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THE VIEWS OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS ON VOLUNTEERING: THE ANKARA UNIVERSITY SAMPLE

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Abstract: The objective of this work is to reveal the views of the social work students on volunteering. The research has been conducted with the participation of 223 Ankara University Faculty of Health Sciences Department of Social Work students. Through complete inventory, the data were gathered from volunteering students; and analyzed with frequency distribution (f) and chi-square (X^2) techniques. The female student count is 74% of the participants, whereas 26% are male. Additionally, 23.8% of the students are freshman, 30% are sophomore, 22.9% are junior and 23.3% are senior students. The students' perception on volunteering follows mostly as sharing quid pro quo, providing all kind of needs, emotional support and working at an enterprise free of charge. While 33.6% of the students have been involved in certain volunteering activities during the past year, the percentage of students who have registered to one or more non-governmental organizations (NGO) are more than the half. Moreover, the fields where the students mostly attend to volunteering works are children welfare, disability, youth and poverty. The reasons why the participants attend to volunteering activities are significantly love for people, the wish to accomplish something for the society and gaining information and experience. The social work education has a positive affect on most of the students regarding volunteering, due to course contents (field study, NGOs, poverty and social work, social work with disabled) and field studies. The participation of female students during the past year is higher than the male students. Social work education influences the thoughts of students on volunteering in a positive direction. Adding a different course on volunteering to the schedule, more active student societies and academicians and more effective coordination with NGOs may have more improving results on the thoughts and attitudes of students regarding volunteering.

Keywords: Social work, social work education, social work students, volunteering.

Introduction

Along with the developments in the world, volunteering has been becoming more prominent with the lead of the universities and NGOs in Turkey. Today, attending to volunteering activities has become to require being more equipped comparing to the past. Therefore volunteering activities at universities started to become more important.

When analyzing the literature, although there is no single definition that has been reached with unanimity on volunteering, each definition emphasizes a different feature which one can argue there is no difference among them. Hence, even though the definitions seem to be different than each other, while underlining those differences they actually approach to the integral body differently. When considering the common points of the definitions together; in general, volunteering is a set of activity/activities of an individual with no expectation of interest (material or non-material) using his/her time, energy, knowledge, skills and sources with one's own will

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and consciousness of social responsibility to help to those who are in need (except for the near kins) (Fazlıoğlu, 2013, p.69; Güder, 2006, p. 4).

Yet, according to Çakı (2014, p.187) “The principal of no financial gain expectation does not mean there will be no payment to the volunteer. On the contrary, there can be occasions where the travel and fundamental needs have to be covered (specifically in international volunteering programs) for.”

There are different opinions whether the volunteering activity shall be on an individual level or institutional level. While some authors emphasize that volunteering activities should be on an institutional level for the benefit of the society rather than individual efforts [at this point authors state that volunteering should not be understood as an activity of free-time, but distinctly from philanthropy, volunteering performed under an institution provides social and economic return] (Betil, 2013, p.16; Ege, 2011, p.7, Güder, 2006; Law & Shek, 2009, p.857; Palabıyık, 2011, p.90; Saran, Coşkun, Sherr & Straughan, 2005, p.99; Zorel & Aksoy, 2011, p.3736), some authors on the other hand evaluate activities that does not happen under an institutional framework but on an individual basis on an informal level as volunteering (Abban, 2016, p.5; Palabıyık, 2011: 90). Other authors remark both levels under this scope and volunteering can be performed directly to those in need as well as submitting oneself to a mission in an aid institution with the no-gain principle (Tiltay & Torlak, 2015, p.9). Another fraction of authors argue volunteering with regard to a system. According to Agerhem (2004, p.9), “Volunteerism is the principle or system of doing something by, or relying on, voluntary action or volunteers”.

Having the definitions analyzed, it is possible to reach certain common features. Volunteering is not compulsory, it is not performed against a fee, it is done in an institutional structure with the purpose of social benefit (Palabıyık, 2011, p. 90). Volunteering is a complex behavior and social phenomenon that changes in time (Sherr & Straughan, 2005, p.99). Some authors argue that volunteering can be varying depending on the society’s social, cultural, historical and religious structure (Çakı, 2014, p.187; Fazlıoğlu, 2013, p.69). Having argued faith influencing volunteering, they state the common religion of a country is the most prominent factor affecting volunteering activities (Agerhem, 2004, p.8) and that religious beliefs and practices play the most important role on understanding volunteering (Sherr & Straughan, 2005, p.99). According to Yönten Balaban and Çoban İnce (2015, p.150) “volunteering appeared in many countries intertwining with traditional beliefs and community customs”. Adding to this, volunteering is not influenced only by religious beliefs; culture, history, geographical location and politics are also among the factors that influence volunteering (Agerhem, 2004, p.8). Even though the reasons are different, there are factors that drive people to volunteer and put constraints in front of them to help others with no-gain.

