisfaction. Finally, the empirical results show that motive fulfillment and the effect of platform support are contingent on perceived susceptibility to infection.

## **Introduction**

This study deals with informal crisis volunteering during the lockdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic in Switzerland. Informal crisis volunteering is defined as one-time and short-term response to emergencies, disasters, and sociopolitical crises (Smith et al., 2016). Crisis volunteers most often react ad hoc and without organizational context or guidance. Usually, their motives are sympathy and empathy, and their actions are based on individual decision-making and their own resources (Aguirre et al., 2016).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people volunteered to support the public health system, went shopping for people in high risk populations, or supported nonprofits in their services (e.g., Beardmore et al., 2020). Studies investigating the underlying mechanisms of this unique kind of helping behavior revealed a pronounced effect of prosocial motives on the willingness to help (Mak & Fancourt, 2020). However, previous studies have shown that untrained and inexperienced informal crisis volunteers may risk both their own health and the health of those people in need (Whittaker, McLennan, & Handmer, 2015). As our data shows, and as occurred in previous crises (Simsa, Rameder, Aghamanoukjan, & Totter, 2019), the number of informal crisis volunteers in the COVID-19 pandemic – referred to in the following as COVID-19 volunteers – far exceeded the demand for ad hoc help. Hence, the relevant question in crises is not how to recruit volunteers but how to prevent negative consequences from the oversupply and how to channel commitment in such a way that informal crisis volunteering can have positive outcomes.

This study focuses on informal, spontaneous help for strangers organized through online volunteering platforms matching helpers and people in need. Given the circumstances during the lockdown, COVID-19 volunteers were highly dependent on the matching platforms to link them with people in need and supply the volunteering tasks (Spear, Erdi, Parker, & Anastasiadis, 2020). Online platforms have been found to be an effective instrument for volunteer recruitment

and for matching volunteers to tasks in crisis situations (Rotolo & Berg, 2011). Moreover, the platforms provided COVID-19 volunteers with information on how to act under the lockdown restrictions and allowed better steering and control of the unpredictable spontaneous help in crisis situations. The data sample stems from the Swiss platform Amigos.ch, which mainly offered matching services for grocery shopping.

The unique situation of a lockdown due to a potential life-threatening communicable disease raises several research questions on the nature and organization of informal crisis volunteering. This study analyzes the drivers of COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction and considers motive fulfillment as a satisfaction antecedent. Furthermore, this study investigates how the personally perceived susceptibility to infection and the related platform crisis policy affected the satisfaction with the individual volunteer activity. Additionally, we investigate to what extent the COVID-19 volunteering led to a willingness to volunteer long-term, following existing studies on this matter (Hyde, Dunn, Bax, & Chambers, 2016; Penner, Brannick, Webb, & Connell, 2005). Hence, our research questions are:

- What effects do the perceived service quality and crisis policy measures have on the satisfaction with COVID-19 volunteering?
- What effect does the fulfillment of motives through COVID-19 volunteering have on satisfaction with the COVID-19 volunteering?
- Does satisfaction with the COVID-19 volunteering mediate the effect of the antecedent factors on the willingness to volunteer long-term after the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What effect does the volunteers' perceived susceptibility to COVID-19 infection have on the degree of volunteering motive fulfillment and volunteer satisfaction?

## Conceptual Model

Figure 1 depicts the model of COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction. Work satisfaction is based on the assessment of one's own work content and working environment (Yousef, 2002). In line with Francis and Jones (2012) and Kulik, Arnon, and Dolev (2016), we assume that the fulfillment of motivational goals contributes to satisfaction with volunteer work. We consider Clary et al.'s (1998) volunteer functions inventory (VFI) approach as the basis for the conceptualization of the motive-related roots of volunteer satisfaction. Given the unique circumstances of COVID-19 volunteering (e.g., spontaneous help, everyday tasks, short-term engagement), we hypothesize that only the fulfillment of specific VFI motives is decisive for satisfaction formation (see hypothesis delineation in Table A1, Supplemental Appendix). Therefore, Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> is:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** The fulfillment of the career (H<sub>1a</sub>), social (H<sub>1d</sub>), and understanding (H<sub>1e</sub>) functions has no effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction. The fulfillment of the enhancement (H<sub>1b</sub>), protection (H<sub>1c</sub>), and values (H<sub>1f</sub>) functions has a positive effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.

This study considers factors that capture the platforms' support to volunteers during the COVID-19 crisis. Rosychuk et al. (2008) showed that a well-designed information policy had positive effects on willingness to volunteer in an influenza pandemic. Hence, we assume that the assessment of the online platforms' crisis-policy measures (e.g., supply of health information) has a positive impact on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction. In line with Brady and Robertson's (2001) reasoning, we consider perceived service quality as a further platform-related antecedent of COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction. We consider service quality perception as a formative construct (see Table A3, Supplemental Appendix) and Hypothesis H<sub>2</sub> reads as follows:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Platforms' COVID-19 crisis policy measures (H<sub>2a</sub>) and perceived service quality (H<sub>2b</sub>) have a positive effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.

Vecina, Chacón, and Sueiro (2009) and Hyde et al. (2016) reveal that volunteer satisfaction strengthens the intention to volunteer long-term. Furthermore, previous research shows that consumer satisfaction acts as a mediator between expectation confirmation and repurchasing behavior (e.g., Szymanski & Henard, 2001). In line with this stream of research, authors from the field of occupational psychology, such as Yousef (2002), show that job satisfaction also acts as an intervening variable. Therefore, Hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> is:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Satisfaction with COVID-19 volunteering mediates the effects of motive fulfillment, perceived platform service quality, and the assessment of platforms' crisis policy on the willingness to volunteer long-term.

