

# Impact of Volunteer Work on Improving the Quality of Social Life from the Perspective of Social Work Specialists

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Received: April 12, 2023    Accepted: April 27, 2023    Published: April 30, 2023

doi:10.5296/ijsw.v10i1.20940    URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijsw.v10i1.20940>

## **Abstract**

Quality of social life is a good aim for all components of civil and volunteer work in Saudi society. This study examined the impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life from the perspective of social work specialists in Saudi universities. The study used several indicators: The volunteer's ability to build social relationships, build human capacities, and manage living life, as well as their sense of satisfaction and satisfaction of basic and social needs. Descriptive analysis of variables was performed on data collected from four Saudi universities: King Saud University, um Al-Qura University, Princess Nourah University, and the University of Hail; 180 social work specialists were randomly enrolled, including faculty members and male and female students. The results revealed that the general impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life was  $2.44 \pm 0.68$  (mean  $\pm$  standard deviation) and that the overall average of the role of social work in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life was  $2.35 \pm 0.71$ . Civil society institutions should implement volunteer work programs that improve the quality of social, economic, health, and environmental life in Saudi society.

**Keywords:** Volunteering, culture of volunteering, social work, quality of social life

## 1. Introduction

Volunteering has become a significant element of social participation, enhancing the quality of life and supporting contemporary societies; it has therefore been recognized as a great social force in social development (Jiang et al., 2018). It causes people to be involved in their local communities, improving social capital and leading to public health benefits, volunteers' improved well-being, and better quality of care. Moreover, volunteer work can help meet the deficient needs of some segments and special groups; it can also raise the volunteers' capabilities and skills and help them develop positive attitudes toward managing their social selves and facilitating their social participation (Yumagulova & Handmer, 2021).

Al-Subaie (2019) indicated that volunteer work improves the volunteer's quality of life through new experiences, in which the volunteers not only develop their personality but also learn new skills and new methods for building social relationships, thereby avoiding isolation and loneliness. Volunteer work also promotes the values of social giving and altruism. It allows volunteers to develop their skills, contributing to their well-being and improving their quality of life (Ramkissoon, 2023).

Over the past three decades, there has been a growing public interest in “volunteering” by nonprofit organizations, which often represent and promote volunteering as a means of participating in civic life, contributing to the common good, and improving the volunteer's quality of life (Itamar et al., 2019). An increasing number of studies have concluded that people engage in voluntary activities for altruistic and personal reasons. However, these studies did not delve into the effects of volunteer work on the volunteers themselves, particularly the quality of their social life (Chua et al., 2021).

Accordingly, the current study is based on the fact that people volunteer and continue to volunteer for

“psychosocial” reasons—that is, reasons that allow people to meet some psychological and social needs. For example, research on voluntary operations has indicated that people start volunteering to express their human values, increase social interactions, and access new learning experiences and knowledge (Caricati et al., 2020).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 has provided volunteer work attention and support and urged its development. Saudi Vision 2030 aims to achieve a tangible quantitative change by increasing the number of volunteers from 11,000 to 1,000,000 by 2030 as well as a qualitative change in the quality of volunteer work (Mousa et al., 2021).

Based on data from the nonprofit Saudi Trends Report 2021 issued by the King Khalid Foundation, 41% of Saudi volunteers volunteer because they enjoy helping others, 29% wish to fulfill their patriotic duty, 8% believe that it is an excellent opportunity for communication, 7% have free time to use for volunteering, and 4% volunteer in nonprofit organizations to develop skills and abilities. Hence, Saudis participate in volunteer work because of their conviction of the importance of volunteer work in community service and its positive impact in providing new experiences and because they perceive it as an opportunity to develop personal and impersonal relationships and build social capital that supports their societal

existence and achieves their social goals (Alqasa & Al Qahtani, 2022).

Thus, the general welfare of the volunteers requires a deeper understanding of the effects of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life in a way that enhances voluntary behaviors that support the development of the quality of life in line with sustainable development plans and the Saudi Vision 2030. Therefore, the researcher hypothesized that engaging in volunteer work enhances the volunteers' quality of social life.

In this paper, we analyzed the impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life from the perspective of social work specialists—that is, in light of their field experiences, professional practices, and specialized theoretical knowledge to develop the skills of volunteers, enhance their abilities, and direct their voluntary energies toward effective voluntary participation that benefits them and society.

