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# **Volunteerism culture among AL-Muthanna University Students: An Anthropological Study**

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## **Abstract**

This examination looks at what is the important motivation to volunteer among Iraqi students via comparative qualitative research methods. The study investigates the reactions from a sample of 597 students from Muthana University across all disciplines. The finding of this study reveals that Iraqi students have strong humanistic and religious reasons to volunteer. Furthermore, career development aspect has got reasonable attention among students to volunteer. In conclusion, volunteering is an individual choice and in this manner is affected more at the individual level but at the same time is affected somewhat by full-scale level societal powers.

**Keywords:** Volunteerism, Students, Motivation, Study, Organization.

## **Cultura del voluntariado entre estudiantes de la Universidad AL-Muthanna: Un estudio antropológico**

### **Resumen**

Este examen analiza cuál es la motivación importante para ser voluntario entre los estudiantes iraquíes a través de métodos de investigación cualitativos comparativos. El estudio investiga las reacciones de una muestra de 597 estudiantes de la Universidad de Muthana en todas las disciplinas. El hallazgo de este estudio revela que los estudiantes iraquíes tienen fuertes razones humanísticas y religiosas para ofrecerse como voluntarios. Además, el aspecto de desarrollo de carrera tiene una atención razonable entre los estudiantes para ser voluntarios. En conclusión, el voluntariado es una opción

individual y de esta manera se afecta más a nivel individual, pero al mismo tiempo se ve afectado de alguna manera por los poderes sociales de nivel completo.

**Palabras clave:** Voluntariado, Estudiantes, Motivación, Estudio, Organización.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the subject of volunteer services by youngsters has gotten expanded consideration from society and associations. Academic journals and magazines have conveyed various articles depicting the benefits and importance of youth services. The vast majority of this consideration has concentrated on the advantages of community service to society. Previous researches focused on how it may be increasingly powerful, regardless of whether it ought to be necessary and how it ought to be remunerated (Goss, 1993). Volunteering is as old as human society and has been an important part since then. It has a very important significant impact on human solidarity (Gaston & Alexander, 2001). Moreover, volunteering brings cohesion among communities hence a more solidarity can be witnessed in the society. Volunteering for the most part of the world alludes to any action dependent on either non-benefit or free will. It incorporates a wide range from formal volunteering through an organization to casual volunteering. Volunteering has been a point of interest among various academic disciplines. Conversely, few examinations are worried about the investigation of the experience of volunteering in anthropology. This examination propels

anthropological hypothesis and strategies to look for such an investigation.

Explicitly for students, contextual elements might be having an effect on motivation to volunteer, which thus may impact their volunteering exercises. For instance, their motivation to volunteer may likewise have an importance in the job market. Volunteering assumes a remarkable job in the labor market through its utilization as a flagging gadget. In this competition intensive era, motivation to volunteering fills in as a flagging gadget through which the candidate alludes the employer by portraying characteristics that make the person more suitable for the job (Katz and Rosenberg, 2005). It is evident by many types of research that participation in charitable effort or experiential learning can help encourage understudies' professional improvement (Beale, 1984). Volunteer experience may give a better understanding of people as potential workers just as the qualities of the occupations of intrigue.

In previous literature volunteering of students at higher education has ignored. Most of the previous studies have focused on the volunteering activities for the general population. Moreover, there is a dearth of literature on volunteerism culture underdeveloped countries. Hence, it is worthy to investigate volunteerism culture in a particular region focusing on university students. In this study, we investigate the voluntarism culture in Iraqi student focusing on the Muthana university students. The importance of this study is twofold. In one way it investigates the volunteerism culture in a particular

region which is unexplored. The importance of studying in a particular region has significance due to socio-economic differences. On the other hand, this study also investigates the volunteering culture among university students which is an understudied phenomenon.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

According to Bartal (2010), volunteering is intentional, non-compulsory, completed by individuals' own decision, unrestrained choice, which is the reason the old sort of constrained volunteering in socialist associations or any sort of required network work cannot be incorporated into this classification. It is thought processes are internal, abstract, esteem arranged and/or outside, instrumental yet not straightforwardly material. Volunteering is not simply philanthropic movement, as it tends to be valuable for the person also (Bartal, 2010). Volunteering regularly happens in a structured setting. In light of the cross-national examination, what individuals view as willful action relies upon the net expense of volunteering? Social and political settings decide the size and extent of the non-benefit area in various nations Curtis et al. (1992) and the sum and sort of volunteering. In this manner, student volunteering activities are likewise affected by various non-benefit benefits. According to Wilson (2000), volunteering improves citizenship responsibility, predicts more prominent political action, discourage nonsocial attitude, increments physical and emotional wellness and amplifies financial and social accomplishment.

