

## Voluntary Work Model of Qatar University Students

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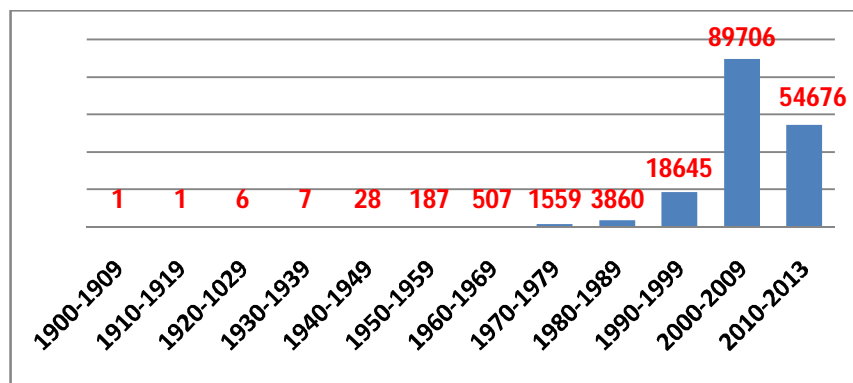
### Abstract

*This paper aims at highlighting voluntary work model of Qatar University Students. It explains its theoretical and practical perception. Furthermore, it illustrates that the nature of the voluntary work is based on seven dimensions: Academic (major): social (parent's perception); psychological (student's perception); gender; in addition to working during study; nationality and age dimensions. It also clarifies the percentage of volunteers of Qatar University students. Furthermore, it explains the parental perceptions toward voluntary work as well as the quality and fields of voluntary work.*

### Introduction

In last ten years, voluntary work witnessed a growing and evident interest in researches; the number of studies and researches has doubled (Figure 1) and the governmental institutes and authorities make much of it by establishing many voluntary centers and associates within educational policies. Although voluntary work is important from an Islamic view, in addition to its importance to individuals with various religious and cultural affiliations, it lacks attention and status that reflect its real importance in human society.

**Figure (1)The percentage of voluntary work model's articles in ProQuest database**



The current time witnesses a shift in many roles and concepts of social life; the most prominent one is the shift of the voluntary work concept, or social cooperation or social participation to a broader and more comprehensive meaning; it has exceeded the limited perception that connects it with charitable voluntary work and now it includes the social role, social responsibility as well as meeting cultural, social, educational, economical, health, environmental and political challenges on local and international levels.

The voluntary work concept shifted from participation to responsibility and it became more closely related to human responsibility, rights as well as duties. In human science researches, voluntary work is divided into two types: First, the work that emerges in sudden situations that requires a quick response from others such as aid in difficult situation and it usually happens with strangers in a relatively short period in comparison with the second type that occurs as a result of previous preparation, planning and organization. In addition, it lasts longer and occurs between people who are familiar with each other (Vecina et al., 1998).

Voluntary work is defined as "the effort exerted voluntarily in order to perform a social responsibility without expecting any financial reward (Aref, 2002), or by the effort exerted by a university student in any social or charitable fields without expecting financial returns (Al-Sultan,2009).

Voluntary work varies qualitatively and quantitatively, it also has beneficiaries and volunteers. However, its concept is still narrow and lacks organization and planning on scientific bases which is reflected on the role of the youth. Therefore, Middle Eastern young people are classified among the lowest in the levels of participation in voluntary work compared with other societies (Jamie and Laurie, 2010).

Moreover, the lack of coordination among society's multiple needs, and available gaping efficacies in the society prevent the emergence of voluntary work important role which requires efforts and policies in addition to organizational plans to facilitate communication between beneficiaries and volunteers.

Because Qatar University is the most important institute which serves its society, and it is the only national university and the general representative of university education and qualifying capabilities of all majors, it is the best and most appropriate institute to embrace voluntary work and the best provider of voluntary work academically and scientifically.

