

Representation of Generation Z's Go-Green Actions through Grinia Volunteer Programs

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ABSTRACT

Environmental issues have gained increasing attention among Generation Z along with the growing awareness of environmental degradation impacts. Participation in volunteer communities has become one of the ways that encourages the development of environmentally friendly behavior in daily life. This study aims to analyze the representation of go-green actions among Generation Z and examine the dynamics of social identity formation and ecological awareness through the Grinia volunteer program. This research employs a descriptive mixed-method approach with data collected through questionnaires and interviews involving Grinia volunteers. The data were analyzed using descriptive and thematic analysis based on Tajfel's Social Identity Theory, including categorization, identification, and social comparison. The findings indicate that go-green actions extend beyond community activities and gradually become integrated into volunteers' daily lifestyles. Involvement in the community strengthens social identity, encouraging individuals to align their behavior with group values and increasing ecological awareness. The implications of this study highlight the role of communities as social spaces that shape environmentally friendly behavior and facilitate the dissemination of sustainability values among Generation Z.

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1. Introduction

Environmental issues have become a global issue, garnering increasing attention worldwide (Wang et al., 2024; Vallée et al., 2024). The 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report stated that the global average temperature has increased by 1.1°C compared to pre-industrial times and is projected to exceed the 1.5°C threshold. Furthermore, World Health Organization (WHO) data indicates that air pollution causes approximately 7 million premature

deaths annually. In Indonesia, according to 2022 data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), the area of deforestation has reached 119,000 hectares, while the plastic waste crisis continues to worsen, with domestic plastic waste production reaching 7.8 million tons per year. These problems threaten environmental sustainability, food security, health, and the survival of future generations (Borowski & Patuk, 2021; Bosio et al., 2023).

In facing these challenges, the active involvement of all elements of society, especially the younger generation, is crucial (Usman et al., 2024; Sufficiency et al., 2022). Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, has great potential to be agents of change because they grew up in the digital era with extensive access to information and high adaptive capabilities (Biswas, 2021). A 2022 Deloitte Global survey showed that 75% of Gen Z members consider climate change one of their top concerns, and more than half have engaged in environmental actions or movements, both online and offline. This tendency reflects a critical awareness and collaborative spirit that can be leveraged to drive concrete action in protecting and restoring the environment (Waeber et al., 2023). Generation Z is known as a generation born in the digital era, technologically literate, and highly socially sensitive. They grew up with extensive access to information, encouraging them to understand various global issues, including environmental ones (Bilińska et al., 2023; Dhayal et al., 2024).

One concrete form of active involvement of Generation Z in environmental conservation is through volunteerism (Lin et al., 2023). This activity serves as a means of self-actualization and realizing concrete actions for change (Bank & Rodrigues, 2023; Garai-Fodor et al., 2021). In environmental issues, volunteer programs promote the "go green" concept as their core activities, encompassing public education and environmental campaigns (Taufiqurrahman et al., 2024). These activities provide young people with firsthand experience in understanding the complexity of environmental issues while fostering empathy and sustainable concern. According to data from Greenpeace Indonesia in 2021, the involvement of young volunteers in environmental programs has shown an increase, particularly in educational programs and beach cleanups in various major cities.

One youth-driven environmental community based on a spirit of volunteerism is Grinia. This community, born from a Generation Z initiative in environmental conservation, serves as a concrete representation of the growing space for green action among youth. Since its founding in September 2024, Grinia has been actively conducting environmental campaigns, digital education, collaborating with various communities and agencies, and opening volunteer opportunities to young people from various backgrounds. Grinia's volunteer system is unpaid and batch-based, with each period lasting four months.

Currently, Grinia operates online, utilizing digital platforms as its primary activity space. Activities such as Instagram Live, environmental-themed online campaigns, and regular webinars serve as the primary means of disseminating education and expanding the movement's reach. This approach empowers Grinia to reach more young people across regions, without geographical limitations. Grinia's presence in the digital space as an environmentally conscious community reinforces the message that young people's involvement in environmental issues can be flexible, inclusive, and impactful. This phenomenon is interesting to examine further because it reflects how going green is no longer just a catchphrase but has become a lifestyle integrated into the daily lives of Generation Z.

