

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEER WORK FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Volunteering is a great virtue that exists in all religions, and it exists in all parts of the world. Since time immemorial, people have spent time and money to help others without compensation. The prophets were volunteers and they commanded people to volunteer because it was necessary. World leaders also called on their citizens to volunteer time and money to help others, but there is no law or work that gives volunteer work the importance that Islam does. Islam encourages its followers to share time, wealth, knowledge, and all good deeds with others. In this research, the concept of volunteer work will be discussed. And learn about its different forms and ethics.

Keywords: Volunteer, Islam, Volunteerism.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

God created man with a purpose and created for him a path to follow and a comprehensive vision for all aspects of his material and moral life. Worship is the goal of man's creation, and the means to achieve that goal for which God created man is to prepare righteous generations to face the challenges of the age. On this basis, ancient and modern scholars have adopted an ideal image of the individual through a system of moral and spiritual values that are compatible with the society in which he lives.

The Holy Qur'an has urged everyone to hasten and race to do good deeds, in order to attain God's satisfaction, each according to his deeds. Muslims are encouraged to actively engage in acts of kindness and service to others, driven by a sincere desire to help those in need and strengthen the bonds of unity within society. This profound commitment to volunteerism forms an integral part of the Islamic tradition, fostering a culture of giving that has enduring impacts on individuals, communities, and society at large.

In this exploration of volunteerism in Islam, we will delve into its theological foundations, the diverse ways it is practiced, and its profound impact on both the giver and the receiver. Through this journey, we aim to unveil the rich tapestry of volunteerism in Islam and how it serves as a beacon of light, guiding Muslims towards a life filled with empathy, generosity, and a strong sense of social responsibility.

1.2 The Study Problem

The main problem with this research is the lack of awareness among citizens about the importance of volunteer work and its lack of participation in it, although it is the most sincere indication of the progress of society and is one of the best approaches to God, It seeks to explore the multifaceted aspects of volunteerism, its impact on individuals and communities, and how

it aligns with Islamic principles and values. Additionally, the study will examine strategies to encourage and sustain volunteerism within Islamic communities, addressing potential challenges and barriers that may exist.

1.3 Study Questions

- What are the core Islamic principles and values that support and emphasize the significance of volunteer work in society?
- What are the social and moral benefits of volunteer work in Islamic communities, both for individuals and society as a whole?
- How does volunteer work in Islamic societies foster a sense of community, social cohesion, and a stronger connection to one's faith and fellow Muslims?
- How does volunteerism in Islamic societies contribute to addressing societal issues such as poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, and disaster relief?

1.4 The Importance of the study

The importance of studying the role of volunteer work in society from an Islamic perspective is multifaceted and holds significant relevance for both academic and practical reasons:

- **Religious and Moral Values:** Examining volunteerism through an Islamic lens underscores the intrinsic connection between faith and good deeds. It provides insights into how Islamic teachings motivate individuals to engage in acts of kindness and charity.
- **Cross-Cultural Understanding:** Investigating the importance of volunteer work from an Islamic perspective promotes cross-cultural understanding and highlights the common human values that underpin charitable actions, transcending cultural and religious boundaries.
- **Community Cohesion:** Volunteer work fosters a sense of unity and solidarity within Islamic communities. Studying this aspect can reveal how volunteerism contributes to community cohesion, social support systems, and a stronger sense of belonging.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** Research in this area can uncover strategies for sustaining volunteer efforts over the long term, ensuring that the positive impact on society endures and grows.

In summary, studying the importance of volunteer work in society from an Islamic perspective has far-reaching implications for social welfare, religious and moral values, community cohesion, and the development of effective policies and programs. It not only enriches our understanding of Islamic culture but also provides valuable insights into the universal human impulse to contribute to the well-being of others.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

The Concept of Volunteerism in Islam:

Volunteer work, often described as the act of donating time, skills, and resources without financial compensation, holds a central place in civil society. Volunteerism holds a central place in Islamic teachings, reflecting the religion's emphasis on benevolence and selflessness.

Historical Context:

The roots of volunteerism in Islam can be traced back to the life and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). His exemplary life showcased the importance of assisting others, supporting the marginalized, and participating in acts of charity and kindness. The concept of Sadaqah (voluntary charity) was foundational, laying the groundwork for subsequent developments in Islamic volunteerism...

Religious Foundations:

The Quran, the holy book of Islam, and Hadith provide explicit guidance on volunteerism. Verses such as Surah Al-Baqarah (2:267-273) and Surah Al-Insan (76:8-9) underline the virtue of aiding those in need, while Hadiths recount numerous instances of the Prophet's own voluntary acts of service. The concept of "sadaqah jariyah" (continuous charity) underscores the enduring impact of volunteerism in Islam.