Accordingly, the current research problem is represented by an attempt of building a theoretical perception reflecting the following determinants: psychological, social and academic determinants, as well as other factors as the career, gender, age and nationality

### **Study questions and hypotheses**

- What is the percentage of participants in voluntary work at Qatar University?
- What are the most important domains of voluntary work that Qatar University students participate in?
- What is the nature of Qatar university students' perceptions toward voluntary work?
- What are the perceptions of Qatar University Students' parents toward voluntary work?

Testing the validity of the proposed model to the actual life (Data)

- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between student's gender and the nature of attitude toward voluntary work?
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between student specialty and the attitude toward voluntary work?
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between parental attitudes and the nature of student attitude toward voluntary work?
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between student nationality and the students' attitude toward voluntary work?
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between a working or a non- working student and the attitude toward voluntary work?
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between student age and his attitude toward voluntary work?

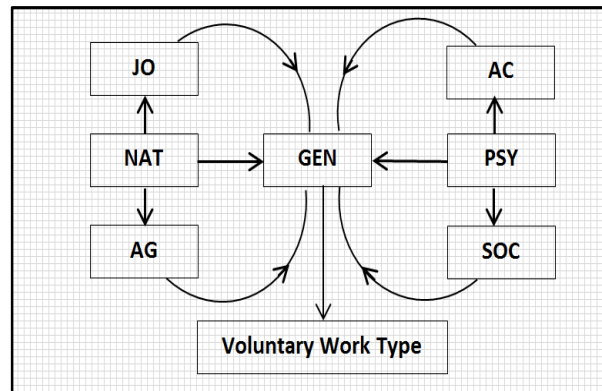
### ***Theoretical Frame***

#### **Proposed Voluntary Work Model**

There are various theoretical models illustrating voluntary work determinants as one of social life aspects. Some of them relied on three, six or eight dimensions according to the nature of work which is based generally on three main dimensions: cognitive as well as emotional and behavioral dimensions.

Muchinsky and Morrow (1980) provided a model of voluntary work based on three determinants: psychological factor (personality characteristics), work environment and economic status. However, Lawson (2008) attributed voluntary work to one factor, while Sanz and Vecina (1998) attributed it to six, and Shaqir (1991) to eight factors. The research upon the nature of voluntary work in Qatar University divides it into seven proposed dimensions (Figure 2) as follows: Academic AC (Major), social SOC (parental attitude), psychological PSY (student's attitude), gender GEN, Job during study JO, nationality NAT and age AG dimensions.

**Figure (2) Voluntary work Model**



The model proposes that gender is a main and a distinctive dimension in performing voluntary work and the type and nature of the work. Each gender has its own affecting factors in the choice and attitude such as academic AC, social SOC (parental attitude), psychological PSY (students attitude) in addition to demographical dimensions like work JO while studying, nationality NAT and age AG dimensions.

Various studies tackled voluntary work modeling, and suggested theoretical perceptions illustrating its determinants. Sanz and Vecina (1998) study revealed the psychological factors affecting the attitudes toward voluntary work. A sample of 34 volunteers (26 female (76.5 %) and 8 males (23.5%); with an average age of 27.3; 85% student received higher education; 14 were unemployed (41.2%) and 10 employed students (24.4%). The study utilized the social responsibility scale developed by Berkowitz and Lutterman (1986) and motivation scale developed by Omoto and Snyder (1995). The results showed that there are six psychological factors highly connected with the attitude towards voluntary work; these are: social support from friends, from parents, from the rest of the family, in addition to the sense of social responsibility, and the sense of satisfaction and enjoyment. Kajornnsin S. et al (1998) 's study aimed to build student voluntary activity model and to validate it in two stages: First, research stage which is conducted on a sample composed of 19 experts. Second, evaluation stage which is conducted on a sample composed of 80 students and 101 residents where voluntary work was applied. It used a questionnaire, and check lists as well as interviews.

Study results show that there are four models of students' voluntary work: conservative, academic, structural and shared models; the experts evaluated such models positively effective and they estimated effectiveness level between good and very good. Furthermore, the study stressed the importance of having models of voluntary work for students at on faculties' and universities' level.

