Altruism among the Teachers Working at UNRWA Schools in Jordan

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Abstract

This article addressed the reality of altruism among the teachers working at the schools of UNRWA in Jordan. The sample of the study consists of (150) male and female teachers. Those teachers were chosen from UNRWA schools in Jordan. To meet the objectives of the study, a two-part survey was developed. The first part collects the relevant data about demographic characteristics .The second part collects data about (the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his students, colleagues, and the school administration). The study found that there is a significant difference at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the respondents' attitudes towards the targeted reality for the favor of the females. There is no significant difference between the respondents' attitudes towards the targeted reality. The researcher recommended that teachers must be provided by more training courses about altruistic behaviors in the educational field and other fields.

Keywords: altruism, teachers, UNRWA, schools, Jordan

1. Introduction

There are several factors which may affect one. Those factors include the factors related to the internal environment and the ones that are related to the external environment. In terms of the educational environment, the teachers' behaviors are affected by several factors, including psychological factors. Such factors affect the teachers' performance.

Social behaviors are considered positive when they are beneficial to others or desirable. Positive social behaviors include helping others. They include the behaviors that aim at making people happy. They include the behaviors that aim at modifying the bad behaviors and habits of others (Al-Anani, 2007).

Keskin & Jones (2011) add that altruism refers to the love possessed by one for others. Altruism involves taking action for the favor of someone or a group without having something in return. The term (altruism) is closely related to human relationships. It involves having sympathy for others. It involves creating connections with others and sacrificing for their sake. The extent of showing altruism depends on the strength of relationship with the other person.

Keskin & Jones (2011) add that altruism refers to the actions or activities that are carried out with having the intention to help someone and without expecting any compensation or benefit in return. The altruistic act is carried out voluntarily with having conviction. It involves showing priority to the interest of others over one's own interest. It aims at eliminating others' feelings of pain and increasing their sense of happiness without expecting any reward in return.

Altruism is defined as a selfless act performed with the intention of assisting another person (Pavenkov et al., 2015). It is a condition of love oriented towards others in which egoism and self-indulgence are abandoned (Enc, 1990) and is targeted towards promoting the well-being of others (Organ et al., 2006). Podsakoffet al. (2000) defined altruism as helping coworkers who are experiencing workplace issues. Scott et al. (1999) discovered that altruism is an essential determinant in a teacher's moral and professional success. It can give significance to a teacher's life, because teaching is driven by the desire to serve others (Stinnett, 1968).

An altruistic instructor works without self-interest in mind. Altruism is the major criterion used to describe a teacher, and it is one of the characteristics that strongly express a teacher (Scott et al., 1999). Altruism encourages people to become teachers, therefore studies on altruism among instructors are significant. Conscientiousness is defined as a pattern of exceeding the minimal required levels of workplace behaviour, such as RAMJ attendance, punctuality, housekeeping, resource management, and internal maintenance issues (Organ, 1988). Many scholars have discovered a type of conduct known as individual initiative, which is comparable to conscientiousness in that employees engage in creativity or innovation to improve the performance of the organisation. They also persevere with passion and take on additional duties (Podsakoff et al., 2000). It describes an individual's proclivity to plan, organise, and carry out duties in order to be dependable (Costa and McCrae, 2006). Conscientiousness is the personality trait most significantly connected with academic performance, and it is highly similar to important success determinants (Kim et al., 2016).

The dedication of teachers to an educational institution's goals and ideals is critical to its success (Somech and Oplatka, 2014). Prescribed role definitions are insufficient, and teachers are expected to go above and beyond their formal responsibilities (Belogolovsky and Somech, 2010). Colleague support is frequently shown to be important for instructors (Halbesleben, 2006). According to Locke et al. (1983), role clarity guarantees that a college teacher knows what is expected of him, receives feedback on his performance, and participates in decision-making. Because "role" can be defined as obligations with unrestricted power in comparison to "job" (Yadav and Kumar, 2017), it is normal for employees to regard practically all workplace behaviours (including supporting others) as in-role (Morrison, 1994). Uncertain job roles can lead to employee conflicts (Fields, 2002), and Podsakoff et al. (2000) discovered that role conflicts and role ambiguity are adversely connected to altruism and conscientiousness (as components of OCB). Importantly, when employees feel unfettered in their positions, work becomes interdependent, which leads to a sense of responsibility for the work of others (Kiggundu, 1983). Workplace behaviours such as helping others and being concerned about others' work can also be the result of highly cohesive groups (Van Dyne et al., 1995). Based on the evidences from the literature, this study was conducted.