We consider the perceived susceptibility to COVID-19 infection as a moderating variable. Perceived susceptibility captures the degree of the individual belief that one can be infected with, for instance, the COVID-19 virus (Masa & Chowa, 2014). Wong and Sam (2010) show that more susceptible citizens have higher information needs in pandemic situations and thus have higher expectations with regard to the quality of platforms' crisis measures. Therefore, Hypothesis H<sub>4</sub> is:

**H<sub>4</sub>:** The positive effect of the platforms' crisis policy is stronger (weaker) for volunteers that perceive themselves as less (more) susceptible to a COVID-19 infection.

One can classify the VFI motives into more instrumental-egoistic (e.g., the career motive) and more altruistic-ethical (e.g., the value motive) categories (Kulik et al., 2016). Susceptible persons should regard COVID-19 volunteering as more ‘heroic’ because they judge this behavior as being riskier for them. We assume that the ‘heroic’ nature of COVID-19 volunteering more strongly contributes to the fulfillment of the altruistic values motive. Furthermore, and in line with Dugas et al. (2016), the perception that COVID-19 volunteering is a kind of ‘self-sacrifice’ should in particular contribute to the fulfillment of more susceptible persons’ self-enhancement motive. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>5</sub> is:

**H<sub>5</sub>:** The mean value of value-motive fulfillment (H<sub>5a</sub>) and enhancement-motive fulfillment (H<sub>5b</sub>) is higher (lower) for persons with high (low) susceptibility perceptions.

-----

Figure 1 about here

-----

## **Study Design and Measurement**

We conducted an online survey among COVID-19 volunteers in the German-speaking part of Switzerland (‘Deutschschweiz’) who had been placed in a volunteer position via the online platform Amigos.ch. Amigos.ch is a cross-sector collaboration of a retail company, Migros, and a nonprofit for elder people, Pro Senectute, that provides volunteer opportunities in the field of neighborhood assistance for elderly and disabled people. In the period from May 6, 2020 to June 3, 2020, a link on the Amigos.ch app directed users to an online questionnaire. Seven hundred



and thirty-four responses were collected by means of the online survey. Some of these responses were discarded due to high proportions of missing answers per respondent and inconsistent answers (i.e., straight lining). Moreover, a preliminary study has shown that test persons need at least eight minutes to read the introductory text as well as the intermediate information and to answer the questions carefully. Hence, all questionnaires with a response time of less than eight minutes were removed. In sum, the number of questionnaires included was reduced to 565. A total of approximately 24,300 individuals had registered on the Amigos.ch platform as helpers, but only approximately 4,250 German-speaking volunteers were actually matched to provide assistance. Hence, the questionnaire response rate was 13.3%. Table A2 in the Supplemental Appendix provides information on the sample characteristics. Table A3 in the Supplemental Appendix depicts the measurement scales used in this study. Moreover, Table A3 (Supplemental Appendix) shows that all measures are reliable and valid. To assess the effect of perceived susceptibility on VFI motives' mean values, we performed a median split of the originally continuous variable.

## **Results**

For the analysis, we conducted structural equation modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS 3.3.2 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015) and considered several covariates (see Figure 1). Interested readers may refer to Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2016) for further information on the PLS-SEM method. Figure 2 depicts the  $R^2$  values of the endogenous variables as well as the significant path coefficients. Satisfaction has a positive effect on the willingness to volunteer long-term. The fulfillment of the enhancement motive and the values motive has a positive effect on volunteer satisfaction ( $H_{1b}$  and  $H_{1f}$ ). The evaluation of platforms' crisis-policy measures ( $H_{2a}$ ) and the service-quality perception ( $H_{2b}$ ) have positive effects on satisfaction. In addition, the analysis reveals a significant moderating effect of susceptibility on the relationship between evaluation of the crisis-

policy measures and satisfaction (H<sub>4</sub>). The moderating effect indicates that the positive effect of the crisis-policy evaluation on volunteer satisfaction is more pronounced among respondents with a low perceived COVID-19 susceptibility. Figure 2 shows that satisfaction mediates the effects of the enhancement function and the values function, as well as the effects of both platform-related constructs (H<sub>3</sub>). In addition, Figure 2 reveals that susceptibility has a positive effect on the fulfillment of the values and enhancement motives (H<sub>5a</sub> and H<sub>5b</sub>).

-----  
Figure 2 about here  
-----

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Our study contributes to research on informal, spontaneous volunteering in crisis situations. First, we show that volunteer satisfaction has an important function in linking the experience of informal crisis volunteering to long-term volunteering. More precisely, and in line with the research of Vecina et al. (2009) and Hyde et al. (2016), satisfaction with volunteering during a crisis mediates the effects of the considered antecedent factors and thereby increases the probability of long-term volunteering.

Second, and building on Francis and Jones (2012) and Kulik et al. (2016), our study offers findings on the motive-related basis of satisfaction with informal crisis volunteering. Starting from Clary et al.'s (1998) VFI approach, our empirical results show that, in particular, the fulfillment of the enhancement motive and the values motive positively affected COVID-19 volunteer satisfaction. Apparently, COVID-19 volunteering was a way to increase self-confidence and to

altruistically care for people in need. Furthermore, our study shows that motive fulfillment was more pronounced for volunteers who perceived themselves to be susceptible to COVID-19 infection. Interestingly, in contrast to findings of the study by Kulik et al. (2016), the satisfaction of the protection motive had no effect on the satisfaction of COVID-19 volunteers. Accordingly, COVID-19 volunteering was not a way to reduce negative emotions or escape from the reality of the lockdown situation. In addition, the fulfillment of the career, social, and understanding function was not relevant for the formation of COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.