Shaqir's study (1991) aimed at comparing some personality factors that characterizes the volunteers in seven characteristics: self-esteem, personal adjustment, social adjustment, control, social responsibility, emotional stability, socialization and bashfulness. The study utilized self-esteem scale developed by Hasan Al-Dirini and Mohammad Salameh (1983), personal profile scale developed by Gordon, F. (cited in Jaber Abdel Hamid and Faud Abu Hatab), and bashfulness scale developed by Husien Al-Dirini (1983), Who conducted his study on a sample of the 100 volunteer youth (half of them males) at Tabuk city in Saudi Kingdom and a 100 non-volunteer (have of them are males) with an average age ranging from 23-27 years; all unmarried. The study revealed the existence of statistically significant differences between the two samples regarding all characteristics in favor of volunteers with the exception of bashfulness which scored in favor of non-volunteers.

Darwish (2008) conducted a study to identify the concept, motives, constraints and domains of volunteering among young people and to reach a proposed model of voluntary work. The study is conducted on the academic year 2007-2008 on a sample composed of 4633 students (396 male and 295 female students); of which 3104 and 848 are regular and affiliated respectively.

Results showed that the concept of voluntary work among young people is an activity held by a young individual in the spare time. Moreover, it is considered as roles and responsibilities represented by providing aid and assistance for some society groups.

Furthermore, it indicated the voluntary work motives are: the desire of acquiring skills, new experiences, appreciation, filling spare time and identifying society problems. Fields of voluntary work include working with orphans, elderly and disabled.

Based on these results, the researcher developed a theoretical perception based on three dimensions: the cognitive dimension that includes the process of educating young people about the concept and the importance of voluntary work, the behavioral dimension that includes developing collaborative work skills and the emotional dimension that is represented in the media role in highlighting the importance of voluntary work.

### Research method

The study adopted the descriptive correlative approach for estimating factor correlations of the proposed model. It is conducted on two samples, parents and students. Parents' sample is composed of 149 parent (50 of them are fathers (33.6%), 87 are mothers (50.8%) and 11 parents did not specify).

Qatari parents number reached 94 and they represent 63%; non-Qataris numbers 44 they represent 29%; 10 parents did not specify their nationality. The percentage of workers and non-workers number reached 80 persons, they represent 53%, and 48 nonworking parent represent 32%. 20 parents did not specify if they work or not. Ages of sample ranged from 32-44 years. Students' sample number is 128 (males 64 representing 50%; and females number is 60 representing 46.9%; 4 students did not specify the gender; ages ranged from 20-31 years.

A number of 42 students joined the university in 2007/2008, they represent (32.8%); 27 joined in representing (21%) of the total sample; 26 joined in 2010/2011 representing (20%); 16 joined in 2006 representing 12%; 6 joined in 2005 representing (6%). Faculty of Arts and Science scored the highest in students' attitudes; 71 students representing (55%) participated in voluntary work, followed by the Faculty of Engineering where 24 students participated representing (18.8%), 11 students of faculty of administration and economics representing (8.6 %) came next, followed by the rest of faculties.

Regarding students' nationality, Qataris students' number reached 40 representing (31%); non-Qataris reached 85 students representing (66%); 3 students did not specify their nationality. Out of the total number of the sample 12 students work and study; they represent 19% whereas 110 students were not working and studying; these represent 85.9%; and 6 did not specify an answer. Finally, the marital status of participants is as follows: 12 are married representing (9%), 111 individual represent (86.7%) were unmarried and 5 did not specify an answer.

### Research Tools:

The researcher designed two scales for measuring the attitude toward voluntary work: student scale and parent scale. Validity and reliability<sup>1</sup> are insured for each scale. Correlations are as follows:

- **Attitude toward university voluntary work (students) scale:** the scale included 18 items; Cronbach alpha coefficient scored 0.61 and factor validity correlations ranged from 0.17-0.66 in explaining the total variance.
- **Attitude toward voluntary work (parental) scale:** the scale included 9 items; Cronbach alpha coefficient scored 0.654 and factor validity correlations ranged from 0.2-0.185 in explaining the total variance.