1.1 Problem of the Study

Altruism, the selfless concern for the well-being of others, is a fundamental aspect of human behavior that can significantly impact social and educational environments. Among teachers working at UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) schools in Jordan, altruism is crucial for fostering an inclusive and supportive educational atmosphere, especially given the unique challenges faced by Palestinian refugee communities. Understanding the levels, factors influencing, and implications of altruism among these teachers is essential for improving teaching quality, student experiences, and community relationships.

Through communication with a group of teachers working at UNRWA schools, the problem of

the present study aimed to answer those questions:

Q.1. What's the reality of altruism among the teachers working UNRWA schools in Jordan?

Q.2. Is there any significant difference existing between the attitudes of the sample towards the targeted reality that could be attributed to (experience, major, gender or receipt of awards)?

1.2 Importance of the Study

The present study is significant due to the significance of altruism in the field of psychology in general and in the field of educational psychology in particular. There are many human behaviours-related topics that worth conducting studies about. That applies especially to the topics related to human behaviours that affect the surrounding society and are affected by it. The altruistic behaviours in the educational field manifest through psychological behaviours and value-based behaviours that are carried out by teachers for the favour of the students, colleagues and school administration. The present study aimed to shed a light on the latter altruistic behaviours

1.3 Relevant Scholarship

Alselmi (2022) explored the role of the Islamic education teacher in promoting altruism among secondary school students in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in Saudi Arabia. 928 secondary school students were sampled through using the cluster random sampling method. The descriptive analytical approach was adopted. For collecting data, a survey was used. The researcher found that the Islamic education teachers play a moderate role in promoting altruism among secondary school students in Makkah Al-Mukarramah. Gender, stream and grade affected the students' attitudes. Such an effect is for the favour of the females, the ones in literary stream and the ones in 12th grade.

Makhamra (2022) aimed to identify the level of perceived organizational support and extent of carrying out altruistic

acts. He aimed to explore the correlation between them. He investigated whether there are differences existing between the attitudes of the sample which could be attributed to gender and educational qualification. The study's sample consists of (105) male and female secondary school teachers. Those teachers were chosen from Rahat, Negev. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher developed a survey targeting perceived organizational support and altruistic behavior. It was found that there is positive correlation between perceived organizational support and altruistic behavior.

Albtoush (2021) explored the tolerance and altruism levels of the recently recruited teachers and the ones recruited a long time ago in the schools in Kasbah Amman. She chose a random sample consisting from (61) teachers who were recruited during the past three years. This sample also consists from 70 teachers who have been working for more than 25 years in the teaching profession. The relevant data was acquired through a survey. The researcher found that the tolerance and altruism levels of the recently recruited teachers and the ones recruited a long time ago are moderate. She also found that a positive relationship exists between tolerance and altruism among those teachers.

Al-Harbi (2021) explored the level of altruism among kindergarten children. He aimed to identify the relationship between the latter level and tolerance in Qassim in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To meet the objectives of the study, he chose a sample of 225 female kindergarten teachers in Qassim. He developed two scales (one on altruism and another one on tolerance). The data was obtained during the academic year (2018-2019). It was found the levels of altruism and tolerance among teachers, and self-tolerance is high. It was found that there is a positive correlation between tolerance and altruism among teachers. The levels of tolerance and altruism of single females are higher than the counterpart levels of married females. The researcher recommends paying more attention to altruism, and tolerance among kindergarten teachers.

Akalan & Sahinler (2020) explored the levels of altruism among the physical education teachers working in Kütahya. They sampled 105 physical education teachers. 53.3% of those teachers are females and 46.7% of those teachers are males. The researcher used an altruism survey that was developed by Ersan and Çabuker. After analyzing the collected data, it was found that there is a significant difference in the selfishness sub-dimension between the respondents which can be attributed to gender. A significant difference exists between the groups - in all total scores – which could be attributed to the place in which the teachers reside at.

Junaidi (2020) aimed to identify the quality of school life among teachers of students with disabilities. He examined the relationship between this quality from one hand and psychological resilience and altruism from another hand. The quality of school life survey was designed by the researcher. The psychological resilience scale was designed by Makhmir (2002). The altruism scale was designed by the researcher. It was found that there are significant differences between teachers in terms of quality of school life in favor of females. It was found that the quality of school life of the targeted teachers can be predicted through identifying their psychological resilience and altruism.