### *1.1 Importance of this Study*

- 1) Paying attention to volunteer work and improving the quality of social life of Saudi citizens is one of the priorities of Saudi Vision 2030, which prompts us to explore the features of improvement in the quality of social life as a result of the practice of volunteer work from the perspective of social work specialists in a way that helps provide useful recommendations to support the values of voluntary work and build the Saudi human, which includes achieving a better quality of social life.
- 2) There are still significant research gaps in understanding the impact of volunteering in improving the quality of life.
- 3) The importance of the current study stems from the interest in social work in the field of volunteer work, an important field of professional practice aimed at consolidating the values of volunteer work in the hearts of clients and building human capacities and social empowerment. This prompts us to investigate the effectiveness of that professional practice in evaluating the impact of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life and then direct research and studies in social service toward that critical research problem.
- 4) The results of the current study direct social policymakers to improve the quality of life of various segments of Saudi society through their extended participation as volunteers, including in nonprofit organizations, recruitment methods, training and management of the volunteer workforce, and taking the necessary measures to increase awareness of the importance, value, and benefits of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life.
- 5) There is a scarcity of Arab and foreign research and studies that deal with the direct relationship between volunteer work and the quality of social life. Hence, the current study fills a clear research gap in the field of voluntary studies and the quality of social life.

## *1.2 The Problem Statement*

Volunteer work has been associated with an improvement in the ability to perform activities of daily living, healthier lifestyles, and improved quality of life, social support, interaction, and self-esteem, as well as decreased depression, tension, hospitalization, pain, and psychological distress among volunteers (Dybicz, 2021). Jiang et al. (2020) also indicated that participation in various voluntary activities improves the quality of life. Through volunteer work, social service supports the professional practice and theoretical knowledge, and this entails dealing with different clients and various social segments, such as children, orphans, older people, people with special conditions, poor people, and homeless people. Undoubtedly, voluntary work plays a crucial role in improving social work skills. Social work operates according to the methodology and principles of professional practice. Hence, professional practice in volunteering is reflected in its social effectiveness, which is considered in the management of civil and charitable work in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in a way that achieves acceptance, satisfaction, and higher quality of life among society members.

Social workers play critical roles by encouraging individuals to volunteer, supporting the organizational structure of volunteering, providing these individuals with knowledge, teaching voluntary skills, and building and maximizing human capacities, thus achieving social and psychological well-being by satisfying basic and social needs and investing the ability and time in directing human energies toward volunteer work (Alaimo & Seri, 2023). Hence, improving the quality of life among social service professionals has received increasing attention over the past few years. Another key factor that can have a positive impact on the quality of life among social work professionals is occupational identification—that is, the extent to which professionals feel attached to their work category, along with the feeling and intent to adhere to professional duties (Park et al., 2015). Therefore, in the current study, we considered social work specialists' professional perspectives, maximizing the value of social work in general and volunteer work in particular.

A good quality of social life is crucial, and ignoring it results in low levels of satisfaction, a low sense of contentment and happiness, and poor social and functional performance in health, education, and social life, eventually impairing human development and growth. Hence, concern for the quality of social life is an original goal for all components of civil and volunteer work in Saudi society. Therefore, the main question of this study is as follows: What is the impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life from the perspective of social work specialists in Saudi universities?

## *1.3 Study Objectives*

- 1) To reveal the relationship between participation in volunteer work and the quality of social life from the perspective of social work specialists.
- 2) To identify the areas of volunteer work prevailing among social work specialists.
- 3) To determine the role of social service in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life.

- 4) To examine the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life.

#### *1.4 Study Questions*

- 1) Is there a relationship between participation in voluntary activities and an improvement in the quality of social life?
- 2) What is the role of social service in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life?
- 3) To what extent does volunteer work contribute to building human capabilities and social relations?
- 4) How effective is volunteer work in improving the quality of social life?

#### *1.5 Study Concepts*

##### **(1) Volunteer Work**

Volunteer work is defined as a useful activity in which time is given to help others without expecting any material reward as a behavior that reflects the value of citizenship. Volunteer work enhances citizenship, empowerment, and a sense of loyalty and belonging (Sengupta et al., 2023; Sohler et al., 2023). It also means providing a group of therapeutic or rehabilitative services in defense of the poor and disadvantaged.

##### **(2) Quality of Social Life**

Quality of life (QOL) is defined as “the relationship between biological and social aspects by means of mental, environmental and cultural conditions” Navickas et al. (2016). This approach is similar to the World Health Organization’s (WHO), which refers to the relationship of “an individual's perception of their place in life both in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, norms and interests,” thus emphasizing issues of individual perception about lifestyle, state of life, and health. The concept of the QOL by the WHO includes certain characteristics, such as subjectivity, self-perception, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, physical, cognitive, and emotional states, and interpersonal relationships, in addition to many external environmental conditions and general conditions of life (Maciel et al., 2014). Most definitions of QOL focus on an individual’s physical and psychological health, level of independence, social relations, and connection to the environment in relation to the individual’s perceptions, goals, expectations, standards, and interests (Taghian et al., 2019).

##### **(3) Volunteering Culture**

Volunteering culture includes positive values and attitudes toward volunteer work, as well as the necessary knowledge and skills to practice volunteer work and charitable action from a human perspective that supports the values of social solidarity and altruism. In this context, Morawski et al. (2022) revealed that the impact of volunteer work on the QOL decreases in countries with the lowest development rates and increases in more developed countries. This increase in the QOL is due to the culture of volunteering, which communicates positive

values and supports self-development and human self-improvement (Alaimo & Seri, 2023).