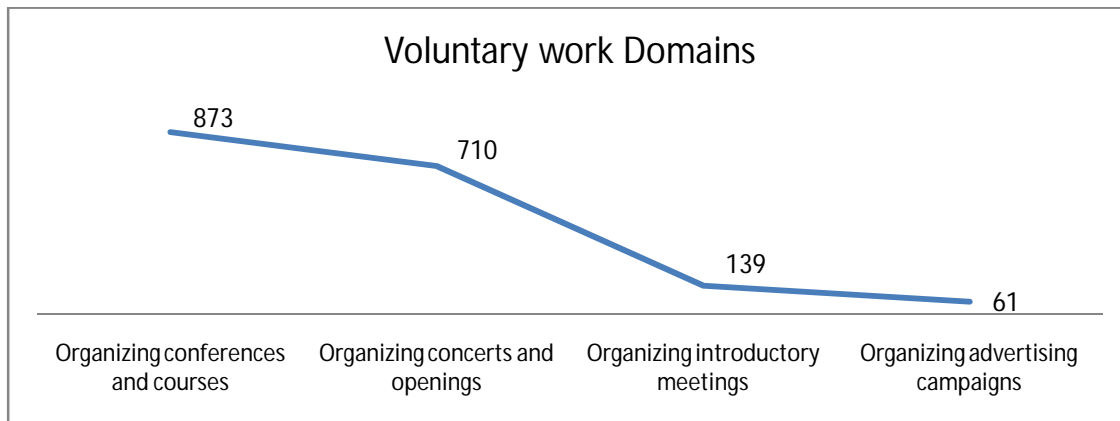
### Results and Analysis

1. -What is the percentage of participants in voluntary work at Qatar University?

<sup>1</sup>Glossary 1.

The number of students who joined voluntary work center in Qatar ranged from 3000-3500<sup>2</sup>. The center monitored voluntary work domains and the number of participants (Figure 5); these domains were: Organizing conferences and courses 873 student, Organizing concerts and openings 710 students, organizing introductory meetings 139 student and organizing advertising campaigns 61 students.

Figure (5)



Voluntary work domains in Qatar University are simple types; due to the narrow concept of the meaning of voluntary work as well as lack of purposeful organizing and planning and the absence of specific models of voluntary work. Qatar Statistics Authority declared that the percentage of volunteers registered in Qatar center for voluntary work in 2010 and 2011 for the age group 20-30 corresponding to university stage doubled (figures 6 and 7); age group 20-24 reached a number of 142, 263 for males, and 196, 271 for females respectively. In the same two years, the number for age group 25-29 was 221, 290 for males respectively and for females 243, 264. In age group 30 and above, the increase was very clear; in the same two years, the number of male students reached 630 and 759 respectively whereas the number of female students reached 664 and 733. The total numbers reveal that the percentage of increase among the males (677) is higher compared to female's number (175).

Figure (6)

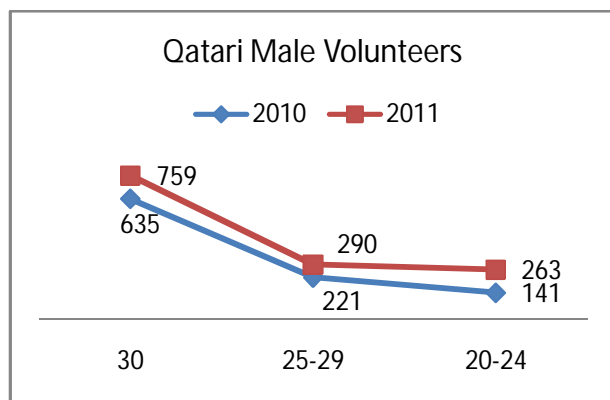
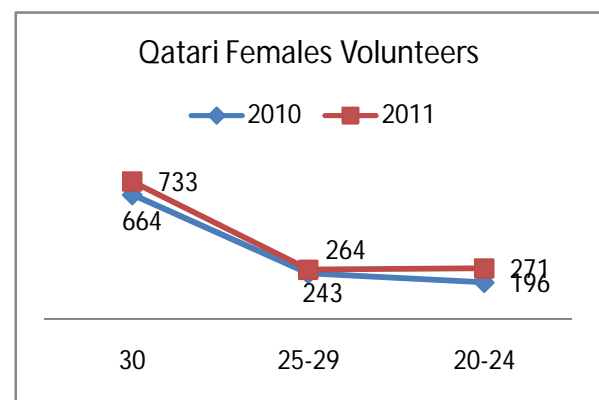