Palta (2019) explored the attitudes of teachers towards altruism. He obtained data from 289 teachers. He adopted a mixed research design. He used a scale for measuring teacher altruism. This scale was developed by Yavuzer et al (2006). The researcher used an interview form that was developed by him. Based on the quantitative finding, no significant difference between the teacher's attitude which could be attributed to genders, marital status and the reasons for choosing teaching profession. The researcher concluded that there isn't any significant attitude between teachers' attitudes which can be attributed to seniority or major. Based on the qualitative findings, most of the teachers stated that their colleagues made altruistic acts that aim to meet teachers' needs.

Wijaya (2013) shed a light on altruism among teachers in Jakarta and its relationship with the relationship strength. Relationship strength was measured through examining a) the duration of the relationships, b) the frequency of having an interaction, c) amount of knowledge on the goal of the other person, d) sense of intimacy, e)-self-disclosure to other people, f) familiarity to others. These criteria were set by Starzyk et al. (2006). The result indicate that altruism is related to the relationship strength.

Al-Anani (2007) examined the helping behaviors among teachers in Jordan. He explored the impact of gender, experience, major, and receipt of awards on the extent of carrying out altruistic acts and offering low-cost assistance. Through a survey, data was collected from the sample. (168) male and female teachers were sampled. Those teachers include kindergarten and basic school teachers who were working in Wadi Al-Seer, Amman. The extent of offering assistance by teachers is high. A significant difference exists between the teachers in terms of the extent of offering assistance which may be attributed to males. In addition, no significant difference exists between the teachers in terms of the extent of offering assistance which may be attributed to age. A significant difference exists between the teachers in terms of the extent of carrying out altruistic acts which may be attributed to males. Also, there is no significant difference exists between the teachers in terms of the extent of offering low-cost assistance which may be

attributed to age, gender or interaction between them. The most important altruistic motives include: religious beliefs, personal motives, sense of responsibility, competence, and empathy.

Harrell (2006) aimed at identifying the impact of empathy and perceived responsibility on the behaviors involving offering assistance to mental patients. (183) students were sampled from community colleges in the United States of America. Comparisons were made between the pre and post applications. It was found that the listening experience did not lead to a change in the attitudes and behaviors of the members of the sample towards the ones mentally ill.

Bartel (2006) aimed at studying the influence of parents and peers on helping adolescents. The sample consists of (108) American male and female adolescents. Parents have an impact on helping adolescents, especially spontaneous assistance. Adolescents are more helpful to friends than others. No significant difference exists between the respondents' willingness to help others which can be attributed to age. Significant differences exist between the respondents' willingness to help others which can be attributed to gender. The latter differences are for the favor of females. Females are more willing to provide assistance than males.

2. Method

Through relying on the descriptive analytical approach, the research was conducted. This approach was adopted because it's the most suitable approach for this study. It is adopted to offer a description of things, and phenomena. It is used to provide a description of people's perceptions of things and events.

2.1 Population

The population in this article involves all the teachers working at the schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Jordan.

2.2 Sample of the Study

A random sample was chosen from the teachers working schools affiliated with the UNRWA in Jordan in the following areas: (Hateen camp, Al-Wahdat camp, Al-Baqaa camp, Zarqa camp). The sample consists from 150 male and female teachers. Table no. (1) presents the characteristics of the members of the sample.

Table 1. The Characteristics of the Members of the Sample

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	66	44.0
	Female	84	56.0
	Total	150	100.0
Experience	Less than 5 years	42	28.0
	5-10 years	69	46.0
	More than 10 year	39	26.0
	Total	150	100.0
Major	Scientific major	81	54.0
	Humanitarian major	69	46.0
	Total	150	100.0
Did the respondent receive an award?	Yes	61	41.0
	No	89	59.0
	Total	150	100.0

2.3 Instrument

For investigating the reality of altruism among the teachers working at UNRWA schools in Jordan, a two part questionnaire was designed.   Part one collects data on demographic characteristics. Part two collects data about the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her students, the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her colleagues, and the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor the school administration.

The researcher used the five-point Likert scale in the data collection process. This scale includes five rating categories. Which are: (very great extent, great extent, a moderate extent, a little extent, a very little extent).