Factors that Motivates Volunteering

The reasons that drive people to volunteer are grouped under different topics in the literature. Taking into account the common features of these reasons, at the core base, it is appropriate to categorize them under two topics of individual and social reasons (Abban, 2016, p.14; Akman, 2008, p.85; Çakı, 2014, p.188; Ege, 2011, p.8; Fazlıoğlu, 2013, p. 70; Güder, 2006; Güngör & Çölgeçen, 2013, p.167; Kurt, 2015, p.207). Those are:

Individual reasons: Showing commitment to a belief, making change in one’s life, feeling better by helping other people, removing loneliness, sharing what one has, improving knowledge and skills, sharing experience, earning credit and appreciation by being a role model to other people, achieving qualification on a certain topic, considering oneself someone who is needed, earning special status, getting respect, meeting new people, making social connections and status, doing something different and exciting (having a change from the routines of life like work and education), living the feeling of belonging, being a member of a teamwork, improving oneself, choosing profession, testing one’s limits, self-actualisation.

Social reasons: social benefit, contributing to activities, finding solution to a social problem, supporting a work or an institution that one believes and trusts, contributing to the need of human resource, mediating the introduction of institution/society/group that one represents.

When looking into the individual reasons driving people to volunteering, even though expectation of no-gain is emphasized, one can understand that volunteering is actually a two-way process. According to Güder (2006, p. 4) “activities that are done as a volunteer make one gain various qualifications, even though there is no expectation of gain. These gains in one sense, does coincide with the reasons that drives people to volunteer”. With other words, volunteering provides benefit for both the volunteer and the person who has been served (Abban, 2016, p.5), and contributes to the psychological and social improvements of the volunteers (Ling & Chui (2016, p.2316). While the individual is helping others with their volunteering work; they also with their volunteering actions satisfy their needs of belonging and love, being respected, self-actualisation, which is mentioned in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Bjarneld, Lindmark, McSpadden & Garrett, 2006, p. 50). With this

aspect, volunteering creates positive gains for both the servant individuals and to those who demand service (Güngör & Çölgeçen, 2013, p.167). As a result, volunteering influences positively the well-being of individuals and societies as a whole (Ling & Chui, 2016, p.2316).

Factors that Obstruct Volunteering

Although there are factors that encourage people to volunteer, there are other factors that disable them to do so. Age, economic insufficiencies, place, time, not being ready, the instance that the perception of volunteering by individuals usually occurs to be a financial aid or expecting an interest, not to know to start volunteering how and when, not willing to take responsibility, prejudice and lack of confidence, finding it boring, lack of self-confidence, not having a tradition or habit, not having someone from the family or environment or having had a bad experience could be put as some examples as factors that may obstruct individuals to attend volunteering activities (Abban, 2016, p.36; Fazlıoğlu, 2013, p.72; Kurt & Taş, 2015, p.208).

“One of the factors that direct an individual to volunteer is education. The more the education level increases, the more individuals become involved to problems. As empathy and self-confidence rises, one can see these individuals are being more volunteering.” (Palabıyık, 2011, p.92)

Volunteering in the Youth

Among the individuals participating volunteering works, the youth and university students have a different place. Considering Turkey has a young population, this becomes more important. As stated by Yönten Balaban and Çoban İnce (2015, p.150): “At the point where volunteering activities happen, the youth as a dynamic power have a principle role as in many other fields.” The late adolescence or late youthness period, which also contains university students, is a period where psychological criteria becomes more vivid which will probably not change in the future, therefore is an essential era for taking part in volunteering roles. If volunteering actions will enable them to develop altruistic identities, then they can spare an important amount of volunteering time in their future lives (Kirkpatrick Johnson, Beebe, Mortimer, & Snyder, 1998). “The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, and to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson; cited in Law and Shek (2009a, p.855). In the daily life, people tend to reach to a higher goal. According to the theories of development youthness is an important period where one can invest in order to reach the higher goal. The living purpose of the young generations is closely related with pro-social norms and behaviors (Law and Shek, 2009a, p.856-867).