Beyond individual motives and activities, our study adds to a better understanding of how to accommodate the many spontaneous volunteers in a crisis. Online platforms are an efficient means to channel the oversupply of informal crisis volunteers and to match helpers with people in need. Hence, the platforms may mitigate the negative side effects of spontaneous empathetic and sympathetic helpfulness in crisis situations that are highlighted by Whittaker et al. (2015). In line with this notion, and as a further contribution to research, our study shows that the platforms fulfill an information and support function for the volunteers and thus improve the personal perception of the individual volunteer experience. This is in line with findings from Rosychuk et al. (2008) about the relevance of well-designed information policies during pandemics. However, the present study shows that the effect of this supportive function is less pronounced for the formation of volunteer satisfaction under the condition of high perceived personal susceptibility to a COVID-19 infection.

Crises will continue to occur in the future, and accordingly, the results of this study are of interest to state agencies and nonprofits in the area of crisis reaction. Since informal crisis volunteering satisfies the values and enhancement motives, the identification and selection of potential volunteers to whom these volunteering functions are particularly important should be advantageous. In addition, advertising appeals in comparable crisis situations should communicate the

possibility of self-enhancement and providing selfless and altruistic help. Furthermore, because of its positive effect on motive fulfillment with respect to volunteers' perceived susceptibility, communication campaigns should not try to downplay the risks associated with such crisis situations. Volunteer organizations should in particular meet susceptible volunteers' expectations regarding the provision of safety information and other support measures.

Every empirical study has limitations: First, it is not certain whether the sample is representative of the people who volunteered during the COVID-19 crisis. Second, the internal validity of survey studies is lower than that of experimental studies. Third, this study considers only one online platform, and thus external validity might be limited. Future studies may try to overcome these limitations. Especially, future studies in other crisis situations could verify the relevance of the identified drivers of volunteer satisfaction. Additionally, in order to tailor targeting strategies, it would be interesting to determine for which volunteer segment the fulfillment of the enhancement function and the values function is particularly crucial. Finally, the extent to which COVID-19 volunteers are actually engaged as volunteers after the end of the crisis should be investigated.

## References

- Aguirre, B. E., Macias-Medrano, J., Batista-Silva, J. L., Chikoto, G. L., Jett, Q. R., & Jones-Lungo, K. (2016). Spontaneous volunteering in emergencies. In D. H. Smith, R. A. Stebbins, & J. Grotz (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations* (pp. 311-329). Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Beardmore, A., Jones, M., Biddle, M., White, J., Ismail, S., McClean, S., Gibson, A., & Sabey, A. (2020). Apart but not alone – Neighbour support and the Covid-19 lockdown. *UWE research project*.
- Brady, M. K., & Robertson, C. J. (2001). Searching for a consensus on the antecedent role of service quality and satisfaction: An exploratory cross-national study. *Journal of Business Research*, 51(1), 53-60.
- Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., & Meine, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1516-1530.
- Dugas, M., Bélanger, J. J., Moyano, M., Schumpe, B. M., Kruglanski, A. W., Gelfand, M. J., Touchton-Leonard, K., & Nociti, N. (2016). The quest for significance motivates self-sacrifice. *Motivation Science*, 2(1), 15-32.
- Francis, J. E., & Jones, M. (2012). Emergency service volunteers: A comparison of age, motives and values. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, 27(4), 23-28.
- Hair Jr, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C., & Sarstedt, M. (2016). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hyde, M. K., Dunn, J., Bax, C., & Chambers, S. K. (2016). Episodic volunteering and retention: An integrated theoretical approach. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 45(1), 45-63.

- Kulik, L., Arnon, L., & Dolev, A. (2016). Explaining satisfaction with volunteering in emergencies: Comparison between organized and spontaneous volunteers in operation protective edge. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 27(3), 1280-1303.
- Mak, H. W., & Fancourt, D. (2020). Predictors of engaging in voluntary work during the Covid-19 pandemic: Analyses of data from 31,890 adults in the UK. *SocArXiv papers*.
- Masa, R. D., & Chowa, G. A. (2014). HIV risk among young Ghanaians in high school: Validation of a multidimensional attitude towards condom use scale. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 19(4), 444-457.
- Penner, L., Brannick, M. T., Webb, S., & Connell, P. (2005). Effects on volunteering of the September 11, 2001, attacks: An archival analysis. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 35(7), 1333-1360.
- Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Becker, J.-M. (2015). *SmartPLS 3*. Bönningstedt, Germany: SmartPLS. Retrieved from <https://www.smartpls.com>.
- Rosychuk, R. J., Bailey, T., Haines, C., Lake, R., Herman, B., Yonge, O., & Marrie, T. J. (2008). Willingness to volunteer during an influenza pandemic: Perspectives from students and staff at a large Canadian university. *Influenza and other Respiratory Viruses*, 2(2), 71-79.
- Rotolo, T., & Berg, J. A. (2011). In times of need: An examination of emergency preparedness and disaster relief service volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 40(4), 740-750.
- Simsa, R., Rameder, P., Aghamanoukjan, A., & Totter, M. (2019). Spontaneous volunteering in social crises: Self-organization and coordination. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 48(2S), 103-122.

- Smith, D. H., Stebbins, R. A., Grotz, J., Kumar, P., Nga, J. L. H., & van Puyvelde, S. (2016). Typologies of associations and volunteering. In D. H. Smith, R. A. Stebbins, & J. Grotz (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations* (pp. 90-125). Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Spear, R., Erdi, G., Parker, M. A., & Anastasiadis, M. (2020). Innovations in citizen response to crises: Volunteerism & social mobilization during COVID-19. *Interface: A Journal for and about Social Movements*.
- Szymanski, D. M., & Henard, D. H. (2001). Customer satisfaction: A meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 29(1), 16-35.
- Vecina, M. J., Chacón, F. F., & Sueiro, M. A. (2009). Volunteer satisfaction: Internal structure and relationship with permanence in organizations. *Psicothema*, 21(1), 112-117.
- Whittaker, J., McLennan, B., & Handmer, J. (2015). A review of informal volunteerism in emergencies and disasters: Definition, opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 13, 358-368.
- Wong, L. P., & Sam, I. C. (2010). Public sources of information and information needs for pandemic influenza A (H1N1). *Journal of Community Health*, 35(6), 676-682.
- Yousef, D. A. (2002). Job satisfaction as a mediator of the relationship between role stressors and organizational commitment: A study from an Arabic cultural perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 17(4), 250-266.