Therefore, the general concept of volunteering is to expend effort, money, or experience due to self-motivation (Al-Tuwajri, 2002). The culture of volunteering is one that contains principles, ethics, and standards that encourage doing good that benefits others without obligation and without coercion. People in the Arab countries see that Volunteer work is what can be provided from time to time (Al-Dosari, 2005) and is not limited to supporting the weak group such as the disabled, orphans, widows and the poor, but rather it must include every human being and his right to life, peace, freedom and his right to development (Ibrahim, 2001).

Forms of Volunteerism in Islam:

There are various forms of volunteerism in Islam, and these actions are often guided by religious teachings and the concept of Sadaqah (charity). Here are some forms of volunteerism in Islam:

- **Zakat:** Zakat is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is a mandatory form of charitable giving. Muslims are required to give a portion of their wealth, typically 2.5% of their savings and investments, to help those in need. This act of charity helps provide for the less fortunate and serves as a form of volunteerism within the Islamic community.(Quran, 2:267-273) .
- **Sadaqah:** Sadaqah refers to voluntary acts of charity and kindness beyond the obligatory Zakat. Muslims are encouraged to give Sadaqah as a means of helping those in need, without expecting anything in return. It can take various forms, such as donating money, providing food to the hungry, or helping the poor and needy.(Quran, 2:267-273).

- **Islamic Charitable Organizations:** Many Islamic charitable organizations and NGOs operate globally, providing aid and assistance to those in need. These organizations rely heavily on volunteers to carry out their missions, which may include providing humanitarian relief, healthcare services, education, and more.(Al-khatib , Hassen , 2016)
- **Community Service:** Muslims are encouraged to engage in acts of community service, such as cleaning mosques, helping neighbors in need, and participating in community events and projects that benefit the local community.(Al-Krenawi and Graham, 2000) .
- **Visiting the Sick:** Visiting the sick is considered a virtuous act in Islam. Volunteering to visit and assist those who are ill not only provides physical help but also offers emotional and spiritual support.(Ibn Majah,37).
- **Feeding the Hungry:** Providing food to those who are hungry is a noble form of volunteerism in Islam. Muslims are encouraged to feed the hungry, especially during times of need, such as during Ramadan.(Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)).
- **Supporting Orphans:** Supporting orphans is highly regarded in Islam. Volunteering to care for and provide for orphaned children is seen as a virtuous act.(Quran, 93:9).

Objectives of volunteering

Volunteerism aims at many goals at individual and collective superiority and at the Arab level as a whole, namely, Al-Hayed, 1430:

Objectives of volunteer work at the Individual-level

- The preparation of a mentally, emotionally and physically balanced human personality through a sense of security and security in its society.
- Raising a Muslim's dignity through self - reliance.
- To realize the principle of loyalty and belonging to the Islamic Ummah in the daily lives of individuals.

Objectives of volunteer work at the community level:

- It promotes the principle of human cooperation to carry out acts of righteousness in society and to prevent the causes of corruption and vulnerability in society.
- Developing the spirit of brotherhood and love for God Almighty among individuals and groups in confirmation of belonging to the doctrine of monotheism and the Muslim nation without discrimination or preference for a sect or group.
- To create a cohesive society that each individual feels responsible for his or her society and to maintain his or her society and its capabilities.

Objectives of volunteer work at the Arabian level:

- Building human civilization on noble Islamic values and virtuous morals that spread mercy, affection, brotherhood and cooperation in society.
- Maintaining the cohesion and strength of society according to the principle of one body, to face difficult circumstances and participate in happy occasions.
- Meeting the nation's needs and solving its urgent problems by investing in the energies of individuals, thus eliminating the need for help and assistance and achieving self-sufficiency.

Controls of volunteer work in Islam

while volunteer work is encouraged and highly regarded, there are certain controls and guidelines that help ensure that volunteer activities align with Islamic principles and ethics. These controls primarily revolve around maintaining the values and teachings of Islam while engaging in voluntary service.

- **Intention (Niyyah):** The intention behind volunteer work in Islam is paramount. The primary motivation should be to seek the pleasure of Allah (God) and to serve others selflessly, rather than seeking personal recognition or gain.
- **Adherence to Islamic Ethics and Morality:** Muslims engaging in volunteer work must adhere to the ethical and moral guidelines outlined in the Quran and the Hadith. This includes honesty, integrity, compassion, and respect for all individuals.(Al-Bukhari & Muslim).
- **Respect for Local Laws and Regulations:** Muslims are required to respect and obey the laws and regulations of the country or community in which they are volunteering. This includes adhering to legal requirements related to permits, safety, and other relevant matters.(Al-Mawardi,2012).
- **Avoiding Activities Contrary to Islamic Values:** Volunteers should refrain from engaging in activities that contradict Islamic values or principles, such as promoting violence, discrimination, or any form of harm to others.(Ibn Qudamah, 1996).
- **Maintaining Priorities:** While volunteer work is encouraged, it should not interfere with an individual's religious obligations, such as daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, or other religious duties. Maintaining these priorities is essential.(Ibn Qayyim,1997).