Social Work and Volunteering

Social work as a profession of solidarity and aiding is socio-focuses; aims to help people with scientific principles, methods and techniques (Duyan, 2012, p. vii). The beginning of professionalisation of social work is based on volunteering works that are social well-fare oriented. The education of social work has begun at late 1800s. First appeared in England and then in the United States of America, the pillars of social work were constituted by the volunteering works of the members of religious groups and wealthy philanthropists with no official education, with no knowledge on human behavior; at the charity foundations aimed to provide the needs of the poor people in urban areas (Alptekin, 2016, p.10; Saygi Doğru, 2011, p.67; Zastrow, 2014, p.2). These untrained proto-social workers who are also known to be friendly visitors were supporting the poor people with moral persuasion and have tried to find ways helping them (Tannenbaum & Reisch, 11.06.2017, paragraph 3). Sherr and Straughan (2005, p.100) have explained this with the following statement: “Simply stated, the profession of social work owes its existence to volunteerism”.

Within this context, social work is the leading profession which has the closest relation with volunteering. Thus the volunteering level of social work students is utmost important (Özkan et al., p.94). Inside the social structure due to the reason that at the head of the disadvantaged groups which are served by the NGOs have complex problems, volunteering activities have been increasing and thus volunteering has become to require more equipped human resource (Güngör & Çölgeçen, 2013, p.165-166). Turkish Educational Volunteers Foundation (TEVF) research also addresses this issue and participants suggested certain fields which require volunteer activity fields by 100% as poverty, women and children.

Consequently, having the disadvantaged groups in the society prioritized, social work which aims to help individuals is one of the professions for volunteering. Therefore this work was conducted to find out the views of the candidate social workers, who have a very important role among the aiding professions.

Methods

The research was performed during fall of 2016 with 223 freshman (53), sophomore (67), junior (51) and senior (52) undergraduate students studying in the Ankara University Faculty of Health Sciences Department of Social Work. The data were gathered by the volunteering students, through a questionnaire form consisting of two sections which was developed by the researchers. The first part includes socio-demographic questions, whereas the second part asks questions on volunteering. In order to create the questions on volunteering, a question form was given to 49 students from different classes that had open-ended questions. The answers received turned into a close-ended questionnaire of 13 articles. The data were analyzed using the frequency distribution (f) and chi-square (X^2) techniques.

Results and Findings

Socio-Demographic Findings

Female students are forming 74% of the population, whereas 26% is formed by male students. The participants who were below the age of 18 forms 5.4% of the population: 29.6% between the ages of 18 and 19, 43.9% between 20 and 21, 18.4% between 22 and 24, 2.7% above the age of 24. The freshman students are 23.8%, sophomore students 30%, junior students 22.9% and senior students are 23.3% of the population. While 3.6% of the students' mothers are illiterate, 2.7% are literate; 40.7% are elementary school graduates, 19.3% are primary-middle school, 22.9% highschool, 10.3% institution/faculty graduates and 0.9% has completed post graduates studies.

Findings on the Participation and Motivation of Students to Volunteering Activities

One can observe that the students with the highest rate considers volunteering (71.7%) as "sharing with no gain", and respectively the following considerations follow: "satisfying all kinds of needs" (64.1%), "emotional support" (41.7%), "unpaid working" (35.9%), "non-material aid" (34.1%) and "material aid" (28.3%) [Table – 1]. According to the research results of Abban (2013, p.59), among the reasons why university students are taking part in volunteering institutions, the first one is consciousness of social responsibility (76.4%). This is followed by: the need to feel good (55.8%), wish to gain experience (53.8%), spending free time (34.2%) and new friendships (24.4%). According to a study of the Foundation of Private Sector Volunteers (FPSV)[2005, slide 9] conducted with 586 civil servants and 157 private sector employees, volunteering means to help each other (41.5%), to work willingly (19.7%) and social solidarity (12.2%).

Based on the research results, while 33.6% of the students participated to volunteering activities during the past year, 64.4% did not commit themselves to volunteering work. TEVF research (2012, p.17) on the young people ages varying between 18 and 35 reveals the participants to volunteering works during the past year does not exceed 4.8%. This result clearly indicates that social work students have a higher participation rate than Turkey average. 43.9% of the participants declared that they were aware of volunteering works prior to university yet they did not attend any, 38.1% on the other hand told they were aware of volunteering activities prior to university and they attended time to time.