## **Author Biographies**

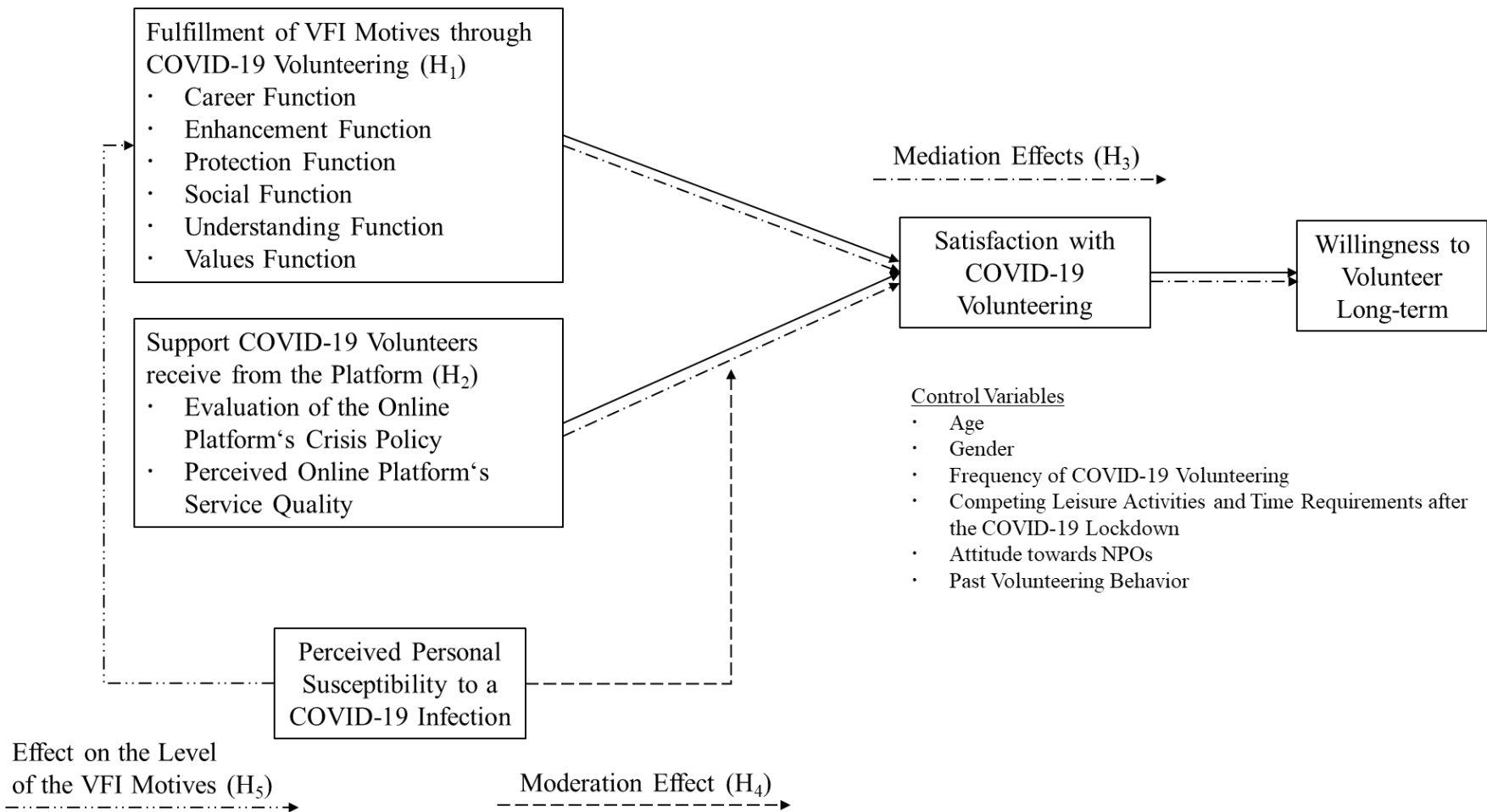
**Stefan Trautwein** is a research assistant at the Chair for Public and Non-Profit Management at the University of Freiburg (Germany). He completed a master's degree in Public and Non-Profit Management at the University of Freiburg. His research interests lie in the fields of business ethics and nonprofit management.

**Florian Liberatore** is a lecturer and senior project manager at the ZHAW School of Management and Law (Switzerland). His research is focused on healthcare management as well as nonprofit and public sector marketing.