## 2. Literature Review

Few domestic or international studies have analyzed the relationship between volunteer work and the quality of social life. Therefore, we reviewed the studies that directly or indirectly approached the research question of the current study.

Navickas et al. (2016) investigated the impact of volunteering as a form of entertainment on the QOL of students. Their results revealed that volunteering provides young people with emotional and social benefits, leading to self-confidence, increased motivation, independence in controlling stress, new acquaintances and friends, and awareness of new cultures. It also contributes to personal development, as communication and teamwork skills are acquired, and improved physical and mental condition.

Avieli et al. (2016) attempted to predict the quality of professional life among professional and volunteer caregivers, compared the ethical behavior of volunteers with the behavior of professional therapists, and examined the relationship between years of experience and ethical behavior. The results indicated that professional caregivers reported higher levels of compassion satisfaction and moral behavior than volunteer caregivers.

Al-Shahrani and Hammad (2019) investigated the role of volunteer work in improving social capital and promoting sustainable development in Saudi society. Their results revealed that volunteer work plays a significant role in improving social capital and achieving sustainable development in Saudi society. Furthermore, the study showed the importance of volunteer work in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in helping to spread the culture of volunteer work.

Chung et al. (2020) presented a study on the quality of healthy living, especially mental health, on the role of voluntary participation and the relationship between motives and psychological and mental well-being. Data were collected from full-time employees of organizations in South Korea using a self-administered tool. To test the hypotheses, hierarchical regression analyses and path analysis were performed. The results revealed the effect of voluntary participation on psychological well-being, showing that employees with other-oriented motives are more likely to participate in voluntary activities, which increases their psychological well-being.

Some studies have explored the relationship between volunteer work and the promotion of positive values for university youth. For example, Al-Daghiri (2021) investigated the role of volunteer work in promoting positive values among girls. He aimed to identify the attitudes of Saudi girls toward volunteer work, the impact of volunteer work on the positive values of girls, and how to develop the role of volunteer work in promoting positive values among girls based on the Saudi Vision 2030. The study used the descriptive approach on a sample of 414 girls. His results revealed strong agreement among the sample members on the impact of volunteer work on the positive values of Saudi girls. Citizenship behavior was the positive value least affected by volunteer work among Saudi girls.

In another study, Al-Zabali (2021) conducted a survey on students at King Abdulaziz

University to reveal the main trends that direct university students' practice of volunteer work. The study used the descriptive approach on a sample of 410 students from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at King Abdulaziz University. The study revealed that students' participation in volunteer work involved volunteering in the professional specialization at a rate of 61.2%. The most important proposals of the study enhanced the university students' attitudes toward volunteer work with individuals specialized in volunteer work.

Hijazi's (2022) study aimed to identify the attitudes of social work students in Palestinian universities towards volunteer work in medical institutions. The study used the descriptive approach on a sample of 300 male and female students. His results revealed that the degree of acceptance of students toward volunteering in medical institutions was high, reaching 78.8%. The study also revealed no differences attributable to the variables of gender, academic level, and housing. The study recommended focusing on the practical side of volunteer work in crises and researching the role of social work.

This study differs from previous similar studies in that not all studies on this research topic directly touched on the relationship between the practice of volunteer work and the improvement in the QOL. While some of these studies clarified that relationship through various sub-variables, such as feelings of happiness, a sense of social responsibility, and building personal capabilities, our current study aims to identify the direct relationship and the impact of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life from the perspective of social work specialists.

### **3. Methodological Procedures**

#### *3.1 Type of Study*

The current study is a descriptive analytical study concerned with providing an in-depth description of the impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life through analyzing the main variables that interfere in shaping the features of the quality of social life by extrapolating the results of this study, which takes social service specialists as its basic unit.

#### *3.2 Study Methodology*

The study relied on the descriptive approach through the social survey method with a sample of social work specialists (faculty members and male and female students in social work departments in some Saudi universities) to determine the impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life by dismantling the variables of the impact of volunteer work on some aspects. The study identified the features of the quality of social life, such as building social relations, building human capacities, satisfying basic and social needs, and forming positive attitudes among volunteers, in addition to the volunteers' feelings of satisfaction with their QOL.

#### *3.3 Study Population and Sample*

The study population consisted of faculty members and male and female students of social work departments in four Saudi universities: King Saud University, Umm Al-Qura University,

Princess Noura University, and the University of Hail. The data were collected based on a random sample of 180 individuals comprising 30 faculty members and 150 male and female students from the social work departments of these universities.

### *3.4 Study Tools*

The data were collected in the current study based on the formulation of a three-point Likert questionnaire, which aimed to measure the effect of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life from the perspective of social work specialists (faculty members, male and female students). The questionnaire used in this study included three axes: The first was voluntary activities and fields of volunteer work, the second was the role of social work in supporting volunteer work and improving the QOL, and the third was the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life. The apparent validity of the questionnaire was verified by presenting it to five arbitrators in some Saudi universities, and in the light of the researcher's notes, the questionnaire was revised and constructed in its final form. As for the reliability of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was applied to an exploratory sample, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient for stability was calculated, which amounted to 0.97.