To understand the involvement of young people in the Grinia community, this study uses Henri Tajfel's Social Identity Theory. This theory explains that social identity is formed through three processes: categorization, identification, and social comparison (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). Generation Z volunteers at Grinia tend to identify themselves as part of an environmentally conscious community. They form emotional bonds with the group and incorporate the community's values into their personal identity. Through symbols, collective activities, and narratives developed through digital media, a strong sense of belonging to the community is fostered. This encourages members to maintain behaviors aligned with ecological values (Schnur, 2024).

Based on this reality, this study urgently seeks to further examine how the representation of green actions among Generation Z is manifested in structured social practices within the community. Although a wealth of literature has addressed youth involvement in environmental issues, there remains a gap in research specifically examining community-based volunteer programs, particularly digital ones like Grinia, that can shape sustainable ecological behavior and awareness. Furthermore, studies on the internal dynamics of volunteer programs, the values they foster, and their impact on participants' lifestyles, particularly in emerging communities like Grinia, are still relatively limited. This study addresses this gap by positioning Grinia as a concrete example of a digital ecological movement driven by Generation Z.

This study aims to describe and analyze how the Grinia volunteer program fosters go-green practices as part of an environmentally friendly lifestyle among Generation Z. It also aims to identify the forms of participation that emerge within the program, the environmental values that are developed, and the extent to which the volunteer experience contributes to changes in participants' pro-environmental behavior. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the growing body of knowledge on youth environmental engagement by providing empirical evidence on how a digital volunteer community facilitates the development of social identity and ecological awareness among Generation Z. Furthermore, the findings offer practical insights for environmental organizations, educators, and policymakers in designing community-based volunteer programs that promote sustainable behavior and strengthen environmental participation among young people.

2. Research Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a convergent mixed-method design to analyze the representation of Generation Z's go-green actions through participation in the Grinia volunteer program. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected during the same period, analyzed separately, and integrated during the interpretation stage to provide a comprehensive understanding of volunteers' environmental behavior and social identity formation. The quantitative component used a descriptive approach through questionnaires to examine volunteers' perceptions regarding participation, environmental awareness, and go-green behavior. The qualitative component employed semi-structured interviews to explore participants' experiences, meanings, and interpretations related to their involvement in the Grinia community and the development of ecological awareness.

2.2 Population and Sample

The population consisted of all active volunteers who participated in the Grinia volunteer program from Batch 1 to Batch 4. Using purposive sampling, 20 volunteers were selected based on the following criteria:

- a) they had actively participated in the Grinia volunteer program for at least one complete volunteer period (four months);
- b) they were involved in at least one core division or organizational activity, such as environmental campaigns, digital education, event management, or community outreach;
- c) they consistently attended scheduled meetings and program activities during their volunteer period; and
- d) they were willing to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire and providing informed consent.

In this study, an active volunteer was defined as a member who consistently participated in organizational activities, contributed to assigned tasks, and remained engaged throughout the volunteer period. Of the 20 selected participants, all completed the questionnaire, while 10 volunteers were purposively selected for in-depth interviews based on their level of participation, communication ability, and willingness to share their experiences in greater detail.

2.3 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted using two main techniques:

- a) Online interviews via the Zoom platform, using questions formulated based on indicators from social identity theory. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing informants to freely yet purposefully explain their experiences and perspectives.
- b) Questionnaires were administered to all participants to examine their perceptions of participation in the Grinia volunteer program, social identity, environmental values, and pro-environmental behavior. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items were developed based on Tajfel's Social Identity Theory, covering three dimensions, social categorization, social identification, and social comparison. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure the clarity and relevance of each item to the research objectives.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data obtained from the interviews and questionnaires were analyzed using thematic analysis. This technique was chosen to identify patterns of meaning that emerged from participants' narratives and experiences related to their involvement in the volunteer program. The analysis process involved several stages, namely:

- a) Quantitative descriptive analysis was applied to questionnaire data to describe participants' responses regarding their involvement in volunteer activities and environmental behavior. Questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics by calculating the mean score for each questionnaire indicator. The mean scores were used to describe the level of volunteers' participation, social identity, environmental values, and pro-environmental behavior within the Grinia volunteer program. The average score for each indicator was calculated using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$ = mean score

$\sum X$ = total score obtained from respondents

N = total number of respondents

The mean scores were interpreted using the following criteria:

Table 1. Interpretation Criteria of Mean Scores

Mean Score Range	Interpretation
1.00–1.80	Very Low
1.81–2.60	Low
2.61–3.40	Moderate
3.41–4.20	High
4.21–5.00	Very High