According to human capital theory, volunteering has a positive and significant effect on education. Education stimulates positive behavior towards helping whereas volunteering is increasingly regular among financially strong netizens. However, this is not limited to the only financially strong citizen in some cases. Furthermore, religiosity expands the likelihood of volunteering. Consequently, people with intensive social capital are more likely to participate in volunteering activities. Similarly, demographic factors like age gender education are also relevant factors for volunteering. Furthermore, literacy, income and religiosity have also found to be relevant with volunteering in hungry (Bartal, 2010). In the same line of studies, Handy et al. (2010) asserted that students with non-materialistic values and having compulsory volunteering subjects at the secondary level are more tilted toward volunteerism.

The most continuous inspirations of volunteers are helping poor people, experience, religious values, self-challenge, professional advancement, moral obligation, useful spending of free time, making new companions and a strong affiliation with the society and community. However, the dominance of religiosity is witnessed in specific volunteering activities like helping the poor, religious confidence, moral obligation and societal affiliation. In this kind of volunteering, the religious commitment is solid and its principle highlights are the optimistic benevolent demeanor, esteem introduction, connection to a network, solidarity and supportiveness.

In this manner, it depends on conventional qualities much of the time including gathering and organizational membership. However, modern volunteering activities involved gaining experience, professional advancement, self-challenge and making new friends. This sort is driven by intrigue, less charitable. The purpose of this type of volunteering is learning, individualistic, self-absorbed, intelligent, imaginative and inventive. Hence it is progressively specific and less ideological and generally done by youngsters.

Prior studies focusing on American students asserted that volunteer's identity is more probable than non-volunteers to have authority capacity, social self-assurance, basic reasoning abilities, and compromise aptitudes (Astin et al., 1999). Henceforth, a business looked with numerous appropriate candidates may utilize volunteer encounters to construe aptitudes, or even expanded peripheral efficiency in this way empowering candidates to utilize their volunteering encounters as positive signs and effectively contend and improve professions prospects, direction higher pay rates, and show signs of improvement occupations (Freeman, 1997).

### **3. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The data consists of a survey based sample of 497 students of Muthana University. The study is significant due to the different contextual framework of the country. The questionnaire was converted into a local language to give better understand for respondents and get

more accurate responses. The questionnaire was reviewed by the panel of relevant faculty members of different local universities. The questionnaire was adopted from Clary et al. (1996) and modified according to the need of study. The students were sampled on the basis of convenience and six disciplines were stratified including social science, arts, business, economics, natural sciences and engineering. An In-class session has arranged to collect student responses on volunteering. The response rate was recorded as 100% as none of the students refuse to record the response.

### *3.1. Descriptive Statistics*

Out of the total, 374 students submitted that they had participated in volunteering activities in the last 2 years. The rate of participation in our sample is 75.25% which is a high level of participation in volunteering activities. However, Hustinx et al. (2008) indicated that the level of participation among youngsters is higher than the general public. Further a subsample has selected out of total participants who have participated in volunteering activities. Therefore, 374 students were selected who already volunteer. On the basis of gender, 31% are female while 69% are male students in the sample. Mean age of respondents was recorded as 21.5. The income level is recorded as 78.5% are from lower and middle-income families while 21.5% are high-income families.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The subsample of 374 students who already participated in volunteering activities in the last 2 years were asked to participate. Factor analysis is carried out to determine the group of dimension. In the final solution, three dimensions have emerged from the data set. The factor analysis presented that first factor is consisting of 3 items and demonstrate the motivation to volunteer based on career development. The second dimension consists of four items and represents the humanistic and religious reasons to volunteer. The third dimension consists of four items and demonstrates the social values to volunteer.