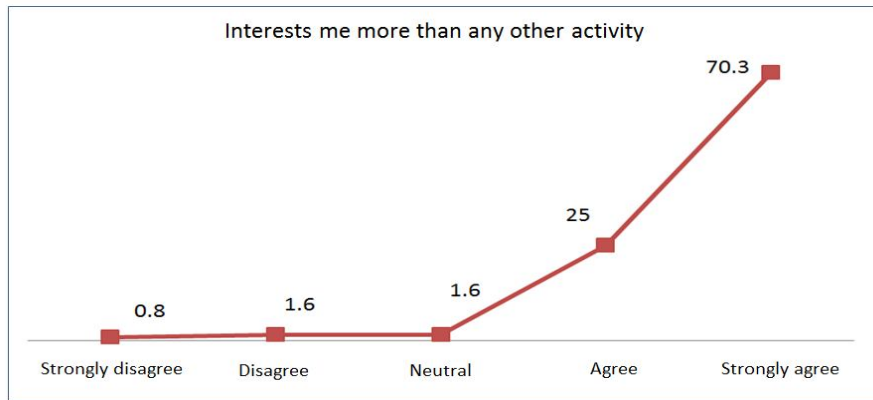
Figure (7)



This significant increase may be due to and the large number of forums held in Doha between 2011-2012. Furthermore, males accept to do voluntary work more than females; the results of one of items in the scale showed that 70 % of respondents strongly agree that voluntary work is interesting (Figure 8).

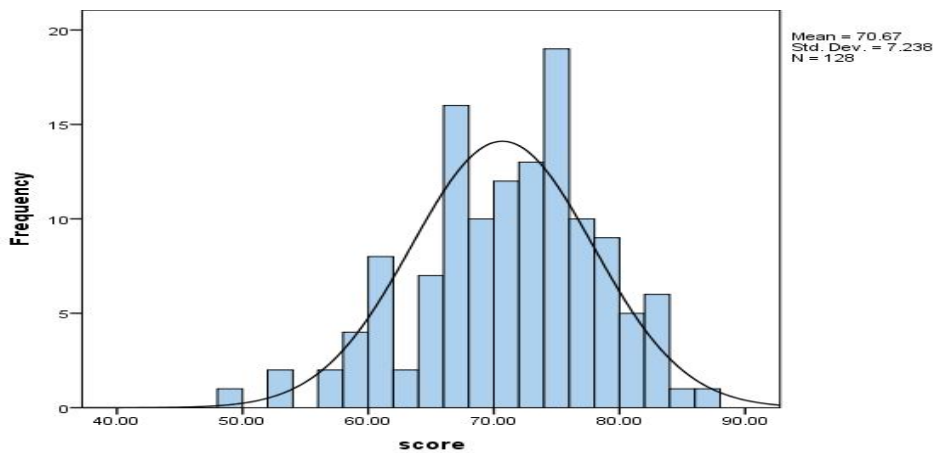
<sup>2</sup>The volunteering center at Qatar University.

**Figure (8)**



The second question: What is the nature of Qatar university students' attitudes toward voluntary work? The distribution of attitudes toward voluntary work scale scores was close to normal (Figure 9); mean, average and median scored 70.6, 71.5 and 74, respectively, standard deviation scored 7.

**Figure (9)**



The levels of positive attitudes toward voluntary work are determined as ( high- moderate-low ) (Table 1); the moderate level percent is 43%, followed by high level 30.5%, then the low level 26.6%.