### *3.5 Study Variables*

- 1) The independent variable: Volunteer work (activities - practices - fields).
- 2) The dependent variable: Social QOL (subjective QOL, quality of living life, quality of healthy life, quality of educational life).

These variables were measured in the light of many indicators that appeared in the definition of the quality of social life.

### *3.6 Fields of Study*

- 1) The human field: The human field of study is defined by faculty members and male and female students of social work departments in some Saudi universities.
- 2) Setting: Four Saudi universities—King Saud University, Umm Al-Qura University, Princess Noura University, and the University of Hail.
- 3) Study period: 12 January 2023 to 1 February 2023

### *3.7 Characteristics of the Study Sample*

The total sample size was 180. This included 30 faculty members (assistant professors, associate professors, and professors) and 150 students from the social work departments of King Saud University, Umm Al-Qura University, Princess Noura University, and the University of Hail.

## **4. Results**

### *4.1 Fields of Volunteer Work Among the Study Participants*

Table 1 presents the fields of volunteer work among the study participants. The overall mean



of the volume of voluntary participation among the study participants was  $2.24 \pm 0.77$  at a rate of 74.7%. Volunteering provides the participants with many benefits at the personal and societal levels, which contributes to improving the quality of social life. Youth care and spreading community awareness were the most common volunteering area (mean:  $2.45 \pm 0.69$ ), with a high tendency to participate in voluntary work. The second area was caring for the poor and the needy and providing social assistance (mean:  $2.44 \pm 0.61$ ), with respondents “always” tending to participate, whether that care is in the form of material or in-kind assistance. The third was caring for children, orphans, and people of unknown parentage (mean:  $2.43 \pm 0.68$ ), with respondents “always” tending to participate. The fourth was caring for special groups and satisfying their basic and social needs (mean:  $2.38 \pm 0.68$ ), with respondents “always” tending to participate.

The fifth volunteering area was caring for older people (mean:  $2.37 \pm 0.75$ ), with respondents “always” tending to participate. This finding is consistent with Principi et al.’s (2016) conclusion that policymakers could consider developing more opportunities for the involvement of older volunteers with low educational levels, poor health, widows, divorcees, or singles. They can do this by ensuring that volunteering provides the potential to meet the critical motivational needs of older people, such as increased self-esteem, better handling of personal problems, and satisfactory social contacts. In addition, population aging has led to increased interest in social policies and volunteer work to encourage active aging. In this context, the WHO defines “active aging” as the process of improving opportunities for health, participation, and security to improve the QOL with age. These results also agree with those of Yeung et al. (2018), which indicated that volunteering should be promoted, especially among older people, ethnic minorities, people with lower education levels, unmarried people, and unemployed people, who generally suffer from poor health and less participation, to improve the quality of volunteering and their lives.

The sixth volunteering area was participation in the development of Saudi society (mean:  $2.34 \pm 0.73$ ). The seventh was related to health care and the dissemination of health awareness (mean:  $1.87 \pm 0.74$ ), with respondents “sometimes” tending to participate. Voluntary participation in this area was less among the study participants compared with other areas. Finally, the volunteering area of cultural and awareness-raising guidance in cultural and religious fields came in the eighth rank (mean:  $1.68 \pm 0.84$ ), with respondents “sometimes” tending to participate. This result differs from the findings of Khalifa’s (2021) study, which indicated that the most prominent area of volunteer work conducted by the respondents are awareness and education campaigns (mean: 2.88). As for the areas of volunteer work that were least prominent among young people, collecting donations and aid came in the 10th rank (mean: 2.58).

Participating in these volunteering areas contributes to improving the QOL of the volunteers among the study participants, consistent with the results of Guimaraes et al. (2023).

Table 1. shows the fields of volunteer work among the study participants.

N	Areas of volunteer work	Response	Frequency	%	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Arrangement
1	Cultural guidance and awareness in the cultural and religious fields	Always	44	24.4	1.67	0.84	8
		Sometimes	33	18.3			
		Scarcely	103	57.3			
2	Elderly care	Always	96	53.3	2.37	0.75	5
		Sometimes	54	30			
		Scarcely	30	16.7			
3	Caring for children, orphans, and the unknown	Always	98	54.4	2.43	0.68	3
		Sometimes	62	34.4			
		Scarcely	20	11.2			
4	Health care and spreading health awareness	Always	39	21.7	1.87	0.74	7
		Sometimes	78	43.3			
		Scarcely	63	35			
5	Caring for special groups	Always	88	48.9	2.38	0.68	4
		Sometimes	72	40			
		Scarcely	20	11.1			
6	Caring for the poor and needy and providing social assistance	Always	91	50.5	2.44	0.61	2
		Sometimes	78	43.3			
		Scarcely	11	6.2			
7	Participate in the development of Saudi society	Always	89	49.5	2.34	0.73	6
		Sometimes	64	35.5			
		Scarcely	27	15			
8	Taking care of youth and spreading community awareness	Always	102	56.7	2.45	0.69	1
		Sometimes	57	31.7			
		Scarcely	21	11.6			
<b>The overall mean of the volume of voluntary participation among the study participants</b>					<b>2.24</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>74.7%</b>