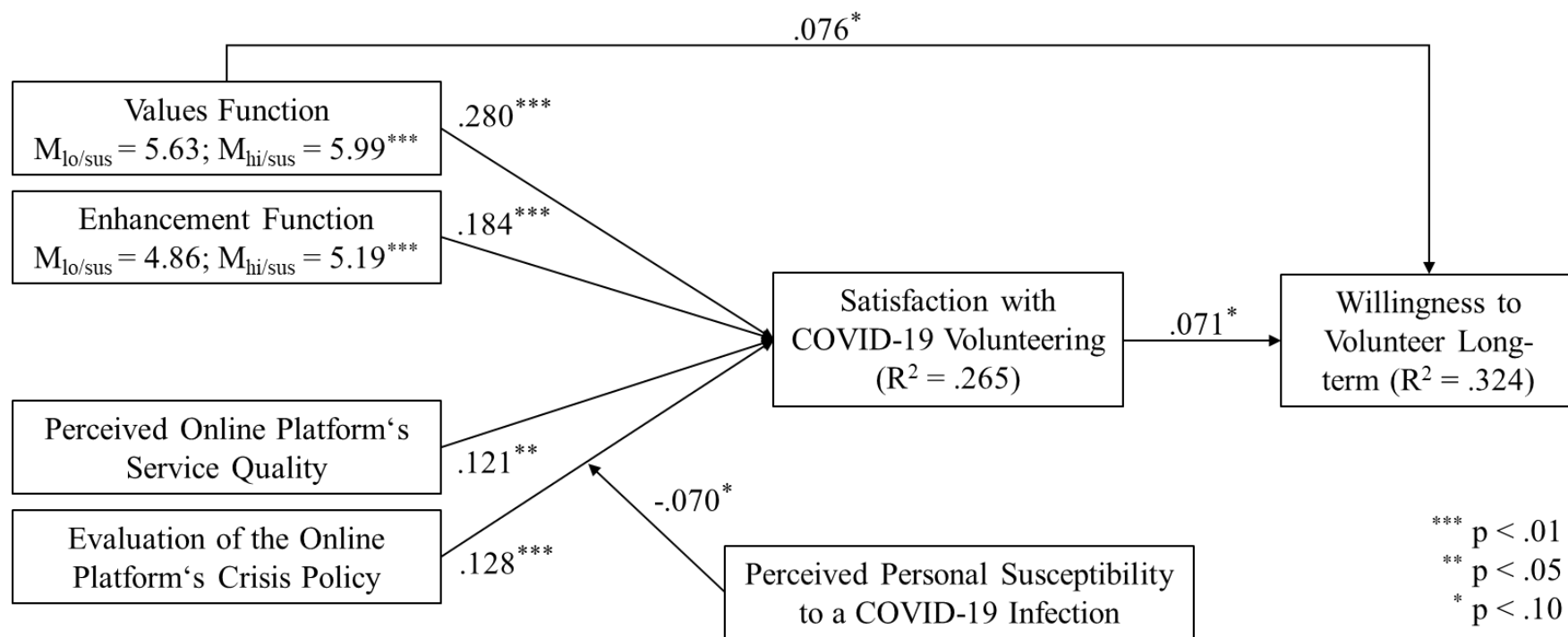
**Jörg Lindenmeier** is a full professor for Public and Non-Profit Management at the University of Freiburg (Germany). His research is focused on consumer and prosocial behavior and addresses ethical consumption, volunteering behavior, and donation behavior, among others.

**Georg von Schnurbein** is an associate professor for Foundation Management and the director of the Center for Philanthropy Studies at the University of Basel (Switzerland). His research interests are nonprofit governance, nonprofit finance, and philanthropy.





**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model.



Indirect Effect (Mediation Analysis)	Coefficient	LLCI (5%)	ULCI (95%)	LLCI (2.5%)	ULCI (97.5%)
Enhancement Function → Satisfaction → Willingness	.013	.003	.029	.001	.032
Values Function → Satisfaction → Willingness	.020	.004	.039	.001	.043
Crisis Policy → Satisfaction → Willingness	.009	.002	.021	.001	.024
Service Quality → Satisfaction → Willingness	.009	.001	.021	-.000	.025

**Note.** lo/sus = low susceptibility, hi/sus = high susceptibility. LL and UL bootstrap confidence intervals are based on 5,000 bootstrap runs. The detailed parameter estimates and further results of the empirical analyses can be provided by the corresponding author upon request.

**Figure 2.** Significant Effects.

**Table A1. General and COVID-19 Specific Effects of the Fulfilment of VFI Motives.**

	<b>Mechanism underlying the positive effect of volunteering functions</b>	<b>Hypothesis regarding the COVID-19 volunteering-specific effect</b>	<b>Hypothesis confirmed</b>
<i>Career Function</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career-related benefits of volunteering (Clary et al., 1998).</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge and skills in a domain of professional and academic development (Chacón, Gutiérrez, Sauto, Vecina, &amp; Pérez, 2017).</li> </ul>	<p>This function “applies to situations where the individual is using the volunteer experience to build career experience” (Gage &amp; Thapa, 2012, p. 413). It is a strong predictor for younger people’s intention to volunteer (e.g., Cho, Bonn, &amp; Han, 2018). No special professional qualifications can be acquired when shopping for persons in need of assistance. Moreover, students make up only a small part of the sample. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>1a</sub> is:</p> <p><b>H<sub>1a</sub>:</b> The fulfillment of the career motive has no effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.</p>	✓
<i>Enhancement Function</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits obtained from development of self-esteem through volunteering (Clary et al., 1998).</li> <li>• Satisfaction related to personal growth (Clary et al., 1998).</li> </ul>	<p>According to Dunn, Chambers, and Hyde (2016), the enhancement function is most salient for episodic volunteering. Because COVID-19 volunteering bears resemblance to episodic volunteering, COVID-19 volunteering can help to strengthen volunteers’ self-image. Therefore, Hypothesis H<sub>1b</sub> reads as follows:</p> <p><b>H<sub>1b</sub>:</b> The fulfillment of the enhancement motive has a positive effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.</p>	✓
<i>Protection Function</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits obtained from a reduction of negative emotions (Wu, Wing Lo, &amp; Liu, 2009).</li> <li>• A means to cope with inner conflicts (Gage &amp; Thapa, 2012).</li> <li>• Ego-protection and escape from problems (Chacón et al., 2017).</li> </ul>	<p>Although Dunn et al. (2016) show that the protective function is one of the less salient functions in the context of episodic volunteering, it can be assumed that volunteering can be a means for the reduction of negative emotions which arose during the isolated and stressful lockdown. This notion is in line with Kulik, Arnon, and Dolev’s (2016) findings that show a higher importance of volunteering as a means to escape from reality among spontaneous volunteers. Hypothesis H<sub>1c</sub> therefore is:</p> <p><b>H<sub>1c</sub>:</b> The fulfillment of the protection motive has a positive effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.</p>	✗
<i>Social Function</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits obtained from the opportunities to be with friends and meet new people (Clary et al., 1998).</li> <li>• Important reference persons appreciate the volunteering activity (Chen, Liu, &amp; Legget, 2019).</li> </ul>	<p>The social function is in an episodic context usually a strong predictor for volunteering (Dunn et al., 2016). However, in an online volunteering context, this effect seems to be weakened or even reversed (Cox et al., 2018). Since the COVID-19 engagement under consideration is mediated online and the volunteers had no or very few personal contacts, Hypothesis H<sub>1d</sub> is formulated as follows:</p> <p><b>H<sub>1d</sub>:</b> The fulfillment of the social motive has no effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.</p>	✓