- b) Data reduction was carried out by selecting and simplifying information obtained from the interviews and questionnaires. Data irrelevant to the research focus was discarded, while information related to the go-green program and volunteer social identity was coded for further analysis.
- c) Data categorization based on similarities in content and meaning. For example, statements related to community belonging, pride in volunteering, and ecological motivation were grouped into categories representing elements of social identification.
- d) Identification of key themes. From the categorization, several key themes emerged related to the go-green volunteering activities. These themes reflect how participants interpreted their involvement socially and personally.
- e) Interpretation of meaning using social identity theory. Each finding was linked to three key

processes in Tajfel's theory, categorization, identification, and social comparison. Interpretation was conducted to analyze the volunteer experience as it reflects the formation of an ecological identity.

- f) Triangulation and member checking were used to ensure the validity and validity of the findings by comparing interview results from various divisions. Furthermore, member checking was conducted by asking participants to confirm the interpretations to ensure they aligned with their own experiences and perspectives.

3. Results and Discussion

Research Result

Go-Green Practices of Generation Z in the Grinia Volunteer Program

The Grinia volunteer program encourages the development of go-green practices among Generation Z through educational and participatory activities. These activities foster environmentally friendly behaviors that gradually become integrated into the volunteers' daily lives.

Table 2. Go-Green Practices among Grinia Volunteers

Main Aspects	Average Score	Finding
Engagement and participation	3,76	Volunteers are actively involved in environmental campaigns, digital education, and community activities.
Identity and pride	3,71	A sense of pride emerges in being part of a community that upholds environmental values.
Social responsibility	3,71	Volunteers demonstrate commitment to community goals and environmental issues.
Lifestyle changes	3,65	A behavioral shift toward environmentally friendly habits occurs in daily life.
Collective contribution	3,65	Activities are carried out collaboratively and have an impact on the surrounding environment.

Based on Table 2, engagement and participation received the highest mean score. This indicating that active involvement in environmental campaigns, digital education, and community activities is the most prominent go-green practice among Grinia volunteers. These activities are not ceremonial, but rather repetitive and structured within various community programs. This intensity of participation creates a collective experience that strengthens individuals' attachment to environmental activities. This high level of involvement can be seen as the initial process in the formation of social identity, as described by Tajfel through the categorization stage. Volunteers begin to position themselves as part of a group that cares about the environment. This grouping emerges from shared activities, goals, and values carried out during the program.

The identity and pride aspects indicate a shift from mere involvement to an appreciation of their role within the community. Volunteers no longer merely participate but begin to associate themselves with the values espoused by Grinia. This sense of pride develops with the experiences they gain while involved in various environmental activities. This stage aligns with the identification process in Tajfel's theory, where individuals begin to internalize the group's values as part of themselves. Green values are no longer external but become part of their everyday perspectives and attitudes. Emotional attachment to the community strengthens the tendency to maintain behaviors aligned with environmental values.

The social responsibility demonstrated by volunteers demonstrates an awareness of their role in the community. Their activities are oriented not only toward participation but also toward contributing to shared goals. This is reflected in their involvement in campaigns, education, and activities targeting the wider community. Lifestyle changes represent one of the most tangible forms of go-green practices identified in this study. Simple habits such as carrying a tumbler, reducing plastic use, and being more selective in consumption indicate behavioral transformation. These patterns develop through ongoing interactions within the community, forming new routines.

Collective contributions demonstrate that environmental action in the Grinia community is built through social relationships between members. Each individual influences each other in maintaining behaviors aligned with green values. This dynamic relates to the social comparison process in Tajfel's theory, where individuals tend to adjust their behavior to align with groups they perceive as relevant. The volunteers' direct experiences reinforce these findings. One respondent stated:

“through the campaign we created, there was a lot of participation from the community who started to be aware of environmental issues.”

This statement demonstrates that volunteer activities have a far-reaching impact beyond the community. Involvement in campaigns provides tangible experiences in spreading environmental values to the community. Another respondent stated:

“because I'm part of the Events team and at Grinia, often holds environmental-related activities, I feel more directly involved in real action.”

This quote demonstrates that experience within a specific division strengthens practical engagement. Hands-on activities foster a stronger commitment to environmental action. These findings demonstrate that go-green practices are developed through the interaction between individual experiences and collective dynamics within the community.

Volunteer Social Identity Dynamics from Tajfel's Theory Perspective

Involvement in the Grinia volunteer program shapes the dynamics of social identity that develop through interactions between members and collective experiences. This process demonstrates how environmental values are gradually internalized within volunteers.