Those rating categories stand for following score respectively: (5, 4, 3, 2 and 1)

2.4 Validity

The validity was measured through passing it to three experts to assess it. The researcher asked the experts to assess the questionnaire based on criteria. Those criteria include: clarity and relevance to the mentioned objectives. They include: language (e.g. grammar, structure and spelling). These experts work at Jordanian universities. These experts confirmed that the instrument is clear. They also suggested that they didn't find any language-related mistake in the instrument. They added that the questionnaire is relevant to the objectives of the study. They offered some suggestions that were taken into account by the researcher.

2.5 Reliability

The instrument's reliability was checked through Cronbach alpha coefficient values. The overall value is (0.866). That means that such reliability is high.

3. Results

3.1 Statistics and Data Analysis

For offering results, a software called SPSS software was used. In addition, the following methods of statistical analysis were used:

-Frequencies and percentages: They enabled the researcher to offer an accurate description for the characteristics of the respondents.

-Arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for all the items of the questionnaire. They enabled the researcher to identify the exact attitudes of the sample.

- Cronbach's Alpha coefficient: They enabled the researcher to measure the reliability of the instrument.

- Multiple analysis of variance.

The following criteria were used to classify the means into categories:

Low: 2.33 – 1.00

Moderate: 3.67 to 2.34

High: 5.00 to 3.68

4. Results & Discussion

-First question:

Q.1. What's the reality of altruism among the teachers working UNRWA schools in Jordan?

To have this question answered accurately, the relevant means and standard deviations were calculated for all targeted areas. Those areas are: (the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her students, the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her colleagues, and the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor the school administration). The means and standard deviations of the targeted areas are shown below in table (2):

Table 2. The Relevant Means and Standard Deviations for the Targeted Areas

No	Variables	M	S.D	Rank	Degree
1	The teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her students	3.25	0.89	1	Moderate
3	The teacher's altruistic acts for the favor the school administration.	3.22	0.96	2	Moderate
2	The teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her colleagues	3.16	1.03	3	Moderate
	Overall	3.19	1.09		Moderate

The attitudes of the sample towards the reality of altruism among the teachers working at the schools of UNRWA are moderate due to having a moderate overall mean (3.19). The overall standard deviation is (1.09). The respondents' attitudes towards the reality of altruism in all the areas are moderate. As for the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her students are ranked first. It is 3.25. while teacher's altruistic acts for the favor the school administration is ranked second. It is 3.22. The mean of the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her colleagues is ranked third and moderate. It is 3.16.

Hence, it can be attributed to the fact that having very positive attitudes means that the reality is an ideal reality. Having negative attitudes means that altruistic acts are non-existent in reality.

This result can be attributed to the fact that the perceptions towards altruism vary from one person to another. The members of the society can't be ideal. Thus, they can't show high levels of carrying out altruistic acts. In addition, adopting positive values by the members of the society can't be absent. Hence, the extent of carrying out altruistic acts by the teachers at UNRWA schools in Jordan is moderate.

UNRWA schools are characterized by showing attention to a specific category of people who are in need for help. This category of people is represented in the refugees. Hence, the teachers working at UNRWA schools shall be motivated to carrying out altruistic acts much to help the refugee students at those schools. That is confirmed through the results of this study.

Wilson (2000) adds that the dimensions of altruism are represented in (the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her students, the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor his / her colleagues, and the teacher's altruistic acts for the favor the school administration).

Keskin & Jones (2011) add that the concept of altruism is strongly related to one's relationships with others. They add that the presence of altruism indicates that one has sympathy with others and bonds with them. They add that the presence of altruism indicates that one wants to sacrifice for the sake of others. The extent of carrying out altruistic acts depends on the strength of the relationship. Harrell (2006) adds that empathy is an important motive for providing others with help and assistance. Bashir (2022) adds that altruistic behaviors includes the acts that are carried out for the favor of the members of the organization, including superiors and colleagues. Such acts include assisting them in doing work-related tasks.

The results in this regard are not in agreement with the ones reached by Makhamra (2022). who found that the extent of carrying out altruistic behaviors is very high degree. The results in this regard are not in agreement with the ones reached by Al-Harbi (2021). He found that the levels of altruism and tolerance among teachers are high. The results in this regard are not in agreement with the ones reached by Al-Anani (2007) who found that the extent of offering help by the teachers is high.