#### 4.2 The Role of Social Work in Supporting Volunteer Work and Improving the Quality of Social Life

Table 2 presents the role of social work in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life through a set of professional roles played by social work in supporting the values of volunteer work in the hearts of members of Saudi society. Volunteer work and improving the quality of social life (mean:  $2.35 \pm 0.71$ ), with a general trend among the sample, had an agreement of 78.3%. The highest role was the role of social work in raising awareness of the positive benefits of volunteering (mean:  $2.56 \pm 0.60$ ), with a trend of approval among community members.

The second highest role was the role of social work in motivating individuals to participate in voluntary activities, with a mean of  $2.46 \pm 0.64$  and a trend of approval. The third was the role of social work in changing the prevailing negative attitudes about volunteer work (mean:  $2.43 \pm 0.56$ ), with a trend of approval, as many studies have indicated the prevalence of a misconception about volunteering that it is a waste of time and effort and that it is useless, thus pushing social workers to change the negative attitudes toward the practice of volunteer work so that it is the first real step in the practice of volunteer work.

The fourth was the role of social work in building continuous channels of communication with charitable institutions (mean:  $2.43 \pm 0.64$ ), with a trend of approval. The role of social work came in fifth place in directing the voluntary energies of university youth toward the practice of volunteer work (mean:  $2.39 \pm 0.56$ ), with a trend of approval, which reflects the value of professional specialization in motivating and directing toward the practice of volunteer work and its necessities in contemporary society, especially through youth energies.

The sixth was the role of social work in the involvement of students in training in charitable work associations (mean:  $2.37 \pm 0.77$ ), with a trend of approval. The role of social work came in seventh place in providing consultations with guidance and advice and making the right voluntary decisions (mean:  $2.22 \pm 0.80$ ), with a somewhat agreeable attitude. Finally, the role of social work came in eighth place in holding workshops for training on volunteer work skills (mean:  $1.97 \pm 0.87$ ), with a somewhat agreeable trend.

**Table 2.** shows the role of social work in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life

N	Social work roles	Response	Frequency	%	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Arrangement
1	Awareness of the positive benefits of volunteering	Agree	111	61.7	2.56	0.60	1
		To some extent	59	32.7			
		Disagree	10	5.6			

2	Motivate individuals to participate in volunteer activities	Agree	98	54.4	2.46	0.64	2
		To some extent	67	37.2			
		Disagree	15	8.4			
3	Changing the prevailing attitudes about volunteering	Agree	83	46.2	2.43	0.56	3
		To some extent	91	50.5			
		Disagree	6	3.3			
4	Holding workshops for training on volunteer work skills	Agree	66	36.7	1.97	0.87	8
		To some extent	42	23.3			
		Disagree	72	40			
5	Constant contact with charitable organizations	Agree	92	51.1	2.43	0.64	4
		To some extent	73	40.5			
		Disagree	15	8.4			
6	Directing the voluntary energies of university youth toward the practice of volunteer work	Agree	77	42.8	2.39	0.56	5
		To some extent	96	53.3			
		Disagree	7	3.9			
7	Involving service students in training in charitable associations	Agree	99	55	2.37	0.77	6
		To some extent	48	26.7			
		Disagree	33	18.3			
8	Providing consultations with guidance and advice and making the right voluntary decisions	Agree	82	45.5	2.22	0.80	7
		To some extent	55	30.6			
		Disagree	43	23.9			
<b>The overall mean of the role of social work in supporting volunteer work and improving the QOL</b>					<b>2.35</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>78.3%</b>

### *4.3 The Effectiveness of Volunteer Work in Improving the Quality of Social Life from the Sample's Perspective*

The data in Table 3 show the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of

social life from the perspective of the study participants of social work specialists in Saudi universities, as they are professional practitioners of social and volunteer work and are able to evaluate the actual impact of voluntary participation and its role in improving the QOL in the light of many the indicators. The results revealed that the overall mean of the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life was  $2.44 \pm 0.68$ , with a (high) approval rate of 81.3%.

This confirms the role and impact of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life. As for the indicators that showed this effect of volunteer work in improving the QOL, they were as follows: The indicator of the contribution of volunteer work to building and using human capacities came in first place (mean:  $2.57 \pm 0.55$ ), with a high approval trend in achieving social and economic empowerment, which is reflected in the quality of social life. The second highest was an indicator that benefits volunteer work in refining and developing the human personality and enriching the CV with new experiences (mean:  $2.54 \pm 0.53$ ), and a high approval trend. These experiences significantly add to personal experiences and enrich life biographies, reflecting positively on the management and quality of living life.