**Table A1. (Continued)**

	<b>Mechanism underlying the positive effect of volunteering functions</b>	<b>Hypothesis regarding the COVID-19 volunteering-specific effect</b>	<b>Hypothesis confirmed</b>
<i>Understanding Function</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits obtained from the chance to learn and develop new skills (Chacón et al., 2017).</li> <li>• Opportunity to use knowledge and skills that otherwise go unpracticed (Clary et al., 1998).</li> </ul>	<p>According to Dávila and Díaz-Morales (2009), the understanding motivation is particularly relevant for younger persons. The sample of the present study includes a significant proportion of people who can no longer be classified as young. Furthermore, and due to the rather simple tasks that the COVID-19 volunteers finish (e.g., shopping for elder people, go for a walk with the dog for risk groups), no significant effect is expected. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>1e</sub> reads as follows:</p> <p><b>H<sub>1e</sub>:</b> The fulfillment of the understanding motive has no effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.</p>	✓
<i>Values Function</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits obtained from expressing altruistic values through volunteering (Cho et al., 2018).</li> <li>• Opportunity to act in a prosocial and humanitarian manner (Cho et al., 2018).</li> </ul>	<p>The COVID-19 volunteering under consideration is a prosocial behavior that clearly has altruistic and humanistic characteristics. Francis and Jones (2012) showed in an emergency service volunteering context that the fulfillment of the values function has a positive effect on satisfaction. Moreover, and as Dunn et al. (2016) show, the values function is a major driver of episodic volunteerism. In a study on volunteer satisfaction, Kulik et al. (2016) reveal that altruistic motives are more decisive for spontaneous volunteers. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>1f</sub> is:</p> <p><b>H<sub>1f</sub>:</b> The fulfillment of the values motive has a positive effect on COVID-19 volunteering satisfaction.</p>	✓

**References.** Chacón, F., Gutiérrez, G., Sauto, V., Vecina, M. L., & Pérez, A. (2017). Volunteer functions inventory: A systematic review. *Psicothema*, 29(3), 306-316. Chen, X., Liu, C., & Legget, J. (2019). Motivations of museum volunteers in New Zealand's cultural tourism industry. *Anatolia*, 30(1), 127-139. Cho, M., Bonn, M. A., & Han, S. J. (2018). Generation Z's sustainable volunteering: Motivations, attitudes and job performance. *Sustainability*, 10(5), 1400-1416. Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., & Meine, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1516-1530. Cox, J., Oh, E. Y., Simmons, B., Graham, G., Greenhill, A., Lintott, C., Masters, K., & Woodcock, J. (2018). Doing good online: The changing relationships between motivations, activity, and retention among online volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 47(5), 1031-1056. Dávila, M. C., & Díaz-Morales, J. F. (2009). Age and motives for volunteering: Further evidence. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 5(2), 82-95. Dunn, J., Chambers, S. K., & Hyde, M. K. (2016). Systematic review of motives for episodic volunteering. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 27(1), 425-464. Francis, J. E., & Jones, M. (2012). Emergency service volunteers: A comparison of age, motives and values. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, 27(4), 23-28. Gage III, R. L., & Thapa, B. (2012). Volunteer motivations and constraints among college students: Analysis of the volunteer function inventory and leisure constraints models. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41(3), 405-430. Kulik, L., Arnon, L., & Dolev, A. (2016). Explaining satisfaction with volunteering in emergencies: Comparison between organized and spontaneous volunteers in operation protective edge. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 27(3), 1280-1303. Wu, J., Wing Lo, T., & Liu, E. S. C. (2009). Psychometric properties of the volunteer functions inventory with Chinese students. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 37(6), 769-780.

**Table A2.** Sample Characteristics.

<b>Age</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
	36.17	12.03
<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	134	23.72
Female	420	74.34
Diverse	0	0.00
Not specified	11	1.95
<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Swiss	411	72.74
Swiss and one other	89	15.75
Other citizenship	54	9.56
Not specified	11	1.95
<b>Highest Educational Achievement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Compulsory school	59	10.44
Upper secondary level	131	23.19
Tertiary level	190	33.63
Other	145	25.66
Not specified	40	7.08
<b>Professional Activity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Trainee	16	2.83
Employed part-time	160	28.32
Employed full-time	207	36.64
Not working	32	5.66
Self-employed	24	4.25
Student	59	10.44
Miscellaneous	51	9.03
Not specified	16	2.83
<b>Past Volunteering Behavior</b> (Did you volunteer before the COVID-19 crisis?)	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, I volunteered in the twelve months before the COVID-19 crisis.	192	33.98
Yes, I used to volunteer, but the period of my commitment is more than twelve months before the COVID-19 crisis.	145	25.66
No, I have never volunteered before.	228	40.35