In the research, 42.7% of the students indicated they are not a member of any NGO, whereas 57.3% announced they are member of one or more NGO. Rose and Özcan (2007, p.43) have revealed in their research that based on 2003 Turkish Statistics Institution input, approximately 45% of the population in the EU member state countries are members to a volunteering NGO, this percentage in Turkey shows to be 9%. A similar result from another TEVF research (2008) can be observed. Among 55 countries, the participation of the young in Turkey to NGOs is 8% with the lowest (cited in TUSEV,2011,p.79).In this work, the membership rates of the students are significantly higher than Turkey average, which this occasion is a clear indication of the influence of social work education.

The question whether how much time the students spend time on volunteering was asked which turned out with the following result: 28% of the students spend more than 2 hours a week, 22.7% of the students spend 1-2 hours a month, 20% of the students spend 1-2 hours a week, 5.3% of the students spare more than 2 hours a year. According to Abban's research result, which has been conducted over 225 university students on the volunteering levels of the young, 48% of the subjects spend 1-2 hours, 33.8% spare 3-4 hours, 10.7% spend 5-6 hours of volunteering work time (2016, p.58).

Analyzing the fields where they volunteer, one can say social work students mostly take part in (72%) children welfare, which is followed by: disability (20%), youth (18.7%), poverty (17.3%), old age (12%) and women welfare (10.7%); nonetheless, the least fields which the students take part as volunteers are criminality (2.7%) and LGBT-Q (2.7%). Abban's work (2013, p.58) suggests university students participate mostly in the field of education (41.3%). This is followed by health (37.8%) and culture-art (34.7%).

Among the factors that positively influences the motivation of the students on volunteering, the primary can be argues is "humanity" (66.7%); the wish to accomplish something for the society/living environment (66.7%); the wish to gain development, knowledge and experience (66.7%); empathy (60%), acquiring social relations (29.3%); friends and family (20%); the fact that it will look good on a job application (20%); religious belief (17.3%) and guided by the instructors (4%). Ma et al. (2007) argue that positive family environments and positive friend relationships increase the tendency of the young to take part in pro-social works (cited in Ling & Chui, 2016, p.2316).

When looking into the factors that obstructs the volunteering motivation of the students, approximately half of them (49.3%) express they do not have time, 36.8% states they do not know to do it where, for whom and with what purpose; 18.8% carry some anxiety, 15.2% do not know (Table 1)

Table 1.Participation of the students to volunteering activities and their motivations

		Number	%	
Having Participated to an Activity as a Volunteer During the Past Year	Yes	75	33.6	
	No	148	64.4	
	Total	223	100	
Having Participated to an Activity as a Volunteer Before University	I had not any idea, I was not participating	34	15.2	
	I had an idea, I was not participating	98	43.9	
	I had an idea, I was participating time to time	85	38.1	
	I had an idea, I was participating oftenly	6	2.7	
	Total	223	100.0	
The Number of NGOs which the Students are registered	None	32	42.7	
	1	20	26.7	
	2	13	17.3	
	3	6	8.0	
	4	1	1.3	
	5+	3	4.0	
	Total	223	100.0	
Average Time Spending on Volunteeting Activities	1-2 hours a week	15	20.0	
	More than 2 hours a week	21	28.0	
	1-2 hours a month	17	22.7	
	More than 2 hours a month	5	6.7	
	1-2 hours a year	7	9.3	
	More than 2 hours a year	4	5.3	
	Other	6	5.3	
	Total	75	100.0	
		Yes		No
		Number	%	Number %
Participation of the Students to the Fields of Activity	Children	54	72.0	21 28.0
	Criminality	2	2.7	73 97.3
	Women	8	10.7	67 89.3
	Aging	9	12.0	66 88.0
	Disability	15	20.0	60 80.0