The third was an indicator that helps the practice of voluntary activity to provide individuals with the ability to manage crises and life pressures and control emotions (mean:  $2.50 \pm 0.57$ ), with a high approval trend. It is better in terms of excluding diseases or falling into the circle of social problems, and this is achieved thanks to the practice of volunteer work, which provides the individual with new personal characteristics that enable them to manage different life situations. This result is consistent with what was presented in Al-Safty's (2019) study that participation in volunteer work gives the individual self-confidence, social responsibility, and emotional balance to overcome the difficulties and problems that the individual faces and the ability to solve them.

The fourth was an indicator that supports volunteer work, the formation of positive attitudes, and a sense of satisfaction with life (mean:  $2.47 \pm 0.64$ ), with a high approval trend. As for the second aspect, the feeling of satisfaction comes when examining the core of matters related to destitution, poverty, deprivation, and the needs that some segments that need social support suffer from. There is no doubt that familiarity with these different life experiences refines the soul and gives it peace, comfort, and reassurance. The fifth was an indicator that volunteer work gives volunteers positive behaviors, life management skills, and the ability to make sound decisions (mean:  $2.42 \pm 0.71$ ), with a high approval trend. Sound decision-making promotes a stable social life free from social problems and recurrent life crises, which positively reflects on the quality of social life.

In the sixth rank came an indicator that volunteer work improves the level of social performance and positive social relationship building (mean:  $2.42 \pm 0.72$ ), with a high approval trend, which means—according to social capital theory—an increase in the balance of social capital in a way that enhances the community presence in networks. This amount of social capital is also useful in achieving social goals and satisfying human needs. This result is consistent with what was shown by a study (Kragt & Holtrop, 2019) that volunteer work leads to better psychological well-being, as well as an increase in social and human capital.

The expectations and commitment of volunteers are among the main drivers of ongoing volunteer work.

In the seventh rank came the indicator of volunteer work that directs individuals toward good management of free time and the practice of appropriate activity (mean:  $2.40 \pm 0.70$ ), with a high approval trend. Managing leisure time, especially with some age groups, such as older people, gives them a better social QOL, especially in light of active and energetic aging. Following in the eighth rank was the indicator of volunteers achieving full satisfaction of human needs and achieving satisfaction with social life (mean:  $2.38 \pm 0.70$ ), with a high approval trend. The feeling of satisfaction with the QOL is mainly related to the ability to satisfy basic and social needs.

In the ninth rank came the indicator of the effect of volunteer work on the general health of society members (mean:  $2.34 \pm 0.77$ ), with a high approval trend, as health is an integral part of the quality of social life. A long life without health is of no value, hence the value of volunteer work in acquiring skills and building relationships in a way that achieves psychological and social empowerment. This finding is consistent with the findings of a study (Somoray et al., 2017) that high levels of emotional stability, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and communication at work are crucial factors that enhance the occupational QOL for mental health workers. Specifically, workplace affiliation was the strongest predictor of satisfaction with empathy and lower levels of burnout.

In the 10th place came an indicator that develops volunteer work from self- and societal awareness and enhances positive energy and effectiveness (mean:  $2.34 \pm 0.78$ ), with a high approval trend.

Table 3. shows the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life

N	The effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of life	Response	Frequency	%	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Arrangement
1	Volunteering improves the level of social performance and builds positive social relationships.	High	101	56.1	2.42	0.72	6
		Medium	54	30			
		Low	25	13.9			
2	Volunteer work contributes to building and using human capacities.	High	108	60	2.57	0.55	1
		Medium	67	37.2			
		Low	5	2.8			
3	Volunteering gains positive behaviors, life management skills, and the ability to make	High	99	55	2.42	0.71	5
		Medium	57	31.7			

	sound decisions.	Low	24	13.3			
4	Volunteering directs individuals toward good management of free time and appropriate activity.	High	94	52.2	2.40	0.70	7
		Medium	64	35.5			
		Low	22	12.3			
5	Volunteering supports the formation of positive attitudes and a sense of satisfaction with life.	High	99	54.9	2.47	0.64	4
		Medium	66	36.7			
		Low	15	8.4			
6	Practicing voluntary activities helps individuals acquire the ability to manage life crises and pressures and to control impulses.	High	97	53.9	2.50	0.57	3
		Medium	76	42.2			
		Low	7	3.9			
7	Volunteer work is useful in refining and developing the human personality and enriching the CV with new experiences.	High	100	55.5	2.54	0.53	2
		Medium	77	42.8			
		Low	3	1.7			
8	Volunteering achieves the full satisfaction of human needs in a manner that achieves satisfaction with social life.	High	92	51.1	2.38	0.70	8
		Medium	65	36.1			
		Low	23	12.8			
9	Volunteering helps the general health of community members.	High	94	52.2	2.34	0.77	9
		Medium	53	29.5			
		Low	33	18.3			
10	Volunteering helps with self and community awareness and promotes positive energy and effectiveness.	High	95	52.8	2.34	0.78	10
		Medium	51	28.3			
		Low	34	18.9			
<b>The overall mean of the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life</b>					<b>2.44</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>81.3%</b>