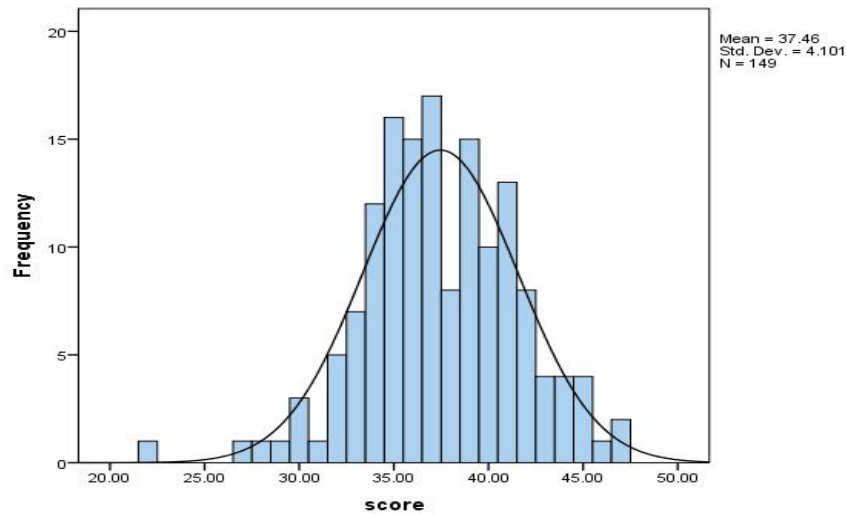
**Table (1)**

The levels of positive attitudes toward voluntary work (students)				
Cumulative percentage	Real percentage	Percentage	Frequency	
26.6	26.6	26.6	34	low
69.5	43.0	43.0	55	Middle
100.0	30.5	30.5	39	high
	100.0	100.0	128	total

This means that student attitude toward voluntary work is neither low nor high; it is predominately mediated. According to strategy of increasing the awareness of voluntary work's importance, it is expected that the category of high positive perception toward voluntary work to become dominant. Third question: What are the perceptions of Qatar University Students' parents toward voluntary work?

The distribution of the scores of the parents of the students at Qatar University toward voluntary work scale (Figure 10) illustrates that they were distributed naturally; mean, average and medianscored 37.5, 37 and 37, respectively; standard deviation scored 4.

Figure (10)



The percentage of parents' attitudes toward voluntary work scored between low, moderate and high; they were (32.2), (36.9) and (30.9) respectively as illustrated in table (2). This demonstrates that voluntary work culture is still limited in the society, and needs more effort to prevail through local programs and courses.

Table (2)

The levels of positive attitudes toward voluntary work (parents)				
Cumulative percentage	Real percentage	Percentage	Frequency	
32.2	32.2	32.2	48	low
69.1	36.9	36.9	55	Middle
100.0	30.9	30.9	46	High
	100.0	100.0	149	Total

Fourth question: Testing the validity of the proposed model to the actual life (Data)

Spearman and Pearson correlations showed that there is no significant correlation between students' perception toward voluntary work and gender (0.039), specialty (0.344), the nature of parents' attitudes toward voluntary work (0.031) as well as student nationality (0.084), student age (0.084) and being a working student or not (0.091). This demonstrates that there are other factors identifying the nature of attitudes toward voluntary work. However, the proposed model does not reveal them.

Lawson (2008) indicates that religious factor has a major effect on attitude toward voluntary work. However, Sanze and Vecina (1998) illustrate that there are six psychological factors highly connected to voluntary work; they are as follows: social support from friends, parents, the rest of the family as well as the sense of social responsibility and the sense of satisfaction and enjoyment. Shaqir's study (1991) determines seven variables characterizing individuals with positive attitude toward voluntary work: self-esteem, and personal adjustment in addition to social adjustment, control as well as social responsibility, emotional stability, socialization and shyness. Thapa and Gapa (2011) attributed the attitude toward voluntary work not only to motivation strength but also to value strength. Accordingly, the models of determinants of the perception toward voluntary works are based on various perceptions and theoretical bases. Although the nature of the societies' cultures is varied, it works with shared factors among these societies and cultures.