**Note.** M = mean, SD = standard deviation, N = frequency.

**Table A3.** Measurement Items, Descriptive Statistics, and Reliability and Validity Indicators.

LV MV	M	SD	$\lambda$	$\omega$
<b>Career Function</b> (Clary et al., 1998; Oostlander, Güntert, Schie, & Wehner, 2014) $VIF_S = 1.528$ ; $VIF_W = 1.532$ ; $M = 1.878$ ; $SD = 1.021$ ; $\alpha = .813$ ; $CR = .867$ ; $AVE = .569$ ; $F/L = .695$				
Please think about your voluntary engagement during the COVID-19 crisis and how you experienced this engagement. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
COVID-19 volunteering can help me to get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work.	1.71	1.366	.869	
I could make new contacts that might help my business or career.	1.48	1.117	.761	
COVID-19 volunteering allows me to explore different career options.	1.67	1.232	.817	
COVID-19 volunteering will help me to succeed in my chosen profession.	1.77	1.326	.715	
COVID-19 volunteering experience will look good on my résumé.	2.75	1.792	.577	
<b>Enhancement Function</b> (Clary et al., 1998; Oostlander et al., 2014) $VIF_S = 1.611$ ; $VIF_W = 1.621$ ; $M = 5.010$ ; $SD = 1.267$ ; $\alpha = .808$ ; $CR = .870$ ; $AVE = .578$ ; $F/L = .642$				
Please think about your voluntary engagement during the COVID-19 crisis and how you experienced this engagement. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
COVID-19 volunteering makes me feel important.	5.17	1.674	.810	
COVID-19 volunteering increases my self-esteem.	4.69	1.804	.832	
COVID-19 volunteering makes me feel needed.	5.50	1.559	.817	
COVID-19 volunteering makes me feel better about myself.	5.50	1.600	.768	
COVID-19 volunteering is a way to make new friends.	4.19	1.838	.531	
<b>Protection Function</b> (Clary et al., 1998; Oostlander et al., 2014) $VIF_S = 1.517$ ; $VIF_W = 1.533$ ; $M = 2.922$ ; $SD = 1.562$ ; $\alpha = .876$ ; $CR = .902$ ; $AVE = .652$ ; $F/L = .605$				
Please think about your voluntary engagement during the COVID-19 crisis and how you experienced this engagement. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
No matter how bad I've been feeling, COVID-19 volunteering helps me to forget about it.	3.36	1.954	.897	
By COVID-19 volunteering I feel less lonely.	3.11	2.008	.814	
Doing COVID-19 volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others.	2.79	1.935	.612	
COVID-19 volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems.	2.32	1.683	.794	
COVID-19 volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles.	3.02	1.953	.887	
<b>Social Function</b> (Clary et al., 1998; Oostlander et al., 2014) $VIF_S = 1.366$ ; $VIF_W = 1.354$ ; $M = 3.527$ ; $SD = 1.254$ ; $\alpha = .748$ ; $CR = .832$ ; $AVE = .567$ ; $F/L = .603$				
Please think about your voluntary engagement during the COVID-19 crisis and how you experienced this engagement. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
People I'm close to want me to volunteer during the COVID-19 crisis.	1.92	1.475	.431	
People I know share an interest in community service.	4.11	1.608	.801	
Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service right now.	4.32	1.777	.821	
COVID-19 volunteering is an important activity to the people I know best.	3.76	1.743	.875	
<b>Understanding Function</b> (Clary et al., 1998; Oostlander et al., 2014) $VIF_S = 1.928$ ; $VIF_W = 1.938$ ; $M = 3.578$ ; $SD = 1.453$ ; $\alpha = .851$ ; $CR = .892$ ; $AVE = .623$ ; $F/L = .665$				
Please think about your voluntary engagement during the COVID-19 crisis and how you experienced this engagement. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
I can learn more about the cause for which I am working voluntarily.	3.20	1.805	.780	
COVID-19 volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things.	4.43	1.703	.762	
COVID-19 volunteering lets me learn things through direct, hands on experience.	3.29	1.910	.805	
I can learn how to deal with a variety of people during the COVID-19 crisis.	3.65	1.873	.807	
I can explore my own strengths through COVID-19 volunteering.	3.31	1.887	.793	