#### *4.4 Correlation Coefficients and Trends of the Study Participants about the Impact of Volunteer Work in Improving the Quality of Social Life*

In light of the use of the Pearson correlation coefficient to find the relationship between four indicators (satisfaction of needs and a sense of satisfaction, building human capabilities, building social relations, and forming positive attitudes) and the quality of social life (quality of subjective life, quality of living life, quality of healthy life, and quality of educational life) from the perspective of social work specialists, the table data shows the correlation coefficients, which show positive relationships between the four indicators and the quality of social life with different degrees of correlation. The data also revealed a strong correlation between satisfying needs, a sense of satisfaction, and a healthy QOL, as well as self- and social efficacy, interdependence, and social confidence.

Furthermore, the data revealed a strong correlation between building human capabilities, the quality of subjective life, and the quality of educational life. On the other hand, the table data showed a strong correlation between building social relationships, the quality of subjective life, and the quality of living life, respectively. As for the formation of positive trends, its relationship was strong with the quality of subjective life and the quality of educational life.

### **5. Discussion of the Results**

The results revealed that there is voluntary participation among the study participants amounting to 74.7% in several volunteering areas. This can be explained in light of the volunteers' motivation model, which varies according to their volunteering motives, varying between learning new skills, developing personality and self-esteem, and preparing for jobs.

Moreover, volunteering provides the participants with many benefits on the personal and societal levels and contributes to improving the quality of social life. This result is largely consistent with what was shown in Park et al.'s (2015) study that the average QOL increased according to the number of voluntary activities in which individuals participated. Our results also agreed in this context with Mousa et al.'s (2021) study, which indicated that many students strongly agreed that volunteering improved their QOL by developing their personal skills and improving their practical skills, as volunteer work among the study participants was not to fill the time and emptiness, but a true experience of life development. According to expectation theory, individuals engage in volunteer work and are motivated by considering their expectation that a certain level of effort will lead to performance (expectation) and that this performance will lead to certain rewards (tool), and the rewards received outweigh the costs associated with the effort (valence). Hence, the outcome is participation in volunteer activities.

In this aspect, the voluntary motivation theory shows that volunteering is practiced to promote one's interests, needs, or desires. According to this view, the volunteer expects to gain something from their volunteer activity. Motivation to volunteer is likely to continue when the benefits are realized. Therefore, it is expected that engaging in official volunteer work will contribute positively to the individual's subjective and healthy QOL.

Youth care and spreading community awareness came in first place as an area of volunteering



with a mean of 2.45, which reflects the volume of interests of students in social service departments and their attitudes toward practicing volunteer work with young people, whether in scout camps, workshops, or youth conferences, and an attempt to establish the values of volunteer work in the hearts of these young. The study participants also tended toward caring for the poor and needy and providing social assistance as another area of volunteering in second place (mean: 2.44) as providing social care to the poor and disadvantaged segments.

The study participants also focused on caring for children, orphans, and people of unknown parentage, which came in third place, with a mean of 2.43, and caring for special groups came in fourth place, with a mean of 2.38. There is no doubt that those voluntary practices and others that the study participants participated in are reflected—according to the personal well-being model—in the characteristics of the sample participants and give them a sense of self-confidence and self-respect at a high level, thus achieving high levels of satisfaction with life. Especially since the voluntary contributions of the study participants did not stop at caring for the poor, special groups, or orphans of unknown parentage but rather extended toward developmental work and community and cultural awareness. As for the role of social service in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life through a set of professional roles played by social service in supporting the values of volunteer work in the hearts of members of Saudi society, our results indicated that the overall mean of the role of social service in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life was 2.35.

The professional roles came in succession: Raising awareness of the positive benefits of volunteering, motivating individuals toward participating in volunteer activities, changing the prevailing negative attitudes about volunteering, building continuous channels of communication, directing the volunteer energies of university youth toward the practice of volunteer work, and involving service students in training in charitable labor associations. This was shown by a study (Geffen, 2019) that voluntary visits with clients led to a significant increase in self-reported levels of well-being by 58%, improved emotional and informational support by 50%, reduced feelings of loneliness by 70%, and improved mood scores represented in anxiety, depression, lack of interest or enjoyment of activities, withdrawal from activities of importance, and levels of physical activity increased from 49% to 66%. The results also showed some other roles of social work in supporting volunteer work, such as providing consultations with guidance and advice, making the right voluntary decisions, and holding workshops for training on volunteer work skills. There is no doubt that most of these professional roles provided by social workers support volunteer work and its inherent role in improving the QOL through guidance, motivation, development, change of directions, and the channeling of human energies.