	Immigrants	4	5.3	71	94.7
	LGBT-Q	2	2.7	73	97.3
	Poverty	13	17.3	62	82.7
	Youth	14	18.7	61	81.3
Factors that Positively Influences the Motivation of Volunteering	To achieve something for the society	50	66.7	25	33.3
	Friends and family	15	20.0	60	80.0
	Emphatetic thought	45	60.0	30	40.0
	Making social connections	22	29.3	53	70.7
	Religious belief	13	17.3	62	82.7
	Humanity	50	66.7	25	33.3
	Benefit for job application	15	20.0	60	80.0
	The wish to develop, gain information and experience	50	66.7	25	33.3
	Guidance by the instructors	3	4.0	72	96.0
Factors that Obstructs the Motivation of Volunteering	I do not know	34	15.2	189	84.8
	Because of my financial insufficiencies	15	6.7	208	93.3
	I am not interested	19	8.5	204	91.5
	I have no time	110	49.3	113	50.7
	I do not want	13	5.8	210	94.2
	Not knowing where it is done, for whom and with what purpose	82	36.8	141	63.2
	I have no worries	42	18.8	181	81.2
Thoughts on Volunteering	Financial aid	63	28.3	160	71.
	Non-financial aid	76	34.1	147	65.
	Emotional support	93	41.7	130	58.
	Sharing with no gain	160	71.7	63	28.
	Unpaid working	80	35.9	143	64.
	Providing any kind of needs	143	64.1	80	35.
	I have no information	1	0.4	222	99.
	Other	1	0.4	222	99.

Even though most of the students (81.3%) think that social education had positively influenced their views on volunteering, more than half of the students express (58.3%) the volunteering activities organized in the department of social work is not enough. Additionally, again more than half of the students thinks (59.2%) the student participation to these volunteering events are too low. When looking to the contribution of the department of social work to volunteering activities, the most important factors are thought to be as: course content (54.7%), field studies (52%), friend circle from the department (41.3%) and finally, the contributions of the instructors (21.3%). (Table 2)

Table 2. The influence of social work education on volunteering

		Number	%	
The Status of the Influence of Sociak Work Education on the Views Regarding Volunteering	Yes, positive	61	81.3	
	No, negative	12	16.0	
	I have no idea	1	1.3	
	Other	1	1.3	
	Total	75	100.0	
The Status of the Students Finding the Volunteering Activities Organized in the Department Sufficient	Sufficient	24	10.8	
	Insufficient	130	58.3	
	I have no idea	69	30.9	
	Total	223	100.0	
The Status of the Students Finding the Participation of Students to the Volunteering Organizastions	Sufficient	17	7.6	
	Insufficient	132	59.2	
	I have no idea	74	33.2	
	Total	223	100.0	
The Contribution of the Department of Social Work to the Participation of Volunteering Activities	Instructors	Yes	16	21.3
		No	59	78.7
	Content of Course	Yes	41	54.7
		No	34	45.3
	Friend Cricle from Department	Yes	31	41.3
		No	44	58.7
	Field Studies (internship/course applications)	Yes	39	52.0
		No	36	48.0

The findings related to the influence of the social work education to the views of students on volunteering are shown in Table 3. According to these results, most of the students (89.2%) took history of social work; more than half of the students took field study (65.9%), poverty and social work (57.8%), communication skills (56.5%), social work with individuals (52%), social work practice with individuals (50.2%); approximately half of the students took social work with groups (47.5%), summer internship (46.6%), social work with families (46.6%), social work with disabled individuals (46.6%), Non-governmental organizations (44.8%), social work with immigrants and refugees (44.8%), community health and health systems (44.4%) courses.

Among the courses mentioned above, most of the students who took the field study (81.6%), non-governmental organizations (77%), poverty and social work (72.1%), summer internship (71.2%), social work with disabled individuals (70.2%) courses; also have registered to the following: social work practice with individuals (68.7%), child rights and law (63.1%), history of social work (62.8%), juvenile delinquency and social work (57.3%), communication skills (57.1%), social work with individuals (56%), social work practice with groups (55.9%), social work with groups (55.7%), social work practice with society (55.6%), social work with children (53.6%), social welfare and sociak work (52.8%), social work with youth (52.1%), social work with families (50.7%), family law (50.7%), social work with society (50.6%); and argue that these courses positively influence their being volunteers.