Effects of volunteerism from an Islamic perspective

The effects of volunteer work from an Islamic perspective can be profound, not only on individuals but also on communities and society at large.

Below are some of the positive effects of volunteer work in Islam:

- **Spiritual Growth and Fulfillment:** Engaging in volunteer work in accordance with Islamic principles can lead to spiritual growth and a sense of fulfillment. It provides an opportunity for individuals to draw closer to Allah (God) through acts of kindness and selflessness.(Al-Ghazali, 2010).
- **Increased Compassion and Empathy:** Volunteering allows individuals to witness the struggles and suffering of others, fostering a greater sense of compassion and empathy. This aligns with Islamic teachings on showing kindness and mercy to all of Allah's creations.(Al-Faruqi,1982).
- **Strengthening of Community Bonds:** Volunteer work in Islamic communities often involves collaboration among members. This strengthens social bonds, encourages unity, and promotes a sense of belonging, all of which are essential values in Islam.(An-Nawawi, 1999).
- **Promotion of Social Justice:** Islamic volunteer work often focuses on addressing social injustices, such as poverty and inequality. By actively working to alleviate these issues, volunteers contribute to the promotion of social justice in society.(Al-Baghdadi, 2003).
- **Positive Influence on Society:** The collective impact of Islamic volunteer efforts can have a positive influence on society by addressing various social issues, promoting welfare, and fostering a culture of generosity and service.(Al-Mawardi, 2012).

Previous Studies:

- In a study (Susanne Klizing 2011) on volunteer work in European universities, the researcher stressed the need to encourage volunteer work in European universities, as the field of volunteering is still traditional in Europe despite the presence of calls for volunteer work in some universities, to draw a map of the current state of research on Volunteer work in Europe and to contribute to the transfer and exchange of knowledge between theory and practice.
- The study (Al-Ghamdi, 1430 AH) aimed to: clarify the concept of voluntary social work from the perspective of Islamic education and explain its applications in secondary school, explain the fields of voluntary social work in Islam, highlight the institutions of voluntary social work in Saudi society, explain the role of secondary school in consolidating the concept of work Voluntary social work, and the researcher used the deductive approach in order to benefit from deducing Qur'anic verses and Prophetic hadiths that indicate volunteer work.

The most prominent results of the study were: Islam gave great attention to voluntary social work. Islam established general frameworks and controls for voluntary social work, such as sincerity, and the compliance of voluntary work with the provisions of Islamic Sharia, and good intentions.

The history of Muslims throughout the ages is full of voluntary work that created a great Islamic civilization. And all the achievements of Islamic history were through Muslim volunteerism, effort and giving.

- The study (Al-Sultan, 2009) on the attitudes of male university youth towards volunteer work. It aimed to reveal the attitudes of university youth towards practicing volunteer work, what volunteer work they would like to do, and the obstacles that prevent university youth from joining volunteer work. The results of the study showed positive trends towards volunteer work, including: helping the poor and needy, visiting the sick and participating in humanitarian relief, caring for the disabled, preserving the environment, and combating drugs and smoking. The least attractive areas of volunteer work for university youth to participate are: civil defense, providing assistance to sports clubs, and child care. The benefits of volunteer work are: gaining new skills and increasing experience, filling free time with useful things, helping to serve the community, self-confidence and personality development.
- The Study (Lisa, 2003). (Family and youth volunteering in the non-profit sector) There has been strong evidence to support young people to volunteer, as there are positive effects resulting from volunteer work for young people. It also appeared that volunteer work is in the interest of the family and the non-profit organizations through which individuals volunteer.

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the importance of volunteer work from an Islamic perspective is deeply rooted in the teachings and values of Islam. It extends far beyond mere acts of charity, encompassing a profound commitment to compassion, selflessness, and social responsibility. Engaging in volunteer work in accordance with Islamic principles not only benefits individuals by nurturing their spiritual growth and moral character but also plays a vital role in strengthening communities and promoting social justice.

The effects of volunteer work within the Islamic framework are transformative, fostering a greater sense of empathy and solidarity among individuals and communities. It underscores the significance of selflessly giving one's time, skills, and resources to alleviate the suffering of others, fulfilling both individual and collective religious obligations.

Ultimately, the importance of volunteer work in Islam serves as a powerful reminder of the fundamental principles of compassion and service, emphasizing the need to actively contribute to the betterment of society while adhering to the moral and ethical values deeply embedded in the faith. In doing so, Muslims not only fulfill their religious duties but also embody the timeless message of Islam - a message of mercy, justice, and benevolence for all of humanity.

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