The evaluation of the study participants of social work specialists for the impact of volunteer work on improving the quality of social life came in the light of several indicators, as our results revealed that the overall mean of the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life was 2.44. This highlights the impact of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life. The analyses of the study were based on highlighting this effect through the indicator of the ability of volunteer work to build and benefit from human capacities, which came with a mean of 2.57, the indicator of volunteer work developing the human

personality and enriching the CV with new experiences, with a mean of 2.54, the indicator of volunteering giving individuals the ability to managing crises and life pressures and controlling emotions, with a mean of 2.50, the indicator of supporting volunteer work, forming positive attitudes, and feeling satisfied with life (mean: 2.47), and the indicator of volunteer work providing volunteers with positive behaviors, life management skills, and the ability to make sound decisions, with a mean of 2.42. These indicators are consistent with the study by Chung et al. (2020) that volunteering serves different psychological functions for individuals, motivating them to engage in voluntary activities. This volunteering approach has been categorized into two psychological functions: Self-directed motivation and other-directed motivation. Self-directed motives refer to meeting personal needs, which bring personal benefits to the volunteer and include aspects of promotion, protection, and understanding. In contrast, other-directed motives focus on increasing the well-being of others from voluntary activities.

Furthermore, there was an indicator that volunteer work improves the level of social performance and building positive social relationships, with a mean of 2.42, which means—according to the theory of social capital—an increase in the balance of social capital in a way that enhances community presence in voluntary social networks and achieves the management of a stable and secure social life. This amount of social capital is useful in achieving social goals and satisfying human needs. Hence, enhancing the volunteers' social capital reflects positively on improving their QOL, where social capital contributes both to the quantitative (volume) and qualitative (degree of familiarity and cooperation) levels of social relations, the internal and external motives for volunteering (idealistic motives, the desire to feel useful to others, the pursuit of social recognition, and the desire to increase the number of acquaintances or friends). The formation of social capital through participation in civil and charitable associations enables people to create relationships characterized by a high degree of intimacy, gives them a sense of satisfaction, and satisfies many of their basic and social needs. The stronger the links with others in social networks, the greater the available resources and the higher the rates of satisfaction with life. Social capital has a positive impact on the management of living and voluntary life.

Volunteer work is also useful in directing individuals toward effective management of free time and the practice of appropriate activity, with a mean of 2.40. It is related to the ability to satisfy basic and social needs. In addition, volunteer work increases self- and societal awareness and enhances positive energy and effectiveness (mean: 2.34). This is consistent with the result of Kleiner et al.'s (2022) study, which showed the positive impact of volunteering on the self-esteem and independence of the study participants, indicating that volunteers should be supported in maintaining their volunteer activities, which helps them achieve a better QOL.

## **6. The Most Prominent Results of the Study**

1. Our results indicated that the role of social work in raising awareness of the positive benefits of volunteering came in first place with a mean of  $2.56 \pm 0.60$ .
2. Our results also showed that the role of social work in motivating individuals to

participate in voluntary activities came in second place (mean:  $2.46 \pm 0.64$ ).

3. Our results revealed the contribution of social work in changing the prevailing negative attitudes about volunteer work, which came in third place (mean:  $2.43 \pm 0.56$ ).
4. Our results revealed that the overall mean of the role of social work in supporting volunteer work and improving the quality of social life was  $2.35 \pm 0.71$ , and the mean of the effectiveness of volunteer work in improving the quality of social life was  $2.44 \pm 0.68$ .
5. Our results indicated the impact of volunteer work in building human capabilities and benefiting from them on improving the quality of social life, which came in first place, with a mean of  $2.57 \pm 0.55$ , as well as the effect of supporting volunteer work in forming positive attitudes and a sense of satisfaction with life in improving the quality of social life, with a mean of  $2.47 \pm 0.64$ .

## 7. Recommendations

1. Conducting more research and studies on volunteer work and the quality of social life.
2. Encouraging students specializing in social work to increase their professional skills and practices in the field of volunteer work in a way that ensures their understanding of indicators of the QOL and measurement methods.
3. Encouraging faculty members, in general, and social work specialists, in particular, to build the values of volunteer work in the hearts of their students through various research activities.
4. Encouraging civil society institutions to build volunteer work programs that enhance the quality of social, economic, health, and environmental life in Saudi society.
5. Holding workshops in Saudi universities to train students on volunteer work skills.
6. Holding training courses for Saudi families to raise awareness of the importance of volunteer work and its role in improving the quality of social life.
7. Raising awareness of the need for Saudi businesspeople to contribute from the social responsibility perspective in building volunteer work programs.
8. Creating communication channels between the universities and civil society institutions by signing several cooperation protocols to support volunteer activities and initiatives.
9. Raising awareness of the need to implement social work departments in Saudi universities and several voluntary initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of volunteer work.
10. Including a course in the study plan of social work departments in Saudi universities entitled “Civil Society and Volunteer work.”

## 8. Study Limitations

- Few Arab and foreign research dealt with the relationship between volunteer work and the quality of social life.
- The process of creating the questionnaire was time-consuming.
- Collecting field materials from four universities.

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