Table 3. The influence of social work courses on volunteering

Courses	I took the course		I did not take the course		Influenced Positively		Influenced Negatively		Did no affect me	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
History of Social Work	199	89.2	24	10.8	125	62.8	3	1.5	71	35.7
Poverty and Social Work	129	57.8	94	42.2	93	72.1	3	2.3	33	25.6
Communication Skills	126	56.5	97	43.5	72	57.1	4	3.2	50	39.7
Community Health and Health	99	44.4	124	55.6	42	42.4	3	3.0	54	54.6
Social Work Literacy	115	39.5	135	60.5	47	40.9	2	1.7	59	51.4
Field Study	147	65.9	76	34.1	120	81.6	3	2.0	24	16.4
Non-Governmental Organizations	100	44.8	123	55.2	77	77.0	1	1.0	22	22.0
Equity and Diversity	86	38.6	137	61.4	40	46.5	4	4.7	42	48.8

in Social Work										
Drama	74	33.2	149	66.8	28	38.8	2	2.7	44	59.5
Social Security System in Turkey	81	36.3	142	63.7	28	34.6	2	2.5	51	62.9
Social Work with Immigrants and Refugees	100	44.8	123	55.2	44	44.0	8	8.0	48	48.0
Juvenile Delinquency and Social Work	75	33.6	148	66.4	43	57.3	4	5.4	28	37.3
Social Work with Disabled Individuals	104	46.6	119	53.4	73	70.2	4	3.8	27	26.0
Gerontological Social Work	69	30.9	154	69.1	33	47.8	3	4.4	33	47.8
Social Work with Individuals	116	52.0	107	48.0	65	56.0	6	5.2	45	38.8
Social Welfare and Social Work	89	39.9	134	60.1	47	52.8	1	1.1	41	46.1
Child Rights and Law	84	37.7	139	62.3	53	63.1	2	2.4	29	34.5
Family Law, Problems of Women and Social Work	71	31.8	152	68.2	36	50.7	3	4.2	32	45.1
Home Care Services	67	30.0	156	70.0	26	38.8	2	3.0	39	58.2
Social Work with Groups	106	47.5	117	52.5	59	55.7	2	1.9	45	42.4
Social Work with Families	104	46.6	119	53.4	55	52.9	3	2.9	46	44.2
Social Work in Business Life	71	31.8	152	68.2	31	43.7	2	2.8	38	53.5
Social Work in Rural Areas	57	25.6	166	74.4	16	28.0	1	1.8	40	70.2
Disasters Social Work	70	31.4	153	68.6	34	48.6	0	-	36	51.4
Substance Abuse and Social Work	70	31.4	153	68.6	35	50.0	3	4.3	32	45.7
Social Work with Society	83	37.2	140	62.8	42	50.6	4	4.8	37	44.6
Mobbing with Psycho-Social Dimension	56	25.1	167	74.9	13	23.2	3	5.4	40	71.4
Social Work with Children	69	30.9	154	69.1	37	53.6	3	4.4	29	42.0
Social Work with Youth	69	30.9	154	69.1	38	52.1	2	2.9	29	42.0
Case Management in Social Work	60	26.9	163	73.1	17	28.3	1	1.7	42	70.0
Ethics in Social Work	80	35.9	143	64.1	39	48.7	0	-	41	51.3
Medical Social Work	71	31.8	152	68.2	24	33.8	0	-	47	66.2
School social Work	78	35.0	145	65.0	36	46.1	1	1.3	41	53.8
Analysis of Art in Social Work	54	24.2	169	75.8	11	20.4	1	1.8	42	77.8
Forensic Social Work	59	26.5	164	73.5	20	33.9	1	1.7	38	64.4
Sociak Work Practice with Individuals	112	50.2	111	49.8	77	68.7	1	0.9	34	30.4
Social Work Practice with Groups	84	37.7	139	62.3	47	55.9	2	2.4	35	41.7
Social Work Practice with Society	81	36.3	142	63.7	45	55.6	3	3.7	33	40.7
Summer Internship	104	46.6	119	53.4	74	71.2	2	1.9	28	26.9

The courses were taken from the following web-site: <http://socialwork.health.ankara.edu.tr/dersler-akts-kredileri/> (Access:11.01.2017)

Variables with Significant Differences

Looking at whether there is any significant differences among the variables; one can find significant differences ($X^2=7.554$, $p<0.05$) between gender and participating a volunteering activity during the past year (Table 4). Female students have been attending to volunteering events more than the male students in the recent year. On the other hand, the study of Özkan et al. (2015, p.106) on “Determining the Social Responsibility Levels of Social Work Students” reveals a different result. This work shows that there has been no significant difference found between gender and participating a volunteering activity in the recent year.