Results related to the second question

Q.2. Is there any significant difference existing between the attitudes of the sample towards the targeted reality that could be attributed to (experience, major, gender or receipt of awards)?

To identify whether there is any significant difference between the attitudes of the teachers towards the targeted reality which could be attributed to (gender, experience, major or receipt of awards), the relevant means and standard deviations were calculated. They can be seen in table (3).

Table 3. The Relevant Means and Standard Deviations Representing the Attitudes of Teachers Towards the Reality of Altruism in Accordance with Gender, Experience, Major, and Receipt of Awards

Variable	Category	No	M	S.D
Gender	Male	116	3.16	0.85
	Female	84	3.23	1.02
Experience	Less than 5 years	42	3.19	0.84
	5-10 years	69	3.20	0.69
	More than 10 year	39	3.22	0.81
Major	Scientific major	81	3.25	0.75
	Humanitarian major	69	3.21	0.82
Did the respondent receive an award?	Yes	61	3.20	0.75
	No	89	3.18	0.82

Based on the table above, it appears that differences exist between the sampled attitudes. The multivariate analysis of variance was used to determine if these differences are significant or not. The findings of this analysis are provided in table (4):

Table 4. The Results Reached Through Conducting the Multivariate Analysis of Variance

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. *
Gender	0.856	1	0.856	4.43	0.000
Experience	0.284	1	0.284	1.15	0.105
Major	0.096	1	0.096	3.11	0.082
Receipt of an award	0.177	1	0.177	2.09	0.001
Error	71.132	146	0.466		
Total	1953.072	150			

(∗): This sign means that the value is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There are significant differences - at the level of significance (α = 0.05) – between the attitudes of the sample which could be attributed to gender for the favor of females. That is because the significance value (0.000) is significant. This result may be attributed to the fact that females are more emotional than males in general due to the emotional nature of their personalities. That shall affect the extent of carrying out altruistic acts for the favor of their students, colleagues and school administration.

No significant difference at the level of significance (α = 0.05) between the attitudes of the sample which can be attributed to experience. This is due to the significance value (0.105) isn't significant. This result may be attributed to the fact that carrying out altruistic acts is affected by one's values and psychological aspects of his/her personality rather than one's experience.

Based on table No. (4), there is no significant difference at the level of significance (α = 0.05) – between the respondents' attitudes which could be attributed to major. This is due to the significance value is 0.082. The latter value is not significant.

This result could be attributed to the fact that doing altruistic acts is affected by values and personal beliefs rather than major.

Through reviewing the relevant literature, it can be concluded that altruistic behaviours are carried out due to having an intrinsic motivation. It can be concluded that most of the reasons behind doing altruistic behaviours are mainly related to the person himself / herself. Despite that, there are others reasons that shouldn't be overlooked.

Based on table No. (4), it was found there is a significant difference - at the level of significance (α = 0.05) – between the respondents' attitudes which can be attributed to the receipt of an award. The latter difference is for the favor of the teachers who received an award. That is because the significance value (0.001) is significant.

The result in this regard could be attributed to the fact that the teachers who won an award are more capable than other teachers to carry out positive behaviors and assist their students, colleagues and school administration.

The things that contribute to increasing the extent of doing altruistic acts include: the training processes. They include developing the teachers' capabilities. They include: rewarding the distinguished teachers for their high productivity and performance levels.

Wilson (2000) adds that the most important factors affecting the extent of showing altruism are gender, age, the nature of the altruistic attitude, and profession. Makhamra (2022) concluded that there isn't any significant difference between the respondents' extent of doing altruistic acts which can be attributed to gender, and academic qualification. Anani (2007) found that there is significant difference between respondents' extent of doing altruistic acts which could be attributed to gender for the favor of males. He found that no significant difference between the respondents' extent of doing altruistic acts as for age.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, altruism plays a vital role among teachers working at schools, contributing significantly to the overall well-being and success of the educational environment. The selfless and compassionate nature of teachers who exhibit altruistic behaviors fosters a sense of community, empathy, and support within the school setting. Through their commitment to the growth and development of their students, teachers showcase a genuine dedication to making a positive impact on young lives, often extending beyond the confines of their job descriptions.

Altruistic teachers create a nurturing and inclusive atmosphere where students feel valued, understood, and empowered. Their willingness to go the extra mile, offering guidance, mentorship, and emotional support, establishes

a strong foundation for the holistic development of students, helping them not only academically but also emotionally and socially.

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