**Table A3. (Continued)**

LV MV	M	SD	$\lambda$	$\omega$
<b>Values Function</b> (Clary et al., 1998; Oostlander et al., 2014) $VIF_S = 1.336$ ; $VIF_W = 1.411$ ; $M = 5.798$ ; $SD = .978$ ; $\alpha = .772$ ; $CR = .842$ ; $AVE = .516$ ; $F/L = .561$				
Please think about your voluntary engagement during the COVID-19 crisis and how you experienced this engagement. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself during the COVID-19 crisis.	5.82	1.320	.705	
I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.	5.16	1.561	.698	
I feel compassion toward people who are particularly in need during the COVID-19 crisis.	6.05	1.172	.688	
I feel it is important to help others right now.	6.38	1.132	.731	
I can now do something for a cause that is important to me.	5.58	1.571	.766	
<b>Evaluation of the Online Platform's Crisis Policy</b> (Self-developed) $VIF_S = 1.238$ ; $VIF_W = 1.261$ ; $M = 6.047$ ; $SD = .945$ ; $\alpha = .766$ ; $CR = .852$ ; $AVE = .594$ ; $F/L = .519$				
The following questions relate to how the platform handles the threat of getting infected with the COVID-19 virus. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
The online platform has always provided me with the information I needed to protect against infection.	6.58	.891	.823	
The online platform has always tried to protect me as a volunteer against infection.	6.37	1.081	.829	
The online platform has always tried to protect those seeking help against infection.	6.62	.811	.814	
The online platform helped me to provide myself with adequate hygiene protection.	4.62	2.189	.590	
<b>Perceived Online Platform's Service Quality</b> (Self-developed formative measurement scale based on Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1991) $VIF_S = 1.254$ ; $VIF_W = 1.274$ ; $M = 6.431$ ; $SD = .798$				
The following questions relate to the online platform through which you were placed to volunteer. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
As promised, the online platform reliably and accurately put me in touch with those seeking help. ('Reliability') VIF = 1.300	6.50	1.058	.742	.518
The online platform has always responded promptly and actively to my inquiries. ('Responsiveness') VIF = 2.159	6.39	1.193	.691	.057
The online platform's website is visually appealing and well structured. ('Tangibles') VIF = 1.564	6.53	.904	.353	-.183
Contact with the online platform can be described as positive and competent. ('Assurance') VIF = 1.970	6.54	.913	.588	.140
The online platform showed understanding for my problems and responded to my concerns. ('Empathy') VIF = 1.656	6.20	1.212	.849	.658
<b>Perceived Susceptibility to a COVID-19 Infection</b> (Masa & Chowa, 2014) $VIF_S = 1.083$ ; $VIF_{Crisis \times Suscept} = 1.036$ ; $M = 5.063$ ; $SD = 1.307$ ; $\alpha = .711$ ; $CR = .821$ ; $AVE = .607$ ; $F/L = .244$				
Please assess the risk that you can become infected with the COVID-19 virus during your volunteer work. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)				
People who volunteer during the COVID-19 crisis can get infected with the COVID-19 virus.	5.11	1.674	.675	
People who volunteer during the COVID-19 crisis must certainly be worried that they might get infected with the COVID-19 virus.	4.16	1.873	.793	
A person who volunteers during the COVID-19 crisis could get infected with the COVID-19 virus if he/she cannot protect himself/herself properly.	5.92	1.348	.858	

**Table A3. (Continued)**

LV	MV	M	SD	$\lambda$	$\omega$
<b>Satisfaction with COVID-19 Volunteering</b> (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2009) $VIF_w = 1.397$ ; $M = 6.403$ ; $SD = .760$ ; $\alpha = .775$ ; $CR = .870$ ; $AVE = .693$ ; $F/L = .484$					
Please think about whether and to what extent you are satisfied with your volunteer work during the COVID-19 period. (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)					
	All in all, I am satisfied with my volunteer job during the COVID-19 period.	6.23	1.044	.690	
	In general, I like my volunteer job during the COVID-19 period.	6.43	.895	.917	
	In general, I like working as a volunteer during the COVID-19 period.	6.55	.816	.872	
<b>Willingness to Volunteer Long-term</b> (Self-developed) $M = 4.337$ ; $SD = 1.651$ ; $Pearson = .451$ ; $CR = .837$ ; $AVE = .720$ ; $F/L = .183$					
Please answer the following questions about your willingness to continue voluntary work beyond the COVID-19 crisis. (1 = not probable; 7 = very probable)					
	How likely is it that you will quit volunteering during the six months following the COVID-19 crisis? (R)	4.22	1.944	.798	
	How likely is it that you will continue working as a volunteer for another two years after the COVID-19 crisis?	4.45	1.932	.896	

**Note.** LV = latent variable, MV = manifest variable, M = mean, SD = standard deviation,  $\lambda$  = standardized loading,  $\omega$  = standardized outer weight, VIF = variance inflation factor,  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha, CR = composite reliability, AVE = average variance extracted, F/L = Fornell-Larcker ratio, Pearson = Pearson correlation coefficient, R = reversely coded. Outer VIFs and outer weights are reported for perceived online platform's service quality due to its formative character. VIF<sub>s</sub> and VIF<sub>w</sub> display inner VIFs resulting from collinearity analysis focusing satisfaction with COVID-19 volunteering or willingness to volunteer long-term, respectively. The VIF resulting from the moderation analysis' interaction effect (i.e., perceived susceptibility to a COVID-19 infection  $\times$  evaluation of the online platform's crisis policy) is indicated by VIF<sub>Crisis  $\times$  Suscept.</sub>. Due to convergent-validity problems, we had to delete one item of the social-function VFI sub-scale (i.e., "My friends volunteer during the COVID-19 crisis."). All factor loadings of the reflective measurement scales are significant at the 1% level but only two of the weights of the formative measurement approach are significantly higher than zero. However, all but one of the factor loadings of this formative construct are greater than .5; they all indicate significant influence. Accordingly, and to ensure content-validity, every dimension of the SERVQUAL approach has been considered.

**References.** Boezeman, E. J., & Ellemers, N. (2009). Intrinsic need satisfaction and the job attitudes of volunteers versus employees working in a charitable volunteer organization. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82(4), 897-914. Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., & Meine, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1516-1530. Masa, R. D., & Chowa, G. A. (2014). HIV risk among young Ghanaians in high school: Validation of a multidimensional attitude towards condom use scale. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 19(4), 444-457. Oostlander, J., Güntert, S. T., Schie, S. V., & Wehner, T. (2014). Volunteer functions inventory (VFI): Konstruktvalidität und psychometrische Eigenschaften der deutschen Adaptation [Volunteer functions inventory (VFI): Construct validity and psychometric properties of the German adaption]. *Diagnostica*, 60(2), 73-85. Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L., & Zeithaml, V. A. (1991). Refinement and reassessment of the SERVQUAL scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 67(4), 420-450.

Trautwein, S., Liberatore, F., Lindenmeier, J., von Schunurbein, G.: Satisfaction With Informal Volunteering During the COVID-19 Crisis: An Empirical Study Considering a Swiss Online Volunteering Platform, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* (49, 6) pp. 1142 - 1151.  
Copyright © [2020] (The Authors). DOI: 10.1177/0899764020964595