There has been a significant difference found between the field practice based on classes and influence on volunteering ($X^2=11.491$, $p<0.05$) [Table 4]. The field studies have been found to influence mostly the junior and senior students on their participation to volunteering events, than the sophomore and freshman. This is followed by the sophomore students. Lastly, the number of students indicating positive influence of field studies to participating volunteering events is zero. The reason of this result is argued to be the facts that, the last semester of the second year in Ankara University Department of Social Work offers students summer internship; first semester of third year offers “social work practice with individuals” and second semester offers “social work practices with groups”; final year first semester offers “social work practice with society” and second semester offers “block practice”. These practice studies provides students the opportunity to work face to face with the applicants in the social work institutions. Working with the applicants enables the students to realize their needs.

Table 4. Variables with significant difference

			Having Volunteered in the Recent Year		Total	X ² =7.554 P=0.006	
			Yes	No			
Gender	Female	Number	64	101	165		
		%	38.8	61.2	100.0		
	Male	Number	11	47	58		
		%	19.0	81.0	100.0		
Total	Number		75	148	223		
	%		33.6	64.4	100.0		
			Field Studies (Internship/Course Practices)		Total		X ² =11.491 P=0.009
			Yes	No			
Grade	Freshman	Number	0	6	6		
		%	0.0	100.0	100.0		
	Sophomore	Number	11	16	27		
		%	40.7	59.3	100.0		
	Junior	Number	14	7	21		
		%	66.7	33.3	100.0		
	Senior	Number	14	7	21		
		%	66.7	33.3	100.0		
Total		Number	39	36	75		
		%	52.0	48.0	100.0		

Variables without Any Significant Difference

Based on the chi-square (X^2) analysis results, there has been no significant difference found ($p>0.05$) between the following: 1- educational status of the parents and thoughts and attitudes on volunteering prior to the university; 2- grade and a) being member of a non-governmental organization, b) average time spent on volunteering activities, c) influence of social work to volunteering, d) contribution of instructors to being volunteer, e) influence of the course content to volunteer, f) contribution of the friend circle from the department to volunteer.

Conclusion

According to the results of this work, the social work students perceive volunteering mostly as sharing with no gain, providing all kinds of needs, providing emotional support and unpaid working at a place. More than half of them are members of one or more NGOs. More than half of the participants did not attend to volunteering activities in the recent year. Whereas most of the students have attended to volunteering activities aiming children welfare, the least participation can be observed on the topics of criminality and LGBTI. Among the participants to volunteering events, one can observe that more than two hours a week at most is spent. The leading factors that drive students to volunteer are humanity, the wish to accomplish something for the society/living environment, development and gaining knowledge and experience. Among the prominent factors that obstructs students to volunteer are that they have no time and they do not know where the practice is done, for whom it is done and the goal of the whole action.

Most of the students think social work education positively influences their ideas on volunteering. Whereas the leading contributors to attend to volunteering activities in the department are course content and internship/course practice; the “field study and non-governmental organizations”, “poverty and social work” and “social work with disabled individuals” courses have the most influence. Compared to the lower grade students, the field studies (internship/course practices) have considerably more influence on the participation of the junior and senior students to volunteering activities. Female students have been attending to volunteering events more than the male students during the past year.

For the young university students, volunteering is an effective method for learning. The skills and perfections acquired with volunteering can help significantly for their professional development (Bağcı, 2013, p.48). It is found to be important that, the development of the volunteering conscious (Saran et al., 2011, p.3736) of the students who will start their professional lives after they graduate is closely related in one sense with their participation to volunteering activities during their studies. From this perspective, defending and encouraging volunteering is needed (Bağcı, 2013, p.50). One can argue that volunteering, which means in short aiding people without the expectation of gain, and social work which helps people with professional education and discipline are in close relation with each other. Therefore volunteering has an important place in social work education and it is found to be appropriate to make certain initiatives for the purpose of increasing the participation of the students.

Recommendations

Taking into account the results of this work, among the facts that obstructs the social work students to participate volunteering events; they do not know where the practice is done, for whom and how it is done along with certain worries. It is thought that if there will be a separate course on volunteering in their schedules, it will help removing those obstacles.

Although social work students indicate that social work education is influencing their opinions on volunteering in a positive way, they do not find the number of volunteering events enough, organized by many other departments as well. It will be appropriate to find ways for more active academicians and student communities, along with more cooperation with NGOs.

Additionally, it is found to be necessary to have similar works to be performed in comparatively in the various departments other universities.

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