**Conclusion**

The current study found that the percentage of participants of voluntary work from Qatar University students for the year of 2011-2012 range from 3000 – 3500 students; in general, this number is increasing; voluntary work domains – as the results indicate are limited to organizing conferences, courses in addition to concerts, openings, introductory meetings and advertising campaigns.

It indicates that voluntary work is limited to simple domains; this is attributed to the narrow meaning and concept of voluntary work among Qatar University students and parents as well as lack of purposeful organization and planning and the absence of model identifying voluntary work. Increasing of volunteer's especially males may be connected to the significant increase of conferences and forums held in Doha in 2011-2012. In addition, the study found that young people enjoy the events of voluntary works.

Furthermore, the study showed that Qatar University students' and parents' attitudes toward voluntary work are close to the natural distribution; it is neither low nor high; it is predominately mediated. This illustrates that the culture of voluntary work is still limited in the society, and needs more effort to prevail in addition to increasing awareness among individuals about voluntary work importance through local programs and courses, it is expected that the category of high positive attitudes toward voluntary work will be dominant.

Moreover, study results indicate that voluntary work model is not effective and significant to Qatar University students because it does not explain its variables: (gender, major as well as nationality, work and age in addition to student's psychological, social and academic aspects) and voluntary work determinants. This demonstrates that there are other factors identifying the nature of perception toward voluntary work. However, the proposed model does not reveal them. It should be noted that some aspects of shortcomings which emerged in the study are connected to the theoretical model design; because the variables of social responsibility, religious commitment degree as well as student's socialization are not incorporated as highly correlated with individuals' attitudes in general. They may be mediator explaining the attitudes toward voluntary work. Furthermore, majors adopted as an academic variable varies a lot; if general average were used, scores might be more accurate.

Moreover, there is a weakness in explaining some questions' results; this may not help the reader to understand the correlation between parents' attitudes and students' attitudes toward voluntary work since the image of the proposed model will not be present completely in the reader mind. Despite of shortcomings mentioned previously, the current research results showed the reality of the concept of attitudes toward voluntary work; they were based on real data collected through sample responses to research tools. Therefore, the research recommends applying the current study on another proposed model that includes other variables and dimensions and to hold further researches on this aspect.

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## Appendixes

## Students scale

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>				
	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>		
	<b>.611</b>	<b>18</b>		

<b>Item-Total Statistics</b>				
	<b>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</b>	<b>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</b>	<b>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</b>
stq1	66.23	48.228	.340	.587
stq2	67.68	51.054	-.024	.639
stq3	66.87	46.069	.345	.579
stq4	66.94	44.579	.395	.569
stq5	66.32	49.369	.217	.599
stq6	67.14	52.153	-.075	.645
stq7	66.73	46.165	.397	.575
stq8	66.95	45.973	.322	.582
stq9	66.00	48.614	.294	.591
stq10	67.04	46.605	.349	.580
stq11	66.90	47.005	.131	.619
stq12	66.66	49.075	.146	.608
stq13	66.14	47.287	.327	.585
stq14	66.91	49.796	.091	.615
stq15	66.77	46.460	.251	.593
stq16	67.13	47.628	.186	.603
stq17	66.84	45.666	.323	.581
stq18	66.16	48.752	.293	.592

## Parents scale

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>				
	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>		
	<b>.654</b>	<b>9</b>		

<b>Item-Total Statistics</b>				
	<b>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</b>	<b>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</b>	<b>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</b>
q1	32.99	13.838	.441	.607
q2	33.11	14.137	.304	.633
q3	33.41	13.730	.312	.631
q4	32.81	14.086	.437	.610
q5	33.98	12.723	.322	.635
q6	33.65	12.904	.389	.612
q7	32.90	14.442	.423	.616
q8	34.07	13.420	.250	.654
q9	32.73	15.481	.262	.643