Table 3. Representation of Grinia Volunteer Go-Green Actions

Stages	Description	Manifestation in Volunteer
Social categorization	Grouping individuals into specific groups based on shared values	Volunteers see themselves as part of an environmentally conscious community
Social identification	The process of internalizing group values as part of one's identity	Go-green values begin to influence daily attitudes and behaviors
Social comparison	Adjusting behavior based on group standards	Volunteers adjust their actions to align with community norms

1. Social categorization

The social categorization stage forms the initial foundation for the dynamics of volunteer identity. Individuals who join Grinia begin to identify themselves as part of a community that cares about environmental issues. This process develops through engagement in shared activities that bring together individuals with similar values and goals. This grouping creates a clear boundary between community members and those outside the community. Volunteers begin to view themselves as part of a group with a higher environmental awareness. This creates a sense of togetherness that strengthens the individual's position within the group. One respondent explained:

“I feel like I'm part of a community that shares the same goal of protecting the environment.”

This statement demonstrates a categorization process that produces a collective identity. The sense of belonging to a group strengthens the initial attachment, which then develops into a later stage.

2. Social identification

The social identification stage demonstrates a deeper development than simply grouping. Volunteers begin to link community values to their personal identity. Go-green values, previously external, begin to become embedded in their ways of thinking and acting. Involvement in various community activities fosters an emotional attachment to the group.

Volunteers feel a shared vision, strengthening bonds among members. This fosters a sense of pride and commitment to continued involvement in the activities. Changes are also evident in the way volunteers fulfill their roles within the community. They no longer simply participate in activities but begin to assume responsibilities consistent with their respective roles. This pattern demonstrates that social identification has evolved into a part of their personal identity.

3. Social comparison

The social comparison stage demonstrates how individuals adjust their behavior based on the standards developed within the group. Volunteers tend to observe the practices of other members and use them as a guide for their actions. This process creates behavioral harmony among members within the community. This adjustment is evident in daily habits that begin to shift toward more environmentally friendly practices. Volunteers strive to maintain alignment with group values to remain part of the community. This dynamic strengthens the consistency of green practices among members. One respondent explained:

“After joining Grinia, I became more aware and reminded people around me more often about protecting the environment.”

This quote suggests that social comparison extends beyond internal adjustment. The internalized values are also reflected in volunteers' interactions within their broader social environment. These findings indicate that volunteers' social identity is associated with a broader ecological awareness, although the present study does not establish a causal relationship between the two.

Research Discussion

Internalization of Go-Green Values as a Representation of Generation Z's Lifestyle

The internalization of green values in the Grinia volunteer program demonstrates a gradual shift from activity-based engagement to the formation of habits that are more embedded in daily life. Activities initially conducted within the community, such as digital campaigns, environmental education, and program coordination, begin to influence how volunteers view their daily practices. The high intensity of interaction within the community encourages individuals to be continuously exposed to the same values, thus strengthening the tendency to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors repeatedly. This pattern is evident in the shift from situational to more consistent activities across various life situations.

This trend aligns with the findings of Ngo et al. (2025) who discussed how environmentally friendly behavior develops through the ongoing interaction of attitudes, social norms, and behavioral control. The study explained that the social environment plays a role in shaping the consistency of Generation Z's behavior towards environmental issues. Continuous interactions create subtle social pressures and encourage individuals to align their behavior with group standards. This study demonstrates the tendency of respondents to become more active in green consumption practices after engaging in a supportive environment.

Changes in volunteer lifestyles are also related to the development of personal values formed during program involvement. Community activities provide a space for individuals to reflect on their current habits, particularly regarding resource use and consumption patterns. Research by Prihatini & Sutanto (2025) shows that developing environmental awareness in individuals is closely linked to personal values, which then influence daily behavior. These values are not formed instantly, but rather through a process involving experience, interaction, and repeated exposure to environmental issues.

The link between values and practices is also evident in concrete behavioral changes. Volunteers are beginning to show a tendency to reduce their use of single-use plastics, carry more environmentally friendly personal equipment, and become more selective in their consumption activities. A study by Raditya & Soelasih (2025) explains that environmental responsibility and individual attitudes play a role in shaping more sustainable consumption behavior. This behavior develops through a gradual adaptation process, along with increasing awareness of the environmental impact of daily activities.