Table 1: Factor Analysis Based On Split Random Approach

|                                  | Split<br>random-<br>1 |          | Split<br>random-<br>2 |              |          |              |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------|----------|--------------|
|                                  | Fact<br>or 1          | Factor 2 | Fact<br>or 3          | Fact<br>or 1 | Factor 2 | Fact<br>or 3 |
| Professional development         | 0.58                  |          |                       | 00.61        |          |              |
| Volunteering for job application | 0.62                  |          |                       | 00.59        |          |              |
| To enhance admission chances     | 0.89                  |          |                       | 00.91        |          |              |
| Noble Cause                      |                       | 0.92     |                       |              | 0.93     |              |
| Helping others                   |                       | 0.85     |                       |              | 0.85     |              |
| For inner satisfaction           |                       | 0.81     |                       |              | 0.83     |              |
| Learn more about the cause       |                       | 0.79     |                       |              | 0.76     |              |
| Friends Volunteer                |                       |          | 0.52                  |              |          | 0.51         |
| Socialization and                |                       |          | 0.77                  |              |          | 0.76         |

|                  |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| networking       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Make new friends |      |      |      |      | 0.72 | 0.73 |
| Cronbach's Alpha | 0.83 | 0.76 | 0.82 | 0.85 | 0.8  | 0.79 |

We directed an exploratory factor analysis and utilized a split-random approach. We built up the measures on half of the sample and in this manner connected the acquired factor answer for the second half. The two samples delivered profoundly comparative outcomes, as appeared in table 1. Further, to explain the differences in motivation to volunteer we compared the responses of students on overall motivation to volunteer scale and rate the responses on each item according to the frequency. The ranking is also separated on the basis of demographic variables, for instance, gender and income level.

Table 2: Reason to Motivation Mean and Ranks

|    |                                  | Male  |      | Female |      | Total |      |
|----|----------------------------------|-------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
|    |                                  | Score | Rank | Score  | Rank | Score | Rank |
| 1. | Noble Cause                      |       |      |        |      | 4.32  | 1    |
|    |                                  | 4.23  | 3    | 4.27   | 2    |       |      |
| 2. | Helping others                   |       |      |        |      | 4.31  | 2    |
|    |                                  | 4.16  | 5    | 4.23   | 3    |       |      |
| 3. | For inner satisfaction           |       |      |        |      | 4.28  | 3    |
|    |                                  | 4.35  | 1    | 4.31   | 1    |       |      |
| 4. | Socialization and networking     |       |      |        |      | 3.23  | 7    |
|    |                                  | 4.29  | 2    | 3.75   | 4    |       |      |
| 5. | Make new friends                 |       |      |        |      | 3.16  | 8    |
|    |                                  | 3.50  | 7    | 3.33   | 8    |       |      |
| 6. | Professional development         |       |      |        |      | 3.11  | 9    |
|    |                                  | 3.32  | 8    | 3.21   | 9    |       |      |
| 7. | Learn more about the cause       |       |      |        |      | 3.79  | 4    |
|    |                                  | 3.20  | 9    | 3.49   | 7    |       |      |
| 8. | Volunteering for job application |       |      |        |      | 3.62  | 5    |
|    |                                  | 3.72  | 7    | 3.67   | 5    |       |      |

|     |                              |      |    |
|-----|------------------------------|------|----|
| 9.  | To enhance admission chances | 3.26 | 6  |
|     | 3.88 6 3.57 6                |      |    |
| 10. | Friends Volunteer            | 2.21 | 10 |
|     | 4.21 4 3.21 9                |      |    |

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From the above results, it is clearly concluded that the dominant motivating factors to volunteer are humanistic & religious. Furthermore, a comparison on the basis of gender presented slightly different results. Female volunteers are participating for volunteering activities for humanistic & religious reasons as well as for socialization and networking (Muyambiri & Chabaefe, 2018).

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is an effort to explain the motivation to volunteer among university students in the special context of Iraq. We adopted factor analysis to determine dimensions from the overall data set and found three dimensions using split random approach. The factor analysis result shows that students in Muthana University are motivated to volunteer due to humanistic & religious, social values and career development reasons. Furthermore, we rank the student responses on each individual item and found that most of the students are motivated to volunteer due

to humanistic and religious reasons. A comparison of responses on the basis of gender provided slightly different results. Where, female volunteers are motivated due to humanistic and religious reasons but as well as have higher motivation for socializing and networking as compare to male volunteers. The overall result shows that Iraqi student who is motivated to volunteer have strong social and religious reasons for the act.

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