The characteristics of Generation Z, who grew up in the digital era, also influence the internalization of go-green values. Access to extensive information allows individuals to be continuously exposed to environmental issues from various sources, both through social media and other digital platforms. Research by Ma et al. (2024) explained that Generation Z tends to integrate sustainability values into various aspects of life, including activity and lifestyle choices. Intense exposure to information and ongoing digital interactions foster a more open perspective on environmental issues.

Collective experiences within a community contribute to the reinforcement of established behavioral patterns. Interactions between members create a space for the exchange of experiences, discussion, and reflection, encouraging individuals to maintain established habits. Collective activities strengthen the bond with the community's values, thus sustaining environmentally friendly behaviors over the long term. This dynamic demonstrates how green values develop through ongoing social relationships within the lives of volunteers.

Role of Community in the Formation of Social Identity and Ecological Awareness of Volunteers

Communities serve as social spaces that bring together individuals with shared interests and goals in environmental issues. Interactions during the Grinia volunteer program occur regularly through various activities such as campaigns, discussions, and team collaborations. This process fosters closer relationships between members through ongoing communication and cooperation. Over time, volunteers feel a sense of closeness that makes them more connected to one another in their activities. This encourage individuals to see themselves as part of a group that cares about the environment. The role of communities in the social categorization stage is evident in how volunteers categorize themselves as part of an environmentally conscious community. In Tajfel's theory, individuals construct social identities through the process of categorizing themselves into groups deemed relevant to their values.

Research by Shen & Zhang (2024) shows that social identity is related to pro-environmental behavior when individuals perceive shared values with their group. This grouping develops through experiences within the community, which brings together individuals with similar activities and goals. Shared activities help volunteers deepen their understanding of their place as part of an environmentally oriented group. The social identification stage begins when volunteers relate the community's values to themselves. Involvement in various activities makes going green values more ingrained in everyday life. Research by Wild & Heuling (2024) explains that social identity influences pro-environmental behavior, especially among individuals active in a particular social environment. Continuous interaction makes volunteers increasingly familiar with the values within the community. These values gradually become part of their way of thinking and acting in their daily activities.

Social comparison is seen when volunteers adapt their behavior to that of other members of the community. They observe the habits of other members and then try to apply them in their personal lives. This process develops naturally because individuals tend to align with the group to which they belong. Research by Johnson & Reimer (2023) explains that group norms influence individual environmental behavior through social interaction. This pattern is seen when environmentally friendly habits are gradually adopted by other members of the community. Ecological awareness develops through experiences gained while volunteering within the community. Activities such as environmental campaigns, public education, and internal discussions enable volunteers to become more familiar with environmental issues from various perspectives.

This process encourages individuals to see the connection between everyday actions and their impact on the environment.

Research by Saracevic & Schlegelmilch (2021) shows that social interactions within a community play a role in shaping environmental awareness through direct experience. Exposure to these activities makes volunteers more sensitive to environmental issues that were previously overlooked. The role of the community is also evident in the dissemination of environment values outside the group. Volunteers who have become accustomed to environmentally friendly practices begin to carry these habits into their social circles, such as family, friends, and social media. Interactions outside the community serve as a channel for conveying the values learned during the program. This aligns with the findings of Dong et al. (2025) that social identity can encourage the spread of pro-environmental behavior through an individual's social network. These activities expand the reach of environmental values from the community to the broader social environment.

4. Conclusion

Generation Z's involvement in the Grinia volunteer program shapes a green movement that evolves from community activities to become part of their daily lifestyle. Involvement in campaigns, education, and collaboration fosters the emergence of consistently environmentally friendly habits. This process occurs through social identity dynamics, encompassing categorization, identification, and social comparison, as described in Tajfel's theory. Volunteers begin to group themselves as part of an environmentally conscious community, linking green values to their identity, and adapting their behavior to the norms developing within the group. Interactions within the community strengthen bonds between members and foster ecological awareness, which then extends to social environments beyond the community.

The development of environmentally-based volunteer programs can be directed at increasing the intensity of interactions and the variety of activities that provide members with hands-on experience. Activities that involve hands-on practice, cross-community collaboration, and strengthening the role of each division can deepen volunteer involvement in environmental action. The use of digital platforms can also be expanded as a medium to strengthen the dissemination of green values to the wider community. Future research could examine comparisons across communities or develop quantitative approaches to examine a more measurable relationship between social identity and environmentally friendly behavior among Generation Z.

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